

# Genesis Chapter 1

## Attributes, Characteristics and Qualities of God

In this chapter we are introduced to several of the attributes, characteristics, or qualities of God. From other scriptures we know that God is an unchanging God, therefore, his attributes are unchanging. There can be no precept or doctrine that violates the attributes of God.

In verse 1 we read "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The first attribute of God revealed in the scriptures is that **God is eternal**. He was before the beginning. "The beginning" is the beginning of time. God was before time. Thus, God is eternal. Now, we know that the scriptures teach that when we are born of the Spirit we are given eternal life in the inner man. Also, we know that we have a hope of eternal life in our outer man which will come to fruition in the resurrection. However, the way in which we have eternal life is different than the way God has eternal life. For us, eternal life deals with the future. It is unending life in the future. With God, however, eternal life is both in the past and in the future. God is eternal, both past and future. The concept of God having no beginning is perhaps one of the most difficult for us to understand. We live in a time based world. Everything we see in nature had a beginning and has an ending. The concept of eternity past is therefore extremely difficult for us to comprehend, yet it is true.

Next, the first word used for God comes from the Hebrew word, "elohiym." This is a singular noun consisting of a plurality and takes a singular verb. There are many words in the English language we can compare this concept to. However, I will look at just one. The local "church" consists of several members. The church that I pastor has about 45 members. I can say that the "church" is located at Denton, Texas. The noun "church" in that sentence is singular and has a singular verb. However there are 45 members that make up the "church." The word, "elohiym," carries the connotation that a plurality makes up the **Godhead**. This is exactly what the scriptures teach. This concept is further illustrated in the first chapter of Genesis in verse 26: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." The word, "God," is singular, yet the pronoun "us" indicates a plurality in the Godhead. The foundation of the precept of the Godhead consisting of Father, Word, and Holy Spirit is laid for us in this first chapter of Genesis.

Further, the word, "elohiym," is used in connection with God as the creator of all things. The strictest definition of "creation" is to make something out of nothing. Only God can make something out of nothing. He is the only **Creator**. To create something takes a power far beyond any ability of man. In the first chapter of Genesis the attribute of God as "**omnipotent**" is abundantly illustrated in the creation of the heaven and the earth. God illustrates this power by simply speaking the universe into being and all that is contained therein!

Moreover, the first chapter teaches us that God is a God of order. God orderly arranged the creation of each day into categories of his choosing. This orderly arrangement and the interaction of those things created and the complexity of those things created illustrate to us the "**Wisdom of God**." Oftentimes the evolutionists will try

to convince us that life began as a simple cell. The truth is that the very simplest of cells is extremely complicated. Within a single cell there generally are at least 60,000 chemical reactions that are continuously taking place. Moreover, each cell has the capability of replicating itself. Furthermore, each cell has a built in protective defense system. These things are extremely complex. To promote that some amino acids threw themselves together to form something so exceedingly complex as a "simple cell" is ludicrous. Only by the **wisdom** and power of an Almighty God could something as vast as the universe in which we live and so complicated as even a simple cell is be brought into existence.

As we contemplate the things which God created and the plants and animals he created we are led to focus on the "**sovereignty of God.**" God made this universe and all that is contained therein as it pleased him. He was under no obligation to anyone to create anything. Further, His creation and what he created was of his sovereign choosing. He created it the way he wanted it and he placed within the universe those plants, animals, birds, man, etc. as it pleased him. The thing formed could not say unto him that formed it, "why hast thou made me thus?"

Finally, in this chapter we see the character of God as **Master** illustrated as he gives to man by his sovereign will in verse 28: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." This right for man to replenish, subdue, and have dominion is given by God and illustrates to us that God is the Master and that man's service is given to him by God.

## **Genesis Chapter 1**

### **Creation vs. Theistic Evolution**

While there has been a long running debate between creation and evolution, yet there are those who try to reconcile the two theories together and they suggest that the bible actually teaches what they call "Theistic Evolution." The idea behind theistic evolution is that God controlled creation by using evolution to bring life into existence. Those who espouse theistic evolution are trying to synergize God based creation as taught by the scriptures with godless evolution.

The major supposition of theistic evolutionists is that the bible uses seven days to describe creation. Sometimes a day is used to represent an epoch or age of time. Assuming the day in Genesis chapter 1 is an epoch or age of time and that those epochs or ages of time are not specified, then man would be free to assign periods of time to each day. For instance, if according to evolutionary theory the age of the earth is 7 billions years old, and then a billion years could be assigned to each day. In this manner the theistic evolutionists try to synergize the doctrine of creation with the doctrine of evolution. Their theory is that creation is an ongoing evolutionary process.

The theory of theistic evolution cannot be supported by the Genesis account of creation, however. The Genesis account sets forth four major contradictions to the theory of theistic (God-controlled) evolution.

The first contradiction in the Genesis account of creation to the theory of theistic evolution is that the bible actually teaches seven literal 24-hour days in which God

created the heaven and the earth and rested. One thing serious bible scholars generally come to recognize is that the scriptures are amazingly consistent. In the account of creation beginning with Gen. 1:1 through Gen. 2:4 there are three ways in which the word, day, is used. The word, day, is used in those same three ways throughout the scriptures. The first way was to use the word, day, symbolically. For instance, "God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. Sometimes in the scriptures the word, day, is used symbolically to represent Jesus Christ. Christ is symbolized by the dayspring and the Day star.

A second way in which the word, day, is used is in a way to represent an epoch or period of time. This is found in Gen. 2:4: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens." Thus, the word day is used to represent the entire period of creation. There is a peculiar identifying mark when the word, day, is used to represent an epoch or period of time. This identifying mark is that throughout the scriptures the word day will be preceded with one of the adjectives: the, this, and that. Therefore when the word day is expressed as "the day" or "this day" or "that day" it represents an epoch or period of time.

The third way in which the word, day is used is the far most common way. It is used to mean a 24-hour period of time. Whenever the word, day, has a number associated with it, then it represents a 24-hour period of time. The account of creation in Genesis chapter 1 is identified as the 1<sup>st</sup> day, the 2<sup>nd</sup> day, etc.

Furthermore, God established the week as a demarked period of time to be observed by man. Man was to work for six days and to rest on the seventh day even as God worked six days and rested on the seventh day. It is interesting that we live in a world in which the week is a recognized demarcation of time. Just about every nation on earth observes the seven day week!

The second major contradiction between the biblical account of creation and the theory of theistic evolution is found in the order of creation. On the third day God created plant life on earth: 11 "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 13 And the evening and the morning were the third day."

On the fourth day God created the sun, moon and stars: 14 "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: 15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. 17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. 19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day."

Therefore, in the biblical account if each day represented an indefinitely long period of time, say, a billion years, then based on the above you would have plant life existing on the earth for a billion years before you had the sun, moon, or stars. This of course is both absurd and impossible.

The third major contradiction between the biblical account of creation and the theory of theistic evolution is found in what the created species bring forth. The following verses show us that each species brings forth **after his kind**:

1. 12 "And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, **after his kind**: and God saw that it was good."

2. 21 "And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, **after their kind**, and every winged fowl **after his kind**: and God saw that it was good."

3. 24 "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature **after his kind**, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth **after his kind**: and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth **after his kind**, and cattle **after their kind**, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth **after his kind**: and God saw that it was good." Notice that each species, whether plant, fishes, birds, or mammals all bring forth after their own kind. This flies in the face of the theory of evolution which has species evolving to bring forth other species.

The fourth major contradiction between the biblical account of creation and theory of theistic evolution is found in the fact that God rested on the seventh day. Thus, according to the biblical account, natural creation is completed and there will be no more new species to be created. This defies the theory of evolution.

We draw the conclusion based on the biblical account that creation was completed in six literal 24-hour days and that God rested on the seventh literal 24-hour day. Theistic evolutionists will have to go somewhere other than the bible to attempt to establish their theory of God-controlled evolution.

## **Genesis Chapter 1**

### **God gives man stewardship over the earth**

Gen. 1:26 "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

Lesser authority derives from the greater authority. God has ownership rights over all creation. Because he is Creator of all things he can do with all things as it pleases him. God's creation of man and his giving of stewardship to man are contained in the same passage of scripture. It can be deduced that God made man among all of his creation capable of being a good steward of His creation. None of the other species created had the unique abilities that God gave man.

God tied his making man in the image of God to his giving stewardship to man. This seems to imply that man in his stewardship is to apply the same value and concern for that which he has stewardship over as the owner (God) of the creation does. Thus,

man is not to abuse his stewardship or treat it as having no value or to abuse that which he has stewardship over. The most important job of a steward is to be faithful to his master. He is to take the orders, standards, and rules of his master and be faithful in their application to the job given him.

God told man to do five things with regard to the stewardship that he gave man over all the earth. He told man to: be fruitful; multiply; replenish the earth; subdue it; and have dominion over the other living creatures.

To be fruitful can mean that man was to be fruitful in natural generation or it could mean that he was to be fruitful in his work as a steward of God's creation. To be fruitful in natural generation does not seem to fit here because the next thing God told man was to multiply. If it had meant that man was to be fruitful in natural generation then there was no need for the command to multiply. However, fruitfulness in man's work as a steward implies that man is not to be lazy or slothful. It also implies that man should be wise in his stewardship so as to get the wisest return from his efforts.

Next, God commanded the man to multiply. To multiply means to bring forth in abundance. Remember God only created one couple. The rest came through natural generation. The same time that man was multiplying, the other created species were multiplying also. Our individual stewardship is limited by our individual abilities. As the earthly creatures multiplied, the need for stewardship increased, thus there was a need for an increase of stewards.

Moreover, God commanded the man to replenish the earth. Notice it does not say "replenish in the earth." The scripture says "replenish the earth." **Replenish in the earth** has an entirely different meaning to **replenish the earth**. To replenish the earth carries with it the idea to make full use of the earth and its resources. Now this does not mean that man is to be wasteful or to use the earth's resources unwisely. God is not wasteful and God is certainly wise in all that he does. Likewise in using the resources of the earth man is to be wise in his use and to be prudent in his stewardship of the earth's resources.

The fourth thing God told man to do as a steward was to "subdue" the earth. To subdue carries the idea that man is to bring the earth and its resources under his subjection. Thus, the land and its resources are to be used as man's servants. God does not abuse us as his servants; therefore, we are not to abuse the land and its resources as our servants. As God provides for us, we are to provide good stewardship to the land and its resources.

The fifth thing God told man to do as a steward was "have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." The phrase, "have dominion," means to prevail against, reign over, or rule over. There are times in which man has had to curtail the multiplication of certain species of animals for the good of mankind and for the good of other animals. There are also times in which man has had to nurture the existence of certain animals for the good of mankind and for the good of other animals. Animals are extremely useful in many ways. However, to maximize their usefulness it is necessary that man be a wise steward of God's creation. The indiscriminate killing of animals or the wiping out of animal species can cause very serious repercussions in the balance of nature.

## **Genesis Chapter 1**

### **God makes provision for man and all his animal creation**

Gen. 1:29 "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so."

Notice that in the beginning God did not give man or animal meat to eat. God gave the herbs and the fruit of the trees for man to eat and green herbs for the animals to eat. God is the owner of all that is. He is a sovereign and he has the sovereign right to set the limits on what even is permitted to eat. Later he gives the right for man to eat meat.

Man was initially a vegetarian and fruit eater and this was the provision that God gave to man. The animals were vegetarians as well. It was only after the fall of man that this was changed.

Obviously the fruits and vegetables God gave for man to eat was originally satisfactory to satisfy the needs of man.

## **Genesis Chapter 1**

### **God pronounces that his creation is good**

After God created something he called it good. This was done in verses 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, and 25. Next in verse 31 we read: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." The word, "very," comes from a Hebrew word that when joined with another word is an intensive. Thus, the phrase "very good" carries with it the idea that it was exceedingly good.

We have the perfect God creating the heavens and the earth and all that is contained therein and calling it very good. There should be no valid criticisms of what God has created including man. It was all "very good."

The word, "good," speaks to the moral nature of the universe that God created. In the creation every thing that God created responded in obedience to the calling of God when he said, "Let there be..." "and there was." The vast majority of God's creation was made with the inherent nature to obey and could not disobey God. Their obedience gives glory to God: Psa. 19:1 "To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."

God made man with the ability to choose to do good or to do evil. With this freedom of choice, when man obeys God it is a higher glory to God than the creation of God that must obey the laws of God without the ability to choose. In light of this, Adam, and subsequently all mankind, dishonored God when Adam disobeyed the commandment of God in the Garden of Eden.

# Genesis Chapter 1

## Man Created in the Image of God

Gen. 1:26 "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

Based on the above we can conclude that when man was created he was in the image of God. When thinking upon this fact, my mind is drawn to two questions:

1. Is man still in the image of God?
2. How is man in the image of God?

Let us deal with the second question first. Of all of God's creation only man was created in the image of God. Further, God later forbid man to make any image of God. Thus, man is the only image and likeness of God that God has authorized. The scriptures do not say that God created man partially in the image and likeness of God. It says that he created God in his own image after his own likeness. Thus, man was the best representation and likeness of God that God created.

This principle is set forth in examining the physical characteristics of man and the things the scriptures say about God. The following is said in describing God in comparison to the physical characteristics of man:

1. Ps. 11:4 "The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: **his eyes** behold, his eyelids try, the children of men."
2. Ps. 34:15 "The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and **his ears** are open unto their cry."
3. Deu. 4:34 "Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a **mighty hand**, and by a **stretched out arm**, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?"
4. Ex. 24:10 "And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under **his feet** as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness."
5. 1 Sam. 13:14 "But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after **his own heart**, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee."
6. Ex. 31:18 "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the **finger** of God."

In the above we note the description of God using the physical characteristics of man.

Likewise, other verses of scripture describe God using the senses of man: see, hear, smell, taste, and feel:

1. Gen. 11:5 "And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded."

2. Deu. 33:7 "And this is the blessing of Judah: and he said, Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him; and be thou an help to him from his enemies."

3. Phil. 4:18 "But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God."

4. Heb. 2:9 "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

5. Heb. 4:15 "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Moreover, we see verbs associated with man used to describe God such as God speaking; God denying; God working; God judging; God forgiving; God rewarding; etc.

Unlike the birds, fishes, mammals and other animals that God created, man was created with the ability to think logically, to reason, to rationalize, to deduce and draw conclusions. These are also things that are ascribed to God.

The phrase, "Let us," indicates a plurality in the Godhead. This is verified by several scriptures with 1 John 5:7 the most cited: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." The three, yet one, nature of the Godhead is also found in man's likeness and image to God.

According to 1 Thes. 5:23 man is also three, yet one, in nature: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

There are seven things that God made man in which he is different from the other creatures, yet are characteristic to God:

1. God made man upright. All the other mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, etc. are made to locomote parallel to the ground. Man is made so that he can readily look outward and upwards.

2. God made man with a reasoning, rational, logical mind. All of the other creatures are extremely limited in their ability to logically reason if at all.

3. God made man with the freedom of ability to choose his course. No other creature has the latitude to make such free choices.

4. God made man to have "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." God certainly has dominion over all his creation. God gave man to have dominion over a large portion of the creatures of the earth.

5. God made man in the image of the Godhead. The Godhead consists of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and these three are one. God made man a threefold yet one nature: body, soul, and spirit.

6. God made man with the ability to assimilate language for communication. All other creatures are very limited in their ability to communicate and do not have the ability to assimilate language to any degree.

7. God gave man wisdom. This is the ability to take the knowledge and understanding that man has and to put it to good use.

The following two verses teach us that man is still in the image of God:

1. Gen. 9:6 "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."

2. 1 Cor. 11:7 "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man."

However, due to the fall of man, man is no longer completely in the image of God for we find in the covenant of redemption that the elect of God are predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son: Rom. 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." If man were perfectly in the image of God then why would it be necessary that God predestinate the elect to be conformed to the image of the Son?

There are things about God that Adam and his genealogy lost in the fall of man. The read the following concerning Christ: Heb. 7:26 "For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens..." Furthermore, Christ is called the Sun of Righteousness: Mal. 4:2 "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." In contrast it is said of fallen man in Rom. 3:10: "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:" Ultimately in the resurrection through the atoning sacrifice of Christ we will once again be completely in the image of Christ as we will be holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens and we will be made altogether righteous.

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **God Rests from his work of natural creation**

Gen. 2:1 "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. 3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."

God created the heavens and the earth in six days and he rested on the seventh day. One of the great evidences of creation is that all nations on the earth observe a seven day week. This could not have happened by chance or happenstance. God, himself, established the week based on his time table for the creation of the heavens and the earth.

The outline of the Sabbath is laid out for us in this passage of scripture. The Hebrew word for Sabbath is used in the above passage, only it is translated "rest." Seven is the bible number for completion. The above passage shows the "completed work of God" in creation and His "resting" from that completed work. Later, at Mt. Sinai, God will establish the law of the Sabbath. The basis of the Sabbath is that God worked six days and completed his work of natural creation and then he rested from that completed work on the seventh day.

Under the Old Covenant, the observation of the Sabbath was to give honor to God for having completed the work of natural creation and then resting from that completed work on the seventh day. All that observed that Sabbath day were given honor to God for having completed the work of natural creation and resting on the seventh day. This became the pattern that was to be observed under the law: six days work, then rest on the seventh day. This was a timely rest based on a timely creation.

"God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it..." Certainly for man to rest one day a week was a blessing from God. The word, sanctify, means to set apart. God set apart the day to be observed as a day of rest and for man to give honor and glory to God for having created the heavens and the earth.

Today, we rest in an even greater work than creation of the heavens and the earth. We rest in Christ's finished work of redeeming us from our sins. This is the Christian Sabbath: to rest (cease from our works of trying to get right with God) in the finished work of Jesus Christ who redeemed us from our sins on the cross of Calvary. This gives honor and glory to Christ for his work of redemption.

For one not to rest on the Sabbath day under the Old Covenant was to fail to give the proper honor and glory to God for His work of natural creation. Likewise, for one to continue to try to establish his righteousness by some works system fails to give honor and glory to Christ for what he has already accomplished for us in the work of redemption.

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **God's initial watering system**

Gen. 2:5 "And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. 6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."

Oftentimes people make the assumption that when God first created the heavens and the earth that everything is just like it is today. However, this is not the case. There were a few things that were different than the way things are today. Today, the earth is generally watered with rain from the clouds above us. This was not the way it was when God initially created the heavens and the earth. There was a mist that went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground. Rain is not recorded in the bible until the days of the great flood in Noah's day. This was nearly two thousand years into man's history on the earth. This was nearly one-third of the earth's existence so far without rain.

This mist was not dew that we occasionally see on the grass when the temperature and atmospheric moisture conditions are right. This was enough moisture that rivers of water flowed. To understand how this mist came about we need to look back on creation itself in Chapter 1: 6 "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so." The firmament was an atmospheric expanse that divided the waters which were above the firmament from the waters which were below the

firmament. In the days of the great flood we read: Gen. 7:11 "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. 12 And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights." During this cataclysmic flood water came from three sources: rain, fountains of the great deep, and windows of heaven.

Thus, it is safe to conclude there was a great body of water that surrounded the outer atmosphere of the earth before the great flood. This envelope of water would have acted as a greenhouse to the earth. Years ago I owned a greenhouse and grew tomatoes in that greenhouse. One of the things that I learned is that each morning there would be a mist that consisted of water that arose from the earth and fell back upon the earth. It was in this manner that the earth was watered before the great flood. This mist watering the earth under a greenhouse envelope of water in the outer atmosphere would have resulted in a uniform, consistent, and steady water supply to the plants and would have resulted in much greater plant growth yields than we generally have today. This outer atmospheric water envelope over the earth will explain several things that are given to us in the next few chapters of Genesis.

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **What man consists of in nature**

Gen. 2:7 "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The word, Adam, literally means red earth. God created man from the dust of the ground. All of the elemental components of man can be traced back to the ground. He is just a bunch of dust with one major exception. He has a living principle that God gave him. This living principle is called the breath of life. This living principle came from God's breath. It is also called the soul. When that living principle departs from man and he breathes his last breath, he dies.

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **Man's first home**

Gen. 2:8 "And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. 10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads."

It was in this Garden of Eden that man had his first home which was given to him of God. Here man had a plentiful supply of food. He also had a very pleasant surrounding. There were two significant trees that were in the midst of this garden which we will learn much more about later. Also, this was a very fertile spot of land as there

was a river which watered the garden. God had prepared a natural physical paradise for the man whom he had created.

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **The rivers and their courses**

Gen. 2:10 "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. 11 The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; 12 And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. 13 And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. 14 And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates."

At first glance we may not see much significance to the details given us concerning the above rivers and their courses. For the most part we do not read much in the scriptures after this about these rivers, nor of some of the lands. However, there is no wasted space or filler in the scriptures. There is a significance of every word. Just because we may understand that significance does not mean that each word is not important. The key to unlocking some of the significance of the above passage is found in the meaning of the names and the significance of bible numbers.

Normally when we think of a river we think of streams or smaller rivers flowing into the larger river. The river mentioned above, however, parts and forms four other rivers. Ps. 46:4 speaks of such a river, "there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." This river had streams coming out of it that caused the city of God (church) to rejoice.

The word, Eden, means "delight." The Lord delights to save his people from their sins. The first head of the parted river is "Pison." The word, "Pison," means "freely flowing." God's grace is free and flows down from God to his elect people. This river compassed the "whole land of Havilah." Havilah means "circle." In the scriptures a circle is a symbol of a covenant. In the covenant of redemption set forth in Rom. 8:29, 30, those that God foreknew, he predestinated; and those he predestinated, he called; and those he called, he justified; and those he justified, he glorified. Thus all He chose before the foundation of the world are completely encompassed by the grace of God freely flowing from God and imparted unto us by the Holy Spirit.

The name of the second river is "Gihon" which means "stream." This river completely encompassed the land of "Ethiopia." The word, Ethiopia, means "black." Black is the bible color associated with sin. The atoning blood of Jesus is as a stream atoning for all the sins of all his elect people: "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, thru sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:2).

The name of the third river was "Hiddekel" which means "rapid." This river flowed to the "east" of Assyria. East is the bible direction of sin. Also "Assyria" means "plain." In Eph. 2:1 we read, "you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." The Holy Spirit as a (rapid) river reaches down and quickens us (gives us spiritual life) when we were dead in trespasses and sins (absent of spiritual life). This is the

marvelous work of the Holy Spirit causing us to be born again.

The name of the fourth river is Euphrates, meaning “bursting” or “sweet.” The gospel or good news comes to those whom God elected and the Holy Spirit quickened and is indeed bursting or sweet news to the child of God who has come to realize his own condemnation and felt the depravity of his heart. This sweet news refreshes his soul and causes him to have hope of eternal life thru the redeeming blood of Jesus.

Surely these four streams of God’s grace, redemption, new birth, and the gospel flow out from God’s delight to save his people from their sins and make glad the city of God (his church) which is the holy place of his tabernacles.

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **Work Assigned to Adam in the Garden**

Gen. 2:15 "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."

While we do not know the size of the Garden of Eden, yet we do know that there was every tree that was good for food and pleasant to the eyes in the Garden. This must have been quite a few trees. The effort to dress a garden of trees of this size and to keep that garden in good would have been considerable. God did not intend for Adam to be lazy, but to be busy. Slothfulness is spoken against in the scriptures. Paul wrote: 2 Th. 3:10 "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **The giving of the law of sin and death**

Gen. 2:16 "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

God had planted a garden of trees that were good for food and pleasant to the eyes in the Garden of Eden. As the creator of all things, God has ownership of all things and has the sovereign right to make available or restrict whatever he pleases.

God, according to his sovereignty, gave permission to Adam to eat of all the trees of the garden except for one. The trees belong to God and Adam belonged to God. Adam had no inherent rights. God could just as easily and with as much authority restricted Adam from eating of any of the trees. The right to eat of the trees was a granted right that God gave to Adam.

It was the "LORD God" who gave commandment to Adam. The word, God, is the title God used in creating the heavens and the earth. The word, LORD, is the title

God uses indicating that he is the covenant maker and covenant keeper. LORD is the same as Jehovah or JHVH. Thus, the commandment was coming from the almighty creator of the universe and from the covenant making and keeping God. There is tremendous power and authority behind this commandment.

The commandment gave Adam permission to eat of all the trees of the garden except for one tree. Without this commandment Adam had no permission to eat of any of the trees of the garden. However, with this permission to eat of the trees came a restriction: Adam was not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. For Adam to eat of this tree would at the very least have been stealing from God and committing a trespass against God.

This commandment was given in the form of a law. God is the lawgiver of all the earth. All just laws derive from God. He has the ultimately authority over all things. A good law spells out the provisions clearly. A good law is not vague. The above law spells out the provisions clearly and is not vague. There is no doubt that Adam was free to eat of all the trees of the garden but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Further, a good law will clearly set forth the penalty for breaking the law. Again, the above law clearly sets forth the penalty for breaking the law: "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The translators gave us a fuller meaning of the term "die" in the marginal reading: "dying thou shalt die." The meaning is that there would be an immediate death upon eating of the tree followed by a later death. This is exactly what happened when Adam ate of the tree.

The nature of the deaths that Adam brought upon himself and his posterity will be brought out in subsequent studies.

The above law is also known as the "law of sin and death." In addition, it is also referred to as "the covenant of the law of sin and death."

Some have suggested that since Eve was not yet created that this law did not pertain to her. The error in that thinking is a failure to realize that Eve was created from the rib of Adam. She was in Adam when the law was given!

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **Adam - Federal Head of All Mankind**

There is a biblical doctrine referred to as the "doctrine of federal headship." This doctrine teaches that when Adam was in the garden of Eden and was given the "covenant of the law of sin and death" that he represented not just himself in that covenant, but stood as the covenant representative of all mankind. Thus the effects of breaking that covenant applied not just to him, but also to all that he represented.

The covenant of the law of sin and death is stated in Genesis 2:16, 17 as follows: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The "doctrine of federal headship" is alluded to in 1 Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." From this, of course, we gather that all that were in Adam, die. Just as we gather that all that are in Christ are made alive. The most comprehensive teaching on the "doctrine of federal headship" is found in

Romans 5:12-19.

Romans 5:12 reads, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Paul wrote this nearly two thousand years ago, long before any of us existed except in the mind and purpose of God. Thus none of us alive today had ever personally sinned when Paul wrote this epistle. Yet Paul affirms that death passed upon all mankind for that all mankind had sinned. Since we had not personally sinned, then how had we sinned? The answer is "we sinned in Adam" as we were seminally in Adam and Adam was our representative before God. Thus when the sentence of death passed upon Adam as a result of his sin, that same sentence of death passed upon us.

Romans 5:13, 14 reads, "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 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." Simply stated the above teaches us that God does not impute sin to us when there is no law. A law must be given in order to have sin imputed against us. From Adam to Moses no additional law, besides the "law of sin and death," had been given to mankind. Furthermore, God had driven man from the garden and fixed it so that man couldn't return to the garden. Thus none of the subsequent offspring of Adam could return unto the garden and eat of the forbidden fruit. They could not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression. Notwithstanding, death reigned over all mankind from Adam to Moses even though they had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression and even though no other law had been given by which sin could be imputed to them. What caused this reign of death? Though they had not personally sinned, yet they sinned in Adam, as he represented them in the garden of Eden.

Next, Romans 5:15 teaches us that by the offence of Adam, the many in Adam are dead. Furthermore, in Romans 5:16, we are taught that God's judgment was, as a result of Adam's transgression, to condemn all mankind. Again in Romans 5:17 we are taught that as a result of Adam's offence death reigns over us. Romans 5:18 reads, "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation..."

Finally, verse 19 says in parts, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners..." The results of all this can be summarized as follows:

1. Adam represented all mankind in the garden.
2. When Adam ate of the forbidden fruit, because he represented us, it was as though all mankind had eaten of the forbidden fruit.
3. God's sentence of death upon Adam because of sin was also a sentence of death upon all mankind because of the sin of Adam.
4. Death in all its aspects not only reigned over Adam, it reigned over all mankind which were seminally in Adam and sinned in Adam.
5. When Adam transgressed, his nature fell to a sin-cursed state. We were made sinners because of Adam's disobedience and our nature is the same as Adam's sin-cursed nature.

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **Creation of the woman**

Gen. 2:18 "And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." ...21 "And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

God created man as a social creature. Most men and women dread loneliness. Most of us want social interaction. While there may be the occasional hermit, this is abnormal. While most animals desire some social interaction, yet not like man desires social interaction. Man likes his mind and his senses to be stimulated. Certainly God knew what he had created and the nature of the creature he created.

God created the woman from a rib of Adam. She was made of the very same substance that the man was made of. Some have suggested that God made the man superior to the woman. This cannot be. They are made of the same substance. The woman was made from the rib of man. As Adam declared she was "bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh." Thus, whatever the substance the man was made of so was the woman.

She was designed to be an help meet for him. Notice the phrase is "help meet" not "help mate." The word, meet, means suitable. While she was designed to be an help meet for him, we learn elsewhere where he is also a help to her: 1 Pet. 3:7 "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." Thus, the man and the woman are in life's struggles and life's pleasures together and work together for the common good of the family.

It would seem the significance of the woman being taken from the side of man is that she is to be at his side. If she was to be his head, then it would have been appropriate that she be taken from his head. If she was to be his servant, then it would have been appropriate that she be taken from his feet. She was taken from his side next to his heart.

The man and the woman are complements of one another. The nature of the woman is a complement of the nature of the man. Most men are not very good at conversation, but are better at listening and logic. Most women are very good conversationalists and more emotional creatures. Their being together brings out the best of each and together that complement makes for greater ability than each would have separately.

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **The wisdom of Adam before the fall**

Gen. 2:19 "And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him."

The naming of all the animals tells us that Adam was endowed with great wisdom before the fall. To give a suitable name that applied to all the living creatures on the face

of the earth required both a knowledge of those animals and wisdom to give them a name befitting their qualities and characteristics.

Further, this was no easy task, as there are literally thousands of creatures that required a name. No doubt this was a lengthy work and perhaps quite tedious. The end result is that every creature received a name and each of them still has that name today.

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **Institution of the marriage covenant**

Gen. 2:23 "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

While the above gives the impression that Adam instituted the marriage covenant we will see later that it actually came from God. However, Adam as the head of the race and the first created had the right to establish the manner in which his family would operate. Since authority derives from authority, who gave modern man the right to change the law established by Adam and handed down to his family. We, mankind, are all a part of the family of Adam. We have no right to change the marriage arrangement that Adam gave to us.

It wasn't long before men began to depart from this simple covenant of marriage. The first marriage was one man married to one woman. There was no "cleave unto his wives," but "cleave unto his wife." Lamech, the sixth from Adam on Cain's side had two wives. Here is where polygamy was introduced into the world. It was not after the order that Adam had established and commanded and further it is not after the order that God established: Matt. 19:4 "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, 5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? 6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Notice that the actual wording of the marriage covenant actually came from God. Adam repeated it and adopted it for himself and his family.

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother..." When a man departs from his father and mother's house to be married, he is leaving the judicial, financial, and emotional system he was under in his parents house and establishing his own in his new home. Before the young man departs he was under the judicial rules of his parents home; he was under the financial umbrella of his parents home; and he was under the emotional support system of his parents home. When he departs to be married he establishes along with his wife a new judicial system of the new family; he establishes along with his new wife a new financial system to govern the new family; and they together establish an emotional support system between themselves and for their children.

"And shall cleave unto his wife..." The word, cleave, means to cling to or adhere. This indicates a very strong bond. Today we might say that they are to be super glued together. Couples should consider themselves to be unalterably joined together. People

today are too quick to cast aside the marriage bond and break the covenant of marriage. This is not the way God designed it. We should consider marriage as a lifetime commitment.

"And they shall be one flesh." Being of one flesh means that they act together in unity and as a unit. The husband and wife should consider themselves as a unit. Their actions should be thoroughly thought out and agreed upon and then they should be of one mind and of one action.

## **Genesis Chapter 2**

### **Shame of nakedness associated with sin**

Gen. 2:25 "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."

Prior to transgressing the law of God, Adam and Eve were naked but they were not ashamed. The scriptures lay out for us that the shame of nakedness is associated with sin. So long as they had not sinned, they had no shame of their nakedness. As soon as they sinned, they became ashamed of their nakedness and we read in Gen. 3:7 "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." Once they had sinned they tried to cover up their shame by sewing fig leaves together and making aprons. What they were really trying to cover up was the shame of their sinfulness. Sin is a shame that is upon all mankind.

## **Genesis Chapter 3**

### **LORD God**

Beginning with Genesis chapter 2 verse 5 the phrase LORD God is used as the name for God throughout the rest of the second chapter and through the third chapter. The word "LORD" is in all capitals in the King James translation of the bible. Wherever, this use of all capitals in spelling the word, lord, is found it has reference to the title "Jehovah" to describe God. Jehovah was not spelled out in the Old Testament, but only the consonants were used JHVH or YHWH which when the vowels are added make the names Jehovah or Yahweh. This has reference to God as the covenant making covenant keeping God. In chapter 2, God had made with man the covenant of the law of sin and death. Likewise, he had made with the man and woman the covenant of marriage.

When the word, LORD, is appended with the word, God, it brings together the description of God as both the creator of all things or the Almighty and God as the covenant making covenant keeping God. As the creator of all things, God has the right and authority and ability to enforce the covenants that he establishes. God made the covenant of the law of sin and death in chapter 2 and he comes to enforce this covenant in chapter 3.

## **Genesis Chapter 3**

## The Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden

Gen. 3:1 "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

The serpent was the creature that enticed the woman and subsequently the man to eat of the forbidden fruit and so fall in trespasses and sins. In Revelations chapters 12 and 20 the serpent is identified for us:

1. Rev. 12:9 "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

2. Rev. 20:2 "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years."

Thus, we conclude that the serpent in the garden is none other than the Devil or Satan who had taken up residence in the body of the serpent.

When the above passage speaks of the subtlety of the serpent it is talking about the subtlety of Satan. The word, subtle, comes from a Hebrew word meaning "cunning or crafty." We notice the devices of the serpent:

1. He went to the weakest link. Eve was the weakest link because she had not been an eyewitness of what God had said to Adam. She was still a rib in Adam's side when God gave the law of sin and death to Adam. What Eve knew, she knew, because of what Adam had said to her. Also, we notice that Adam did not tell Eve the exact same thing that God had told Adam. Based on Eve's response to the serpent, she thought that God had said "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Thus, it would appear that Adam had told Eve that she was not to eat of the tree or even touch it, lest ye die.

2. The serpent called in question the veracity of the word of God when he asked, "Ye hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" He is questioning what God had said. Likewise, Satan in tempting Christ in the wilderness said, "If thou be the Son of God..." Again, Satan is calling in question the Sonship of Jesus Christ. In doing so, he was questioning the truthfulness of God who said that Christ was his son.

3. Next, the serpent contradicted the word of God. As the Lord said, the devil was a liar from the beginning and the father of liars. Satan said, "Ye shall not surely die:" God had said that "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Satan said, "Ye shall not surely die." Thus, Satan is questioning the truthfulness of God and setting himself up as being greater than God.

4. Moreover, the serpent sets forth the enticement to work on the desires of the flesh: "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Now the enticement is that if you eat of the tree then your eyes will be opened and you will become godlike and know good and evil." This fits the principle set forth in the book of James: James 1:13 "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Notice the serpent provided the enticement to the lust of the flesh. Before sin is brought forth and then death, the enticement must conceive with the lust (desires of the flesh).

5. Man was created with three types of fleshly desires. The desires in and of themselves are not sinful. Sin is brought forth when the fleshly desires conceive with the enticement to evil. We read of these three fleshly desires in 1 John 2:16 "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." Notice that when Eve looked at the tree of knowledge of good and evil she saw: "that the tree was good for food (lust of the flesh), and that it was pleasant to the eyes (lust of the eyes), and a tree to be desired to make one wise (pride of life).

6. When the enticement of Satan conceived in the mind of Eve with the lust of her flesh she ate of the tree (sin) and this sin brought forth death.

7. The fallen one (Eve) now becomes the serpent's instrument to entice the as yet unfallen man (Adam): Eve having eaten of the forbidden fruit "then gave also to her husband with her; and he did eat."

There was a major difference between the sin of Eve and the sin of Adam. Eve was deceived in her fall, yet Adam was not deceived. He knew exactly what God had said and the consequences of his actions, yet he did it anyway. Adam was left with an alternative choice when he saw that Eve had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The choice was either to obey God and be separated from his wife or disobey God and die but not be separated from his wife. Adam chose the later.

### **Genesis Chapter 3**

#### **God as the Apprehender and Judge of the Sinner**

Gen. 3:8 "And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

None is more perfect than God to bring the sinner to the bar of justice. According to the scriptures:

1. Heb. 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

2. Ps. 139:2 "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. 3 Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. 5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. 7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

The above passages of scripture teach us of the omniscience of God (He has all knowledge of all things) and the omnipresence of God. His omniscience and omnipresence make God the perfect apprehender of the sinner. There is no such thing as anyone ever getting away with a single sin before God. All sin and disobedience receives a just recompense of reward.

When God called unto Adam and asked him, "where art thou?" it wasn't that God did not know where Adam was, for God knew perfectly well where Adam was and what he had done. No, this was bringing Adam before the bar of judgment in the courtroom of the Almighty and charging him with sin. Adam had no choice but to confess his sin. His own words condemned him: "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." Why was Adam afraid? Why did he know that he was naked? Why did he hide himself? If Adam had not sinned he had no reason to be afraid. He had no reason to hide himself. He had no reason to be ashamed of his nakedness. When standing before the Almighty judge of all the earth, the sinner will confess his sins.

God's response to Adam's confession was: "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" God

already knew the answer, but for Adam's sake he asked the question. Adam would not have known of the shame of sin had he not eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. With Adam's reply we see the fallen nature of sinful man as he attempted to shift the blame for his sin to someone else: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." In other words, it was the woman's fault and ultimately it was God's fault because he gave me the woman! Fallen man always attempts to shift the blame for sin to someone else.

Next, God accosts the woman: "What is this that thou hast done?" Again, we know that God knew perfectly well what the woman had done, but he brings forth a confession from the woman: "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." The blame game continues. The woman says it was the serpent's fault because he beguiled her. While it is true that the serpent beguiled her, yet she was ultimately responsible for her actions. Likewise, we are ultimately responsible for our actions.

Now, we know that God did not ask the serpent why he beguiled the woman. There was no excuse for the serpent's action. It was strictly Satan's rebellion against God.

"And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here as God pronounces judgment upon the serpent, he also makes a promise of a redeemer for his fallen family. This is the promise of the woman's seed bruising the head of the serpent, while the woman's seed would have his heel bruised. Implied in this was the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ (woman's seed) and the death of Jesus upon the cross (heel bruised), while destroying the works of the devil (head of the serpent).

Moreover, God pronounced judgment upon Eve: "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." This pronouncement had a local fulfillment in Eve and a long term pronouncement upon women in general. Any woman who has ever given birth to a child knows that the birth comes with much sorrow or pain. With every birth, a woman comes perilously close to death to deliver a child into the world. Many women have died giving child birth. Further, despite the desires of some women in the women's liberation movement, the fact is that the wives of the world have had the husbands of the world to have authority or rule over them.

One part of the pronouncement seems to be peculiar to Eve. God promised he would greatly multiply her conception. Notice that he did not say he would greatly multiply her conception(s), i.e., that she would have more than one conception. That is not at all unusual for women to have more than one conception. The promise was that he would greatly multiply her conception, singular. In other words, with each conception she would bring forth multiple children. Most women do not have multiple children with each conception. However, Eve is the mother of all living and with each delivery she had more than one child. This would explain, biblically, where the wives for Cain and Seth came from. They were their sisters perhaps their twin sisters.

Finally, God pronounced judgment upon Adam: "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy

sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The ground was cursed for Adam's sake. Adam and all mankind were sentenced to hard work to produce the fruits of their survival. Further, man was consigned to return to the dust of the earth. Now we know that this is not all of God's judgment as we have more unveiled to us as we continue the study of the scriptures. However, we can see that the nature of man changed in the fall and that he became dead in trespasses and sins and he was judged by God to return unto the ground at corporeal death.

### **Genesis Chapter 3**

#### **The immediate evidences of the fallen state of man**

Gen. 3:7 "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. 8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden."

First, the serpents lie is manifest. While some of what the serpent said was true, the eyes of Adam and Eve were opened and they knew evil, yet the rest of what he said was immediately manifest to be a lie. They did not become as God and they did not know good. They knew only evil.

Second, their state or condition of life became immediately dead in trespasses and sins. The evidences of their fallen state are manifest in the above passage:

1. They noticed immediately that they were naked and were ashamed. Before they fell in sin, they were naked, but they were not ashamed because in their innocent state nakedness brought no shame to them.
2. Their fallen state is manifest by the fact that they thought they could do something about the shame of their sin: "They sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" to hide the shame of their sin. Thus, they tried to fool themselves and God into believing they could take care of their sin problem.
3. Their fallen state was further manifest in that they thought they could hide from God: "and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden." This teaches us that they thought that God would not be able to see them among the tress of the garden and that they could escape the judgment of God through hiding themselves. Their wicked minds were completely clouded by sin.

### **Genesis Chapter 3**

#### **Eve the mother of all living**

Gen. 3:20 "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living." The name Eve literally means mother. She was given this name because she is the mother of all living. There has been much speculation in scientific communities about their being multiple sources or lines of genealogy back to the fountainheads of mankind. However, even science has finally come to recognize that through DNA studies that all mankind can be traced back to a single set of parents.

Further, people have speculated in Genesis chapter 6 when the scriptures speak of the sons of God and the daughters of men, that perhaps angels had cohabitated with men and brought forth children. However, our verse above completely rules out this idea as a possibility. We will deal more with Genesis chapter 6 when we get there.

### **Genesis Chapter 3**

#### **God provided redemption vs. the impossibility of man redeeming himself**

Gen. 3:21 "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. 22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Previously Adam and Eve had sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons to hide the shame of their nakedness (sin). This, however, was not an appropriate covering. Their efforts to cover their sin were totally ineffective. Only God can cover sin. In the passage above we find that God made coats of skins and clothed Adam and Eve. This symbolizes to us that for a suitable covering of sin there must be a sacrifice. Further, this sacrifice must be provided by God. Truly our works (sewed fig leaves) cannot save us from our sins: 2 Tim. 1:9 "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." The Lord Jesus Christ came as the Lamb of God to save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). God provided the only sacrifice that was suitable to cover us from our sins.

Before Adam and Eve ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the Garden, they were free to eat of every tree of the Garden but of this one. Also in the midst of the Garden was the tree of life. They had been free to eat of that tree according to the covenant God had made with Adam in the Garden. Had they eaten of that tree they would have lived forever in their innocent state. Once, however, they had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve lost the privilege and ability to eat of the tree of life. God "drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." No matter how much man may have wanted to come back and eat of the tree of life, he had no authority or ability to come back as God made it impossible for man to come back.

Similarly, we read that the Lord said that it was impossible for man to do anything to get eternal life: Matt. 19:25 "When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? 26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, **With men this is impossible**; but with God all things are possible." Eternal life is the gift of God and is given to the elect. Man cannot do anything to get eternal life. Like Adam and Eve we are clothed with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ thru his sacrificial atonement: 2 Cor. 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

## **Genesis Chapter 4 Sovereignty of God in Election**

Gen. 4:1 "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD." No matter how much we may want something or think we can influence God's choice, the truth is God is sovereign and "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou" (Dan. 4:35). Eve said she had gotten a man from the Lord. The truth is Abel of whom she said nothing was the man from the Lord. According to the scriptures Cain "was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (1 John 3:12).

Throughout the scriptures we see this principle of God choosing and not man choosing. During the days leading up to the flood, we read part of the condemnation of man was that every imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually. Also, all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. This condemnation was all conclusive, yet Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. God's choice of Noah to repopulate the earth after the flood was by the **grace of God**. Later God chose a man who was guilty of murder to lead the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage (Moses). Further, God chose David to replace Saul as King of Israel, even though his own father did not think this would be God's choice as Jesse left David at home to take care of the flock when Samuel came to anoint one of his sons to be the next King. This pattern plays out throughout the scriptures.

## **Genesis Chapter 4 God as a respecter of persons and not a respecter of persons**

Gen. 4:3 "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect."

Several times in the scriptures we read where God is not a respecter of persons: II Chr. 19:6, 7; Rom. 2:6-11; Acts 10:34; Eph. 6:5-9; and Col. 3:18-25. Yet in our subject passage above we read that God had respect unto Abel, but he had not respect unto Cain. How can God be both a respecter of persons and at the same time be no respecter of

persons? Do the scriptures contradict themselves? The scriptures never contradict themselves.

We are told in 2 Tim. 2:15 "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The truth is there are ways in which God is no respecter of persons and there is a way in which God is a respecter of persons. By looking at the verses we quoted in the previous paragraph we can see the ways in which God is no respecter of persons:

1. II Chr. 19:6, 7 "And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts." In judgment God does not respect persons. God judges righteous judgment and does not favor one over another in judging the guilt or innocence of a person.

2. Rom. 2:6-11 "Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God." In judgment, God does not favor the Jew over the Gentile or the Gentile over the Jew. He is no respecter of persons in judgment based on their nationality.

3. Acts 10:34, 35 "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." This statement by Peter was made because God had revealed it unto him. Before the Jews thought that God favored them only and that they were all of God's elect children. They thought, surely, that God did not have a people among the Gentiles. However, God showed Peter and the Jews that God has a people in all nationalities.

4. Eph. 6:5-9 "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him." Men treat people different based on their perception of them as being either a master or a servant. However, God does not respect the master over the servant or the servant over the master. In this way God is no respecter of persons.

5. Col. 3:18-25 "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve

the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons." This passage of scripture deals with the relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children, and servants and masters. In all these relationships God does not favor one over the other, but in judgment deals with each in chastisement without respect of persons. Thus, God does not respect the person of the husband over the wife, or the person of the parent over the child, or the person of the master over the servant, but deals with each in chastisement without respect of persons.

Thus, we can see that God does not favor the Jew over the Gentile in judgment nor does he favor people because they are masters over servants, nor does he favor people because of their gender, nor does he favor people based on their position in the family, nor does he favor people based on their nationality, nor does he favor people because of their social standing or financial position. In all of these ways God is no respecter of persons.

Next, we consider how that God is a respecter of persons. In the following four passages of scripture God is said to be a respecter of persons:

1. Ex. 2:23-25 "And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered **his covenant** with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them." God favored the children of Israel over the Egyptians because of **the covenant** that he had made with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. This favoritism was based on the **covenant**.

2. Lev. 26:3-9 "If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land. And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword. For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish **my covenant with you**. The promise of God favoring them was based on the covenant that he had made with them at Mt. Sinai.

3. II Kings 13:23 "And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of **his covenant** with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet." Again we see that God favored Israel over the other nations during this Old Testament economy because of **the covenant** that he had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. His respect towards them was a **covenant respect**.

4. Ps. 74:18-20 "Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name. O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude of the wicked: forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever. **Have respect unto the covenant**: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." The Psalmists calls on the Lord to have respect unto Israel over

their enemies by asking the Lord to have **respect unto the covenant**. Thus, the Psalmists is calling upon God's **covenant respect**.

In all four of these passages God has respect unto a people based on a covenant. Likewise with Cain and Abel God had respect unto Abel and he had not respect unto Cain based on a covenant. This covenant is set forth for us in Rom. 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." Also, we read of this covenant in Eph. 1:4-7 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." God chose Abel in covenant before the foundation of the world, but he did not choose Cain. Thus, God had respect unto Abel, but he had not respect unto Cain.

## **Genesis Chapter 4**

### **Acceptable vs Unacceptable Worship**

Gen. 4:3 "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." Previously we noted that God had respect unto Abel, but he had not respect unto Cain. We noted how that this respect was based on God's covenant. In addition, God had not respect to the offering of Cain, but he had respect unto the offering of Abel.

Why did God have respect unto Abel's offering, but he had not respect unto Cain's offering? What was there about these offerings that God had respect unto one and not the other? This respect certainly was not based on the effort required to bring it or on the expediency in which it was brought. Cain's offering required more effort on Cain's part than the effort that Abel put forth in bringing an offering. Moreover, Cain was first to bring an offering. Yet God rejected Cain's offering, but accepted Abel's offering.

First, Cain's offering was of the fruit of the ground. God had cursed the ground in Gen. chapter 3:17-19: And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Cain brought an offering of that which God had cursed. No wonder Cain's offering was not accepted of God. The Creator of the Universe deserves better than to receive an offering of that which He had cursed.

Second, the attitude of Cain was wrong. He brought his offering in order to receive praise from God. He expected God would praise him for his hard work and

diligent effort in bringing forth fruit from the ground. Yet, when God rejected his offering Cain became wroth and his countenance fell. He was angry because God did not praise him.

In contrast, Abel brought an offering of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. How did Abel know what would be acceptable unto God? The answer lies in what God had shown unto Adam and Eve: Gen. 3:21 "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them." God had made the first blood sacrifice in order that Adam and Eve might be properly clothed. Thus, God showed that he would accept the blood sacrifice of an animal by His example. Furthermore, Abel's offering was not to receive praise from God, but was made to praise God.

What does this mean to us today? According to Gal. 3:10: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Thus, all mankind is under the curse of God because of sin. If I bring the works of my effort unto God as an offering of worship then I am bringing the fruit of that which God has cursed. Those who do bring the works of their efforts unto God, saying, "look what we have done" are, in essence, bringing the same type of offering that Cain brought. They are seeking God to praise them for what they have done.

If, however, my offering is that which is found in Gal. 3:13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," then I am bringing the true blood sacrifice that clothed my sin with the blood offering of Jesus Christ and made me righteous before God. Thus, my praise to the Lord Jesus Christ for his sacrificial atonement is, in essence, bringing the same type of offering that Abel brought. With this God is satisfied. Furthermore, praising Christ for what he has done is praising God and not seeking the praise of God.

## **Genesis Chapter 4 Total Depravity of Man**

By studying Cain in this chapter we get a clearer picture of what happened to mankind when Adam disobeyed God and ate of the forbidden fruit, thus bringing mankind under the law of sin and death.

Cain, we are told, was of that wicked one and slew his brother. There are not many people who are named in the scriptures that we can say without any doubt are not children of God and were not elected by God before the foundation of the world. One, of course, is Esau, of whom we read in Romans chapter 9 that God hated. Cain is another. There are many characteristics of Cain presented to us in Genesis chapter 4. The characteristics are typical of the natural man. Man is by nature totally depraved. Some of these characteristics presented in Genesis chapter 4 are as follows:

1. Cain was wroth with God when God did not respect his offering. This tells us that he was full of pride and that he did not respect God as the Great Creator. It also tells us that Cain believed God was wrong in not praising Cain for his offering. Certainly, this is the height of arrogance.

