

# *The Book of Genesis*

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**(1987–1989 Study)**

The following notes were compiled from a Bible study on the Book of Genesis led by Bro. Frank Shallieu in 1987-1989. They should be utilized with the following understanding:

1. Each paragraph preceded by **“Comment”** or **“Q”** (an abbreviation for **“Question”**) was introduced by someone other than Bro. Frank.
2. The original study did not follow a prepared text but was extemporaneous in nature.
3. Although the transcriber tried to faithfully, with the Lord’s help, set forth the thoughts that were presented in the study, the notes are not a verbatim rendering and, therefore, should be considered in that context.
4. Finally, Bro. Frank did not review the notes for possible errors that may have inadvertently entered the text.

With this disclaimer in mind, may the notes be a blessing as a useful study guide.

# THE BOOK OF GENESIS

(Study led by Bro. Frank Shallieu from 1987 to 1989)

**Gen. 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.**

In a beginning, God created our physical or material universe. In *another* (and subsequent) beginning, Jesus was created as the first sentient being. Therefore, *Jehovah God*, not with assistance from the Logos, who had not been created yet, made the physical universe.

The time setting of this verse is prior to the Seven Creative Days—*long before*. “Heaven” (singular) refers to the earth’s solar system. “Heavens” (plural) would be the entire physical universe including the earth. Psalm 115:16 distinguishes between “heavens” and “heaven,” that is, between the entire universe and our own solar system. “The *heaven*, even the *heavens*, are the LORD’S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.”

Verse 1 zeroes in on the earth, *our* solar system, which was created with the rest of the universe. No time period is given for this creating, but it took considerable time. *Much later* the First Creative Day began; it began 48,000+ years ago. Verse 1 can be paraphrased as follows: “Before the ordering of the earth’s surface, this condition existed for ‘x’ amount of years.”

**Gen. 1:2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.**

The earth was “without form” with regard to its *surface*. There was no definition to earth’s surface—no mountains, no valleys, etc. But the earth did have form in the sense of being a sphere. Moreover, the earth was “void” of plant and animal life. And “darkness was upon the face of the deep [the waters].” In other words, the earth at this time was shrouded in pitch darkness and covered with water. The surface of the earth is now approximately 75 percent water; at that time, the surface was 100 percent water.

It took *time* for the earth even to be covered with water. Therefore, water did not cover the earth until a *late* period in the creation process—but before the Creative Days began. The watery surface could have been a quagmire (perhaps consisting of slime with irregular puddles?), but at any rate, the continents were not visible. Moreover, a canopy surrounded the earth. (Rings were a later development.) The canopy, which was like an envelope covering, could not be penetrated by sunlight. Incidentally, the waters could not have been ice because the earth was still molten to a greater or lesser degree. The waters could have been warm or even hot.

**Comment:** Figuratively speaking, the earth was like a fetus being developed in a sack where light does not penetrate. A fetus is without form originally, but it develops.

The earth was swathed in darkness. In the First Creative Day, it took 7,000 years for light to penetrate earth’s canopy, but the *orbs* of the sun and the moon could not be distinguished until the Fourth Creative Day. Man was first made *here*, on planet Earth, although his creation did not take place until the end of the Sixth Creative Day. Out of disorder, God created order.

God’s Spirit “moved upon the face of the waters” like an aurora borealis, an electrical power. His Spirit fluttered over the surface of the waters, operating with electrical energy like flickering lightning.

**Gen. 1:3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.**

**Gen. 1:4** And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

**Gen. 1:5** And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

Each Creative Day was 7,000 years long—an epoch of time. A beginning and an end marked each Creative Day, or epoch, with things occurring in between. “Let there be light” was God’s object, and light gradually happened. A distinction in “light” was definite between “day” and “night” by the end of the 7,000 years, between light and no light. There were then 12 hours of day and 12 hours of night.

Each pronouncement had a beginning and an ending. Since we know from Bible chronology that the length of the Seventh Creative Day was 7,000 years, we can conclude that the length of each of the other six Creative Days was also 7,000 years. In other words, just as each day in our week is 24 hours long, so each of the Creative Days was the same length, or 7,000 years. From our perspective, it seems interminably long for each period to be fulfilled, but the time aspect is different for spirit beings. A thousand years are as one day is the principle (2 Pet. 3:8).

In regard to the Seventh Creative Day of 7,000 years, it was not until Jesus came (4,128 years after Adam) that more of God’s plan became apparent. The principle is the same with the other Creative Days. Not until a Creative Day was approximately half complete would God’s purpose be discerned with *any* clarity. By the end of the 7,000 years, His purpose was seen in its fullness.

The achievement of light was pronounced “good” by God at the end (in the morning) of the First Creative Day. He was satisfied with the operation of His Spirit to cause light, thus dividing night from day. The falling or dropping of heavy materials from the canopy, or surrounding envelope, down upon the earth left the canopy more aqueous so that light could penetrate. There is majestic simplicity in the language used here in Genesis, but the words are fraught with depth of meaning. The simplest statements of Scripture are often the deepest.

In the spiritual aspect, the gospel light contrasts with the darkness of sin and death. At the end of the Kingdom, the true light will be perfect. As God pronounced the literal light good, not the darkness, so it will be with the gospel light at the end of the 7,000 years (Gen. 1:4).

**Comment:** The *Photodrama* states, “When the earth was molten, its water and minerals were thrown off a great distance in gaseous form. As these cooled and took shape, they constituted great rings at a distance from the earth.” Please explain this statement.

**Reply:** For a long time, the earth was enveloped in a canopy, or sack. Inside the canopy, the earth was like a ball-bearing wheel, revolving at 25,000 miles per hour. As the cooling process continued, the envelope broke unevenly. With gravity (or magnetic attraction) being least at the North and South Poles, the canopy, or sack, began to change into rings. Stated another way, that which formerly enshrouded the earth changed into rings. Incidentally, many changes may be taking place in the universe that we cannot see. If there were black sacks (or canopies) around other heavenly bodies, we could not see those bodies. Scientists describe “black holes,” but much may be occurring there.

Anyway, instead of the envelope sack collapsing down equally all over the earth, there first was a shrinking down into rings around the earth. The heavier materials cascaded down from the weakest points at the North and South Poles toward the Equator. Finally, in Adam’s day and up to the Flood of Noah’s day, only a thin veil of water remained. The rings we now see on Saturn, Jupiter, etc., show that in regard to God’s objective for those planets, they are now

where earth was at the beginning of the First Creative Day. The planets are progressing—but slowly from our vantage point. Stated another way, the rings of Saturn and Jupiter indicate they have progressed to a *later* development than they were originally. These planets may or may not be inhabited in due time.

**Gen. 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.

**Gen. 1:7** 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.

**Gen. 1:8** And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

The word “firmament” means expansion, atmosphere. Before the Second Creative Day, the waters above the earth and the waters on the earth were together, but the waters above the earth were revolving around the earth at a slower speed. As an illustration, we can think of a ball bearing. A casing can be put around a ball bearing and actually contact the ball bearing without interfering with the rolling of the ball bearing; that is, the casing and the ball bearing can be in contact with each other yet function independently. That is how the earth revolved inside the canopy, or envelope. The canopy enveloped the *entire* earth. In other words, the canopy did not just consist of rings around the Equator or another diameter.

Thus the earth had darkness upon the face of the deep (no light prior to the First Creative Day), and an outer mantle of mineralized water surrounded it. The earth and the mantle were independent of each other, but there was no vacuum or space between them; that is, there was no space between the inner and the outer water. (As time went on, things happened to the outer mantle, as described in *Volume 6*.) Darkness of the outer mass prevented light and the sun as a disk from being seen, and there was no atmosphere. The only visible activity was the Spirit of God brooding or fluttering over the face of the deep like an aurora borealis. An electrical energy of some kind was in that fluid mass.

First Creative Day: “Let there be light.” From the canopy, rings cascaded down upon the earth, bringing water and heavy minerals. As the mineral content was successively deposited upon the earth, the canopy gradually became more translucent so that some light penetrated to the earth; that is, night and day were differentiated, but the sun, the moon, and the stars were not visible as physical bodies, or orbs.

Second Creative Day: “Let there be a firmament in the *midst* of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.” In other words, the firmament separated the two “waters.” A space gradually developed between the outer canopy and the earth inside.

“And God *said*, Let [such and such happen].” Notice, He *spoke*. “And God *called* the light Day, and the darkness he *called* Night.” “And God *called* the firmament Heaven,” etc. The point is that God *literally* made pronouncements. Based upon findings in nuclear physics, genetics, etc., there is a coded RNA or DNA tape even in *inanimate* objects. Since inanimate objects are composed of electrons, neutrons, and atoms *in motion*, there is *activity* in this infinitesimal universe. Hence inanimate objects are planned and coded too. The Creator, as Emperor of the universe, is in the unique position of being able to do anything He wants because He has the key of life and death. Even with His *voice*, He can do things. Man can activate an automatic garage door with his voice, and that is only a *tiny* example of what God can do on a MUCH LARGER scale.

The point is that God can just make a statement, and it is DONE. The material knows what to

do when so instructed. The principle is like man instructing a computer. The *entire* universe, animate and inanimate, has been coded, and God has the key to activate or inactivate each.

A statement in physics is that matter can be neither created nor destroyed by man. This statement is true. Destruction merely changes matter into another form. Man cannot create matter out of nothing. *Only God* can create and totally destroy; that is, *only God* can create out of nothing and destroy into nothing. He can address His subjects—human, angelic, plant, animal, and mineral—and have complete control over them. God can merely make a *statement*, and each knows just what to do. He has the key and can start or stop just with a statement.

*Elohim* is used for God in Genesis chapter 1—*Elohim* (*plural*)—but the verb is in the *singular*. *Elohim* is a plural word, but the *verb* determines whether an individual or individuals are being referred to. It is like saying, “*We* declare,” and meaning, “*I* declare.” “Ephraim” (*plural*) can be the name of either a *singular* person or a *plural*-member tribe. Context determines. And even kings and judges are sometimes called *elohim*, meaning people of mighty stature. The point is that God’s power and majesty are *infinite*, and we are looking at His Word, which is so very simply stated: “And God said....”

**Q:** Why is the pronouncement “God saw ... that it was good” conspicuously absent in the Second Creative Day?

**A:** A time period of 7,000 years, called “evening and morning,” was set aside for each of the Creative Days. In regard to the Second Creative Day, God said, “Let there be a firmament,” and the firmament *did come* into existence in the specified time. In other words, His objective or purpose of making a firmament was accomplished, and that objective was called “Heaven.” The Second Creative Day did produce what God had determined, but He did not call it “good” because the next day, the *Third Creative Day*, was needed to bring about the statement that it was “good.”

The Second Creative Day was *preparatory* for the Third Creative Day. When the atmosphere expanse occurred, the next logical stage was the appearance of dry land. Hence the pronouncement of “good” was delayed until the objective that God was looking for was accomplished in the Third Creative Day—the objective of “Earth,” or dry land, being exposed and made available for plant life, which, in turn, would be made available for later animal life. God said “good” when the major step toward life had occurred: land surface. In other words, the waters were separated vertically (“firmament”) and horizontally (“dry land”) before “good” was pronounced. Continents and oceans were distinguishable by the middle of the Third Creative Day.

Pastor Russell reasoned that we know each Creative Day was 7,000 years long because we can *prove* the length of the Seventh Creative Day and all of the Creative Days were equal in length. The *delay* of the “good” pronouncement is another inherent proof that each Creative Day was 7,000 years long, that the Creative Days were of a *specified, predetermined, mathematical, equal, rhythmical* length. When that time expired, the next Creative Day had to begin—even if the *full* purpose had not been accomplished. The firmament was developed, but dry land had not yet appeared. Nevertheless, the Third Creative Day had to begin on schedule. The same principle would apply if we wanted to do something in a day, but the project took longer than 24 hours. Time marches on whether or not we are finished. Rhythmical, conclusive endings occurred for *each* Creative Day: evening and morning, evening and morning, etc.

**Gen. 1:9** And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

**Gen. 1:10** And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters

called the Seas: and God saw that it was good.

**Gen. 1:11** 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.

**Gen. 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.

**Gen. 1:13** And the evening and the morning were the third day.

Of the Third Creative Day, God said *twice* that it was “good.” (Two pronouncements of “good” also occurred during the Sixth Creative Day, as stated in verses 25 and 31.) There was a *multiple* purpose for the Third Creative Day: (1) dry land and (2) grass, herb-yielding seed, and fruit trees. For the first purpose, the emphasis was on *dry land*, or “Earth,” because seas were a *by-product*. Waters were gathered into receptacles, or depressions, called “Seas,” and as the waters flowed into these seas, they uncovered land surface. *Dry land* was thus formed, upon which grass and fruit trees could grow. *Both* purposes were called “good”; namely, dry land was good, and grass, seed, and trees were good. The implication is that dry land was accomplished earlier in the Third Creative Day—in approximately the *first half* of that day. Grass, herbs, and fruit trees were accomplished in the *second half* of the Third Creative Day.

The First Creative Day shows that *light* is the basis, or source, for all life. No vegetation can grow without light. Before the First Creative Day, there was darkness, confusion, and chaos. In the First Creative Day, darkness and light were separated or differentiated. This demarcation removed confusion, and *order* began to be established. Before that, the earth was without form, void, and dark on the face of the deep. Now there was some light, even though the sun and the moon were not yet visible as disks. Light and darkness alternated on a 24-hour, or daily, basis. Light is *good* because it helps to distinguish between truth and error, and between righteousness and sin, both figuratively and literally.

The fact the Second Creative Day was not called “good” indicates that at its end, the *major* objective was not quite complete, even though the firmament was developed. The *real* objective was the exposure of dry land for plant life. Mineralized water rings fell on the hot, steaming surface of earth. The steam vapor produced by the falling water rings arose from the hot earth and pushed out the canopy more and more, making the atmosphere, or firmament. It was like a cushion forming, as when a tire is inflated. Incidentally, earth’s *atmosphere* is what makes the planet appear colorful (blue and green) from out in space.

In the Third Creative Day, the earth brought forth grass, seed, and fruit trees that yielded fruit “after his kind”; that is, all three categories were self-generating once they were started, or created. Not only did God create the vegetation, but He created it with the ability to reproduce itself. In regard to the grass, herbs, and fruit trees, their seeds were in them. The same is true with the animals, man, and even certain inanimate elements. *God* gave the powers of procreation and/or self-generation. “After his [its] kind” prohibits an evolutionary change of one species into another. The Bible does indicate a *form* of evolution but of the *lowest* type—simply a *bringing forth* but with a *fixity of kind* and species. Thus there was *modified* evolution. An extreme statement that there was *no* evolution turns people off.

The description of the Creative Days and the time before they started is as if God is allowing us to *witness* the events taking place. It is as if we lived back there and were viewing the events from an earthly viewpoint. God tells His intention, and it *happens*. Scientists more or less have the gist of what took place in the preparation of earth’s surface, but they lack definition. They guess wildly in terms of millions of years.

**Gen. 1:14** 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:

**Gen. 1:15** And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

**Gen. 1:16** 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.

**Gen. 1:17** And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

**Gen. 1:18** 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.

**Gen. 1:19** And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

Verses 14-19 describe the Fourth Creative Day. In this time period, rings were formed around the earth, as opposed to just the canopy, which had obscured the sun, the moon, and the stars. The remaining veil was of a high water content so that the orbs could now penetrate with their light. Of course the sun, the moon, and the stars had been previously made—long, long ago.

In *Volume 6*, on pages 33 and 34, the following statement was made: “God made [or caused to shine—a different verb not meaning created] two great lights; the greater light for the rule of the day [to indicate the time of day] and the lesser light, the night; the stars also.” According to *Strong’s Concordance*, the Hebrew *asah*, translated “made” in verse 16 in the King James Version, has the thought of “to do” or “to make” in the broadest sense but not in the sense of “to create.” *Asah* means “appointed.”

“To divide the day from the night.” Since “God divided the light from the darkness” in verse 4, how do we harmonize these two thoughts? And verse 5 states, “God called the light Day, and the darkness ... Night.” In the Fourth Creative Day, the sun, the moon, and the stars could now be seen, as opposed to just a diffusion of light. Thus there was more definition to day and night, more mathematical precision. In the First Creative Day, the diffusion of light did not permit a distinct 12-hour (or so) day and a 12-hour (or so) night. The sun could be below the horizon yet still provide light by lighting up the canopy, so that “Day” was longer than “Night.” In the Fourth Creative Day, there was clarification of the atmosphere so that disks could be seen.

Incidentally, because of the earth’s axis at the time of the two equinoxes, day and night are equally 12 hours in length twice a year. Also, all stars are suns. Planets revolve around each star (or sun), but they are too far away for us to see.

**Q:** How are the “lights” (the sun, the moon, and the stars) “signs”?

**A:** Stars outside our solar system form the 12 signs of the Zodiac (or the Hebrew *Mazzaroth*). The plan of the ages is portrayed in the signs of the Zodiac. How are the sun and the moon “signs”? They show prophetic events both literally and symbolically. For example, the sun might be obscured by an eclipse or by another means on a particular day to indicate God’s displeasure. In 1870, when the pope pronounced the doctrine of papal infallibility in a window and was purposely bedecked with jewels to reflect the assumed sunlight, the heavens over the Vatican responded with *anger*—tremendous thunder and storm. In Joshua’s day, the sun “stood still” (Josh. 10:12,13); that is, it was dumb (this effect was not caused by an eclipse). Daniel watched the heavens as a chief of the “astrologers.” Based on the “signs” in the heavens, the wise men traveled to Israel to see the babe Jesus. The heavens also reacted when Jesus was



crucified. In regard to the Time of Trouble in the near future, the sun and the moon will be literally affected in some places of earth when the Kingdom is about to be inaugurated in Israel. The sun, the moon, and the stars, especially the 12 signs of the Zodiac, show God's *foreknowledge long before* man was created. Jesus is the Lamb slain before and from the foundation of the earth (Rev. 13:8). In verse 16, the words "he made" should be deleted, for they were incorrectly supplied before "the stars also."

From an observer's standpoint, as the Fourth Creative Day progressed, the sun first became visible, then the moon, and finally the stars as the canopy got thinner and was of a higher percentage of water in content. A clear water canopy existed up until Noah's day. There may have been a little visible haze, but the people could clearly see the sun, the moon, and the stars.

"Signs" are mentioned first in verse 14, ahead of seasons, days, and years, because spiritual things are more important than the natural. "Signs" are a *larger, higher, and more important* picture.

**Gen. 1:20** And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

**Gen. 1:21** 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.

Verse 20 starts to describe the Fifth Creative Day. In regard to water and life being brought forth, if we consider the proportion of the earth's surface that is water, a *great* acceleration of the process had to take place in order to produce life to the extent indicated here.

"Let the waters bring forth *abundantly*." In *Volume 6*, page 35, we read, "And God said, Let the waters *swarm with swarms* of living creatures." This statement, which applied especially to salt water, indicates a *tremendous, miraculous proliferation, an astounding multiplication*.

*Volume 6* continues on pages 35 and 36: "No man knoweth, and it is unwise to be dogmatic. It is not for us to dispute that even the protoplasm of the Paleozoic slime may not have come into existence through chemical action of the highly mineralized waters of those seas. [This is what scientists today are saying.] What we do claim is, that all came about as results of *divine* intention and arrangement, and, hence, were *divine creations*, whatever were the channels and agencies. And we claim that this is shown by the facts of nature no less than by the words of Genesis—that however the creatures of the sea were produced, they were brought to the condition in which each is, of its own kind—where the lines of species cannot be overridden. This is *God's work*, by whatever means brought about."

The Pastor thus suggested that the lower form of life could have started from a chemical action. But as time goes on, we think more and more of everything being done with a computer—from electrons to protoplasm and on up. Everything animate and inanimate is programmed, and God can make them come into being as He sees fit.

What about genetic engineering? With a knowledge of certain laws, scientists can produce bacteria, viruses, etc. However, in order for scientists to do this, God first had to program them. From order, scientists can do some manipulating. For example, the atom bomb was developed by knowing the inherent potential for energy, that is, by knowing *God's design* for matter.

For life in the waters, "moving" creature (KJV) is more accurate than the marginal "creeping." Strong's definition of "moving" is "*swarm, i.e., active mass of minute animals.*"

Verse 21 reviews verse 20 in regard to both living, moving creatures in the waters and winged fowl in the “open firmament.” However, verse 21 adds information; namely, the creatures and the fowl were brought forth “*after their kind*,” and God pronounced the development “good.” Verse 21 also says that God “created” them, as opposed to “Let the waters bring forth.”

Verse 20 suggests that God just said, “Let this happen,” and it happened. If the first moving creature was the lowest form of life (amoebas and protozoans), let us say that they came forth through a chemical action. But notice, amoebas and protozoans do not have heads, legs, fins, etc. They simply divided. Then verse 21 shows that taking advantage of this lowest type of life, God *instructed* it and *designed* the various bacteria, viruses, etc. Life did not just happen to come into existence, for each has its own “*kind*.”

To state the matter another way, verse 20 shows the very *basic* type of moving creatures in the waters. Then verse 21 tells that God *designed* them, which is a different thought than just random chemical action. In other words, the amoebas and paramecia developed into other forms, and once this happened, the forms were *fixed*.

God *created* great whales; that is, the whale did not evolve. It is true that there are varieties of whales, but God *designed* the whale to look like a whale. In other words, God *created* all forms of life, whether microscopic or huge. But verse 20 shows that a basic form of life was produced first.

Computers can do drawings when instructed through a keyboard by a human operator. Thus the operator “creates” by instructing what he wants. This procedure works because the computer was formatted to follow the instructions. And so with all matter, animate and inanimate, there is a built-in code (DNA, for example) that God can instruct, and the matter will respond. Out of this swarm of life, God said, “Let a whale be created,” but He put into the swarm the design that He wanted. All matter, animate and inanimate, can respond to whatever God wills. For instance, if God said to an individual, “I want you to disappear,” that person would atomize or vaporize. No one else could cause such a reaction just by his voice. That is why God is the Creator, the Author, and the Mover of all. He does not have to physically exert Himself. By His voice alone—by voice control—He can make matter do whatever He wants.