2. Cain's hatred of God and belief that God was wrong carried over unto hatred for anything that God would approve. This led to his slaying his brother Abel, whose offering God respected. Thus, we see that wicked fallen depraved man will commit murder so long as he believes he can get away with it. Moreover, fallen man will oppose any godliness on behalf of God's people.

3. Next, Cain did not think God would see his evil deeds and he denied even knowing the whereabouts of his brother Abel. Thus, Cain denied the attributes of God and lied to God, thinking God could not have the ability to know what he had done.

4. Further, Cain's selfishness was manifest when he made the statement: "am I my brother's keeper?" Everything Cain did was done out of a selfish motive. This is characteristic of the total depravity of man.

5. When caught in his evil deed, Cain spoke of the unfairness of God's punishment: "My punishment is greater than I can bear." Fallen man will continually harp on what they say is God's unfairness.

6. Cain went out from the presence of the Lord. Man does not like to retain God in his knowledge and will separate himself, if possible, from even the mention of God unless it is in the form of a curse or blasphemy against God.

7. Cain's selfish self-promotion was manifest in his naming of the city he built after the name of his first-born son.

In summary all of Cain's actions were selfish and prideful. This is typical of man in his natural state. It is also typical of the elect before they are born of the Spirit.

Moreover, we see the fallen nature of man manifest in the great-great-great-grandson of Enoch when he mocked God saying, "Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."

## **Genesis Chapter 5 Book of the Generation**

There are numerous times the phrase, "generation of," occurs in the scriptures. However, there are only two times in scriptures in which the phrase, "book of the generation of," is found:

1. Gen. 5:1 "This is the book of the generations of Adam."
2. Matt. 1:1 "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

This invites us to compare the two "books." Since, Genesis chapter 5 is the book of the generation of Adam, we note that the emphasis of this book is on death. Over and over again we are told of eight individuals who lived and the last thing said of them is "and he died" in this chapter. It would be fair to say that this chapter is the book of death. The deaths in this chapter are brought about by the sin of Adam.

In contrast, the book of the generation of Jesus Christ in Matthew chapter 1 has an emphasis on life. The word, *begat*, is used thirty nine times, in this chapter. The fortieth birth was that of Jesus Christ. Death is not mentioned in this chapter.

The verse in 1 Cor. 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" is illustrated by these two "books." Adam brought death into the world; Christ gives eternal life to his elect world.

Another comparison in these two books is the consequences of the actions of the two to whom the books are named. Adam brought sin and death into the world through his disobedience of the commandment of God. Christ is the savior of sinners: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Through his obedience to the commandments of God he delivered his people from the consequences of sin and death.

Furthermore, Genesis chapter 5 gives us the several descendents of Adam in descending order. This is like a polluted fountain flowing from Adam to his posterity. In contrast, the first chapter of Matthew shows us the one who stopped the pollution and cleaned it up. The fountain led to Christ, but he being conceived of the Holy Ghost had no sin and committed no sin. As the redeemer of sinners he was the perfect sacrifice for their sins. According to 2 Cor. 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Christ, like the tree that Moses cast into the waters of Marah, is the tree of righteousness cast into the polluted waters of Adam who cleansed those waters for his elect children.

## **Genesis Chapter 5 Five and Death**

In Genesis chapter 5 after Adam's name is mentioned exactly five times, the last thing said about him in that chapter is "and he died." There are seven other men whose names are mentioned in that chapter exactly five times and the last thing said about each of them is "and he died." There is a very strong correlation in the scriptures between the number five and the subject of death. There are five types of death taught in the scriptures.

The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death..." God told Adam "...in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The marginal reading for "die" is "dying thou shalt die." This indicates an immediate death followed by a later death. Thus we know the bible teaches more than one kind of death.

The scriptures teach at least five deaths. These deaths are:

1. Death of the body or corporeal death.
2. Death in trespasses and sins.
3. Death to fellowship.
4. The second death or eternal death.
5. Death to sin.

Beginning with Adam sin began to work in the lives of every man to bring forth the death of the body. These corruptible, mortal bodies are headed to the grave as God told Adam, "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Second, to be dead in trespasses and sins speaks of the state or condition of our carnal nature. This death is characterized as rendering us incapable of fearing God (Romans 3:18), of seeking God (Romans 3:11), of understanding the things of the Spirit of God (Romans 3:11; I Corinthians 2:14), of knowing the way of peace (Romans 3:17).

Under this death we only seek after the world (Ephesians 2:2), the spirit of Satan (Ephesians 2:2), and to satisfy fleshly lust (Ephesians 2:3). Furthermore our carnal mind is enmity with God (Romans 8:7) and we cannot please God (Romans 8:8). All of our works are verily wickedness (Galatians 5:19-21). David described this death as beginning at conception in Psalms 51:5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me." Furthermore, he said we begin to portray this sin-cursed death nature at birth as stated in Psalms 58:3, "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." Under the law of sin and death according to David we will not even think about God, Psalms 10:4, "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." In addition, a person dead in trespasses and sins is incapable of delivering himself from that condition. The prophet Jeremiah illustrated this truth through question and answer in Jeremiah 13:23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Paul described us under the law of sin and death in Romans 5:6-10 as being "without strength," "ungodly," "sinners," and "enemies of God."

The third death is "death to fellowship." The story of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32 illustrates this death. When the prodigal had left his father's house to go waste his substance with riotous living and then later returned, the father described this son thusly, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again..." Likewise he said to his other son, "For this thy brother was dead, and is alive again..." Please notice that the prodigal when wasting his substance with riotous living did not lose his relationship to his father or brother, but he lost his fellowship to them. He was dead to their fellowship. Paul, also describes this death to fellowship in I Timothy 5:6, "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." I guess we could safely call her a living "dead" person. I wonder how many of God's people are dead to the fellowship of God and to the fellowship of the saints as a result of seeking worldly pleasures?

The fourth death we will consider is called in Revelation 20:14, the "second death." This is God's eternal punishment for sin. Those who suffer the "second death" are "cast into the lake of fire" to suffer the eternal vengeance of God. They are described in Revelation 20:12 as being "the dead, small and great" and they are "judged every man according to their works." Verse 15 tells us, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Paul describes these in II Thessalonians 1:7-9 thusly, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

Finally, there is a good death taught in God's word. Romans 6:2 asks us, "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" What does it mean to be "dead to sin?" It means to be dead to the condemning affects of sin and to be dead to the bondage of the law of sin and death. Hebrews 2:14 speaks of Christ thusly, "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all of their lifetime subject to bondage." When Jesus died on the cross for us, he delivered us from the wrathful judgment of God (second death) and when he arose the third day he established our hope

in the resurrection of our mortal bodies. Also in Romans 8:2, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." This is in harmony with Ephesians 2:1 which states, "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Likewise the Lord said in John 5:25, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the son of God and they that hear shall live." When Christ speaks to us in that still small voice giving us spiritual life we become "dead to" the condemning effects of sin and its bondage over us. We now, in spirit, fear God, seek after Him, understand spiritual things, believe that he is, bear good fruit, seek to please him, etc. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

## **Genesis Chapter 5 Image and Likeness**

When God created Adam in his image and likeness, he declared him to be good. However, Adam fell somewhat from that image in which he was created, when he partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He corrupted his way upon the earth and was no longer righteous and holy before God. The consequence of Adam's transgression is clearly indicated in the following passage: Gen. 5:1-3 "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth." Seth was begotten in the image and likeness of fallen Adam. Sin and consequently death passed upon Seth the son of Adam.

"Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." Some have thought this to teach that God created several men and women and collectively called their name, "Adam." However, this is not the case. God created Adam and Eve (male and female) and called their name Adam, i.e., Mr. Adam and Mrs. Adam. In this we see that Eve took the name of her husband Adam. This is God's order for marriage.

## **Genesis Chapter 5 Length of Life Before the Flood**

In the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis we read of the following life spans:

Adam	-	930 years
Seth	-	912
Enos	-	905
Cainan	-	910
Mahalaleel	-	895
Jared	-	962
Enoch	-	365*
Methuselah	-	969
Lamech	-	777.

Certainly these life spans are far greater than the life spans typically experienced on earth today. Occasionally, some one will live to be 100 years old or slightly older. However, this is not common. I will set forth why I believe the life spans were different before and after the flood.

Why were people back before the flood able to live so much longer than we are today? To understand this we take note of the conditions on the earth before the flood vs. the conditions on the earth after the flood. Before the flood there was a water envelope around the earth's outer atmosphere. When the earth was flooded, according to the scriptures, water came from three sources: Gen. 7:11 "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. 12 And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights." According to Gen. 1:6, 7 "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so." The waters above the "firmament" (expanse) came down during the flood (windows of heaven were opened).

There are three major types of rays generated from the sun that greatly affect conditions on the earth: heat rays, light rays, ultraviolet rays. The heat rays and light rays are generally very beneficial to life on earth. The ultraviolet rays are generally very detrimental to life on earth. The UV rays cause rapid aging of the skin and cause cell damage including damage to the genetic materials in the cells. The build up of UV rays in the atmosphere also increases the oxidation level in the atmosphere which leads to an increased metabolic rate and aging process as well.

Water reflects UV rays. Thus, you will more quickly get sunburn when you are around water and on snowy days. However, during pre-flood days, the water envelope around the outer atmosphere of the earth would have reflected the UV rays from entering the earth's atmosphere. Therefore, the reflection of the damaging UV rays would have allowed life to live longer than we can live today.

After the flood life spans gradually began to decrease. This can be explained due to the fact that it took some time for the concentration of UV rays to accumulate around the earth's surface. As the UV rays accumulated the life spans decreased and this fits what we read in the scriptures concerning life spans.

## **Genesis Chapter 5**

### **Enoch**

Gen. 5:18 "And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch: 19 And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: 20 And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died. 21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: 22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: 23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: 24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."

Additionally, we read of Enoch in Heb. 11:5 "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

According to the scriptures we read of only two men that have been taken into heaven without dying. These two men are Enoch and Elijah. These men are examples of those who will be alive at the second coming of Jesus. Those of the elect who are alive at the second coming of Jesus will not die corporeally, but will be changed and made like unto the glorious body of Jesus.

There are many lessons taught us in the above passages of scripture concerning Enoch:

1. First, Enoch was a descendant of Adam and, therefore, bore the sin-cursed nature of man. According to the scriptures we all died in Adam and he brought us, through his disobedience to the law of sin and death, into a state of being dead in trespasses and sins. Rom. 3:9-18 tells us: "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes." This was Enoch's condition as well as our condition prior to being born of the Spirit of God. Enoch was a sinner and at one time he was dead in trespasses and sins.

2. Enoch lived in a wicked world which at the time was greatly corrupted. In Gen. chapter 6 before the flood, God gives us this statement of the condition of mankind: 5 "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." Also, the following verses tell us more of the condition of man in the pre-flood world: 11 "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. 13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Thus, Enoch was living in a world that was even more violent and corrupt than the world we are living in today!

3. Further, Enoch did not have the benefit of the gospel of the grace of Christ or of the scriptures to encourage him unto godly living. There were no gospel preachers to preach unto him, nor did he have the benefit of the organized church and godly men and women to encourage him.

4. There are certain legal requirements for people to live in heaven.
  - a. Their sin debt must be paid.

b. They must have been born of the Spirit of God.

5. No. 4 above begs the question: "How can a man who was born before the law was given and before Christ died live in heaven with God?" The answer can only be found in Christ's covenant work in the covenant of redemption. The covenant of redemption is stated for us in Rom. 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." Therefore, Enoch had to be one whom God chose in Christ before the foundation of the world. Moreover, God predestinated Enoch to be conformed to the image of Christ. In addition, Christ called Enoch into spiritual life in the spiritual birth. Furthermore, Christ died on the cross to redeem Enoch of his sins. Finally, Christ translated Enoch that he should not see death and changed his vile body to be like the glorious body of Christ. All of this proves that works of righteousness nor gospel obedience are instruments to cause one to be born again and saved from ones sins.

6. We have the evidence of Enoch's new or spiritual birth as he walked by faith for three hundred years. Faith is a fruit of the spirit. Therefore, a person must be born of the Spirit before he can walk by faith.

7. To walk by faith (the word, walk, here indicates how one lives one's life) when there was no scriptures to guide Enoch required Enoch to be in close communion with God. Since the Old Testament scriptures would not be given for over 2,000 years, Enoch, no doubt did much praying that God would direct his walk. Enoch did not walk with God one day and then live after the world the next day. Enoch walked with God for three hundred years. Thus, he had a constant walk and communion with God. However, Enoch was also living in this world and continued with his duties and responsibilities in this world as the scriptures tell us that after the birth of his first born child and he began a walk with God that he also had sons and daughters born unto him. Some people seem to think that for a person to have a walk with God that he can think and do nothing else but think and meditate on God and spiritual things. Obviously this was not the case with Enoch. He lived his daily life, but he did it in such a way as to please God. This is what we should strive for.

8. Enoch had this testimony that he pleased God. God was under no obligation to translate Enoch, just as he was under no obligation to translate Elijah. However, it pleased God by his grace to translate both of these men. They both had the testimony that they pleased God. They, however, are not the only ones that pleased God, but the others were not translated. Many of God's children have pleased God by walking by faith. We should, likewise, strive to please God by walking by faith. When we think of all that Christ has done for us, it stands to reason that we should desire to please God. We do this by walking by faith and not by sight.

9. Enoch, no doubt, was a great example to others, just as he continues to be an example to us today. We should strive to live our lives in such a way as to be an example for others to emulate. We can do this when we walk by faith and live each day striving to have fellowship with God and pleasing God.

## **Genesis Chapter 6**

## The Wickedness of Man

Gen. 6:1-5 "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Gen. 6:11, 12 "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

The above two passages of scripture give us a description of the depravity of man that resulted from the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden. Based on the depravity of man and the conditions that existed in the days before the flood, the pathway of man was steadily downward as a society. The end conditions before the flood were that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" and all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" and "the earth was filled with violence." This was a general condemnation of all of mankind in the days before the flood.

Certainly not all men had corrupted their way to this extent in the period of time from creation to the flood. We read of Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, etc. These men we know had not lived their lives in such a completely corrupt way.

There was a pathway of corruption that began when men began to multiply on the face of the earth and that ended in the horribly corrupt condition described in the passages above. In our society today, we would do well to take heed unto the lessons taught us above that we may avoid the calamity of timely judgment that fell on mankind during the flood and on Sodom and Gomorrah, and on many nations that have risen and fallen over the span of time of man's existence on earth.

The above calamity or pathway of corruption began when "the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." At first, this may seem like an innocuous statement. However, when we closely examined it, we find that this set in motion the pathway of corruption that would lead to the earth being filled with violence and the general condemnation that "every imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually."

Some have thought and advocated that the "sons of God" were fallen angels who cohabitated with women and brought forth children. However, nothing could be further from the truth. The scripture plainly tells us that "Eve is the mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20). Eve is not the mother of fallen angels. Moreover, sin passed upon all men through Adam. Therefore, there could not have been men who proceeded from the cohabitation of fallen angels and women. The term "sons of God" carries the same meaning here as it does throughout the scriptures: It means "spiritually born children of God." Thus, we have spiritually born children of God choosing wives. First, this is contrary to the pattern God showed to us when he formed the woman from the rib of Adam and brought her to Adam to be his bride. The marriage of Adam and Eve was the result of God's selection

not man's selection. I know the argument that they had no choice, since they were the only two people on the earth at that time. However, God also was in the selection of a bride for Isaac. When Abram sent his servant to his kindred to find a wife for Isaac, the servant prayed that God would make it known which woman would be Isaac's bride, and before he had finished praying God answered his prayer. This shows us that God chose Rebekah to be Isaac's bride. Moreover, the scriptures teach us that the relationship between a husband and wife is to mirror the relationship between Christ and his bride, the church. Yet it is Christ who chooses who will make up his bride.

Most marriages for God's sons and daughters would be much better if, instead of the man and woman making the selection, God made the selection. We should teach our children and grandchildren to pray that God will select for them a spouse.

When the pre-flood sons of God saw the daughters of men, their selection criteria for marrying them was that "they were fair." In other words, they were looking and selecting their mates based on their natural beauty (sex appeal). Now just about all women are fair, but is sex appeal of the woman to be the only basis of selection of a mate? They were not selecting mates based on their godly walk, or modest and meek behavior, or based on how well they had prepared themselves to be a good wife and mother. The sole criteria for selection was "how well do they appeal to the base nature of the man." No doubt, the women of that society knowing that men were selecting them to be wives based on their natural beauties, would go to great lengths to demonstrate their natural beauties to the prospective bridegrooms. It seems to me that the American society has largely denigrated to this level today.

When sex appeal is the basis of mate selection, then what happens to the marriage when one of the spouses finds someone who they find more attractive than the one they married? No wonder we are living in a society today where multiple marriages are the norm and not the exception. What great damaging affects these temporary marriages have on the children which are born under these circumstances. When children are so greatly ignored or neglected by one or more of the parents, then often they end up reacting in a violent way.

"When the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." Following the depression of the 1930s and World War II, there was an overreaction by many of those who had experienced the two events. They wanted their children to have it better than they had. They did not want their children to experience poverty and great hardships in their lives. They overreacted by insisting that their children strive to be a success in life. The goal for the children which was constantly reinforced by the parents, teaches, and society was to "be somebody." In the world society before the flood, the children were taught to be "mighty men and men of renown." Thus, there was a great drive to succeed. God has not taught his children to be successes. He had taught his children in his word that instead of being successes they should be faithful and godly. Our goal in our lives should be to be faithful and godly. We should not set a goal that we will be successful, but rather that we will strive to be faithful and godly.

When a person is driven to be successful, he will do just about anything including neglecting his/her spouse and children, lying, cheating, stealing, etc. in order to obtain that success. The world before the flood had many successes and great wickedness and

every imagination of their heart was only evil continually. Violence had filled the earth until there was not any remedy for man. Will this be the story of the United States?

The scriptures speak of God's faithful disciples as being the "salt of the earth." One of the characteristics of salt is that it has a preserving quality. If the disciples of the Lord will consider their ways and repent and set their families in order and quit striving for success, but rather strive to be faithful and godly, and put the Lord and his service first, then as the Lord said, "A city which is set upon a hill cannot be hid." When the local church becomes such a collection of godly disciples, then others of God's children will see it and desire to come there for refuge and this will start the tide for reversing the effects of the ungodly pathway of corruption. However, if this doesn't happen then there will be a certain fearful looking for timely judgment upon our land.

## **Genesis Chapter 6 God's wrath towards sin & God's judgment**

The following two passages in Genesis chapter 6 show us God's wrath toward sin and God's timely judgment of sin:

1. Gen. 6:5-7 "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."

2. Gen. 6:11-13 "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

As we have noted earlier in our studies of Genesis, Adam's transgression brought himself and all his posterity under the penalty of the law of sin and death. Part of the law of sin and death is that our carnal nature was so corrupted that we became dead in trespasses and sins. We became incapable of doing good or seeking God in our carnal nature. Only by the miracle of the new or spiritual birth is a person capable of seeking after God, of doing good, of understanding the things of the Spirit of God, of fearing God, etc.

While those who are born of the spirit of God are capable of walking uprightly, this does not mean that they always will walk uprightly. They still have a sin nature. The conditions of mankind had so denigrated that "every imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually. The earth was filled with violence.

Because of the pathway of sin and the effects of sin, the same God who created man and declared him to be good and very good is now ready to destroy all flesh because of the evil deeds of sin. The scripture says that God repented that he had made man upon the earth. The word repent in connection with God is not to imply that God did not know what was going to happen or to imply that God changed because of the actions of man. It

does teach us that God's action towards man changed because of the conditions that man brought about. God made man upright and God declared him to be good and very good. Now man's way is completely corrupted and God is set to destroy man because of his corruption. God had every right as the judge of all the earth and creator of all things to judge all flesh to be worthy of destruction.

The above passages also teach us that "it grieved God at his heart" to see the great sinfulness of man upon the earth. Grief is a human quality that is often brought about because of very troubling conditions in our lives. Thus, God is "troubled" by the sinfulness of man.

God is not a whimsical God. He does not do things haphazardly. God cannot change. The timely wrath of God is not poured out upon us for each sin that we may commit. The condition of mankind in corruption had become so great that the only remedy was a timely destruction. There are times in the scriptures where we see the condition of men's corruption to reach such a point that destruction is the only remedy. The completely corrupt conditions of Sodom and Gomorrah is an example of this. Likewise, the completely corrupt conditions of the nations that God destroyed before Israel in the land of Canaan are another example. When society denigrates into complete corruption the remedy is complete destruction. This teaches us that God will forbear the sinful corruption of a society only to a certain limit and only for a period of time.

The justice and wisdom of God is borne out in the destruction of the pre-flood world as God made a new beginning with Noah and his family. While some societies have denigrated themselves into complete corruption and ultimate destruction, yet the whole world has not corrupted itself as the world before the flood corrupted itself into "every imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually," and "violence filled the earth."

Certainly, God never intended that all man would be destroyed without exception as this would have gone contrary to God's covenant of redemption. God was gracious even in the midst of the destruction of the pre-flood world with a flood.

## **Genesis Chapter 6**

### **Noah Found Grace in the Eyes of the Lord**

Gen. 6:7-9 "And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God."

The above passage is an amazing testimony of the grace of God. God had determined to destroy man whom he had created for it had repented him that he made them. Moreover, we read earlier in the chapter the general condemnation of all mankind that "every imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually and that all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth. Since this was a general condemnation of all mankind, it would have included Noah. Yet, later in the above passage we read where Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. How did Noah go from being corrupted and condemned with all of mankind unto being just

and perfect and walking with God? The answer is found in the statement "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."

Some have thought that Noah found grace because he was a just man and perfect in his generations and that he walked with God. However, had that been the case, Noah would have merited his deliverance from the flood. His deliverance would not have been by grace (unmerited favor of God) but rather by his works. The fact is Noah found grace before he was just and perfect and walked with God. It was only because of the grace of God that Noah was just and perfect in his generations and that he walked with God.

Man is by nature totally depraved. This depravity was handed down from generation to generation originating with Adam who transgressed the law of sin and death in the Garden of Eden. A man is incapable of delivering himself from this state of total depravity. He dwells in this state and is bound to his flesh nature of depravity until he is born of the Spirit of God. The new or Spiritual birth is totally and solely brought about by the grace of God through the spoken voice of the Son of God: John 5:25 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."

Further, the only way that any man can be just before God is that he has been washed in the blood of Jesus. This too is by the grace of God and not by the works of man. Noah lived a long time before Christ came into the world, yet the blood of Jesus was applied to Noah to make him just before a just and holy God. This was brought about by the covenant of redemption that God made with himself before the world began. This covenant is stated in Rom. 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." Based on the work of God in this covenant we read in verse 33, 34: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

It was because of this covenant work of God that Noah was brought into a state of righteousness with God and that he was able through the miracle of the effectual calling of God to walk with God.

Later it is said of Noah that he was a preacher of righteousness. This too is by the grace of God. God calls whom he will to preach and he gives them the gifts and ability to preach by his grace. He also has given them what to preach by his grace.

## **Genesis Chapter 6** **Ark – Type of Christ**

Gen. 6:14-16 "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it."

According to 1 Peter 3:20, 21 the ark along with water baptism are both figures of Christ: "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:" The lesson above is that the ark and water baptism are both figures of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, a closer look at the passage in Genesis shows us that the ark is not only a figure of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, but it parallels Christ in many ways.

The ark was made of gopher wood. This is the only reference to gopher wood in all the scriptures. Thus, the ark was made of a unique wood. It was one of a kind. This is like Christ in that he is one of a kind. Certainly he had a human body, yet his body was different from any living today. His body was without sin. His birth was different from any living today. He was born of a virgin. He was conceived of the Holy Ghost. He is both the Son of God and the Son of man. In these things he is definitely unique just as gopher wood is unique.

Next, the ark was sealed. It was pitched within and without with pitch. It was sealed so that the water would stay outside the ship and the people and animals within the ship would be preserved from the destruction of the flood. This is similar to the preservation in Christ Jesus: Jude 1:1 "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:" This speaks of a people being preserved in Jesus Christ. Other verses that speak directly of a people being preserved are listed:

1. Ps. 37:28 For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

2. 1 Th. 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. John 10:25-30 "Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."

The promise is that all that are given to Christ by the Father are preserved in Christ and shall never perish.

The ark was sealed with pitch. Pitch is the sealant that seals the ark. The Hebrew word is "kaphar" which means "to cover (spec. with bitumen); fig. to expiate or condone, to placate or cancel:--appease, make (an) atonement, cleanse, disannul, forgive, be merciful, pacify, pardon, to pitch, purge (away), put off, (make) reconcile (-liation)." This multifaceted definition would also define the work of Christ which he accomplished on behalf of the elect by his blood atonement.

"Rooms shalt thou make in the ark..." Christ said in John 14:2, 3: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto

myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Whether the Lord was speaking of heavenly mansions or mansions here in time, I'll let others decide. The fact is that there awaits the Lord's covenant people a prepared dwelling place that will be far more than suitable for each one.

"The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits." Three hundred is the bible number associated with the subject of faith. Everywhere the number three hundred is found in the scriptures the subject of faith is being discussed. Oftentimes, people do not associate faith with Jesus Christ. Yet, he is the perfect example of faith. He was, is, and will be the perfect example of faithfulness to the covenant purpose of God:

1. Matt. 1:21 "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."

2. John 6:37-39 "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

3. John 17:1-2 "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."

4. Rom. 3:22 "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference."

5. Gal. 2:16 "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

"The breadth of it fifty cubits..." The number fifty in the scriptures is very closely associated with the bible subject of new beginnings. We have the following new beginnings due to the work of Jesus Christ:

1. We, the elect of God, have a new beginning in judgment before God. We were condemned in Adam and justified by Jesus Christ. According to Rom. 8:33-34, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

2. In Adam we died in trespasses and sins, whereas in Christ we have a spiritual new beginning in the new or spiritual birth:

a. John 3:3 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

b. John 3:5 "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

c. John 6:63 "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

3. In Adam, our bodies were consigned to return to the dust of the earth. In the covenant work of Christ our bodies will be changed and fashioned like the glorious body of Christ: 1 Cor. 15:51-57 "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for

the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"And the height of it thirty cubits." The number thirty in the scriptures is associated with the subject of redemption. Christ is the only redeemer of the elect:

1. Rom. 3:24 "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"

2. Rom. 8:23 "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

3. 1 Cor. 1:30 "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:"

4. Gal. 4:5 "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

5. Eph. 1:7 "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;"

6. Eph. 1:14 "Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

7. Col. 1:14 "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:"

8. Titus 2:14 "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

9. Heb. 9:12 "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

10. Heb. 9:15 "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

"A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above..." A single window brought the only source of light unto the ark. The problem we and all mankind have is that we have one eye on the Lord and one eye on the world. Our eye is not single, but we often have double vision. Matt. 6:22: "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." Jesus always looked to the Father and always did the will of the Father. His eye was single and he had perfect light.

"And the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof..." Entrance to the ark was through the side. Our entrance into heaven is through the pierced side of Christ:

1. John 19:34-37 "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."

2. Zec. 14:8 "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be."

3. Ex. 4:9 "And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land."

4. Ex. 7:19 "And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone."

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.<sup>5</sup> Lev. 14:6 "As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water:"

6. Lev. 14:51 "And he shall take the cedar wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times:"

7. Lev. 14:52 "And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar wood, and with the hyssop, and with the scarlet:"

8. 1 John 5:6 "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth."

9. 1 John 5:8 "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."

"With lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it." The ark was one ark with three stories. We know that the Godhead is described for us in 1 John 5:7: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." It is said of Christ that in him dwelled the fullness of the Godhead: Col. 2:9 "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

In conclusion, we note that the word picture given to us of the ark in Genesis chapter 6 points us to the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Genesis Chapter 6 God's Covenant Mercy Illustrated in Animals**

Gen. 6:18-20 "But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive."

In the next few chapters we see that God used a listing of animals to illustrate his covenant mercy. Elements of the covenant of redemption are illustrated each time the animals are listed. The covenant of redemption is set forth in Rom. 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." This covenant is set forth in five parts describing what God would do according to that covenant. These five parts are: foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified.

The first of the five parts of the covenant of redemption is illustrated in the above passage in the sixth chapter of Genesis. In the covenant of redemption God foreknew (chose) a people before the foundation of the world to be the recipients of his covenant grace. Similarly, God chose who would go on the ark and be delivered from the flood waters that would destroy all living things in whose nostrils was the breath of life.

While it could be argued that God chose Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives because of the faithful obedience of Noah (this argument is not valid), yet no such argument can be made with regard to the animals God chose to come on the ark.

First the animals could not have had a free will to choose to be saved from the flood waters. The animals did not have the ability to choose at all. The choice was all of God. It was a sovereign choice of a sovereign God that God sovereignly chose the animals he would have to go on the ark. This choice was not based on any good works the animals had done and it was not based on the faith of the animals chosen. Likewise, God's choice of a people to be predestinated, called, justified, and glorified was just as much by the sovereign grace of a sovereign God. The following verses prove this principle:

1. Eph. 1:4-6 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

2. Rom. 9:10, 11 "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)"

3. Rom. 11:5, 6 "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

4. Ps. 14:2, 3 "The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

From the above we conclude that God did the choosing before the world began. Now we are left with the possibilities that God chose based on some goodness he foresaw in man or he chose based strictly on his grace. Psalms 14 tells us that God did not chose based on some goodness he foresaw in man as he saw that there was none that did understand or seek God. Further, God's choice was not based on works, either good or

bad, as he chose Jacob and not Esau before they had done either good or evil. Likewise, Romans chapter 11 tells us that election is strictly by grace and not by works. Grace and works cannot be mixed. If there is any work involved, then it ceases to be grace. Furthermore, man had not the ability to choose God because of his depraved nature: he had not the ability to understand, seek God, or do good.

In conclusion, God's choice of the animals to go on the ark illustrates God's covenant grace in choosing his elect family to be finally glorified in heaven's glory world.

## **Genesis Chapter 6**

### **Provision made for those on the Ark**

Gen. 6:21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them."

For Noah and his family and for the animals on the ark God made provision for the inhabitants of the ark during their journey. God does likewise for his children. He makes provision for them to have spiritual food for their journey here on earth. God told Peter: John 21:15-17 "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

Likewise, Paul instructed the elders at Ephesus in Acts 20:28 "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Moreover, Peter commanded the elders in 1 Peter 5:1-3 "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

It is one of the main duties of a gospel preacher to provide spiritual food to the children of God by preaching the word of God unto them.

## **Genesis Chapter 7**

### **God Sees Noah Righteous**

Gen. 7:1 "And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."

Righteousness is a broad and multifaceted subject in the scriptures. First, when Adam transgressed in the Garden of Eden, he brought condemnation upon himself and all

of his posterity: Rom. 5:12 "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"... 18 "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Because of the effects of the law of sin and death we read in Rom. 3:10 "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:" Thus, we ask ourselves, "How did God see Noah righteous?" The answer is found in the effectual covenant work of Jesus Christ when he shed his blood for the elect family of God on the cross: 2 Cor. 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Therefore, according to the law of substitutionary atonement Christ became sin for us and suffered the judgment of sin on our behalf and we became righteous before God by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

In the judgment of sin all the elect are righteous before God. However, not all the elect continually walk in the pathway of righteousness. God sees them in judgment righteous. In their walk, many times God sees us as walking unrighteous or ungodly. Only a righteous man can walk righteously. Noah in being obedient to the commandment of God walked righteously before God: Gen. 6:22 "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he." Therefore, God saw Noah's judicial standing before him as being righteous because of the atoning blood of Christ, and he saw the works of Noah as being righteous works because of Noah's obedience to the commandment of God in building the ark.

Moreover, Noah was faithful to the things which God told him and to the promises of God. Additionally, therefore, Noah's faith was imputed as righteousness by God.

This all teaches us that as the elect of God we have a righteous judicial standing before God due to the atoning blood of Christ. We have our faith imputed for righteousness as we believe God. We have our works appear as righteous works when we obey the commandments of God.

## **Genesis Chapter 7 Animals Preserved on the Ark**

Gen. 7:2-3 "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth."... 23 "And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark."

The scriptures teach the doctrine of eternal preservation of the elect. This principle is illustrated to us by God's preserving the animals on the ark.

The animals were chosen of God to go on the ark. The animals in general, both those that went on the ark and those that did not go on the ark, were not given a chance to choose to go on the ark. The animals who went on the ark were there by God's choice and not by chance.

Those animals that went on the ark were preserved from death so long as they were on the ark. The scripture states above that God chose these animals so as "to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth." If these animals had gone on the ark and some or all of them had died on the ark, then God's purpose would have been thwarted. However, the scriptures plainly teach that God cannot fail.

It was certain that those animals chosen of God would go on the ark, would be preserved alive while on the ark, and would finally come off the ark. It took the power of an almighty God to preserve them alive so as for them to go on the ark, stay alive while on the ark, and then to finally come off the ark. These animals as well as Noah and the seven humans with him were on the ark for over a year's time. If God's preserving power had not preserved them while on the ark, there, no doubt would have been many if not all of the animals lost due to many factors, including disease, hunger, self destruction, fear, sinking of the ark, etc.

Because of the preserving power of God the same animals God chose to go on the ark, came off the ark without the loss of a single one.

Those that were chosen to go on the ark were preserved alive on the ark. Those who were not chosen to go on the ark were destroyed by the flood waters. The ark was the safest place on the earth at that time.

The animals went on the ark at the time appointed of God and they came off the ark at the time appointed by God. While on the ark they were preserved from dying by God.

Similarly, the ark is a figure of Christ. Christ is the one in whom the elect are preserved. Eph. 1:4 teaches us that God chose a people in Christ before the foundation of the world: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:" This choice is God's choice and not man's choice. Men are not given a chance to decide to be in Christ. The elect are in Christ by God's choice and not by chance.

Just as the animals were preserved from dying to come out on the ark on the other side of the flood, the elect are also preserved for a purpose: Eph. 1:5-6 "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." The word, predestinate, means to fix the finally destiny beforehand. God fixed our final destiny (to be adopted as children by Jesus Christ to himself) before the foundation of the world. We are preserved in Jesus Christ just as the animals were preserved in the ark.

Just as the animals were safe from the flood waters and were safe from dying on the ark, so the elect are safe from eternal destruction by virtue of their being in Christ: Eph. 1:7 "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;" Also, they are safe from losing their eternal life as well, but rather are preserved unto eternal glory in Christ: Eph. 1:11 "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:"

Further, while in Christ we are given spiritual life: Eph. 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

The animals were preserved on the ark based on a covenant promise of God: "to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth." Likewise, the elect are preserved in Christ by a covenant promise of God: Rom. 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." Based on this covenant promise the eternal glorification of the elect is secured as God cannot lie.

Just as the animals were secured by the preserving power of God, so the elect are secured by the preserving power of God: John 10:27-30 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." In order for the elect to perish, both the Father and the Son would have to be overthrown. That is impossible.

Since we are in Christ, we are also in the love of Christ. We read of the promise in Romans chapter 8:35-39 "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

What a great blessing to the elect to be preserved in Jesus Christ.

## **Genesis Chapter 7**

### **Animals used to illustrate God's Predestination**

Gen. 7:2-4 "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth."

In this second listing of the animals that came into the ark to keep seed alive, we see a parallel between what is said about the animals and the subject of predestination as it is introduced in the covenant of redemption. We restate the covenant of redemption as follows: Rom. 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." Those that God foreknew were also predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the

firstborn among many brethren. A simple definition of predestination is to fix the final destination beforehand. God fixed the final destination of those that he chose before the foundation of the world. That final destination is to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Obviously, the destination of those on the ark was not the same as the final destination of those in the covenant of redemption. However, the parallels are striking. God tell us both the final destination to be brought about by the flood waters on both those on the ark and those not on the ark:

1. To those on the ark we read this about their destination: "to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth."

2. To those not on the ark we read this about their destination: "and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth."

This final destination of the people and animals on the ark and those not on the ark was spoken about of God a full seven days before the flood waters began to come upon the ark. The final destination was determined beforehand.

## **Genesis Chapter 7**

### **Animals Used to Illustrate God's Effectual Calling**

Gen. 7:6-9 "And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah."

Gen. 7:13-16 "In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in."

God's covenant of redemption made before the world began is illustrated to us by the animals God chose and caused to come unto the Ark. The covenant of redemption is stated for us in Rom. 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."

In previous studies we have examined the use of the animals to illustrate God's choosing a people to be his people, and predestinating their final destination as being conformed to the image of Christ. The third thing in the covenant is "calling." This calling is a "holy calling" and an "effectual calling." The calling is irresistible. When looking at the above passages in Genesis chapter 7 we note that Noah, his wife, their three sons, and their wives were already on the ark when the animals came unto Noah on

the ark. The children's book pictures of Noah and the other seven driving the animals onto the ark is completely untrue.

The fact that the animals came unto Noah tells us that the animals were not being driven, enticed, or coerced into coming onto the ark. Most of these animals were wild animals. According to the nature of these animals they would never have come onto the ark on their own. Moreover, how could a lamb and a lion have coexisted and willingly come on the ark. There had to be a higher power drawing them onto the ark. They were called of God with an irresistible calling. This march of the animals onto the ark was completely contrary to nature. The voice calling these animals onto the ark was the still small voice of God. They were drawn onto the ark by that all-powerful voice.

Moreover, the animals that came onto the ark were the same animals that God had chosen to come onto the ark and had fixed their final destination before they came onto the ark.

In comparison, there are a people that are effectually called unto spiritual life and come irresistibly unto Jesus:

1. John 6:37-39 "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

2. John 6:44 "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

3. John 5:25 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."

4. Rom. 9:11 "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)"

5. 2 Tim. 1:9 "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,"

6. Heb. 3:1 "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;"

7. John 10:3 "To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out."

From the above we note that it is the voice of the Son of God that causes those who were before dead in trespasses and sins to have spiritual life. Moreover, this calling is a holy calling and draws the ones called irresistibly to Jesus. Further, this calling is according to God's purpose and grace before the world began and not by works that man has done. The condition of those called before they were called is described in Rom. 3:9-18: "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and

bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes."

It took just as much the power of God to call those who were dead in trespasses and sins into spiritual life as it did to call the animals onto the ark. Both callings are contrary to the nature of those called to help in any way to bring it about.

## **Genesis Chapter 7**

### **Judgmental waters came from three sources**

Gen. 7:11-12 "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights."

Throughout the scriptures we see pictures of the Godhead. The Godhead is described for us in 1 John 5:7 "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." The three yet one Godhead has been a mystery to multitudes of bible students. I am convinced there are things about the Godhead we will not be able to understand until it is revealed to us in heaven. Yet we get glimpses of the Godhead throughout the scriptures.

In the scriptures pertaining to the events of the flood we see several pictures of the Godhead. The ark itself had three stories, yet was one ark. One dove was sent forth by Noah three times. The flood waters came from three sources.

The flood waters came from forty days and forty nights of rain. They also came when the fountains of the great deep were broken up. The third source came from the windows of heaven being opened. As we recall, in creation God separated the waters which were above the firmament from the waters which were below the firmament. The firmament was called heaven. There was a water envelope in the outer atmosphere above the earth. As we have previously seen, this water envelope was largely responsible for man living so long before the flood. These waters came down from the outer atmosphere during the flood.

With these three sources of water the earth was covered and all in whose nostrils was the breath of life died in the judgmental flood waters: Gen. 7:19-24 "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days."

## **Genesis Chapter 8**

### **God's Remembered Noah**

Gen. 8:1 "And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged; The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated."

We know that the scriptures teach that God knows all things past, present, and future. He cannot forget anything. Yet the above passage says that God remembered Noah. While it is not in God's ability to forget anything, yet the above scripture is not about God's perfect knowledge. It is about why God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark, in the way that he remembered them. He remembered them so as to stop the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven and to restrain the rain from heaven.

Several times in the scriptures we have the thought presented to us that God remembered different ones. In each case the fact that God remembered those individuals was based on a covenant that he had made. This was covenant remembrance. He remembered them so as to fulfill his covenant promises. God had made a covenant promise to Noah and those that were with him in the ark that they would be preserved alive after the judgmental waters were past. Thus, God is telling us in the above passage that He remembered Noah and all that were with him in the ark based on his covenant promise to them and he is remembering them so as to fulfill his covenant promise.

Elsewhere in the scriptures we have God remember different individuals based on his covenant promises:

1. Gen. 19:29 "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt."

2. Ex. 2:24, 25 "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them."

3. Ex. 6:5-8 "And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD."

4. Ps. 78:37-39 "For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant. But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again."

5. Ps. 98:1-3 "A Psalm. O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

6. Ps. 105:7-11 "He is the LORD our God: his judgments are in all the earth. He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant: Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance:"

7. Ps. 105:40-45 "The people asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven. He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river. For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant. And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness: And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people; That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD."

8. Ps. 106:43-45 "Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry: And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies."

From all the above passages it is clear that God remembered for good many people based on covenants that he had made with those people or with others that embraced those people.

Similarly, God has a people that he remembers based on a covenant made with Himself before the foundation of the world. This covenant is plainly stated for us in Rom. 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." Just as God would not forget to fulfill his holy promises to Noah and to them that were with him in the ark, so God will not forget to fulfill his holy promises to them that he foreknew before the foundation of the earth. All the provisions of that covenant of redemption will be perfectly fulfilled on behalf of the elect family of God because God remembers them with a covenant remembrance.

Likewise, we know that God is incapable of forgetting anything, yet he says concerning his covenant people in Heb. 8:10-12 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." This does not mean that God suddenly became forgetful when it pertained to the sins and iniquities of his covenant people. Rather it means that based on this covenant God will not remember the sins and iniquities of his covenant people against them any more. The sin debt has been paid and it will not be held against them in judgment any more. Praise be to God for both his covenant remembrance and covenant forgetfulness.

## **Genesis Chapter 8**

### **The Ark Rested**

Gen. 8:4 "And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat." As we have seen so many parallels between the ark and the Lord Jesus Christ, we notice another parallel. The judgmental waters had been on the ark from the beginning of the deluge unto the seventh month, and the seventeenth day of the month. Now the judgmental waters were no longer on the ark. The ark had provided a shelter, keeping the judgmental waters away from the inhabitants of the ark. Once, the judgmental waters were off the ark, there were no longer any judgmental waters to come upon the ark. The judgment was complete and the inhabitants of the ark were safe. The ark rested.

Likewise, the judgment of God was upon the Lord Jesus Christ while he hung upon the cross. He was suffering the wrathful judgment for a period of time so that those that were chosen in Him would not have to suffer that judgment. The judgment came not upon the elect family of God. When Christ arose from the grave after three days and nights in the heart of the earth, the judgment was complete. There would be no longer any judgment upon the Lamb of God. He rested from his completed work of redeeming His people from their sins. The following verses speak to us of this rest after a completed work:

1. Heb. 1:3 "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;"

2. Rom. 8:32-33 "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

3. Heb. 10:12-14 "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

## **Genesis Chapter 8**

### **Noah sends forth Raven and Dove**

Gen. 8:6-12 "And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the

earth. And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more."

The inhabitants of the ark had been in the ark for a long period of time and no doubt began to look for hope that the flood would soon be over and that they might come out of the ark. The first evidence of hope is found in verse 5: "And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen." Seeing the tops of the mountains was a great comfort to the inhabitants of the ark. Yet there was still a lot of flood waters upon the earth.

God had sent the judgmental waters upon the earth and destroyed all in whose nostrils was the breath of life except for those that were in the ark with Noah. After the judgmental waters had been on the earth a long time, the occupants began to look for evidence that the judgment of God would soon be over. First Noah sent a raven out of the ark which returned not again. The raven is an unclean animal and would parallel our flesh nature in which it was said of Paul: "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." The message to the inhabitants of the ark from the raven is that I am content to dwell and to eat of the floating dead bodies on the top of the waters. Likewise, our flesh is satisfied to eat of the rotten things of this world.

Then Noah sent a dove out of the ark, which returned to him having found no rest for the soles of her feet. Noah waited seven days and sent the dove again who returned with an olive leaf plucked off. Noah waited another seven days and sent the dove a third time and she returned not again unto the ark.

The dove is used to represent the church in three ages of time. The first age was the age of the law. Under the law, there was no rest, but a continual testimony of coming judgment for sin. However, to fulfill this age and to usher in the New Covenant age, the Lord Jesus Christ came to fulfill the law to a jot and a tittle. This he did and then presented himself a sacrifice unto God to redeem his people from their sins. Christ fulfilled or completed the law. There was nothing left to fulfill in the law. Christ had completely fulfilled it. He also ushered in the New Testament Church. The church bears witness that the judgment is past, just as the dove had an olive leaf plucked off. The olive leaf is a symbol of peace.

Just as the dove went forth a third time from the ark, so the New Testament church waits for the day when Christ shall come again and we shall be translated into the glory world. At God's appointed time, the New Testament age will come to a completion and we and all the elect will be raised up and our vile bodies will be fashioned like the glorious body of Christ and we shall return this way no more, but we shall be forever with our Redeemer.

These messages were conveyed to the inhabitants of the ark by the dove, in the same way that the church conveys messages to God's covenant people.

## **Genesis Chapter 8 Inhabitants of Ark Go Forth**

Gen. 8:13-19 "And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried. And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark."

With this coming forth from the Ark, God fulfilled his covenant promises. God had chosen all that would be on the ark. God had instructed Noah of a coming flood and that he was to build an ark and that he, his wife, his three sons, and their wives along with two, male and female, of all animals in whose nostrils was the breath of life, would go on the ark to keep seed alive. God called the animals into the ark. God caused the judgmental flood to come on the earth to destroy all that was not on the ark. God had preserved those on the ark alive. Now God brings forth all that he initially chose, out into a new world. All of these things God had promised and fulfilled. Not one of God's covenant promises failed to come to pass.

When viewing the covenant of redemption we need to keep our eyes on the end result. Just as God preserved the inhabitants of the ark alive and brought them over to the new (post flood) world, so God will bring us to the promised end result of his covenant promise made in Rom. 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." This covenant promise is further explained in Eph. 1:4-5: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will," and in Eph. 1:11: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Thus, we have the promise of a final destination of being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ; of being adopted into the family of God; and obtaining an eternal inheritance.

## **Genesis Chapter 8**

### **Noah worships the Lord**

Gen. 8:20-21 "And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done."

Worship involves action on the part of the worshipper. "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord." Likewise, it is important that we have an altar to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto the Lord. Up until the time that God gave the pattern of the Old

Testament worship service unto Moses and the children of Israel men built altars of wood, stone, and earth on which to offer their sacrifices. With the giving of Old Testament worship service, God gave to the children of Israel the brazen altar on which the sacrifices were placed. Today in the New Testament we have a different altar. This altar is set forth for us in the book of Hebrews: Heb. 13:10, 15 "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle...By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." Thus, Christ is our altar on which we offer our spiritual sacrifices today. That is we offer our sacrifices upon the finished covenant work of Jesus Christ who died to redeem us unto God by his blood. True worship involves praise and thanksgiving to God. Going through a ritual without actively giving praise or thanksgiving to God is not true worship.

True worship also requires an offering. Noah, like Abel, followed the example that God had initially set in making an animal sacrifice. Noah took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl and offered burnt offerings on the altar. Notice that he did not offer any unclean beast or fowl upon the altar. These beast and fowl offerings are pointing us to a far greater offering. This offering was the "Lamb of God" who is the Lord Jesus Christ who offered himself without spot or blemish unto God and his offering was accepted of God. The offering that Noah and those who later offered under the law had to be of clean beast and fowls. The Lord Jesus Christ was the only truly wholly clean offering as he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. He was the perfect offering.

Likewise, when we worship God publicly today, we offer the spiritual sacrifices of a broken spirit, of faith, of praise, of thanksgiving, of righteousness, of doing good, and of communicating to the needs of others.

Noah was praising and thanking God for what God had done for him, his family, and the animals in the ark. Likewise, we are to praise and thank God for delivering us from the judgment of sin, for giving us spiritual life, and for the hope of eternal inheritance. We are to praise him for the sacrificial atonement of Jesus on our behalf. We are also to praise him for the providential and spiritual blessings in our lives.

The Lord was pleased with the worship and offerings of Noah. True worship is pleasing unto God. It is a sweet-smelling savour unto God.

## **Genesis Chapter 8 Two Great Promises**

Gen. 8:21 "And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. 22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

Following this great cataclysmic judgmental flood, God made two great promises concerning the welfare of man upon the earth. The first promise is that God would never more smite again every living thing as he had done before with the flood. Many today try to teach otherwise. Some say that the earth along with its inhabitants will be destroyed

by an asteroid or by some other cataclysmic event. The scriptures say, "let God be true and every man a liar." When God makes a promise because it is impossible for him to lie or to fail, those promises are sure. This earth will not be destroyed until after the resurrection of the just and the unjust. You can count on it. That is not to say that there want be local catastrophes. However, a general destruction of every living thing will not happen again.

The second promise pertains to the continuity of the seasons upon earth. When I was a child I used to hear the saying that the bible says that before the end of time you will not be able to tell the seasons apart. Well that saying was false. God promised that we would always have the seasons so long as the earth remains. These seasons are certainly good for the well being on man and all other creatures upon the earth. This is not to say that there won't be times when some will experience mild summers and harsh winters or long drought periods or extensive rainy periods upon the earth, but there will continue to be summer and winter and seedtime and harvest so long as the earth remains according to the promise of God.

## **Genesis Chapter 9 God Sends Men Forth a Second Time**

In Genesis chapter 1 after God had created Adam and Eve he sent them forth and gave them their authority and dominion in the earth: Gen. 1:28 "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Now after the flood God again gives man his authority and dominion: Gen. 9:1-3, 7 "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things...And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein."

These two times that God sends forth men are similar and yet they are different. The first time God sent forth man and gave him authority and dominion man had not sinned. He was placed in the best of environments and yet the results for man were that he sinned and the corruption followed. The second thing different was the diet. The first time man's diet consisted of the herb of the field and the fruit of the trees. Now God sends man forth and he is still polluted with the inward corruption of sin. This was no doubt a new beginning with man, but as we will see the same old results as sin and corruption will soon follow. Now man's diet is expanded to allow for the consumption of meat.

Man's authority and stewardship given to him of God is still basically the same both before the flood and after the flood.

## **Genesis Chapter 9**

## **Blood Restrictions**

Gen. 9:4-6 "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."