When God said, “Let the waters bring forth abundantly [*swarm*],” the wording suggests a prolific explosion of life but in its simplest form. From that form, God *created* every moving creature after its kind, not only the great whale but also the most minute creature. What about the electrons? They are all the same, being either positive or negative. What about the minerals? All iron, all silver, all magnesium, etc., are made of the same components, that is, the same electrons, protons, or whatever. Electrons have no shape—they are just a force of energy and power—and when a particular combination is put together, the result is always the same. The great variety of animal life all started with one neutral, shapeless mass like an amoeba. From that basic form of life, God made the various species, which were fixed and could regenerate their own kind.

It did not take millions and billions of years for the animals to develop. Everything was programmed in advance, and God just had to give the voice command. God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms [*plural*].” Then He gave definition to each animal, bird, etc. He designed each one as a separate creation. The designing took time, for the animals, birds, etc., were *individual* concepts, done one by one. Once the designing was complete, God gave a voice command, and the creature was made. In other words, the designing took time, but the actual making was quick.

Just as the universe is infinite, so there are infinite lessons in the variety of living creatures.

Protoplasm was the first slime or undeveloped force, and from that protoplasm, various patterns were made. God gave instruction for the waters to swarm; then from that life, He created the various creatures.

**Gen. 1:22** And God blessed them, saying, **Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.**

God simply blessed His creations and said, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.” We should take this statement at face value. Notice the contrast between the sea creatures and the winged fowl. Only the former multiplied so prolifically.

**Gen. 1:23** And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

The Fifth Creative Day pertained to life being created in the *water* and the *atmosphere*. In the Sixth Creative Day, life was created on *dry land*, on the earth, on soil.

**Gen. 1:24** 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.**

**Gen. 1:25** 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.

Verse 25 modifies or explains verse 24. Just as there was a basic or low form of life in the water to begin with, so the case was the same with dry land, or earth. Cows, goats, sheep, lions, etc., are all composed of earth elements. God formed Adam out of the “dust of the ground,” that is, out of the material of the *earth* (Gen. 2:7). Out of earth’s material, God made the form of a man and breathed into it the breath of life so that it became a living soul. He did the same with the animals. “Let the earth bring forth” suggests a very low plateau of development (verse 24). Then “God made [designed, created] the beast of the earth ... and cattle ... and every thing that creepeth upon the earth.” God programmed a dog, a sheep, a giraffe, and so forth, from the low form.

The little seed from which each of us starts is programmed to develop two arms, one nose, one head, etc., and another seed is programmed to be a cow, yet originally they all looked alike. A little tiny seed grows, according to a code, into some kind of living land creature.

“Let the earth bring forth.” All of the elements existed, and God instructed them to develop in various ways. A human develops from one cell, but that cell is a world or universe in itself. Stated another way, in the cell is a miniature universe. Solid matter (minerals) also has a structure, formula, and/or diagram. The man, the dog, the cow, etc., are all *flesh*; hence they are all land or earth creatures. Earth material comprises all land animals.

All living animals and creatures, including man, possess souls. The Greek word *pneuma* pertains to air. God has a memory bank, and the soul of man will have a resurrection. Each soul is a separate, distinct individual. Hence the *pneuma* of a man is more personal than the *pneuma* of a beast, but one thing is common to all: the breath part of the *pneuma*, the oxygen.

God designed (created) all flesh creatures; that is, He gave them their genetic code, formed them, and then let them replicate themselves from His *designed* procreation feature. From another perspective, all earth, or flesh, beings can be reduced to a common denominator, including the insects.

The word translated “beast” refers to wild animals. The word “cattle” means domestic animals

such as sheep and goats. The term “creeping thing” refers to lizards, insects, etc. God “made” (created, designed) all cattle and beasts and everything that creeps. All of these categories came into being in the Sixth Creative Day. In the Kingdom, some form of control will be exerted to limit (not extinguish) the more harmful ones.

**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.

In the clause “let them have dominion,” the pronoun “them” refers to Adam and Eve, male and female. (See verse 27 for context and also to see clearly that “them” refers to both Adam and Eve.) Although Adam was created first, the fact that he was created with the rib to be subsequently used for Eve meant Adam could be called “them” in a prophetic sense.

The clause “Let us make man in *our* image” requires an explanation. Some King James margins have the following note for verse 26: “The plural of majesty as in Ezra 4:18.” If we examine Ezra 4:18, we see that the king was talking: “The letter which ye sent unto us [referring to the king *singular*] hath been plainly read before me.” Also, we sometimes use a rhetorical or editorial plural when referring to self. For example, “We [really meaning ‘I’] think such and such.” In the past, kings also used an editorial “we.” The verb “make” in Genesis 1:26 is in the *singular*. Trinitarians would say this is conclusive proof that they are right—that God the Father and God the Son, being *one*, would have a singular verb—but this works the other way too. The Father (*singular*) did the creating, and He is speaking in the sense of *fullness*, or plenitude, of power; hence a singular verb is correct. And Genesis 2:7 states that the “LORD [Jehovah] God” (*alone*) created Adam. God was *personally* involved in creating Adam, rather than having Jesus assist. *God* created the first *spiritual* being. God also created the first man, or *physical* being. And *God* created the first woman. *He* is the Creator. From then on, there were different processes of generation for both angelic and human beings. Humans reproduce and angels multiply in another way, but the *initial* work makes God the Creator for the universe as well as for intelligent beings.

The original design or concept of man and beast was in God’s mind. But creation was not merely a blueprint or design, for it included the initial output as well. God is more than just the Architect; He did the initial work.

The plurality of majesty with *Elohim* for God, followed by the plural pronouns “us” and “our,” can also be explained in another way. Although God *alone* created Adam, He was speaking in the presence of the Logos and the angels, who were only privileged, enthusiastic observers.

**Gen. 1:27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Three times God is given *sole* credit for creating Adam. (1) “God created man.” (2) “In the image of God created *he* [that is, God] him [Adam].” (3) “Male and female created *he* them.” Also, Genesis 5:1 reaffirms God’s action: “In the day that *God* created man, in the likeness of God made *he* him.” The credit emphatically goes to Jehovah.

God did many things on His own, without the assistance of the Logos. For example, God did not live in a vacuum until He created the Logos. The Logos was in a *learning* state and did not know about man and woman prior to their creation. Man and woman were *God’s* thinking—a *new* physical creation. God is also the Author of the New (spiritual) Creation. Christians are begotten by the Word of *God*. *God* calls them. Jesus is in the picture but in a different capacity.

“Let us make man in our image” (verse 26). This was something *new*. The angels were familiar

with God, the Logos, Lucifer, themselves, the houses (or “mansions”) in heaven, spiritual plants and animals, etc. (John 14:2). But now came a *physical* likeness of that which was spiritual—and it was *miniature*, exceedingly tiny, in comparison with great, *very large* spirit beings, who can travel with the speed of thought. To see such a *radical* creation, a physical man in God’s image, was like a surprise party. This human being could speak, think, sing, worship, etc. Adam was like a miniature spirit being in physical, fleshly form. And a “woman” was completely new. There were no females in heaven.

For Jesus to assist in Adam’s creation, God would have had to discuss all of the details with him first. No, *God* made Adam, and by doing so, He did not minimize His own position. All through his ministry, Jesus recognized the Heavenly Father as being vastly superior. In the initiation of creation—heaven, the Logos, the physical concept, man and woman, the calling of the spiritual New Creation—everything was *God’s* doing. Proverbs 8:22-31 is also pertinent. God did the creating. Jesus was like a *child* being brought up; he was not a master workman to start with. Jesus was being *trained*.

Adam was more than just a mental and moral image of God. He was a *physical* likeness of the spiritual as well. Some of the angels were later attracted to the human female—*because there was a similarity in form*. The Bible tells us that God has ears, eyes, a nose, hands, arms, feet, etc.—the same number as humans (Psa. 34:15; 89:13; Exod. 15:8; Isa. 45:12; Nahum 1:3). Human females looked like angels except they were female and physical; hence disobedient angels left their first estate and married human women (Gen. 6:1,2; Jude 6). The female form was an attraction from both the sexual standpoint and the different temperament. “Image” means a *physical* likeness of that which is spiritual. Adam and Eve were created in the mental, moral, and physical likeness of God. In addition, they had a lordship like God; namely, they had dominion over the animals, the fish, and the fowl.

God made man “in *our image*” and “after *our likeness*” (verse 26). The two phrases suggest *more* than just a mental and a moral likeness. Spirit beings have arms and legs too, but they have far more capabilities, whereas physical beings are extremely limited. Spirit beings can roam throughout the universe, see God, enlarge or condense themselves, and so forth. The story of the genie compacted in a bottle is based on certain truths. At the time of the Flood, the fallen angels, who were *tremendous* in size, were reduced and confined, or imprisoned, in *tartaroo* about the earth. *Tartaroo* is a very small space compared to the universe.

Notice that God made both Adam and Eve in the *Sixth* Creative Day. In fact, verses 24-31 all took place during the Sixth Creative Day.

**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.

When verses 26 and 28 are combined, we see that Adam and Eve had dominion over (1) water creatures, (2) air creatures, (3) land creatures, and (4) the earth itself. Giving *dominion* to man disproves the evolution theory. God *created* Adam and gave him the dominion.

**Comment:** We could say to evolutionists, “If evolution were correct in regard to humankind, where did the *female* come from?”

God told Adam and Eve to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [fill] the earth.” In the Fifth Creative Day, God instructed the creatures of the sea to do the same in the waters (Gen. 1:22). The seas were comfortably filled, not overfilled, and so will the earth be—ultimately. With the animal domain, a balance in nature takes care of (or prevents) the overfilling.

**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.

Man's original diet was along vegetarian lines and included fruit from trees. Not until after the Flood was man told he could eat meat (Gen. 9:3).

**Q:** Were only certain trees intended for food, or will every tree eventually supply food?

**A:** Particular trees are for medicinal purposes rather than for food, but in some way, all trees, herbs, and plants will benefit man and beast.

**Gen. 1:30** 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.

God's design is for the animals to also have a vegetarian diet. That was the case in the Garden of Eden, *before* the curse. After the curse, many things changed. In the Kingdom, the lion will eat straw like the ox, and this development and similar changes will be a return to the Garden of Eden condition (Isa. 11:7).

**Q:** If the plants and herbs were all intended for food and medicinal purposes, was part of the curse that some became unsuitable for food?

**A:** Yes, the curse changed many things. God's original plan existed for only a *very short* time in the Garden of Eden.

**Q:** Because verse 30 does not mention the creatures of the sea, could they have devoured each other originally?

**A:** Yes, conditions could have been different in the lower forms.

**Q:** If the birds ate plants and seeds at this time, would they not have fed on insects also?

**A:** We do not know.

**Comment:** Since the insects were brought forth in the Sixth Creative Day, it would seem like a good means of control for the birds to feed upon them. If the birds ate only plants, herbs, and seeds at this time, perhaps there was another means of control.

**Reply:** Yes, the balance of nature is another subject. Since the curse, the balance of nature has been different. It is achieved by one animal, etc., devouring another. A different balance existed in the Garden of Eden.

**Comment:** The implication is that in the future, there will be a return to organic medicine.

**Reply:** Yes. During the Kingdom, plants will be used for healing and curing. After the Kingdom Age, they will be used for preventive purposes and for maintenance of health. A vegetarian diet will be the rule into the ages of ages. *Spiritually*, the tree of life will be available during the Kingdom, but when the Kingdom ends, those worthy to attain the ages beyond will have access to a *literal* tree of life.

**Gen. 1:31** 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 pronouncement at the end of the Sixth Creative Day was “Very good,” a greater accolade than heretofore. The creation of man and woman, the highest form of perfect flesh life here on earth, was a crowning achievement. But there were only two such beings, for sin entered before man multiplied. After the Millennium, the end of the Seventh Day, the earth will be filled with perfect beings. Incidentally, if we can see samples of beauty here on an imperfect, unfinished earth, how much grander the spiritual realm will be!

**Gen. 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.**

Verse 1 could easily be tacked onto the end of chapter 1. Then chapter 2 would start with the second verse.

**Q:** What “heavens” were finished in the Sixth Creative Day?

**A:** *Earth’s* heavens and solar system—the planets—were finished. In fact, the expression “all the host of them” refers to our planets. Since God rested on the Seventh Creative Day, the implication is that He will do something after it ends. When earth is brought to perfection by the end of the Seventh Day, the will of God will be *fully* done down here. Any infraction will receive immediate retribution. Now, what about the other universes? If God stopped working, it means He has other plans to resume in the future.

Scientifically, this is simplistic language, but it embraces several things. Earth’s atmosphere and the space surrounding it are broken up into different spheres (for example, the ionosphere and the stratosphere). There are designated areas around the earth, each with a distinctive quality in its layer—until one gets beyond earth’s gravitational pull, which goes quite far out and gets weaker as it goes. These spheres could be called “heavens.” An electrical sphere is one. Our immediate atmosphere, or “heaven,” is called “firmament” (Gen. 1:6). *Tartaroo*, where the fallen angels are incarcerated, is another sphere.

How much time was required to “finish” the heavens and the earth? It took “X” number of years *plus the 42,000 years* of the Six Creative Days just for the *earth*. In other words, work was done prior to the Creative Days. At the end of the Kingdom Age, which will be the end of the Seventh Creative Day, or the last 7,000 years, the Church will deal with other worlds. If it took 42,000 years to make earth habitable for man, then it would take, let us say, 42,000 years to prepare the surface of other planets for life. Some of this ordering has probably *already* been going on, but we are unaware of it. Although no other humans have been brought forth, earlier processes have been occurring so that when the Kingdom Age is complete, the Church will have a work to do right away on other planets. For instance, man was made *suddenly*, in one day. Other developments and work (animals, trees, grass, fish, etc.) took *long* periods of time in preparation for man’s creation. We know there is no life on other planets in our solar system, but the universe is TREMENDOUS in size, and preparation is going on elsewhere, unbeknownst to us. The stars we see are suns around which revolve planets that are completely invisible to our best telescopes. Oxygen, water, etc., *can* exist there.

The suggestion is that earth’s development was perfectly timed. Christ died *here*, on this small planet. And although earth’s development occurred relatively *late* in the *physical* creation, yet as far as *human* creation is concerned, it is the *beginning* of creation.

God has been very active not only with the earth but also elsewhere. Then He stopped His physical work, and we are in an interim period until earth’s society is brought into complete harmony with the Lord.

**Gen. 2:2 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.**

God “rested on the seventh day” from all the works that He had made; that is, God temporarily ceased activity along the lines specified *here*. However, He *is active* regarding the New Creation. He is resting from *material or physical* creation; He is resting in regard to another material universe and the creation of human beings elsewhere.

**Gen. 2:3 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.**

“From all his work which God *created and made*.” This statement is interesting. God not only designed but also made, or *produced*. Jesus said, “My Father worketh hitherto, and [now] I work” (John 5:17). God worked “hitherto” regarding the Six Creative Days.

In Hebrews 4:3-6,10,11, the Apostle Paul drew a spiritual lesson from Genesis 2:1-3. God rested the Seventh Creative Day from all His work. Similarly, the Christian is to rest from all his work and to enter into God’s rest. True, we who believe now enter into a rest in the present life, but in this context, the “rest” is *after death*. The Christian’s present rest is a rest of faith, and his standing with God is predicated upon faith: “According to your faith be it unto you” (Matt. 9:29). James added, “Faith without works is dead” (James 2:20). But the allusion here is that just as God ceased from His physical creative works and rested on the Seventh Day, so the Christian is to look forward to another, or future, rest after death. There is a rest now, and there is a greater rest later, into which we hope to enter. In the present life, we are *laboring* to please God, expending energy. If we are faithful, our “labors” after death will entail no emotional trauma and no physical fatigue.

God blessed and sanctified the Seventh Creative Day at the end of the Sixth and the beginning of the Seventh—even though the Seventh Day would contain the permission of evil. Why did He bless the Seventh Creative Day? The reason is that at its conclusion, His purposes will have been accomplished. God looks ahead to giving everlasting life to those who *love* Him in spirit and in truth. The same principle holds for us as individuals. Sometimes we ask for a blessing, and then all kinds of problems occur. These problems are disciplinary and educational—they have value ultimately but seem to be otherwise at first. Here God blessed the Seventh Day, and yet evil arose because He saw that man, being a free moral agent, must obey of his own volition in order to love and please his Creator. The experience with evil is valuable because it shows the other side of the coin—that death is the result if God is not served. Therefore, with the end in view, God blessed the Seventh Creative Day. God permits evil but is not the author of it. The Seventh Creative Day started with an evening and will end with a morning of blessing.

*Volume 6, page 37, reads, “We may reasonably assume that it was just at the close of the sixth epoch-day that God created man; because his creation was the last, and it is distinctly stated that God finished his creative work, not on the sixth, but ‘on the seventh day’—the division of the man into two persons, two sexes, being, evidently, the final act.”* The Pastor thought the division of Adam into male and female took place in the beginning of the *Seventh* Creative Day, and then God rested. But such reasoning is not logical. When the Seventh Creative Day came, God *had finished* His work. And after God divided Adam to create Eve, a little time period elapsed before sin came. Sin could not have occurred in the Sixth Creative Day because that day was pronounced “very good” regarding Adam and Eve. Therefore, they were both created at the end of the Sixth Creative Day, and sin entered at the beginning of the Seventh. The *Photodrama, page 16, confirms the Pastor’s thought that Eve was created on the Seventh Day—a thought that needs correction.*

**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,**

Let us consider the last part of verse 4: “in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.” The word “day” is *yom*, the same Hebrew word that was used for “first [Creative] day,” “second [Creative] day,” etc. Thus we have proof that the Creative Days were not 24 hours long, for now all six Creative Days, plus the long period of time prior to the six days, is called “day” (*singular*). In other words, *yom* can mean 24 hours, a lifetime, an epoch, a super-epoch, etc. The word “generations” means, or refers to, the order or details of development that were just enumerated.

**Q:** Is there any reason that verse 4 is the first mention of the “LORD God”?

**A:** Christian writers say the introduction of this term proves the existence of two different accounts, the first (Genesis chapter 1) being the *Elohim* account and this one being the Yahweh account. Actually, they are the same account. *Elohim* is also in Genesis chapter 2 (*Jehovah Elohim*); it is just that we are now getting more detail about God. The use of a consistent term (*Elohim*) for each Creative Day was logical. Then in Genesis chapter 2, we are looking back on what previously had been done, and an additional term was introduced to break up the repetition. As the Bible continues, additional different terms are used to describe God’s being.

**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.**

“Every plant ... *before* it was in the earth, and every herb ... *before* it grew.” The word “before” shows that God had the pattern in His mind (and perhaps had even created a counterpart in the spiritual realm) of all the herbs and plants *before* their existence here on earth. This thought, so simply stated, is mind-boggling and profound. In other words, *considerable* thought preceded the actual producing of plants and herbs. The designs were thought out well in advance, and they germinated when God ordered the right conditions. The process of development of plants and herbs started with the formula, pattern, and design in God’s mind. However, the secrets of His formulas were not unlocked until the proper conditions existed, one condition being the “mist” that watered the earth (described in the next verse).

“God had not caused it to rain upon the earth.” This statement gives support to the Vailian theory, with water above the earth in rings or a canopy and water on the earth below in oceans. For a time, there were no clouds; that is, there were no clouds between the canopy above and the waters below—and hence no rain. (Clouds, in condensing, distill rain.)

**Q:** In the Third Creative Day, plants and herbs started coming forth. We know about the Flood in Noah’s day, but successive rings of water broke prior to Noah’s day. How do we harmonize the breaking of the rings and the floods with the statement that it had not rained?

**A:** A *deluge* is different from the distilling of raindrops from a cloud. Rain consists of droplets of water. The collapse of a canopy is not “rain” but a *flood* of water. Also, there was not that much water. The heavier minerals cascaded down earlier and kept coming down successively until there was just a transparent veil left of practically all water.

The earth was like a hothouse with a mist watering it. In the hothouse humid condition, a mist arose from the ground to provide sufficient moisture for plants to grow. Moreover, “there was not a man to till the ground,” so plants and herbs under these conditions were *self-growing*.

Rings collapsed prior to man’s creation, causing floods of great magnitude but not great enough to cover the entire earth with water at one time. The rings fell irregularly during the

Creative Days prior to the creation of Adam. Because all of the floods were limited in scope and did not cover the whole earth at one time, the plants, etc., survived. Thus there was a continuum of activity of life growing on the earth. Otherwise, if the floods had been universal, a complete loss of life would have occurred, and how would life have regenerated? (By the way, the earlier floods covered much more land surface than Noah's Flood.)

**Gen. 2:6** But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

The formulas, patterns, and designs became realities when the proper conditions existed of "mist," sun, and earth (soil).

**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.

God formed man (Hebrew *adam*) of the "dust" of the ground. "[Out] of the ground" is the Hebrew word *adamah*, that is, "out of *adam*." Hence the word *adam* has to do with the earth, the "dust" itself.

God "formed" man; He sculpted or artistically developed him, as it were, out of the elements of the earth. It was like making a lily out of mud. In death, a corpse goes back to dust. "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" (Gen. 3:19). Thus the expression "dust to dust" means that dust returns to dust—it decomposes.

"God formed man ... and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Before Adam got the breath of life, he had flesh, cells, blood vessels, blood, etc., but when the breath of life was breathed into his nostrils, he became a *living* being. In other words, Adam was not a living soul until he received the breath of life. Before that, he had cells of life, but he was not living. A "dead soul" is one that previously existed and thus has an identity.

**Comment:** The Hebrew word *nephesh*, which is translated "soul" here, is the same word that is used in 1 Kings 17:21,22, where the dead child was revived, and the account says that the soul came back into the child. "The soul of the child came into him again, and he revived."

**Reply:** Yes, and one has to have a previous existence before he can become a dead soul. After being a dead soul, he can be revived.

It is like a blank tape. Once a cassette tape is activated on a machine and the tape begins to record, that tape has certain peculiarities (an individual personality, as it were) that another tape does not have. Stated another way, before the recording starts, the tape is live—it is sensitized—but it has no personality, or identity, until it is put into a machine, the electricity is turned on, and the recording begins.

Therefore, if an embryo in a womb is killed, it is not the killing of a personality. To become a living soul, the child must be born, that is, come forth from the womb and have the breath of life. The living tissues and cells that exist earlier, prior to birth, do not constitute a living soul. Adam had living cells when God formed him *prior* to getting the breath of life. Indeed there is life in the womb and preparation, but the identity of the soul does not come out until there is breath. In regard to the statement "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," a soul must have had the breath of life and done something in order to go into death (Ezek. 18:4).

If a cassette tape is being recorded and the "Stop" button is pushed, and the tape is removed from the machine and put on a shelf, it is dead for that period of storage. At a later date, the tape can be put back in the recorder and replayed and also start to record again. And so

mankind, when called forth from the tomb, will have all that was “recorded” previously and will also be able to absorb new material.

At death, the “soul” (the identity of the being) goes back to God (the “tape” returns to Him). The truth is in between what the nominal Church considers the soul and what most Bible Students believe. The soul goes back to God, into His memory bank, into storage, and can be resuscitated later. The identity of all who have ever lived has been preserved.

**Gen. 2:8** And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

In the east part of a territory called Eden, God planted a garden. God created Adam outside of the garden (but in Eden) and then put him in the garden. In other words, God created the garden *before* He created man—just as He created conditions *before* the fish, beasts, etc., came forth. First, God created the environment, then the beings. Incidentally, Eden means “pleasure,” “delight.” Adam’s creation was a delight to God and to man.

Adam saw something of the unfinished earth before he was put in the garden, unless he was instantly zipped over there. If we have the right heart condition, it is sometimes good for us to have a contrast—to be poor and then rich, for example, or to have suffering and then relief. The contrast helps us to be content with our surroundings, to appreciate health, etc. Adam would have been translated into the garden, just as Enoch and Elijah were many years later. While in the garden, Adam could not see out of it because of the terrain.

**Gen. 2:9** 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.

All trees were beautiful and had edible fruit. There were trees of life and trees of the knowledge of good and evil—both being a particular *kind* of tree. The “tree of life” was a grove or kind of tree necessary to perpetuate human life. The “tree of knowledge of good and evil” was also a grove. *Xulon*, the Greek word translated “tree,” means “grove” (Rev. 2:7; 22:2,14).

Both kinds of tree—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—were pleasant to look at, had edible fruit, and were “in the midst of [that is, *among*] the garden.” In other words, the forbidden tree grew among the other kinds of trees and hence was not in just one place. Adam and Eve had to watch and discriminate lest they partake of it. Similarly, the Christian is not to go into a monastery and be absent from temptations; he is not to isolate himself. He is in an evil world, in a mixed condition, where he must take the initiative to watch lest he fraternize with evil. Taking the proper stand strengthens us as opposed to being in a sterilized condition.

**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.

Here is a prime clue for locating the Garden of Eden, along with the names of the rivers, which are given in succeeding verses. A river originated *in Eden* but not necessarily *in the garden* portion. However, the river went *through* the garden, and where it exited the garden, it divided into four rivers, two of which are known today: the Tigris (Hiddekel) and the Euphrates.

The river in Eden was the river of life. Just as that river parted into four rivers, so four classes of humanity have their origin in Adam. The first river mentioned, the Pison, represents the Little Flock. The last river mentioned, the Euphrates, pictures the world of mankind. The point is that a progression is shown, an order of resurrection, by the sequence in which the four

rivers are introduced: Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, Euphrates. The four rivers show the ultimate destiny of four classes of humanity (Adamic stock) who will get life.

**Gen. 2:11** The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

**Gen. 2:12** And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.

The first river mentioned was the Pison. Multiple clues show that the Pison represents the Little Flock. (1) Pison means “gusher,” “geyser,” “abundant well.” Regarding the Little Flock, Jesus told the woman of Samaria, “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 [*gusher*] of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14). (2) Gold pertains to *divine* nature. (3) Havilah, which means “circle” or “crown,” shows regality and gives the thought of the crown of life for the Little Flock. (4) The gold was stated to be “good,” and divine nature is certainly good.

Bdellium is associated with manna (Exod. 16:35; Num. 11:7). The Little Flock will receive of the golden pot of “hidden manna” in the Ark of the Covenant; that is, they will get *immortality* (Rev. 2:17). Manna is described as bdellium manna. Not much is known about bdellium, but it was probably a mineral in the shape or form of a pearl or a pellet, being convenient to pick up though small. Hence bdellium resembled manna.

The onyx stone was black and thus pictures *humility*. The Little Flock originates from the earth, the dark planet of sin. Black onyx has white layers so that a design can be sculpted out, black being on top and white underneath. The high priest had an epaulet of black onyx on each shoulder, with the names of six tribes inscribed on each stone. These shoulder stones were a lot larger than those on the high priest’s breastplate, which contained the name of only one tribe on each stone. From the black onyx stones hung a chain that held the breastplate, suggesting a relationship between the epaulet and the breastplate names. The tribal names on the two epaulet stones were listed according to birth. The breastplate names were arranged according to importance, election, and selection. Of Jesus, it is said, “The government shall be upon his shoulder” (Isa. 9:6). As a breastplate of *judgment*, it represents the Little Flock, those who will be placed in positions of judgment (set in ouches of gold) after having proven faithful. The jewels in the breastplate are a *finished* picture of the Lord’s jewels (Mal. 3:17).

The fact that the onyx epaulet shoulder stones were *black*, as opposed to the beautiful, sparkling stones on the breastplate, shows that the Little Flock will always remember their humble origin. The humble-minded Little Flock will never consider their overcoming to be due to their *own* efforts, abilities, etc. By *divine grace*, the Little Flock are called, developed, perfected, and honored. While the beautiful breastplate shows office, the black onyx stones are a constant reminder of the humble past. Jesus is a High Priest who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities because he took on the human nature (the seed of Abraham). Hence compassion is also indicated in the breastplate—the Little Flock will be the best kind of judges possible. Incidentally, the word “humility” comes from “humus,” or dark soil. Humility means to be lowly, not boastful.

**Gen. 2:13** And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

The second river, the Gihon, encompassed all the land of “Ethiopia,” that is, the Hebrew *Cush* (or *Kash*) *in Turkey*, according to the King James margin. Noah’s three sons were Ham, Shem, and Japheth. One of Ham’s sons was Cush, and Cush was the father of Nimrod (Gen. 10:1,6,8). Cush was born in Turkey and lived there for many years after the Flood before going to Africa. Although boundaries have fluctuated over the years, Turkey and India are the land of

Kash (Kashmir is in India). Even Nimrod, Cush's son, was born in Turkey. "Ethiopia" is a much *later* identification of Cush. It is like the term "Rameses," which in the context of the Scriptures had a different name but is called by its *later* name "Rameses."

Ham means "swarthy," "dark-colored," and Cush means "black." Nimrod, too, was associated with Africa, but later in his life. His earlier years were in Turkey and vicinity. Canaan, the brother of Cush—both being sons of Ham—was cursed by Noah, who said that Canaan would be a *servant* to his brethren (Gen. 9:25; 10:6). This development was appropriate, for the Gihon River represents the Great Company, and the Great Company will *serve* the Little Flock.

It was Ham who sinned, but the curse came on Canaan, his son (Gen. 9:25). Ham settled in Egypt, Canaan settled in the land of Canaan, Cush eventually settled in what is Ethiopia today, and Shem settled in India, Iran, and Iraq. When Shem was old, he also migrated to Egypt and Palestine. (After rescuing Lot from the four kings, Abraham met Melchizedek, that is, Shem—see Genesis chapter 14.) Noah and his sons lived several hundred years more after the Flood.

The Gihon, which represents the Great Company, means "bubbler." A "bubbler," although more than just a quiet stream, is more subdued and not as active as a "gusher" (the Pison). A gusher is a pressurized outflow.

**Gen. 2:14** 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.

The third river, the Hiddekel, is mentioned in the Book of Daniel and hence is associated with an Ancient Worthy (Dan. 10:4). By extension, then, the Hiddekel represents the Ancient Worthies. The river is called the Dekel today in lands where it flows, and we call it the Tigris.

Three of the four rivers traveled eastward, and the Tigris and the Euphrates empty into the Persian Gulf. Solomon's Temple faced east; that is, the front was eastward, and the back was westward. Hence the Mediterranean Sea is called the "hinder sea," for as far as Jerusalem is concerned, the Mediterranean Sea is west of it (Zech. 14:8).

Hiddekel means "encircler," which is a reminder of a crown. The Ancient Worthies are called "princes," a form of honor and royalty but on a lesser plane than kings (the Little Flock). Princes even had crowns, marks of distinction, and they had certain responsibilities and authority. By the way, when Jesus is called "Messiah *the Prince*," the title refers to him now, that is, before he inherits the throne (Dan. 9:25).

The fourth river, the Euphrates, which means "waters," represents the world of mankind. The very paucity of information helps to show that this class is the lowest on the totem pole. The Euphrates is called the "great river" in Scripture, and in regard to the world, "great" would mean voluminous in the sense of large numbers (Gen. 15:18). Revelation 17:1 speaks of "the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon [the] many waters [of the Euphrates]," the waters being peoples, nations, and tongues.

Adam came from Turkey, and Noah's Ark landed on Mount Ararat in Turkey. Both locations are in Anatolia or *eastern* Turkey.

The river that flowed out of Eden and divided into four rivers portrays that out of Adam's stock comes the development of four classes of mankind, each with a different destiny. The four rivers branched off from the main Eden river as it exited the Garden of Eden. The four rivers did not branch off at *one* point but formed within a 10- to 15-mile distance from the garden. The Pison could have been the first branch, the Gihon the second, etc.—in the order listed in this chapter of Genesis. All four rivers came from a *high* elevation, for the Garden of

Eden is a high, elevated plateau. The sequence in which the four rivers are listed refers to the order of resurrection change of the four classes.

**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.

Verse 15 is a confirmation of verse 8, showing that God first created Adam outside of the Garden of Eden, a paradise, and then transported him into it. God had already planted the garden, but Adam was to “dress” and “keep” it. In other words, he was to prune it and maintain its appearance—to keep the orchard of life beautiful. This information gives us insight into the future. Man was not made to be completely idle. He will work in the Kingdom and beyond, *but not laboriously*. He will have time to do other things, but he will have to “keep” his “vine and fig tree” (Micah 4:4). In addition to communal responsibilities, a certain orderliness will be expected with regard to personal property. However, such work will be pleasurable and will not be accompanied with fatigue and sweat.

God gave man herbs (bearing seed) and fruit (trees) for food (Gen. 1:29). The tree is essentially the life-giving element, and a variety of trees were in the Edenic orchard. A mixture was needed to sustain life, but herbs can also be enjoyed (for tea, for example).

The commission to man was not only to dress and keep the Garden of Eden but also to extend its boundaries so that when Adam had children, they would have ground. “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. 1:28). From this little plot, seed from the trees of life could be planted to provide for the future. God prepared the Garden of Eden, but from the standpoint of expanding beyond the garden, “there was not a man to till the ground” until Adam was created and then expelled from the garden (Gen. 2:5).

Birds and animals originally ate herbs, not fruit (Gen. 1:30). In tempting Eve, the serpent ate fruit, but fruit was probably not its legitimate diet because the Adversary was the manipulator. In the Kingdom, the lion will eat grass, etc., as in the past (Isa. 11:7). Man, however, ate both the fruit and the herbs.

**Gen. 2:16** And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

**Gen. 2:17** 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.

Every tree was good for food, including the prohibited tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam was simply given a test not to partake of that kind of tree. This first covenant with man, referred to as the Adamic Covenant, was *conditional*. If Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would die within a 1,000-year day. The implication was that if he obeyed, he would live forever. In other words, life was contingent upon his obeying certain conditions.

It is significant that God called the tree “the tree of the knowledge of [both] *good and evil*,” not just “the tree of the knowledge of evil.” God gave this name in advance for several reasons: (1) He foreknew that both Adam and Eve would sin. (2) As a result of their disobedience, God knew that Adam and Eve would have the experience of witnessing and contrasting good and evil. Stated another way, they needed to see evil to be able to contrast it with good. Man has been experiencing evil ever since through sickness, disease, and death.

The dying process began when Adam partook of the forbidden fruit, but 930 years (actually 928 years) were required for the perfect organism to die. (Adam’s creation, his naming the animals, Eve’s creation, and Adam’s fall all had to occur within two years.) Evidently, the death

of an intelligent being was unique in God's universe.

The covenant was made with Adam alone, before Eve was created. Hence if Adam had not followed Eve's lead, there could have been a different ending to the story. In disobeying, Adam committed a *single* act of disobedience to a *simple* test.

Whether we say, "Dying thou shalt die" or "When you eat thereof, you shall die," it means the same thing in effect. It is like a criminal who commits a sin that incurs capital punishment. There is a time period between sentencing and execution. The dying process, as well as actual death, is all included.

**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.

**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.

**Gen. 2:20** 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.

Verses 19 and 20 are a parenthetical insertion. The forming of the beasts out of the ground and every fowl of the air had already taken place. Adam named the birds and the beasts and the "cattle" that God brought to him. In regard to the fish, the saying "out of sight, out of mind" applies. Adam would have named the kinds of animals and birds *in that region* (and not polar bears, for example). *Sample* animals of various species were brought to Adam.

Outside the garden was more or less a wilderness. However, it was not all just rock and sand. There would have been some vegetation for man (although of the crudest kind) when Adam was expelled from the garden. But Adam had to scrounge and live on vegetables and other things that previously were for the cattle and the beasts. No longer could he eat the fruit of the trees, and meat was not permitted until after the Flood. There would have been seeds outside the garden, but Adam had to plant and nurture them. In other words, he had a real struggle in the unfinished earth.

Sad to say, the Book of Genesis has been grossly neglected. The thoughts that are compacted into the book are of the deepest nature. Some of the simplest statements are the most profound. *Tremendous* information is provided.

God was saying, "I will make Adam a helpmate." Then the Holy Spirit mentioned that the animals and the birds, creations of the ground, were not meant to be Adam's helpmate (or "help meet"). God could have also created Eve out of the ground, but He made her out of Adam's rib in order to show a difference with her. In addition to the literal account, symbolism is intended. The creation of Eve from Adam's rib showed not only that the future Church would be made from Jesus' side but also that Jesus alone would pay the ransom price.

God not only theoretically had the design of the beasts in mind, but also He *created* them. Later He brought a sample to Adam to name. Although Adam had a rapport with the animals, he could not find companionship with them *on his own level* of thought. The fact that Adam was given a dominion over the animals suggests they were all obedient to his whims; they were docile no matter what the species. In spite of Adam's enjoyment with, pleasure over, and attachment to the animals, that rapport was far short of his own intellectual level. God had already designed Adam's helpmate, but to impress upon Adam the value of Eve's creation, He delayed. God was holding in reserve a surprise benefit.

Adam derived a certain delight in seeing the animals, naming them, and having their obedience, but at the end of that road was Eve's creation. Eve was to be his helpmeet rather than another male, which could have been the case, just as it is with the angels in heaven. All angels are male, but they have a friendship relationship. As explained also, there was a certain strategy in the way Eve was formed out of Adam's side. God formed everything: man, woman, and beast.

**Q:** Since Adam was formed as an adult, how did he speak and name the animals?

**A:** Speech was a gift Adam had, whatever the language and the vocabulary. A lot of programming was involved in Adam's creation, not in regard to his free moral agency but in other areas. Adam and the Logos communicated *verbally* through speech and language that were programmed into Adam. The serpent also talked *audibly*, with accompanying actions that made the temptation more poignant and forceful. Perhaps the serpent was munching on an apple and then began talking with Eve.

The fact that the animals *were brought* to Adam for naming suggests that he did not have a long time to observe many of them and to learn all of their characteristics. Rather, with his perfect mind, Adam would have observed a certain trait—perhaps an animal's walk or appearance or fur—and then given a name accordingly, as a first impression.

With God designing and creating the animals (their form, shape, habits, diet, organs, etc.) and then giving Adam the privilege of naming them, it was like a father humoring a child with the privilege of doing something the father could do far better himself. God was saying to Adam, "These animals are yours. You are king over them." The animals were like presents for Adam, and at the end was the best present: Eve. She was probably strikingly beautiful in her perfection.

The statement in verse 20 that Adam named the animals but that "there was not found an helpmeet for him" shows that he was perceptive. Adam was created a *perfect* adult, but his longing for companionship and his observations of the male and female pairing of the animals show how sensitive the *perfect* organism is. If we are born nine-tenths dead, our perception is very feeble, and we use only a *tiny* portion of our brain. Adam was a perfect man with a perfect brain who could do things lightning fast. He was very sensitive and very alert. When the animals were brought to him, he saw that they were lovely but thought, "Oh, if only I had someone like myself with whom I could communicate!" Verse 18 tells us God *foresaw* that Adam would sense the need for a helpmate. God was not surprised—He foresees everything.

God might have brought the beasts to Adam in pairs. Being sensitive, Adam would have thought, "Where is *my* mate?" He was probably impressed that God went to so much trouble to let him check out each species to see if it was a helpmate for him. However, none were satisfactory, so God provided Eve.

The concept of a helpmate led to the deflection of some of the angels. They were attracted to this beautiful new thing: woman. Satan, being aggressive by nature, was the audacious one, the leading spirit, but it took some time before the angels fell and came in league with him. Instantly seeing the potential for an entire race of human beings, Satan began to *act*, whereas the angels were just thinking and observing.

**Gen. 2:21** 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;

**Gen. 2:22** And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and



**brought her unto the man.**

Without any detail, Genesis chapter 1 simply states that God created male and female. Now Genesis chapter 2 digresses and provides more information. God caused Adam to sleep deeply and then took a rib from his torso, performing a surgical operation, as it were. Then God “closed up the flesh.” The literal sleep of the first Adam suggests the deep sleep that God caused to come on the Second Adam, Jesus. Jesus’ death at Calvary finished his work of providing the Ransom and made possible the creation of the Second Eve, his Church.

From the rib, God made the woman and “brought her unto the man.” Adam probably did not see the work being done, for the implication is that he was under “anesthesia” when the operation was performed. When he awoke, he saw a beautiful woman being brought to him as a *surprise*. Of course afterwards Adam would have known that Eve was made from his rib. Adam was taken and put in the garden with lots of beautiful, fragrant trees and flowers. The animals were brought to him as surprises, and finally Eve was the *grand* surprise.

**Q:** Since Adam was perfect, when the flesh was closed up after the rib was removed, would there have been any visible sign or scar? If there was a scar, then Adam, being naked, would have noticed and realized something had transpired.

**A:** Since Jesus appeared after his resurrection with a wounded side to convince Thomas, it is possible that Adam had a scar temporarily. We do not know for sure, but certainly after Adam was startled and delighted by Eve’s appearance, God would have told him, “I created this helpmate from you. I removed one of your ribs, and this is the result.”

**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.

Adam named Eve as well as the animals. He called her “woman” (Hebrew *ishshah*) because she was taken out of his side, out of “man” (Hebrew *ish*). Thus Adam gave her the name of the species, as it were. The names “Adam” and “Eve” were God-given, however, because there are other implications; that is, the names were overruled.

**Q:** Does the implanting of Adam’s rib in Eve indicate there was not too great a difference in physical stature between perfect man and perfect woman? Otherwise, the man’s rib would not have fit properly into the woman.

**A:** Out of Adam’s rib, God made Eve’s whole skeletal frame. God then made flesh, nerves, etc., and encased the skeleton. In other words, from the rib, God formed Eve by stretching it into the skeletal frame.

**Gen. 2:24** Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

For a man to leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife means that in marriage, a man’s first allegiance is to his *wife*. It is improper for parents to be possessive of a child and not want him or her to get married or, if the offspring is married, to want him or her to still be tied to the parent.

“They shall be one flesh.” A connubial relationship, the cleaving of one to another, is proper and natural.

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

If *perfect* and living under *perfect* conditions, people would not have evil thoughts, and nakedness would be all right. Under present conditions, there is *no room* for nudity as a practice because we are fallen. Prior to sin, Adam and Eve were unashamed of their nakedness, but after disobeying, they were ashamed—and properly so. It is important to understand this difference (namely, that Adam and Eve were naked and not ashamed originally) because in the next chapter, Genesis 3:10 states that they were “naked” and ashamed.

After the Apostle John died, Gnostics in the early Church felt that the flesh was mind over matter. Because the flesh, the old man, was to die, they used the flesh for all kinds of excesses, saying that God was looking only at the new creature and not at the flesh. These were abnormal views. As an example of something that could happen today, a Christian should not go to an art class where women and men pose nude. The rationalization should not be used, “There is nothing wrong with that. It is all in your mind.”

“Evil communications corrupt good manners [conduct]” (1 Cor. 15:33). Later, with imperfect man and what they saw, many angels fell because of vicarious association. Being perfect, the angels probably never would have had evil thoughts except that they fraternized, or associated, with conditions conducive to a depraved nature.

The account is trying to show the sleep, the rib, and Eve’s being taken out of Adam rather than being taken from the ground, as Adam was. These points have far-reaching implications that will not be discussed now. The question “If Eve alone had sinned and not Adam, what would have happened?” can be addressed later with a little more assurance because of this background information.

**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?

Calling the serpent a “beast” is a clue that as originally created, the serpent was in a different form than after it was cursed. Being “more subtle,” it was more intelligent than any other beast—and the most advanced below man. However, when the serpent talked and reasoned with Eve, it was a *possessed* beast. Satan possessed the serpent much as God spoke to Balaam through the ass.

What would the serpent have looked like before the curse? It probably had four legs and could stand erect when it so desired as, for instance, in eating the fruit of a tree. It looked vaguely like a reptile but was attractive—it was not repulsive like present-day snakes. Proof that the serpent was pleasant to behold is that it reasoned intimately with the woman and she was not repelled.

When the serpent was cursed, it lost its beauty—much like Lucifer. Originally beautiful and very intelligent, Lucifer was an honored creation in heaven, yet he fell. The “son of light” became Satan, the deceiver, the Adversary, etc. Just as Lucifer’s name was changed, so the serpent may have had a different designation originally.

The serpent asked Eve, “Has God said, ‘You shall *not* eat of every tree of the garden?’” Satan twisted God’s words. God had said that Adam could eat of *every* tree—and eat *freely*—except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16,17). In other words, God simply put a prohibition on *one kind* of tree. By stating the question in the negative, Satan was casting suspicion and doubt on God’s motives. The implication was that God was *depriving* Adam and Eve of something desirable, that is, that He was denying them their rights and they were entitled to more.