God told man not to eat the flesh with the blood. Blood was not to be a part of the diet of man. The reason is that the blood is the life of the flesh. This principle is taught elsewhere in the scriptures as well:

1. Lev. 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

2. Lev. 17:14 "For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off."

3. Deu. 12:23 "Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh."

Thus, man was free to eat the flesh of animals, but he could not eat the life principle of the animal along with the flesh of the animal.

Also, in our text we see that God promised that if man ate the life of the flesh with the flesh that he would require the blood of the life of the one who ate the life of the flesh with the flesh. This would be required at the hand of the beast, or the hand of man, or the hand of every man's brother.

Moreover, God introduced the eye for eye principle in the above text. If a man shed man's blood, by the hand's of man was his blood to be shed because man was in the image of God.

## **Genesis Chapter 9 God Makes a Covenant with all Creatures**

Gen. 9:11-17 "And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

God made a covenant with every living creature that he would never again send a flood to destroy all flesh. We notice the nature of this covenant that it is a one-sided

unconditional covenant. By one-sided we mean that all the action is performed by one party to the covenant. By unconditional we mean that the action performed is not dependant or conditioned upon any action by the other party to the covenant. The actions of man or other living creature do not affect or alter the fulfillment of this covenant. All the actions of this covenant are performed by God. God simply promised that he would never again send a flood to destroy all flesh. The actions are all performed by God and the benefits of this covenant are every living creature.

We see a similar covenant stated in Romans chapter 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." As in the covenant above, all the actions are performed by God. God foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified. The actions of God are not conditioned upon any actions of those that God foreknew. God's actions are totally independent upon the actions of those he foreknew. Therefore, this covenant is a one-sided unconditional covenant.

In the covenant stated in the beginning of this article, God gave a token of this covenant. A token is not the covenant but is a sign or representation of the covenant. The bow in the cloud after the rain is a sign or representation of the covenant that God made with every living creature. This is not the only place where God gave a token as a sign or representation of a covenant that he made. When we get to Genesis chapter 17 we see God making a covenant with Abraham and with his seed after him to give them the land of Canaan and he gave them the token of circumcision as a sign of the covenant that he had made with him.

I have found that after storms, which sometimes are very violent and scary, that when I see the rainbow in the cloud that it is very reassuring and peaceful. I suspect this is the same with many of God's creatures as they look upon the token of the covenant that God made with every living creature. Yet the main thought in the above passage is not that we look upon the covenant and find rest and peace, but the main thought is that God looks upon the bow in the cloud and remembers His covenant that he made with every living creature: "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." The knowledge, that when a storm comes upon the earth and afterwards the bow is seen in the cloud, that God looks upon the bow and remembers his covenant is what is most reassuring to the creature.

## **Genesis Chapter 9**

### **Earth Overspread by the three sons of Noah**

All that are alive on the earth today are descendants of Noah. Noah is the common link to all nations and tribes of people. Further, Noah's three sons went forth from the ark and their descendants initially settled in different parts of the earth. Initially after the flood there were three races of people that came from the three sons of Noah.

Gen. 9:18, 19 "And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan. These are the three sons of Noah:

and of them was the whole earth overspread." It is generally recognized that the dark-skinned people descended from Ham. The name Ham means "hot, warm, burnt-black." Further, it is generally recognized that the Anglo-Saxon people descended from Japheth. Japheth is said to be the father of the Gentiles. Likewise, it is recognized that the Oriental people were generally descendants of Shem. Of course, as time has gone by there has been much intermingling of the races and tribes and nations have arisen that are mixtures of the three original races.

## **Genesis Chapter 9**

### **Sin of Ham and the Curse on Canaan**

Gen. 9:20-27 "And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."

Sometime after the flood, Noah planted a vineyard and drank of the wine until he was drunken. In his drunken state he was uncovered within his tent. Later in the scriptures drunkenness is condemned. Noah's drunkenness set off a chain of reactions. Ham saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers without. Shem and Japheth knew that they should not look upon their father's nakedness and took a garment and went backward with their faces backward and covered their father so as not to look upon his nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine he knew what his younger son had done unto him. The sin was not so much what the younger son had seen, but what he had done. Since we are not told exactly what he did, we will not speculate. However, the sin was such that Noah pronounced a curse upon the youngest son of Ham and a blessing upon Shem and Japheth.

Ham is the one who sinned, yet the curse was placed upon the youngest son of Ham, Canaan. Ham had sinned against his father, yet the curse was placed on the son of Ham. Many have said that this is unfair. However, it should be noted that Adam sinned against God and subsequently all the descendants of Adam have sinned against God. The scriptures are plain that Adam brought himself and all mankind under the curse of the law of sin and death: Moreover, we read in Gal. 3:10 "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." That places all mankind under the curse. Thankfully, verse 13 of Gal. 3 tells us: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:" Christ was "made to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The son of man was made to be a curse for the sins of God's sons (elect children).

Moreover, in the curse and blessings pronounced by Noah Shem is favored. The kingdom rested with the descendants of Shem through the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Christ came as the seed of Abraham. The oracles of the Old Testament were given to the children of Israel. The ceremonial worship and service was given to the children of Israel. They were greatly blessed with these things.

Next, we see that Japheth was enlarged and that he dwelt in the tents of Shem. After the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the gospel was sent to the Gentiles beginning at the house of Cornelius. The Gentiles have carried the gospel since that time. The Gentiles came to dwell in the tent that was originally established with Shem. Now it is a much bigger tent (enlarged). The Gentiles have been greatly blessed with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## **Genesis Chapter 9 Noah's Life Span after the Flood**

Gen. 9:28, 29 "And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died."

The flood removed the envelope of water from the outer atmosphere of the earth. This allowed for the ultraviolet oxidizing rays of the sun to reach the earth's surface and begin shortening men's lives. However, it took some time for these rays to become concentrated in our local atmosphere and thus for a period of time, men continued to live much longer than they do today. Yet, with each subsequent generation the time span of man on earth shortened until it reached about what it is today.

Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood. This made for a total of nine hundred and fifty years that Noah lived before he died. Only Methuselah lived longer on earth than Noah.

## **Genesis Chapter 10 – Nimrod**

Gen. 10:8 "And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11 Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, 12 And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city."

Nimrod was a descendant of Ham and the 13<sup>th</sup> from Adam. He is said to be a "mighty one in the earth." This phrase seems to be a reference back to the giants in the days prior to the flood and the mighty men of renown mentioned in Gen. Chapter 6. As we see in the passage above Nimrod was a kingdom builder. He desired to have dominion over other people. What he did was in direct opposition unto God and in disobedience to the command of God: Gen. 9:1 "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Instead of replenishing the earth, Nimrod was trying to gather all the people together so that he could reign over them. We will read more about his efforts in that regard in the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis.

God is the King of kings and Lord of lords. He has ultimate dominion and Nimrod was challenging that dominion by doing what he did before the Lord. He was openly defiant to the commandment of God.

The desire to be mighty is directly opposite to how God teaches us that we ought to humble ourselves: 1 Pet. 5:5 "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder.

Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

Nimrod went forth to build his kingdom beginning at Babel and extending to Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. In our passage above we see Asshur being connected to the work of Nimrod. Asshur was a descendant of Shem. They had the same goals in mind. Asshur went forth and "buildded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city." In this we are introduced to two groups of people who became notorious for kingdom building. They desired to spread their particular dominion to rule over other peoples and build great kingdoms. From this beginning we see the seed planted for the building of the kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon. We read of both of these kingdoms later in the scriptures interacting and adversely affecting the children of Israel. When Israel was dividing into two nations: Israel and Judah; these two kingdoms brought them into captivity. The kingdom of Assyria overcome Israel and dispersed the ten tribes of Israel abroad so as to lose their identity. Later the kingdom of Babylon brought Judah (consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin) into captivity where they remained for 70 years.

## Peleg

Gen. 10:25 "And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name was Joktan."

In the world today, there is a false religion masquerading as science known as evolution. One of the premises of evolution is that it supposedly explains why you can find various species of animals and plants and people on remote islands and continents that are divided so far apart that species could not have migrated between those islands and continents. Yet the above verse clearly explains how this came to pass that the same or similar species of animals and plants and people are located on different continents and islands very remotely apart.

Eber named one of his sons Peleg because the earth was divided in his days. The name "Peleg" literally means "earthquake." At one time the earth was of one vast land mass. During the days of the birth of Peleg there was a great earthquake that divided this great land mass into continents and islands. A cursory examination of a globe of the earth shows that the continents and islands are like a jigsaw puzzle that the pieces would fit together if you could move the continents back together.

Scientists today speak of a continental drift over eons of time. The bible speaks of an earthquake that divided the earth in a short period of time. I am going to believe God in his word, rather than the priests of evolution.

With the earth being suddenly divided, the animals and plants and people on those various continents would have been carried with the continents and islands formed as a result of that giant earthquake. Another chunk of evolutionary nonsense bites the dust when compared to God's word.

## Genesis Chapter 11 – Babel

Gen. 11:1 "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. 3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. 4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. 7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. 8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. 9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."

"And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech." Truly, by the grace of God, it was a blessing to the people of that time that all the peoples could communicate freely with one another about the goodness and mercy of God and could work together for good. However, with such providential blessings also comes responsibility. This blessing was later taken away from the people because of their rebellion against the commandments of God.

"And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there." The fact, that the whole mass of humanity had come to dwell in the plain in the land of Shinar was against the commandment of God which he gave to man when Noah and his family came off the ark: Gen. 9:1 "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Instead of going forth by the commandment of God, the people had rebelled so as to associate together in one small location on the globe. In chapter 10, we see that this rebellion was being led by two men, Nimrod and Asshur. Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord and he and Asshur were kingdom builders. They desired to be in control of the population of the world and be recognized as some great ones. Such kingdom builders believe themselves to be superior to others and even to be superior in knowledge and wisdom than God.

"And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar." Notice that the people were in agreement with the building project as "they said one to another." Now it could be argued that the people were in ignorance of the commandment of God. However, this would not have been the case as Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth were still alive at this time. They had heard the commandment of God and no doubt taught it to their children and grandchildren. Yet, it is so easy for fallen men to fall prey to the seducing of schemers such as Nimrod and Asshur. Even before the fall, Eve had fallen victim to the serpent who told her lies contrary to what God had said.

"And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." Here, the scheme is revealed. The desire was that men would devise their own government and be under the dominion and government of men rather than under the dominion and government of God. Notice, that they did not want to be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. This is in direct rebellion against the commandment of God that they go forth and replenish the earth. Moreover, they wanting a city of government by which they could devise their own rules and laws and do as they pleased and not be under the rules and laws of God. Further, they wanted a tower by which they could appoint people to watch over the activities of men and control their actions according to their designs and man-made laws.

"And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." One of the erroneous views that man has of God is that he is aloof to the activities of man. They think that God is far off and not involved in the affairs of man. Nothing could be further from the truth. God knows our thoughts afar off and the hairs of our head are all numbered. He sees the wicked and the good on earth and he intervenes as it pleases him in the affairs of man. God saw the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. He knows all things and he knows what is in the heart and designs of man. Further, God will have his way, even though man frequently rebels against him.

It is of God's mercies that he looks over the affairs of man and sometimes intervenes providentially in those affairs. If these rebellions had been left unchecked, then man would have continued with their rebellion and increased more and more without restraint. One of the charges against the people before the flood is that "every imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually." Man can imagine much wickedness in their pursuit of their lust for power and dominion.

"Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." There are a vast number of languages in the world today. They can be traced back to the days of the building of the tower of Babel. While all the languages have common threads, yet they are distinctly different. The power of God manifest in confounding the languages of the people is amazing indeed. This action has been a great deterrent to the designs of scheming men who would build their kingdoms into a world-wide empire. The confusion of languages is the greatest single deterrent to a world-wide government. It doesn't stop men from trying, but it sure makes it manifold more difficult to accomplish. This, too, is by the mercy and grace of God. We are much better off being governed by God than being controlled by the designs of scheming men.

"So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city." The net effect of confounding the languages of the people is that God accomplished what he had commanded the people to do. They were scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth. Thus, they were now fulfilling the commandment of God to go forth and replenish the earth. Further, the designs of scheming men such as Nimrod and Asshur were thwarted for the time being. Their descendents would continue in their efforts at kingdom building which is readily apparent

in the pages of the scriptures. "Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."

## **Genesis Chapter 11 – From Shem to Abram**

In the midst of the 11<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Genesis a radical change in emphasis takes place. Up till the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter the scriptures had presented God's dealings with the whole of humanity. Now the focus changes from a broad overview of God's dealings with all of humanity to a very narrow look at God's dealings with a single man and his family. We are carried from the forest to an individual tree. The majority of the rest of the Old Testament scriptures present God's dealings with Abram and a portion of his descendents.

There are a number of interesting things we find in this portion of the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter:

1. Shem was a son of Adam and lived for 502 years after the flood. He was approximately 100 years old when he went on the ark with his parents and brothers and their wives.
2. Generally, the length of life of each successive generation was shorter than the length of life of their father.
3. Shem actually died after Abraham died.
4. Eber was the great grandson of Shem. He apparently became the titular head of the family at one time as his name became representative of the descendants. The word, Eber, was later called "Hebrew." Abram and his descendants were known as Hebrews.
5. We also note that the geneology included Abram, and Sarai, and Lot, and Milcah, all of whom would become prominent in the testimony of the scriptures later on.
6. We are also told that Sarai was barren. This too is significant and foreshadowed the great power and mercy of God that would be manifest toward Abram and Sarai at a later date.

## **Gen. 12:1-3 – The Promised Blessings**

Gen. 12:1 "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

In the above passage God instructed Abram to do four things:

1. Get thee out of thy country
2. Separate from thy kindred
3. Separate from thy father's house
4. Go to a land that God would show him.

God promised Abram seven blessings when he did the four things above:

1. I will make of thee a great nation
2. I will bless thee
3. I will make thy name great
4. Thou shalt be a blessing
5. I will bless them that bless thee
6. I will curse him that curseth thee
7. In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

There are at least eight significant conclusions from the above:

1. God 's blessings exceed in number the things God required of Abram.
2. God's blessings exceeded greatly in extent over the things required of Abram.
3. God was gracious, as we will see, in providentially interceding to see that Abram fulfilled what God required of him.
4. God was acting in his sovereignty in appearing and blessing Abram. He was the lone man on the face of the earth at that time that God appeared unto and made such promises to.
5. God acted according to his grace in appearing unto Abram and making the above promises. Abram had done nothing to deserve such great promises.
6. God made promises to Abram that could only be fulfilled by the power of God.
7. God made promises to Abram that only an eternal God could perform.
8. God made promises to Abram that only an omniscient God could accomplish.

To make of one man a great nation involved the providential blessings of God not only on that one man, but upon many generations and descendants of Abram to follow. The extent of this promise was truly astounding. Then for that nation to become a great nation would require the special presence of God with that nation. The course of history set forth for us in the scriptures shows us that all this came to pass just as God said it would.

God promised to Abram that He would bless him. Some of the blessings upon Abram were truly astounding. God blessed Abram with his providential watch care over him even turning the heart of kings that could otherwise have done him harm. Moreover, God blessed Abram to have a son, Isaac, when both he and his wife Sarah were physically unable to produce children. Moreover, God blessed Abram to intercede on behalf of his nephew Lot and then to defeat a great army of four nations with 318 servants. Furthermore, God blessed Abram when he met Melchisedec returning from the slaughter of the kings. It is just a small sampling of the ways that God blessed Abram.

God promised Abram that He would make his name great. Today, nearly four thousand years later, Abraham is one of the greatest names on the face of the earth. His name is not only great among the Jewish people, but his name is great as the father of the faithful among Christians, and the Muslims also consider Abraham to be their father as well.

God promised Abram that he would be a blessing. In many ways Abram has been a blessing. He was a blessing to his descendants as God made a covenant with him and in that covenant he established a nation and gave them the land of Canaan for an inheritance and possession. He is a blessing to us today as an example of a faithful man,

trusting in God and receiving the blessings of faith. Most significantly, it was through Abraham that the promised seed, (Christ), would come and save His people from their sins.

God promised Abram that he would bless him that blessed thee. God blessed Abimelech the king of the Philistines and his house and the servants when they obeyed the commandment of God and restored Sarah back to Abraham. The wives all conceived and bear children. Moreover, God blessed those nations who supported and helped Israel both in their journeys and in their pilgrimage in the land of Canaan.

God promised Abram that he would curse him that curseth thee. We see this particularly manifested with those nations who took up arms against Israel and sought to do harm to Israel. God cursed their efforts and blessed Israel on many occasions.

The last promise is the greatest of all. God promised Abram that in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. Later that promise is expanded to show that the blessing would come through the seed of Abraham. Christ is that promised seed of Abraham: Gal. 3:16 "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." The family is defined for us in the New Testament as consisting of a father, and a mother, and at least one child. The promise is that God would bless at least one member of every family in Christ. The conclusion we can draw from this is that God's elect includes at least one member of every family on the face of the earth, both past, present, and future. This is a great multitude that no man can number of every nation, kindred, people, and tongue, that are clothed with white robes and have palms in their hands, "And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

### **Gen. 12:4, 5 – Slow Growth of Abram**

Gen. 12:4 "So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."

Abram would later become known as the father of the faithful and certainly much of his life was manifested by his faith in God and the word of God. However, he did not start out as a man full of faith. Rather, he grew slowly in his faith.

Abram was told by God to do four things. He was to leave the land of his nativity. He was to leave his father's house. He was to leave his kindred. He was to go to a land that God would show him. The first thing Abram apparently started to do right away. He left the land of his nativity, but he stopped well short of going to the land of Canaan. He did not a first leave his father's house. It was a long time, until he departed from his kindred. Abram left the land of his nativity, but he stopped in Haran. His father went with him: Acts 7:2-4 "And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and

come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell."

God first appeared to Abram when he was in the land of Mesopotamia. Apparently, Abram told his father about what God had said to him. His father went with Abram to Haran. There they stayed until his father died. It was not until the death of his father, that Abram made the effort to go on unto Canaan. Moreover, Lot, the nephew of Abram went with Abram unto the land of Canaan. Thus, Abram still had not obeyed to do all that God had commanded him to do. Abram did not actively obey when he finally departed his father's house. He only departed after his father was dead. Also, we will see that Abram was very slow to separate himself from his kindred.

After the death of his father, Abram partially obeyed the commandment of God in that he went into the land of Canaan.

This should serve to teach us that even with the father of the faithful, growth in faith is often painstakingly slow. God's people rarely start out fully grown in their walk of faith. They grow into it slowly. We also see that God is very long suffering toward us and very patient with us as we grow in faith. God's grace toward us is truly amazing.

### **Gen. 12:6-8 – God appears to Abram the second time**

Gen. 12:6 "And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. 7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him. 8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD."

The bible is presented to us as a progressive revelation. First, God reveals a truth unto us, then he progressively reveals more truth to us. God had promised seven blessings unto Abram the first time that he appeared to him. Now God makes a further promise unto Abram after that Abram had departed the land of his nativity and his father's house and had come to the land of Canaan. God promised to Abram that he would give the land of Canaan to his descendents (seed).

Now, we see Abram beginning his walk of faith, as he passed through the land of Canaan. As he journeyed through the land, he no doubt, was trusting in the providential hand of God to keep him safe. Abram had left a land where the inhabitants were almost exclusively Shemites. No doubt, Abram had much familiarity with the customs and ways of the Shemites. They were his people. Now Abram is journeying in a land that consists almost exclusively of Canaanites, who were the descendants of Ham. Not only did they have a different skin color, but also had a different language and different customs. They probably looked suspiciously upon this Shemite journeying through their country with his family. The natural course of fallen man is to have distrust for those who are different from us. In the United States there are neighborhoods that I would shun to walk through because of pent up racial animosity toward the Japhethites.

Upon hearing the additional promise of God, we find that Abram built an altar unto the LORD who had appeared unto him. Building an altar was the form of worship

authorized of God at that time. This shows us that Abram was thankful for God's providence and blessings that were upon him and had been revealed to him. Would to God that we would be more thankful today for the blessings of God upon us and that have been revealed to us.

For a period of time, Abram pitched his tent between Bethel and Hai. This is a very significant place for Abram to pitch his tent. The name, "Bethel," literally means "house of God." In contrast, the name, "Hai," literally means "junk heap." Thus, Abram and his family were living between the house of God and the junk heap of their fallen nature. As children of God, we dwell in this life spiritually between the house of God and the junk heap of our sinful fallen nature. We are faced with this scenario of dwelling in this world each day that we live on earth. We can either spend our time going up to the house of God and worshipping and serving God or we can spend our time following after the junk heap of our sinful fallen nature. One thing most helpful unto us as we dwell in this location is that we "build an altar of prayer unto the LORD and call upon the name of the LORD." Abram set us a good example here.

### **Gen. 12:9-13 - Abram's Doubts**

Gen. 12:9 "And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south. 10 And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land. 11 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon: 12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. 13 Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee."

Abram was faced with the same problem that we are continually faced with: he doubted God. God had made promises to Abram that when carefully scrutinized should have been sufficient to strongly assure Abram that no harm was going to come to him.

First, there was a famine in the land. God had told Abram to go sojourn in the land of Canaan. God did not tell Abram to go into Egypt to escape the famine. One of the biggest mistakes we make is not to seek the guidance of the Lord. We assume we can reason how to solve our problems by ourselves. We leave God out of the solution. Abram did this as he thought surely that by going to Egypt he would be able to sustain himself and his family in that wealthy country. What happened here to Abram is that he doubted God could resolve his problem. Likewise, when we try to solve our problems by ourselves, we doubt that God can resolve our problem for us.

Second, Abram doubted that God would providentially preserve him from harm, even though God had made promises to Abram that he would make of him a great nation and that in his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed. If Abram had been killed, then God would not have fulfilled his promises.

When we doubt, we end up devising schemes to help God fulfill his promises. Abram's scheme was for Sarai to tell the Egyptians that she was Abram's sister. While it is true that Sarai was Abram's half sister, yet it was a deliberate misrepresentation to tell the Egyptians this.

Third, Abram knew that he was going to a land where morals were lax. He knew they would look with lust upon his beautiful wife and would kill him if they thought that she was his wife. Further, he was bringing his wife into a situation where she could be raped.

All of the above shows us that Abram doubted the promises of God and doubted the power of God to protect him and his family. Do we not do the same thing when we fail to seek God's guidance when we are faced with financial problems, or health problems, or family problems, or church problems? Do we doubt that God can guide us or deliver us in the solution to our problems? He has promised to be with us in the midst of our troubles and he teaches us that we are to cast our cares upon him, for he careth for us.

The solution to the above is to trust God and his word. We do not have to understand how God will accomplish his promises. We just need to seek his guidance and to trust him.

### **Gen. 12:14-20 – Abrams Shame and God's Deliverance**

Gen. 12:14 "And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair. 15 The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. 16 And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels. 17 And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. 18 And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? 19 Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way. 20 And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had."

Abram had spoken deceitfully to the Egyptians saying that Sarai was his sister and not mentioning that she was also his wife. Abram had done this because he feared that he would be put to death if they knew that Sarai was his wife. Subsequently, the princes of Egypt beheld the beauty of Sarai and commended her before Pharaoh. Then Sarai was taken into Pharaoh's house. Beholding her, Pharaoh seemed intent on making Sarai one of his wives. Thinking that Abram was her brother, Pharaoh heaped many and expensive gifts upon Abram. All this set up a dilemma for Abram. If Abram told Pharaoh that Sarai was his wife, then it would have been exposed that Abram had deceived Pharaoh and had taken the gifts of Pharaoh under a deception. According to the natural course under those circumstances, Pharaoh would probably put the stranger to death and felt justified in doing so. If Abram said nothing, then Pharaoh would have taken Sarai for his wife. All of this was because Abram had practiced deception.

Because of the gifts of Pharaoh to Abram one could argue that Abram prospered from his deception. However, as we will see later, the cattle that he received from Pharaoh brought about a very serious conflict in Abram's family. One of the maidservants that Abram received from Pharaoh ultimately brought about a conflict that

is still raging in the world today. The cattle and servants that Pharaoh gave to Abram would hardly have seemed to have merited the trouble that they caused.

But what was Abram to do about the dilemma that he was in. He could speak up and probably be killed or he could be silent and lose his wife. Thankfully, God was merciful to his erring child and delivered Abram from his dilemma. God delivered Abram and Sarai by sending forth great plagues upon Pharaoh and his house. God also let Pharaoh know why they were being plagued. As a result, Pharaoh rebuked Abram and deported him and Sarai out of the coast of Egypt. Thus, Abram left Egypt in shame. This came to pass because Abram had not sought the counsel of God and had practiced deception. In spite of this, God sent forth his grace and mercy upon Abram and Sarai.

### **Gen. 13:1-9 – Abram returns to Bethel**

Gen. 13:1 "And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south. 2 And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. 3 And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; 4 Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD. 5 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. 6 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. 7 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. 8 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. 9 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."

Because of a famine in the land of Canaan, which the Lord had directed Abram go to, Abram left to go sojourn in Egypt. He did this without asking counsel of God. There in Egypt he had deceitfully told the Egyptians that Sarai was his sister and not revealed to them that she was his wife. As a result of these things Abram and Sarai were expelled from Egypt by Pharaoh. All the time that Abram had been in Egypt, we have no indication that he worshipped God or called upon the name of the Lord.

Immediately upon returning to Canaan, Abram went to the place where he had previously built an altar to worship God. Here between Bethel and Hai, Abram worshipped God and called upon the name of the Lord. This teaches us that when we depart from the worship of God and seeking counsel from God and we act in the sinful ways of the world and consequently get our lives in a mess, the answer for us is to return to the place where we departed and call upon the name of the Lord and worship him. God is gracious and forgiving of the sins of his people. Returning seems to go against the pride of many people, but Abram set us an example. That truly is the only meaningful solution for the wayward child of God.

Abram had increased greatly in herds, flocks, and cattle while in Egypt by the gift from Pharaoh. Upon returning to Canaan, this proved to be a snare to continued fellowship with his nephew Lot. Lot also had much cattle, flocks and herds. "And Lot

also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. 6 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together." Almost invariably in life we have to make hard decisions. In Abram's case, he had to decide which was more important to him, the fellowship of Lot or his material possessions. Just think how many families have been divided over this very issue. The land was simply not able to bear the cattle of both Abram and Lot. There wasn't enough grass for the two sets of herds and cattle.

"And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land." This strife developed first between the herdmen of Abram and Lot. How would Abram and Lot resolve the strife? The strife was in open view of the inhabitants of the land. So often the actions of God's children are open to view by the inhabitants of this world. If the action is handled in an ungodly way, then the world will ridicule the disciples of the Lord and reproach the name of the Lord. If the action is handled in a godly way, then it encourages the children of God who observe the action out in the world.

Abram chose the way of godliness, even if it was not financially prudent to do so. Abram treasured his fellowship with Lot above worldly gain. He had his priorities based on the love of God and love towards God's children. This is where our priorities should be as well.

"And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. 9 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."

Abram made the magnanimous proposal to Lot to choose where he wanted to go, and Abram would take the other path for his cattle and herds. This is just the opposite of what a prideful man would have done. Through the pride and greed of our flesh, we generally want to have our way and that way is to get gain. Through the love of God, we are to mortify the deeds of the flesh and seek not our own gain, but the gain of others. Abram chose the good way. Abram is an example for us today.

### **Gen. 13:10-13 – Lot's Choice**

Gen. 13:10 "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. 11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. 12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. 13 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly."

When Abram made the magnanimous proposal to Lot giving him the choice as to where he wanted to go live, and Abram would go the opposite direction, Lot had to consider what to do. From the description above we can make the following conclusions concerning Lot's choice and why he made the choice:

1. Lot did not consult the Lord as to what the Lord would have him do.

2. Lot made his choice based on what was the best place for him to prosper materially. He saw the plain of Jordan "was well watered every where ... even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt." Thus, his cattle would have plenty of grass to eat and water to drink.

3. Lot did not consider what the moral fiber of the people would be that he would have to associate with. He did not consider the effect it would have upon himself and his family. Lot did not look for a place where he could have fellowship with godly people.

When we do as Lot did and fail to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our lives and our decisions, we suffer the consequences of our actions. One only has to look at the later results to Lot and his family to realize that Lot made a very poor judgment in pitching his tent in Sodom. There are consequences to our actions here in this time world. We know the scriptures teach us that Lot was a child of God and that heaven is his home: 2 Pet. 2:7, 8 "And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)" However, his journey in this life was met with great vexation and trouble based on his choices and actions.

The above teaches us that we should seek the Lord and his guidance in our decisions in this life. Failure to do so will result in serious negative troubles and consequences to us.

### **Gen. 13:14-18 – Abram receives further revelation from God**

Gen. 13:14 "And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. 16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. 17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. 18 Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD."

"And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him," Remember that God had told Abram to do four things: leave his country; leave his father's house; leave his kindred; and go to a land that God would show him. First, Abram left his country, but not his father's house. After the death of his father Abram came to the land of Canaan, the land which God showed him. Still his nephew Lot was with him and sojourning with him. He had not yet done everything that God had told him to do. With the strife between the herdsmen of Abram and the herdsmen of Lot, Abram proposed a separation between himself and Lot. When Lot had left, then the Lord appeared the second time unto Abram. Abram had not bothered to leave his kindred until the strife arose. Sometimes we fail to experience all the blessings of God for a while

because we have not fully obeyed the Lord. Once Abram had fully obeyed the commandments of God, then God gave a further revelation unto Abram.

"Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: 15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." Sometimes when God gives a revelation or prophecy, there is a near-term fulfillment and later a long-term fulfillment. This is sometimes referred to as adumbration. Prophecies are often adumbrated. This one appears to be adumbrated. God told Abram to look in every direction and the land that he saw he would be to him and to his seed forever.

The first fulfillment of this prophecy had to do with the land of Canaan itself. God gave the land by promise to Abram. A few hundred years later Abram's descendants came into possession of that land according to the covenant promise of God. However, their possession of this land was not literally forever. His descendants were driven from that land during the Assyrian and Babylonian empires, and to a large extent the land remained in the possession of others. A portion of that land returned to the Jews during the days of Nehemiah and Ezra. However, all the land was lost to the Jews around 70 A.D. A very small portion of that land is currently occupied by a small portion of the descendants of Abram.

A greater fulfillment of that prophecy has to do with heaven itself. Scripture tells us that the "seed" of Abram under consideration was not "Isaac" and his descendants, but rather the "seed" is singular and has reference to Jesus Christ: Gal. 3:16 "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

The second part of that prophecy had to do with the fact that the seed of Abram would be multiplied to an innumerable host: "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." The term, "dust of the earth," is simply used to illustrate that the seed (Christ) multiplied could not be numbered for multitude. In the New Testament we learn that the natural descendants of Abram are not the multitude under consideration but that the true multitude is known as "children of promise:" Rom. 9:6-8 "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

In Gal. 4:28 we are told who the children of promise are and how they became children of promise: Gal. 4:28 " Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." We will save our discussion of this until we get to the birth of Isaac.

That the children of promise would possess heaven is set forth for us in Rom. 8:16, 17 "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Since, heaven is Christ's dwelling place, then the children of promise, being joint-heirs with Christ shall also possess heaven.

The bottom line, God promised Abram that he and his seed would have a permanent dwelling place and that the seed of Abram would be multiplied to an innumerable host.

"Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. 18 Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD." As would be expected Abram immediately took note of the local or near term promise and greatly desired to see what the land was like that God had promised him and his descendants. Afterwards, Abram continued his efforts at altar building and worshipping the Lord. The understanding that we receive of the word of God should also encourage us to spend much time in worshipping the Lord. Just like Abram, God has made some wonderful promises to us also.

### **Gen. 14:1-7 – Kingdom expansion**

Gen. 14:1 "And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations; 2 That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. 3 All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea. 4 Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. 5 And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim, 6 And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan, which is by the wilderness. 7 And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezontamar."

There was a time when Chedorlaomer, king of Elam had nine kingdoms or nations under his control. There came a time when five of those kings rebelled against the control and authority of Chedorlaomer. This set up a war between the four who remained with Chedorlaomer and the five who rebelled against him. Chedorlaomer was like Nimrod and Asshur before him a kingdom builder. He desired to have control of other people and to be considered a great king upon earth. Ultimately, people like him are really after world-wide dominance. This pattern carries throughout man's history.

A kingdom builder who has dominance does not easily give up that dominance against those who rebel against him. We are not told why the five kings rebelled, but there had to be something that they and their people did not like or agree with. This does not matter with a kingdom builder. Their desire is for world-wide conquest and they will stop at almost nothing including ruthless destruction of those who would oppose them.

The next thing we see about Kingdom builders, they use occasion of conflict or trouble to expand their kingdom. They justify this by saying such things as we need those lands to protect our borders against our enemies. Or these lands are strategic to the well being of the kingdom. Chedorlaomer used the conflict to expand his kingdom by moving against some of the kings and nations of people in the land of Canaan: "And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim, 6 And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan, which is by the wilderness. 7 And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezontamar." As

you will notice the Rephaims, the Zuzims, the Emims, the Horites, the Amalekites, and the Amorites really had nothing to do with the conflict between the nine nations, but were just in the way of Chedorlaomer. He used the occasion of the conflict against the five nations who rebelled to smite their armies and enslave those people.

### **Gen. 14:8-12 – War between the Kings**

Gen. 14:8 "And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; 9 With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five. 10 And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. 11 And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. 12 And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed."

The war between Chedorlaomer and those who were with him and the king of Sodom and those that were with him was fought in the vale of Siddim. In verse three we were told that the vale of Siddim is the salt sea. Also, the slimepits to which the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled are believed to be tar pits. The salt sea would later form a part of the boundary of the nation of Israel.

As Chedorlaomer and those with him were victorious, they did as conquering armies often do, they gathered from the losers a bounty. They took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals.

Next, they did something that would result in their destruction: they took Lot, Abram's brother's son and his goods and departed.

### **Gen. 14:13-16 – The Amazing Victory**

Gen. 14:13 "And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram. 14 And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. 15 And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. 16 And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people."

No number is given of the size of Chedorlaomer's army, but reason would suggest that since it was composed of the soldiers of four kingdoms that it would have number in the thousands at least. This goes to show that the victory is not always to the largest or best trained army, or to the best armed army. When God is on your side, the other army has no chance. Abram had 318 trained servants, but they had no reason to have been trained in natural warfare. He had the confederacy of three men but far greater than that

he had the arm of the Lord who delivered his enemies into his hand. This truly was an amazing victory.

Now all this teaches us that we have enemies in this life. We have many battles to fight. Oftentimes, our enemies in life are far greater than we can handle ourselves. Just as Abram loved his nephew Lot, so the Lord far more exceedingly loved Abram and delivered him. Likewise, the Lord loves us and has the power to deliver us in our battles and warfare. The victory is not to an arm of flesh, but the victory comes in our trust in the power and love of an Almighty God.

We see from the above the completeness of the victory. Abram brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people. He brought back everything that was taken. Our God is truly an amazing God and can give us amazing victories in the battles of life.

### **Gen. 14:17-24 – Abram met by two kings**

Gen. 14:17 "And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale. 18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. 21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. 22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, 23 That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich: 24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."

Two kings went out to meet Abram. One offered a natural kings reward from the spoils of victory. The other gave Abram bread and wine.

The far greater of the two kings was Melchizedek, king of Salem. According to the New Testament the word, Melchizedek, literally means king of righteousness. The word Salem means peace. So Melchizedek was both king of righteousness and king of peace. Melchizedek who met Abram is either the Lord Jesus Christ or the strongest type in the Old Testament of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not my intention to debate that issue in this writing. Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine to Abram. As emblems, bread and wine are used extensively in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Unleavened bread and wine were offered daily with the morning sacrifice and with the evening sacrifice. They were also a part of several other feasts in the Old Testament. The communion service of the New Testament worship also includes unleavened bread and wine. Jesus, in establishing the communion service equated bread to his broken body and wine to his blood. Thus, bread represents the pure, perfect, complete, sinless, and holy body of Christ. Wine represents the blood of Christ which he gave to redeem his people from their sins.

Like Melchizedek, Christ is a king. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. He is the king of peace and the king of righteousness. He reigns over those he has made righteous. Moreover, he has brought peace to the same ones.

Melchizedek blessed Abram: "And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth." In the New Testament, we read where the less is blessed of the greater. As great a man as Abraham was and as faithful a man as Abraham was, yet Melchizedek is greater than Abraham. No matter what deeds God may bless us to perform or what sacrifices we may be blessed to make, Christ will always be far greater than us. We should recognize his far superiority and give him the praise and glory that he deserves.

"And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all." Lest anyone doubt how Abram was victorious over the host of Chedorlaomer and his army, Melchizedek tells us that it was God who delivered Abram's enemies into his hand. Abram could not have had the victory he had unless God had blessed him with deliverance. The true glory goes to God. Abram recognized this and gave tithes unto Melchizedek. A tithe is literally a tenth. Abram gave a tenth of all that he possessed unto Melchizedek. From all indications this was a free-will offering. Abram was not commanded to give a tenth, but he willingly gave it to Melchizedek.

"And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself." Abram was not impressed with the offer of the king of Sodom. He had no intention of being materially enriched by a victory that God had given him. How different this is from many servants today, who think they should be materially enriched for the service they render unto God. Abram's response to the king of Sodom was: "And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, 23 That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich: 24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."

The Lord said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness..." Abram had his priorities right. He knew where his strength came from and who had blessed him. If we are to give the praise and glory to God, then we cannot seek the praise and glory for ourselves. Certainly, Abram could have had the worldly goods that the king of Sodom was offering. However, he would have been prospering from something that God had done for him. Abram knew he could not have had such a deliverance without the providential intervention of God. While Abram refused to be enriched by the king of Sodom, yet he did not force this belief on the men that were with him, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre. He did not begrudge them taking their portion of the goods if they so pleased. Worship of God is on an individual basis. We worship not because we are forced or coerced into it, but because we are willing to do it.

### **Gen. 15:1-6 – Abram's first question**

Gen. 15:1 "After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. 2 And

Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? 3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. 6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

"After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Now Abram had just prior to this experienced the delivering power of God in the defeat of Chedorlaomer and his host. Certain questions arise in the mind of God's children such as "Now that God has delivered me from my enemy, shall others come after me. Abram was a stranger in a strange land. Living in a foreign country where others are different in skin color and customs and beliefs than you can be a scary proposition. God assured Abram that He would be Abram's shield. A shield is for protection against the swords and arrows of the enemy. God promised Abram that He would be that protection against the swords and arrows of those who would attempt to hurt or destroy him.

Abram had willingly given up a proposed great bounty of material goods that the king of Sodom had offered him. For the vast majority of people times are hard for every one of them. Relatively few of God's children are wealthy in this world's goods. Abram had given up a possible reward, now God has promised him that God was Abram's exceeding great reward. There are two types of rewards in this life for God's children. There are material rewards, which perish with the using. There are spiritual rewards that men cannot break through and steal or moth or rust does not corrupt. We should desire the spiritual rewards that come from God. Abram's service would be richly rewarded with spiritual blessings from God. Likewise our service to God is richly rewarded with spiritual blessings from God.

God had appeared to Abram and promised him great things. Some things were puzzling to Abram as to how these things would be accomplished. God promised that he would multiply the seed of Abram to an innumerable host and that his seed would possess the Promised Land. Yet, Abram was childless. He was getting old and his wife was old. Who would be his heir? Thus, Abram asked God, "And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? 3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir." If Abram had no children, then Eliezer of Damascus would be Abram's heir. This did not seem right to Abram based on the promises that God had made unto him. Abram was looking for assurances from God that he would have a son who would be his heir. Up to this point God had not given Abram a child.

"And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir." God assured Abram that his steward would not be his heir, but that he would have a child come forth from his own body that would be his heir. This was of great comfort to Abram, even though, God did not tell Abram at this time how this would be brought to pass. Abram just knew that according to the promise of God that he would have a child that would be an heir.

"And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." Once again, God confirms to Abram that his seed would be multiplied into a great multitude. Previously God had told him that they would be like the dust of the earth for multitude, now God said to Abram that his seed would be multiplied to like the stars of heaven for multitude. Upon hearing this, Abram believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Some have taken the statement in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of Romans to mean that Abraham became righteous because he believed God. They maintain that he was born of the Spirit and washed in the blood of Christ because he believed God. Yet, this is not the first time that Abram had believed God and certainly there were many evidences of Abram's faith before this incident. Abram had left his country, left his father's house, left his kindred, and come to the land of Canaan because God had told him to do so. Abram had built altars and worshiped the Lord before this incident. Abram had acted in faith in the destruction of the army of Chedorlaomer. Abram had received the bread and wine that Melchizedek had given him and had given tithes to Melchizedek. Thus, Abram's belief in God which was counted to him for righteousness did not make him a child of God. Rather, it was an indication that God was pleased that Abram believed the promise of God and God counted it as a righteous thing for Abram to believe his promise.

### **Gen. 15:7-21 – Abram's second question**

Gen. 15:7 "And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. 8 And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? 9 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. 10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. 11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. 12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; 14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. 15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. 16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. 17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. 18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: 19 The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, 20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, 21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

In the above passage of scripture God reveals to Abram through a word picture the elements of the covenant of redemption. We really do not know how much Abram

understood of this word picture, but in the associations consistently made in the scriptures the picture is that of the covenant of redemption.

"And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. 8 And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?"

God had told Abram that he had brought Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan and that he would inherit that land. Again, Abram wondered in what way that he would come to inherit that land, and thus he asked God for a sign whereby he would know that he would inherit that land.

"And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. 10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not." God had Abram to sacrifice five animals and to cut them up into eight pieces. Throughout the Old Testament scriptures there were five animals used in sacrifice that were acceptable sacrifices unto God. The sacrifice of cattle, goats, sheep, doves, and pigeons were acceptable sacrifices unto God and were used in the tabernacle and temple services. Five in the scriptures is associated with death. The animal sacrifices point us to the only sacrifice that did away with sin. They pointed us to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. It was through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ that we were justified: 2 Cor. 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Next, the heifer, the she goat, and the ram were all three years old. Three is associated in the scriptures with the Godhead: 1 John 5:7 "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." God showed to Abram that the covenant was a covenant made by the Godhead.

There were eight pieces of the animals that were laid out. Eight is associated in the scriptures with the subject of new beginnings. In the covenant of redemption there are at least three new beginnings.

"And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him." In this Abram got a little taste of what Jesus suffered on the cross for His people. On the cross where Jesus justified us there was darkness over all the earth for three hours and Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." Truly, this was an horror of great darkness.

"And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces."

The smoking furnace is associated in the scriptures with the subject of justification. This shows us that the smoking furnace is a picture of God the Father rendering judgment upon his people.

The burning lamp is associated with the work of the Holy Spirit in the scriptures. In the covenant of redemption the Holy Spirit does the calling and the glorification of the elect family of God.

That the burning lamp and smoking furnace passed between the pieces indicates to us that all the Godhead is involved in fulfilling the covenant of redemption. Elsewhere in scripture when a covenant is made it was ratified by the parties to the covenant passing between the pieces: Jer. 34:18, 19 "And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made

before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof. The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf;" The covenant revealed in word picture unto Abram was a covenant that the burning lamp (Holy Spirit) and the smoking furnace (God the Father) ratified by passing between the pieces (God the Son).

The covenant of redemption is set forth in Rom. 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." In this covenant we make the following observations that are consistent with the word picture that God gave unto Abram:

1. This covenant brings about justification of the elect through the sacrificial atonement of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ died to justify the elect family of God. He suffered the horror of great darkness in the room of his children in order to justify them before God.

2. There are three new beginnings in this covenant brought about by the following:

a. Calling – This brings God's children from a state of being dead in trespasses and sins to being born of the Spirit of God and given another spiritual nature in the new birth.

b. Justification – God's children are brought from a state of condemnation to a state of righteousness through the atoning blood of Christ.

c. Glorification – God's children are brought from a state of corruption in their natural bodies to a state where they will stand before God in heaven's glory world conformed to the very image of Jesus Christ.

3. The parties to the covenant of redemption are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. This covenant was made and confirmed by the Godhead and all the work is accomplished by the Godhead. Those God foreknew do not have any work that they perform to bring about the predestination, calling, justification, and glorification. The elect are passive in this work. It is performed upon them, but the work is all of God.

"And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." Here God informs Abram that he would not possess the land of Canaan in his lifetime, but that his seed would be a stranger in a land that is not theirs and they would serve in bondage in that land and be afflicted for four hundred years. This is typical of God's children today. We are in bondage under the elements of this world and made to serve in this world until we die. However, there is coming a day of deliverance for us, just as there was a day for deliverance of the descendants of Abram and then they would possess the Promised Land. We shall have a day of deliverance when the Lord comes to take us home to the glory world of heaven.

The children of Israel were made to come out of Egypt with great substance. We shall come out at the appointed time with substance far greater than the children of Israel

possessed when they came out of Egypt. We shall come out of the grave as heirs of God and joint heirs of Jesus Christ. What greater substance can a person have than this?

"In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: 19 The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, 20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, 21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." This confirms that the word picture God gave to Abram was a word picture of a covenant. The covenant God made with Abram was an unconditional covenant. God would bring his descendants unto the land of Canaan and give them an inheritance in that land. Abram would not have to do anything for them to possess that land. Likewise, the covenant of redemption is an unconditional covenant whereby God gives us an inheritance and does everything to bring us into that inheritance.

### **Gen. 16:1-3 – Abram and Sarai try to help the Lord out**

Gen. 16:1 "Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. 2 And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. 3 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife."

The Lord had promised to Abram on more than one occasion that he would have a child and that his seed would be multiplied to a great multitude. The problem that Abram had was that he was 85 years old and Sarai was 75 years old. They had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan and still were barren. It was apparent to both Abram and Sarai that they were not going to have a child or so it seemed to them. In their minds if the promise of God was to be fulfilled then they would have to come up with a way for that promise to be fulfilled. This is simply doubt based on earthly sight. How often all of us are guilty of this very thing? We look at our earthly circumstances and think that God will not keep his promises if we do not do something. We, in effect, doubt that God is able to do it himself.

"Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai" when she said unto Abram, "Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her." In other words, this is a way that Abram can have a child and thru this child God will fulfill his promises to Abram. It is extremely foolish of us to doubt the Lord even though we do it often. We always make a mess of things when we doubt the Lord and try to help the Lord out. The world is in a turmoil today nearly four thousand years later because Abram and Sarai tried to help the Lord out. The descendents of Ishmael and Isaac are still fighting in the Middle East today.

One of the great myths today is that we must assist the Lord in getting someone born of the Spirit of God. This is a very similar mistake that Abram and Sarai made. The Lord does not need our help and in his due time he will cause all of his elect children to be born of the Spirit.

Please note that Abram actually married Hagar as she became his wife. Therefore, Abram had two wives and finally had children by both wives. Sarai was a free-woman and Hagar was Sarai's maid. She was an Egyptian handmaid. She was in bondage. Just because she was married to Abram did not make her a freewoman. She was still Sarai's maid and was to obey her mistress.

In Galatians chapter 4 these two women – Sarai and Hagar – and their sons are compared to an allegory representing two covenants. One woman was free and the other a bondmaid. The son of the free woman was born by promise. The son of the bondmaid was born after the flesh. I suggest the reader study the fourth chapter of Galatians to understand the spiritual significance of this allegory. Even though they are an allegory, yet the things written concerning them in the Old Testament are literally true.

### **Gen. 16:4-5 – Hagar despises Sarai**

Gen. 14:4 "And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes. 5 And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee."

We are not told exactly why Hagar despised Sarai. Most likely Hagar being a bondwoman despised the fact that she was in bondage and had conceived Abram's son and her mistress was a freewoman. Perhaps she thought that Sarai had not given Abram a child and she gave Abram a child, therefore, she should not have to be a servant to the freewoman. Moreover, she probably had an exalted opinion of herself as opposed to Sarai because she was able to conceive a child and Sarai was not able to conceive a child.

Now we understand that both Sarai and Hagar were wives to Abram. However, Sarai was a freewoman and Hagar was a bondwoman serving Sarai.

The book of Galatians tells us that Sarah and Hagar were an allegory with Sarah representing the covenant of grace and Hagar representing the covenant of the law. This follows the example above as the legalists despise those who worship God under the covenant of grace. We have the above example as well as the case of Cain and Abel and the case of the Pharisees and Sadducees despising and persecuting the true worshippers of God under the covenant of grace. Even today those who attempt to worship God under some legalistic system despise those who worship God under the covenant of grace. Those under a legalistic system believe their works should be rewarded. No doubt Hagar felt that her work in bringing forth a son for Abram should be rewarded and she be given a position better than her mistress who had not conceived.

"And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee." Sarai immediately recognized that what she had done in giving her handmaid to Abram for wife was wrong as she saw the consequences of her action. Next, she desired the Lord to judge her actions recognizing she had done wrong. She was admitting to Abram that her actions were wrong. She was also confessing to the Lord that her actions were wrong. We need to learn from Sarai that we should not devise schemes to try and help the Lord out. There are consequences to such

actions. The Lord does not need our help, and when we try to claim credit for what the Lord has done, then we will suffer the chastening rod of God for such actions.

### **Gen. 16:6-9 – Hagar flees from Sarai**

Gen. 16:6 "But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face. 7 And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. 8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. 9 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands."

When Sarai dealt hardly with Hagar because of her despite of Sarai, then Hagar fled from her face. Under the allegory of the two wives of Abram representing the two covenants, we should understand that the law is servant to grace. The scriptures teach us in Gal. 3:24 "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." A schoolmaster is a servant that brings us to the desired place. The covenant of the law is a servant, a schoolmaster and it serves under the covenant of grace to bring us to an understanding that we had need of a Savior and that by his works alone we are saved from the condemnation of the law.

While Hagar fled from her mistress she was still under her mistress. God sent his angel to tell Hagar to return to her mistress. The angel said unto Hagar, "whence camest thou? And whither wilt thou go?" Hagar was always a servant and was still a servant. The best place for her as a servant was to return to her mistress. Her mistress provided for her needs. "And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands." Here we see the Lord providentially intervening on behalf of the servant for her and the child's well-being.

### **Gen. 16:10-16 – God makes covenant promises to Hagar and her son**

Gen. 16:10 "And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. 11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. 12 And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. 13 And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? 14 Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered. 15 And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. 16 And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram."

"And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." This promise made to Hagar is somewhat

similar to the promise made to Abram. Both were promised that their seed would be multiplied to a number that could not be numbered for multitude. The Lord set the births of Ishmael and Isaac in proximity to show us a comparison. Ishmael was a child born after the works of the flesh. Isaac was a child of promise. Every elect child of God has two natures during their lifetime. They each have a nature that is born after the flesh and they each have a nature that is given to them by promise. The elect are a great multitude that no man could number of every nation, kindred, people and tongue. The promise to Hagar is that there would be a great multitude that would be after her seed. All naturally born people have a nature after the flesh.