Satan had not previously disobeyed God, for God’s will *is done* in heaven. Hence Satan became

the “father” of lies with this first transgression (John 8:44). Because he had not sinned previously, we have to conclude that *at this point*, he really believed what he was saying. He was not disobeying divine authority with the knowledge that he was definitely wrong. Rather, Satan was deceived in his own thinking. Having seen the creation of man, he meditated on certain things. There was only a two-year gap between the creation and the fall of man. Lucifer, as well as the Logos, had rejoiced at the *new* human creation: first the man and then the woman. Adam was a miniature physical form of what a spirit being looks like, but a woman was something different, for the angels were all *sons* of God, all *males*. As Lucifer meditated, he could see the potential for reproduction and multiplication that existed through the woman. He misunderstood God’s motives in prohibiting Adam from partaking of the one kind of tree. He had heard what God said to Adam but misunderstood and thought God had limited Adam (and Eve).

Since no human death had ever occurred, even though that was the penalty for disobedience, Lucifer did not know what death was. As one of the early creations, he may have already lived a million years, and none of the spirit realm had died either. Lucifer was one of the chief angels; he was an archangel. *Faith* was required to believe God meant what He said, namely, that death was the penalty for disobedience.

When Lucifer saw the perfect human creation, the wheels were turning, and he imagined what might be done with them and their progeny. He saw the possibility of a physical universe with human beings just as there already was a spirit universe with spirit beings. Then he *misinterpreted* God’s motive in placing a restriction on eating the fruit of a particular tree. Lucifer had been *thinking* along these channels, but his disobedience did not start to occur until he spoke and acted through the serpent. At that point, he made a decision for disobedience. He saw the potential, and now he acted as the *benefactor* to Eve. He befriended her, suggesting that if she disobeyed God, the result would be *good*.

Satan thought he was immortal, and he was more and more convinced of his immortality when he disobeyed—and repeatedly—with seeming impunity. He experienced no deterioration in spiritual energy, and he maintained his beauty and agelessness. In contrast, when man disobeyed, he aged, got wrinkled, became infirm, etc., and eventually died.

Satan misquoted God. Professed Christians can also put false connotations on the principles of God. A certain statement or illustration in God’s Word may be used to draw a lesson completely different from what was intended. One may truly think he is *properly* interpreting the Bible but actually be *misinterpreting* it.

Based on all the serpent said and did, we know that Satan had carefully thought out this matter in advance. For example, Satan chose an *opportune* moment. He chose both the time and the place, making sure that Adam would not be there. Why did Satan talk to just the woman? He recognized that when the rib was taken from Adam and Adam’s qualities were divided, Eve would be the easier one to *deceive*. As the Apostle Paul said, “Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Tim. 2:14). Also, the prohibition had been declared to *Adam*; the penalty was on the *man*. God was careful to put the penalty only on Adam because the ransom price had to be paid (a single life for a single life, a man for a man). Eve was considered *in* Adam, a *part* of man. God “called *their* name Adam” (Gen. 5:2).

God simply prohibited the eating of one kind of tree. There was nothing wrong with such a prohibition. Some people think everything should be democratic and they are entitled to all things, but that concept is wrong. We are subjects of grace. God did not choose us because we are better than someone else or because we have rights to certain things. As brethren, we must heed the Scriptural conditions that *limit or modify* our behavior under certain circumstances.

**Gen. 3:2** And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

Note Eve's reply: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden." She did not quote God correctly either, for God had said, "You may *freely* eat of *every* tree except the one" (Gen. 2:16 paraphrase). Eve omitted "every" and "freely." She did not quote God in a positive manner any more than the serpent did. Although she was trying to correct the serpent, her deletions were significant.

**Gen. 3:3** 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.

Now Eve *added* to the original prohibition, which mentioned nothing about *touching* the tree. Since the prohibition was not to eat of the tree, common sense would say to leave it alone. Therefore, Eve thought wisely, "I better not touch the tree either." However, God did not say those words, and Eve was unknowingly setting up a trap for herself. Incidentally, the prohibited tree was not a single tree but *one kind* of tree that was here and there throughout the garden. The principles of the Adversary's tactics are being discussed. He is a wily foe.

**Gen. 3:4** And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

The serpent said to Eve, "You shall *not* surely die." What a strong statement! Satan had given a lot of thought to God's prohibition before saying these words and possessing the serpent. Satan thought the prohibition was strange. He wondered why God excluded that tree from Adam's diet. If we had *faith* in God and *loved* Him, we would say, "God must have a good reason even if I do not understand it." We have this attitude about Scriptures we do not understand. However, if we did not have faith and were beginning to question certain things, the prohibition could be a stumbling block as we thought about it more and more.

When the serpent ate the fruit and *did not die*, the test was increased. Perhaps the serpent was even eating the fruit while it was talking to Eve. The eating was a *tremendous* test on Eve as well as on Satan, for the assumption would be, if the tree is poisonous to man, it is poisonous to animals too. At each step, Satan became more and more convinced that he was right. Yes, there were contradictions, but then much seemed to be in his favor. Satan thought God was lying when He said that Adam would die if he ate the forbidden fruit.

Even *before* this scene with Eve, Satan had the serpent partake of the fruit, so Satan knew in advance of tempting Eve that the serpent would not die. But then to demonstrate the eating before Eve and say, "Ye shall not surely die," made the serpent's statement seem correct.

God's original statement and prohibition would lead any thinking person to ask, "Why?" With the "Why?" came the test. Faith would say, "God has a good reason of which I am not aware." However, one who lacked a sufficiency of faith, trust, and love for God might misconstrue what seemed to be a proven fact; namely, the serpent ate the fruit and did not die. And when Adam and Eve subsequently ate the fruit and did not die, Satan was further confirmed in his lie.

The holy angels who did not sin at the time of the Flood do not need any further testing. They withstood what seemed to be a proven reality and still had faith and trust in God and did not sin. Because the holy angels were tested to the very core and passed the test, they do not "die any more" (Luke 20:36).

The lesson for us is that we must *analyze* statements coming forth from Christians—what we hear and what we are being taught. We should ask ourselves, "Is the statement true?" Eve was naive. She was trusting and believing. When she saw what seemed to contradict, she went

along with the reasoning, forgetting what God had said. She was deceived by false reasoning, and we, too, can be deceived by false reasoning. The Apostle Paul said, “I fear lest you, like Eve, will be deceived by beautiful statements of others who are supposed to be Christians. You naively believe them” (2 Cor. 11:3,4 paraphrase). We must heed a “thus saith the LORD,” and the “thus saith the LORD” here was a simple statement: “Thou *shalt not* eat of it” (Gen. 2:17).

**Gen. 3:5 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.**

The serpent continued his false reasoning. When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, their eyes were opened immediately to their nakedness. This, too, would seem to justify Satan, who misunderstood what the “good and evil” was. Did evil of this nature exist *before* this incident? No! Satan thought that for some ulterior motive, God was excluding the fruit, but Satan was *impugning* God’s motive. Satan thought, “It is God who is evil in making the prohibition. Since the serpent and Adam and Eve can eat the fruit and not die, then another side of God’s character is being revealed.” Satan mistakenly thought God was trying to withhold information and privileges, and the evidence seemed to prove that Satan’s stand was right. Adam and Eve felt shame regarding their nakedness, but Satan did not, for the prohibition was only on Adam. Satan had a tiny bit of truth mixed with a lot of error. The mixture confused Satan, so that he misconstrued God’s motives and thought that by eating the fruit, Adam and Eve would become more godlike, more like spirit beings.

The death penalty was not on the angels; the prohibition was for man only. Since the angels subsequent to Adam’s fall did not begin to deteriorate, we know their experience was different from man’s. Moreover, they did not feel shame, which was a part of man’s penalty. Of course later as the fallen angels beheld the physical acts of man and woman, the seeds of *moral* degeneration were bred in them, but they did not experience the *emotional* reaction of shame that Adam and Eve did.

Some time passed before the fallen angels materialized, for if they had materialized sooner, the Flood would have come sooner. We know the delay occurred because when they materialized, they predominated. They became mighty men of renown, and they proliferated and dominated the human race. Man had to have a chance to multiply before the disobedient angels caused the hybrid race. Proof that generations (plural) were born is that Noah’s genealogy could be traced as “perfect” (Gen. 6:9). The materializations occurred in Noah’s day—not necessarily when he was building the Ark but in his lifetime. At the time the 120 years began and God gave Noah the decree to build the Ark, evil had reached a crescendo. Hence there was a long period of time after the creation and fall of Adam and Eve in which the angels were thinking matters over, and the unholy angels then made a decision to follow Satan’s leadership.

Satan misunderstood that death was a dying *process*: “dying thou shalt die.” However, the death sentence immediately fell upon Adam—probably in the cells of his body, for the death penalty is inherited. After the fall but before Adam had children, his DNA cellular genetic code was altered so that the death sentence was in his genes. But the enactment of that death penalty was so slow that Adam lived 930 years before he died. The lack of visibility of the death sentence in Adam for a period of time was a strong test on others who observed him.

When man was created, it was clearly implied that had he not eaten of the forbidden tree, he would have lived forever. (Incidentally, in regard to the animals, it was not said that they were created to live perpetually.) Also, if God had so chosen, He could have made Adam to live only 100 years and then die—that was God’s prerogative. The injunction to Adam in regard to obedience became a covenant, the Adamic Covenant.

**Gen. 3:6** 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 woman saw that the tree was good for food.” This statement is a clue that the serpent ate the fruit in front of Eve. The serpent had already reasoned with her, implanting the seed of bad thinking, and that thinking began to percolate; namely, God had said, “You shall die,” but Satan, through the serpent, had said, “You shall not die.” In the meantime, Eve’s seeing that the tree was good for food steered her thinking to Satan’s favor. She thought God had lied and withheld knowledge from her that she had a right to have. The Hebrew word used here for “saw” is *raah*, which means “considered”; that is, Eve had time to meditate on what she had seen.

The tree was also pleasant to look at. The fruit looked luscious. This fact shows that what appears to be actual evidence (in this case, the serpent’s eating the fruit as well as the appearance of the fruit) can be deceiving. Even in the brotherhood, what seems to be factual evidence can be misleading. We (the Church) are naive like Eve, as the Apostle Paul said. If teachers come in and say, “This is all right, and that is all right” when it is not, we can be deceived because those teachers are prospering—they are more numerous, they get more attention, they are more highly favored, they seem to have God’s blessing, etc. But what is God’s blessing? The understanding of Providence is a very complex subject. We must stay close to the Scriptures in order to interpret what *appears* to be factual evidence. In the Garden of Eden, the *circumstantial* evidence favored Satan. God’s statement could not have been any *simpler*, but Satan made a complex argument out of it. If we try to reason with the Adversary, we will be *no match*. He is a brilliant being with tremendous powers of intellect. All we have to combat him is a “thus saith the LORD” plus the guardian angels and the robe of Christ’s righteousness.

Eve also saw that the tree was “desired to make one wise.” She came to this conclusion because the serpent was the *wisest* beast and because he was the *only one* eating the forbidden fruit. Therefore, she reasoned that the fruit had made him so wise. Again this was circumstantial evidence. We need God’s grace in this world. Because we are living in the end times, we must be careful of sophistry regarding the interpretation of God’s Word.

Eve partook of the fruit. From the account, we do not know whether or not Adam was with her at the time. It does not really matter, for the facts remain the same. At any rate, the Apostle Paul tells us that Adam was *not deceived* when he partook (1 Tim. 2:14).

There may well have been a little interim between Eve’s and Adam’s partaking. When Adam heard, he (incorrectly) assumed Eve would die and then partook himself (as a “suicide pact”) out of inordinate love for her—without inquiring of God first.

Satan had not approached Adam, the man, because he felt he would be far more successful through the woman. Women have a desire for approval and are more sensitive and appreciative of kindness and beauty.

**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.

The eyes of both Adam and Eve “were opened, and they knew that they were naked.” If Eve partook earlier and there was a time interval, this verse suggests that she did not feel naked until Adam partook, for the penalty was on him, the father of the human race. Eve died because of Adam’s transgression rather than her own.

“They sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.” “Aprons” were like those worn by natives: a cord with an “apron” flap in front and back. The leaves were folded (“sewed”) and hung loosely. *Their* covering themselves suggests justification by *works*. In contrast, God later provided animal skins, as coats, to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve; God’s covering pictured Christ’s robe of righteousness gained through the shedding of blood.

The thought of the “fig” leaves can be carried further. The fig tree represents the nation of Israel, and the Law was given to Israel. Because Adam and Eve *sewed their own* fig-leaf covering, the act represents justification by the works and deeds of the Law. Christ’s robe of righteousness supplants that type of justification.

**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.

**Gen. 3:9** And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

Adam and Eve “heard the voice of the LORD God walking ... in the cool of the day.” The “voice” was the Logos, the Word of God (John 1:1). “Logos” was the title of Jesus in his prehuman existence. “Michael” was another title (Dan. 12:1). “Logos” refers to his role as spokesman for God.

Adam and Eve heard an audible voice *calling* (described as “walking”) to Adam. As in Genesis 3:9, the Old Testament frequently says the LORD God spoke to so-and-so, but actually the Logos was conveying the instruction. As official spokesman, the Logos spoke so authoritatively that his pronouncements were considered to be the LORD God speaking. By dissecting the grammar of such statements, Trinitarians could “prove” that Jesus was God, but *we must reason* on these Scriptures.

The *Diaglott* footnote for John 1:14 quotes an authority in regard to an Asian custom that when the king spoke to the public, his face was covered and he had a spokesman. From a veiled cubicle, the king spoke to his representative who, in turn, gave the pronouncement to the people. The people knew the king’s message was coming through the “Logos.” The principle is the same as having a translator. If a person spoke Russian, a translator would convey the message to those who spoke English.

The expression “cool of the day” meant afternoon, which corresponds to 3 p.m., the time that Jesus died on the Cross. In paying the ransom price, he was naked on the Cross. He was naked in front of a tree, as it were, as opposed to being behind a tree, because he was in Adam’s stead. On the Cross, Jesus would have felt chills; therefore, the “cool” of the day has a symbolic meaning as well. It was like the fall of the year, autumn. Also, when we “fall,” we stumble and fall down. These words have their origin in the spiritual fall of Adam, which occurred in the fall of the year. The God of nature has designed tides, weather, animals, seasons, planets—everything—as symbols. The thinking behind these *realities* is significant. Incidentally, the “cool” of the day is called the “wind” in the King James margin.

**Gen. 3:10** And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

Adam and Eve were in the garden when they heard the Logos call, “Adam! Adam!” Right away they were frightened because they had sinned, so they hid themselves among the trees (or *behind* a tree). Adam said, “I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid myself.” One penalty for disobedience that they felt immediately was a sense of being unclothed and shame, which led them to make a fig-leaf covering, but in spite of this

covering, which *they* made, they still felt naked because their covering was insufficient.

**Gen. 3:11** 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?

God knew the answers to the questions, but He asked them (through the Logos) because a strategy was involved. God was not seeking information but was giving Adam and Eve an opportunity to explain themselves.

**Comment:** Each one was willing to blame another, which is true of people today. It takes courage to say, “It is my fault. I was wrong.”

“Who told you that you were naked?” Adam and Eve were aware of the sensation, but the question connected the sensation of nakedness with the *transgression*. We could have a providence that is retribution, a punishment, but view it otherwise. For instance, we might say, “That experience is common to man.” Another hard experience might not be a punishment at all but a test of our faith in God and in Christ. Or a test might be designed to probe and develop us—and not be a punishment in any sense of the word. Experiences have to be *analyzed*. We should ask ourselves (and the Lord in prayer), “Why did this happen?” Because of *wrongdoing*, because of *right* doing, or because of *not* doing? At the First Advent, Jesus looked into *every* experience to see what God’s leadings were. He did not see any of his experiences as happenstance. Jesus’ life was ordered of the Lord. “The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way” (Psa. 37:23). Hence we should try to see things in this light in regard to important events and circumstances.

“Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded you not to eat?” Adam first said he hid because he was afraid and because he was naked, but he did not say, “Because I sinned.” His *transgression* caused the sensations. The ideal answer would have been, “I transgressed. I disobeyed your commandment. I ate of the tree, and I got this sensation.” God pressed the question to get at the *real* reason: “Have you eaten of the tree that I commanded you not to eat?” This second question was instructional and illuminating. Adam got the point and then offered another excuse (verse 12).

**Gen. 3:12** And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

Adam blamed his transgression on the woman whom *God* had given him: “*She* gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” Adam even brought God into the situation. Sometimes we do foolish things, and Adam’s comment helps us to understand some of our own actions. Today we are not commanded to not do such and such, but with Adam, the command was very specific and his disobedience constituted the sin. Instead we are given the *whole Bible*, and Adam’s and Eve’s failings can help us to see some of the failings and shortcomings in our *own* flesh. The more we know of God’s Word, the more responsible we are, but we should hunger to know more and more of God’s ways and principles. The more we learn now, the better educated we will be for our future work. We should want to discern the real reason we do something, not the professed reason. To be strictly true and honest is a hard thing. God is developing us to see if, at heart, we truly desire to be like Him.

Instead of saying, “The woman gave me of the tree,” Adam should have said, “I disobeyed. I ate the fruit.” He should have taken the blame himself. Jesus died specifically for Adam. As children of Adam, we are covered by the ransom price.

Adam answered, “The woman whom *thou* gavest me....” He was wrong to bring in God. If the Lord judged us by some of our statements, we would be very much condemned. Since there



was only *one* woman in the garden, it was certainly wrong for Adam to identify her as “the woman whom thou gavest to be with me.”

**Gen. 3:13** 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.

God asked Eve, “What have you done?” (Adam, as head of the husband-wife relationship, was questioned first, but Eve was not left out.) Eve blamed the serpent. True, the woman did give Adam the fruit, and the serpent did beguile Eve, but each should have said, “*I disobeyed.*” Both Adam and Eve should have said *first*, “I did eat,” and then *secondarily*, if at all, have brought in Eve and the serpent, respectively. Their words were backwards. With Christians, too, many things are backwards, with the importance in reverse order. And why? To protect either ourselves or those we love.

**Gen. 3:14** 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:

Now God addressed the serpent, but He did not ask, “What have you done?” because the serpent was possessed. In the New Testament, a demoniac who was the spokesman for a company of fallen angels asked Jesus, “Have you come to torment [judge] us before the time?” (Matt. 8:28-32; Mark 5:2-13). The individual who ostensibly asked the question had no such knowledge, for it was the evil being *in him* who did the speaking when Jesus was about to cast out the fallen angels. Their spokesman continued: “We do not want to be dispossessed and go into the abyss. Let us go into the swine.” Hence the fallen angels talked with Jesus before he exorcised them. The point is that Jesus was talking to a man, but the man was not the one speaking. Yes, his mouth moved and his tongue wagged, but the *evil being* in him responded to Jesus. These incidents help us understand God’s dealing with the serpent in the Garden of Eden.

The serpent became a helpful symbol following its cursing, but when it conversed earlier, it was possessed. Satan and God both knew that Satan had possessed the serpent. But now, by talking to the serpent and stating the curse, God was really telling Satan his destiny. God cursed the serpent above all cattle and beasts and said it would go on its belly and eat dust all the days of its life. And God put enmity between the serpent and the woman, etc. (verse 15). The serpent became a symbol by being *radically, suddenly, and literally* changed. By being forced to travel on its belly, the snake previously, by implication, could stand erect. The act of beguiling the woman brought the curse.

**Gen. 3:15** 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.

God put enmity between the woman and the serpent, and between the woman seed *class* and the serpent seed *class*. The serpent seed will bruise the “heel” (feet members), and the woman seed will bruise the serpent’s head. This verse is a prophecy that the feet members will die *violently*.

Just as the serpent is a symbol of that which is evil, so the destiny of evildoers is that they will bite the dust (be destroyed underfoot, die the Second Death). The upright will get life. Thus we see the two extremes. And just as the serpent injected poison into Eve, so snakes are poisonous and dangerous, even though they lack arms, legs, and jaws with large teeth. Snakes inject venom, but the signification goes much further.

The serpent seed versus the woman seed represents two classes. In Revelation chapter 12, when the dragon was unsuccessful in swallowing the man-child, he next chased the woman,

who fled into the wilderness for 1,260 years. But the dragon will make war with the remnant of her (the woman's) seed (Rev. 12:17). The dragon is a multitudinous seed, a composite seed, with Satan as its head. The woman is a multitudinous seed with Jesus as its head.

The woman seed will bruise Satan, the serpent seed's head. The serpent is the one being addressed. Hence "thee," "thy," and "thou" all refer to Satan, for the "head" (*Satan*) did the talking and the deceiving.

In the term "his heel," the pronoun is wrong. The thought is that the serpent will bruise "her heel" (the woman's heel), that is, the feet members. The Apostle Paul gave the clue: "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your [the Church's] feet shortly" (Rom. 16:20). In other words, the Church will be involved in the crushing of Satan underfoot, but first, the dragon seed will bruise the heel of the woman seed. The implication is that the last members of the body of Christ will die *violently*. (Incidentally, the dragon or serpent [civil power] put Jesus to death.) Reverse order was intentionally used by the Holy Spirit to make the last part of verse 15 a time lock. The heel will be bruised (killed) first; the serpent head will be bruised later.

Jesus will *personally bind Satan* (Jesus must first enter the strong man's house and *bind him*), but the *Church* will be involved in Satan's *destruction* (Mark 3:27). The Christ will destroy Satan and all who follow his deception in the "little season" (Rev. 20:3).

**Gen. 3:16** 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.

The Revised Standard Version reads, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

**Q:** Does this verse indicate that prior to the punishment, there was more equality between Adam and Eve?

**A:** Although there was more equality, there was not full equality because *their* name was called Adam and the two were one under *his* name (Gen. 5:2). The sequence of address when God gave the punishments and/or curses was the same as the order of sin: (1) Satan, (2) Eve, and (3) Adam. Satan initiated the temptation, the woman was beguiled, and Adam willingly ate the fruit.

Eve did not conceive prior to leaving the garden, but the implication is that if sin had not occurred, Eve would have borne children without pain, for Adam and Eve were told to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Now there would be pain before birth (travail or labor pains) and at birth (the final birth spasm). Notice that in spite of the pain of childbearing, the woman's desire would be to her husband.