"And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction." The name "Ishmael" means "God hears." This should encourage us that God hears us regardless of the position we may hold in life or the state of our finances. God hears the cries and problems of his people. The fact that he heard this bondmaid who was under the bond service of another and blessed her both with a child and with providential watch care over her teaches me that he watches over me as well.

"And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." Based on this, I have no doubt that Ishmael was indeed a wild man and that his hand was against every man and every man's hand was against him. I also have no doubt that he dwelled in the presence of all his brethren. This description, however, also applies to the flesh nature of every child of God. We have a nature of flesh that is wild: Job 11:12 "For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt." The ass in the wild has an uncontrolled nature. So, likewise, vain man has a wild uncontrolled nature that refuses to be controlled by the moral compass of God.

Also, we have a nature in the flesh that wars against our spiritual inner man. Moreover our spiritual inner man wars against our nature in the flesh: Gal. 5:17 "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." This flesh nature like Ishmael dwells in the presence of its brethren (the spiritual inner man) and wars against the spiritual inner man. Similarly, the spiritual inner man wars against the flesh nature. This is a constant warfare that every born-again child of God must content with every day.

"And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? 14 Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered." Hagar recognized that God was watching over her in her affliction. She was recognizing his watch care and praising him for his watch care by calling his name "Thou God seest me." The name "Beerlahairoi" means the "oath of God who seest me." With this name she was recognizing the oath or promise that God had made unto her and praising him for his watch care.

"And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. 16 And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram." We can assume that Hagar told Abram about her experience as he called his son's name Ishmael. Abram had a son in his old age, but this was not the son of promise.

## **Gen. 17:1-8 – God expands his covenant promise to Abram**

Gen. 17:1 "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. 2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. 3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. 6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." God begins to expand his promise to Abram by appearing unto him as the "Almighty God." In this expanded promise God is manifesting his power over his creation. As the "Almighty," God is powerful. As the "Almighty," God created the heavens and the earth. As the Almighty he brought a flood upon the earth to destroy all living things in whose nostrils was the breath of life except those on the ark, by whom he preserved seed alive. To fulfill the promises that God made unto Abram, the power of the Almighty is necessary and will be manifest.

God told Abram to "walk before me, and be thou perfect." The use of the word, perfect, does not mean sinless perfection, but rather it is speaking about maturity. In other words, God is telling Abram to be mature in his walk of faith. God is making covenant promises unto Abram and is telling Abram to be mature in his faith that God will perform those promises. While Abram's faith will not bring about those promises, yet through his faith he will experience the joy of seeing those promises at least partially fulfilled.

"And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." God reiterates his promise to Abram that his seed will be multiplied to an exceedingly great multitude. This is at least the third time that God has expounded this promise unto Abram.

"And Abram fell on his face:" Falling on one's face in the scriptures is a sign of humility and devotion to God. Abram felt himself to be extremely small and recognized the great superiority and greatness of "Almighty God" with this gesture.

"And God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations." Now God begins to expand his revelation unto Abram as he tells him that he will be a father of many nations. From Abram there sprang many nations including, Israel, Edom, Midian, Sheba, etc. In addition, Abraham is considered the father of the faithful not only in Israel but among the Gentiles as well.

"Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee." The name, "Abram," means "High Father." The name, "Abraham," means "Father of a multitude." This man who

had wondered childless for so many years until Ishmael was born at 86 years of age is now being told that his name is changed from "High Father" to "Father of a multitude." Only "God Almighty" can bring such to pass and cause a solitary man to become a father of a multitude of people when he is past the time in nature of being able to father children.

"And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee." At ninety nine years of age Abraham has had one child. Yet God tells him that he will make him exceeding fruitful. It did not say that he would make his sons exceeding fruitful, but that Abraham would be exceeding fruitful. Abraham had no idea at this time that he was yet to father seven more children! Moreover, God promised that he would multiply into several nations and that kings would come out of him. This was true not only in Israel but in several other nations that he was the progenitor of as well. What amazing promises God made unto this man who left his country, his father's house, his kindred, and came unto a land that God showed him. Abraham had already witnessed great things done by the God he served, but the best was yet to come.

"And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." There is a difference between making a covenant and establishing a covenant. A covenant has to be made before it can be established. Establishing a covenant is bringing to fruition the terms of the covenant. God made an everlasting covenant before the foundation of the world. That covenant is stated for us in Rom. 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." This covenant was established in the seed of Abraham which we are told in Gal. 3:16, 17 is the Lord Jesus Christ: Gal. 3:16 "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." This covenant was confirmed to Abraham in the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis.

"And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." Also, in the promises of God is the promise that the descendants of Abraham would possess the land of Canaan. While it was over 400 years later before they actually possessed the land of Canaan, yet it was theirs by covenant promise. Because God promised it to them, then they were assured of coming into possession of it. Likewise, God has promised to his covenant children that they will be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ and that they will be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ and that they will have an eternal inheritance. The descendants of Abraham did not possess the land of Canaan for over 400 years from the time the promise was made, yet it was theirs by promise of God for all that time. Likewise, we do not now yet possess our eternal inheritance, but it has been promised and the same "God Almighty" who made promise to Abraham and then fulfilled his promise to Abraham will also fulfill his promise to us as the elect children of God.

The covenant God made with Abraham was a one party covenant and was non-conditional upon Abraham and upon Abraham's descendants. The establisher of the covenant was God Almighty. Abraham and his descendents were the beneficiaries of the covenant. Likewise, the covenant that God made with himself and states in the eighth chapter of Romans is also a one party covenant and is non-conditional upon the beneficiaries of the covenant. All the elect that were foreknown before the foundation of the world are the beneficiaries of the covenant and enjoy all the benefits of the covenant. The establisher and executor of that covenant is God himself and all the terms will be fulfilled.

### **Gen. 17:9-14 – The token of the covenant**

Gen. 17:9 "And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

God gave unto Abraham and to his seed the ordinance of circumcision. Circumcision was not the covenant, but was a **token** of the covenant that God made with Abraham and his descendents. Circumcision of the male children identified them as being beneficiaries of the covenant of which God had made with Abraham and subsequently with them. Circumcision was not just for the natural descendants of Abraham, but also the ordinance was to be performed on all that were born in the house or bought with money of a stranger.

Male children who were the descendants of Abraham were to be circumcised when they were eight days old. The number eight in the scriptures is associated with the subject of new beginnings. This natural circumcision of the male children at eight days of age is a type or figure of what happens when the elect child of God is born of the Spirit and undergoes the spiritual circumcision of the heart. Being born of the Spirit is a new beginning for God's elect. That natural circumcision of the foreskin is a type or figure of the spiritual circumcision of the elect is set forth for us in the following passages of scripture:

1. Rom. 2:28, 29 "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

2. Col. 2:11-14 "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of

Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;"

These two New Testament passages speak of a spiritual circumcision of the heart. This is not a fleshly circumcision, but a spiritual circumcision. The circumcision is not of the foreskin, but of the heart. Natural circumcision would identify someone who was embraced by the covenant God made unto Abraham and his descendants. This identity was made by natural eyesight and would be made only concerning the males. Spiritual circumcision of the heart can be made by identifying the changed life of the individual whose heart has been circumcised. We do this when we see the fruits of the Spirit manifest in the life of the individual whose heart has been circumcised: Gal. 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

Natural circumcision was performed only on the males. Spiritual circumcision of the heart is performed upon all the elect, including both males and females.

Natural circumcision was performed by the hands of some man. Spiritual circumcision is performed by Jesus Christ and is made without hands. Natural circumcision involved the cutting away of a portion of flesh. Spiritual circumcision involves the removal of the condemnation of our sins under the law. Certainly spiritual circumcision far exceeds the effect for good that natural circumcision brought about. Spiritual circumcision involves a quickening which gives us spiritual life. This is a new beginning for the child of God. In addition, spiritual circumcision brings about a new beginning by taking us from a state of condemnation to a state of justification before God.

Moreover, spiritual circumcision identifies us as having part in the covenant of redemption stated in Rom. 8:29, 30. When we see the evidences of the spiritual circumcision of our heart we are assured that God chose us before the foundation of the world, that he predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he justified us by the blood of Christ, and that we shall be glorified in the resurrection of our bodies.

"And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." While it was possible that the descendent of Abraham could be cut off from his people by not being circumcised, yet it is not possible for someone who has had their heart circumcised by the circumcision made without hands to be cut off from the benefits of the covenant of redemption.

### **Gen. 17:15-18 – The astounding Promise**

Gen. 17:15 "And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. 16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. 17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart,

Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? 18 And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!"

According to what we read in the book of Romans, at the time that God appeared unto Abraham both his reproductive ability and Sarah's reproductive ability were dead: Rom. 4:19 "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:" According to nature, neither Abraham nor Sarah were capable of having children. Yet God promised Abraham in the above passage that He would give him a son of Sarah. The initial reaction of Abraham is exactly what you would expect from someone who did not have the ability to have children anymore and who was married to someone who was way past the time in nature that she could typically conceive a child. Abraham laughed in his heart at what God told him. According to nature Abraham knew that this was impossible.

Abraham and Sarah had 12 years before tried to help the Lord out in bringing to fulfillment the child through which they thought the promise of God would come. Sarah had given her handmaid Hagar to Abraham to wife and to have a child. The impatience and doubts of men is manifest in their actions. Men by nature seem to believe that God needs help. God never has needed the help of man and he never will need the help of man to bring about his covenant promises.

Abraham realizing the reproductive deadness of his own body and the deadness of Sarah's womb said unto God "Oh that Ishmael might live before thee." At this point Abraham is still of a doubtful mind that it could conceivably be possible that he and Sarah could conceive of a son. However, that would soon change.

God changed the name of Sarai to Sarah. The name, Sarai, means my princess. The name, Sarah, means princess of a multitude. God made it very plain that the promise he had previously made unto Abraham that he would be the father of nations and kings would come out of his bowels was to be fulfilled through Sarah. He promised that Sarah would be the mother of nations and those kings of peoples would come through her.

Surely God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts, our thoughts. What is impossible with men are possible with God.

### **Gen. 17:19-22 – The Child of Promise**

Gen. 17:19 "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. 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. 21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. 22 And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham."

This passage speaks of Abraham's two sons. Ishmael was a child of the flesh. In the manner in which Ishmael was born and the causes of his birth are identical to every one who has been born on earth with the exception of Jesus who was born of a virgin. Ishmael was born of the flesh. There is a sense in which Isaac was a child of the flesh as

well. Yet there is something different about Isaac's birth. Isaac's birth was by promise from God.

There are similarities between Isaac's birth and the spiritual birth of God's elect. We read in Gal. 4:28: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." We notice the following about Isaac's birth and compare it to the spiritual birth of God's elect:

1. Isaac's birth was by promise from God. Likewise, according to the covenant of redemption God knew the elect before the foundation of the world: Eph. 1:4 "According as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world..."

2. Isaac's birth was contrary to nature. He was conceived of parents whose reproductive ability was dead. As the elect children of God we are born spiritually when we were spiritually dead: Eph. 2:1 "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." A dead person has no ability to bring about life. A person who is reproductively dead cannot bring about a natural child. Likewise, a person who is spiritually dead cannot bring about a spiritual child. Yet God brought about the birth of Isaac when Abraham and Sarah had no ability to bring about his natural birth. God restored them to the time of life and they had a child. Likewise, God brought about our spiritual birth when we had no ability to bring it about.

3. Isaac's birth was at God's appointed time: "But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year." Only God can appoint the birth of a child exactly one year later. Prospective parents cannot guarantee that they will have a child exactly one year after they predict they will have a child. Likewise, our spiritual birth is at God's appointed time: John 3:8 "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." No man can appoint the time of his spiritual birth. His spiritual birth occurs when God appoints that it will occur.

4. Isaac's birth was by covenant arrangement by God. Likewise the spirit birth of the elect child of God is by covenant arrangement by God in the covenant of redemption: Rom. 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. 30 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."

Ishmael was blessed of God as God told Abraham: "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." These things came to pass just like God said it would.

God, however, had something better for Isaac: "But my covenant will I establish with Isaac." The covenant promises made to Abraham were to be confirmed in Isaac, the child of promise.

## **Gen. 17: 23-27 – Abraham obeys the commandment of God**

Gen. 17:23 "And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said

unto him. 24 And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 26 In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. 27 And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him."

While Abraham initially laughed at the promise of God that he would have a son when he was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 years old, yet Abraham showed his faith in God and his faith that God would bring to pass what he promised as he obeyed the commandment of God to circumcise all the male members of his household, including himself. This shows that Abraham believed God would bring to pass the covenant promise that God had made to him, including the promise of a child by Sarah when they had been before both reproductively dead. He was persuaded that God would bring to pass what God had promised: Rom. 4:19-22 "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."

## **Genesis Chapter 18**

### **The Lord Appears to Abraham**

Gen. 18:1, 2 "And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground..."

On this occasion when the Lord appeared unto Abraham, he appeared as one in the midst of three. We frequently find the Lord in the scriptures described as appearing as one in the midst of three. The Godhead is described for us in 1 John 5:7: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." The Lord set forth the Godhead as the authority to baptize in Matt. 28:19 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" Additionally, when Christ was crucified on the cross he was one in the midst of three that were crucified. There are numerous other examples in the scripture where Christ is pictured as one in the midst of three. This teaches us, among other things, that we should consider Christ as the Son of God in the midst of three that include also the Father and the Holy Ghost.

Next, the name used for God in this passage is "LORD." Anytime we see the word, LORD, in all capitals we know that this word is derived from the word, Jehovah, or "JHVH." The word, Jehovah, refers to God as the covenant making and covenant keeping God. Thus, the LORD appeared to Abraham as the covenant making and covenant keeping God. This is the most frequent word used to describe God in the many appearances that he made to Abraham. Whenever we find the word, LORD, to describe God this should trigger in our minds that the main subject of the passage is about God being the covenant making, covenant keeping God.

Additionally, the Lord appeared as a man to Abraham. Abraham's view of the Lord was as a man. Of course, in the New Testament we read where the Lord came down from heaven and took upon himself the form of a man. We know that he came down as a man to redeem his people from their sins. Also, we read that as a man, he is God manifest in the flesh: 1 Tim. 3:16 "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh**, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." What we understand of God today is through the scriptural picture of Jesus as a man. We understand the love of God through the sacrificial atonement of Jesus Christ. We understand the goodness of God through all the good works that Christ did while here in the flesh. We understand the forgiveness of God as we view the Lord's forgiveness of those that crucified him. Thus, our understanding of God is generally through the eyes of a man viewing God, the man, Christ Jesus. There are many things that we cannot understand about God today, but what we can understand, God has made known to us in light of what we are capable of understanding as men.

There were two angels who were with the Lord. The number two in the scriptures is associated with the subject of witness. The word, angel, literally means messenger. These two heavenly messengers gave witness of the justice of God in this chapter and the next. These two angels also took on the form of men as they appeared to Abraham as men and later to Lot as men.

### **Gen. 18:2-8**

#### **Abraham's Response to the Lord's Visit**

Gen. 18:2-8 "And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat."

When Abraham saw the Lord and the two other men he reacted with haste and zeal to go meet them. How different this is to what most people respond to the opportunity to worship today. Oftentimes, many people come when they feel like it or when they have nothing else to do. When many come they are late for the beginning of service and seem not to be concerned about it. In contrast to this, Abraham **ran** to meet them. Abraham felt he needed the fellowship of the Lord much more than the Lord would need his fellowship and he reacted to go in haste to meet and fellowship with the Lord. This should be our reaction today to the opportunity to meet with the Lord.

Second, when Abraham met the Lord he bowed himself to the ground. Bowing before others is recognition of their superiority and importance. It is an act of worship. It is also recognition of being a servant before the one to whom you are bowing. The problem so many people have is that they view God as being their servant to respond to their needs and whims. Abraham did not view the Lord that way at all. Neither should we view the Lord that way. We are not our own, we are bought with a price. Therefore, we should humble ourselves before the Lord and recognize that we are His servants.

Third, Abraham desired the extended presence of the Lord: "My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:" Abraham knew that it was of God's mercy that he had come to visit with him. He also knew that God could make his visit as short or as long as He desired. God is sovereign and his actions are sovereign. We should, like Abraham, recognize that the Lord is sovereign and that his visits are by his mercy towards us. We should also desire, like Abraham, that his visits with us be extended, the Lord willing. What great blessings it is to us that the Lord come and visit with us.

Fourth, Abraham sought to serve the Lord rather than to be served by the Lord: "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat."

So many, today, come to worship service with the attitude that I am here to see how that I might be served or entertained. They approach God in prayer with the attitude of "what can God do for me today?" They approach the worship with the attitude of "what can we get out of this?" If they are not entertained to their satisfaction they complain or vow not to return. Abraham's reaction is just the opposite. He approached the opportunity to visit with the Lord as an opportunity to serve the Almighty and thought and acted with the desire to serve his Lord. How much better it would be for us today if we had Abraham's attitude toward the worship and service of God. Rather than thinking, "what can I get out of the service," we should be thinking "what can I do to better worship and serve the Lord."

Fifth, Abraham set forth to do for the two men that were with the Lord as he set out to do for the Lord. Oftentimes, people give lip service to their love for the Lord and for their desire to worship and serve the Lord. Yet, their reactions to the people of God are different from the lip service they give to worship and serve the Lord. This principle is illustrated to us in the following passage: 1 John 3:14-17 "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

The Lord said: Matt. 25:40 "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Our actions towards our brothers and sisters in Christ should be the same as our actions toward Christ.

## **Gen. 18:9-15**

### **The Lord Reaffirms Promise of a child and Sarah Laughs**

Gen. 18:9-15 "And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh."

This passage of scripture introduces several interesting thoughts:

1. God reaffirms His promise to Abraham in the hearing of Sarah.
2. Abraham obviously had not told Sarah of the promise of God that they would conceive and have a child in their old age.
3. When Sarah heard the promise she laughed within herself as she considered her own old age and condition and Abraham's old age and condition. Certainly this would have been a logical conclusion if only the abilities of their natural frame were under consideration.
4. God heard her thoughts, as she did not speak out loud her thoughts, but spoke them within herself. Thus, we know that God can discern the very thoughts of our hearts. This principle is taught in Heb. 4:12, 13 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."
5. God confronted Sarah's inward laugh. Sarah denied it, as she was afraid, but God corrected her. This teaches us that we cannot even hide our wicked thoughts from God. This principle of God having all knowledge even to the discerning of evil thoughts was present before he destroyed the earth with a flood. One of the accusations God made against the people at that time was: Gen 6:5 "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."
6. The condition of Abraham and Sarah at the time the promise of a child was made to them was that they were old and well stricken in years. According to nature it would seem that they were both incapable of having a child. However, God asked the

pertinent question: "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?" What was to take place wasn't dependent on the ability of Abraham and Sarah, but was according to the power of God.

7. God tells us how that Abraham and Sarah are going to be able to have a son: "At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." God told them that he would restore them to the time of life when men and women could conceive and have children. This was totally impossible for man to accomplish, regardless of the many claims made by charlatans of an elixir that will make you young again. Only God can turn back the clock and restore someone to the time of life. Later in the scriptures we will see this manifest as a young Philistine king desired the beautiful body of Sarah who was before "old and well stricken in year." The fact that God is able to turn back the clock also gives us an assurance that God can take the corrupted bodies of nature of his elect family and bring them forth to a condition that is far superior to anything they ever had in this life. This will take place in the resurrection.

### **Gen. 18:16-19** **Hidden vs. Revealed**

Gen. 18:16-19 "And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."

This passage plainly tells us that God hides some things from some men and reveals some things to other men. God is sovereign and can do what he pleases. So for God to hide some things to some and to reveal some things to others is well within the attribute of God's sovereignty.

Next, God gives us a reason for why he is revealing the secret unto Abraham: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." The scriptures give us some clues as to why and how God reveals to some and hides from others:

1. Matt. 11:25-26 "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." In this passage, we are told that God hides things from those who are wise and prudent in their own eyes. That is he hides things from those who have an exalted opinion of themselves. In contrast, God reveals things unto those who are humble like babes. God resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble.

2. Matt. 13:10 "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. 12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. 13 Therefore speak I to them in

parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. 14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. 17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

In this passage, God hid from the people, whose hearts had waxed gross (hardened), the understanding of the kingdom of God by speaking parables unto them. However, to the disciples, who were following him, Christ gave understanding of the parables by revealing to them the meaning.

Moreover, many prophets and righteous men in the Old Testament days desired to know the things about the kingdom of God but it was not revealed unto them because of the timing of God's bringing to light the things that he had hidden during the Old Testament economy.

3. Luke 9:44-45 "Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying." In this and similar passages, the Lord frequently told the disciples that he would be delivered into the hands of men, crucified, and rise the third day. However, this truth was not revealed to them until his resurrection. The words were spoken by the Lord, but the Lord did not give the understanding until he was resurrected.

4. 2 Cor. 4:3-4 "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." First, the gospel has no meaning to those who are dead in trespasses and sins as they do not believe themselves to have need of a redeemer. Moreover, the gospel is hidden from those who the god of this world has blinded their minds. Their minds have been blinded thru false teachings and false gospels.

5. Col. 1:26 "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:" God purposed that the mystery of the kingdom of God would be hidden until it pleased him to reveal it, thus, those who lived in ages and generations before that time that mystery had been hidden.

6. Rev. 2:17 "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." Thus, to receive this "hidden manna" which is the understanding of the word of God, one must have first been born of the Spirit and have a spiritual ear in which to hear. Moreover, he must have overcome through repentance and godly living in order to continue to receive an understanding of the word of God.

7. John 8:47 "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." A person must be born of God to be able to hear God's words.

8. 1 Cor. 2:9 "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Again, until a person is born of the Spirit he has no capability of understanding the word of God. It is hidden from him.

In conclusion, the thing that God revealed unto Abraham was the judgment and justice of God in destroying Sodom and Gomorrah and at the same time delivering Lot from the destruction.

### **Gen. 18:20-22 Should they have known?**

Gen. 18:20-22 "And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD."

In this passage, the LORD sent the men (angels) to Sodom and Gomorrah to destroy the cities of the plain because of their wickedness. The LORD said that their sin was very grievous. The question before us is "Should the men of Sodom and Gomorrah have known that what they were doing was very grievous and that they were in danger of God's judgment because of their actions?" "If so, then why should they have known?" Up to this point in the scriptures we do not find any scripture where God had said, "Thou shalt not commit Sodomy."

Even though the scriptures do not record up to this point that God had said "Thou shalt not commit Sodomy," yet the men of Sodom and Gomorrah were without excuse and should have known that what they were doing was wrong for the following reasons:

1. God gave the covenant of the law of marriage in the Garden of Eden saying, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Moreover, it is recorded in Gen. 1:27, 28 "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Plainly, the Lord's commandment was for the man and woman to marry and to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. Clearly, what the men of Sodom and Gomorrah

were doing was completely contrary to what God commanded and to the marriage covenant of a man and a woman.

The men of Sodom and Gomorrah could not reasonably argue that it had been so long since the creation that they could not be expected to know the marriage covenant that God had given to Adam and Eden. Yet, the span of time from creation to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was within the consecutive lifetimes of three individuals: Adam, Methuselah, and Shem, who was still alive at the time of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

2. The laws of nature which God put in motion when he created the heaven and the earth and all that was therein declare that the proper order is for a male and a female to live together and procreate. Almost all the mammals in the world follow this pattern under the laws of God in that sexual relations are almost always in the animal kingdom between the male and the female.

Moreover, the men of Sodom and Gomorrah should have known that they were in danger of God's judgment as they were living in the generation of Shem, the son of Noah, who came off the ark with Noah and was an eye witness of God's judgment of the gross wickedness of sin.

The men of Sodom and Gomorrah were without excuse for their gross wickedness.

### **Gen. 18:23-33** **Abraham Intercedes for Lot**

Gen. 18:23 "And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? 24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? 25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

26 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. 27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: 28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it. 29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. 30 And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. 31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. 32 And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. 33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place."

There are several important scriptural lessons taught in the above passage of scripture:

1. A society can become so corrupt that God will destroy it.
2. God's people have a preserving influence on the society in which they live.
3. Since God is the judge of all the earth and judges righteous judgment, how are Lot and anyone else righteous?
4. Abraham's intercession on behalf of Lot is similar to the Lord's intercession on behalf of his people on a daily basis.

First, Sodom and Gomorrah had become so corrupt in their living that there was no remedy for the deliverance of the cities from their wicked state. In the day that Lot went to dwell in Sodom the Lord stated this concerning the men of Sodom: Gen. 13:12, 13 "Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly." Next, we see that this wicked sin had completely pervaded the entire city of Sodom: Gen. 19:4 "But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:" Thus, the entire male population of that city both old and young had become sodomites with the exception of Lot. In Ps. 9:17 we read, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

Second, God's people have a preserving influence on the society in which they live. This is manifest in the fact that the Lord said that he would not destroy the city if there were but ten righteous within the city. Also, the Lord said of the disciples in the New Testament: Mat. 5:13 "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." One of the attributes of salt is that it has a preserving quality. For instance, salt is a meat preservative. Similarly, the disciples have a preserving quality in the society in which they live. Like salt, the Lord's disciples have a flavoring influence and a preserving influence on the society in which they live. Isaiah spoke by prophecy concerning Israel: Isa. 1:9 "Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah."

Thirdly, since God is the judge of all the earth and judges righteous judgment, how are Lot and anyone else righteous? When we look at the life of Lot we see a man who chose to live among the wicked. He also sinfully offered his two daughters to the wicked men who surrounded his house instead of the two men who came to dwell with him that night. Moreover, Lot after he and his daughters were delivered, through the enticements of his two daughters who encouraged his drunkenness and then lay with his two daughters and they brought forth sons of Lot. These were not righteous actions. However, we know that Lot was a righteous man because the scriptures tell us so: 2 Pet. 2:6-9 "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:"

Since God judges righteous judgment, then how was Lot a righteous man? Moreover, how are any of us righteous men? According to the scriptures every sin and

disobedience receives a just recompense of reward: Heb. 2:2 "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;" Moreover, the wages of sin is death: Rom. 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." That death includes an eternal death which for the wicked is to be cast into the lake of fire for eternity.

Under the law of sin and death we all have the same standing before God: Rom. 3:9, 10 " What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:" This says that under the law of sin and death there is none righteous. Thus, we again ask ourselves, "How is Lot righteous and how am I righteous?" The answer is found in the covenant of redemption: Rom. 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." Under this covenant one of the five things that God did for the elect is justify them.

Under the law of sin and death we were condemned before God because of sin. Part of the judgment process is the **execution** of the penalty of sin. The Old Testament teaches us the principle of "substitution atonement." Jesus is the perfect substitute for the elect family of God. He took upon himself our sins and was made to be sin for us. He suffered God's wrathful judgment for our sins in our place. God's wrath was satisfied on the cross as Christ suffered the fullness of God's wrath and then died for the elect. Every sin of the elect was atoned for on the cross. Moreover, the offering being accepted of the Father, we were imputed with the righteous of Christ: 2 Cor. 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." It is because of this covenant work of Christ that Lot is declared righteous and I am declared righteous.

Fourthly, Abraham's intercession on behalf of Lot is similar to the Lord's intercession on behalf of his people on a daily basis. The Lord interceded for his nephew Lot. Christ intercedes for those who are kin to him by spiritual birth, adoption, and marriage. We read of this intercession in Rom. 8:33, 34 "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." That this intercession is a continual intercession we read in Heb. 7:24, 25 "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Moreover, in Rom. 8:26, 27 We read where both the Holy Spirit and Christ make intercession for us: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

### **Gen. 19:1-3**

Gen. 19:1 "And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; 2 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. 3 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat."

Lot was in a weak spiritual condition. While he had a righteous soul (2 Pet. 2:8), he was vexed with the unlawful deeds of the wicked. Before Lot came to Sodom he dwelled in tents with Abraham. Now Lot has increased with material goods, but not increased with the spiritual blessings of fellowship with God and with His servants. He had gone from dwelling in a tent to dwelling in a house. He had gone from being a herdsman to being on the city council of Sodom (we know this because he sat in the gate of Sodom).

Lot, in seeing the angels, desired to have fellowship with the angels. Lot probably did not know at this time they were angels, but he knew they were not of Sodom and he was hungry for fellowship for someone not of Sodom. Lot was willing to serve these men and be hospitable to them. However, they (the angels) were not as interested in having fellowship with Lot. He said they would tarry in the street that night. However, Lot prevailed upon them and they agreed to stay with Lot that night. Lot made them a feast and baked unleavened bread for them and they did eat. Thus, the angels did have fellowship with Lot.

### **Gen. 19:4-11**

#### **Angels Encounter with the Sodomites**

Gen. 19:4 "But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: 5 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. 6 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, 7 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. 8 Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof. 9 And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. 10 But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. 11 And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door."

From the above passage of scripture we make the following observations:

1. When Abraham interceded on behalf of Lot the Lord said that if there were as few as ten righteous within the city he would not destroy the city for the ten's sake. The above passage tells us that there were not more than four righteous in the city at most.
2. All the men of the city were practicing Sodomy. This was true for both old and young alike and from all quarters of the city.
3. All the men were desirous to forcibly rape the strangers who came within the city of Sodom. Their desire to know them was not to get acquainted with them, but to have sodomite relations with them.
4. Lot's two daughters were married, yet according to Lot they did not know a man. Apparently, the marriage was a marriage of convenience as the sons-in-law were Sodomites as well.
5. Lot's offer of his daughters to this mob was itself a wicked act. Thus, we know that righteous men can do wicked things.
6. The men of Lot were not interested in the daughters of Lot.
7. When Lot refused to bring the men out to the howling mob, they turned on Lot and threatened to do to him what they planned on doing to the men.
8. The strangers revealed themselves to be angels when they pulled Lot back into the house and smote all the men with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves to find the door.
9. Heb. 13:2 "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Lot was one that had entertained strangers and being unaware of their station had entertained angels.

### **Gen. 19:12-23** **Lot departs from Sodom**

Gen. 19:12 "And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place: 13 For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.

14 And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

15 And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. 16 And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

17 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. 18 And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord: 19 Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast showed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the

mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die: 20 Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. 21 And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. 22 Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. 23 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar."

There are two main themes in the passage above – the judgment of God and the mercy of God.

God showed forth his judgment upon the cities of the plain because of their exceeding wickedness: Ps. 9:17 "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Jude 1:7 "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Thus, the wicked are responsible for their actions and further God's longsuffering only goes so far when it comes to the acts of gross wickedness. God is not mocked. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the plain had given themselves over to fornication and had gone after strange flesh. There is no reason why they would not have known better and yet they rejected the laws of God to commit their fornication with strange flesh. God answered in judgment upon them because of their wicked acts.

The mercy of God is manifest towards Lot and towards his wife and daughters. Lot was not deserving, as he had lived in such a way that his sons-in-law thought he was mocking them as he warned them to flee the destruction of Sodom. Lot because of his manner of living had not been a faithful witness of the right way of the Lord. Further, Lot's proposal to the howling mob of bringing his daughters out to them was also wicked. Yet, God was merciful to Lot. God is merciful to his elect children. We don't always get what we deserve, but rather, we are blessed to partake of God's mercy. God was merciful to Lot in delivering him from the destruction of the cities of the plain. Lot had seemingly been reluctant to leave as he lingered in his departure from Sodom. Further, God was merciful and longsuffering toward Lot in granting him his petition to dwell in Zoar and sparing Zoar from the destruction. If Lot had been acting on faith, he would have gone up to the mountain as God had told him initially. Later, Lot realizes his folly and goes on up to the mountain as God had initially warned him to go. Further, because of God mercy toward Lot, He held off on the destruction of the cities until Lot entered into Zoar.

While Lot's actions were not always good, yet God's mercy toward Lot is an encouragement to each of God's children. Unfortunately, there are times that we are guilty of acting like Lot, and yet God is merciful to us. We should be quick to praise God for his mercies towards us.

### **Gen. 19:24-29**

Gen. 19:24 "Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; 25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. 26 But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. 27 And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD: 28 And he

looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. 29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt."

The following points may be made of the above passage:

1. Brimstone and fire are associated with the subject of God's judgment in the scriptures. The following verses all show this association: Deu. 29:23; Job 18:15; Ps. 11:6; Is. 30:33; Is. 34:9; Ez. 38:22; Luke 17:29; Rev. 9:17; Rev. 9:18; Rev. 14:10; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:10; Rev. 21:8. Often in the scriptures when something first appears, the use of that item is consistent throughout the scriptures.

2. The phrase, "smoke of a furnace," is also associated with God's judgment: Ex. 19:8; Rev. 9:2.

3. Lot's wife looked back contrary to the commandment of God and was turned to a pillar of salt. This principle is used as a warning from the Lord for those disciples who lived at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem: Lk. 17:30 "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. 31 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. 32 Remember Lot's wife. 33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it." The Lord teaches us to look forward and not to look back upon what we are leaving: Lk. 9:61 "And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. 62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

4. Abraham's intercession for Lot is affirmed as the reason the Lord spared Lot in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

### **Gen. 19:30-38**

Gen. 19:30 And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters. 31 And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: 32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. 33 And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. 34 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

35 And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. 36 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

37 And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. 38 And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day."

While the actions of Lot's daughters were reprehensible, yet the pattern of Lot's actions is that of a child of God that is living in rebellion of the Lord's commandments. We know that Lot is a child of God because the scriptures tell us he is. Yet much we see of Lot is contrary to a walk of holiness. First, we see Lot making a decision to put material possessions first in his life. He decided to go to Sodom and live there for material gain, even though he knew the men of the city were exceeding wicked before the Lord. He subjected himself to the filthy conversation of the wicked which vexed his righteous soul. Yet, he remained in Sodom and gained materially. He went from dwelling in a tent to possession of a house. He also sat in the gate of the city (indicative of being a part of the city government.) When the angels came to Sodom and the wicked men came out with purpose of raping these men, Lot offered his daughters unto the men. Next, we see Lot doubting that he could go to the mountain as he was told to do and begging that the Lord would spare Zoar so he could go there. However, after he fled to Zoar, Lot feared that the men of the city would take revenge on him and he fled to the mountain.

In the above passage, we read where Lot allowed his daughters to give him wine and he became drunken. Next, Lot committed incest with his two daughters and they were with child of their father.

There are at least two great lessons that we can learn from Lot. First, a child of God can live in rebellion and wickedness. The doctrine that a child of God will persevere in good works once he is born of the Spirit is dispelled by the actions of Lot. Lot did not persevere in good works. There is very little that we read about the life of Lot that could even be considered good works or that he even made an effort to live godly.

Second, a child of God will suffer if he follows a life of rebellion and wickedness. Notice that Lot vexed his righteous soul with the filthy conversation of the wicked. Moreover, notice that Lot lost his material possessions for which he had labored most of his life. Additionally, notice that Lot lived a life of mortal terror. He was afraid of what the men of Sodom would do to him and he was afraid that the men of Zoar would take vengeance on him. He fled in terror unto the mountain. Furthermore, Lot had no effectual witness unto his sons-in-law as they considered that he was mocking them when he pled with them to leave and escape the destruction of Sodom. Lot, also, lost his wife when she looked back on the destruction of Sodom and was turned to a pillar of salt. Moreover, Lot ended up drunken and in disgrace that he had two daughters carrying his sons. For a child of God to live a mostly faithless, rebellious life will result in a man sowing what he reaps as we read in Gal. 6:7, 8: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

## **Gen. 20:1, 2** **Abimelech takes Sarah**

Gen. 20:1 "And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. 2 And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah."

This is the same story that got Abraham and Sarah in trouble in Egypt with Pharaoh. Abraham said of Sarah that she is my sister. He failed to mention that she was his wife. Telling the truth involves more than just not telling a lie, but to tell the truth means not withholding information in order to mislead someone else. Abraham and Sarah withheld information so as to mislead Abimelech, king of Gerar. When Abraham had gone to Egypt, he feared that the men of Egypt would look upon his beautiful wife and slay him to take her. This also shows a failure to trust in the Lord to provide for their safety.

What is remarkable that Abraham and Sarah told this story in Gerar is that Abraham and Sarah were well advanced in age. According to Gen. 18:11 both Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age: "Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women." Abimelech was a young Philistine King. Why would he want a woman that was old and well-stricken in age? Young men will not normally look wantonly at a 90 year old woman. Yet, Abimelech took Sarah unto himself.

We must remember that God had told Abraham and Sarah that he would restore them to the time of life and that at God's set time in the next year, Sarah would bear Abraham a son: Gen. 18:10 "And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him." Based on what we read in Genesis chapter 20 Abraham and Sarah were returned to their youth so as to bear a son in their old age. God fulfilled his promise to Abraham and Sarah as he returned to them the time of life.

### **Gen. 20:3-8**

#### **God Rebukes Abimelech**

Gen. 20:3 "But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. 4 But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? 5 Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. 6 And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. 7 Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine. 8 Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid."

God knows the thoughts and intents of our heart. He knows more than just our actions, but he knows also what we are thinking and what we are intending to do. Abimelech had not touched Sarah and truly thought that she was Abraham's sister. However, from the above it is apparent that Abimelech had plans to take Sarah. His statement about the integrity of his heart was just hollow words as God said to Abimelech that he had withheld him from sinning against God. It wasn't the integrity of Abimelech's

heart that prevented him from taking Sarah, but the fact that God withheld him from sinning that prevented him from touching Sarah.

God was watching over this godly couple even when they were not completely forthcoming in what they told others. God providentially prevented Abimelech from taking Sarah. This is another example of God's grace towards his elect children.

From the above it is also apparent that Abimelech feared God. Unlike Pharaoh in the days of Moses who hardened his heart against God, Abimelech believed what God told him. Abimelech both believed that he was God and that he would do what he said. Furthermore, his servants were also afraid of the pronouncement from God that they were all dead men if Abimelech did not restore Sarah to Abraham. Abimelech also believed that God would also keep his promise that when he restored Sarah to Abraham that Abraham would pay for Abimelech and he would live. Abimelech, of course, restored Sarah to Abraham.

### **Gen. 20:9-13** **Abimelech reproves Abraham**

Gen. 20:9 "Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. 10 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? 11 And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake. 12 And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. 13 And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother."

Abimelech acknowledged his own sin in taking Sarah, even, calling it a "great sin." Yet, Abimelech also knew that this whole episode would not have taken place if Abraham and Sarah had been forthcoming concerning their relationship. He had every right to question the actions of Abraham and to admonish him for doing what he did. Abraham and Sarah through their deceitfulness brought Abimelech and Gerar into a position of near destruction from God. He was correct in saying to Abraham, "thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done."

Abraham's response to Abimelech when questioned why he did what he did was "because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my wife's sake." Even for someone as faithful as Abraham and Sarah, yet there were times that their faith waned and they attempted to take things into their own hands. Rather than trusting that God would watch over them, in this occasion and in the similar episode in Egypt, they had trusted in their own ingenuity. However, when we trust in ourselves rather than God, we generally cause ourselves problems and make a mess of things. Ultimately their deliverances came from God and not from their own plans.

In the above, Abraham reveals to us that Sarah is his half sister. That explains why what he said and what she said was not directly a lie. Yet it was deceitful for them to say this and mislead people into believing they were siblings and not spouses.

## **Gen. 20:14-16**

### **Abimelech gives gifts unto Abraham and Reproves Sarah**

Gen. 20:14 "And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. 15 And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee. 16 And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver: behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and with all other: thus she was reprov'd."

To the above passage we make the following observations:

1. Abimelech obeyed God when he restored Sarah back to Abraham. Because Abimelech feared God he did not linger in restoring Sarah.
2. Abimelech believed God when God told him that Abraham was a prophet. Abimelech recognized the superiority of office of the prophet over his office of King. We do not know how Abimelech gained his office, but we do know that God appointed Abraham to the office of prophet. Thus, Abraham's office is superior to Abimelech's office.
3. In honor of God's blessings upon Abraham, Abimelech gave gifts unto Abraham: sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants and a thousand pieces of silver. Abimelech was a wealthy man, but he was willing to give of his wealth to assist the prophet of God on his journey of life.
4. Abimelech reprov'd Sarah. He did this by gently referring to Abraham as her brother. Moreover, she was reprov'd in that Abimelech was gracious and giving unto Abraham and her while she and Abraham had been deceitful. The scriptures tell us to overcome evil with good: Luke 6:35 "But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil."

## **Gen. 20:17, 18**

### **Abraham prays for Abimelech and his household**

Gen. 20:17 "So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children. 18 For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife."

Previously Abraham had interceded on behalf of Lot and God honored Abraham by delivering Lot from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Now Abraham prays unto God for Abimelech and his household. Lot was very close kin to Abraham, but Abimelech was a stranger. Yet Abraham prayed for Abimelech as well as Lot.

God answered the prayer of Abraham on behalf of Abimelech and his household and gave to them children which had been withholden from them because of Sarah.

## **Gen. 21:1-7**

### **Sarah Bears Isaac**

Gen. 21:1 "And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. 4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. 6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. 7 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age."

To the above we make the following observations:

1. God keeps his promises and he does it exactly as he says he will.
2. God restored both Abraham and Sarah to the time of life so that Sarah could bear a son.
3. God also gave seed to Sarah and Sarah conceived by the strength that God had given her.
4. The child was named Isaac in obedience to the command of God.
5. The child was born at God's set time.
6. Isaac was circumcised at eight days of age, just according to the commandment of God.
7. Sarah now readily admits that she had laughed at the idea of having a child at her age, but now in joy she knows that others will rejoice at the news of the great power of God who had restored her to the time of life and had given her seed and granted that a son would be born in hers and Abrahams old age.
8. The above illustrates that Isaac was a child of God's promise. God promised a child a full year before he was born. God caused the child to be born of parents who were unable to have children in their old age. God restored the parents to the time of life and granted the child to be born in God's exact appointed time. This corresponds to Gal. 4:28, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." We are promised to be born of the spirit of God before the foundation of the world. Next, we are born of the Spirit contrary to our flesh nature which is dead in trespasses and sins. Moreover, we are born spiritually at God's appointed time. Our spiritual birth is according to God's sovereign power. Additionally, joy is a fruit of the Spirit and God makes us to rejoice over our spiritual birth.

## **Gen. 21:8-13**

### **The Two Covenants**

Gen. 21:8 "And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned. 9 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. 10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with

my son, even with Isaac. 11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. 12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. 13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed."

There should be no doubt that the above events took place just as the scriptures describe them to us. Yet there is very much more contained in the message than just the natural occurrences. Sometimes when we study the scriptures, great nuggets of truth are not revealed unto us until later on in the scriptures. The scriptures are a progressive revelation of the great truths of God and his grace.

First, we will examine the natural lessons in the above. Weaning is a significant event in the development of a small child. It is a break from the dependency of the child from its mother's milk to in some small way to begin to feed itself. The Lord speaks to us in Isaiah of our need to advance spiritually from our dependency just upon the milk of the word: Isa. 28:9 "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts."

To acknowledge and celebrate this significant event in the life of Isaac, Abraham prepared a great feast for his son. In the United States we celebrate people's birthdays as being some sort of milestone. Often times we have feasts on a person's birthday. In the bible times, people were more into celebrating significant events such as weaning, puberty, marriage, and significant national occurrences.

When Sarah saw Ishmael the son of Hagar mocking her son Isaac, it angered her. No mother would want someone else to mock her children. She was especially outraged since Ishmael was the son of a bondwoman. It is not appropriate in any culture for bondservants to mock the free. Sarah's anger prompted her to tell Abraham to "Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." This upset Abraham because Ishmael was also his son. He, no doubt, loved Ishmael as well as Isaac. God, however, told Abraham to hearken unto the voice of Sarah, "for in Isaac shall they seed be called." At the same time, God promised Abraham that he would take care of Ishmael and make him a great nation because he is Abraham's seed.

These natural occurrences lead us to the more significant spiritual parallels brought out to us in Gal. 4:22-31: 22 "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. 24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. 25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. 26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. 27 For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. 28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. 29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. 30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

An allegory is defined as symbolic work: a work in which the characters and events are to be understood as representing other things and symbolically expressing a deeper, often spiritual, moral, or political meaning.

Abraham's two wives and two sons are symbolic of the two covenants of worship that God established. The book of Galatians confronts the issue that some from the church at Judea had taught that the Gentile converts must be circumcised in order to be saved. This error had taken root in the churches of Galatia which mostly consisted of Gentile converts. This error was rooted in some wanting to bring over elements of the law covenant that God had made with the children of Israel in Mount Sinai and make it a requirement in New Testament worship.

In the allegory, Abraham is typical of God and the two wives are typical of the two covenants of worship that God established. We first notice that there are only two covenants of worship that God has ever established and will ever establish.

The first covenant was given by God to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. It was a covenant that gendered to bondage. The law required perfection and the children of Israel were not perfect and could not keep the law perfectly. Failure to keep the law brought them under the curse of the law, hence bondage. The law was not something that you could keep 90% of it and be okay. The law required you keep 100% of it. Failure to keep a single item of the law made you a transgressor of the law. As we read in Gal. 3:10: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The worshippers under the law were in bondage to the law. They were bondservants to the law.

The second covenant was given by Jesus Christ when he journeyed in the flesh here on earth: John 1:17 "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." True worship today is under the covenant of grace. In this covenant our eternal salvation is by grace alone through the atoning blood of Christ. This covenant of grace is the freewoman (just as Sarah was a freewoman). Those who worship under the covenant of grace are free (just as Isaac was free). The covenant of grace is free and the worshippers under the covenant of grace are free as well. This covenant of grace is spelled out for us in Rom. 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."

Next, Ishmael mocked Isaac. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Similarly the worshippers under the law covenant have always been the ones that persecuted the worshippers under the covenant of grace. In Paul's day, the Pharisees and Sadducees persecuted the Lord's true worshippers to the death. This continued on for about 1800 years when those who worshipped under some legalistic works system have persecuted the worshippers under the covenant of grace.

"Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." This teaches us that as we worship today, we are not to bring in elements of the Old Law covenant into our practice of worship as that will lead

us into bondage. We are to cast out the Law Covenant as a means of worship and only worship as we are directed in the New Covenant of Grace given to us by Jesus Christ.

### **Gen. 21:14-21** **God provides for Hagar and Ishmael**

Gen. 21:14 "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. 15 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. 16 And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept.

17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. 18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. 19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. 20 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. 21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt."

"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away:" To live by faith is to be obedient to God. Abraham, even when the circumstances were such that he did not understand the reason why, he still was obedient to God. He did not procrastinate in his obedience, but he rose up early in the morning. This should be a lesson to us as well. Once we know what God would have us to do, we should not delay in the doing. Even though it had grieved him to see Ishmael depart, yet Abraham believed God would keep his promise and take care of the child and eventually make the child a nation.

"And she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. 15 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. 16 And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept." Hagar's faith was not as strong as Abraham's. She looked at the circumstances and though surely that the child would die and she did not want to see the death of her child. Her sorrow and concern for the life of the child was unfounded. She failed to trust that God would take care of the child.

"And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. 18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. 19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink." God was gracious to Hagar and the child even when Hagar had not trusted in the word of God. Sometimes God is gracious unto us even though we have not trusted in the word of God as we should

have. However, Hagar had gone through anguish and sorrow that she need not have suffered, if she had trusted in the Lord.

God opened Hagar's eyes. Sometimes the answers to our problems are right before us, yet we do not see them. God opened Hagar's eyes so that she saw the well of water. The well had been there all along, yet Hagar had not seen it. When God opened her eyes then she saw it. How often have we searched for answers or sought for understanding and did not see it until God opened our eyes, then we found the answers or the understanding we were searching for.

"And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. 21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt." Again, we see that God is not only a maker of promises or covenants, but he also keeps his promises and covenants. It is a wonderful lesson to know that God is with us in our lives just as he was with Ishmael. God made provision for Ishmael, both directly and indirectly.

### **Gen. 21:22-34**

#### **Abimelech and Abraham make a covenant**

Gen. 21:22 "And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest: 23 Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned. 24 And Abraham said, I will swear. 25 And Abraham reproveth Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away. 26 And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but to day.

27 And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant. 28 And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. 29 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? 30 And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well. 31 Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they sware both of them. 32 Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines. 33 And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God. 34 And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days."

To the above passage we make the following observations:

1. When God is with someone, then others notice it. I have known of people that it was very obvious that God was leading and directing them and blessing the labors he had given to them. Abimelech noticed that God was with Abraham. Abimelech had been previously visited of God and desired the blessings of God.

2. What Abimelech desired from Abraham, he would have received from Abraham whether the covenant had been made or not. However, it appears that Abimelech feared the greatness of Abraham and the blessings that God was bestowing

upon him. Abimelech apparently sought for security for himself, his family, and for his descendants after him. On this basis Abimelech sought to make a covenant with Abraham.

3. Abimelech had been kind to Abraham and his family and he used this as a reason for Abraham to enter into covenant with him. Obviously if he had not been kind unto Abraham, then Abraham would and should have been dubious about entering into a covenant with Abimelech.

4. Both Abraham and Abimelech swore to the covenant that they made with one another. They swore by God to the covenant. Heb. 6:16 "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife."

5. After, the oath was taken, the servants of Abimelech violently took away a well of water that belonged to Abraham. Abraham complained to Abimelech about this and Abimelech stated that he did not know about it. His servants had acted without his knowledge. This prompted Abraham to make another covenant.

6. The second covenant Abraham made with Abimelech had witnesses: 27 And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant. 28 And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. 29 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? 30 And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well. This is similar to the covenant that God made concerning his elect family. Instead of seven ewe lambs, the Lord set aside his churches as a witness of the fact that he alone dug the well of salvation for his people.

7. "Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they sware both of them. 32 Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines." Beersheba literally means "well of the oath." The reactions of Abimelech and Abraham was somewhat different to the making of this oath. To Abimelech it was a business arrangement. To Abraham, it was the blessings of God in watching over him. Abraham reacted thusly: "And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God. 34 And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days." Abraham took the occasion to worship and praise God for his blessings and watch care over him.

## **Gen. 22:1-18**

Gen. 22:1 "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am." It is sometimes argued that this scripture contradicts the scripture in James 1:13: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:" However, it should be noted in James 1:13 that the subject is temptation with evil. God does not tempt any man with evil. God, however, does "test" his people from time to time. This passage involves God testing (tempting) Abraham's faith. Will Abraham believe God and respond with obedience to the command of God, or will Abraham disbelieve God and respond by disobeying the command of God?

Faith involves some things that we know and some things that we do not know. We walk by faith by taking heed to the things we know and trusting that God will lead us to do what is best in our lives. What Abraham knew in this passage is that God had promised that "in Isaac shalt thy seed be called." God had promised to multiply the seed of Abraham to become a great multitude and that his seed would be a blessing to all nations, and to all families of the earth. This promise of the blessings of the seed involved the seed coming through Isaac.

v. 2: "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Some have argued that this is an error in the scriptures, when it says that God told Abraham to take his only son and offer him for a burnt offering. They say that Abraham had two sons at this time. It is true that Abraham had two sons and that he loved both sons. However, Abraham had only one "son of promise." Isaac was Abraham's only son of promise. Isaac was the promised son through which the seed of Abraham would come. Abraham knew that Isaac was his only son of promise. This is the important thing that Abraham knew about this testing. No doubt, Abraham reasoned that if he offered Isaac as a burnt offering, then God would raise him from the dead as God had promised to bring through Isaac the promised seed. Thus, Abraham had something he knew: Isaac was the son of promise and he knew what God had promised concerning Isaac. What Abraham did not know at this time was how God would bring the events to pass and just where the offering was to take place.

v. 3: "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him." If Abraham had not known the covenant promise of God, then he most likely would have been very reluctant to take Isaac and offering him as a burnt offering. Most likely, he would have rebelled against the commandment of God. However, Abraham rose early in the morning to obey God. He was anxious to obey God, because he knew the covenant promise of God and that God could not lie. Therefore, he fully expected to see Isaac rise from the dead. Similarly, we like Isaac, are children of promise: Gal. 4:28 "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." God has promised eternal life to us by a covenant he made before the world began: Rom. 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." Just as Abraham was convinced of Isaac's resurrection and did not fear death for Isaac, so we should be convinced of our resurrection based on the covenant promise of God and not fear the death of our bodies.

v. 4: "Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off." God revealed to Abraham the place for the burnt offering. Remember God had told Abraham to offer Isaac upon one of the mountains that "I will tell thee of." Abraham had set out without knowing all the details beforehand. This is a part of walking by faith: Trusting that the Lord will make things known in His good time. Because Abraham did not know the place beforehand, he also did not know how long it would take to get there.

Some have thought that Isaac was a type of Christ until he got to the top of the mountain and then the ram became a type of Christ. However, I differ from that view as I

believe Isaac was a type of the elect child of God throughout the whole episode. Isaac was a child of promise, just like we (the elect family of God) are children of promise. Isaac was plagued with the same problem that we are plagued with. He was a sinner just as we are sinners. For Isaac to be a fit subject of heaven, something must be done about his sins. Likewise, something had to be done about our sins before we could become fit subjects of heaven. Isaac was deserving of punishment, just like we are deserving of punishment.

v. 5: "And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." This verse tells us that Abraham fully expected that both Abraham and Isaac would come down from the mountain. I also point out that Abraham was to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. This involved the burning of the body. Isaac's body would have been fully burned. Yet Abraham fully expected that God could and would resurrect his body from this condition.

v. 6: "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together." When it comes to the punishment of sin we are deserving of each of us bearing our own burden. Isaac was bearing his burden up the mountain. However, according to the mercy of God, Christ bore our burden on the cross of Calvary that we would not have to bear it.

v. 7: "And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" The custom of the day for making an offering was to take a lamb and slay it and offer it as a burnt offering. Isaac asked his father as there was no visible sign of a lamb for a burnt offering.

v.8: "And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together." Obviously Abraham had not yet told Isaac that he intended under the commandment of God to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. Yet Abraham was honest in his answer that God would provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering. It is just that Abraham thought at the time that Isaac was the lamb to be slain. However, Abraham's statement would soon be fulfilled just as he said it.

v.9, 10: "And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son." Abraham, acting by faith, proceeded to do what God had commanded him to do. He fully expected to take the life of Isaac, believing that God would raise him from the dead. We read of this in Heb. 11:17-19 "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son. Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." This passage in Hebrews chapter 11 summarizes the story of our passage up to this point.

v. 11, 12: "And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." As we consider Abraham's faith that is illustrated in this passage, we see another element of that faith. That element is that Abraham feared God. This was not a fear of terror, but rather a fear of great respect. Fearing God is an evidence that one is born of the Spirit of God. One of the

characteristics of one who is under the law of sin and death (not born of the Spirit) is that he does not fear God: Rom. 3:18: "There is no fear of God before their eyes." The evidence that Abraham feared God is that he withheld not his own son from God.

v. 13: "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and beheld behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son." God showed to Abraham in this verse, the principle of substitutionary atonement. The ram was offered as a substitute for Isaac. This is a type of Christ being a substitute for the elect family of God. The ram with his horns caught in a thicket is akin to Christ being caught up in a covenant promise. Of course, in the covenant of redemption, Christ is the one who justified those that God foreknew. In the above picture, instead of Isaac being offered, the ram was offered in his stead. Likewise, instead of the elect family of God suffering eternal punishment, Jesus suffered that punishment for us on the cross in our room and stead.

v. 14: "And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen." The word, Jehovahjireh, means Jehovah will see to it. The word, Jehovah, refers to God as a covenant making, covenant keeping God. God, as a covenant making, covenant keeping, God sees to it that we (the elect family of God) are justified from our sins. He did this by taking our sins upon himself and suffering the wrathful judgment of God because of our sins.

v. 15-18: "And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 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; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

In the above passage of scripture God makes an oath. We read of this in Heb. 6:13-18: "13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, 14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. 17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:" God made a covenant promise to Abraham and then he confirmed the promise with an oath. These are the two immutable things referred to (his covenant promise and his oath). The word immutable simply means unchangeable. One of the characteristics of God is that he cannot lie. Thus, there is perfect assurance that what God promised, God will fulfill.

The promise made to Abraham in our passage is the following:

1. Abraham would be blessed.
2. Abraham's seed would be multiplied as the sand upon the sea shore and as the stars of heaven. One thing that the sand upon the sea shore and the stars of heaven have in common is that they are innumerable. Thus, the seed of Abraham would be increased to an innumerable host. We are told in Gal. 3:16 that the seed of Abraham is Christ: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Therefore, the

promise to Abraham is that the elect family of God, which is the multiplied seed of Abraham (Christ) is innumerable.

3. Abraham's seed would possess the gate of his enemy. In the scriptures, to possess the gate of one's enemy is to have the victory over the enemy. We had as enemies, sin, death, hell, Satan, and the grave. Christ gave us the victory over all our enemy. He possessed the gate of our enemy.

4. In the seed of Abraham all nations of the earth would be blessed. This promise is restated to us in Rev. 7:9, 10: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." The elect family of God embraces a great multitude which no man can number and they are found in all nations of the earth, and all kindreds of the earth, and in all people of the earth, and in all tongues of the earth. May God be glorified by all his people.

### **Gen. 22:19-24**

#### **Abraham's extended family**

Gen. 22:19 "So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba. 20 And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor; 21 Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram, 22 And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. 23 And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother. 24 And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah."

Sometimes we do not understand the genealogies of the scriptures. Sometimes we get a little glimpse into their significance. Regardless, we need to understand that God had a purpose for each genealogy in the scriptures, whether we understand why or not. In the above we see that Bethuel and Rebekah will have a direct connection with Abraham in the future. Rebekah will become the wife of Isaac and will bear twins to him named Esau and Jacob. May God bless us with understanding as it pleases him.

### **Genesis Chapter 23**

#### **Place of Sarah's Death**

Gen. 23:2 "And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her." The place of Sarah's death was Kirjatharba, also known as Hebron in the land of Canaan.

The names of the city and the country in which Sarah died tell us a story about death. The name Kirjatharba means "city of the four (giants)." The name Hebron means "seat of association." The name Canaan means "one that humbles and subdues."

In the book of 1 Samuel chapter 17 there was a giant by the name of Goliath. Goliath was a type of Satan. Goliath had four sons who were also giants. Kirjatharba was the city of four giants. Goliath was the father of four giants. Satan was declared to be a murderer from the beginning. The four giants that Satan brings against us are sin, death, hell, and the grave. From these four giants we have no power to overcome them. They have total control over us.

Hebron means seat of association. When Adam transgressed in the Garden of Eden he was our federal head representing all of his posterity. We all are associated with the results of Adam's transgression. By succumbing to the enticements of the serpent, Adam brought himself and all mankind under the curse of the law of sin and death. He brought us to have the four giants rule over us: sin, death, hell, and the grave.

Canaan means "one that humbles and subdues." The very knowledge of death humbles us and causes us to realize that we cannot overcome the bondage of death. We are subdued by death.

It is only through the covenant work of Jesus Christ that we are delivered from the four giants. Through the atoning blood of Christ and his subsequent resurrection from the dead that we are delivered from sin, death, hell, and the grave. Thanks be to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who has given us the victory over these great giants.

## **Genesis Chapter 23**

### **Abraham's Purchase of a Burial Site**

When Sarah died, Abraham purchased from the children of Heth a place to bury Sarah: "Gen. 23:12 "And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land. 13 And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt give it, I pray thee, hear me: I will give thee money for the field; take it of me, and I will bury my dead there. 14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, 15 My lord, hearken unto me: the land is worth **four hundred shekels** of silver; what is that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead. 16 And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, **four hundred shekels of silver**, current money with the merchant. 17 And the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure 18 Unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city."

In the process of time, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah were all buried in this possession of a burying site that Abraham purchased for **four hundred shekels of silver**.

**Four hundred** is closely associated in the scriptures with the **subject of bondage**. A part of the bondage that the elect come face to face with is death and the grave. Silver is associated in the scriptures with the subject of redemption. Thus, the deliverance from the bondage of death and the grave is found in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

In the history of humankind, the vast majority of people have never seen anyone delivered from death and the grave. From the viewpoint of what we see with our eyes, no

one who goes down into the grave ever returns into the land of the living. This bondage of death and the grave strikes fear in the hearts of men. This fear of death torments the hearts of men (1 John 4:18). Not only does the grave hold its occupants, but also the fear of death subjects the living all of their lifetime to the bondage of death (Heb. 2:15). One only need visit a funeral service to see the fear that many who are present are expressing in their faces.

There is deliverance for the elect children of God both from the bondage of the grave and from the fear of death. Job expressed his belief in the resurrection from the grave: Job 19:23 "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! 24 That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! 25 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:" Thus, Job believed that the same flesh that the skin worms destroyed would one day see God!

Our deliverance from the bondage of the grave and from the fear of death is found in the covenant work of Jesus Christ. This covenant is stated in Rom. 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." This covenant promise is such that it overcomes the wages of sin, which is death through the justifying blood of Christ. In addition, this covenant promise delivers us from the bondage of the grave in that we will one day stand glorified before God.

Therefore, through this covenant promise, we have hope that the end of this life is not to lie in the grave forever, but that the very flesh that goes to the grave Christ will resurrect from the grave and present to God in a glorified state. For this promise to be fulfilled Jesus came and delivered us from the curse of the law of sin and death. Heb. 2:14 "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

For those who understand this covenant promise death and the grave no longer hold the torment over them that they once had. Their hope in the resurrection is very precious unto them.

## **Genesis Chapter 24 Types and Shadows**

This chapter is filled with parallels between the finding of a bride for Isaac and the bringing of some of God's children unto becoming a part of the visible militant bride of Christ which in the New Testament is known as the Lord's church. In this chapter, Abraham is typical of God the Father. Isaac is typical of Christ. Rebekah is typical of Christ's bride or church. The servant is typical of the gospel minister. We will follow the

narrative of chapter 24 and point out the many parallels with the bringing of some of God's children to become part of the Lord's church.

First, we point out that the term, LORD, and the term, God, is used to describe God in this chapter. This is telling us that God is manifesting himself as both the covenant making, covenant keeping God (LORD=Jehovah) and the almighty creator (God=Elohiym). He is also described as the God of heaven and the God of earth and the God of Abraham. This teaches me that God is the almighty creator in both the spiritual realm of heaven and the natural realm of earth. He is also the almighty creator of the natural man and the spiritual man.

24:1 "And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things." The question becomes what does the statement "all things" mean? Certainly the bible tells us that God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempted he any man. Abraham's and Sarah's plan to have Ishmael was evil. Likewise, the deception that Abraham and Sarah committed concerning their relationship (brother and sister, rather than husband and wife) was evil. God did not bless them in their deception, nor did he bless them in their plan to fulfill the promise of God by having Abraham have a child with Hagar.

In contrast the LORD blessed Abraham in all things pertaining to His covenant promises. First, in the covenant of redemption, God blessed Abraham to be one of those that He foreknew before the foundation of the world. Likewise, he blessed Abraham to be predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Additionally, God called Abraham into spiritual like through the new birth. Moreover, Jesus Christ died to redeem Abraham from his sins. Finally, Abraham will be in the resurrection glorified in body, soul, and spirit.

Second, in the covenant promises the LORD made to Abraham, Abraham saw the LORD's marvelous work in restoring himself and Sarah to the time of life and having a son at God's appointed time. This is a type and shadow of the miracle of the new birth that happens to every elect child of God. Moreover, Abraham was witness to a demonstration of the atoning sacrifice of Christ as the lamb caught with his horns in a thicket was provided as a sacrifice in the room of Isaac. Moreover, Abraham experienced the belief in the resurrection as he fully expected that he would take the life of Isaac by God's command and that God would raise him from the dead.

Third, Abraham saw and heard the LORD's promises made in the covenant of redemption in the promises made by the LORD concerning the seed of Abraham. God promised that the seed of Abraham would be a blessing to a great multitude comparable to the sand upon the sea shore, the dust of the earth, and the stars of heaven. Moreover, he promised Abraham that the seed of Abraham would be a blessing to a people in every nation, kindred, people, and tongue. Additionally, the LORD promised Abraham that all families would be blessed in the seed of Abraham. Finally, God promised Abraham that his seed would possess the gates of his enemies. Of course, the New Testament tells us that the seed of Abraham is Christ.

2 "And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: 3 And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: 4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac."

The responsibility for finding a bride for his son Isaac, Abraham did not entrust with just any servant. He chose the eldest servant of his house. This eldest servant had proven himself as both capable and faithful in executing his duties as a steward. This job of finding a bride for Isaac was way too important than to trust a novice to find the right bride. This eldest servant is typical of God's called gospel ministers. Before a man who is called of God is ordained to carry out the duties of a gospel minister, he must first prove himself to the church that he is called of God and that he is capable of both understanding the gospel, but also making the proper applications of the gospel and carrying forth the duties of a gospel minister. He is not to be a novice. The term, elder, is the biblical term for a New Testament gospel minister. "Elder" indicates a man who is mature in his knowledge, judgment, and experience.

Abraham gave very specific instructions unto the eldest servant of his house as to who would be a suitable mate for his son Isaac. He also gave instructions as to where the servant was to go and where he was not to go. Thus, the servant was very restricted by Abraham as to where he would find a suitable bride and among whom he would find a suitable bride. We see such restrictions that the Lord placed upon the disciples when he sent them forth:

1. Matt. 10:5 "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

2. Acts 16:6 "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, 7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. 8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us."

Abraham told the servant not to take a wife of the daughters of the Canaanites. No doubt Abraham had seen the manners and wicked ways of the Canaanites and knew that it would not be good for Isaac to marry one of the daughters of the Canaanites. Likewise, the gospel ministry is not looking to bring someone into the fold of the church who does not show "fruit meet for repentance": Matt. 3:7 "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance..." A person who has not been born of the Spirit cannot bring forth good fruits. Only those who have been born of the Spirit are capable of bringing forth good fruits.

"But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac." This is very specific instruction that Abraham gave to his eldest servant. He told him exactly where to go and to whom he was to go. This is the same way that the Lord sends forth his gospel ministers. They are to go to God's born-again people. They are the only ones capable of receiving the gospel message:

1. 1 Cor. 1:18 "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

2. 1 Cor. 2:14 "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

3. John 3:3 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4. John 3:5 "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

They are already God's people, so the gospel minister is not making children of God, but is instructing, and encouraging, and feeding God's children.

Moreover, throughout the book of Acts we see the gospel ministry going where they are led by the Spirit of God and being hindered from going where they have not been led by the Spirit of God.

"And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth." Abraham took an oath from his eldest servant as he sent him forth to find a bride for his son Isaac. Likewise, when a man is ordained by the presbytery of elders, he likewise promises before God to follow the teachings of God's word in his ministry. This is a very solemn responsibility that each true God-called gospel minister is called on to execute. If he fails to execute his responsibilities, then he must answer to the God who called him as a minister.

5 "And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? 6 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again." This passage has meaning based on the types and shadows. There is no other statement in the scriptures that Isaac was ever in the land of Mesopotamia. However, Christ came once and lived on earth as a man and completed the work of saving his people from their sins. He is not coming to earth a second time to live on earth as a man. There is no reason for Christ to come in human form to earth again. This completely refutes the false doctrine that Christ is returning to earth to live and reign in a visible outward kingdom on earth for a literal thousand years. Christ currently is reigning in a spiritual kingdom on earth currently recognized as his church. He reigns in Spirit. When Christ comes in the resurrection he will not set foot upon the earth in his body as a man. Rather his people will meet him in the clouds and will be carried to heaven. The earth and its works will be burned up.

8 "And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again." There is the responsibility that a gospel minister bears and there is a responsibility that those to whom he preaches bear. Just as Abraham's servant was to find the right woman to be the bride of Isaac. Once he had carried forth his task, then the responsibility rested with the woman. She would either come and be the bride of Isaac and enjoy the blessings of being his bride or she would forbear and miss out on the honor and blessings of being his bride. This responsibility rested with her. So long as the servant obeyed the commandments of Abraham and faithfully carried out his assigned duty, then if the woman would not follow, he was clear from the oath that he made to Abraham. Likewise, the gospel minister is to obey the commandments of his Master and faithfully carry out his assigned duties. If the people to whom he preaches fail to agree to be a part of the Lord's church, then he is still clear from the oath he took as a gospel minister. Those who did not obey the gospel commandment are the ones who miss out on the blessings of the Lord's gospel kingdom.

10 "And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor." The number ten in the scriptures is very closely associated with the subject of law or commandment. The camel is a creature designed to carry a burden. The servant was carrying the goods and treasures of his master, Abraham, on the back of the camels. Similarly, the gospel minister is given the word of God to deliver unto God's born again children. These are great treasures that God has entrusted to his faithful ministers. The gospel ministers carry these treasures on the back of the laws and commandments of God. When they come to preach to the people of God they come forth with great treasures of their master to show unto the people the wonderful riches of their master. This is to demonstrate to the Lord's children that they will be well cared for if they follow their Lord as his disciples.

11 "And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water." Kneeling is an act of humility. Drawing water is a labor that the women engaged themselves in. The significance is that the Lord does not send his servants through their pride, but he blesses his servants when they humble themselves. Likewise, the Lord sends his servants not to lazy people calling upon them to be his disciples, but the Lord sends his servants to people who work and are willing to work.

12 "And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. 13 Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: 14 And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master." Abraham's servant had instructions from Abraham as to where he was to go and to who he was to go. He also had instructions as to where he was not to go and to who he was not to go. The servant was experienced and had proven himself as a trusty steward. Yet, the servant realized he needed much more if he was to find the right bride for Isaac. He knew that he needed God's help and direction. Without God's help and direction he, no doubt, felt helpless in finding the right person. The servant did what he needed to do. He put this task in the hands of the Lord and waited for God's direction.

Similar to the servant above, God's called gospel ministers have God's word and generally are skillful in the use of God's word. Yet, they realize their own helplessness when it comes to where they are to go and to whom they are to preach and of what they are to preach each time they preach. The best course of action for the gospel minister is to pray that God will direct him as to where he is to preach, to who he is to labor and what he is to preach each time he preaches.

Abraham's servant knew there were certain characteristics that were important that the woman Isaac was to marry should possess. He knew that she should be a willing servant and that she should be compassionate: "And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also." The servant was very specific in his prayer as to what he was requesting the Lord. These are also things the gospel minister should consider in his prayers unto the Lord.

15 "And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. 16 And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. 17 And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. 18 And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. 19 And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. 20 And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels." In this account, Rebekah showed her willingness to serve by drawing water for a stranger. She also showed her compassion even to the camels of the servant.

The above is an amazing account of God's omniscience: he knew beforehand what the servant would pray. Further, it is an amazing account of God's providence. God answered the servant's prayer just as the servant ended his prayer and He answered it to the very detail to which the servant had prayed. Moreover, that which was not yet known unto the servant, all the details of Abraham's charge was perfectly fulfilled in Rebekah. She was of Abraham's kindred and from his country just as Abraham had charged his servant.

I have had some similarly amazing experiences along the way in my ministry as I am sure that many of God's called ministers have also experienced. Our God is an amazing God and he does amazingly.

21 "And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not. 22 And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold; 23 And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?" The servant demonstrates to us some aspects of faith. The servant had seen his prayer answered to great detail right before his very eyes and at the moment he had finished praying. He knew that this was the woman that the LORD intended for Isaac. However, the servant had not yet seen the response of the woman and whether or not she would be willing to follow him and become Isaac's bride. Nearly always our faith is based on some knowledge that we have and some things that are promised but not yet fulfilled.

The servant acted on the knowledge and experience that he had. He trusted in the LORD that this was the right woman to be the bride of Isaac. He gave precious gifts unto her. He gave her a "golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold." Gold in the scriptures is very closely associated with the subject of kings. He was giving Rebekah gifts from a king and that identified her with a king.

When a gospel minister preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ, he declares to the listeners the wonderful works of God and the wonderful things that Jesus has done for them. These are precious gifts from the King of kings. This is the King's gospel. Furthermore, according to the scriptures those who have been born of the Spirit are also kings: Rev. 1:5 "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his

Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Thus, through the miracle of the new birth, we are associated with the King of kings and also made to be kings and priests unto God. The people to whom the gospel minister preaches the gospel unto are kings and priests unto God. The gospel minister is bringing precious gifts from the King of kings to those who are already kings and priests unto God.

23 "And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?" 24 "And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. 25 She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in." Here the servant is verifying that Rebekah meets the qualifications laid upon him by Abraham. Likewise, the gospel minister is to be like John the Baptist and verify that the person who is requesting baptism meets the qualifications set forth in the scriptures: Matt. 3:7 "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:" For a person to be a part of the Lord's church, he must have shown proper credentials. He must be humble, believe the truth, and show forth fruits meet for repentance. Rebekah showed that she was of the kindred and country of Abraham and that she was willing to serve the Lord's people.

26 "And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD. 27 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren." I wonder how many times each of us when the Lord answers our prayers and blesses us that we fail to render due praise unto our Lord for his blessings: Luke 17:12 "And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: 13 And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. 14 And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. 15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16 And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. 17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? 18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger." Abraham's servant was like the one leper who returned to give God the praise and glory he deserved. We should pattern ourselves after Abraham's servant.

28 "And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things." I have seen this happen many times as a gospel minister. When a person hears and believes the truth that they are immediately ready to share the good news with others. Rebekah is typical of God's people who hear the good news of salvation by grace.

29 "And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well. 30 And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well. 31 And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels."

Rebekah had told her encounter to those in her house and the things that the servant had told her and his prayer unto the LORD and how the LORD had answered his prayer. Rebekah's brother, Laban, heard the report and believed the report. When a child

of God believes the gospel report, then he will be very respectful unto the messenger and will entreat the messenger well. He not only has respect unto the LORD, but he also has respect unto the messenger of the Lord. Laban referred to Abraham's servant as "thou blessed of the LORD." The servant was Abraham's servant and he was truly blessed of the LORD. We are not told whether Laban was a servant or not. However, Laban became a servant to Abraham's servant as he provided much care for him and his men and camels. This is the kind of response that often happens when God's children hear the good news and humble themselves. They desire to become the Lord's servants and learn that the best way to serve the Lord is to serve His people.

32 "And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him. 33 And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on." Abraham's servant first provided for the needs of the camels and the men that were with him. The Lord's servant's have their daily lives and the cares and concerns of their families and the responsibilities of their business and the ones under their care. These things have to be done. The life of a gospel minister is not what some seem to think. Those who are hirelings and paid for their services have their reward. However, the true ministers of the gospel preach and teach God's word, in addition to the responsibilities stated above. Abraham's servant after having taken care of the necessary things, then proceeds to state his need to tell his errand. The minister of the gospel should ever be ready and anxious to tell his errand to God's waiting people.

34 "And he said, I am Abraham's servant. 35 And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. 36 And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath. 37 And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell: 38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.

39 And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me. 40 And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house: 41 Then shalt thou be clear from this my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear from my oath.

42 And I came this day unto the well, and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go: 43 Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw water, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink; 44 And she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: let the same be the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son. 45 And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew water: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. 46 And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also.

47 And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon

her face, and the bracelets upon her hands. 48 And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son. 49 And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left."

Abraham's servant repeated faithfully those things that had transpired beforehand. He began by stating that he was Abraham's servant. This tells us that the story is not about the servant, but rather about Abraham sending him to find a bride for his son, Isaac. Obviously the handiwork of God is manifest in the details of the experience of the servant and his coming to find Rebekah. The story is told that all the glory is given unto the LORD. This should be a lesson to the minister of the gospel. We should not think the story is about us, but about our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. We should tell the story faithfully and give all the praise, honor, and glory unto God as he certainly deserves it.

After having told the story, the servant had completed his responsibility and turns the decision over to Rebekah and her family. Now is the time for their decision. Likewise, the gospel minister tells the story of salvation from sin by grace through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ and how that God has a kingdom whereby the child of God can worship and serve the LORD as His manifest bride. At this point it is the responsibility of the hearing believer to take responsibility for deciding to become a disciple of the LORD.

50 "Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. 51 Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken. 52 And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth. 53 And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things. 54 And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master."

Laban and Bethuel were correct when they said "The thing proceedeth from the LORD." They were correct in giving their permission unto Rebekah to go and become Isaac's bride. The servant's response was also correct when having heard their words, "he worshipped the LORD." As a token of the mercy and grace of God, the servant gave precious gifts unto Rebekah and her brother and mother. Thereafter, the people had a delightful time of fellowship and rested during the night. Then the servant rose up and was anxious to complete the task at hand as he said, "Send me away unto my master." This should be a lesson to the gospel minister. He should share the precious truths of God's word, grace, mercy, and love with the children of God. He should also have a mind to complete the task at hand.

55 "And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go. 56 And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the LORD hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master. 57 And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth. 58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. 59 And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men." It is not

surprising that Laban and Bethuel wanted to hang onto the fellowship they enjoyed with Rebekah for a few days more. Sometimes, God's people are hindered because they want to hang onto the former things of life, rather than moving on to serve the Lord. However, the servant of the Lord needs to continue to encourage the people to put the Lord and his service first in their lives and to be up and about the master's business. This is what Abraham's servant did.

Moreover, Laban and Bethuel had given their permission to Rebekah to go and become the bride of Isaac. However, the final decision rested with Rebekah. She decided properly that she would go and become Isaac's wife.

60 "And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." This is a remarkable statement in light of God's promises to Abraham that he would multiply his seed as the dust of the earth, as the sand upon the sea shore, and as the stars of heaven for multitude. Laban's and Bethuel's statement is somewhat more specific as to number. The phrase, "thousands of millions," indicates a number of many billions. Some have thought that this indicates there will be billions of people in heaven. If, in fact, their prophecy concerning Rebekah was from the LORD, then that is exactly what it means.

61 "And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. 62 And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahairoi; for he dwelt in the south country. 63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming. 64 And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. 65 For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a veil, and covered herself. 66 And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done. 67 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death."

As we mentioned before, the number ten in the scriptures is closely associated with the subject of law or commandment. Rebekah was riding upon one of the ten camels as she came unto Isaac. The scriptures teach us: Gal. 3:24 "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." When Rebekah saw Isaac she lighted off the camel and went to meet Isaac. Likewise, when a child of God is blessed of the gospel to see her Lord and Savior, she leaves the law and goes to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. Moreover, when she did this, "she took a veil, and covered herself." How we should follow Rebekah's example and realize that it is not us that is to be glorified in the marriage to our Husband, but Jesus is to be glorified. We should not seek praise or glory for ourselves, but seek to give all the praise and glory unto God.

"And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her." In the covenant of redemption we are given unto Christ to be his bride. The covenant of redemption is the mother of this arrangement. We are dwelling with Christ in the tent of the covenant of redemption. Moreover, the statement of a love of the husband for his bride is first used in the above. The statement that Isaac loved Rebekah mirrors the love that Christ had for his bride, which is also set forth to us as an example of how husband are to love their wives: Eph. 5:25 "Husbands,

love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:"

### **Gen. 25:1-4**

Gen. 25:1 "Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. 2 And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. 3 And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. 4 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah."

In this passage we have a statement concerning Abraham's marriage to Keturah after the death of Sarah. We notice that he had 6 sons by Keturah. Not a lot is said in the scriptures about most of these sons. However, Midian is mentioned often and his descendents became a nation in which the Israelites would have a lot of dealings with in the future.

While, it is often that we may not know the significance of some of the listings of genealogies, we should not make the assumption that they are not important. Just because we may not see the significance does not mean that God will not reveal the significance to someone else. I have had the experience of wondering about some things in genealogies in the past and later the Lord opened my understanding of the significance. While I do not currently understand the significance of this genealogy, I look forward to the time the Lord may open my understanding.

### **Gen. 25:5, 6**

Gen. 25:5 "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. 6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country." At the weaning of Isaac, Abraham had sent Hagar and Ishmael away by the direction of the LORD that the son of the freewoman would not be heir with the son of the freewoman. Now in keeping with this direction, Abraham sends away the sons of Keturah, even though there is no indication that Keturah was a bondwoman. Yet, these sons were not in the same position that Isaac was. Isaac was the only son of promise and he would occupy a more favored position because of this.

Abraham did not send these sons of Keturah away empty handed, but he gave gifts unto them. No doubt, Abraham loved these children even as he had loved Ishmael, yet because of the promise of God, Isaac was favored.

### **Gen. 25:7-11**

Gen. 25:7 "And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. 8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. 9 And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre; 10 The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife. 11 And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi."

We are given certain details about the life and death of Abraham in this passage:

1. Abraham lived to be an hundred and seventy five years old. While that may seem like a long time to us today, yet it shows us that the lifetime of men was shortening after the flood. Nearly every successive lifetime after the flood is shortened. This is in harmony with what God taught earlier. This continued until the average lifespan was about 70 year of age.

2. When Abraham died we read of four different things that happened to him. First, he gave up the ghost. When the soul (ghost) departs the body, death ensues. Death, of course, is the second thing that happened to Abraham. The third thing is that he was gathered to his people. This is referring to the fact that when the soul and spirit of a child of God departs the body, then it goes unto heaven where others who have gone before are waiting (he was gathered to his people). The fourth thing that happened to Abraham is that his body was buried.

3. Abraham had prepared previously for the burial of his body along with the body of Sarah. Abraham believed in the resurrection and perhaps desired that he rise up with Sarah in that great day of the resurrection of the bodies of God's people.

4. Ishmael and Isaac together buried the body of Abraham. While these two were in many ways quite different, they shared a love and devotion to their father Abraham. Likewise, the descendants of both sons often are at war with one another, yet they both claim Abraham as their nations father.

5. "And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi." Now, this is not to imply that God did not bless Ishmael, but rather it is an indication that God had special blessings for Isaac. From this point on for the next few chapters, our attention will be turned from God's dealings with Abraham to God's dealings with Isaac.

6. The place of Isaac's dwelling was called "Lahairoi." This name means the "well of the living one." Thus, Isaac was dwelling by the "well of the living one." Likewise, if we are living as the disciples of Christ, we are dwelling by the "well of the living one."

### **Gen. 25:12-18**

Gen. 25:12 "Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham: 13 And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, 14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, 15 Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah: 16 These are the sons of

Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations. 17 And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people. 18 And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria: and he died in the presence of all his brethren."

The above passage is the fulfillment of the promise that God made unto Abraham concerning Ishmael: Gen. 17:18 "And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! 19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. 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." Thus, according to God's promise to Abraham, Ishmael did become a great nation and he did beget twelve princes. God's providence and blessings were upon Ishmael and the establishment of the nation and twelve princes that came forth from him. However, Ishmael and that nation were not favored nearly as much as Isaac and the nation of Israel that would come forth from him.

Moreover, God promised concerning Ishmael that he would dwell in the presence of his brethren: Gen. 16:12 "And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." According to our passage above this promise was also fulfilled.

God always fulfills his promises.

### **Gen. 25:19-21**

Gen. 25:19 "And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac: 20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian. 21 And Isaac entreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived."

The importance of prayer is illustrated above. Isaac entreated the LORD for Rebekah his wife who was barren. The LORD answered Isaac's prayer and blessed Rebekah to have twins. Isaac and Rebekah had been married for twenty years before that Rebekah conceived. Now we know that Isaac and Rebekah were going to have a son based on the promise that God had made unto Abraham. However, God used the occasion of Isaac's prayer to bring forth the conception.

Rebekah was the second of seven barren women in the scriptures who later had a son. Each of these women were blessed to bring forth a son who was greatly favored in the eyes of God to perform some important deed or function. These seven barren women, their sons name, and the important deed or function are listed below:

1. Sarah – Isaac- he was the son of promise and his birth is used to illustrate to us the miracle of the new or spiritual birth. (Gal. 4:28)
2. Rebekah – Esau and Jacob – These twins are used to illustrate God's sovereign election of a people to be his chosen people. (Rom. 9:10-13)
3. Rachel – Joseph – One of the strongest types of Christ in the bible.
4. Wife of Manoah – Samson – Nazarite.
5. Hannah – Samuel – Great prophet.

6. Great woman who lodged Elisha the prophet – her son – raised from the dead.
7. Elizabeth – John the Baptist – forerunner of Christ.

### **Gen. 25:22, 23**

Gen. 25:22 "And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger."

Often in the scriptures the Lord uses two individuals by comparison and contrast to illustrate great spiritual lessons. We saw this previously with Cain and Abel and Ishmael and Isaac. Now we have Esau and Jacob who are twin brothers that the Lord uses to illustrate another great spiritual lesson. The lesson that these two illustrate is the doctrine of God's election of a people to be his people.

Again, we see the name God uses in this passage is the word, LORD, which as we have previously pointed out refers to God as the covenant making – covenant keeping God. This passage of scripture centers on the subject of God's covenant. In the covenant of redemption in Rom. 8:29, 30 we read: "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 first part of this covenant is the statement that God foreknew a people. In Eph. 1:4-6 we read of God's choice of a people: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

God chose a people in Christ before the foundation of the world. Jacob and Esau are set forth as an example of God's election of a people. We read in Rom. 9:10-13: "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." This tells us that God through his sovereignty made choice between two unborn boys that had done neither good nor evil. Thus God's choice was not based on works at all. There was nothing that either boy had done to warrant God's choice. Yet, God chose and loved Jacob and did not choose and hated Esau.

This is exactly how God's purpose according to election stands. The choice of a people to be God's covenant people in the covenant of redemption is strictly made by the sovereign act of God and is solely by the grace of God. This principle of grace in election is stated in Rom. 11:5, 6 "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works:

otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

Moreover, the choice was made by God and not by the boys. Nor was it made for the boys by their parents. God in his sovereignty did the choosing. In like fashion God in his sovereignty does the choosing in the covenant of redemption.

"Two nations are in thy womb..." We know that according to biblical history, both the descendents of Esau and Jacob became nations. Esau became Edom and Jacob became Israel.

"Two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels..." Both Esau and Jacob were sinners. They were sinners by nature and both sinned. Then we must ask ourselves since both boys were sinners, then how were they two manner of people? The answer is that Jacob was a sinner justified by the atoning blood of Christ and Esau was a sinner unjustified. Every man in the earth fits one of those descriptions.

"And the one people shall be stronger than the other people..." This can be taken one of two ways. It can be said that Israel as a nation was stronger than Edom as a nation and that is true. It can also be said that God's elect people are stronger than those who are not his elect people. In the eyes of God, those whom he chose have faith and therefore have more strength with God that God has given them. This also is correct.

"And the elder shall serve the younger." This seems to be a direct reference that Edom was prophesied to serve Israel. This is exactly what happened according to the history of the Old Testament scriptures.

### **Gen. 25:24-28**

Gen. 25:24 "And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. 25 And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. 26 And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them. 27 And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. 28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob."

"And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau." Esau got his name based on the appearance he had when he was born. The name Esau literally means red. This is also the meaning of the name Edom. Apparently his hair was red and he had hair all over his body at birth.

"And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob." The name Jacob, means a supplanter or one who removes or carries a thing away by fraud or trickery. This was a strange name for them to name a son, but Jacob in his earlier life lived up to the meaning of his name. In this supplanting or trickery, Esau, Jacob's brother was to be his primary target.

"Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents." These twin boys were quite different both in appearance and in their manners. Esau was a man's boy. He did what most men would be proud of. He was a cunning hunter and a man of the field. This red headed, hairy boy, no doubt, made his father proud with his manly deeds. In contrast Jacob was a plain man. The fields and hunting was not his "cup of tea." He liked dwelling in tents and cooking. He was a mama's boy. He did things with his mama.

"And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob." This is exactly what you would have suspected based on the nature of the two boys. However, as we will learn, God's children can change and Jacob will be one who will be a hard worker in the field and a good provider for his family. He will also grow mightily in faith before God. However, beforehand he will live up to his name.

### **Gen. 25:29-34**

Gen. 25:29 "And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: 30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. 31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. 32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? 33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright."

The above passage tells us a lot about the two young men. First, we learn of Esau that he was only interested in living in the moment. He was looking for instant gratification. He was not concerned or worried about the future, but lived for the instant gratification of the moment. He was faint from his hunting and Jacob had made up a nice pot of red pottage. He was willing to give up his birthright in order to have a meal of red pottage. The instant gratification was to fulfill his fleshly lust for delicious pottage. He so lightly considered his own birthright as being important and valuable. After all, he reasoned, what good would it do him now if he could not have what his soul lusted after and that is a delicious meal of red pottage. He was all about fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind. He was typical of those who are children of wrath and of those who are children of God before they are born of the Spirit. Thus, Esau despised his birthright.

Jacob was a conniving businessman. While Jacob valued the birthright that belonged to his brother, he was willing to take advantage of any situation or even create a situation where he could get advantage. By offering his brother Esau a meal of beans in exchange for the birthright, Jacob showed his extreme selfishness as well. The unselfish thing would have been to give his brother a bowl of red pottage of beans. However, Jacob had lusted after his brother's birthright and obtained it through supplanting his brother with the offer to exchange the bowl of beans for his brother's birthright. Selfishness is the chief characteristic of God's children before the new birth.

### **Genesis 26:1-5**

Gen. 26:1 "And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. 2 And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: 3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform

the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father; 4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; 5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."

As children of God, trials are always a part of our lives. Isaac was no exception. A famine in that day placed peoples' lives in danger. The decision you made had better be the right decision or you and your family could starve to death. Isaac did that which is right. He followed the direction of the LORD: "And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: 3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee;" If you recall, Abraham had had some dealings with this Abimelech, king of the Philistines. Abimelech proved himself to be a king that feared the Lord. The Lord always knows what is best for us. He will always send us to the best place for us. He has the answers for us in the midst of our trials. As we will see later, The Lord was indeed with Isaac and did indeed bless Isaac in the land that he sojourned according to the direction of the Lord.

The covenant promise of the LORD passed in this passage from Abraham to Isaac: "for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father; 4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; 5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." The LORD had previously made these promises to Abraham. Now the torch is passed unto his son Isaac. However, the LORD points out to Isaac that the promises were not made to Isaac based on his merit, but because of Abraham's obedience to the voice, charge, commandments, statutes, and laws of God. God passed this great covenant promise on to Isaac by grace through the obedience of another. Likewise, the covenant promises of the covenant of redemption are passed along to the elect family of God not because of their obedience, but because of the obedience of Jesus Christ. It is strictly by the grace of God through Christ's obedience that we are called into spiritual life, justified by the blood of Jesus and that we will be raised and fashioned like the glorious body of Christ in the resurrection.

## **Gen. 26:6-11**

Gen. 26:6 "And Isaac dwelt in Gerar: 7 And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon. 8 And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife. 9 And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her. 10 And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us. 11 And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."

No matter what our background may have been or what we may have heard others say, we all have to experience growth in faith if we are to become the kind of disciples that we ought to become. Isaac had Abraham for his father. The scriptures tell us that Abraham is the father of the faithful. That is he is the example that we should follow in our faithful walk. Abraham, no doubt, told Isaac many of the experiences of the Lord's dealings with him and the many deliverances he had from the Lord. Isaac had been privy to the experiences of the faithful servant who had been blessed to find a wife (Rebekah) for Isaac. Yet, now, Isaac is called upon to trust in the Lord and go to the land the LORD showed him. He had the promise that the LORD would bless him and be with him in that land. Isaac believes God and goes to the land, but then does not believe God about the promise of the LORD being with him and blessing him!

We know that Isaac showed doubt because when the men of the place asked him of Rebekah, "he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon." If Isaac had trusted in the promises of God, he would not have feared to say that Rebekah was his wife. Yet, his fleshly doubt led to his lie about Rebekah being his sister. Moreover, this showed that Isaac had not yet reached the point of being the kind of husband that he ought to have been. A husband should be willing to die for his wife: Eph. 5:25 "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it..." Christ died for the church; therefore, a faithful husband should be willing to give his life for his bride.

Another lesson taught us in this passage is that parents set examples for their children and often the children follow those examples even if they are bad examples. Abraham and Sarah had done this same thing about telling a lie about their marital state twice. Now Isaac and Rebekah have followed their example. We should be very careful about the type of examples we set for our children.

"And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife." We can be sure that sooner or later our lies will be discovered. Abimelech looked out of his window and saw Isaac sporting with Rebekah his wife. This sporting was a sexual flirtation that husbands do with their wives, not with their sisters. Abimelech had been warned and chastened of the Lord for his looking upon Sarah and had learned his lesson well. He had made no such advances to Rebekah and rebuked Isaac and Rebekah for their foolish actions: "And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her. And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us. And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death." At this point in time, Abimelech proved himself to be more faithful than Isaac. However, that would change.

In this, the LORD proved his faithfulness to his promises even though Isaac had not fully trusted in the LORD. The Lord is gracious towards his people.

**Gen. 26:12-16**

Gen. 26:12 "Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him. 13 And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: 14 For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him. 15 For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth. 16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we."

In this modern day of mechanization and heavy and specialized equipment in farming, the farmer is able to break up his soil much more than his predecessors were able to do. Also, the farmer has fertilizers available to him that maximizes his production. Today, if the farmer gets a 30-40 fold return he thinks he has had a good crop. Yet, without all this, Isaac sowed in the land and received in the same year a hundredfold return. He did this because the LORD blessed him. The scriptures are plain that the LORD richly blessed Isaac and that is the reason that he waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great. When the LORD blesses a man he can do great things. The key is the LORD's blessings. The LORD had promised Isaac that he would bless him and now we have the abundant evidence of the LORD's blessings.

"For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him. 15 For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth." When the LORD blesses a man, those who are not following the LORD often become envious of that man who is being blessed. Envy invariably leads to jealousy and ultimately persecution. The greatest example of how this happens is illustrated for us by the envy of the Pharisees and Sadducees and chief priests against Christ:

1. Matt. 27:18 "For he knew that for envy they had delivered him."

2. Mark 15:10 "For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy." The Philistines envied the prosperity of both Abraham and Isaac. During Abraham's day they were afraid to do anything against Abraham, but after the death of Abraham they stopped the wells that Abraham's servants had dug with earth. Now their envy had turned upon Isaac.

"And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we." We have before shown that Abimelech feared God. Yet, he was a man subject to much political pressure. No doubt, this pressure was great for Abimelech to ask Isaac to leave and go from them. Abimelech succumbed to that pressure.

### **Gen. 26:17-22**

Gen. 26:17 "And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. 18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. 19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. 20 And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.

21 And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah. 22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

"And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there." Isaac did not argue with Abimelech or pick a fight with Abimelech. Isaac did not say that it wasn't fair that he had to leave, but rather Isaac knew that he was dwelling in Abimelech's land and that Abimelech was the king of that land and that he should respect the wishes of the king of that land. This principle of submission is taught to us in 1 Peter:2:13, 14: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well."

"And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them." Since the wells were good and valuable in Abraham's day, they would still be good and valuable in Isaac's day.

The Philistines envy of Abraham was the cause of their stopping the wells after the death of Abraham. They did not want to recognize the work of Abraham and his greatness. Likewise, today we see the envy and persecution against the work of the Lord's true church. The enemies of the church are envious of the Lord's blessings upon the church. If these enemies had their way they would stop the wells of the Lord's true church. They would stop people from drawing water out of the wells of salvation. They would stop the flow of the true gospel of the grace of Christ and would instead offer water from the broken cisterns that they had dug.

Just as Isaac called the names of the wells the same as his father Abraham had named them, so today, when we dig again the wells that our forefathers had drawn from, the names of God's grace, mercy, love, election, predestination, effectual calling are still used by those who have dug again the wells that were previously dug by our forefathers.

"And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water." This is similar to what we read in the New Testament: John 4:14 "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." When we dig into God's word, we uncover in our knowledge this well of springing water within us and drink of that which the Lord has given us and we never thirst for a redeemer again.

"And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him. And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah. And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land." It is apparent that Isaac was seeking for a place where he could be alone without strife. He was not trying to pick a fight with the Philistines, though it seems they were trying to pick a fight with him. The Lord's people in his true church have generally been a peace loving people who desire to have a quiet habitation. While their enemies often seek a fight against them, yet they strive to dwell peacefully

and seek a place separate from strife. When we find such a quiet habitation, we can do as Isaac and be fruitful in the land.

### **Gen. 26:23-25**

Gen. 26:23 "And he went up from thence to Beersheba. 24 And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake. 25 And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well."

Isaac went up to Beersheba. Beersheba literally means "well of the oath." It's name was about to be fulfilled. The servants of Isaac digged a well here. Later king Abimelech would come and make an oath with Isaac. Thus, the name of the place was appropriately named. Today, in the Lord's church we draw water out of the well of the oath; i.e., we drink of the covenant of redemption that God made before the foundation of the world. That covenant is stated for us in Rom. 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."

"And the LORD appeared unto him the same night..." The felt presence of the Lord is one of the greatest blessings we can experience this side of heaven. The Lord has promised: Matt. 18:20 "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." There is a location that is a great blessing from the Lord. When the church gathers in the Lord name, they are at that location that is a great blessing from the Lord. Likewise, Isaac had gone to the location the Lord instructed him of and the Lord appeared unto him. When we gather ourselves together and drink water out of the well of God's eternal covenant of redemption, the Lord appears unto us and greatly blesses us with his felt presence.

"And said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake." Fear not is a term that indicates that when we put our trust in the Lord we have no reason to fear for the Lord is with us. Moreover, the Lord said to Isaac that "I am with thee..." Oftentimes the Lord is with us and we don't even recognize it. But what a blessing it is to us when the Lord makes his presence known unto us. The Lord not only spoke of the present tense but also of the future tense as he said "I will bless thee." What a blessing it is to have the promise from the Lord of future blessings. He has blessed us, he is blessing us, and he will bless us. God also promised that he would multiply Isaac's seed. That is also a blessing from the Lord to know that God will multiply your seed. The Lord also told Isaac why he would multiply his seed: "for my servant Abraham's sake." Being blessed for someone else's sake is nevertheless a blessing. We are blessed today for Christ's sake. We are blessed not because we deserve it, but we are blessed because of Christ and his work on the cross and his causing us to be born of the Spirit.

"And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there..." Based on the presence and the promises of God, Isaac did

exactly what he should have done. He builded an altar there. That is he worshipped God in the place of God's blessings. Moreover, he called upon the name of the LORD there. A God who has promised us such great things, is worthy for us to call upon his name. Since, he can deliver with such great deliverances, he can deliver us in our daily cares and needs as well. Isaac also pitched his tent there. This is the perfect spot for Isaac to pitch his tent. This (the church) is also the perfect spot to pitch our tent and rest under the umbrella of the gospel of God's grace. Hearing the good news of an ever present God and all the great things that he has and will do for us is a great motivation to us to pitch our tent among the Lord's humble people.

"And there Isaac's servants digged a well." When the gospel ministers preach to us from the unsearchable riches of God's word, they have digged a well in the fountain of God's word and we are made partakers of the waters of God's glorious gospel.

### **Gen. 26:26-33**

Gen. 26:26 "Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army. 27 And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? 28 And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; 29 That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the LORD. 30 And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. 31 And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. 32 And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. 33 And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day."

The Philistine king, the king's friend, and the chief captain of the king's army all went to Isaac to talk unto him and ask him to make a covenant with them. This is a direct recognition that Isaac had become greater than all the nation of the Philistines. The lesser goes to the greater when desiring peace. Isaac had previously been asked to leave the city of the king's habitation for he had grown great and the envy of the people put political pressure upon the king to send Isaac away. Now, the Philistines are greatly afraid of Isaac as he has grown so great in their sight. The LORD had greatly prospered Isaac in this land.

When this entourage came to Isaac, "Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?" In Isaac's mind he had been sent away because of envy and hatred toward him. While this may have been true concerning the multitudes of the king's city, yet I do not believe it to be true of the king himself. He had succumbed, however, to political pressure and had sent Isaac away.

"And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; 29 That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the LORD." This is a reflection of the fear that the people had concerning

Isaac. They were afraid that he would arise and do them harm and they saw that he was wealthier and mightier than they. Thus, they desired a covenant of peace with Isaac. Again, the weaker party seeks out the greater when desiring peace.

They claimed that they had not touched Isaac and had done unto him nothing but good and sent him away in peace. While there is no indication that they had touched Isaac, yet many of the people had strived with him over two or three of the wells that he had dug. Further, it is a stretch to think that they had sent him away in peace, but rather they had sent him away because of their envy of him. However, they were right about one thing; Isaac had indeed become the blessed of the LORD. That in itself was reason for them to seek peace with Isaac. A man can be overcome, but the LORD cannot be overcome.

As we had noted before, Isaac had sought a quiet and peaceable habitation when he experienced the strife over the wells. Therefore, it was also in his best interest to enter into a covenant of peace with the Philistines. The two parties swore one to another and feasted together showing their ready agreement with the covenant of peace treaty.

"And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day." Like Isaac, we have peace with God because of a covenant that God made before the world began. Thus, when we dig into God's word, we find water that satisfies the longings for peace in the soul of God's children.

### **Gen. 26:34-35**

Gen. 26:34 "And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: 35 Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." Isaac and Rebekah both knew that the nations of people that dwelled in the land of Canaan had been marked out by the Lord for destruction. They also knew that the promised seed would not go through the lineage of the Hittites. Moreover, they knew that the ways of the Hittites were wicked in the sight of God. They knew that the grandchildren that would come from that marriage would be brought up in the ways of the Hittites. Thus, it was a grief of mind to both Isaac and to Rebekah. This also teaches us the importance of marrying a godly mate.