If the transgression had not occurred, Adam and Eve would have had more of a partnership, but Adam would still have been the head. Now Eve would have a more subservient role, and history proves this to be true regarding women. We are reminded of certain other prophetic utterances such as when Ham showed disrespect for his father after the Flood (Gen. 9:24,25).

**Gen. 3:17** 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;

Why was the ground cursed for *Adam's* sake, or because of Adam? (1) The permission of evil

has been for man's benefit, as will ultimately be seen. Too much leisure is not good for fallen man. (2) Adam had sinned.

**Gen. 3:18** Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

The ground would now bring forth thorns and thistles. In other words, there would have been no weeds if Adam had not sinned. Man would just sow and plant—without weeds, thorns, and thistles.

Also, verse 18 indicates a change of diet from a basic fruit diet to more of a vegetable diet. Evidently no fruit trees were growing outside the garden at this time.

**Gen. 3:19** 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.

“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” Not only would Adam have to till the ground, plant, and remove the weeds, but also the kernel of wheat would have to be removed, ground, and made into bread; a fire had to be started; and the bread required baking. Obtaining bread would be *much* harder than just plucking fruit off a tree.

“Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” This portion of verse 19 informed Adam and Eve what the death penalty meant, for they would not have understood death. The corpse would be buried in the ground and decay into the elements from which it had been formed.

In addition to death, mankind has experienced sorrow, pain, labor, sweat, etc. When the death procedure is reversed to life by the end of the Kingdom, the curse and its effects upon man will have been rolled back. The reversal process will be *gradual*.

Satan also did not know what death meant at that time. He probably thought that once life was given, it was perpetual, and that the point of eating was just to satisfy hunger, not to satisfy life. Satan should have realized that God could destroy him and that defying God jeopardized his own existence. However, Satan did not realize what God could do to him or to other sentient beings. The angels had lived for thousands of years with no diminution of vitality, so death was a new lesson for the angels—seeing the *dying process* and then actual death.

**Gen. 3:20** And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

Adam named the woman Eve. He had previously named the animals, and now a helpmate was created for him that was bone of his bone. The name Eve means “living.” The name was given because Eve was “the mother of all living.” Eve had borne no children yet, but God had just said she would bear children in pain. The name Eve also suggests that the Second Eve, the Church, will be the mother of all. Rebekah was told, “Be thou the mother of thousands of millions [or billions],” and she represents the Church (Gen. 24:60).

The deception of Eve would have taken place shortly after her creation—probably about two years after. Incidentally, Adam was created at age 30.

**Gen. 3:21** Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

*God Himself* made “coats of skins, and clothed” Adam and Eve. This act was a picture that God would provide His Son as the ransom sacrifice. Earlier Adam and Eve had sewn together fig leaves to clothe *themselves* in aprons (like loincloths). Now God used skins to cover the

nakedness of not just private parts but nearly the whole body. The “clothing” would have been like a tunic, front and back. Since animals had to be killed to provide the skins, God was also showing the lesson that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9:22). The providing of skins was an act of forgiveness; it showed the possibility of recovery.

According to God’s promise, the serpent, the instrument of deception, would have its head crushed by the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15). A way out was thus suggested for the long-term future, but Adam and Eve were not fully aware of the significance. However, they did realize that their present life would terminate, that they would return to dust, and that ultimately the serpent would be crushed, so they did have hope of a vague future recovery.

**Gen. 3:22** 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:

Properly translated, this verse should read: “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man who was as one of us now knows good and evil.” Otherwise, the verse does not make sense. For one thing, God does not experience evil, for everything is happiness and righteousness up in heaven. And Adam and Eve certainly did not become Godlike by *disobeying*. As sons of God, the angels were created in the image of God—the Logos too. Therefore, by *sinning*, Adam did not become “as one of us,” that is, as one of the holy angels or the Logos.

The King James translation actually supports Satan’s lie. His false statement was derogatory, but the implication is that one must experience sin to become Godlike. The thought should be: “Behold the man who was created good and perfect and in our image—now look what has happened to him! He knows good and evil because he partook of the forbidden tree.” The tree symbolized the knowledge of that which was good and that which was evil. Because of disobedience, Adam would now have an experience with evil.

There was and is no sin or death in heaven. God’s will was done in heaven back there, and it is still being done today. Sin occurred on planet Earth, specifically in the Garden of Eden, where Satan manifested himself as the father of lies. Hence the angels did not experience evil up in heaven. Now Adam would see the penalty of sin in the full sense, not only in the cessation of life but also in the attendant pain, sorrow, labor, etc.—things that had never occurred anywhere before.

The death penalty was on Adam, not on his race. The penalty on the human race was *genetically* transferred. Man dies not because of individual sin but because of heredity and *Adam’s sin*. Stated another way, Adam sinned, and because he was the father of the human race, the whole race is under condemnation. Jesus was the substitute for Adam; he died for *Adam’s sin*, and by doing so, he paid the penalty for the entire race. Just as the human race dies in Adam (as an indirect result of Adam’s sin), so the human race will get the opportunity for life from what Jesus did to offset Adam’s sin. Similarly the sorrow and pain that were pronounced on Eve are felt by the whole human race, for the penalties personally expressed to them were indirectly transferred. And Jesus’ ransom sacrifice is likewise transferred to all.

“Behold, the man” reminds us of Jesus before Pilate, who also said, “Behold the man” (John 19:5). Jesus had a crown of thorns on his head, and his back was bloody from stripes. Probably the skins that God provided as clothing for Adam and Eve were somewhat bloody. Pilate recognized Jesus as being very noble despite the disarray of garments, the crown of thorns, and the injuries, for he could see through the superficial troubles and picture Jesus as he was before. And Adam was originally noble, that is, in his perfection prior to transgressing.

In taking Adam’s place as a substitute, Jesus had to feel alienated just as Adam did when he

sinned. Jesus also had to experience the curse just as Adam did. Adam ate of the forbidden fruit; Jesus tasted death for every man. Adam felt he was naked; Jesus was naked on the Cross. A tree was involved with Adam's transgression; Jesus died on a "tree." "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13). Pilate said in connection with Jesus' death and trial, "Behold the man," and God said in regard to Adam, "Behold the man who was as one of us; look at him now." Jesus had to take man's sin upon himself and be really cursed in order to be an offset for Adam. Not only did he have to be a *perfect* man to ransom Adam, who was *perfect* prior to sinning (a life-for-a-life principle), but also he had to experience the suffering. The skins for clothing Adam and Eve were bloody, and Jesus' back was bloody from being scourged. In addition, blood dripped down his face from the thorns in the crown.

Lest Adam "put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" is a radical thought. All other things being equal, had Adam stayed in the Garden of Eden and continued to partake of the trees of life, he could have lived forever *despite his sin and the curse*. Hence God put Adam out of the garden. Notice what the account is telling us—the *Garden of Eden still exists*.

**Gen. 3:23** Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

Although God pushed Adam out of the garden, the suggestion is that if one of Adam's posterity—one of the fallen race that is under condemnation—should be placed in the garden, he would live. The Pastor felt that Elijah and Enoch are alive somewhere as two witnesses—perhaps on another planet. (See *Reprint* article No. 3377 entitled "Enoch, Elijah and the Sentence.") If they were translated to or placed in the Garden of Eden, they would still be alive because verse 22 says "live *for ever*." Enoch was physically translated; that is, he was literally taken from one place to another: to Eden. The death sentence was directly on only Adam (it is indirectly on his posterity), so Enoch and Elijah can still be alive. Adam had the right to life, but he forfeited it. The human race never had the right to life.

**Comment:** God could have made Adam from the dust, or ground, *inside* the garden, but He took special care to state earlier in the Book of Genesis that Adam was formed of the dust, or ground, *outside* the garden. Now, after Adam sinned, he was sent *outside* the garden to till the ground, and there he would return to dust. It seems that God made a distinction between the ground *inside the perfect garden* and the ground *outside in the unfinished, imperfect earth*.

**Reply:** The Garden of Eden is a miniature picture of God's plan for planet Earth; it is a picture of the future paradise down here. Jesus was made flesh down here on earth, not up in heaven. His life was transferred into the womb of the Virgin Mary. The transferal took place outside of the Garden of Eden and outside of heaven itself. But we should keep in mind the distinction: Adam sinned; Jesus did not.

Jesus had to experience the curse in order to be an offset for Adam. In other words, to pay the ransom price, Jesus had to do more than die a perfect life for a perfect life. Jesus also had to experience the curse, being made a curse for us. Therefore, the Ransom includes *two* thoughts.

Ezekiel 28:13 speaks of Lucifer's having been in the "garden of God." The Garden of Eden was an earthly equivalent of heaven. Jesus was created flesh outside of both garden arrangements. His similitude of Adam (as the Second Adam) occurred down here. He was *the Son of the man Adam*.

Adam was sent forth from the garden, where he ate fruit and did not have to till the ground. Once outside the garden, he had to till the ground.

**Gen. 3:24** 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.

God “drove” Adam out of the garden; that is, Adam was *forcefully evicted*. The garden must have been absolutely beautiful because God *Himself* planted it eastward in Eden (Gen. 2:8). The garden was not just a very fruitful area, for the landscaping, trees, flowers, etc., would have been breathtaking. If Jesus said, “I go to prepare a place for you in my Father’s house of many mansions,” then the little Garden of Eden, which *God* took care to plant, would have been a place Adam did not want to leave (John 14:2). Verse 23 suggests that God told him it was necessary to leave and that Adam did not want to go. It was like taking a child by the neck and putting him outside as a punishment. Adam had to go out and till the ground; he could not stay inside where everything was available.

God instructed Adam to leave the garden; He gave Adam his eviction notice, as it were. Notice, however, that God had to *drive* Adam out. The use of this term suggests that Adam was reluctant to go. In addition, God placed “Cherubims” at the east side of the garden like sentinels to guard the entrance and thus forbid Adam’s (and Eve’s) return.

The garden was planted *eastward* in Eden, and Adam was evicted on the *east* (Gen. 2:8). The significance is both literal and spiritual. From a literal standpoint, the garden is in a remote area at a high altitude in a mountain range from whence four rivers start as *one* river. Two of the rivers are *mighty* ones that traverse a tremendous distance. The fact the cherubim were stationed only on the east side suggests it was *impossible* to enter the garden from any other side. Of course the river exited to the *east*.

The spiritual significance corresponds to the Tabernacle arrangement. The way to life was the *east* gate, which was on the *east* side. Only by invitation does one antitypically enter. In the Temple, the east gate was the most prominent one. Revelation 2:7 states that the Little Flock will have access into the heavenly Eden: “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

“Cherubims” (plural) suggests that *two* cherubim were stationed at the east entrance of the garden. But there was only *one* flaming sword, “which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” Moreover, the one sword was *separate*, not in the hands of the cherubim. The flaming sword whirled in every direction. Hence access to the garden was prohibited by two cherubim and the flaming sword. There are spiritual connotations too.

The whirling, turning sword was like saying, “Do not even *think* of entering this garden. The cherubim might get distracted, but this sword is ever active.” The flaming sword, which was an electrical force of some kind, probably pictured the *wrath* of God, that is, God’s *justice*. God dwells with the “everlasting burnings” (Isa. 33:14). “Our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:29). No man can see God and live (Exod. 33:20; John 1:18). We are reminded of Moses and the burning bush, which symbolized God’s presence. The *shekinah* light, too, is brought to mind.

The cherubim and the sword guarded or kept the “way ... of life.” Jesus said, “I am the way [to life]” (John 14:6). The entrance to the garden was “the way”; it was a processional entrance. One entered an open area through a gorge. Adam’s feeling of *separation* from God when he was evicted from the garden and looked back and saw the lightning and knew he could not return was like Jesus’ crying on the Cross, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46).

**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.

The Revised Standard Version is a good translation for verses 1-8. Cain was conceived and born after Adam's and Eve's expulsion from the garden. They probably thought he would be the child of promise of Genesis 3:15—that through him the serpent's head would be bruised. However, Eve's fretful mental condition after being forced out of the garden may have had an adverse effect on Cain's fetal development, thus contributing to his wrong heart condition later. (Of course environment and Cain's own willfulness were factors too.) Nevertheless, Eve did consider that Cain was "from the LORD," which gives credence to Cain's being looked to as the child of promise.

Cain was the firstborn of Adam and Eve. But as so often happened in Scripture, the firstborn, instead of getting a double portion, lost the inheritance.

**Gen. 4:2** And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

Eve bare Abel, the second son. Abel was apparently a very intelligent person who had faith and trust in God. He was a shepherd, and Cain was a farmer.

Genesis 4:17 says that Cain had a wife, so we know sisters were also born. Genesis 5:3 mentions Seth as a third son of Adam and Eve, but other sons and daughters were born. Seth is mentioned because Messiah's lineage was traced through him (Luke 3:38).

**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.

**Gen. 4:4** 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:

Presumably Cain's and Abel's offerings were made about the same time. No doubt Cain had made animal offerings in accordance with God's will for some time, but as his garden grew through much effort, he proudly offered of his own produce, thinking it would be a most acceptable gift. Abel's sacrifice was *more* accepted; Cain's was *less* accepted. But instead of inquiring, Cain allowed the spirit of envy to take over.

What about the expression "in process of time"? The literal Hebrew meaning, "at the end of days," suggests the *fall* of the year because that was the time of year when Adam sinned. Hence the offerings were made in appreciation of God's covering Adam's and Eve's sin. Not only did God cover their nakedness, but He gave them the hope of reconciliation along with the rebuke (Gen. 3:15). In spite of the fact they were expelled from the garden and had to labor with the sweat of their brow, God dealt with them.

Abel's sacrifice was the better one because the animal had to be slain, resulting in the shedding of blood. The principle is that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9:22). Under other circumstances, Cain's offering would have been pleasing to God, for it was given from the fruit of his labors. With vegetables versus an animal, we again have the issue already illuminated by the fig leaves versus the animal skins as a covering. Both the fig leaves and the produce required man's *labor*, which represents the doctrine of justification by *works* versus justification by grace or faith. Works are pleasing to God only if the foundation is justification by faith.

The phrase "in process of time" refers not only to a particular time of the year but also to the fact that time had elapsed. Cain and Abel were grown men and on their own as adults. In his youth under Adam's tutelage, Cain had been schooled for many years in how to offer a proper sacrifice with the shedding of blood. Now Cain thought to introduce a different arrangement.

By digressing from the custom, he displeased the Lord. Cain failed because he did not study the *reason* for an animal offering. He just thought of the offering as a gift. “Abel ... brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat.” The mention of both firstlings and fat indicates there was probably some prior instruction in regard to making a proper offering.

How would acceptance of Abel’s offering have been manifested? Fire may have come down from heaven, or there could have been an audible expression of favor or disfavor.

**Gen. 4:5** But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

When God did not accept Cain’s offering, Cain was “very wroth, and his countenance fell.” Cain’s reaction shows that he was a poor loser, he had a surly disposition, he lacked reverence for God (his anger was really directed at the Lord), and he had a quick temper. The fact that “his countenance fell” indicates Cain was pleased with his offering and he was looking forward to acceptance.

**Gen. 4:6** And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

**Gen. 4:7** If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

Sin lay or crouched at the door if Cain was not careful. Sin desired to have Cain, but Cain was to master the sin; he was to resist the temptation and not give in to it. “Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:14,15). If sinful thoughts are entertained, they will come forth as deeds, and deeds can lead to death. Sin is in the mind first—and that is where it should be repelled. If sin is repeated, it brings forth death.

Here in verse 7, sin is personified as a crouching lion ready to devour one if sinful acts or deeds are continually meditated on. Finally sin comes to be Satan himself. At the Memorial in regard to the betrayal, the account says that Satan entered into Judas and that it was Satan’s hour (Luke 22:3; John 13:27). With the Apostle Peter, the account states, “Satan hath desired to ... sift you as wheat” (Luke 22:31). Satan’s attack on Peter came at the time of the denials. Judas had already conceived sin, but he went out after the Memorial supper to actually transact the deed and lead the enemy to Gethsemane. Satan, then, sometimes becomes the personification of sin.

The longer sinful thoughts stay in the mind, the weaker one gets and the greater the culpability. Next comes an act and then repeated acts until a destiny is reaped.

“Thou shalt rule over him”; that is, “Cain, you must bestir yourself to be vigilant and active in repelling such sinful thoughts.” It is interesting that God gave Cain advice about his heart condition and told him he was in jeopardy. His future depended on how he would act subsequently. God was actually stopping Cain and in a merciful way trying to expose his fault, giving him an opportunity for repentance and reformation.

**Gen. 4:8** And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

The Revised Standard Version reads, “Cain said to Abel his brother, ‘Let us go out to the field.’” Why did Cain make this statement to Abel? He did not want them to be seen by other family members. Hence this was *premeditated* murder. Sneakiness was involved in Cain’s slaying of Abel.



**Gen. 4:9 And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?**

Why did God ask Cain where his brother Abel was? The question was a tactical one to give Cain a chance to confess. (A question was similarly posed to Adam in Genesis 3:9.) God respects one's freewill determination in regard to doing good or evil. If we press others to do *good* deeds, we rob them of the virtue and enthusiasm of that service. And if we press others to do *evil*, we incur culpability by becoming a partaker in the sin. Suggestion is the best method, but we should not suggest in a way that *forces* another to act.

Hence God gave Cain another opportunity—this time to confess. But Cain lied and showed no reverence at all. Moreover, he gave a snotty answer: “Am I my brother's keeper?” What an insolent remark! It is amazing that premeditated murder and such an attitude occurred so early in mankind's history.

**Gen. 4:10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.**

God (probably the Logos) replied, “What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries to *me* from the ground” (paraphrase). This statement shows that God knows what transpires here on earth. Abel's life had been taken; he was *dead*, yet his spilled blood actively cried out for vengeance and retribution. Jesus stated the same principle in Matthew 23:35, “That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.” Accordingly, upon the generation of Jews at the First Advent came retribution for all the righteous blood shed from Abel to Zacharias.

In the Hebrew, the word for “crieth” is *repetitive*; that is, there was a *plural* crying of Abel's blood for recognition and retribution. The crying out was like a siren going on and off. When Cain slew Abel, he also slew Abel's unborn potential posterity. Hence the crime was more heinous; it was like *multiple* acts. The repetitive nature of the atrocities is pictured in the blood. It was as if the blood of *many* was shed. The principle is the same with the souls, slain for the Word of God, crying out from under the altar during the fifth-seal time period (Rev. 6:9,10).

Cain and Abel are a picture. Abel represents Jesus, and Cain pictures Satan. But on a little higher level, there are the Abel *seed* and the Cain *seed*. The Abel seed consists of members of the body of Christ who are “slain” for their faithfulness.

**Gen. 4:11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;**

**Gen. 4:12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.**

Cain was cursed from the earth, which opened its mouth to receive Abel's blood. This detail indicates that Abel was probably stabbed and that his blood was literally spilled (as opposed to a bludgeoning, for example). The blood had gushed out onto the ground, and now the ground was figuratively crying out. As a result, Cain's curse would involve the productivity of the earth. In other words, the productivity would be greatly diminished.

When Adam sinned, part of the curse was that the earth would bring forth thorns and thistles, but Cain's curse was stronger. When Adam tilled the ground, it brought forth fruit, plus thorns and thistles, through much labor. With Cain, the earth objected further—it *would not yield its*

strength; that is, it would not be productive. And this curse directly affected Cain's vocation as a tiller of the ground.

Evidently, Cain was pleased with his offering to the Lord because it was a result of his own labors, and he was probably a good farmer. Now the curse hit him where he felt it most—in his vocation. From henceforth, Cain would be a bedouin or a vagabond, taking of that which grew of itself or taking from another man's labors. Nomads picked dates when they were ripe, etc., and just wandered, living from hand to mouth with no harvesting and storage.

**Gen. 4:13** And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

**Gen. 4:14** Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

Cain's words, "My punishment is greater than I can bear," indicate that he was touched in a most sensitive spot. He was a tiller of the ground, and now the ground would not respond. Also, as a vagabond, he would lose the fellowship of his mother and father and sisters and brothers. This was the second case of excommunication, Adam's and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden being the first. Adam and Eve were expelled from a particular spot that represented the Lord's presence. But, then, when they were outside the garden for a while, the Lord's presence began to follow them—although in a different way. Now Cain, in leaving the fellowship of his parents and going out on his own as a vagabond, would feel the excommunication to a greater degree.

Notice that Cain put being excluded from God's "face" (that is, from His presence) *second*, not first, as it should have been. Instead Cain first mentioned being driven out from "the face of the earth." No doubt Cain had a big farm, and having to leave his "earth," his *possessions*, his home, was his first concern. He felt that loss very keenly. And then he realized a third thing: that his rejection would follow him into succeeding generations as men would begin to multiply. Cain felt this burden was too much. The statement "My punishment is greater than I can bear" brings in all three aspects of what Cain felt was his punishment: (1) being excluded from his home and property, (2) being excluded from God's favor, and (3) fear of what others would do to him (that they would "slay" him).

**Gen. 4:15** And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

God said that whoever slew Cain would receive vengeance sevenfold. And God set a "mark" on Cain so that no one would kill him. The implications were threefold: (1) Vengeance belonged to God. (2) It was good for Cain not to have his life terminated immediately but to have to feel the results of the punishment and thus, hopefully, redeem his character. (3) When God pronounced Cain's punishment, the family members were present; otherwise, they would not have known how to interpret the "mark." In their presence, God explained what He would do to Cain, and they heard Cain say, "My punishment is greater than I can bear," etc.

Whoever took (blood) vengeance on Cain would suffer sevenfold. (Later the Mosaic Law permitted a family member of the victim to slay the murderer who was not yet in a city of refuge.) Others could look at Cain with disdain but not kill him, for killing him would bring death to the slayer as well as trouble to the slayer's progeny. Incidentally, Cain probably had a wife at this time (see Gen. 4:17), so the time setting was considerably later than the expulsion from the Garden of Eden.

We will take a moment to consider how God's disfavor was on Dathan and Abiram, who murmured because they felt they had a right to the priesthood. Because of this rebellion, Moses said, "Let God make a new thing. Let the earth open her mouth and swallow them" (Num. 16:30 paraphrase). Immediately that did happen—not only to them but also to their wives, children, and possessions. The lesson is that sin is contagious. Giving support to those not in the Lord's favor incurs responsibility.

The "mark" could have been that Cain's skin turned dark. If so, however, *only Cain* as an individual would have been affected. We know the mark was not a genetic alteration that was transmitted to his offspring because later on, Ham's son Canaan was similarly cursed but through his genes. The mark could also have been leprosy (as occurred to Miriam, Moses' sister), or it could have been a literal mark on Cain's forehead. At any rate, the mark was literal and visible and something that would be easily spotted.

**Gen. 4:16** And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

A footnote in the Revised Standard Version says that Nod means "*wandering*"; that is, Cain went out into a territory where he wandered like a fugitive and a bedouin. He went out into "a land of wandering," not to a specific geographic place.

When Adam was expelled with Eve from the Garden of Eden, he went out into the unfinished earth, but he planted a garden and grew crops for his livelihood and lived there with Eve in a specific place. He could have moved from time to time over many years, but he did settle down. The settled condition or area is likened to "the presence of the LORD." Cain went out from that "presence of the LORD," or more settled area where his parents resided. His leaving (as punishment) was like being alienated from God. First, Adam was put out of the garden; now Cain was put out from a "conditional garden," as it were. Although there was a big change, God's presence did not forsake Adam and Eve, and they still had some fellowship with God, the implication being that they were obedient in worshipping the Lord and in the performance of sacrifices. In contrast, in the process of time, Cain introduced an innovation in offerings to the Lord; that is, he offered of his crops, rather than an animal as Abel did.

The Garden of Eden was eastward in Eden. When Adam and Eve were expelled, they were sent forth on the east side. Now Cain, in being forced to leave, went still farther east. The *eastward* movement was figurative of losing more and more of the Lord's favor. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had the benefit of full fellowship with God. When forced out, they had only a partial presence of the Lord. Now Cain lost the presence of the Lord. Of course, the eastward movement was literal too. Adam's leaving the Garden of Eden on the east and going east are indicative of the terrain, although he could have gone a little northeast or southeast—figuratively getting farther and farther away from the presence of the Lord.

**Gen. 4:17** And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.

The wording of verse 17 tells us that Cain already had a wife before his expulsion, but there were no children. He did not "know" his wife until he had gone out from the presence of the Lord. Therefore, Cain did not have any children until he was in the "Nod" condition. His wife would have been one of Adam's daughters. Cain, Abel, and Seth are the only sons named, but Adam "begat [other] sons and daughters" (Gen. 5:3,4). In other words, daughters were born before Seth, for Adam was 130 years old when Seth was born.

A partial lineage of Cain is given in verse 18. (The lineage through Seth appears in the next chapter of Genesis, that is, chapter 5.) The Enoch of Cain's lineage is *not* the faithful Enoch of

Jude 14, who came from the Seth line (Gen. 5:19-24).

We know that Seth was the third son of Adam and Eve because of what Eve said in regard to another seed being appointed instead of Abel (Gen. 4:25). However, daughters were born in between, and other sons were born after Seth.

**Comment:** Early in the genealogy, there was a repeat of names in Cain's and Seth's lines: Enoch, Methusael (Methuselah), and Lamech (Gen. 4:18; 5:21-25). Even the order was the same.

Cain probably had a wife before he slew Abel. One reason is that he and his wife were a duplication of the Adam and Eve picture. Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden, and Cain and his wife were expelled from the presence of the Lord. In both cases, the husband-wife relationship existed prior to the expulsion, and the birth condition existed afterwards in the imperfect or less perfect state. Moreover, it seems logical that Cain had his wife before he killed Abel because Cain was disgraced once that murder occurred. Also, he was afraid someone would kill him in turn, so who would have married him at that point?

Cain built a "city" and called it Enoch. The fact that Cain named the city after his son and not after himself indicates two things: (1) although Cain was an outcast, he wanted the memory of his posterity to be established, and (2) he wanted his posterity to have a fresh start. *Strong's Concordance* states, "A city ... in the widest sense [can even be] a mere encampment or post." This definition gives credence to the thought of a city being much smaller than our present concept. All things being equal, an encampment grows into a village, a village grows into a town, and a town grows into a city.

**Gen. 4:18** And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.

The mention of five generations shows the passage of time. Of course Enoch would have had more sons than just Irad, and he would have had daughters.

**Gen. 4:19** And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.

**Gen. 4:20** And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle.

**Gen. 4:21** And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

**Gen. 4:22** And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

Lamech, five generations after Cain, married two women, Adah and Zillah. Here is the first instance in Scripture of polygamy. In the Cain line, a moral deterioration was setting in. The deterioration was not mental, for verses 21 and 22 mention certain capabilities and skills. To be the "father" of a particular skill is to be the *inventor* of a new field of endeavor. The making of tents, musical instruments, and implements of brass and iron was initiated at this time. (This would be the seventh generation including Adam.)

Adah bare Jabal and then Jubal, who were brothers. *Jubal*, with his musical instruments, was the origin of "Jubilee." The joy of an instrument sound was developed into a ram's horn, which announced the year of Jubilee.

Life was very simple originally. Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain was a tiller of the ground. Evidently those two types of life lasted a considerable time, through several generations, with one being either a shepherd or a farmer. But now, at this later date, metal was being smelted, molded, and hammered into shape.

Zillah also had a son, Tubal-cain, and she had a daughter, Naamah. The compound name Tubal-cain signified Tubal of the Cain lineage. The name thus suggests there were also sons in Seth's lineage with the name Tubal, and "Tubal-cain" made the distinction. Tubal-cain was an "instructor," a blacksmith, who worked metals. All of these skills were developed prior to the Flood. For the account to give the names and occupations of Jubal, Jabal, and Tubal-cain in the seventh generation from Adam indicates the development of "city" life in a more comprehensive sense. "Manufacturing" had now begun: industry and the making of instruments (including musical instruments).

Eve, Adah, Zillah, and Naamah are the first four women named. Why was Naamah brought into the account by name, especially since nothing else was said about her? Naamah means "fair," "beautiful." The time was getting nearer and nearer to the end of the first dispensation. Lamech's children were the *eighth* generation starting with Adam, and Noah was only *ten* generations removed from Adam. Genesis 6:2 states that the "sons of God" (the angels) beheld the daughters of men and, seeing that they were fair, took unto themselves wives. The holy angels had been given a charge to see if they could lift up man from the quagmire of sin. Now about this time, that is, with the eighth generation, some of the angels became enamored of the human female. It is possible that Naamah was the wife of *Beelzebub*.

When the angels left their first estate and stayed here and took human wives, they had children, who grew up to become "men of renown" (Gen. 6:4). It took Noah 120 years to build the Ark, and the time setting was now only *two generations* before the Flood, so the offspring of the fallen angels had time to grow up as "men" in the earth—that is, as hybrids—flesh beings of human mothers and spirit beings. The progeny caused violence in the earth.

**Gen. 4:23** And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, 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.

**Gen. 4:24** If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

Lamech addressed his two wives as if calling them to hear and witness his statement, which was like an ode, poetry, or a couplet. Lamech wanted Adah and Zillah to hear and remember what he said about having slain a man. (The Revised Standard Version reads, "I have slain a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me.") Why did Lamech talk thus to his wives? One possibility is that he had wounded the young man because of harm threatened to his wives.

Lamech reasoned that if Cain was to be avenged sevenfold, then he, Lamech, would be avenged 77-fold if anyone killed him for his action. God had set a mark on Cain so that if someone injured Cain to take vengeance, that person would receive punishment sevenfold. Although Cain slew Abel, capital punishment was not exacted at that time upon Cain, the Lord having had His reasons for not doing so. Now Lamech had also slain a man (killed him by violence). Lamech was saying, "I have slain a man, but if the sevenfold was true in regard to Cain, it should be even *more* true with me." In other words, Lamech felt justified in his action, whereas Cain lacked justification. Since Lamech believed he had good reason for the killing, he felt the Lord would grant 77-fold protection to him. In other words, in boasting that he had less criminal intent and thus less liability, Lamech felt he would be protected and justified. (Note: The Lamech of the *Seth* line, which was *another* Lamech, was the father of Noah.)

**Gen. 4:25** And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.

**Gen. 4:26** And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.

Seth, whose name means “substitute,” “appointed,” “compensation,” was the substitute for Abel. In a modified sense, Seth’s line was uncontaminated, for Noah was “perfect in his generations” (Gen. 6:9). Even though born of fallen man, Seth’s lineage was relatively pure in contrast to the Cain lineage. However, not everyone in Seth’s lineage was all right with God, and not everyone in Cain’s line was bad. Simply stated, the names given in Seth’s lineage trace Noah’s “perfect” generation, uncontaminated with fallen-angel seed, even though some of the brothers and sisters of those mentioned were not “perfect.” Noah was the tenth generation from Adam through Seth’s line. Incidentally, the Abydos Tablet follows Cain’s lineage in the beginning.

In Abel’s stead, Seth was born to Adam and Eve. Although Cain and Abel were born very early, Seth was not born until Adam was 130 years old, and Seth was 105 when he had Enos (Gen. 5:3,6). At the time Enos was born to Seth, “*Then began men to call upon the name of the LORD*”; that is, in the *days* of Enos, men began to call upon the Lord. Enos lived 905 years, and he was born 235 years (130 + 105) after Adam (Gen. 5:11). Hence somewhere in the lifetime of Enos, up to 1,140 years (905 + 235) after Adam, men began to call upon the name of the Lord, but why?

The time factor is important. “Men” began to beseech God for help because of certain conditions that existed. (Worship did not begin at this time because Adam and Abel had worshipped many years earlier.) Therefore, certain circumstances developed or existed in earth’s society in the days of Enos, where the righteous began to look upward for help. When the fallen angels left their first estate, they began to *remain here* (Jude 6). Following Adam’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden and up to the time of the Flood, God permitted the angels to come and go as messengers to see if they could rescue man out of sin. But to leave, or keep not, “their first estate” means that disobedient angels no longer returned to heaven. In other words, they came down to this planet and *lived here*, preferring the earth because they were enamored of women. To the angels, women were something *new*. The taking of wives was a more formal type of union, but that was preceded by immoral acts on the side for a period of time.

Initially, all of the angels who came down here were holy—they were just messengers. But in time, some began to commit fornication, and this immorality took place quite some time before the evil 120-year period prior to the Flood. Although Noah did not have any children until he was 500 years old, he was born during the time that moral infractions were occurring between human females and disobedient angels (Gen. 5:32). The infractions took place here and there, and more and more, until the people no longer knew what angels to trust. Moreover, the fact that angels can change their form made it impossible to distinguish good from bad, holy from unholy, and reliable from unreliable, especially because the angels did not deteriorate mentally or “physically.” Therefore, people who were disturbed by developing conditions tried to bypass the angels, and they beseeched *God* for help. A very deceptive arrangement existed now, and the Seth line cried out for help, whereas the Cain line was more susceptible to the corruption. Those of the Seth line tried to remain separate and distinct and in the Lord’s favor, and they tried not to intermarry with the Cain line and its practices.

By Noah’s day, only he, his wife, his three sons, and their wives were uncontaminated with fallen-angel seed. Oppression and fornication were getting out of hand, and conditions were

onerous and frustrating to those trying to live in harmony with God's will. Since Enoch prophesied about the Lord's return way down in our day, we know there was still some contact between holy angels and the human family at that time (Gen. 5:22; Jude 14,15).

**Gen. 5:1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;**

**Gen. 5:2 Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.**

"Adam" can be substituted for "man": "In the day that God created *Adam*..." "This is the book [that is, *document*] of the generations of Adam." This fifth chapter is an official register of the lineage of Adam up to Noah's day.

The fact that God "called *their* name Adam" shows Adam's headship. This concept harmonizes with Genesis 2:24, "They [two] shall be[come] one flesh." And spiritually, the Bride is called by Christ's name: The *Christ*.

The clause "*Male and female* created he them" describes the first union in the Bible. Moreover, this statement refutes homosexuality.

God created Adam in *His* likeness. Eve was made from Adam's rib (and thus not in God's likeness). There is a spiritual counterpart: Adam represents Jesus, and Eve represents the Church drawn from his side, being bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh (Gen. 2:23). The consecrated are in God's likeness in the sense of having Christ's righteousness cover their imperfections. Christ himself did not need the robe of righteousness because, being a direct creation, he was perfect—holy, pure, harmless, and sinless. Genesis 5:1,2 was purposely worded because of the spiritual picture.

**Gen. 5:3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:**

**Gen. 5:4 And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters:**

**Gen. 5:5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.**

Adam lived 930 years. The Flood brought a radical change in atmospheric conditions, greatly shortening man's life span. When the canopy of water broke, the ultraviolet rays penetrated earth's atmosphere, affecting the duration of life. This is one reason that Adam's long life is accurate. Another reason is that he was created perfect, and man is much more fallen today. Also, Adam was told that in the day he sinned, he would die. That "day" was 1,000 years long, and he died within that period of time. Then, too, the diet changed after the Flood from vegetarian to meat.

**Q:** If Adam lived a long time because of perfection, why did Methuselah, several generations later, live 969 years, as opposed to Adam's 930 years?

**A:** For one thing, tradition asserts that Adam died from an accident, not from natural causes. Also, a 39-year difference is not significant with such long life spans.

Adam was made in the likeness of *God*, whereas Seth was begotten in the likeness of *Adam* (Gen. 5:1,3). In other words, whatever change came on Adam for disobedience was now inherited by his offspring.

Eve was not created in the direct likeness of God, but Adam was; that is, Adam was a *physical*, as well as a mental and moral, likeness of God. Eve was the same as Adam in every respect except that she was female, and God is a male. Eve was not inferior; she was just a female. The human race is condemned in Adam. Eve was condemned not for her original sin but because she shared the sin with Adam. God “called *their* name Adam”; hence she *shared* in his penalty for judgment (Gen. 5:2).

The ages listed for having children were not necessarily for the first child. The proof is that Seth was Adam’s third son. In those cases where the time span was shorter to the birth, the son listed was probably the first, and in other cases, the son was not. Two individuals (Mahalaleel and Enoch) are listed as having sons at age 65 and one (Cainan) had a son at 70; these were probably first sons.

**Comment:** The 930 years that Adam lived enabled him to overlap all of the offspring listed in the fifth chapter of Genesis except Noah. In other words, of the ten generations between Adam and Noah, Adam overlapped through Lamech’s early years.

**Reply:** Yes. Lamech lived 777 years and died about five years before the Flood. Hence, roughly, 1,656 years minus 5 years and minus 777 years would be 874 ( $1,656 - 5 - 777 = 874$ ). Since Adam lived 930 years, he overlapped Lamech by 56 years.

Genesis chapters 5 and 11 pertain to chronology. Patriarchs after the Flood had much shorter lives. Jacob lived to age 147; Joseph, 110; Aaron, 123 approximately. The shorter lives indicate a deterioration. Incidentally, actuarial tables show a longer life mean today than several decades ago, but the figures are misleading. Earlier in the twentieth century, many died in the two world wars, whereas today many lives are artificially prolonged by antibiotics and other medications. Also, back there infant mortality was high because of nonsterile birth techniques.

The first chronology chain link in the Bible is that Adam lived *130 years* and begat Seth. Adam also “begat [other] sons and daughters.” Notice that not one daughter is named, and only three sons are named: Cain, Abel, and Seth. Limited information was provided in order to keep the spiritual pictures that are profitable to the new creature from being obscured.

Noah was “perfect in his generations” (Gen. 6:9). The fifth chapter of Genesis shows the perfect lineage up to Noah, uncontaminated by fallen angels. Though born imperfect (of Adam), the succeeding generations (Seth through Noah) had a right spirit, obviously exercising discretion in the choosing of wives.

**Gen. 5:6** And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos:

**Gen. 5:7** And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters:

**Gen. 5:8** And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died.

Noah’s lineage is being traced. Verses 6-8 treat Seth and his begetting of Enos.

**Gen. 5:9** And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan:

**Gen. 5:10** And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters:

**Gen. 5:11** And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died.



Enos is traced to the birth of Cainan. As we follow the lineage down to Noah, with repeated statements of so-and-so “begat [other] sons and daughters,” we get the idea that the population was growing and growing.

**Q:** At what point were there written records, written documents?

**A:** This official register was started by Adam. Noah took the record on the Ark.

**Gen. 5:12** And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel:

**Gen. 5:13** And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters:

**Gen. 5:14** And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died.

Cainan is traced through the birth of Mahalaleel. Whether the sons listed were the firstborn or later born does not matter, for the important thing is that *Noah's* generation is being traced.

Some of the names in Seth's register are similar to those in Cain's lineage. Notice that in the fourth chapter of Genesis, no time periods are given for Cain's descendants. Also, Cain's lineage does not go up to the Flood but extends only to a certain point in order to name a particular woman: Naamah (Gen. 4:22). Seth's lineage is much more definite. No other history of the world contains such detail.

**Gen. 5:15** And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared:

**Gen. 5:16** And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters:

**Gen. 5:17** And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died.

Mahalaleel's life includes the birth of Jared, who was possibly a first son because he was born when Mahalaleel was 65 years old. Jared, which means “descending,” has the same meaning as Jordan. The Jordan River is called The Descender. Why was Jared so named? He was born about 460 years from Adam, and the fallen angels left their first estate at this time (Jude 6). Their materialization was one thing, and the birth of their children and the time those children reached maturity were another thing. At the time of Jared's birth, the fallen angels were lingering and *living* down here. Compare Genesis 4:26, which states that in the days of Enos—*later in his life*—“then began men to call upon the name of the LORD” because of the influence of the fallen angels. The disobedient angels were living here and *committing fornication* with female humans. (Incidentally, the interlinear Old Testament literalized reading for Genesis 4:26 is, “Then it was begun to call on the name of Jehovah,” so the King James marginal translation is wrong.)

In Jared's day, especially around 600 to 800 years after the creation of Adam, problems were arising in regard to the fallen angels. But even earlier, before 500 years had elapsed, some of the angels were beginning to disobey. Thus a deterioration started 1,000 years before the Flood, and it got worse and worse and worse.

**Gen. 5:18** And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch:

**Gen. 5:19** And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and

daughters:

**Gen. 5:20** And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died.

Jared's statistics include Enoch's birth. An important personage, Enoch is the first individual the Bible highly commends (Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5; Jude 14,15). Enoch and Noah are the two especially approved persons who lived prior to the Flood, and Enoch was the seventh generation starting with Adam.

**Gen. 5:21** And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah:

**Gen. 5:22** And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

**Gen. 5:23** And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:

**Gen. 5:24** And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

At age 65, Enoch was a relatively young man when he begat Methuselah. After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch "walked [faithfully] with God" for at least 300 years. Enoch is an exception in this chapter in another way as well. Instead of saying "and he died," the Bible states, "He was *not*; for God took him."

How did Enoch "walk" with God? When the fallen angels started to linger down here, Enoch did not just passively watch the situation but spoke out and warned others not to fraternize with the fallen angels. He was a *preacher of righteousness* just as Noah was later on. He was God-fearing and lived an obedient life. Moreover, he prophesied about the Lord coming with his saints (Jude 14,15).

To "walk" with God also means to *commune* with God. There had to be some type of rapport in order for Enoch to be able to prophesy about an event still future even now. He prophesied before the Flood about conditions way down here at the very end of this age; that is, he got *supernatural* information about a coming event. Because of the nature of the prophecy, we can conclude that information on other matters was also communicated to Enoch.

The very prophecy recorded in Jude indicates that Enoch was distressed with conditions back there and that God gave him this information as an encouragement. Enoch was thus assured that the evil would not continue forever. A time would come when the conditions would be reversed.

Some King James Versions contain an interesting marginal reference about Methuselah: "Methuselah, this is, at his death, the descending forth of waters." In other words, if we add up the chronology in this fifth chapter, we will see that Methuselah had to die *in* the Flood, *by* the Flood, or *just before* the Flood. He died, in fact, just before the Flood, for the day Noah was instructed to get into the Ark (which was only *seven days* before the Flood came) was the day Methuselah died. Hence the marginal reference indicates that an important change occurred in Methuselah's 969th year. Methuselah is the oldest person mentioned in the Bible: *969 years old*.

### Enoch

Of the patriarchs listed in this chapter, why is the expression "and he died" omitted only with Enoch? What does it mean? "Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Hebrews 11:5 explains what "he was not" means. "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." Enoch was translated so that he would not *experience*

death. “God took him”—but took him where? The account suggests that Enoch was taken to some place.

There are other instances of a translation in the Scriptures. (1) Elijah was translated. A chariot of fire came between Elisha and Elijah and separated them, and Elijah was taken up into heaven, out of sight, by a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:11). Sons of the prophets searched for his body, but they could not find it (2 Kings 2:15-17). (2) Philip was translated away from the Ethiopian eunuch to Azotus (Acts 8:39,40).

If Enoch did not die, where was he taken? Genesis 3:22,23 reads, “And the LORD God said, ... lest he [Adam] put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.” When Adam sinned, he was expelled from the garden, and guards or sentinels were stationed there. God “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.” In other words, if Adam could have retained access to the garden, he would have lived *forever*, even though he had sinned.

The death penalty was pronounced upon *Adam only*; hence only *one* Redeemer was needed. *One* Savior could die for Adam and thus redeem Adam and *all* in his loins. Jesus was unmarried, so all the life potential was still in his loins. Jesus died, the innocent Lamb of God, with a *pure* race in his loins, whereas Adam had an *impure* race in his loins. The wisdom of God can be seen. As by *one* man sin entered the world, and death has passed upon all, so the redemption comes also by *one* man, Christ Jesus (Rom. 5:12-19). The human race dies because of heredity, never having had the right to life. Only Adam had the right to life, but it was conditional upon obedience. When he disobeyed, he forfeited life, and the curse upon the human race came upon Adam.

Because the death penalty was on *Adam only*, it is technically possible for a member of the human race to live beyond the thousand years, to live indefinitely. And even though Adam sinned, if he could get back in the garden, all other things being equal, he *could live*.