### **Gen. 27:1-4**

This chapter of Genesis has a theme. The theme is everyone is acting on fleshly impulses. No one bothered to pray or to seek the will of God in the matter of Isaac's blessing! The major lesson of this chapter is found in Gal. 6:7-10: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men,

especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, and Jacob all sowed to the flesh in this chapter. We will see what they reaped.

Gen. 27:1 "And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die."

Apparently it was believed that a man had a blessing for one of his children that he could bestow before the day of his death. Isaac was intent on giving this blessing to Esau. Isaac was aware of the things that God had told Rebekah concerning the affairs of their two sons: Gen. 25:22 "And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Despite what God had said, Isaac loved Esau: Gen. 25:27 "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. 28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob."

Isaac was determined to give his blessing upon Esau, his firstborn and favored child. Isaac did not seek the LORD's guidance in the matter for his mind was already made up as to what he was going to do.

We should understand that God will keep his promises regardless of the actions of men. Even if Isaac had given the blessing to Esau, God would have still kept his promise. Isaac's determination was not about to alter what God had promised. Isaac's determination to bless Esau was contrary to the promise of God and Isaac acted on this fleshly desire by having Esau go and take some venison and bring him some savory meat.

Esau also acted on his fleshly desires. Of course, Esau could only act on his fleshly desires as he was not one of God's elect children. Esau knew that he had sold his birthright to Jacob for a pot of beans. Esau had little use for the birthright beforehand. Now Esau wanted the blessing of his father. Esau did not see himself being bound by his actions or by the agreements that he entered into. Later he thought that he could still have it all by purposing to kill his brother Jacob.

### **Gen. 27:5-10**

Gen. 27:5 "And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. 6 And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, 7 Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before my death. 8 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. 9 Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: 10 And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death."

Rebekah had heard the conversation between Isaac and Esau. She also knew what God had promised her concerning the twins in her womb. She loved Jacob and was determined that Jacob would receive his father's blessing. Again, we reiterate, the promise of God is sure and will not be altered by the actions of men. However, Rebekah had tied the promise of God with the blessing of Isaac. She was determined that she would have Isaac bless Jacob instead of Esau. Rebekah believed that Isaac's determination to bless Esau was wrong. She did not confer with Isaac about the matter, neither did she pray to the LORD for guidance. She took matters into her own hand according to her fleshly desires. She cooked up a scheme to deceive Isaac and brought Jacob into her scheme of deception. She would make Jacob appear as though he were Esau and when Isaac pronounced the blessing he would think he was blessing Esau when in fact he would be blessing Jacob. When we follow the direction of the Lord we do not have to deceive and lie. Isaac and Rebekah had been married for about ninety years at this time and we have Rebekah lying to and practicing deception on her husband.

### **Gen. 27:11-16**

Gen. 27:11 "And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man: 12 My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. 13 And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them. 14 And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved. 15 And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: 16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck:"

Sometimes it is important to notice what is not said as well as what is said. Notice that Jacob did not say to his mother that it would be wrong to deceive my father. Rather he pointed out the perceived problems with deceiving his father. He was all for deceiving his father. He just did not want his father to know that he was deceiving him.

The scheme included getting Jacob to look and feel like his brother Esau. Both Jacob and Rebekah were taking advantage of the fact that Isaac was nearly blind. Rebekah took care of the problem by clothing Jacob in Esau's clothing and in putting skins of the kids of the goats upon Jacob's hands and the smooth of his neck.

### **Gen. 27:17-24**

Gen. 27:17 "And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. 18 And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son? 19 And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. 20 And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God

brought it to me. 21 And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. 22 And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. 23 And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him. 24 And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am."

In the above Jacob lied four times:

1. "Who art thou, my son? 19 And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn;"
2. "I have done according as thou badest me."
3. "How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought it to me."
4. "Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am."

Moreover, Jacob invoked the name of the LORD in his lies.

According to the theme of chapter 27 we note here that Isaac had practiced deception in telling the men of the Philistines that Rebekah was his sister and not his wife. Now we see Isaac being deceived by his own wife and son. Again we quote from Gal. 6:7, 8: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Isaac had sowed to the flesh with deception and now he is reaping of the deception that was being practiced upon him. This should be a great lesson upon each of us. It is far better to sow to the Spirit and reap the fruit of that eternal life that God has given us than to sow to the flesh and reap the corruption of the flesh.

### **Gen. 27:25-29**

Gen. 27:25 "And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank. 26 And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. 27 And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed: 28 Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: 29 Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee."

We ask ourselves the following questions concerning the blessings upon Jacob:

1. Were these pronounced blessings from the LORD?
2. Would Jacob have received these blessings if Isaac had not been deceived?

The answer to the first question would appear to be yes based on all the resulting history of Jacob's progeny. Throughout much of Israel's history the above things were true. Certainly, we know that these blessings were not based on the good actions of Jacob. He did nothing to deserve these blessings. It was by the grace of God that these things came to pass.

The answer to the question also appears to be yes. God had made known that he chose Jacob and did not choose Esau even before the children were born. We read in Rom. 9:10-13: "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." What we must remember is that God will accomplish his promises regardless of the actions or inactions of men. Isaac could not have prevented the blessings upon Jacob regardless of what he planned to do concerning blessing Esau. How this would have played out if Isaac had not been deceived we will never know, but we do know that God would still have brought the blessings upon Jacob.

### **Gen. 27:30-40**

Gen. 27:30 "And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. 31 And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. 32 And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau. 33 And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.

34 And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. 35 And he said, Thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing. 36 And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? 37 And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?

38 And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. 39 And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; 40 And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck."

Three of the four individuals in the 27<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis were children of God and one was not a child of God. Esau was not chosen of God and we read that God hated him. The non-elect are never born of the Spirit of God and their actions are always selfish fleshly actions. Esau accused Jacob of taking away his birthright through subtlety. Yet that is not true. Esau had known exactly what he was doing in selling his birthright. Jacob certainly took advantage of the opportunity, but he did not deceive or use subtlety to take away Esau's birthright.

Moreover the blessing was never Esau's blessing, though he certainly thought it was his. No doubt, Jacob used subtlety to deceive his father. However, the blessing was from the LORD and it was going to be Jacob's blessing all along. This principle of the blessing never being Esau's blessing is set forth for us in the book of Hebrews: Heb. 12:16 "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." When Esau sold his birthright, he also gave up his right to the blessing. The blessing was to go to the son with the birthright and that is Jacob. Moreover, this birthright belonged to Jacob by proclamation from God, even before they were born and even though Jacob was the second born.

Esau's tears were not able to return the birthright or the blessing to Esau.

Esau asked Isaac if he had reserved a blessing for him and Isaac made a pronouncement concerning him and the subsequent nation of Edom. This pronouncement also appears to be from the Lord. Just because Esau was not a child of God does not mean that none of his progeny were not children of God, for, no doubt, some of them were. However, the pronouncement upon Edom came true as the pronouncement from God upon Israel came true.

### **Gen. 28:1-5**

Gen. 28:1 "And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. 2 Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. 3 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; 4 And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham. 5 And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padanaram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother."

After that Isaac had caused great harm to his family by seeking to bless Esau without either seeking guidance of the LORD or considering what the LORD had told Rebekah concerning the two sons, Isaac learned his lesson and called Jacob and blessed him with the blessing that he should have blessed him with without the deceitful antics of Rebekah and Jacob.

Previously, Abraham had instructed his most trusted servant to go to Padanaram and seek a wife for Isaac of the house of his kindred. The LORD led the servant to Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel and the sister of Laban. Abraham was very specific that the servant was not to bring a wife of the daughters of the Canaanites. Of course, Rebekah became the wife of Isaac. Now following this example, Isaac instructs Jacob to go to the same place and seek a wife among the daughters of Laban. One of the reasons that the Canaanites would not be a suitable wife for either Isaac or Jacob was that God was going to destroy the nations that occupied the land of Canaan. If either Isaac or Jacob had married a Canaanite, then it would have been hard for them and their

descendents to destroy the nations that occupied the land of Canaan. Also, the Canaanites with their wicked ways and idolatrous practices would have turned the hearts of Isaac, Jacob, and their descendents from following the Lord.

Moreover, we have the best example of finding a spouse shown to us by example in the scriptures. Abraham had sought a wife for Isaac and besought the Lord in helping him to do so. Isaac instructed Jacob of where to find a spouse and besought the Lord of Jacob's behalf. This method is still the best method today for finding the right spouse for God's children.

"And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; 4 And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham." God's blessing and promise had previously been passed to Isaac. Moreover, Isaac had already learned from the Lord that Jacob was chosen of God to be the recipient of God's covenant promise and not Esau. Thus, Isaac officially passed the torch to Jacob. Now the LORD himself would appear to Jacob and confirm that he would inherit the promises that were previously made to Abraham and Isaac. We also note in this passage, that Abraham and Isaac inherited the land by promise as they did not have possession of the land. Possession of the land would not come for several generations. Yet, the land was theirs by covenant promise. Now the land would be Jacob's and his offspring by covenant promise.

"And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padanaram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother." Now, both Isaac and Jacob are acting in obedience to the covenant promise that God had made to Abraham and Isaac. Isaac was being obedient in sending Jacob away to find a bride among the daughters of Laban and Jacob was acting in obedience in going to Padanaram to find a bride among the daughters of Laban.

As a side note, Jacob was about 70 years of age when he went to Padanaram.

## **Gen. 28:6-9**

Gen. 28:6 "When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; 7 And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padanaram; 8 And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father; 9 Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife."

Previously Esau had taken wives of the daughters of Canaan. These were a distress to both Isaac and Rebekah. Esau, an alien from the covenants of promise, always acted in a selfish manner. Whatever he did, he sought to do for his own selfish reasons. This is the nature of fallen man. It is the nature of an individual who has not been born of the Spirit of God. Esau now sought the favor of his father for gain. He did not need another wife, yet he saw that his previous wives did not please his father, so he sought to please his father by taking a wife of the daughters of Ishmael. Isaac had not told or besought Esau to do this, yet selfishly Esau thought that by taking Mahalath to be his

wife that Isaac would be pleased. Of course, Esau was not seeking to please God by his actions.

### **Gen. 28:10-15**

Gen. 28:10 "And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. 11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. 12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. 13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; 14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

"And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. 11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep." Jacob was doing what his father had told him to do. The setting was one that would seem somewhat scary and troubling to a traveler. Jacob had a long journey to travel from Beersheba to Padanaram. He had traveled all day and now it was nightfall. Jacob had left his home, knowing that he had a brother that was determined to kill him, and was traveling to a strange place. He dwelt in a country that was by its nature and inhabitants different from him. He was going on a task that I am sure he had doubts about. Jacob was a man that had spent much of his time dwelling in tents. Now he is in the open field and his provision for sleeping was to take stones out of the field and use them for pillows. No doubt he felt alone with a troubled mind as he lay down to sleep.

Like Jacob experienced, sometimes the Lord appears unto us at the most troubling times in our lives. Jacob was not expecting a visit from the Lord and sometimes we receive visits from the Lord in our experiences that we are not expecting.

The scene that followed had elements that are typical of God's promises and work in the covenant of redemption stated to us in Rom. 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 promise that God had made to Abraham and confirmed to Isaac was now to be confirmed to Jacob. Previously, Isaac had spoken to Jacob about the promise, but now it was to be given to him personally by God himself.

Again, we notice that the promise is delivered by God using the name, LORD. As we have seen several times previously in the book of Genesis, the word, LORD, refers to God as a covenant making, covenant keeping God. Now the LORD is about to confirm the covenant promise to Jacob.

"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." The

word, ladder, appears only once in the scriptures. Since, the word only appears once, we need to key on some other phrase to get the meaning of the ladder in Jacob's dream. For this we find a similar sentence in the New Testament: John 1:51 "And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." By comparing these two scriptures we conclude that the ladder is typical of the "Son of man."

The ladder in Jacob's dream was a bridge between earth and heaven. Christ, as the son of man, is our bridge between earth and heaven. Notice that in the Genesis account the ladder begins on earth and extends to heaven, whereas in the John account only heaven is mentioned. It seems to me that both are true. The work of Christ originated in heaven. However, the work of Christ bridges man to God or earth to heaven.

Christ came down from heaven to save his people from their sins. He was born of a virgin and conceived of the Holy Ghost. He kept the law perfectly and at the appointed time he went to the cross where He that was without sin was made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

"And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; 14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." It was revealed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that the promised seed would be as the dust of the earth, the sand of the sea shore, and as the stars of heaven. All three of the analogies contain a number that cannot be counted for multitude. The seed, we are told in Gal. 3:16 is Christ: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Christ is the promised seed. The multitude of this seed is found in the covenant election of God: Rom. 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow..." and Eph. 1:4 "According as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world..." The apostle John was given a vision of this great multitude in Rev. 7:9, 10: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

The extensiveness of this multiplied seed, we are told, is found in the fact that it "spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Thus, God has an elect people in all sections of the earth and in all families of the earth!

"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." This promise that the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would possess the land of Canaan was by covenant promise and was made sure by God. He assured beforehand that they would possess it by covenant promise. This points us to the covenant promise made in the covenant of redemption: "them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren..." This promise of being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ was made by God before the world began. The word, predestinate, means to determine and

assure the final destiny beforehand. The final destiny of the elect is to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. This is ultimately accomplished in the resurrection. This also was spoken of in the covenant of redemption: "And whom he justified, them he also glorified. In the resurrection we will be glorified to the extent that we will be in the image of Jesus Christ.

One last thing I want to show in the subject passage: "behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it..." and "the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Angels in the scripture are defined as "messengers" and "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Not only are there heavenly creatures known as angels, but sometimes the gospel ministers are called angels. Gospel ministers ascend in Spirit through prayers, studies, and meditations, to receive the heavenly messages sent from God and descend to deliver them to the Lord's people in preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are ascending and descending upon the completed work of Jesus Christ that he accomplished in redeeming his people from their sins.

### **Gen. 28:16-19**

Gen. 28:16 "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. 17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. 18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. 19 And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first."

Previous to the dream we had no evidence that Jacob had ever called on the name of the Lord or had ever had fellowship with God before this. We did see Jacob acting out the behavior his name indicated. The name, Jacob, means supplanter. Jacob had supplanted his brother, Esau in the matter of the birthright and the blessing of Isaac. Jacob also had conspired to lie and deceive his father. Now, we begin to see a very dramatic change in Jacob's life. This change did not originate with Jacob, but rather with God.

The dream had a life-changing effect upon Jacob. As he said, "Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not." When a person comes to the realization that the LORD is watching over him and is present with him, then it often brings about a change in the life of that individual. We also see that Jacob began to fear God based on his dream and experience: "And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Jacob called the place where he had the dream: "the house of God." He also referred to the ladder as the "gate of heaven." A gate serves as an entrance point. Also, a gate in cities is often the place where the government of the city took place. As we have previously seen the ladder is a type of the covenant work of Jesus Christ. It is through the covenant work of Christ that we have entrance (gate) unto heaven. Moreover, the Lord's church is the governing body of the kingdom of heaven.

Jacob called the name of the place where he had the dream, Bethel. The name, Bethel, literally means house of God.

"And took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it..." Oil in the scriptures was used for anointing and dedication. This act of Jacob was to recognize and dedicate the place where he had been as the house of God and a place of worship.

### **Gen. 28:20-22**

Gen. 28:20 "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: 22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

Several have held to the idea that Jacob was bargaining with the Lord in this passage. However, I do not think that was the case. Oftentimes in the scriptures when the word, if, is used it is used for a line of reasoning. Rather than bringing doubt and questioning if something will be so or not, it is used as a line of reasoning from an established fact. Oftentimes, the word, since, can be substituted for the word, if. As an example: "if this be so, then this is so" can be read as "since this be so, then this is so." I believe this was the case in the above passage.

Notice that Jacob was vowing a vow. This would not have been based on doubt of speculation, but rather on an established fact. The above could thus be read, "Since God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on..." Thus Jacob was saying this is what I am going to do since the above things are so:

1. I recognize that God is my God.
2. I recognize that this pillar is God's house.
3. I will give a tenth of all that the Lord gives me unto the Lord.

Rather than doubt or a bargain, this seems to me to be a dedication.

### **Gen. 29:1-3**

Gen. 29:1 "Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east. 2 And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone was upon the well's mouth. 3 And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place."

As Jacob continued on his journey he had God's covenant promises resonating in his heart and was no doubt comforted by them. When he came to the land of the people of the east, he came to a well of water. Wells in that day were very important for the livelihood of the people and of the animals of those countries. This is still true in some countries today. Man and animals cannot survive very long without water. Water is essential to the maintenance of life. Wells, therefore, became gathering places for the shepherds and their flocks. Also, the women went out to draw water out of the wells for

their families to drink, to cook, and to wash clothes. The wells, for many people, were social gathering places.

The wells, in the scriptures, are often used to teach us spiritual lessons. For instance, when the children of Israel came into the wilderness from Egypt, they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees. It just so happened that the nation of Israel had twelve princes and seventy elders to govern the people. This parallels the twelve apostles and seventy elders the Lord used in the establishment of the New Testament church.

Often, oaths or covenants were made in the proximity of wells. The wells were often named after the oath or covenant. The bible speaks of drawing water from the wells of salvation. Our souls are watered by the gospel of Jesus Christ that tells us of the covenant of redemption and the work of Christ under the covenant of redemption to redeem us from our sins and give us a hope of heaven's glory world.

Since, all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable..., then the above passage concerning a well must also be profitable to learn about as well. The well was in a field. Now that is not surprising, but it is also significant, because the "field" is often used as a parallel to the "world" in which we live. We have a spiritual well for God's born-again children in this wicked world in which we live. In John chapter 4, the Lord spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well. He told her in John 4:10: "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." He also told the woman in v. 14: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Christ is that well from which we drink spiritual water springing up into everlasting life. Moreover, Christ is in us, the hope of glory.

There were three flocks of sheep by the well that Jacob came upon. Likewise, we can see that God has a people among the Hamites, the Shemites, and the Japhethites. Another way of looking at this is that God had a people under the law covenant, he has a people under the grace covenant, and he has a people embraced in the covenant of redemption.

"And a great stone was upon the well's mouth." This great stone had to be removed to enable the flocks to drink. Jesus was buried in Joseph's new tomb. There was a great stone rolled across the front of the sepulcher. It took several men to roll the stone over the opening, yet, a mighty angel rolled the stone away. We feast on the spiritual waters of knowing that Christ rose victorious over death, hell, and the grave, having delivered us from our sins. Now, we know that Jesus could have come out of that grave without the stone being rolled away. However, the stone was rolled away that man may look upon the empty tomb.

"And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep..." Truly, all of God's elect are gathered around the work of redemption manifest by the empty tomb, signifying the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

## **Gen. 29:4-8**

Gen. 29:4 "And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? And they said, Of Haran are we. 5 And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him. 6 And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. 7 And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go and feed them. 8 And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep."

In the above passage we see the providence of God leading Jacob to the place and people he was to go to. Jacob's father and mother had told him to go to Haran and find a wife among the daughters of Laban. Laban, of course, was Rebekah's brother. Jacob's lot was to come upon a well where men and flocks were gathered together. When he inquired of where they were from, he was told they were from Haran. When he inquired if they knew Laban the son of Nahor, they said "We know him." It just so happened that the youngest daughter of Laban came out with the sheep at that time. These are a lot of coincidences. Yet God often works in the lives of others to arrange coincidences to accomplish his purpose.

"And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go and feed them. And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep." When Jacob asked the men to water the sheep the men told him that they could not until all the flocks were gathered together and "they" roll the stone from the well's mouth. This suggests that the stone over the well was a very large stone and required multiple men to roll it away.

### **Gen. 29:9, 10**

Gen. 29:9 "And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them. 10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother."

There is no reason to think that Jacob was a particularly strong man, but when God blesses us then we are enabled by the enabling power of God to do things that otherwise we could not do. The stone that otherwise required several men to roll away Jacob rolled away by himself. Jacob was anxious to see the fulfillment of his journey and to meet the family that he had been sent to. Thus, by the enabling strength of God Jacob rolled the large stone away and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

### **Gen. 29:11-14**

Gen. 29:11 "And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. 12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father. 13 And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his

sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things. 14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month."

"And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept." This is the first time that the word, kiss, appears in the scriptures. There is no reason to assume this is a romantic kiss, but most likely a kiss upon the cheek. The context suggests this as Jacob lifted up his voice and wept. Jacob was overcome with joy at the encounter of meeting the daughter of his mother's brother for the first time.

"And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father." Rachel was likewise thrilled to meet the son of Laban's sister. This was a surprise as the distance between them was great and many years had passed since Rebekah had left Haran to go to be the wife of Isaac. Most likely Laban and his family probably never expected to see any of Rebekah's family. To have Jacob come was an emotional time for Laban and his family.

"And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house." We see a very similar reaction from Laban towards Jacob that both Jacob and Rachel had experienced in their meeting. Laban readily opened his house to Jacob.

"And he told Laban all these things. 14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month." Upon hearing the certainty of Jacob's story, Laban said, "Surely, thou art my bone and my flesh." Most likely they had much catching up to do about the lives of the respective families as Jacob abode with Laban by the space of a month. However, this arrangement was about to change as Laban will make a proposition to Jacob for earning wages for his keep.

### **Gen. 29:15-20**

Gen. 29:15 "And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be? 16 And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured. 18 And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter. 19 And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me. 20 And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her."

In this passage we get some hints as to the desire and motive of Laban towards Jacob. Laban saw an opportunity to profit off the presence and visitation of his nephew Jacob. He set forth to bargain for Jacob's service. The agreement was that Jacob would serve Laban for seven years and then Laban would give to Jacob his daughter Rachel to wife.

It is clear also that Jacob looked upon the two daughters of Laban and saw that Rachel was by far the most beautiful of the two. Leah had tender eyes, but Rachel was beautiful and well favored. Jacob was so smitten by the beauty of Rachel that his seven years of service seemed only like a few days. It has also been my experience that when we looked forward to something with great joy and work towards that hope that times

passes swiftly by. However, when we are bored or in dread of something, then the time seems to drag by.

### **Gen. 29:21-30**

Gen. 29:21 “And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her. 22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. 23 And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in unto her. 24 And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid for an handmaid. 25 And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah: and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me? 26 And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. 27 Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. 28 And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also. 29 And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid. 30 And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.”

The scriptures teach us “that whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Jacob had deceived his father, Isaac; had lied to him; and had taken a blessing that was intended for his brother, Esau; and had taken advantage of the fact that his father was practically blind. In the above passage we see what Laban did unto his nephew Jacob. Laban and Jacob had an agreement that Jacob would work seven years for Laban and then Laban would give to Jacob his daughter Rachel. The time had come for Laban to fulfill the promise and give Jacob his daughter Rachel to wife. Instead, Laban gathered the men of the place to gather and had a wedding feast. No doubt there was much drinking of wine at the wedding feast so that Jacob would not have the sharpest of senses when Laban pulled his shenanigan. Moreover, it was night when Laban gave to Jacob Leah instead of Rachel. My guess is that Laban probably thought he would have a hard time marrying off Leah, so he made the switch.

As Jacob lay with Leah that night, I am sure that he thought he was laying with Rachel. When the morning came and with it the light of day Jacob discovered that it was Leah and not Rachel. Jacob was not pleased and he rebuked Laban: “What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?” Jacob had been lied to, deceived, and taken advantage of during the night when he could not see and had been give the first born and not the second. See how this almost matches the deception Jacob had practiced upon his father, Isaac? Moreover, Laban answered Jacob thusly: “It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.” Jacob had promoted himself before his firstborn brother Esau. Jacob had sowed what he had previously reaped.

Laban now shows his true colors and what he had intended all along when he said “Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.” Thus for a week Jacob was to know Leah only and then at the end of the week, he was given Rachel to wife also. However, to get Rachel, Jacob

was to serve Laban for seven more years. So by Laban's deception, he accomplished the marrying off of his older daughter Leah and got twice as much service from his nephew Jacob than what they had originally bargained for. However, we must remember that God is not mocked, but whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. Laban purposed to increase his wealth by deceiving Jacob and for a good while this plan seemed to work. However, as we will see God will take the wealth of Laban and give it to Jacob and his family.

Of significance in the above account, we see that Laban had given to each of his daughters when they were married a handmaid to serve them. These two maids will become tools to the two sisters as they battle for the affection of their husband Jacob.

Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. There are many biblical arguments against polygamy. Jacobs love for Rachel more than he loved Leah is a great practical lesson against polygamy. This set off a reaction of bitterness, strife, and hatred between the two wives of Jacob.

### **Gen. 29:31-34**

Gen. 29:31 "And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren. 32 And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me. 33 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name Simeon. 34 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called Levi. 35 And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I praise the LORD: therefore she called his name Judah; and left bearing."

It seems to me that it is in the fallen nature of the woman that she will somehow feel herself to be inadequate in her role as wife and mother. Here we have two sisters both vying for the affection of a common husband. One sister, Leah, feels herself to be inadequate in the area of feminine appearance. The other sister, Rachel, feels herself inadequate because of not being able to produce children as her sister does. There was a constant warfare between the two sisters.

Our adequacy does not rest in the natural appearance or abilities. Rather our adequacy rest in the Lord. The Lord saw that Jacob favored Rachel and gave Leah something that Rachel did not have. He gave her children. However, rather than being satisfied with the beautiful gift that God had given her and rejoicing in the children that God had given her, she used the birth of her children as a tool to convince her husband to love her as he loved Rachel or even more than he loved Rachel.

In the above passage we have recorded the birth of Leah's first four sons. Each one was given a name based on the feeling Leah had at the time. Leah felt to be afflicted when the first born came, so she named him "Reuben" which means afflicted. Likewise, when the second born was born she named him "Simeon" because she said that the Lord had "heard" that she was hated. The word, "Simeon" means "The Lord heard." She named the third "Levi" because that thru his birth she believed that Jacob would be

“joined” unto her. The name “Levi” means “joined.” With the birth of her fourth born son Leah “praised” the Lord, so she called him name “Judah” which means “praise.”

With each of the twelve sons of Jacob and with the two sons of Joseph, names were given to them at birth that we are given the meaning of and this is significant elsewhere in the scriptures. Highly frequently in the scriptures, the Holy Ghost moves men to write about things that will be later significant in the later canon of scriptures. Knowing the meanings of the names of the sons and two grandsons of Jacob are useful to our understanding of the first part of the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation.

### **Gen. 30:1-8**

Gen. 30:1 “And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. 2 And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? 3 And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. 4 And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her. 5 And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. 6 And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan. 7 And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. 8 And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali.”

In the above passage we see that Rachel was not satisfied with the affection and love of her husband, but was envious of her sister’s reproductive ability. Rather than look at her own inability to have children, she blames it upon Jacob and demands that he give her children. In this Jacob appropriately replied, “Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?” Obviously Jacob could father children, but it was God who had withheld from her the fruit of the womb. Rather than praying that the Lord would give her the ability to have children she came up with her own perverted plan. “And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her.” The plan was reprehensible in several areas:

1. Bilhah was her hand maid meaning that she was a bond servant.

However, to make a bondservant a concubine for your husband is morally wrong and an abuse of power over the poor bond maid.

2. Rachel is claiming the children of her bond maid for herself, which is also reprehensible.

3. Jacob was complicit when the scheme and could certainly have put a stop to it, but rather went along with it.

The above was an escalation of the war between the two sisters, who were warring for the affection of Jacob. It seems foolish to me that anyone would look at the polygamy of this clan of people and think that somehow that God has authorized the practice of bigamy or polygamy.

It is easily discernable that both Leah and Rachel was greatly dissatisfied with having to share their husband. Moreover, Jacob could not have been happy to have to listen to the constant complaints of these two sisters. Surely, God’s way of marriage between one man and one woman is far better than any bigamist or polygamist arrangement.

Again, we see the names of the two sons in the above passage related to the feelings of the sisters. The name “Dan” means “judged” because Rachel said that God had judged her. The name “Naphthali” means “wrestling” because Rachel said that she had great wrestlings with her sister and had prevailed.

### **Gen. 30:9-13**

Gen. 30:9 “When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife. 10 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son. 11 And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad. 12 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son. 13 And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher.”

In this passage, Leah counters the action of her sister Rachel by giving her maid, Zilpah to Jacob to wife. The only motivation that I can see for this action is that she wanted to stay ahead of Rachel in the race for children. This action was just as morally odious as the previous action of Rachel in giving her maid to Jacob for wife.

The children, like the previous sons, were named according to the thinking of the two sisters at the time of their birth. The name “Gad” means “troop” after the statement of Leah, “A troop cometh.” The name “Asher” means “happy” after Leah’s statement “Happy am I.”

### **Gen. 30:14-21**

Gen. 30:14 “And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. 15 And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes. 16 And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. 17 And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. 18 And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar. 19 And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son. 20 And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun. 21 And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah.”

In the above passage we see another turn in the war between the sisters as they bargain over a mandrake for the right to sleep with Jacob. Rachel wanted one of Leah’s sons mandrakes and Leah wanted to sleep with Jacob. Thus, the bargain was made and Jacob was informed that he was to lay with Leah because of the bargain. Thus, the intimacies of Jacob were being traded for the carnal desires of the two sisters. Consequently, Leah bare the fifth son to Jacob. She called his name, Issachar, meaning “hire” as she had hired Jacob’s affection for a mandrake. Subsequently, Leah bare the

sixth son to Jacob and called his name “Zebulun” which means “dwell” as Leah thought by having the sixth son that surely Jacob would want to dwell with her rather than Rachel. Finally, Leah had a daughter and called her name “Dinah.” We are not given the meaning of the name, Dinah. As we shall see later, Dinah shall not bear children and thus will not be a continuing part of Jacob’s heritage.

### **Gen. 30:22-24**

Gen. 30:22 “And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. 23 And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: 24 And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son.”

In the war between the two sisters, Leah had desperately wanted the affection of her husband Jacob and God gave her an abundance of children. In contrast, Rachel desperately wanted children and God gave her the affections of Jacob. Now, God remembers Rachel and gives her a son and she named him “Joseph.” The word “Joseph” means “adding.”

God is merciful and manifests his mercy to both sisters, even though they fought against each other. Yet the mercies of God are great. God ultimately gave Rachel what she so desperately wanted and would later add a second child, Benjamin. In child birth, however, Rachel would die. At that point, Leah, would get what she so desperately wanted and that is the undivided affection of her husband Jacob. Both women had acted at times in a morally reprehensible manner, yet God in his mercy and by his grace blessed both women. When I think about God’s dealings with these two sisters, I am made to think of myself and how that at times I have not been what I should have been, yet God has blessed me according to his mercies and according to his grace.

### **Gen. 30:25-36**

Gen. 30:25 “And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. 26 Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee. 27 And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake. 28 And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it. 29 And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me. 30 For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the LORD hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?

31 And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock. 32 I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted

cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire. 33 So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me. 34 And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.

35 And he removed that day the he goats that were ringstreaked and spotted, and all the she goats that were speckled and spotted, and every one that had some white in it, and all the brown among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons. 36 And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.”

The time for Jacob to return to the land of Canaan had come and Jacob went to his uncle Laban to get his blessings to return to the land of Canaan. Laban told Jacob that he had learned by experience that the Lord had blessed him for Jacob’s sake. This parallels the fact that God has blessed us for Christ’s sake. Also, we know that sometimes we receive blessings because of our proximity to other people as well. I believe there have been times that the Lord has abundantly blessed the preaching of his word for certain individuals in the congregation and it was a blessing for all the members of the congregation. This should also encourage us to make close fellowship with godly people as we may be blessed for their sake.

Again, Laban proposes a contract of work with Jacob. Jacob has learned by past experience not to trust Laban with his proposals and this one will be different only in that the Lord intercedes on behalf of Jacob and his family.

Laban considered the contract of labor to be a gift that he was giving Jacob, however, Jacob believed that he would earn through his labor the portion that would fall to him.

Jacob proposed to again care for the flock of Laban and the wages would be only those cattle that had certain markings on them. To this Laban agreed. However, Jacob said that he would separate out those who had the particular marking at the beginning and Laban beat Jacob to it and gave those marked cattle into the hands of his sons.

### **Gen. 30:37-43**

Gen. 30:37 “And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut tree; and pilled white streaks in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods. 38 And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink. 39 And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstreaked, speckled, and spotted. 40 And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstreaked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle. 41 And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. 42 But when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. 43 And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.”

The above illustrates that God knew and revealed the truth even when men were convinced of fables. Jacob thought that when cattle conceived when they were looking at certain objects that the cattle would be in likeness to the objects. This was apparently widely believed at that time. Of course at one time, the earth was believed to be flat and not round, but the scriptures told us multiple centuries before that God sitteth upon the “circle” of the earth!

At first Jacob believed that his practice of putting objects before the cattle was the cause of the cattle bringing forth young in the likeness of those objects. However, later God showed Jacob the truth: Gen. 31:9 “Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me. 10 And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstreaked, speckled, and grisled. 11 And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I. 12 And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstreaked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.” In the dream, God showed Jacob that the reason the cattle brought forth as they did was based on genetics and not based on some commonly believed fable. Moreover, when we realize that modern genetics was not discovered and generally believed until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we must say, “Let God be true, but every man a liar.” The bible is scientifically the most accurate document known and revealed great scientific truths long (often centuries) before scientists discovered those truths.

“And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.” In this we see, the Lord interceding on the behalf of Jacob and taking away the wealth of Laban, who had gained much of that wealth through his deception of Jacob. The scriptures say, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord” (Rom. 12:19).

## **Gen. 31.1-2**

Gen. 31:1 “And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory. 2 And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before.”

So long as Laban and his sons were prospering at the labors of Jacob they were satisfied and supportive of him and wanted him around. However, when the Lord began to bless him and they ceased prospering from his labors, their attitude toward him changed. The sons acted as though Jacob had stolen the cattle from them and their father. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, God was taking from Laban that which he had gathered through deceit and giving it to Jacob who had been deceived and yet faithfully labored for Laban and kept his end of the contracts that he had made with Laban.

How typical the above is with many of God’s children. The world loves them so long as the world can prosper from their labors. Once the prospering stops then the world will turn upon them and act hatefully toward them.

So long as the Lord blessed Laban for Jacob's sake, then Laban wanted Jacob around. However, when the Lord ceased blessing Laban for Jacob's sake, his countenance toward Jacob changed.

### **Gen. 31.3-16**

Gen. 31:3 "And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.

4 And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, 5 And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me. 6 And ye know that with all my power I have served your father. 7 And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. 8 If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstreaked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstreaked. 9 Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me. 10 And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstreaked, speckled, and grised.

11 And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I. 12 And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstreaked, speckled, and grised: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. 13 I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.

14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? 15 Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money. 16 For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours, and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do."

Jacob had gone to Padanaram at the direction of his father and mother and while traveling along the way, the Lord appeared to him in a dream and this was a life changing experience for him. Jacob had vowed a vow unto the Lord: Gen. 28:20 "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: 22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." God had honored his end of the vow and now had instructed Jacob to return to his father's house and that the Lord would be with him.

Jacob went about explaining and convincing his family that they needed to pack up and go to the land of Canaan. First, he reminded them how that their father had turned against him and how he had attempted to deceive him in wages ten times. He also pointed out how that the LORD had interceded on his behalf and caused the cattle to bear so that the young would be Jacob's and his family. Finally, Jacob told them about God instructing him in a dream to return to the land of his kindred.

Rachel and Leah agreed with Jacob and encouraged him that both he and his family would do whatsoever God had said unto Jacob to do.

### **Gen. 31.17-29**

Gen. 31:17 “Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels; 18 And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padanaram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan. 19 And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's. 20 And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled. 21 So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face toward the mount Gilead.

22 And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled. 23 And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead. 24 And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. 25 Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

26 And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives taken with the sword? 27 Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp? 28 And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing. 29 It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.”

Jacob knew that the Lord had bidden him to return to the land of Canaan, yet he tried to flee away in secret from the knowledge of Laban. On the one hand he trusted the direction of the Lord, but he did not trust the protection of the Lord. Jacob knew the greed of Laban and that the sons of Laban spoke against Jacob. He also knew that Laban's countenance was not toward him as before. Jacob, feared for his safety and the safety of his family and he fled without saying goodbye to Laban.

Apparently, Rachel was into idolatry and the worship of images as was her father Laban. She stole her father's images and told no one. Apparently she wanted some images to worship since she would be away from those in her father's house. She stole them and later she lied about stealing them. While she would deceive her husband and her father, yet she would not deceive God. The problem with secret sins is that they are not secret with God. Often, he brings them to light and to judgment.

Laban when he knew that Jacob had fled, pursued hard after Jacob with intention to do him harm. Yet, God appeared unto him in a dream and warned him not speak good or bad to Jacob.

“What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives taken with the sword? 27 Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away

with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp? 28 And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing.” This question and statement of Laban was very hollow because of what he said next, “It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.”

If Laban had been sincere, he would not have intended to do Jacob harm. The fact that God appeared unto him is evidence that Laban had indeed intended to do Jacob harm. Laban had no intention that Jacob and his family leave, but he feared the wrath of God and the wrath of Isaac.

### **Gen. 31.30-42**

Gen. 31:30 “And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?”

31 And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me. 32 With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.

33 And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found them not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent. 34 Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not. 35 And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women is upon me. And he searched, but found not the images.

36 And Jacob was wroth, and chided with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? 37 Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both. 38 This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. 39 That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. 40 Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. 41 Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times. 42 Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.”

Laban had asked Jacob why he had stolen away in secret to which Jacob responded by saying that he was afraid.

Laban also accused Jacob of having stolen his images (gods). To this Jacob invited Laban to search and with whomsoever the images were found that he was to be put to death. Obviously, Jacob did not know who had stolen the images. He also pronounced a death sentence upon Rachel which would be carried out by God at the birth of their youngest son.

Laban, through his search found not the images. To this Jacob began to vent about all the wrongs that Laban had done to him over the years as noted in verses 26-42. This cleared the air for both men.

### **Gen. 31.43-55**

Gen. 31:43 “And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born? 44 Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee. 45 And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar. 46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.

47 And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. 48 And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; 49 And Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. 50 If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee. 51 And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee; 52 This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. 53 The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us.

And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac. 54 Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

55 And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.”

The relationship between a husband and father can be troubled at times. In this case both men loved their family and wanted good for their family. Ultimately, the husband has the final say, but the father can cause problems or make matters easier. When Laban proposed a covenant between himself and Jacob, it was a covenant of peace and promise of refrain from harm. Both men agreed to this covenant.

The covenant was also a covenant of witness between the two men. It was a witness that neither man would pass over the heap to do harm to the other. They swore to the this covenant upon the name of the God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, and the God of Isaac and that God would judge between them. In other words, if either violated the covenant, then they were asking the wrath of God upon the violator.

Both, Laban and his men and Jacob and his family ate upon the heap, which is a sign of agreement and fellowship. Both men also gave names unto the heap: Laban called the heap Jegarsahadutha and Jacob called it Galeed and Mizpah. The names represented the meaning that each man gave to the heap of witness. Both Jegarsahadutha and Galeed seem to mean heap of witness. Mizpah mean watch tower.

Next, Jacob swore to the covenant by the fear of his father, Isaac. Thus, Jacob showed that his great respect and honor that he had for his father, Isaac, was reason that he would never violate the covenant.

Finally, Jacob offered a sacrifice upon the heap, which indicated that Jacob would rather be in the place of the sacrificed animal than violate the terms of the covenant.

“And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.”

## **Genesis Chapter 32**

The chapter begins with the angels of God appearing to Jacob. This is the second experience that Jacob had with the angels of God. Jacob had seen the angels of God ascending and descending between heaven and earth upon a ladder. This had been a part of a life changing experience of Jacob as the LORD had manifest himself unto Jacob.

The LORD had previously told Jacob to return unto the land of Canaan and Jacob was preparing to do this very thing. This brings us back to the reason that Jacob had left Canaan in the beginning. Esau, Jacob's elder brother, had purposed to kill Jacob because Jacob had stolen away his blessing from their father, Isaac, and had disrespected Esau both in the matter of the blessing and in the birthright. So long as Jacob was in Padanaram, Jacob had no reason to fear Esau, but now the LORD was sending Jacob back to Canaan and Jacob's fears of Esau returned.

How Jacob was able to overcome his fears of Esau is a great lesson for every child of God. We all have things that we are greatly afraid of in this life. Further there are times that we must come to grips with our fears. These fears can be a real torment unto us if we do not properly overcome them. Jacob's experience is a great lesson to us in overcoming the exceeding fears of our lives.

Jacob could look back upon the life changing experience on the journey to Padanaram and be encouraged by both the things he had experienced at the hands of the LORD and by the promises of the LORD. The appearance of the angels of God, no doubt, reminded Jacob of the LORD's blessings and how the LORD had kept his promises.

Gen. 32:3 “And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. 4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now: 5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.” Jacob, out of necessity had to deal with his fear of Esau. Jacob, by his example, met his fear directly. He sent messengers to Esau telling him of his coming. Jacob could have been silent and hoped that Esau would not find out, but his fear of Esau would have remained. This teaches us that we need to be direct in dealing with our fears.

Gen. 32:6 “And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.” Sometimes our fears are just in our mind, but often they are real. The fact that Esau was coming with four hundred men meant that Esau was serious in his desire to kill Jacob. The number

four hundred in the scriptures is associated with the grave. Apparently Esau's intent was that Jacob be sent to the grave.

Gen. 32:7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; 8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape." Once again, Jacob was flooded with great fear of Esau and was distressed by what he feared Esau would do. Jacob's initial thought was damage control. Perhaps he could figure out a way to save half of the people by dividing them into two bands. This thought was before Jacob went to the LORD in prayer.

Gen. 32:9 "And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. 11 Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. 12 And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." The real and best solution for dealing with our fears is to take them to the LORD in prayer. Rather than trying to solve our fears with worldly reason and a rational mind, we need to go the One who has both the wisdom and ability to overcome our fears.

Jacob's prayer, though very short, has many lessons for us in approaching our God in prayer. First, Jacob addressed God as the "God of my father Abraham and the God of my father, Isaac..." Jacob honored God for his promises, blessings, and deliverances of both his grandfather Abraham and his father Isaac. God had made several promises to both of these men and had fulfilled his promises and greatly blessed these men in every way. Not only did Jacob honor God in this manner, but also encouraged himself that God was able to fulfill his promises towards Jacob and to bless Jacob.

Next, Jacob referred to God as "the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee..." The term, LORD, used to describe God is the most commonly used term to describe God in the Old Testament as there are over 6500 times it appears in the Old Testament. It literally means a "covenant making; covenant keeping God." Thus, God both makes and keeps covenants. God had both instructed Jacob and promised Jacob that he would deal well with him. A God, who cannot lie, and who promises his servant that he will deal well with him, will surely deal well with him. This too was a great encouragement unto Jacob. He could encourage himself that God had promised unto him that he would deal well with him. Now, if in returning to Canaan, Jacob were killed by Esau, then how would it be that the LORD had dealt well with Jacob? Likewise, we can be encouraged by both the direction of the LORD in our lives and the promises of God toward us as we attempt to overcome our fears.

"I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands." Jacob approached the LORD in humility. The scriptures tell us that God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Jacob approached the LORD in humility, owning that he was not worthy of even one of the mercies of God or of the

truth shown unto him by the LORD. He considered himself a servant of the LORD. Jacob also recognized that it was by the grace of God that he had prospered into two bands. This teaches us that we should honor and praise God for all our blessings and recognize that what we have is by the mercies and grace of God. Moreover, we should recognize ourselves to be the servants of the LORD.

“Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.” Jacob was very specific in what he requested from the LORD. Sometimes, in people’s public prayers they pray in generalities. This is appropriate as they are praying on behalf of a group of people. However, in our private prayers we should pray in specifics for the things that we are asking from the LORD.

“And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.” Again, Jacob reminded the LORD of his covenant promises towards him. If Esau were to smite Jacob and all his family members, then how could these promises come to pass?

Notice that Jacob’s prayer was short. It does not take a long prayer to be heard of the Lord or to be effective with the Lord. Next, most of Jacob’s prayer was made to give glory and honor unto God and to encourage himself in the promises of God. The actual request was only a single sentence, yet it was very specific as to what he hoped the Lord would do for him.

Gen. 22:13 “And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother; 14 Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams, 15 Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals. 16 And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

17 And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee? 18 Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us. 19 And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him. 20 And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me. 21 So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company.”

Some have thought that Jacob did the above to try to bring about a resolution with Esau out of his own efforts. I do not agree with that assessment. The above was done after Jacob’s prayer to God. The Lord gave Jacob the answer to effectively remove Esau’s anger towards Jacob. In Esau’s mind, Jacob had disrespected him and stolen from him. With the presents and the acknowledgement of Jacob that he was Esau’s servant, Esau was being respected by his brother and, with the goods he was being repaid for what he believed was stolen from him. This alleviated the anger of Esau. God gave Jacob this answer when he needed it. Likewise, the Lord gives us what we need when we need it.

Gen. 32:22 “And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. 23 And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.” There are times in our

lives that we must get away for a little while from all other cares and be alone with the Lord. This was such a time with Jacob.

Gen. 32:24 “And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. 25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. 26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. 27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. 28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. 29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.”

Jacob, that night wrestled with a man (the LORD) until the break of day. There have been times in my life that I have in my mind wrestled with the Lord in an attempt to bargain a blessing from the Lord. I have promised that I would give up something or do something if the Lord would do something for me. I have learned that I cannot wrestle a blessing from the Lord. We cannot possibly overcome the Lord by bargaining with him. Jacob attempt to wrestle a blessing from the Lord all night, but was unsuccessful. However, at the break of day, the Lord prepared the way for Jacob to receive a blessing. He touched Jacob in the hollow of his thigh and the sinew shrank. Jacob was now a cripple. His own natural strength was abated. He was left clinging unto the Lord rather than wrestling with the Lord. When the Lord said “Let me go for the day breaketh,” Jacob answered “I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.” This should be both how we see ourselves and how we interact with God for a blessing. The only strength we have is in the Lord. When we realize that we are crippled (without strength), then we are made to realize that our strength is in the Lord alone and that we need to cling to him for our blessings of life. Paul said, “When I am weak, then am I strong.” When we are weak in ourselves, then are we strong in the Lord.

After Jacob was clinging to the Lord, the Lord said: “And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. 28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” The word, Jacob, means supplanter. As a supplanter, Jacob had tried to bargain or wrestle the Lord for a blessing. The word, Israel, means prince of God. As one who was cripple clinging unto the Lord, Jacob became a prince with God having power with God and with men and prevailed. Likewise, we should consider ourselves a part of spiritual Israel and consider ourselves spiritual cripples clinging unto the Lord.

Gen. 32:30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. 31 And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. 32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.” The fact that the children of Israel eat not of the sinew that shrank is a memorial to Jacob's experience in being made a cripple of the Lord and clinging unto the Lord for a blessing. It taught them that they should consider themselves likewise a cripple of the Lord, clinging unto the Lord for a blessing.

## Genesis Chapter 33

Gen. 33:1 “And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. 2 And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost. 3 And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.”

While Jacob probably loved all of his family, yet in the above we see that he should his order of esteem toward the members of his family. Jacob was not yet sure what Esau’s reaction would be toward him and his family, so he placed those he had less esteem towards first and those he had the most esteem for last. Thus, if Esau’s reaction was not favorable, then the ones Jacob had favored the most would have the better chance to escape.

Jacob continued his two-fold effort to win favor with his brother. He had already sent many gifts unto Esau and now he was going to show Esau the utmost respect. Jacob bowed himself to the ground seven times to show complete respect unto his brother. Before Jacob had left Canaan, he had greatly disrespected Esau, his elder brother. After the Lord had appeared unto Jacob on the road to Padanaram and after the Lord had manifest himself in many ways unto Jacob, Jacob manifest his new nature by properly showing respect to his elder brother.

Gen. 33:4 “And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept. 5 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant. 6 Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. 7 And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.”

Obviously, Esau had been won over by both the gifts and the respect shown toward him by his brother Jacob. He had embraced Jacob, kissed him, and wept. This left no doubt that Esau’s anger had been pacified.

Next, Esau looked upon the family of Jacob and asked about them. We see also that the family of Jacob showed the same respect unto Esau and each bowed down before him.

Gen. 33:8 “And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord. 9 And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself. 10 And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me. 11 Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it.”

Next, Esau inquired about the gifts of the livestock and Jacob answered that they were given so that he might find grace in Esau’s sight. Esau responded that he had enough and for Jacob to keep what he had unto himself. To this, Jacob responded, “Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.” Jacob was not going to give a gift then take it back. Jacob knew that

the Lord had blessed him and he had seen Esau's face as though he had seen the face of God and God was pleased with him. Likewise, it would be just as wrong for us to give a gift in the service of God and then to take it back.

Gen. 33:12 "he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee. 13 And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. 14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir. 15 And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord. 16 So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir."

Esau volunteered to travel with Jacob and also offered to have some of his men help Jacob, yet Jacob declined by pointing out that the children were tender and that the flocks and herds with young would die if they were overdriven. He said that he would lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure. What Jacob said was true, but I suspect that Jacob really did not want to continue in the company of Esau. Jacob knew that Esau was a wicked man, and he did not want to have companionship with a wicked man.

Gen. 33:17 "And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth. 18 And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city. 19 And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money. 20 And he erected there an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel."

There are at least two great lessons in the above. First, Jacob erected an altar to praise God for his blessings of deliverance. Certainly, we should remember to give praise to God for his many deliverances in our lives. The second thing was that Jacob did not seek direction from the Lord when he bought a parcel of a field in Shalem. Some of the worst mistakes of my life have come during times when I made decisions without inquiring of the Lord. As we will see, Jacob will regret having bought a parcel of a field in Shalem.

## **Genesis Chapter 34**

### **The Wickedness of the Children of Israel**

This chapter lays out some of the wicked deeds of the children of Israel. This chapter is also a prelude to a narrative that will soon begin concerning Jacob's son Joseph. This chapter is in dire contrast to the description of Joseph and his actions which are narrated to us beginning in chapter 37. Joseph is a very strong type of Jesus Christ. There are over one hundred parallels between the life of Joseph and the life of Christ. However, the brethren of Joseph are depicted as being wicked sinners. This shows us, in type, that the elect family of God in comparison to their elder brother is wicked by nature and their elder brother is altogether righteous. Our elder brother, Christ, saved us from our sins, which is similar to Joseph saving his brethren from their calamitous condition.

The following wicked deeds of the children of Israel are laid out for us in the 34<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis:

1. Gen. 34:1 “And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. 2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her.” Dinah, who could not have been more than 9 or 10 years old at the time, was allowed to go out by herself in a strange land among strange people. She should never have been allowed to go out by herself.