There must be a reason why God chose to protect the garden, for all He had to do was to destroy the trees. The trees of life could have withered and died, and man could have stayed in the garden. Instead God *preserved* the garden by placing cherubim there. If someone could get into the garden and eat of the tree of life, he would live forever. Therefore, if Enoch was translated to the Garden of Eden, it is technically possible that he is alive to the *present day*. The Garden of Eden *still exists*. God did not destroy the garden as He destroyed Jonah’s gourd. Jonah sorrowed for that plant, so God drew a lesson: “What about Nineveh, a nation that has repented? You are more concerned about a plant than about the people” (Jonah 4:9-11 paraphrase). Jonah apparently learned the lesson and got the point of the stupidity of his placement of values because he was not condemned. And Jesus quoted Jonah’s being in the whale as a sign of his own death and resurrection.

Some quote Hebrews 11:13 and ask, “But doesn’t this text say, ‘*These all died in faith, not having received the promises*’?” Yes, but Hebrews 11:5 reads, “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.” Enoch was translated *because* “he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” In other words, prior to verse 13, Enoch is listed as an *exception*. The point is that if Enoch was translated to the Garden of Eden, his translation would be a very good reason for its preservation.

The booklet *God, Angels, & Men*, page 17, gives a reason for the preservation of Enoch, and it would be equally true of Elijah. “Enoch did not experience death at all, God having translated,

having physically transferred, him to another place where his life would be perpetuated until his reappearance at a later date in the Kingdom Age both as a sign and as a testimony of the unlimited capabilities of Jehovah's power."

Enoch and Elijah cannot be in heaven because Jesus and Peter said hundreds or thousands of years later, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven" and "David is not ascended into the heavens" (John 3:13; Acts 2:34). Elijah was taken up into *earth's atmosphere* and translated to Eden, not up into God's heaven. A proof that everyone does not have to die is that many will live through the coming trouble and on into the Kingdom, never going into the grave.

Enoch's prophecy is stated in Jude 14 and 15: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are *ungodly* among them of all their *ungodly* deeds which they have *ungodly* committed, and of all their hard speeches which *ungodly* sinners have spoken against him." What terrific information! Enoch was the "seventh [generation] from Adam." Therefore, Jude was writing about Enoch's prophesying *before the Flood*. Jude was saying, "Back there, before the Flood, Enoch prophesied of an event *still future*." Enoch was talking about the *manifestation* of Christ's *Second Advent*. As Enoch was the seventh from the *first Adam*, so the Enoch class is the *seventh* period or epoch (Laodicea) from the risen Lord, the *Second Adam*.

Enoch prophesied of Christ's coming with his Bride after the marriage. Hence Enoch prophesied about a time when the Church would be complete. He was not referring to the *secret presence* but to when the complete Church would return with Jesus to manifest judgments on the earth. "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9).

If we put ourselves back in Enoch's day in his place, we will better understand his experience. Genesis 5:22 states that Enoch walked faithfully with God for 300 years after he begat Methuselah. Now Jude tells us that during this walk with God, Enoch was given information. Moreover, he *prophesied* the information; he *declared* it (he did not keep it quiet) to the people then living. Those who were listening heard that the Lord was coming to execute *judgment and vengeance upon the ungodly, the ungodly, the ungodly, the ungodly!* Enoch was actively preaching, and then, all of a sudden, where was he?

Enoch had a wife and children. When God took him, he was absent from his family, as well as from neighbors and friends. Hebrews chapter 11 tells us that the act of Enoch's being taken was *FAITH*; that is, Enoch *agreed* to the translation. And the translation *cost him something*. Hebrews 11:5 is referring to all of these thoughts. The Bible is truly a *living Bible*—a tremendous force—if we can grasp the *fuller* meaning in the Scriptures.

After Enoch was translated, those he left behind would have thought about what he had said and done. What remained was the *memory* of his preaching. The sum and substance of that message was much like Noah's preaching. Noah preached of a coming Flood, a coming judgment. Enoch also prophesied of a coming judgment, not the Flood but that the Lord would come "with ten thousands of his saints" to execute *judgment* (Jude 14). When the Flood came, the people back there thought it was what Enoch had been talking about. The thoughts of men were evil, and evil abounded *continually*, going from bad to worse. God said to Noah: "Yet 120 years I will wait. In the meantime, build the Ark for you and your family."

To repeat: When the Flood came, the living generation thought that it was the judgment Enoch had been referring to. But Jude corrected the matter by saying, "What Enoch prophesied back there, prior to the Flood, pertained to a judgment *still future*"—and it is still future even today.

But the *first* judgment is a picture of the *second* judgment. What happened at the end of the First World, or Dispensation, is a figurative picture of what will happen at the end of the *present evil world*. Now Jesus' words take on a lot more meaning: "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man.... [The people] ... knew not until [the day] the flood came" (Matt. 24:37-39 paraphrase). Jesus meant that conditions back there in Noah's day pictured what would happen in our day. Conditions today are progressing more and more toward those of Sodom and Gomorrah. The public standard keeps deteriorating in the media, music, etc., and conditions are like those in Noah's day. Ever since the Harvest began in 1874, the deterioration has been setting in. In the beginning, the deterioration was noticeable only to those who looked for it, but now the deterioration is obvious. We have to specially seek out peace and quiet to be able to concentrate on the Lord.

**Q:** If the Flood pictures the coming Time of Trouble, who does Enoch picture?

**A:** Enoch pictures the Church being taken, that is, the invisible rapture of the feet members. Enoch "was not; for God took him" (Gen. 5:24). Jesus told us to pray that we might be accounted worthy to escape those things that will happen on the earth, for the tribulation will be such as has never been since there was a nation (Matt. 24:21; Luke 21:36). The true Church will be spared that trouble just as Enoch was taken before the Flood. Enoch was the seventh generation from the first Adam, and the rapture occurs in the seventh period from the Second Adam. From Adam to Enoch is one picture. When we go past Enoch, the scenario is of another type, which will be discussed at some other time. It is interesting that the name Enoch means "teacher." Incidentally, both Methuselah and Lamech died before the Flood.

In regard to the translations of Enoch and Elijah, if *two* individuals came forth from the Garden of Eden, there would be *two* witnesses to testify. One (Enoch) lived in the world before the Flood; the other (Elijah) lived in the world after the Flood.

Adam died 930 years from his creation. Enoch was translated 57 years after that. Then 69 years later, Noah came on the scene. These three important personages more or less followed one another.

Noah lived for 600 years before the Flood. In those 600 years, Noah knew a great deal about events that happened in the First World. When the Flood came and subsided, Noah knew where Ararat was, and also roughly where the Garden of Eden was. In fact, all (or nearly all) who lived in the First World knew the location of the Garden of Eden, for its whereabouts were common knowledge, but they did not go near it. Thus the eight individuals who survived the Flood also knew its location. As accounts of pre-Flood happenings were verbally passed on to succeeding generations, mythology developed. Mythology, a distortion of truth, is based on something that happened in the past. Here is the basis of the story of Shangri-la, which tells that anyone who could get into Shangri-la (i.e., the Garden of Eden) would be returned to his youth.

**Gen. 5:25** And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech:

**Gen. 5:26** And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters:

**Gen. 5:27** And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.

As recorded, Methuselah was the oldest living person. He died the day of the Flood but not in the Flood. He had to die *before* the Flood rather than in it because those listed in the genealogy of Noah were "righteous." Hence if any in that genealogy other than Noah, Ham, Shem, and

Japheth were alive when the Flood came, they would have been in the Ark and carried through to the next dispensation. Although all have sinned and none are truly righteous, Seth's lineage, from a practical standpoint, was more or less righteous compared to other lineages at that time. Those of Seth's line tried to live to please the Lord. (And that was also true of Adam after he ate of the forbidden fruit. From other factors, we can assume that Adam did try to make amends.)

Apparently, a *prophetic* power operated when the mothers gave birth to their sons and named them. For example, in the days of Enos, men began "to call upon the name of the LORD" (Gen. 4:26). Later Jared ("the Descender") was born (Gen. 5:15). A New Testament example is when the angel told Joseph that the name of the child to be born to Mary would be Jesus, for "he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). The names pertained either to the mother's experience in bringing forth the child or to contemporary conditions, the latter being true here in Genesis.

The name Methuselah means "violence," a description of conditions at that time. Except for Seth's lineage, a *progression* of deterioration occurred in the Adamic family. First, men began to call on the name of the Lord God. Then came the "descending," a reference to those of the holy angels who deflected evidently in the days of Jared. Now in Methuselah's day, there was violence in the earth in regard to the incursion of the disobedient angels into the human family.

**Gen. 5:28** And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son:

**Gen. 5:29** And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.

**Gen. 5:30** And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters:

**Gen. 5:31** And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died.

Lamech had a son named Noah. Noah and Enoch were the two patriarchs specially commended before the Flood. Cain, Abel, and Enoch were treated in more detail in the lineage, but other than the comment on Noah here in verse 29, the others were given similar *terse* statistics only. Lamech died just before the Flood—five years before.

Apparently, some sort of information was transmitted to the family to the effect that in connection with the birth of this particular son, Noah, something remarkable would happen. A prophecy was given: "This same [Noah] shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed." God cursed the ground in regard to Adam, saying that thorns and thistles would grow and man would labor by the sweat of his brow (as opposed to just plucking fruit in the Garden of Eden). From the condition of a relatively toil-free paradise, Adam and Eve were thrust out of the garden and now had to eke out a living in the unfinished earth. Noah would help in some way, but how?

1. When Noah grew up, he would be a light, a guide, to those who were interested in serving the Lord. He would be able to instruct them and bring them into better harmony with their Creator.

2. The name Noah means "rest," "comfort," "ameliorator"; that is, his name suggests *peace* from one standpoint. For instance, two artists were asked to paint a condition of peace. One drew a beautiful, idyllic scene like a Garden of Eden with a lake having not a ripple, etc. The other drew a tree blowing *violently* in the wind, but on a branch of that tree was a bird singing

cheerfully. The latter is the case here, for conditions surrounding the human race at that time were anything but peaceful. Hence peace with God, tranquillity of mind and spirit, is far more important than the hard experiences and disappointments we get in life. Noah pictures Christ. "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" (Matt. 11:29). The rest obtained through Noah prefigures the rest we get through Christ even in the present life.

3. From a *natural* standpoint, the human family was evidently laboring and toiling. The pronoun "us" in verse 29 refers especially to the Seth line, the "righteous" minority in the human family, who were meeting opposition (jeers and other things) in trying to hew a straight line. The prophecy had to do with toil of the hands, and what was Noah's occupation? Since he had a vineyard after the Flood, we can conclude that he had one prior to the Flood as well. Hence he was a husbandman with agricultural pursuits. The prophecy indicates that he would have *ingenious* methods for tilling the soil. Being capable (as well as humble), he probably invented certain types of plows and farm implements that made the work easier than the original primitive methods. Therefore, even from a *natural* standpoint, Noah was a help to his family in eking out a living from the cursed earth.

**Gen. 5:32** And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

"After" (see the Revised Standard and the New International Version) Noah was 500 years old, he begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Japheth was the oldest son, and Ham was the youngest (Gen. 9:24; 10:21). Therefore, since the order according to age and starting with the oldest was Japheth, Shem and Ham, the listing in verse 32 (and many other places) of Shem, Ham, and Japheth is in the order of *importance*.

Why did it take Noah so long (500 years) to have children when the list earlier in this chapter shows that some only 65 years of age had children? (1) For one thing, we do not know when Noah got married. (2) God, knowing the end from the beginning, overruled the number of years because of the pictures, or types, that would result with Noah's being the eighth on the Ark with his three sons and the four wives but no grandchildren. (3) For the 500 years, Noah was a preacher of righteousness. Evidently, he was so zealous and energetic that he did not think of marriage for many years. He was diligently trying to save others from the sinful race (2 Pet. 2:5).

The angels "sometime were disobedient," and God patiently waited (1 Pet. 3:20). He was "longsuffering," waiting for the construction of the Ark to save and carry over to the next dispensation the eight individuals deemed worthy. The disobedience of the fallen angels was that they "kept not their first estate" (Jude 6). Therefore, God cast the angels who sinned "down to hell [*tartaroo*]" (2 Pet. 2:4).

**Gen. 6:1** And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

The emphasis in this verse is on the word "*multiply*." Men prior to the Flood lived up to 969 years. Hence they had many, many children, both male and female, "sons and daughters" (Gen. 5:4,7,10,13,16,19,22,26,30). Verse 1 brings us up to the days of Noah. In the interim period from Adam's transgression until the Flood (1,656 years minus the two years until the Fall would equal 1,654 years), there was a multiplication of the human family, so that the area of civilization was now relatively filled. *Millions* were probably living at this time.

**Gen. 6:2** That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

The “sons of God” in this context were the disobedient angels, spirit beings. The first dispensation was under subjection to the angels (Heb. 2:5). God permitted the holy angels to try to uplift man, but why? (1) God was testing them and their loyalty to Him. (2) A lasting lesson would thus be given on the contagion of sin, that is, on the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its pollutant effect on others, for instead of helping man, many of the angels became mired in sin themselves. The principle is that “evil communications corrupt good manners [the angels in this case]” (1 Cor. 15:33).

When the angels saw that human females were beautiful, some of them deflected. A human (male or female) is no match for resisting an angel, materialized or not. Thus the fallen angels took whatever wives they wanted—whether or not the women were already married.

When the archangels and the angels saw the creation of *Adam*, they sang for joy. There was an anthem of praise somewhat like the song at the birth of Jesus. And when they saw a *woman*, they were almost equally astonished, for there are no females in heaven. The angels are all males. Looking down on these tiny flesh-and-blood beings, who were different from them but in the same likeness, the angels were fascinated with this new creation. While trillions of planets will eventually be inhabited, earth is the first place where human beings were created. Jesus came down *here* to die to redeem man as an everlasting object lesson not only to the human family but also to the yet-unborn generations to be created on other planets. Human beings on this planet are the *beginning* of God’s physical creation. Earth is a small, insignificant planet, but it is significant from the standpoint that Jesus came here to die (and will never die again anywhere) and that man was first created here.

The female humans, the “daughters of men,” were beautiful to the angels. If there were *spiritual* women in heaven, we know that they would be even more beautiful and glorious because an angel who appeared to man was often surrounded by an illumination that knocked the party down. The person had to be strengthened just to hear the angel’s message. Hence if there were women in heaven, they would be every bit as beautiful. The angels observed the male-female relationship, the cohabitation, and the bearing and raising of children as something new and unique. The angels were fascinated with this drama.

The disobedient angels were not just concerned for a sexual act—they *lived* here, and they liked it here. Because of women, therefore, they left their first estate. Instead of being messengers of God, trying to uplift the human race and help and instruct them, many of the angels became contaminated themselves and preferred to live down here rather than to go back to heaven. Fortunately, the holy angels outnumber the fallen ones, even though the unholy angels are numerous. “They that be with us are more than they that be with them” (2 Kings 6:16,17).

**Gen. 6:3** 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.

God was saying, “Man is *flesh*. The mixture of human and angelic seed into a hybrid race is not of my design. Because man is supposed to be *flesh only*, and the whole effort thus far of the angels not only has not lifted man up but is causing dreadful conditions and degradation, I am pronouncing a *time limit* of 120 years. At the end of that time, I will cut short the atrocious sin with divine judgment.” God was “longsuffering” in the days of Noah, but the judgment would come (1 Pet. 3:20). To state the matter another way, there would come a time when God’s spirit would no longer strive with man, and at that time, man’s days would be numbered for 120 years. God’s patience had a time limit, and He gave it a numerical value because several things had to happen.

Noah was 600 years old at the time of the Flood. Hence he was 480 years old when the 120-year time limit was pronounced—and it was *prior* to his sons being born. Noah had been



preaching righteousness all this time, while others were having numbers of children. The earth was beginning to teem with people in the pocket area involved.

To build the Ark in 120 years was a *huge* project. However, it took 20 years (from age 480 to 500) for Noah to realize he needed help. If he was unmarried, he saw his need for a wife. Certainly he was guided by providence. He knew the evil would not change, for he had preached all those years with no converts except, later, his immediate family. And he was a *powerful* preacher. That is how corrupt society was back there!

**Gen. 6:4** 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.

The “giants” were the *nephilim*. The term *nephilim* also has the thought of “strong ones” or “heroes.” The double connotation is based on the time period that was involved. Just as some of our words have changed in meaning over the years, so did the word *nephilim*. Today we define it as “fallen ones.”

“The sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them.” The children became “mighty men which were of old, men of renown.” *Nephilim* include the children as well as the fallen angels, but there was a big difference between them. The angels that materialized were *spirit* beings, whereas their hybrid offspring, as a fixed product, were more closely identified with the earth. Since the hybrid children were *physical* beings, they could not dematerialize and thus were stuck here.

As mighty men of renown, the hybrid children were superior to normal humans both physically and mentally, but not morally. The mythology of various nations goes back to a period when the heroes (and villains) were called gods, titans, and demigods. These fables are distortions of partial truths of the supernatural beings who existed before the Flood.

As recorded in Numbers 13:32,33, when the 12 spies were sent to search out the land, ten of them came back with a fearful report of *nephilim*, “men of a great stature,” “giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants”; and they advised the Israelites not to go in and possess the land. Their report proves that the word *nephilim* was still part of the people’s vocabulary in Moses’ day.

The statement “There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that” has implications even after the Flood. None of the hybrid offspring survived the Flood, but one of the wives of Noah’s sons could have carried the contamination in her genes.

The *nephilim* were not only fallen, but they were *gibborim* (big in size and strong) and heroes (originally). The mythology gods and demigods were heroes who were given names. In the Bible, named giants after the Flood were Og and Goliath (Num. 21:33,34; 1 Sam. 17:4-7). Amalek also has a suspicious history, and there were the *Rephaim* and the children of Anak (Gen. 15:20; Exod. 17:8-14; Num. 13:33). Hence the Bible contains vague references to the *nephilim* even after the Flood. Apparently, a genetic follow-through appeared after the Flood, but in God’s providence, those individuals were eliminated. At least one of Noah’s daughters-in-law would thus have had angelic contamination in her genes.

**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.

Verse 5 is no exaggeration, and it should be read with emphasis: “The *wickedness* of man was *great*, ... and *every* imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only *evil continually*.” Meantime,

while this condition existed, Noah was preaching righteousness.

Matthew 24:37-39 reads, “But as the days of Noe [Noah] were, so shall also the coming [presence] of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the [day the] flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming [presence] of the Son of man be” (compare Luke 17:26,27). The emphasis in the Gospels is on the people’s *unawareness* and also on the *suddenness* of the coming catastrophe. A *period of time* (“days”) is contrasted with the *suddenness* of the event (“the day”). The “days of Noah” alluded to are described in Genesis 6:5, when men’s thoughts were of evil continually. In the meantime, Noah was preaching righteousness and warning about a coming flood.

Imagine the circumstances when Noah was building the Ark. Until the Flood, it had never even rained upon the earth, for the earth was watered by a “mist,” or dew, that went up from the ground (Gen. 2:5,6). Therefore, when Noah preached about a coming Flood and was building a huge boat on dry land, the people really thought he had lost his senses, but Noah had *faith—he believed God implicitly*. That is a lesson for us in regard to God’s Word. Sometimes we may misunderstand a statement. For example, when Jesus said, “If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off,” he did not mean to literally sever a hand, but if other Scriptures taught the same thing, we would have to do it (Matt. 5:30). This figurative language is saying that when we do something wrong, drastic action must be taken to STOP it somehow. Drastic action includes repentance, asking for forgiveness, and reformation to make the situation right depending on whether the wrong is between the Christian and God or between the Christian and fellow man. We are to compare Scripture with Scripture. When the Scriptures agree, we are to believe them *by faith*, even if we cannot understand the mechanics or the philosophy behind a statement. As we progress in our Christian life, Scriptures we did not understand will take on meaning. *With faith*, our questions will be answered as we develop. Sometimes we need knocks and experiences to soften us up.

**Gen. 6:6** And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

**Comment:** God is not taken by surprise, for He knows the end from the beginning. Hence this verse needs some discussion. The *Berean Manual* states (paraphrased): “God changed His course of action in dealing with man because of man’s wickedness, but He did not change His mind or His overall plan.” God knew ahead of time that the angelic effort to uplift man would fail and that a flood would have to occur as a divine judgment. That is why He reserved the invisible canopy of water.

1 Samuel 15:29 reads, “The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he [God] is not a man, that he should repent [sorrow].” *Sorrow* is involved here, as some marginal references indicate, rather than “repentance.” Words in Hebrew are composed of consonants, and the translators optionally supply the vowels based on the context. The Hebrew word for “repent” is unusual in that it is translated a rather strange way, showing we do not have the full handle on it. The Hebrew *nacham* is translated “comfort” 41 times in Scripture and “repent” 38 times. Many English words are like that, for instance, “spring.” Spring is a time of year, water coming out of the ground, or a mechanical device that goes up and down; it can also mean to leap. *Naham*, another Hebrew word that is closely related to *nacham* and looks the same, has caused a problem with usage. *Naham* means to voice sorrow audibly with a sound, a moan, or a groan. It is also used in connection with lions that roar. Genesis 6:6 is saying, “It grieved God in His heart.” Hence both *outwardly and inwardly* the Lord *grieved* when He saw the wickedness that was transpiring in the earth.

Let us take a moment to philosophize on the grieving. Jesus was God’s dear Son, and Jesus

came to die on the Cross. In the midst of all his suffering, he cried, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” The Father looked down and saw His Son suffering. Jesus’ death as a ransom for all was a part of God’s plan, yet when the Father saw Jesus suffering, He was emotionally affected and He sorrowed. (The principle was the same with Jesus’ weeping over the death of Lazarus.) Hence sometimes when there is sorrow and grieving, it does not mean that the One in control wants to stop the suffering immediately or that He did not foresee it. God permitted evil for a reason. He could have stopped the situation by destroying Satan and preventing the holy angels from sinning, but He tolerated or permitted the evil because He was testing His people and the angels too. In fact, the holy angels were tested to the core. Accordingly, Jesus said that those who are accounted worthy to obtain the age beyond the Millennium and the resurrection of the dead will be like the holy angels in that they will not die anymore (Luke 20:35,36). The test on the angels was so severe that the holy angels who did not deflect will live forever. Why was the trial so severe? Because God *did not do anything* when the angels married and had offspring with human females and the human race was being oppressed. The test: Did the angels *love* God and feel that, based on other things He had done, He had the *wisdom* and the *power* to halt the situation but did not because *He had a reason*? And that is *faith*. Faith trusts God and His method as being the best, even when some things are hard to understand. We are to trust when things are seemingly to the contrary. God’s noninterference and His not stopping Satan were a severe test, but that test was absolutely necessary in order to find out the worthiness of the *holy* angels, who will nevermore deflect.