2. Gen. 34:3 “And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel. 4 And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife. 5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come. 6 And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him. 7 And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done. 8 And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife. 9 And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you. 10 And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein. 11 And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give. 12 Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife. 13 And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister:”

While there is no doubt that what Shechem had done was sinful and that he deserved to be punished. Also, Hamor, the father of Shechem, proposed intermarriage between the children of Israel and the inhabitants of the land, which of course was not according to the purpose of God. Jacob knew this as Isaac and Rebekah had been grieved at Esau for his intermarriage with the Canaanite woman. While the sons of Jacob had no intention of actually carrying forth the proposal of Hamor and Shechem, they answered deceitfully.

3. Gen. 34:14 “And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that were a reproach unto us: 15 But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised; 16 Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. 17 But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.” Jacob was seeing his sons act out on their deceit as he had deceived his father concerning the blessing that was intended for Esau.

4. Gen. 34:18 “And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son. 19 And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he was more honourable than all the house of his father. 20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying, 21 These men are peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, it is large enough for them; let us take their

daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters. 22 Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised. 23 Shall not their cattle and their substance and every beast of theirs be ours? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us. 24 And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city.” Now the whole city was involved in the deceit of the sons of Jacob. While one man had sinned, yet the sons of Jacob planned to slay the entirety of the inhabitants of the city, even though only one man had sinned against the family.

5. Gen. 34:25 “And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. 26 And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out.” The sons of Jacob murdered the male inhabitants of an entire city because one man had sinned.

6. Gen. 34:27 “The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister. 28 They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field, 29 And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house.” The sons of Jacob were not satisfied to murder the men of the city, but also their lust for worldly riches is also manifest as they spoiled the city and took the women captive for their servants.

7. Gen. 34:30 “And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house. 31 And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?” The sons of Jacob disregarded the consequences of their action and what it might do to the family of Jacob, but carried out their anger against a single man by slaying all the males of a city. Moreover, this shows that their plan was without the approval of their father, Jacob. Jacob should have been the one making the decision as to what to do about Shechem, but the sons of Jacob disregarded the authority of their father.

## **Genesis 35.1-8**

Gen. 35:1 “And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother. 2 Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: 3 And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. 4 And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem. 5 And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. 6 So Jacob came to Luz, which is in

the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him. 7 And he built there an altar, and called the place Elbethel: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother. 8 But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak: and the name of it was called Allonbachuth.”

“And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.” There are times in our lives, as children of God, when seems to be out of control and there are many problems, especially, in our families, that it is necessary to go back to where we started our journey of discipleship. Jacob saw that his children were out of control and doing great wicked things contrary to the walk of God. No doubt, he felt powerless and ignorant as to what he should do. Yet, God who is merciful gave Jacob and ultimately us instruction as to what we should do. God told Jacob to go back to where he had started and God had first appeared unto him and to make an altar unto God.

Jacob would have had many memories of the time that God had appeared unto him and the dread that he had of his brother Esau who had purposed to kill Jacob. In going back to Bethel, Jacob would have recalled the dream that he had whereby he saw the angels of God ascending and descending from heaven on a ladder. Also, he would have recalled the promises that God had made to him and now how that God had fulfilled those promises. When we can recall our experiences with the Lord and the times He has delivered us in the past and we can recall the precious promises of God, then it encourages us when we confronted with the many problems, trials and tribulations of life.

“Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments...” Jacob knew that the place to which he was instructed to travel was a holy place and that there would be no room for filthiness or strange gods, thus he wisely instructed his family to put away their strange gods and to change their filthy garments for clean garments. Since the name Bethel literally means house of God, we should approach our worship in the church the same way. We should put away all strange gods and change our garments from pride and filthy conversation of the wicked to humility and seeking to walk uprightly.

“And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.” A father should lead his house in worship and should recall to his children how that the Lord has delivered him in time past and also to encourage his children in worship. Here we see Jacob setting an example for us by doing these things.

“And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.” Obviously, the children did not rebel against their father and they followed his instruction to put away the strange gods. They also put away the earrings in their ears. Now we know that Jacob had many sons and they were wearing earrings in their ears. To worship God, they put away those earrings. What a good example that is for young men today. Earrings in men’s ears are a sign of rebellion and God hates rebellion.

“And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.” Here we see the amazing mercy of God. Surely the actions of the sons of Jacob was such that they deserved to be

destroyed by the inhabitants of the cities about them, but God placed his protective shield about them and the inhabitants were terrified of God and did not pursue after the sons of Jacob even though their deeds were awful. Truly, if God were to take judgment upon us for what our sins deserved, then we would be destroyed in the lake of fire forever. Yet, God is merciful to his elect children and spares them from eternal judgment. His judgment of our sins was rendered upon our elder brother.

“So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him.” Jacob obeyed the command of the Lord and he led his family to obey as well. Again, this is an example to all the fathers who are God’s children.

“And he built there an altar, and called the place Elbethel: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.” Jacob had made a promise to God based on the fulfillment of the promises that God had made to him. Now Jacob has come and fulfilled his promise and built an altar of worship to God. This should teach us to thank and praise God for his blessings upon us and for his fulfilled promises to us.

“But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak: and the name of it was called Allonbachuth.” The word, “Allonbachuth,” means “oak of weeping.” In the same place where Jacob and his family came to give praise and thanksgiving to God, there previously had been weeping for the loss of a loved one. Ps. 30:5 “For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” In the place where weeping had endured for a night, joy has now come in the morning. Likewise, when we as children of God come to a knowledge of our sinful nature and have a deep conviction of sin, we weep. However, when we later come to understand that Jesus died for our sins and heaven will subsequently be our home, then we rejoice.

### **Gen. 35.9-15**

Gen. 35:9 “And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. 10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. 11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; 12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. 13 And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him. 14 And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon. 15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Bethel.”

“And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him.” God had appeared to Jacob when he was journeying from Canaan to Padanaram and revealed himself to Jacob and made great promises to Jacob. Jacob had promised: Gen. 28:20 “And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: 22 And

this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.” God had indeed done what he had promised to Jacob and God has brought Jacob back to the same place where Jacob vowed.

“And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.” This is the second time that God has told of Jacob’s name change: Gen. 32:28 “And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” Israel means prince of God. Israel was not only Jacob’s name but also became the name of the nation that came out of his loins. His name had gone from one that meant supplanter to one that meant prince of God. God had completely changed the life of Jacob and richly blessed him and now he had or was soon to have 12 sons who would be the start of the 12 tribes of Israel.

“And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; 12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. 13 And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.” Once again we see God reiterating the promises that he had previously made to Jacob. Israel was indeed to become a nation and a company of nations and kings did come out of his loins. His progeny did indeed come later into possession of the land of Canaan as God had promised. God had fulfilled the promises to bring Jacob back safely, and now is confirming again the greater promises to Israel.

“And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon. 15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Bethel.” The word, Bethel, means house of God. Jacob had come again to the place where God had first appeared unto him and to the spot where he had first worshipped God and here at the same place he worshipped God again and called the place as he had before Bethel.

## Gen. 35.16-20

Gen. 35:16 “And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. 17 And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. 18 And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. 19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. 20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.”

We glean the following points from the above:

1. The soul departs the body at death. The soul does not die, but the body dies. The soul of God’s children lives on in heaven after the death of the body.
2. The curse that Jacob pronounced on that person who stole Laban’s idols was fulfilled in Rachel as she died giving birth to her second son.
3. Rachel called her son Benoni, which means **son of my sorrow**. Jacob called his name Benjamin, which means **son of my right hand**. In this Benjamin is a

type of Christ. Christ bore the **sorrows of death** for his elect family, then he arose and **sat at the right hand of God**.

4. Rachel was buried in the way to Ephrath. Ephrath means fruitfulness. Later the name Ephrath was changed to Bethlehem which means house of bread. Jesus, of course, was born in Bethlehem. None is more fruitful than Jesus as he delivers the entire elect family of God unto glory. Moreover, it is Jesus who provides spiritual bread for his house.

### **Gen. 35.21-26**

Gen. 35:21 “And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar. 22 And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: 23 The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun: 24 The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin: 25 And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali: 26 And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padanaram.”

In the above we are given a detail of Israel's journey as he spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar. Moreover, we are given another glimpse of the wickedness of the sons' of Jacob as Reuben lay with Jacob's concubine. Next, we are given a listing of the sons of Jacob which each wife and concubine bare unto him.

### **Gen. 35.27-29**

Gen. 35:27 “And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned. 28 And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years. 29 And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.”

Here we have the account of the end of Isaac's life. He lived to be 180 years old. He was married to only one woman, Rebekah. He lived to an old age and was richly blessed of God. He was a faithful man and a good example in most aspects of his life for God's children. When he died, he gave up the ghost, that is, his soul departed. He died, that is, his body died. He was gathered unto his fathers, that is, his soul went to heaven to wait the morning of the resurrection where it will be reunited with the body.

Esau and Jacob were separated most of their lives, yet were together in the burial of Isaac their father.

## **Genesis Chapter 36**

This chapter details the genealogy of Esau, the brother of Jacob. It also details the genealogy of the inhabitants of Seir who occupied Seir before Esau and his descendants drove them out. These were known as the Horites. They were the descendants of Hori, the son of Seir. The Horites were of the aboriginals and were giants. Esau and his descendants were blessed of God to drive out the Horites and occupy the land of Seir as God gave this land to the Edomites: Deu. 2:5 “Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.”

22 “And the children of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna.”

12 “And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these were the sons of Adah Esau's wife.”

As can be seen by the above Timna was a Horite but she was also concubine to an Edomite. Amalek came of both the Horites and the Edomites. It was Amalek and his descendants that were continually in war against the children of Israel. It was the Amalekites that attacked the children of Israel in the wilderness.

The heads of the tribes of Edom and the heads of the Horites were known as Dukes. The name duke means a bull. The dukes were also called kings. There were eleven dukes listed in Edom and they were the descending sons and grandsons of Edom. There were seven dukes listed of the descendants of Hori.

Names of some of the descendants of Esau are found later in the scriptures and this chapter gives us a genealogical reference to those individuals.

## **Genesis 37:1-11**

Gen. 37:1 “And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. 2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report. 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. 4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. 6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: 7 For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. 8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. 9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. 10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? 11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.”

Beginning with this chapter, the focus changes from Jacob to his next to youngest son Joseph. Joseph is different from his brethren. We read of the many evil deeds of Joseph's brethren, but we read of the faithfulness and righteous walk of Joseph. Joseph is a very strong type of Christ. He is perhaps the strongest type of Christ in the Old Testament. There are more than one hundred parallels between the life of Joseph and the life of Christ. Joseph, however, is not Christ and therefore Joseph is not perfect. Christ said in John 5:39 "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." One of the ways the scriptures testify of Jesus in the Old Testament is thru types. That is, one person will be a figure or type of Christ. In the next several chapters we will point out many of the parallels between the life of Joseph and the life of Christ.

One of the works of Jesus when he came into the world is that he fed the flock of God (children of God) with the word of God. We also see where Peter instructed the elders: 1 Pet 5:2 "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;" Just as Joseph fed the flock with his brethren, Jesus fed the flock with his brethren.

"And Joseph brought unto his father their evil report." Matt. 12:34 "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. 36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. 37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours." Just like Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, so the Father loves Jesus more than all his children: Matt. 3:17 "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Nine times in the New Testament Christ is referred to as the beloved Son of the Father. Moreover, as Joseph was the son of Israel's old age, Jesus is the Son of the Ancient of Days. Israel also made Joseph a coat of many colours. Likewise, the Father gave Christ a people of every nation, people, tongue, and kindred which parallels Joseph's coat of many colours.

"And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him." Luke 19:14 "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us." Also, John 15:22 "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. 23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. 25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause."

"And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more." Luke 20:19 "And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them. 20 And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign

themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.”

“And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: 7 For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. 8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. 9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. 10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? 11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.”

There are at least three parallels between Joseph and Christ in the above passage of scripture:

1. Joseph’s brethren rejected the idea of Joseph reigning over them. Likewise we read in Luke 19:14 concerning Christ: “But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.”

2. It ultimately came to pass that Joseph’s brethren, his father and mother all came to bow down to him. Similarly and more extensively we read of bowing down to Christ: Rom. 14:11 “For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”

3. Joseph’s brethren were envious of him. Mat 27:18 “For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.” Jesus was delivered to Pilate because of envy.

## **Genesis 37:12-22**

Gen. 37:12 “And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. 13 And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I. 14 And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

15 And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? 16 And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. 17 And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.

18 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. 19 And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. 20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams. 21 And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him. 22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands,”

In the above passage we see three more parallels between the life of Joseph and the life of Jesus Christ. First, Joseph was sent of his father to find his brethren. Jesus said in Luke 19:10 “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Second, the brethren of Joseph sought to slay Joseph. Likewise we read in Matt. 26:4 “And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him.”

Third, Reuben sought to deliver Joseph out of the hands of his brethren. Similarly, we find that Pilate sought to deliver Jesus out of the hands of the Jews: Matt. 27:17 “Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? 18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. 19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. 20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. 23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. 24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. 25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. 26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.”

### **Genesis 37:23-28**

Gen. 37:23 “And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; 24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. 25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. 26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? 27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. 28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.”

In this passage we find five more parallels between the life of Joseph and the life of Christ:

1. Joseph was stripped out of his coat of many colours. Concerning Jesus we read in Matt. 27:35 “And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.”
2. They cast Joseph into a pit. Jesus was cast into Joseph’s new tomb.
3. They raised Joseph up out of the pit. Jesus was raised from the dead and out of the tomb.

4. Joseph was sold for twenty pieces of silver. Jesus was sold for thirty pieces of silver.

5. Joseph was taken into Egypt. Jesus as a young child was carried by Joseph and Mary into Egypt.

Some have wondered why Joseph was sold for 20 pieces of silver, whereas Jesus was sold for thirty pieces of silver. Joseph was sold for the price of a 17 year old lad. Jesus was sold for the price of an adult woman: Lev. 27:1 “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the LORD by thy estimation. 3 And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary. 4 **And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels.** 5 **And if it be from five years old even unto twenty years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels,** and for the female ten shekels. 6 And if it be from a month old even unto five years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation shall be three shekels of silver. 7 And if it be from sixty years old and above; if it be a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.”

Joseph was sold for his own value, whereas, Jesus was sold for the value of his bride, the church.

### Genesis 37:29-36

Gen. 37:29 “And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. 30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? 31 And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; 32 And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no. 33 And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. 34 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. 35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him. 36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.”

It appears from the above that Reuben's brethren did not tell Reuben that they had sold him to the Ishmaelites but rather left him to believe that Joseph was dead. One may wonder why they would not tell Reuben of the sale. The answer could be that 20 pieces of silver is easier to divide into ten parts than into eleven parts. Greed can be a strong motivation for those living wicked lives.

The sons of Jacob fabricated a lie to their father, making him to believe that Joseph was dead. This parallels the lie that the Jews told about Jesus: Matt. 28:13 “Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.” This lie was told to make people think that Jesus is still dead in the tomb, when in fact he is alive forever more.

## **Genesis Chapter 38**

### **The Sins of Judah**

This chapter is set in contrast to the surrounding chapters that detail the faithfulness and upright living of Joseph. Just as Judah and his sins are set in contrast to Joseph, so the wickedness of Judas is set in contrast to the righteousness of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

The chapter begins in Judah going down to sojourn with an Adullamite named Hirah. While sojourning with Hirah, Judah, took a daughter of a Canaanite to wife named Shuah. We know that Jacob had been instructed by Isaac and Rebekah not to take a wife of the Canaanites. Obviously, Judah rebelled against such instruction.

Next, Judah had three sons by Shuah: Er, Onan, and Shelah. Judah took a wife for his firstborn son, Er, whose name was Tamar. As Er was wicked in the sight of the Lord, the Lord slew him. At this point, Judah instructed Onan to marry Tamar and raise up a son in the name of his elder brother. Onan rebelled against raising up a son in the name of Er, so the Lord slew him. At this Judah instructed Tamar to wait for the youngest son to grow up and then he would be given to Tamar for a husband. To this, Tamar, agreed and put on the garments of her widowhood and waited for Shelah to grow up.

However, Judah did not keep his promise to Tamar and gave her not Shelah for a husband. The Lord expressed his displeasure against oath breakers in Zec 8:17 “And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD.”

Tamar reacted to the broken promise by disguising herself as a harlot and waiting by the wayside while Judah passed by. Gen. 38:15 “When Judah saw her, he thought her to be an harlot; because she had covered her face. 16 And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for he knew not that she was his daughter in law.) And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me? 17 And he said, I will send thee a kid from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give me a pledge, till thou send it? 18 And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand. And he gave it her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him.” Thus, we see that Judah willingly participated in the sin of harlotry along with his disguised daughter-in-law Tamar.

When it became known that Tamar was expecting through harlotry, Judah gave sentence upon her that she should be burned because she was with child by harlotry. When Tamar made her plea she produced the evidence that the children were by her father-in-law: Gen. 38:25 “When she was brought forth, she sent to her father in law, saying, By the man, whose these are, am I with child: and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose are these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff. 26 And Judah acknowledged them, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more.” Thus Judah in his self-righteousness sought to slay Tamar, but when he became aware that he was the guilty party, he said nothing about himself being burned for engaging in harlotry.

## **Genesis Chapter 38**

## **The Sin of Onan**

Gen. 38:7 “And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him. 8 And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother. 9 And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. 10 And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also.”

Some have thought that because the Lord slew Onan for spilling his seed upon the ground that the Lord was expressing his displeasure at birth control and therefore we should not practice birth control today. However, a closer examination of the above shows that the cause of God's displeasure is not just the act of Onan spilling his seed upon the ground, but rather because of his refusal to raise up seed unto his brother. Onan had been commanded of his father to take his dead brother Er's wife to be his wife and to raise up seed to his brother. Therefore, Onan rebelled against the commandment of his father and put out the name of his brother by refusing to give seed to his dead brother's wife.

Under the law a brother was to take his dead brother's wife and marry her and the first born would be in the name of the dead brother: Deu. 25:5 “If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her. 6 And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel. 7 And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother. 8 Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her; 9 Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house. 10 And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.”

We see that it was not birth-control in general that the Lord was displeased with Onan about, but his refusal to raise up seed in the name of his brother.

I do not find any teaching from the Lord in the scriptures that deals with birth control to show that the Lord is either for it or against it.

## **Genesis Chapter 38 The Birth of Twins**

Gen. 38:27 “And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb. 28 And it came to pass, when she travailed, that the one put out his hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first. 29 And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? this breach be upon thee: therefore his

name was called Pharez. 30 And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zarah.”

The birth of the twins had a strange occurrence because the hand of the youngest came out first and then was drawn back into the womb. Pharez was born first and is in the blood line leading up to the birth of Jesus (See Matthew chapter 1 and Luke chapter 3). Zarah was called first, but was in actuality last. There are some New Testament passages dealing with first being last and last first:

1. Matt. 19:30 “But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.”

2. 1 Cor. 15:45 “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. 47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. 49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

The context, in reference 1, above, refers to the discipleship of the saints. When we promote ourselves first then we are last in the approval of the Lord. When we humble ourselves and consider others first and ourselves last, then we are first in the approval of the Lord.

The context, in reference 2, above, refers to our covenant standing before the Lord. The first Adam above was of course the man Adam. The second Adam above is the Lord Jesus Christ. The contrast is that Christ, though the last Adam, was the first in importance to us and our eternal standing before God. Next, we who are children of God have two natures. We have the earthly nature that we received from Adam and we have the spiritual nature that we received from God. Moreover, in the resurrection we who have borne the image of the earthly shall in our bodies bear the image of the heavenly.

## **Genesis Chapter 39** **Joseph as a Type of Jesus**

In this section of the book of Genesis that details the account of the life of Joseph, there is many times that the life of Joseph can be seen to mirror the life of Christ. Therefore, Joseph is a very strong type of Jesus. Now a type is rarely as good as the antitype and certainly no one can truly completely mirror the perfection of Jesus Christ. However, Joseph is perhaps the strongest type of Jesus in the scriptures.

Jesus said in John 5:39: “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” God, has by design, used the account of Joseph to point us to the life of Jesus Christ.

In this 39<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis we note the following parallels between the life of Joseph and the life of Christ:

1. v. 2 “And the LORD was **with Joseph**...” John 8:29 “And he that sent me is **with me**: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.” John 11:42 “And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.”

2. v. 2 “he was a **prosperous** man;” v. 3 “the LORD made all that he did to **prosper** in his hand.” V. 23 “the LORD made it to **prosper**.” It is apparent that whatsoever that Joseph did, that the Lord made it to **prosper**. Likewise, we read a prophecy of Christ in the book of Isaiah: Is. 53:10 “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall **prosper** in his hand.” Jesus came to save his people from their sins. In this work he was perfectly prosperous. He said himself: John 6:38 “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” If the Lord should lose a single one that the Father gave him, then he would not have prospered, but would have done less than the Father chose him to do. However, **the pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hand.**

3. v. 2 “he was in the **house of his master** the Egyptian.” Jesus referred to his Father’s house in two verses of scripture:

a. John 2:16 “And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not **my Father's house** an house of merchandise.” This of course has reference to the Temple.

b. John 14:2 “In **my Father's house** are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.” This appears to have reference to our heavenly home.

In addition to the above, the church is also referred to as the **house of God** in 1 Timothy. Jesus, while in his ministry, frequently went into the temple, he is residing in our heavenly home, and he is the head of the church and promised to be in the church wherever two or three are gathered together in his name.

4. v. 4 “He made him **overseer** over his house...” Joseph was overseer over his master’s house. Similarly, Jesus is referred to as the bishop of our souls: (1 Pet. 2:25 “For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and **Bishop** of your souls.” The word, bishop, means overseer. Jesus is **overseer** over the souls of all of God’s elect.

5. v. 4 “All that he had **he put into his hand.**” All that Potiphar had he put in Joseph’s hand. Likewise, we see all the elect family of God placed in the hand of Jesus:

a. John 6:37-39 “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

b. John 10:27-30 “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.”

c. John 17:2 “As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.”

d. Heb. 2:13 “And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.”

Therefore, as Potiphar placed all that he had in Joseph’s hand, the Father placed all the ones that he chose before the foundation of the world in the hands of Jesus Christ.

6. v. 5 “The LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for **Joseph's sake...**” The reason the Egyptian’s house was blessed was because of the presence of Joseph. God blessed it for Joseph’s sake. This is similar to God’s forgiveness of our sins: Eph 4:32 “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for **Christ's sake** hath forgiven you.”

7. v. 5 “And the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.” The Lord’s blessing of Potiphar for Joseph’s sake extended to all that he had in the house and in the field. Likewise, God’s blessing of his elect family for Christ’s sake extends to all that he has in the church and in the world.

8. v. 6 “Joseph was a **goodly** person...” The type breaks down here for Joseph cannot be “good” but only goodly: Matt. 19:17 “And he said unto him, Why callest thou me **good**? there is none **good but one**, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Jesus as the Son of God is **good** and he was/is **good** in the flesh. However, in the flesh, no man is good.

9. v. 6 “And Joseph was ... well **favoured**.” Luke 2:52 “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in **favour** with God and man.”

10. v. 7-10 Joseph was tempted of Potiphar’s wife, yet did not give in to sin with her. Likewise, we read of Jesus in Heb. 4:15 “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

11. v. 14-18 Joseph was falsely accused of a sin that he did not commit. False witnesses testified against Jesus at the high priests home: Matt. 26:59 “Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; 60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, 61 And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. 62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?”

12. v. 20 “And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the **prison**, a place where the **king's prisoners were bound**: and he was there in the **prison**.” We read of the prophecy of Jesus in Isaiah chapter 53:8 “He was taken from **prison** and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.” Just as Joseph was falsely accused and wrongly judged and cast into prison, so we see that Jesus was falsely accused, wrongly judged and placed in prison. Joseph was placed where the king’s prisoners were bound. Jesus went to **prison** and death to deliver the King’s prisoners: Zec 9:12 “Turn you to the strong hold, **ye prisoners of hope**: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee...”

All, of the elect family of God, were prisoners of hope. That is we were in prison to the law of sin and death and had no way to deliver ourselves from that captivity. However, Jesus delivered us by dying in our room and stead: Rom. 8:2 “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” He has delivered us from the bondage of sin: Gal. 4:3 “Even so we, when we were children,

were in bondage under the elements of the world: 4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”

## **Genesis Chapter 39**

### **The Faith of Joseph**

While the subject of the faith of Joseph is not limited to this chapter, yet some significant details are brought forth in this chapter. We recall that in previous chapters that Joseph had dreamed two dreams and told them to his father and to his brothers. In these dreams he saw his brothers and his parents coming and bowing down before him. Joseph, no doubt, believed these dreams were given to him from the Lord. Yet, we immediately begin to see obstacles arising to hinder the fulfillment of these dreams.

First, his father, Jacob rebuked him for these dreams. Jacob was a man of God and to have the rebuke of a man of God who was also your father had to be a discouragement to Joseph. Moreover, his brothers hated him because of his dreams. Likewise, their animosity towards him had to be a discouragement to him. In this, however, Jacob remained faithful in his character towards God and in his belief that God would somehow bring these dreams to fulfillment.

Next, his brothers conspired to kill him and took him and cast him into a pit, while they discussed what they would do to him. Now, if his brothers had killed him, he would never have seen the fulfillment of his dreams. Judah, then persuaded the other brothers to sell Joseph to a band of Ishmaelites so that they could profit from their brother's bondage. They also conspired to make up false evidence and tell their father that Joseph had no doubt been slain by a wild animal.

The Ishmaelites in turn sold Joseph to a wealthy man named Potiphar in Egypt. Joseph was faithful as a slave in Potiphar's house doing whatsoever was commanded him and much more. Then Potiphar's wife wanted Joseph to commit adultery with her and continually tempted him, yet Joseph was faithful to his God and to his master and refused to succumb to her temptations. Yet, she lied and said that he came to rape her and Potiphar had Joseph cast into the prison where the king's prisoners were kept.

In this brief synopsis there are many lessons in faith for us. First, what the Lord promises us or commands us does not come to pass on our time schedule but on the Lord's.

Second, our faith is put to the test, just as Joseph's faith was continually being tested through extremely difficult trials. 1 Pet. 1:7 “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:”

Third, many times there will be things and people to arise to discourage us in our walk of faith. We should expect these things to come and continue faithful in our walk of discipleship, trusting that the Lord will fulfill his promises.

Fourth, the providence of God will be eventually manifest in our walk of faith and deliver us to the fulfillment of the promises of God. Joseph would eventually see this as God in providence led him to the place where he would need to be and to the

circumstances that would eventually bring him in favor before Pharaoh and to the position of being second only to Pharaoh in the kingdom of Egypt. There were just a great series of events that seemed to be bringing Joseph down before he came to that place. Why should we expect that it would necessarily be any different for us?

## **Genesis Chapter 39**

### **The Uprightness of Joseph**

No man is like Christ when it comes to being righteous. Jesus is the righteous One. He did not have an imputed righteousness, but was altogether righteous within himself. In contrast, when Adam fell, he brought condemnation upon himself and his posterity. Every individual who is righteous before God is righteous because of the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. Joseph is no exception. Joseph cannot be a type of Christ when it comes to righteousness, nor can any other man be a type of Christ when it comes to righteousness.

Joseph, however, strove to live an upright life. This is demonstrated in the temptation of Potiphar's wife: Gen. 39:7 "And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. 8 But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; 9 There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? 10 And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her."

The scene above is not an uncommon temptation to most men. The temptation to commit adultery or fornication is common to men and women alike. There are many excuses people use to justify committing the act. Some say the adverse circumstances made them incapable of resisting. Joseph did not blame neither the adverse circumstances nor the continual temptations and use them as an excuse to give in. He did not use the woman's desire as an excuse. He simply refused to submit to the temptations. Rather, Joseph said that it would be a sin against God and against the woman's husband to give in to her temptations. Moreover, Joseph called it a great wickedness to commit adultery.

There are things that we can learn from Joseph's uprightness. First, Joseph had the proper perspective on the sin. It was not just a trespass against the husband but it was a sin against God and a great wickedness to commit adultery.

Second, adverse circumstances do not justify sin. Such things as living in broken homes, living in ghetto type conditions, having wicked influences in the family or among acquaintances, or constant and continual provocative temptations do not justify sinful action.

Third, we must live our lives to serve God and to keep his commandments, if we are to overcome sinful activities in our lives.

## **Genesis Chapter 39**

## Joseph's mistake

There have been times in the lives of nearly all of God's born again children that they have made mistakes of judgment and suffered because of their mistakes. Joseph was no exception: Gen. 39:11 "And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. 12 And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. 13 And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, 14 That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: 15 And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. 16 And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. 17 And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: 18 And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. 19 And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. 20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison."

Joseph's mistake in judgment was that he went into the house when no other man was there. Potiphar's wife had continually tempted Joseph leading up to that time so Joseph should have known that he was treading on dangerous waters when he went into the house and no other man was there. As a consequence of Joseph's mistake of judgment he ended up in prison for a crime he did not commit. We should learn from our mistakes and often we do learn from our mistakes. It is a part of the maturation process. However, sometimes mistakes in judgment lead to serious consequences as it did with Joseph. Joseph's mistake in judgment led him to a he said/she said situation and in this case Joseph was bound to lose even though he was not guilty.

Wisdom can be gained though mistakes in judgment, but a better way to learn wisdom is to ask God for wisdom that we might know how to avoid mistakes in judgment.

We need to learn to avoid circumstances that could be misinterpreted by others.

## Genesis Chapter 40 An Illustration of Grace

Most people who believe in God profess that they think that God should be fair and that everyone should be treated in judgment exactly alike. However, if God were fair, then how could God punish the Just One and let the unjust go free? Christ, who had no sin, suffered the wrathful judgment of God for the sins of his elect. There is nothing fair about it, yet it greatly manifests the love of God towards his people.

In this 40<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis we have an example of two men who were guilty of having offended Pharaoh: Gen. 40:1 "And it came to pass after these things, that the

butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt.” In comparison, all of mankind have offended the God of glory.

These two servants of Pharaoh were cast into the prison because of their offenses to await judgment: Gen. 40:2 “And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. 3 And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound.” The wrath of God is against all sins and all sinners, thus all mankind. We, all, were under the condemnation of God because of sin.

Both servants of Pharaoh were guilty and were worthy of death because of their offenses. Yet, we find that Pharaoh restored the chief butler and hanged the chief baker according to Joseph’s interpretation of their dreams. Why was one executed and the other allowed to go free. The answer is grace. Grace is the unmerited favor of God. All of mankind are worthy of eternal punishment, yet only a portioned will suffer the eternal wrath of God. The reason the rest do not suffer God’s wrathful judgment is because of the grace of God toward them and Jesus atoning blood.

Someone might ask, “Why did Pharaoh chose the butler to restore and not chose the baker?” My answer is that I do not know as we are not told. Yet, we know that God chose his elect by the grace of God. That is they were chosen by God’s unmerited favor. Pharaoh’s choosing the butler to restore is an illustration of God’s amazing grace towards the elect.

## **Genesis Chapter 40**

### **Joseph as a Type of Jesus**

As we have previously stated, Joseph is one of the strongest types of Jesus in the Old Testament. There are many parallels between the life and experiences of Joseph to the life of Jesus Christ. Some of those parallels found in chapter 40 are as follows:

1. Joseph was an interpreter of dreams. He interpreted the dreams of the two servants of Pharaoh who were consigned to the prison because they had offended the king. Dreams from God as detailed in the scriptures are a form of prophecy. Jesus was an interpreter of Old Testament prophecy. Several times the phrase, “As it is written..” is spoken by the Lord as he expounded the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. A few of these times are listed as follows:

a. Matt. 26:24 “The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.”

b. Mark 7:6 “He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”

c. Mark 9:13 “But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.”

2. Joseph thru his interpretation of dreams foretold the destination of the two servants of Pharaoh. The butler would be restored to the service of Pharaoh and the baker would be hanged by Pharaoh. It came to pass just as Joseph had foretold.

Likewise, Jesus foretold the destination of the two groups of mankind, i.e., the elect and the nonelect:

a. Matt. 25:31 “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:”

b. Matt. 25:41 “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:”

3. Joseph pronounced good tidings to the butler and asked the butler to remember him when he was restored to the service of Pharaoh. The butler forgets about Joseph. Jesus has pronounced good tidings to the elect and often times we forget about him in our daily living.

4. Joseph was a servant to the prisoners: Gen. 40:4 “And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in ward.” Similarly, Jesus was a servant to the elect children of God who were the prisoners of sin: This is illustrated in John chapter 13 when Jesus as a servant washed the disciples feet.

5. The captain of the guard charged Joseph with the care and well-being of the prisoners: “And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them.” In similar fashion we read of Christ given charge of the elect: John 6:38 “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” Christ was charged by the Father with the eternal deliverance and security of the elect.

6. Joseph was bound in the prison. He was not free to do his own will, but the will of the captain of the guard. Likewise, Christ was bound to the covenant of redemption as stated in Rom. 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.” As we read in John 6:38, 39 previously, Jesus came to do the will of the Father and that will was to execute the covenant of redemption as stated above.

## **Genesis Chapter 41 The Providence of God**

The providence of God is manifest in the event described in this chapter. God's providence is not to be confused with God's omniscience. God knows all things past, present and future. This is his omniscience. However, God's omniscience is not the cause of all things. God is not the author of confusion. The ultimate confusion is sin. God is not the author or cause of confusion. Some seem to think that if God knew about something beforehand then he must be the cause of it. That just simply is not so as we

have already noted that God is not the author of confusion, yet he knew about confusion beforehand.

The providence of God works hand in hand with his omniscience. In previous chapters in Genesis God made promises to Abraham and to Joseph. In Chapter 15, for instance, God revealed to Abraham: Gen. 15:13 “And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years...” Of course, when this was revealed to Abraham he did not even possess a seed except by the promise of God. Moreover, God promised to Joseph in two dreams (Chapter 37) that his brethren would come and do obeisance unto him. Before either promise could come to pass certain things had to happen. Among those things that would have to happen were the following two things:

1. The promised descendants of Abraham had to come into Egypt. They were in Canaan at the time of the beginning of Chapter 40.
2. Joseph would have to ascend into a position of authority, before his brethren would come and do obeisance unto him.

Before those things could come to pass, God’s omniscience and his providence would work together to bring these things to pass. Below are listed some things that God did not cause but through his omniscience he knew would come to pass:

1. God did not cause the brethren of Joseph to sell him into bondage, but he knew that they would.
2. God did not cause Potiphar to buy Joseph as a slave from the Ishmaelites, but he knew that he would.
3. God did not cause Potiphar’s wife to lust after Joseph and then to lie about him to cover up her own wickedness, but God knew that she would.
4. God did not cause Potiphar to have Joseph committed to the prison where the king’s prisoners were kept, but he knew he would.
5. God did not cause the servants of Pharaoh to offend against Pharaoh, but he knew they would and that Pharaoh would have them cast into the prison where Joseph was.
6. God did not cause the butler to forget about Joseph’s request until Pharaoh had his dreams, but he knew he would.
7. God did not cause Pharaoh to appoint Joseph to his position of being over the storehouse of food, and to be second only to Pharaoh in the kingdom, but God knew that he would.

Next, we look at some things that God did in providence to bring about his desired purpose that worked together with God’s foreknowledge:

1. God gave Joseph the gift of being able to interpret dreams.
2. God gave to each of the king’s prisoners a dream that troubled them.
3. God gave to Pharaoh two dreams that troubled him.
4. God gave seven years of great abundance of corn in the land of Egypt.
5. Following the seven years of great abundance, God sent seven years of famine upon all the earth.

Through God’s foreknowledge and through his providence God worked to bring about the fulfillment of his promises to Abraham and to Joseph. He also worked to bring about the fulfillment of the dreams of the butler, the baker, and Pharaoh.

## Genesis Chapter 41 Joseph Uses His Gift

Joseph's use of his gift that God had given him is an example of how that we should use the gifts that God has given us. Joseph used his gift both in this chapter and in the previous chapter to interpret dreams that God had given to the butler, the baker, and to Pharaoh.

The following points can be made about Joseph's use of his gift to interpret dreams:

1. Joseph did not have the ability or gift to interpret dreams except God had given him the gift. Gen. 41:15 "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. 16 And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, **It is not in me**: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." God had given Joseph the ability to interpret dreams that God had given.

2. Joseph gave the credit, praise, and glory to God as Joseph told Pharaoh: **God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.**

3. When opportunity from God arose, Joseph used his gift. He did this when he interpreted the dreams of the baker and of the butler and of Pharaoh. He did not hide his gift, but he used it.

Like to Joseph, we should use the gifts that God has given us. We should recognize that the gifts come from God. We should be ready to use them when opportunity arises. We should also give all the praise, honor, and glory to God for his gifts and for our ability to use those gifts.

In addition to the gift of being able to interpret dreams, God gave to Joseph wisdom: Gen. 41:32 "And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass. 33 Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. 34 Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. 35 And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. 36 And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine. 37 And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants. 38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? 39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art..."

Pharaoh recognized that the Spirit of God was dwelling in Joseph and that God had given him much wisdom in his advice to Pharaoh. Therefore, Pharaoh promoted Joseph to be second only to Pharaoh in the kingdom and to be in charge of providing bread for the people.

Like Joseph, when we manifest the wisdom that God gives us then God will bring us to the places that we need to be to better serve him.

## Genesis Chapter 41

## Joseph as a type of Christ

In this chapter there are a great number of parallels between Joseph and Christ:

1. When Joseph was called to come before Pharaoh, he changed his raiment: 14 “Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.” Actually Christ had two changes of raiment. First, he laid aside his glory to come to earth and be a servant to save his people from their sins. Second, when he ascended back on high he was restored to the glory that he had before he came to the earth.
2. Joseph interpreted Pharaoh’s dreams, which dreams are a form of prophecy. Christ, as we have previously noted, interpreted Old Testament prophecy to us in the New Testament.
3. It was said of Joseph that he had the Spirit of God in him: 38 “And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?” Jesus was said to be full of the Spirit: Luke 4:1 “And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness...”
4. Joseph was appointed to be ruler of Pharaoh’s house: 40 “Thou shalt be over my house...” Jesus is over the house of God: Heb. 3:6 “But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”
5. The people of the land of Egypt were ruled by Joseph’s word: 40 “and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled.” Likewise, we are to be ruled by the word of God: Matt. 4:4 “But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”
6. Joseph had the authority of Pharaoh in the land of Egypt: 42 “And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph’s hand...” Christ had all the authority of God: John 5:27 “And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.”
7. Joseph was arrayed in a vesture of fine linen: 42 “...and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen...” On the mount of transfiguration we see Jesus in glory: Mark 9:3 “And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.”
8. No man was to lift his hand or foot without Joseph: 44 “And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.” The Lord said in John 15:5 “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”
9. Joseph was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh: 46 “And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt.” Jesus was thirty years old when he was baptized and went to do the work that the Father had given him: Luke 3:22 “And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. 23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,”

10. Joseph rode in the second chariot behind Pharaoh: 43 “And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had;” Jesus also occupies the second position in the Godhead: 1 John 5:7 “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.”

11. Joseph was set over all the land of Egypt: 41 “And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.” Jesus rules all nations: Rev. 12:5 “And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.”

12. Everyone in Egypt was to bow the knee at the presence of Joseph: 43 “and they cried before him, Bow the knee;” Every knee shall bow before Jesus: Phil. 2:10 “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;”

13. Joseph’s wife was given to him by Pharaoh: 45 “And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.” Jesus wife is the church: Eph. 5:23 “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it...” The church in this passage consists of the entire elect family of God and the Father gave them unto the Son: John 10:27 “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and my Father are one.”

14. When Joseph’s oldest son Manasseh was born he said: 51 “For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.” Thus, Joseph was made to forget his sufferings and the sinful actions of his father’s house. Likewise, we read of the effects of the work of Jesus: Heb. 10:17 “And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”

15. When Joseph’s younger son Ephraim was born he said, 52 “For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.” John 12:24 “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” Jesus compared himself to a corn of wheat that fell into the ground and died. Through his death he brought forth much fruit. Jesus was fruitful in the land of his affliction.

16. Others were commanded by Pharaoh concerning Joseph, 55 “Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.” Similarly, the mother of Jesus said unto the servants: John 2:5 “His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.”

17. Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea... without number: 49 “And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.” In the morning of the resurrection Jesus will gather his elect unto him and they will be like the sand of the sea, without number: Rev. 7:9 “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”

18. All countries came unto Joseph to buy food during the years of famine: 57 “And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.” There was no other place to go to buy corn as Joseph had control over all the storehouse of corn. Likewise, we must go to Jesus for spiritual blessings as all spiritual blessings are in Jesus: Eph. 1:3 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:”

## **Genesis Chapter 42**

### **Parallels between Joseph and Christ**

Joseph is one of the strongest types of Christ in the scriptures. There are numerous parallels between the life and events surrounding Joseph and the life and events surrounding Christ. We continue in this chapter to show several of the parallels between Joseph and Christ:

1. In this time of famine, Joseph had control of the only source of corn available to the people in this region of the world. Likewise, for the spiritually famished children of God, the only source of spiritual food is the scriptures. Jesus provides us the spiritual food as according to 2 Tim. 3:16 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” As the Son of God, Jesus gave us the scriptures. He also opens to us the meaning and application of the scriptures (he blesses and breaks them as he did the loaves in the wilderness) so that we can feast upon them.

2. Joseph knew his brethren before they knew him: v. 8 “And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.” According to Rom. 8:29 and Eph. 1:4 Jesus knew all his brethren and chose them before the foundation of the world. This was a long time before they ever knew Him.

3. Joseph was not satisfied that most of his brethren came to him, but would have all of them to come to him. Likewise, we read of Jesus in John 6:37 “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

4. v. 6 “And Joseph was the **governor** over the land...” Isa. 9:6 “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of **his government** and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

5. v. 6 “Joseph's brethren came, and **bowed down themselves before him** with their faces to the earth.” Rom. 14:11 “For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, **every knee shall bow to me**, and every tongue shall confess to God.”

6. Joseph sold to all the people food and to his brethren he sold but it ultimately was without price as he returned the money to them. We read of this prophecy concerning the interaction of Christ with his brethren: Isa. 55:1 “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, **buy wine and milk without money and without price.**”

7. Joseph made himself strange unto his brethren that they did not recognize him: 7 “And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them...” After his resurrection Jesus made himself as a stranger to a couple of his brethren: Lk. 24:13 “And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. 14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened. 15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.”

8. Joseph spake roughly to his brethren: 7 “And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food.” At times, Jesus spake roughly to his brethren as illustrated in the following verses:

a. Matt. 16:23 “But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.”

b. Matt. 17:17 “Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.”

c. Matt. 8:26 “And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.”

9. Joseph accused his brethren: v. 9 “Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.” Similarly, Jesus accuses all mankind as follows: Rom. 3:23 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” and Rom. 3:9 “What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;”

10. Joseph's action brought conviction to his brethren: v. 21 “And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.” Similarly, we see Jesus words bringing conviction to some: John 8:7 “So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. 8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.”

11. v.23 “And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter.” They did not know that Joseph understood what they spoke. Likewise, we see where there were Jews who did not realize that Jesus knew what

they spoke in their hearts: Matt. 9:3 “And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. 4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? 5 For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? 6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.”

12. v. 29 we read where Joseph wept. Likewise we read in John 11:35 “Jesus wept.”

## Genesis Chapter 42 Providence of God

The picture of God’s providence in the affairs of men to accomplish God’s purpose is continued in this chapter. As you recall, God had promised Abraham that his seed would sojourn in Egypt for 400 years before they would be delivered into the promised land of Canaan. Likewise God had promised through two dreams to Joseph that his brethren would come and do obeisance to him.

In this chapter we see the famine in the land in that part of the world had become so severe that Jacob and his family and the families of his children had no food to eat. God had sent the famine on the land and this famine would be a tool that God would use to bring Jacob and his descendants into Egypt where they and their descendants after them would spend the next 400 years: Gen. 42:1 “Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? 2 And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die. 3 And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.”

Unknown to the brethren of Joseph, Joseph had become the ruler in Egypt and through God’s providence God had brought him to that position and had brought them to seek corn in Egypt and they would have to deal with a disguised Joseph: Gen. 42:6 “And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and **bowed down themselves before him** with their faces to the earth. 7 And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. 8 And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. 9 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.” Joseph sees the first of two fulfillments of the dreams that he had as his brethren came, and **bowed down themselves before him**.

## Genesis Chapter 42 Other Lessons

In addition to the parallels between the life of Joseph and the life of Christ and the providential workings of God, we are also taught other lessons in this chapter:

1. God has a way of directing or guiding us to do things when often we are not even aware that he is doing so. This was true concerning Jacob and his descendants leaving the land of Canaan and coming to dwell in Egypt. This began to be manifest when a famine came upon the land and Jacob sent ten of his sons into Egypt to buy corn: 42:1 “Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? 2 And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.”

2. Our secret sins are sometimes brought to light in unexpected ways. The brethren of Joseph had sold Joseph into bondage. They had no idea that Joseph would come to be the ruler or governor of Egypt and they would have to answer unto him and do obeisance unto him. While the knowledge that it was Joseph was hidden from them, they saw one of their brethren held as a captive prisoner until they brought Benjamin unto Joseph, which they knew that their father, Jacob, would not approve of.

3. God’s children often are convicted of their sins through the procession of events in their lives: 42:21 “And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. 22 And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.”

4. Jacob also did not believe the dreams of Joseph were from God. Because of this he believed the false report that Joseph was dead and he mourned many years for his son, Joseph, thinking he was dead. Had he believed that God had given Joseph the dreams, then he would have realized that his other sons were lying to him: 42:36 “And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me.”

5. Just as Joseph was gracious and merciful towards his brethren even though they had done evil to him, so also is God gracious and merciful towards his children even though they have done evil towards him: 42:35 “And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.”

## **Genesis Chapter 43**

### **Parallels between Joseph and Christ**

As we have before stated, Joseph is a very strong type of Christ and there are numerous parallels between the life and events in the life of Joseph and the life and events in the life of Jesus Christ. Some of these parallels in this chapter are stated below:

1. Joseph’s brethren had to go to Joseph to get food. The only source of corn for themselves and their families was in the storehouse of Joseph. Likewise, spiritual food is available only in Christ: Eph. 1:3 “Blessed be the God and Father of our

Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:”

2. To receive the food for themselves and their families, they were required to follow the commandment of Joseph: 43:3 “And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.” Likewise, if we are to receive the spiritual food in the kingdom of God we must follow the commandment of Jesus to: Heb. 10:25 “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

3. Joseph sent his servant to bring his brethren home: 43:16 “And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon. 17 And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house.” Likewise, Jesus sends his servants to bring his children to the feast: Luke 14:16 “Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: 17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. 18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. 19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. 20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. 21 So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. 22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. 23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.”

4. Joseph returned the brethren's money to them: 43:20 “And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food: 21 And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. 22 And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks. 23 And he said, Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them.” Likewise, our service to Jesus is fully rewarded way beyond the efforts we make: Matt. 19:29 “And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.”

5. Joseph's brethren ate in Joseph's house: 43:32 “And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians. 33 And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another. 34 And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.” Likewise, the brethren of Christ eat spiritual food in the house of God as the house of

God is the church of God: 1 Tim. 3:15 “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

6. One brother of Joseph was blessed more than the other brethren of Joseph: 43:34 “And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.” Similarly, some in the kingdom of God receive more talents or gifts than others: Matt. 25:15 “And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.”

7. Joseph gave his brethren water to wash their feet: 43:24 “And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet...” Jesus did more than Joseph as he washed his disciples feet: John 13:3 “Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; 4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. 5 After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.”

8. Joseph wept: 43:30 “And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there.” Jesus wept: John 11:35 “Jesus wept.”

9. Joseph in his providence blessed his brethren: 43:23 “And he said, Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them. 24 And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender.” Not only did Joseph return the money of his brethren to them, but he also gave them water to wash their feet and gave food for their animals to eat. Every child of God who has felt the presence of God in their lives knows of the exceedingly many providential blessings that come to him just because he is the brother of Jesus Christ.

10. God sent peace to the troubled souls of the brethren of Joseph: 43:18 And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses. 19 And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house, 20 And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food: 21 And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. 22 And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks. 23 And he said, Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them.”

God sends peace to the troubled souls of the brethren of Christ: John 14:1 “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

11. The brethren of Joseph bowed down to him a second time: 43:26  
“And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth.” Christ’s children frequently bow themselves down to him as they go to God in prayer.

## **Genesis Chapter 43**

### **Surety**

The principle of surety is set forth in this chapter in the conversation between Israel and Judah. Judah promises to be surety for his brother Benjamin. Similarly, Christ is surety for the entire elect family of God.

Gen. 43:2 “And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food. 3 And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. 4 If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food: 5 But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. 6 And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? 7 And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down? 8 And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. 9 I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever:”

Jacob had a great love for his son, Benjamin, and did not want harm to come to him or for him to be lost to his fellowship. With Judah’s promise to be surety for Benjamin he was saying to his father that he would stand in the place of Benjamin judicially or financially to pay any debts or serve any judicial judgments for Benjamin should the need arise and would finally present Benjamin back home to his father. To be surety for another means to stand in the place of the other to pay any debts or serve any judicial judgments for the other. Moreover, if Judah failed to present Benjamin back to his father, then he would bear the shame and blame forever. Later on we will find that a charge will be brought against Benjamin and Judah will step in and offer to serve the penalty for Benjamin so that Benjamin might return home to his father.

Jesus served as surety for the entire elect family of God: Heb. 7:22 “By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.” Jesus was/is surety based on a covenant promise made between him and the Father: Rom. 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.” Jesus told us in John 6:37-39: “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will

which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

If Jesus should fail to bring home even one that the Father gave him, then according to the law of surety, Jesus would bear the shame and blame forever.

Those that the Father gave to Jesus each had great judicial debts and for Jesus to be surety for them, he had to step in and take their place to pay off the judicial debts. We read that Jesus did this on the cross of Calvary: 2 Cor. 5:21 “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Moreover, based on the covenant promise, every one for whom Christ died will one day be presented to the Father in a righteous and perfect condition. Already, the elect family stands before the Father in judgment in a righteous state: Rom. 8:33 “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Because Christ is our surety and has paid the price for us, no judicial charge can be laid against us before the Father forever.

## **Genesis Chapter 44**

### **Differences between Joseph and Christ**

In previous chapters we have outlined many parallels between the life and events of Joseph and Christ. In this chapter, as with all types of Christ, we notice that types of Christ are not perfect and we look at some of the imperfections of Joseph:

1. Joseph set a trap to bring a false accusation against Benjamin, because he wanted Benjamin to be with him in Egypt. Now this was contrary to the will and purpose of God as God would have all the descendants of Jacob to come to Egypt where his descendants would stay for 400 years. Sometimes men try to thwart the will of God only to find that God in his providence has overruled their efforts. In this instance God overruled through his foreknowledge and providence. God had previously put in the heart of Judah to make a covenant of surety-ship with Jacob which served to spoil the design of Joseph. Through the foreknowledge of God, he knew what Joseph would design to do and through his providence God put in the heart of Judah to be surety for Benjamin.

2. Joseph used a silver cup to “divine.” The Hebrew meaning of the word translated divine or divineth in this chapter is otherwise translated throughout the Old Testament as “enchantments.” The scripture plainly tells us that we are not to use enchantments: Deu. 18:10 “There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch...” Later, the magicians of Egypt would use “enchantments” in an effort to emulate the miracles that God performed at the hands of Moses.

3. Joseph falsely accused his brethren of “rewarding evil for good.” While in some matters that were true, but in this which Joseph accused them at that time, it was not true.

Christ is perfect in every detail. Joseph as a type of Christ was not perfect as he has the flesh nature inherited from Adam and we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God.

## **Genesis Chapter 44**

### **Judah pleads surety-ship to Joseph**

Joseph had accused Benjamin of stealing his silver cup and pronounced that he would be Joseph's servant. Moreover, even though all the brothers said they would be his servant, Joseph denied their pleas and told them to go home. At this point, Judah approached Joseph and carefully told him of the covenant agreement of surety-ship that Judah had with Jacob, whereby Judah agreed to be surety for Benjamin. Judah also told how that if Benjamin did not return to his father, Jacob, that Jacob would die of sorrow for his son, Benjamin. This convinced Joseph that he would have to reveal himself to his brethren and to drop his scheme to keep Benjamin as a servant and sent his other brothers back to their families in Canaan. It was the providence of God in putting it in the heart of Judah to be surety for Benjamin that ultimately convinced Joseph to follow through on God's revelation to Abraham that the seed of Abraham would go down into Egypt and dwell there for 400 years.

## **Genesis Chapter 45**

### **Parallels between Joseph and Christ**

Joseph is perhaps the strongest figure of Christ in the bible. There are a great number of parallels in the life and events surrounding Joseph and Christ. Some of these parallels are set forth in this 45<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis:

1. v.1 "Joseph **made himself known** unto his brethren." Matt. 16:15 "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not **revealed** it unto thee, but **my Father** which is in heaven."

2. v.2 "And he **wept** aloud:" John 11:35 "Jesus **wept**."

3. v.3 "for they were **troubled at his presence**." Matt. 14:26 "And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, **they were troubled**, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear."

4. v.4 "And Joseph said unto his brethren, **Come near** to me, I pray you. And they came near. James 4:8 "**Draw nigh** to God, and he will draw nigh to you."

5. v.4 "And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom **ye sold** into Egypt." Matt. 26:15 "And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And **they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver**."

6. v.5 "Now therefore **be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves**..." John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. **Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid**."

7. v.5 “**God did send** me before you **to preserve life.**” John 6:38 “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the **will of him that sent me.** 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of **all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.**”

8. v.7 “And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to **save your lives by a great deliverance.**” Matt. 1:21 “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for **he shall save his people from their sins.**”

9. v.8 “So now it was not you that **sent me hither, but God:**” John 5:30 “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the **Father which hath sent me.**”

10. v.8 “**lord of all his house...**” Acts 2:36 “Therefore let **all the house of Israel** know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both **Lord** and Christ.”

11. v.8 “**a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.**” Matt. 2:6 “And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a **Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.**”

12. v.10 “And thou shalt  **dwell in the land of Goshen...**” Rev. 21:3 “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, **and he will dwell with them,** and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”

13. v.11 “And there will I nourish thee;” John 21:15 “So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my lambs.**” John 21:16 “He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my sheep.**” John 21:17 “He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, **Feed my sheep.**”

Acts 20:28 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to **feed the church of God,** which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

1 Pet. 5:2 “**Feed the flock of God** which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;”

Rev. 7:17 “For **the Lamb** which is in the midst of the throne **shall feed them,** and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Rev. 12:6 “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that **they should feed her** there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.”

14. v.21 “Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and **gave them provision for the way.**” Phil. 4:19 “But my God **shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**”

15. v.22 “To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.” Christ has given all of the elect a change of raiment in judgment, changing them from wearing

condemnation in unrighteousness to wearing the imputed righteousness of Christ: 2 Cor. 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." To those who know the truth about salvation by grace Christ has additionally given them the knowledge of God's covenant of redemption (5 changes of raiment) in Rom. 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**." Moreover, he has given to them **the faith (300 pieces of silver represent the faith that was once delivered to the saints)**: Jude 1:3 "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend **for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints**."

16. v.23 "And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way." Joseph sent a great quantity of food for his father's household. Likewise, Christ has provided a far greater quantity of food for his Father's household: 2 Tim. 3:16 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

17. Joseph's father believed Joseph to be dead and then found out that he was still alive. To Jacob this was life from the dead. Jesus actually died and then arose from the grave 3 days later. This is life from the dead.

## **Genesis Chapter 45** **Joseph's Gift to Benjamin**

Gen. 45:21 "And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. 22 To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave **three hundred pieces of silver**, and five changes of raiment." There is a very strong correlation in the scriptures between the number 300 and the subject of faith. This correlation is so strong that the words faith and its derivatives, faithful, faithfully, and faithfulness occur exactly 300 times in the King James translation of the New Testament. In addition, the words, believe and its derivatives, belief, believeth, believing, and believer occur exactly 300 times in the scriptures. There are between 30 and 40 writers of the Old and New Testaments whose writings spanned about a thousand years. There is no way they could have collaborated together to come out with such statistics. This was by the leadership of the Holy Spirit that such a correlation has been made even to the number of times the words appear in the scriptures.

Joseph was the next to the youngest child of Jacob. He was the oldest son of Rachel. Jacob had ten sons and they envied Joseph, as he was his father's favorite. Because of their envy, they sold Joseph into Egyptian bondage. Joseph is a very strong type of Christ. There are over one hundred parallels in the life of Joseph with the life of Jesus Christ.

While in Egyptian bondage, God blessed Joseph and eventually he became second only to Pharaoh in the Egyptian kingdom. As his name was changed, his brethren knew not that it was Joseph who was second only to Pharaoh. There came a famine in the land and Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy food that the descendants of Jacob die not. The brethren of Joseph knew not that it was Joseph who was selling them food, but Joseph knew whom they were.

In the process of time, Joseph made himself known to his brethren and at first, they were very afraid, but Joseph comforted them. It was at this time that Joseph gave the gifts unto his brethren. To each of the ten older brothers he gave a change of raiment, but to the younger brother, Benjamin, Joseph gave **five changes of raiment and three hundred pieces of silver.**

Since Joseph is a type of Christ, we see that the gifts given to the eleven brothers of Joseph parallel the gifts that Christ has given to his brethren (the elect family of God). To each of the brethren there is given a change of raiment. All of the elect were clothed in unrighteousness because of the sin of Adam. Through the atoning blood of Christ, all of the elect are now clothed in the righteousness of Christ: 2 Cor. 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Thus, all of the elect have a change of raiment from the unrighteousness of their fleshly nature to being clothed with the imputed righteousness of Christ. As a result, they will all be housed in heaven's glory world.

Benjamin, however, received more than the other brethren. He received **five changes of raiment and three hundred pieces of silver.** Likewise, the disciples of Christ in his true church receive more than other children of God. They receive an understanding of the covenant of redemption. The covenant of redemption is a five part covenant. In this covenant, the disciples of Christ learn that they have "five changes of raiment." The covenant of redemption is set forth for us in Rom. 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." God foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, and glorified the elect in covenant before the foundation of the world. This knowledge and understanding of the covenant of redemption sets the true church of Christ apart from all other belief systems. Those adherents in the primitive church, therefore, have these five changes of raiment: foreknew, predestinated, called, justified, glorified in their belief system.

Furthermore, to the true church there is delivered "the faith that was once delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3). The faith that was once delivered to the saints is the true system of doctrine, practice, and government of the true New Testament church. In this faith, there is only one gospel: Gal. 1:6 "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." The true gospel is the "gospel of the grace of Christ." Any other gospel is a perverted gospel and Paul said let such as preach a perverted gospel be accursed. There are many so-called gospels in the world today, but only one true gospel.

This faith that was once delivered to the saints is clearly spelled out in the New Testament. Since the scriptures are a thorough furnisher unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16, 17), the doctrine, practice, and government of the New Testament church will be thoroughly spelled out for us in the New Testament. If a group of people have unscriptural practices, or have doctrines not taught in the bible, or have a government that is anti-scriptural then it is because it is not the true church. No where in the scriptures do you find a Sunday school, schools of Theology, salaried ministry, instrumental music in the New Testament church, hierarchal government, women preachers or deacons, church choirs, tithing in the New Testament church, or church auxiliaries.

The three hundred pieces of silver speaks to us of the preciousness of the "faith that was once delivered to the saints. We should desire to keep the "faith that was once delivered to the saints" and not change it in any way.

## **Genesis Chapter 45**

### **Jacob learns that Joseph is Alive**

Previously, the sons of Jacob had lied to their father and told him that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal and provided Joseph's coat of many colors with blood stained from a slain lamb as evidence. Jacob thought the blood was Joseph's blood and that he was surely dead. For many years Jacob believed Joseph to be dead. Now the time had come that Jacob is told by his sons that Joseph is alive: Gen. 45:25 "And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, 26 And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. 27 And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: 28 And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."

At first Jacob refused to believe that Joseph was alive as he had evidence (so he thought) that he had seen before that Joseph was dead. He believed his sons were lying to him. What changed his mind was the preponderance of evidence that Joseph was alive. This evidence was from the wagons that Joseph sent to carry him into Egypt, then he believed that Joseph was yet alive.

This teaches us that false or perverted evidence can great hinder someone from believing the truth. Jacob's sons had presented their father false evidence and he had believed it. Likewise, many people today are presented with a perverted gospel and believe the false teachings. This seriously hurts them in their ability to believe the truth that salvation from sin is by grace alone. Paul wrote of a perverted gospel in Gal. 1:6 "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

Paul affirmed that the true gospel is the "grace of Christ." He said that any other gospel is a perverted gospel and not the true gospel. Since many of God's people have

been taught a perverted gospel, it is hard for them to believe the true gospel. It is necessary that they receive a preponderance of evidence that salvation from sin is by the grace of Christ alone before most of them can be converted to believe the truth. It is much easier for those who have not had their minds blinded by a false gospel to believe the truth than it is for someone who has been taught and believed a false gospel.

## **Genesis Chapter 46 Jacob to be made a great nation in Egypt**

God declared unto Jacob that he and his descendants would become a great nation in Egypt: 46:1 “And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. 2 And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. 3 And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: 4 I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.” Much of this chapter deals with the framework of the nation that Jacob would become and would set a pattern for a future and greater kingdom as set forth below:

### **Twelve and Seventy – A Kingdom Born**

The kingdom of Israel began based on a covenant that God had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God chose Jacob and changed his name to Israel. The man Jacob had twelve sons. These twelve sons married and multiplied into a multitude. The progeny of these twelve sons were divided into twelve tribes, commonly referred to as the twelve tribes of Israel. The tribes were known by the names of the twelve sons of Jacob.

During the days of the great famine in Egypt, Jacob and his family came to live in Egypt under the protective care of Joseph: Exo 1:1 "Now these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt; every man and his household came with Jacob. 2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, 3 Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, 4 Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. 5 And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already." From these twelve sons and seventy persons grew a nation within Egypt of nearly three million people who were delivered out of Egypt during the days of Moses.

In the wilderness God made a covenant with Israel and appointed over them twelve princes and seventy elders:

1. Num. 1: 4 "And with you there shall be a man of every tribe; every one head of the house of his fathers. 5 And these are the names of the men that shall stand with you: of the tribe of Reuben; Elizur the son of Shedeur. 6 Of Simeon; Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. 7 Of Judah; Nahshon the son of Amminadab. 8 Of Issachar; Nethaneel the son of Zuar. 9 Of Zebulun; Eliab the son of Helon. 10 Of the children of Joseph: of Ephraim; Elishama the son of Ammihud: of Manasseh; Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. 11 Of Benjamin; Abidan the son of Gideoni. 12 Of Dan; Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. 13 Of Asher; Pagiel the son of Ocran. 14 Of Gad; Eliasaph the son of

Deuel. 15 Of Naphtali; Ahira the son of Enan. 16 These were the renowned of the congregation, **princes** of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thousands in Israel."

2. Exo 24:1 "And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off."

3. Exo 24:9 "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel."

4. Num 11:16 "And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee."

5. Num 11:24 "And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle."

6. Num 11:25 "And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease."

The twelve princes of the twelve tribes of Israel became the governors of Israel and the seventy elders became the judges of Israel. What later became known as the Sanhedrin counsel had its roots in the seventy elders.

This pattern of the kingdom is presented to us in type at the place known as Elim:

1. Exo 15:27 "And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters."

2. Num 33:9 "And they removed from Marah, and came unto Elim: and in Elim were twelve fountains of water, and threescore and ten palm trees; and they pitched there." Elim was a place of refuge and comfort for the desert weary travelers. Here they refreshed themselves. Of course, this pointed back to the kingdom that began with twelve sons of Jacob and seventy descendants.

It also pointed forward to a future kingdom of heaven that would have twelve apostles judging the twelve tribes of Israel and seventy elders:

1. Mat 10:1 "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease."

2. Mat 10:2 "Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother..."

3. Mat 10:5 "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not."

4. Mat 11:1 "And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities."

5. Mat 19:28 "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

6. Luke 10:1 "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come."

7. Luke 10:17 "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name."

The twelve apostles are the ones that Christ used as foundation stones to build his church kingdom upon: Eph. 2:20 "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." The seventy elders are representative of the gospel ministry today who go at the direction of the Lord through the Holy Spirit.

## **Genesis Chapter 46 Parallels between Joseph and Christ**

There are numerous parallels between the life and events surrounding Joseph and the life and events surrounding Christ. In this chapter I have identified four such parallels:

1. God promised to Jacob that Joseph would put his hand upon Jacob's eyes: v.4 "I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes." The implication is that Joseph would put his hand upon the eyes of Jacob and Jacob, whose vision was now dim, would have a recovering of sight. Likewise we see where Jesus put his hands upon the eyes of a blind man and he had a recovery of sight: Mk. 8:25 "After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly."

2. Joseph had two sons in the land of Egypt: v.20 "And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him." Christ's children are described as two:

a. Eph. 2:15 "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"

b. John 10:16 "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

3. Joseph presented himself unto his father: v.29 "And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while." Jesus presented himself to the Father: Heb. 9:14 "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

4. All of Joseph's kin and his father's house came unto him: v.31 "And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and show Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan,

are come unto me;” Similarly, we read of Christ: John 6:37 “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

## **Genesis Chapter 47.1-6**

Gen. 47:1 “Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen. 2 And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh. 3 And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers. 4 They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. 5 And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: 6 The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.”

“Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen.” Joseph announced to Pharaoh that his family and their flocks and herds and possessions have come out of Canaan and are currently in the land of Goshen. This allowed Pharaoh to know that his orders had been carried out. This is in likeness to Christ announcing on the cross that “It is finished” signifying that Christ had fulfilled the commandments of the Father to deliver his children from their state of condemnation to a state of righteousness.

“And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.” Joseph served an intermediary for his brethren in presenting them unto Pharaoh. Likewise, Christ is our intercessor as we read in Rom. 8:34 “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

“And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers. 4 They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.” The brethren of Joseph confessed to Pharaoh what their occupation was and then made request to dwell in the land of Goshen. Their occupation as shepherds was an abomination to the Egyptians. This is somewhat akin to God’s humble obedient children confessing they are sinners and asking for a home in the Lord’s New Testament church. They knew that for their request to be considered was because of their relationship to Joseph and his work as their mediator. Likewise, we know that for us to have a part of the New Testament church comes through our relationship to Christ as children of God and to his work as our mediator.

“And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and

brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell.” Pharaoh made an agreement with Joseph that Joseph’s family would dwell in the land of Goshen, the best of the land. Likewise, there was an agreement between the Father and Christ that God’s obedient children could dwell in the church while they sojourned here on earth. Moreover, there is an eternal covenant between the Father and Christ that the elect will dwell eternally in the glory world. This covenant was made before the foundation of the world:

1. Rom. 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.”

2. Eph. 1:4, 5: “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will...”

3. Eph. 1:11: “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:”

“And if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.” Joseph had the authority from Pharaoh to appoint men as rulers over Pharaoh’s cattle. This is similar to Christ having the authority to appoint ministers to take the oversight and leadership over the Lord’s “sheep:”

1. Eph. 4:11, 12: “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:”

2. 1 Pet. 5:2 “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;”

3. Acts 20:28: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

4. Matt. 28:18-20: “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

## **Genesis Chapter 47.7-10**

Gen. 47:7 “And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. 8 And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? 9 And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. 10 And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.”

This interaction between Jacob and Pharaoh is quite remarkable in that it illustrates to us a great spiritual lesson. In the eyes of the world, these two individuals would seem to have been on the opposite end of the social spectrum. Pharaoh was at the time, the ruler of the greatest nation on earth. Jacob was a sojourner. He had lived as a sojourner in Canaan, then Pandanaram, then back to Canaan, and now in Egypt. He never had a permanent possession of a dwelling place in any of those countries. He also was a shepherd, which was an abomination to the Egyptians. He was a financially poor man as he came to Egypt to dwell because of the famine of the land.

Moreover, Jacob's view of his life was that his days had been few and evil and had not attained unto the days of the years of the life of his fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. Thus, Jacob considered himself to be a poor sinner whom God had richly blessed.

The world view of Pharaoh would have been that he was a great man. The world view of Jacob would have been that he was an insignificant peasant.

It is at this point that we see a great spiritual lesson as the scripture says that "Jacob blessed Pharaoh." According to the scriptures: Heb. 7:7 "And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better." In the eyes of God Jacob was better than Pharaoh and greater than Pharaoh. Spiritually, Jacob had a very close relationship with God and God richly blessed Jacob. Moreover, Jacob had the knowledge of God's covenant promises. Truly, Pharaoh could not have blessed Jacob in the sense that Jacob blessed Pharaoh. By all evidence, this Pharaoh was a child of God and did many good things for his people and was indeed gracious toward Joseph and his family, however, Pharaoh did not have the kind of fellowship with God that Jacob had with God.

The above should teach us that it is better to have a spiritual fellowship with God than to arise to great acclaim and position in the world.

### **Genesis Chapter 47.11-13**

Gen. 47:11 "And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. 12 And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families. 13 And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine."

"And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded." Joseph carried out the command of Pharaoh. Joseph had this responsibility and he completed it. Likewise, Christ carries out the command of the Father both in giving the obedient children of God a timely possession in the church and all the elect an eternal possession in heaven:

1. Rev. 12:6 "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

2. Eph. 1:10, 11 "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated

according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:"

“And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.” While the famine was very sore in the land of Egypt, Joseph provided nourishment for his family. Likewise, Christ provides for the spiritual nourishment of his children, even though there is a famine of spiritual nourishment in the world:

1. John 21:15 “So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”

2. Acts 20:28 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

3. 1 Pet. 5:2 “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;”

4. Rev. 7:17 “For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

5. Rev. 12:6 “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.”

“And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.” The world has no spiritual food for the spirit born child of God. A child of God who tries to get his spiritual food from the world will find his soul to be greatly famished:

1. Luke 15:14 “And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.”

2. 1 John 2:15 “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

## **Genesis Chapter 47.14-26**

In this passage of scripture, we are told how that the famine continued on in the land of Egypt and what happened to the people during this time of famine. First the people gave all their money for bread to eat. The next year they gave their cattle, flocks and herds to Pharaoh for bread to eat. The third year they gave their lands and their

bodies to Pharaoh for bread to eat. In just a relatively short period of time, because of the famine, the people had gone to possessors of wealth to be slaves to Pharaoh. Next, Pharaoh made them sharecroppers. They were to give 20% of all that they produced to Pharaoh.

This should teach us that we should not trust in uncertain riches. How easy is it for worldly riches to disappear in a very short period of time. Rather, we should put our trust in our God and trust in his provision.

## **Genesis Chapter 47.27-31**

Gen. 47:27 “And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly. 28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years. 29 And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: 30 But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. 31 And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.”

Israel made a covenant with Joseph that his body would not be buried in Egypt but be buried in the land of Canaan in the burying place that had been purchased by Abraham. Buried there was Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob’s wife Leah. There were two things that Jacob requested of Joseph to assure Jacob that his desires would be carried out. First, there was a covenant between the two. We know this was a covenant because Jacob required Joseph to put his hand under his thigh while Joseph confirmed the agreement: “I will do as thou hast said.” Next, Jacob asked Joseph to make an oath to that affect: “And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him.”

The above is very similar to what we read concerning Christ and the covenant that he made with the Father: Heb. 6:16 “For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. 17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:”

We have a great hope of eternal life because of the covenant promise made between the Father and Son and because of the oath of God. Since God cannot lie, these two immutable things (covenant promise and oath) assure us of our eternal home. Just as Jacob had a covenant promise and oath from Joseph, we have even a greater hope than Jacob because our covenant promise and oath is from God.

## **Genesis Chapter 48**

In this chapter we discover Jacob is in his last days and was sick and Joseph comes to visit his father and brings his two sons with him.

Jacob declares the blessings of God and tells Joseph that his two sons are Jacob's and shall be named with the other sons of Jacob. That is, Joseph would get a double portion with his seed. Joseph as the more upright of the sons of Jacob was given a double portion.

Jacob proceeds to pronounce the blessings upon the sons of Joseph. You will recall that Isaac had tried to grant the greater blessing upon Esau even though God had pronounced that the elder shall serve the younger. However, the blessing of God was ultimately given to Jacob. There is a biblical principle in the scriptures of the favored second. We find several examples where the blessings of God were given to the second rather than the first:

1. Abel over Cain
2. Isaac over Ishmael
3. Jacob over Esau
4. The second covenant over the first covenant
5. The second or new birth over the first birth
6. The second Adam (Christ) over the first Adam
7. Elisha over Elijah (Elijah came first, then Elisha came second)
8. King David over King Saul

When Joseph brought his sons to Jacob for Jacob to bless, he brought Manasseh, the oldest, to Jacob's right side and he brought Ephraim, the youngest to Jacob's left side. However, Jacob guided his hands wittingly and laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim and his left hand upon the head of Manasseh. This displeased Joseph, yet Jacob refused to do otherwise. No doubt Jacob remembered that his father Isaac had tried to give the blessing to Esau that was reserved for Jacob.

Jacob crossed his arms to place his hands upon the heads of Ephraim and Manasseh and bless them. This points us to the cross of Calvary where Christ shed his blood to redeem his people from their sins. All the elect family was blessed in the atoning sacrifice of Christ.

Jacob blessed both the sons of Joseph: v. 15 "And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, 16 The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." However, upon the younger was pronounced the greater blessing: v. 17 "And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head. 18 And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head. 19 And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations. 20 And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh."

Historically, we know that the tribe of Ephraim played a greater role in the history of Israel and become a greater people both numerically and influentially than did the tribe of Manasseh.

However, there appears to be an allegorical significance to the two sons of Joseph. They point us to Christ and his statements concerning the Jews and the Gentiles: Matt. 19:28 “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. 30 But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

20:1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. 2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? 7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. 9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. 11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, 12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. 13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? 14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? 16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.”

The gospel was first preached to the Jews and there were some Jews who received it and entered into God's visible church kingdom on earth. Next, the gospel went unto the Gentiles and many of the Gentiles responded and entered into God's church kingdom on earth. Thus, the Jews were first and the Gentiles were second as far as the dispensation of preaching and receiving the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Many of the Jews became jealous of the Gentiles and adopted the false belief of Judaism as set forth in the book of Galatians and elsewhere. Through this false teaching the vast majority of the Jews that were in the church departed from the true church. While they were first to receive the gospel they became last in the kingdom. The Gentiles who were last to have the gospel preached unto them continued in the gospel and the true gospel church is still with the Gentiles until this day. The last became first.

Now, notice that it was said of Ephraim that his seed would become a multitude of nations. The word, Gentiles, refers to the multitude of nations that are not Jews.

## **Genesis Chapter 49 Prophecy of Jacob**

Gen. 49:1 “And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days. 2 Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father.”

In the last day of Jacob’s life on earth, he called unto his sons and had them gather themselves around him as he spoke to them on his deathbed. Jacob was blessed of God to prophecy concerning the “last days.” While I am uncertain as to the meaning of the phrase “last days,” in this text, yet, there are things in this passage that speak to us of some events that surrounded the time of the coming of the Lord Jesus into the world the first time. There are also some things that Jacob said that seem to resonate with us in this gospel day in which we live.

The prophecy seems to be adumbrated, i.e., to have more than one application. However, it does not seem to have the application to the individuals, but unto their tribes and then, further beyond the end of the law dispensation with the children of Israel. There is much concerning this prophecy I readily admit that I do not have understanding on.

I will take the prophecy concerning each son and his tribe and attempt to glean what I can from its teaching.

## **Genesis Chapter 49 Reuben**

Gen. 49:3 “Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: 4 Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch.”

Reuben had the position of the firstborn in the family of Jacob. As such, he was to be the leader of the family showing forth strength, excellence of dignity and excellence of power. The firstborn in a family occupies initially a favored position in the family. However, the actions of the firstborn can alter his standing in the family. This was the case with Reuben. He lay with his father’s concubine. Through his sin he defiled himself and brought reproach to the family. He lost his right of leadership in the family. Moreover, his sin had a permanent effect upon his tribe as well. The tribe of Reuben would never be a leader among the tribes of Israel.

There are lessons we can learn from this:

1. We can alter or lose our position of leadership both in our family, in the church, or in the world by our wicked actions, which we are all prone to commit.
2. Our actions can have a negative affect upon our families, or upon the church of our membership, or upon any organization we may represent.

## **Genesis Chapter 49**

### **Simeon and Levi**

Gen. 49:5 “Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. 6 O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall. 7 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.”

There is a strong correlation between the actions of Simeon and Levi and the twin subjects of anger and wrath. Simeon and Levi became angry when their sister was defiled by Shechem in the city of Shalem. Shechem desired to marry their sister, Dinah and Shechem’s father Hamor had arranged a covenant with the children of Israel. However, at an opportune time, Simeon and Levi united in their wrath, descended upon the city of Shalem, and slew all the males in the city. Their anger was fierce and it turned into wrath which was cruel. They murdered every male in the city!

The scriptures teach us that we are not to let our anger turn to wrath: Eph. 4:26 “Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:” Anger is an emotion that we fairly frequently may feel based on the circumstances of life. However, wrath follows when we allow the anger to turn to cruel action against our adversary. Even if we think vengeance is called for the Lord has taught us: Rom. 12:19 “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” We are not to let our anger be united with wrath and vengeance. It is dishonorable for the disciples of Christ to seek wrathful vengeance upon their adversaries.

## **Genesis Chapter 49**

### **Judah**

Gen. 49:8 “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. 9 Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? 10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. 11 Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: 12 His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.”

The above prophecy of Judah appears to be pointing us unto the ruler ship of the tribe of Judah and especially unto Christ as the coming king and atoning sacrifice for his people.

“Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise...” Certainly our praise today is and should be of Christ who descended from the tribe of Judah.

“Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies;” To have one’s hand in the neck of his enemies indicates that he has the victory over his enemies. This certainly describes Christ who has the victory over sin, Satan, death, hell, and the grave.

“Thy father's children shall bow down before thee.” The scriptures teach us concerning Christ: Rom. 14:11 “For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” Every child of God will bow down in reverence and worship before Christ and confess that he is the eternal king and savior.

“Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?” Lions are used in the scriptures as figures of kings. The kingly line of the children of Israel was given to David of the tribe of Judah and descended through Solomon and his descending sons.

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” Beginning with king David, his descendants were the lawful kings and rulers over the nation of Israel until Christ came. Christ is symbolized in this passage as “Shiloh.” That the elect people of God are gathered together unto Christ is confirmed by the words of Christ: John 6:37 “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

“Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes:” The gospel declares unto us that Christ ascended into Jerusalem on a colt, the foal of an ass: Matt. 21:5 “Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.” Christ not only came as a conquering king, but he also came as a redeemer. Wine is symbolic of the blood of Christ. That “he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes,” points us to the atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross of Calvary. With the atoning sacrifice of Christ, the filthy garments of his elect children were exchanged for garments of righteousness: 2 Cor. 5:21 “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

“His eyes shall be red with wine...” His eyes being red with wine is not suggesting that Christ was drunken with wine, but rather is symbolic of Christ being filled with the Spirit: Eph. 5:18 “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;” Also, Luke 1:15 reads: “For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.”

“And his teeth white with milk.” Milk is associated with the word of God: 1 Pet 2:2 “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:” Moreover white is associated in the scriptures with righteousness. This passage is suggesting that Christ would eat of the word of God and be altogether righteous. Christ said concerning his keeping of the word:

1. Matt. 5:17 “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

2. Matt. 4:4 “But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

Christ is the one who was altogether righteous and through his blood atonement justified the elect family of God and made them righteous before a just and holy God. Moreover, it is Christ who sits and reigns in an everlasting kingdom today, ruling and reigning over his children in his kingdom.

## **Genesis Chapter 49** **Zebulun**

Gen. 49:13 “Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon.”

Very little is told us about Zebulun in this passage. We are told that Zebulun’s dwelling place would be at the haven of the sea. Haven means a sheltered cove or bay. Thus, we are told that Zebulun’s dwelling place is a sheltered cove or bay by the sea. Zebulun is somewhat like the Lord’s church. She is sheltered by the protective watch care of her husband, Jesus Christ.

Moreover, a haven of the sea is a place where the fisherman would bring their catches. This reminds of what the Lord told Peter and Andrew: Matt. 4:19 “And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” One of the functions of the Lord’s church is to bring the Lord’s children into the fold of the church.

Zebulun was also to be a haven for ships. The ships could find a safe harbor from the storms in the cove. Likewise, the Lord’s church is a safe harbor for God’s children from the ravaging storms of life. Here they can come and find rest and peace from the storms of life.

The border of Zebulun was unto Zidon. Zidon was a son of Canaan. Needless to say, when an inhabitant of Zebulun went into Zidon, he was no longer in Zebulun. Similarly, the Lord’s church has borders or boundaries. We are within the church as long as we do not go outside the boundaries. We are bounded by the teachings and commandments of the Lord and the holy scriptures.

## **Genesis Chapter 49** **Issachar**

Gen. 49:14 “Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens: 15 And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute.”

The description of Issachar speaks to us of a burden bearer who finds a good rest and a pleasant land and then bows his shoulder to bear and thus becomes a servant unto tribute. The closest description I have found to the above in the New Testament is found in Matthew Chapter 11 when the Lord tells his people to come unto him: Matt. 11:28 “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

“Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens.” The Lord said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden.” The Lord is speaking to his people who are bearing two burdens. They are bearing the burden of trying to get right with God and they are bearing the burden of sin-guiltiness. The only way that they can find rest is to come to the Lord and rest in his finished work. The Lord himself finished the work of making them right with God. They do not have to labor to try to establish their righteousness for Christ has already made them right with God: Rom. 10:1 “Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Christ is the end or completion of the law for righteousness. When we believe that Christ has by his grace made us righteous before God, then we can rest from the burden of trying to get right with God and we can rest from the burden of sin-guiltiness as we realize that we have a righteous standing before God because of the sacrificial atonement of our Savior in our room and stead.

“And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant.” When we hear and believe the gospel of the grace of Christ we are brought to an understanding that this is a good rest and we are also taught about the Church Kingdom of God that it is a pleasant land in which to live and labor.

“And bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute.” This is similar to what the Lord said, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” While we find that the Lord had given us rest from laboring to establish our own righteousness and rest from sin-guiltiness, this should cause us to have a desire to serve the Lord because of his manifest love for us. This service is not a grievous service but is an easy service and the burden is light. Serving the Lord in his kingdom is one of the great privileges that God gives us.

## **Genesis Chapter 49**

### **Dan**

Gen. 49:16 “Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. 17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. 18 I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.”

The word, Dan, literally means judge. That which God uses to judge the people is his laws. For instance, God made a covenant with the nation of Israel. They were to keep the laws and commandments of God or suffer the consequences of breaking those laws.

In the Garden of Eden, when God made a covenant with Adam, he gave him one law and he gave him the penalty of breaking the law, which was death. By breaking the law, Adam brought himself and all his posterity under the law of sin and death. Satan in the form of the serpent enticed Eve and then Adam to break the law of God.

Dan, in the passage above, is typical of the law covenant whereby Israel was judged by the law. The law had a curse: Gal. 3:10 “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”

Judgment under the law was like the “serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.” We are like riders on the horse of the law and we are bitten through transgression of the law so that we are condemned by the law. The universal condemnation of the law is set forth in Rom. 3:19 “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

“I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.” We cannot deliver ourselves from the curse of the law. Moreover, the law only condemns us and does not justify us, so if deliverance comes then it must come from an outside source and from one who is capable of delivering us. The LORD (Jehovah = a covenant making, covenant keeping God) is the one who delivers us from the condemnation of sin and justifies us before God. Jesus Christ is the LORD and it is he who has delivered and justified us before God:

1. Gal. 3:13 “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:”

2. 2 Cor. 5:21 “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

## **Genesis Chapter 49**

### **Gad**

Gen. 49:19 “Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last.” This passage of scripture points us to the wild man of Gadarea.

Luke 8:26 “And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. 27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. 29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. 31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. 32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. 33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. 35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to

Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.”

This man of Gad had been overcome by a legion of unclean spirits and consequently was a wild man as described in the passage above. However, when the Lord came to him, he cast out the legion of unclean spirits and the man became one that was sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind. The man had been overcome by a troop, but overcame at the last through the gracious work and command of Jesus.

God’s children are like the man of Gad. We have all been overcome by a troop of sin, but are delivered by the Lord. Not only did he deliver us from the condemnation of sin, but he made us righteous before God. We are clothed in the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

## **Genesis Chapter 49**

### **Asher**

Gen. 49:20 “Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties.” The name “Asher” means happy or joy. It is stated that his bread shall be fat, i.e., it will be plenteous. Moreover, Asher was to yield or bring forth abundantly royal or kingly dainties.

Asher is typical of the Lord’s church. The church has plenteous bread to eat. The Lord has given the church abundant spiritual food contained in the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. The following verses speak of the abundant supply provided to the Lord’s church:

1. 1 Cor. 3:2 “I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.”

2. Heb. 5:12 “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.”

3. 1 Pet. 2:2 “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”

4. John 6:27 “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”

5. Acts 2:46 “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,”

6. 1 Cor. 10:3 “And did all eat the same spiritual meat;”

7. Heb. 5:14 “But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

8. Matt. 4:3 “And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

9. Acts 2:42 “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

10. Acts 2:46 “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,”

11. 2 Cor. 9:10 “Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;”

The word, royal, refers to kings. The obedient children of God in the church are referred to as kings in Rev. 1:5, 6: “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” Moreover the church is described as a royal or kingly priesthood:

1. 1 Pet. 2:5 “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

2. 1 Pet 2:9 “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”

As a royal priesthood, the church yields royal dainties in offering up spiritual sacrifices unto God.

Through all the above the church members are filled with joy:

1. Matt. 13:44 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.”

2. Matt. 25:21 “His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

3. Luke 6:23 “Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.”

4. Luke 15:7 “I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”

5. John 3:29 “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.”

6. John 15:11 “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.”

7. John 16:20 “Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.”

8. John 17:13 “And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.”

9. Acts 13:52 “And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.”

10. Acts 20:24 “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

11. Rom. 14:17 “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

12. Rom. 15:13 “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

13. 2 Cor. 8:2 “How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.”

14. Gal. 5:22 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,”

15. Phil. 1:25 “And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;”

16. 1 Th. 1:6 “And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:”

17. James 1:2 “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;”

18. 1 Pet 1:8 “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:”

19. 1 John 1:4 “And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.”

The church, like Asher, is full of joy. The church has plenteous bread to eat. The church is also a royal priesthood that offers up spiritual sacrifices to God.

## **Genesis Chapter 49**

### **Naphtali**

Gen. 49:21 “Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words.” The description of Naphtali is similar to the circumstance and condition of the gospel ministry in the Lord’s church.

The word Naphtali means wrestling. The hind in the description is a young deer. The hind in the above description is let loose or freed from captivity. Goodly words are those that are found in the scriptures.

The gospel ministry is no different in his experiences from others of God’s born-again children. First, they are freed from the bondage of the law of sin and death through the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit in causing them to be born of the Spirit. Next, they wrestle with their own conviction of sin and try to establish their righteousness through the works of the law or through the works of some religious system. As they wrestle, they, by the grace of God, are freed from the bondage of the law and religious works systems by the gospel of the grace of God.

Being freed from the bondage of the law and religious works systems, they rejoice like the hind that is freed from the cage or pen that held her. They experience great joy

and exuberance at their new found freedom. They have a desire to worship and serve the Lord with much zeal.

Next, experiencing a call to preach the gospel to God's people, they engage in the study of God's word and under the leadership of the Spirit, they speak goodly words to the Lord's people who themselves have had similar experiences of grace.

## **Genesis Chapter 49**

### **Joseph**

Gen. 49:22 "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: 23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: 24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:) 25 Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: 26 The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren."

It is fitting that more would be said about Joseph than about the other sons as Joseph is a very strong type of Christ. There are over a hundred parallels between the life and circumstance of Joseph and the life and circumstance of Jesus Christ. Several parallels are presented in the above passage:

1. "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well..." The fruitfulness of Christ is without measure. We read of the fruitfulness of Christ in Rev.7:9 "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." We read that Christ is the promised seed of Abraham: Gal. 3:16 "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." The promise to Abraham was that his seed would be multiplied to be as numerous as the stars, the dust of the earth, and the sand upon the sea shore.

2. "Whose branches run over the wall..." At one time there was a middle wall of partition that separated the Jews from the Gentiles: Eph. 2:14 "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace..." Thus, the branches of Christ extended beyond the Israelite nation and encompassed a great multitude of people in all nations.

3. "The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him..." Certainly the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians, the lawyers, the scribes, the priesthood, the Sanhedrin court, and the Roman government all took out their bows to shoot and try to destroy the Lord. Their hatred was certainly manifest in their actions

against the Lord Jesus Christ. However, though the Lord was grieved by their actions he was not deterred from doing what the Father gave him to do.

4. "But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob..." The Lord Jesus came to defeat and to destroy a great host of enemies: sin, death, hell, Satan, and the grave. He went forth with the bow of righteousness and the covenant promises of God to accomplish the work before him. Christ, as the Son of God, went forth in the mighty power of God to accomplish the purpose or will of the Father: John 6:37 "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

5. "From thence is the shepherd..." This is certainly an apt description of our Lord Jesus Christ: John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep..." 14 "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."

6. "The stone of Israel:" Matt. 21:42 "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

7. "Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb..." The book of Revelation declares to us the blessings of the Almighty upon the Lord Jesus Christ:

a. Rev. 5:12 "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

b. Rev. 5:13 "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

c. Rev. 7:12 "Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."

8. "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills." The blessings of God upon the person and work of Jesus Christ have prevailed above any blessings of any who has lived before or will live after. The blessings of God are eternal blessings, unlike the timely blessings of men.

9. "They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." While Joseph was separate from his brethren in some ways, especially in the way of upright living, yet, Christ was separate from his brethren in holiness, righteousness, wisdom, godliness, and a host of other perfections.

## Genesis Chapter 49

### Benjamin

Gen. 49:27 “Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.”

The description of Benjamin can be taken in a couple of different ways. In some ways it is similar to the natural man in his depraved nature. It can also be compared to the disciple of the Lord. I tend to believe that the latter possibility is more appropriate here as it seems to more fit the context of the descriptions of the other eleven brothers.

First, the name “Benjamin” means “son of my right hand.” The elect family of God consists of children or sons of God. Thus, they each could be identified as a “son of God’s right hand.”

Second, the description says that Benjamin “shall ravin as a wolf...” A wolf has an appetite to catch and devour the prey. Ravin is suggestive of the appetite. A true disciple of the Lord has an appetite to learn more of what God’s word teaches. He knows that he is a sinner saved by grace through the atoning blood of Christ. He also knows that the love of God motivates him to be a follower of Jesus Christ. To be a good follower (disciple) of Jesus Christ he needs to know more of what God’s word teaches and to apply the principles to his understanding and practical living. He is to follow the admonition of Peter in 1 Pet. 2:2, 3: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”

Moreover, a true disciple of the Lord will be like a wolf that patiently and continuously seeks after his food. The true disciple will patiently and continuously seek knowledge, understanding, and wisdom in God’s word. Rom. 15:4 “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

“In the morning he shall devour the prey...” To be a good disciple of Jesus Christ there is a prey that we must devour. We know that we are sinners by nature and have a sin-cursed nature that Paul said, “I know that in me, (that is in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing.” For a wolf to devour the prey, he must destroy that which he is devouring. Likewise, there are things that we are to mortify or put to death:

1. Rom. 8:13 “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

2. Col. 3:5 “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: 7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. 8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds...”

In putting off the deeds of the flesh, the disciple is now in a position to eat of that which is precious: Col. 3:10 “And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: 11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. 12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13 Forbearing one

another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

Mortifying the deeds of the flesh and putting on the new man are a large part of the work of a disciple of Christ. As disciples we work in the daytime or morning and we reap the blessings of our labor in the evening or night.

“And at night he shall divide the spoil.” As a disciple of the Lord, we have responsibilities to our families, to our fellow disciples, to the church, and to those seeking searching children of God that we are blessed to interact with. To divide the spoil, is to give to others many of the benefits of our labors. Some of the benefits to others of our labors are pointed out in the following scriptures:

1. Matt. 5:14 “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

2. John 15:13 “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

3. Matt. 25:34 “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

4. Phil. 2:4 “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

5. 2 Tim. 2:2 “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

Clearly, the life of the disciple is a blessing in the lives of many of God’s children.

## **Genesis Chapter 49**

### **The Death of Jacob**

Gen. 49:28 “All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them.

29 And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, 30 In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a buryingplace. 31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah. 32 The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Heth. 33 And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.”

Often times God is referred to as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The reason for this is that God made and confirmed a covenant with these three patriarchs. It was one covenant confirmed with these three men. These men were all blessed to have God make and confirm the covenant with them. These men were together in their lives as having God make and confirm the covenant with them. Moreover, for some part of their lives these three men lived together: Heb. 11:9 “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:”

Since part of the promise of God to these individuals was that the land of Canaan was given to them of God by promise it is fitting that all three men should be together in the grave in the same burial site in the land of Canaan. Moreover, they were buried with their wives. Abraham and Sarah were together. Isaac and Rebekah were buried together, and Jacob and Leah were buried together.

“And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.” It is my experience that when visiting a person who is near death that they struggle to speak a few words in their weakened condition. However, God gave Jacob strength to speak a very lengthy prophecy as recorded in this chapter before Jacob yielded up the ghost.

Upon finishing his commandments to his sons, Jacob yielded up the ghost and was gathered unto his people. This testifies to us of the nature of death for a child of God. First, he yields up the ghost, i.e., the soul and spirit departs from the body. Next, the soul and spirit are gathered together with the previously departed children of God in heaven’s glory world. In the next chapter, we have recorded the burial of Jacob’s body.

### **Gen. 50:1-3**

Gen. 50:1 “And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. 2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. 3 And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days.”

“And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him.” Most often one mourns for the loss of one’s father. With Joseph this was true. Joseph was the first born of Jacob’s beloved wife Rachel. Joseph was Jacob’s favorite son and Jacob did much to cause Joseph to realize this. Jacob mourned for his son all the time that he thought he was dead. The bond of love was strong between Joseph and Jacob.

While death is not an end of things, it is the end of fellowship while here on earth. The felt loss of fellowship is strong when we lose the companionship of those we love.

“And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel.” Joseph sought to preserve the body of his father as long as Egyptian embalming would allow him to. This action parallels the action of Christ who has eternally preserved the elect unto glory: John 10:27 “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” By covenant arrangement we are preserved in Christ unto eternal glory.

“And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days.” In the scriptures there are associations between certain bible numbers and associated subjects. For instance the number two is association with witness; the number three is associated with the Godhead, the number five is associated with death; etc.

The number forty in scripture is associated with trial and judgment. Jacob, like all of mankind was a sinner. The judgment of sin is death. Jacob’s body now was experiencing the judgment of sin as the forty days suggest.

The number seventy is a kingdom number. The numbers one, twelve, and seventy are closely associated with the kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of God:

1. The one man, Jacob, had twelve sons and seventy descendants that came into Egypt. This was the beginning of the kingdom of Israel.
2. When the children of Israel departed Egypt and came into the wilderness, they came unto Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees.
3. When God established Israel as a kingdom through covenant with them, God was king over them and the nation had twelve princes and seventy elders according to God’s arrangement.
4. When Christ came as the King of the Kingdom of God, he appointed twelve apostles and seventy other elders in the beginning of His kingdom.

When the Egyptians mourned for Jacob seventy days, it was an indication that they were mourning for a king. So in the estimation of the Egyptians, Jacob held the status of a king in their eyes.

### **Gen. 50:4-6**

Gen. 50:4 “And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, 5 My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again. 6 And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.”

Joseph recognized the authority of the government of Egypt and of Pharaoh the king of Egypt in the above passage. It was not only by the providence of God that Joseph came into Egypt and came to the position he had in Egypt, but also by the authority of Pharaoh and his government that had been gracious unto Joseph and to his family.

Joseph sought the approval of Pharaoh to temporarily leave Egypt to fulfill his covenant promise to his father Jacob concerning Jacob's burial request.

Moreover, Pharaoh recognized the blessings of God that brought Joseph into Egypt and the wisdom that God gave Joseph in delivering Egypt in the midst of a great famine. Pharaoh showed his appreciation unto Joseph in his ready willingness to let Joseph leave Egypt to bury his father.

Joseph promised to Pharaoh that he would return unto Egypt after burying his father. This is another parallel between the life and circumstances of Joseph and the life and circumstances of Christ. Christ also in leaving promised to come again: John 14:3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also...28 "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I." Just like Joseph left Egypt and returned to Egypt, so Christ left the earth and will return at the appointed time to earth to take his children home.

### **Gen. 50:7-13**

Gen. 50:7 "And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, 8 And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. 9 And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company. 10 And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days. 11 And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan. 12 And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: 13 For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a buryingplace of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre."

"And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt." To the Egyptians, Joseph was a savior who had saved great numbers of them from certain starvation by his planning and provision. He also was the face of the government as he was the one that they had much more access to and interaction with than Pharaoh himself. When the family member of a great and beloved leader in a nation dies, the whole nation mourns with the leader. This was the case with the Egyptians mourning with Joseph over the loss and burial of his father.

"And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen." To the children of Israel, Jacob along with his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham were the recipients of the promise of God that their offspring would one day become a great nation and would possess the land of Canaan. They not only mourned their father as children and grandchildren, but they mourned him also as the father of their nation.

“And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days.” Seven is the bible number associated with completion. This indicates that when the seven days were accomplished the mourning was complete and finished.

“And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan.” Jacob had lived far longer in Canaan than he had in Egypt. Yet, the Canaanites did not mourn for him in the same way that the Egyptians had mourned for him. I suspect, the reason for the Egyptians mourning more for him was because of their love for Joseph.

“And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: 13 For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a buryingplace of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre.” The sons of Jacob fulfilled the commandment of their father by burying him in the place he had commanded them to bury him.

### **Gen. 50:14-21**

Gen. 50:14 “And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father. 15 And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him. 16 And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, 17 So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. 18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. 19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? 20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. 21 Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

“And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.” Joseph had kept his promise both to his father Jacob and to Pharaoh. He promised Jacob that he would bury him where he had indicated. He promised Pharaoh that he would return. He kept both promises. In the keeping of his promises he is like Christ. Christ has never broken a promise, but he keeps all promises that he has ever made. 2 Cor. 1:20 “For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”

“And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.” The brethren of Joseph knew that they had done great evil unto Joseph. They knew that Joseph had the right to punish them for the evil that they had done. However, as long as their father was alive they felt that Joseph would forbear punishing them for that evil. Now that Jacob was dead, they feared the vengeance of Joseph.

“And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy

brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father.” The brethren of Joseph sought forgiveness of both their trespass and their sin from Joseph using as a basis for that forgiveness the commandment of Joseph’s father. Please note that the words – trespass and sin – were both used in the text. The trespass was against Joseph, but the sin was against God. Now Joseph could forgive their trespass, but only God could forgive their sin. (Sin is defined as the transgression of the law: 1 John 3:4 “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.)”

“And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. 18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. 19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?” Joseph wept, perhaps because he had already shown unto them by his many actions towards them that he had forgiven their trespass. As for the forgiveness of their sins Joseph said, “Fear not: for am I in the place of God?” This should teach us that when we trespass against someone, that it is proper for us to ask them to forgive our trespass. However, their forgiveness of our trespass is not the same as God’s forgiveness of our sin. Before the bar of divine justice we have been forgiven of our sins by the atoning blood of Christ on the cross. From a standpoint of the cleansing of our conscience, we seek God to cleanse our conscience through his heartfelt pardoning grace.

“But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.” The key to understanding this passage is found in the word, “it,” “It” refers to the dreams that Joseph had and told to his father and to his brethren. It was because of the dreams that his brethren hated him and thought evil against him. They thought it would be evil for Joseph to reign over them and for them to bow down to Joseph. However, at this very time, they were bowing down to Joseph according to those dreams. It was through the fulfillment of those dreams that many people were saved from famine and death. Thus, God intended the dreams for good, whereas Joseph’s brethren interpreted the dreams to be evil against them.

“Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.” Just as Joseph promised to nourish and comfort his brethren and their little ones, so Christ has promised to nourish us spiritually and to comfort us concerning our sins and our eternal inheritance. He has spoken kindly through the gospel unto us as well.

## **Gen. 50:22-26**

Gen. 50:22 “And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years. 23 And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees. 24 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. 25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. 26 So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.”

The life of Joseph is closed out in this passage. Before he died, he reminded the children of Israel of the wonderful promises of God to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob that God would visit them in Egypt and bring them into the land of Canaan. Joseph was confident that God would fulfill these promises for he made an oath with the children of Israel that when God visited them and delivered them that they carry up his bones out of Egypt and that he be buried in the land of Canaan. Joseph remained in a coffin in Egypt until God fulfilled his promise and ultimately Joseph's bones were taken up out of Egypt and buried in the land of Canaan.