When God witnessed the evil being done, it disturbed Him, but He saw that it was *necessary*. The permission of evil and its dreadful results have been and are being photographed and reproduced as lessons for others in the future. Sin’s contaminating influence—how it changes and perverts man’s thinking—will be a lasting lesson to all future generations yet unborn on other planets. Disease, death, murder, rape, etc., occur over and over again. How both the holy angels and the wisest men on earth could not handle the situation is being permanently recorded.

God was not sorry that He had allowed evil to take place because He could have interfered with it right then and there—but He did not. The long-suffering of God waited patiently, for certain things must take place to test the mettle of man. If God will give a certain select few immortality where they will be like God, who cannot die, and have life flowing from them to give to others, Christians must be tested to the core. They will be tested like Abraham. In other words, if necessary, would they sacrifice their only son if doing so meant *obedience* to God? God will suit that type of test to everyone who gets the crown of immortality. The testing is necessary, but it is not pleasant to look at. Many injustices have been done to God’s true saints.

Back to the account here in Genesis. It grieved God outwardly with sound, as it were, as well as inwardly, in the core of His heart, to see the evil situation before the Flood.

The Christian who loves mother, father, son, daughter, etc., *more than Jesus* is not even worthy to be his disciple, his follower (Matt. 10:37). But God graciously goes easy with us because we are little babies when we come into the truth. We are fed with the milk of the Word, and as we develop, the tests get more severe. Peter said, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you,” for “hereunto were ye called” (1 Pet. 2:21; 4:12). Trials are a sign of growth and maturity. It is a *privilege* to be tried in this fashion. Hopefully, many of us will make the top grade, by God’s grace.

**Gen. 6:7** 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.

Again the word “repent” gives the wrong thought. Unfortunately, the Hebrew word (*nacham*,

*naham*) was little understood by the translators.

Man, beast, the creeping thing, and fowl of the air were to be destroyed by the Flood. The fact that fish are not mentioned is a clue that the Flood was localized and not universal. Note: "All" in the Bible does not have to literally mean all. For example, in the Book of Daniel, the beast representing the fourth empire is said to devour the "whole earth" (Dan. 7:23). The Roman Empire did not embrace all of the nations, but it occupied so much of the then-civilized world, controlling all countries around the Mediterranean Sea, that it is said to have controlled the whole earth. Another example is Revelation 13:8, which reads, "And *all* that dwell upon the earth shall worship him [the beast]," but nations outside the Roman Empire did not worship the beast. The point is that "all" is used in an accommodated sense in a number of places in the Scriptures and also here in connection with the Flood.

**Gen. 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.**

**Gen. 6:9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.**

**Gen. 6:10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.**

"These are the generations [sons] of Noah: ... Shem, Ham, and Japheth." "Noah was a just man," the implication being that he was upright, honest, etc. Although he was under the Adamic curse as a son of Adam, he served God wholeheartedly and blamelessly. Hence Noah (like Abraham and Moses) was justified by his faith. Since these individuals lived before Christ came, they were justified to friendship and to a measure of fellowship but not to sonship. (Adoption to sonship is of a higher order and available only in the Gospel Age, for Christ is the forerunner, the Head of the Church.) If the faithful ones of old had lived in this age, they would have made the Little Flock. It honors God to see there is a faith class down here going against the stream in trying to obey Him. Enoch and Noah both "walked with God" (Gen. 5:24).

Noah was "perfect [whole or complete] in his generations." The thought is that Noah was purely of Adamic stock, not contaminated. His forebears, too, were pure, and so were his sons, but that may or may not be true of the sons' wives.

**Gen. 6:11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.**

**Gen. 6:12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.**

**Gen. 6:13 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.**

Verses 11-13 emphasize the *violence* and the *corruption* in the earth, necessitating the destruction of society, the hybrid offspring, and the contaminated human family.

**Gen. 6:14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.**

**Gen. 6:15 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.**

Here is just a brief summary, but Noah was given details on how to build the Ark. The *rectangular* barge was to be 450 feet long (1 1/2 times the length of a football field), 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. The pitch made the Ark completely *waterproof*, and secondarily it caused

the outside of the Ark to be slippery, thus preventing people from climbing up into the vessel.

The word “rooms” is “cages” in the literal Hebrew, but it probably meant “cubicles.” The cubicles would have been in the side walls, and in the center were the larger animals (such as giraffes and elephants). The larger animals were penned in the lower story where they would have plenty of space and room to move about. On the sides were the three stories.

**Gen. 6:16** 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.

An 18-inch window served the purpose not only for looking out but also for providing air and ventilation. The Ark, being pitched inside and out, was like a sealed box, but all around at the top of the Ark, there was an opening with staves to hold the roof up. Basically, then, the Ark was all window at the top to allow air to come in from all directions and foul air from the animals to get out. In addition, a door was set in the side of the three-story Ark.

The only other time, or circumstance, where *tebah*, the Hebrew word for “ark,” is used is in reference to the basket Moses was placed in as a babe. There is a co-relationship. The Ark is a figure of baptism *into* Christ—not just a mere repentance from sin (1 Pet. 3:21). Many believe in Christ, but we must believe *into* him to be his followers.

Noah was given these instructions before his sons were born. If he was like the Apostle Paul and did not have a wife, he surely now realized he needed one to insure posterity and survival—just as the animals had mates, male and female.

Noah had to think where he would get wood (lumber), pitch, food for the animals, etc. As he pondered where and how he would build the Ark, he realized he needed help. He needed children, and they had to grow up. In the beginning, Noah had plenty to do just to gather the raw materials. The account also suggests that Noah was a *strong* man and that he had a body to accommodate his preaching. When he preached righteousness, he no doubt had a booming voice. Later, when people jeered him as he worked on the Ark, he would have paused briefly to reply and advise the hecklers what to do. God and the Flood were invisible.

**Gen. 6:17** And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

“I, even I” shows a *divine* judgment. *Jehovah Himself* was responsible. Since it had never rained before, Noah needed a double emphasis. “I intend to do this, even I!” God assumed the responsibility. If the Flood did not come to pass, God would be responsible. “I really intend to bring a flood of waters, so you go ahead, Noah, with my instructions.” Building the Ark was a *tremendous* project, and these words encouraged Noah. It was necessary for him to get extra assurance so that he would *zealously* build the Ark, a project that now became the dominant theme in his life, the principle being “this one thing I do” (Phil. 3:13).

**Q:** At other times, we have considered the reasoning that only the civilized, habitable part of the earth was inundated and that, therefore, the Flood was localized, not universal. What about the animals? Were they restricted to the portion of earth where man was?

**A:** The Scriptures are silent on that aspect. Certainly the animals were destroyed *within* the Flood area. Probably there was some survival *outside* the Flood area, but we do not know what animals or what quantity. And perhaps there were no animals beyond, although some types could have survived. The saving of the clean and the unclean animals is typical; it pertains to

mankind. However, Noah's family represents something else.

Geological evidence indicates that the area affected by the Flood *sank*. Then the surrounding waters of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, etc., flowed into the depression. Later, when the land rose up to its previous level (more or less), the waters returned to their prior location.

The waters in the localized Flood area covered the mountains by 15 cubits (22.5 feet) so that the Ark would not scrape or hit anything (Gen. 7:20). The area affected was *large*, bigger than the United States. Noah and the Ark did not hit the perimeter of the "crater" because of the size of the area and the nature of the storm itself. When the waters abated, Divine Providence kept the boat within the perimeter until the time came for the vessel to ground on Mount Ararat in Armenia.

Fish and insects were ignored in the pronouncement of destruction. The omission of fish is a clue that the Flood was localized, for saline fish cannot survive in freshwater and freshwater fish cannot survive in salt water. Other fish will die if the water temperature changes just a few degrees. The animals taken into the Ark were those formerly indigenous to that area.

**Gen. 6:18** 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.

"With *thee* [that is, with Noah only] will I establish my covenant [the Noachian Covenant]." Noah's wife and the sons and their wives shared in the covenant, but it was made with Noah alone. Eight people were on the Ark.

**Gen. 6:19** 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.

**Gen. 6:20** 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.

The flesh creatures brought into the Ark were fowl, cattle (beasts), and creeping things, "two of every sort," male and female. The animals came unto Noah. He did not have to go out and search for them, for God selected the animals and caused them to go to Noah (Gen. 7:9). We are reminded of the Garden of Eden, where God brought the animals before Adam, who named them (Gen. 2:19).

"Two of every sort" means that for every male, there was a female counterpart. In the next chapter, we will find out that several pairs were involved depending on whether the species was clean or unclean (Gen. 7:2).

**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.

Noah had to put food on the Ark for him and his family and for all of the animals. The stored food had to last for one year without spoilage. Here is a clue that fermentation occurred after the Flood, not before. When the water ring broke, fermentation was greatly accelerated.

Incidentally, Jesus' statement in Matthew 24:37-39, which compared the days of Noah to the days of the Son of man in regard to eating, drinking, and marrying, meant that these activities preoccupied the people's *entire* attention and that they did not listen to the message of the hour. Today we are living in a time like that.

The first 480 years of Noah's life were spent mainly in preaching righteousness, but when the

message of the Flood came, including God's intention to destroy mankind except for Noah and his family in the time limit of 120 years hence, and when dimensions were provided for the Ark, Noah had to direct his attention primarily to building the Ark. His activities from now on will become very meaningful, for many of them have a prophetic application, not just the 120 years.

**Gen. 6:22** Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

**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.

God mentions "this *generation*." Bible Students have often pondered, "How long is a generation?" Genesis 6:3, which reads, "Yet his [man's] days shall be an hundred and twenty years," seems to indicate that a generation is 120 years.

**Gen. 7:2** 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.

The term "by sevens" means there were "seven pairs" (seven males and seven females) of clean animals. "By two," then, signifies one pair (a male and a female) of unclean animals. The contrast is between "sevens" (plural) and "two" (singular).

The fact that the animals were paired indicates not necessarily that each pair was penned together but that at least they were side by side for companionship (rather than being adjacent to another species). Probably no births occurred on the Ark.

**Gen. 7:3** Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

Seven pairs of fowl were taken on the Ark so that the survival of each species would be assured.

**Gen. 7:4** 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.

The announcement "yet seven days" told Noah to get ready to load the animals into the Ark. Then would come the rain for 40 days and 40 nights. In other words, to allow time to load the animals into the Ark, God marked off seven days before the rain would start. It would have taken considerably longer if Noah had had to find the animals through his own efforts, but God caused the animals to "come unto" him (Gen. 6:20). We can be sure that the holy angels were guiding the animals and bringing them to Noah in harmony with God's instruction.

Spiritual reasoning: The Gospel Age is symbolized as comprising seven epochs before the Time of Trouble begins. There is a picture within a picture. The 120 years are a *literal* time period; the seven days are a *symbolic* time period. Both time periods end simultaneously with the commencement of the "flood."

**Gen. 7:5** And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.

**Gen. 7:6** And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

Noah was 600 years old when the Flood came.

**Gen. 7:7** 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.

Although verses 7-9 repeat the account of loading the animals and entering the Ark, they provide a little additional detail. Verse 7 is not a conflict. Noah and his family entered the Ark because of the Flood waters *about to occur*, but the Flood did not start until after the animals were all loaded.

**Gen. 7:8** Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth,

The expression “every thing that creepeth” refers to snakes, lizards, etc.

**Gen. 7:9** There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.

Verse 9 stresses the prominence of Noah. The animals came in pairs to *Noah* and then went into their assigned places in the Ark. As the animals arrived, Noah knew where each one would be housed and then probably gave the directive to his sons to put each animal on a specific floor and in a specific “nest,” or compartment.

What a delight for Noah to see the male and female pairs of perfect animals come up to him! It is likely that God spoke to Noah verbally, audibly.

**Gen. 7:10** And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.

**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.

Verse 11 is very specific regarding Noah's age when the Flood began: 600 years, 2 months, 17 days. This verse and Genesis 8:13 show that the Ark experience was exactly *one* solar year (this statement will be explained later).

“All the fountains of the great deep [were] broken up, and the windows of heaven [King James margin: ‘floodgates’] were opened.” The thought is that something was happening on the *surface* of the earth as well as the rain coming down from above. The term “fountains of the great deep” pertains to waters down here, from *beneath*, whereas the expression “windows of heaven” refers to waters from above. The earth was starting to *sink—gradually*. As the land sank, the waters of the Mediterranean, the Caspian, and the Black seas, plus the Persian Gulf waters, began to run through valleys. Rivers flooded *tremendously*. The sinking was gradual, for if it had occurred too quickly, certain damage, destructive to God's purpose, would have happened to the land. Then, when the land rose *slowly after* the Flood, the mountains more or less retained their former state, and the topography of the land was not seriously altered. In the meantime, a heavy downpour of rain came from above.

The people would have been shocked to see the rain start and then the rivers overflow their banks and radical changes occur. They would have forsaken all usual pursuits and *run in panic* to the highest elevation they could find. The animals, too, would have been in confusion and pandemonium.

The veil, or canopy, was like a bubble around the earth. When the canopy broke at the poles, water cascaded down in the Mesopotamian area, and telluric snow and ice fell at the poles.



However, God prearranged that the force of the water would not directly hit the Ark, lest the Ark be broken. The water coming in from other areas was in addition to the seas emptying in and the rain coming down. Hence there were *three* sources of water: (1) the breaking veil, (2) the rain, and (3) the sinking of the land, which allowed seawaters to come in. The Flood was a *multiple* experience.

The term “windows of heaven” is very descriptive, for we can just picture the water gushing out. Malachi 3:10 reads, “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the *windows of heaven*, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Here in Genesis, the same phraseology shows that the result was an *overwhelming blessing* whether or not we realize it.

**Gen. 7:12** And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

When we consider verses 4 and 12 together, the seven days are not to be included in calculating the number of days that the Flood prevailed. The 40 days and nights were the beginning of the Flood.

**Gen. 7:13** 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;

Again we have a duplication. The two witnesses not only emphasize the importance but also aid our dullness of understanding. Repetition etches the facts into our memories. The two witnesses would have to appear in Genesis, for surely details of the Flood would not occur in any other book of the Bible.

Verse 13 assures us that each of Noah’s sons had a wife, making a total of eight people in the Ark. The number is confirmed in 1 Peter 3:20, “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 Flood began on the 17th day and ended a “year” later on the 27th day (Gen. 8:14). One synodic year (354+ days) plus 10+ days equals 365.25 days, or *one solar year*. If a solar year (according to Noah’s age) were meant, the Flood would have lasted 375+ days. A lunar year of twelve 30-day months would not fit either. Therefore, a year in Noah’s day was based on the synodic calendar, in which *every new moon* started a new month (and not just every 30-day cycle). A 30-day month is an artificial month because a new moon does not occur every 30 days. The lunar year was in between the synodic year and the solar year; in other words, it was a compromise. But as time went on, the calendar was changed to solar years of 365 days. Up to Julius Caesar’s day, the lunar calendar of 360 days was used, but then the Julian calendar of 365-day years was made official. The refinement of the Gregorian calendar came later. Other calendars begin in either the spring or the fall, but Julius Caesar chose a middle date: January 1. The Romans, who were ingenious in many ways, liked to average things out and were methodical and mathematical.

At the time of the Flood, the year began in the fall. Subsequently, in Moses’ day, the beginning of the year was changed to the spring, Nisan being the first month.

**Gen. 7:14** 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.

**Gen. 7:15** And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life.

**Gen. 7:16** And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in.

In verses 14-16, the primacy is again given to Noah. Eight people were on the Ark, but God commanded *Noah*, the animals went to *Noah*, and God shut *Noah* in the Ark. That is why the covenant is called the *Noachian* Covenant.

If we return to verse 4, the seven days that occurred *before* God brought the Flood are a reminder of the Gospel Age Church, which is being selected *before* the four winds are let loose. Pressure is there, like floodgates, or sluice gates, just waiting to happen. *Pressure* builds behind the dam; when the gates are opened, out gushes the water. Similarly, water pressure built up behind the “window” in heaven before the Flood. When the window was opened, water poured forth. It is interesting that the window was clear and transparent. Hence when the people looked up, they did not see the water, and they scoffed at Noah, saying, “All things continue as they were from the beginning.” The public was accustomed to a certain type of light and saw no change—until the water broke. Therefore, the windows emphasize (1) transparency and (2) a sluice gate. The four winds yet future are also transparent. They exist, but the world is unaware of them. The Flood is a symbolic picture of the end of the age. As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man. The people were unaware until *the day* the Flood came *suddenly*.

*God* shut the door. *God* shut Noah in the Ark. After all the work Noah did and the faith he exercised, *God* sealed the eight people in the Ark. From inside the Ark, Noah and his family watched as the door miraculously closed, being locked and bolted, as it were. Noah was brilliant, but he probably had not thought about how to close the “door,” which was a *ramp* hinged from beneath. The ramp had to be heavy and strong enough to support animal traffic for a week. The symbolic meaning is that *God* will close the door to the high calling.

**Q:** Was the ramp above the waterline so that, when closed, there would be no leakage?

**A:** No. Since the water prevailed 15 cubits above the highest mountains, the buoyancy level would have been about 15 cubits. If the ramp were that high up, it would have hinged at the roof. (The Ark was 30 cubits high.) Therefore, the ramp probably hinged shut just below the window(s). Perhaps the ramp was pitched from the inside to make it waterproof. Or earlier Noah could have closed the ramp from the outside, waterproofed it with pitch, and then opened the ramp again to load the animals.

**Gen. 7:17** And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.

**Gen. 7:18** And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

**Gen. 7:19** And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.

**Gen. 7:20** Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

All of the mountains in the Flood area sank down and were covered with *at least* 15 cubits of water; that is, there had to be a 15-cubit clearance for the boat to go over the highest mountain.

**Gen. 7:21** 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:

**Gen. 7:22** All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.

**Gen. 7:23** 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.

In verse 23, the emphasis is again on Noah. “Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.” Noah’s receiving the primacy so often in this chapter comports well with his picturing Christ. The Church and the obedient of mankind are saved *only* because of him.

**Q:** Was there any spiritual significance to the animals?

**A:** Noah represents Christ, and the sons represent the Church. The unnamed wives picture the Sarah Covenant, under which the Church is developed. The Apostle Peter relates the Ark to baptism *into* Christ (1 Pet. 3:20,21). “We must all [the Church now and the world in the next age] appear before the judgment seat of Christ” (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10). The animals picture mankind, that is, the clean and the unclean of the world. Their judgment is yet future. They will be saved while in the Ark in the Millennium and judged at the end (if not cut off sooner).

It is not incongruous for the *three* wives to represent the Sarah Covenant (singular), for the Book of Revelation calls the Holy Spirit “the *seven* Spirits” (1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6). The closing of the door of the Ark represents the closing of the door to the high calling at the end of the Gospel Age. In Ezekiel’s Temple, the east gate will be shut to also show the closing of the door to the high calling.

Seven pairs of clean animals were put in the Ark because God knew Noah would offer sacrifices in thanksgiving and because man was allowed to eat meat once the Flood ended (Gen. 8:20). Noah offered of every clean beast and fowl. Also, four families were on the Ark (four pairs), and after the Flood, Noah distributed the clean animals among the four families, so that each son and his wife got a pair—and Noah and his wife also. Hence more of the clean animals were needed. Some of the unclean animals were mated and kept as a common heritage of all. This arrangement suggests that when the four families exited the Ark, they stayed together for a while before dispersing to different parts of the earth. They lived in a communal arrangement. After the unclean animals needed for work had multiplied sufficiently, they, too, were distributed. Other unclean animals were let loose to multiply on their own (for example, the lion and the elephant).

**Gen. 7:24** And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

The waters prevailed for 150 days and then began to recede. The waters rose to a certain height for 40 days and remained there for an overall period of 150 days. (In other words, the 40 days and nights of rain were included in the 150-day time period.) Then the waters began to subside for another 150 days.

The following excerpt from *Peloubet’s Dictionary* states that the Flood was not universal:

“Whether the flood was universal or partial has given rise to much controversy. The language of the book of Genesis does not compel us to suppose that the whole surface of the globe was actually covered with water. It is natural to suppose that the writer, when he speaks of ‘all flesh,’ ‘all in whose nostrils was the breath of life,’ refers only to his own locality. This sort of language is common enough in the Bible when only a small part of the globe is intended. Thus, for instance, it is said that ‘*all countries* came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn’ and that ‘a decree

went out from Caesar Augustus that *all the world* should be taxed.’ The language must be understood in the sense it would bear to the authors. The world as then known was very small—travel was much circumscribed. The eye witnesses who handed down the story saw no part omitted, they met no survivors. The truth of the Bible would not be shaken were the flood to be limited to a comparatively small area in Asia. There are traditions held by people all over the globe which have preserved the memory of a great and destructive flood, from which but a small part of mankind escaped. They seem to point back to a common centre, whence they were carried by the different families of man as they wandered east and west, but may be explained otherwise. The traditions which come nearest to the biblical account are those of the nations of western Asia. Foremost among these is the Chaldean. Other notices of a flood may be found in the Phoenician mythology. There is a medal or coin of Apamea in Phrygia, struck as late as the time of Septimius Severus, in which the Phrygian deluge is commemorated. This medal represents a kind of square vessel floating in the water. Through an opening in it are seen two persons, a man and a woman. Upon the top of this chest or ark is perched a bird, whilst another flies toward it carrying a branch between its feet. Before the vessel are represented the same pair as having just quitted it and got upon the dry land. Singularly enough, too, on some specimens of this medal the [Greek] letters ... [for NOE] have been found on the vessel.... Tayler Lewis deduces ‘the partial extent of the flood from the very face of the Hebrew text.’ ‘Earth,’ where it speaks of ‘all the earth,’ often is, and here should be, translated ‘land,’ the home of the race, from which there appears to have been little inclination to wander. Even after the flood God had to *compel* them to disperse. ‘Under the whole heavens’ simply includes the horizon reaching around ‘all the land’—the visible horizon. We still use the words in the same sense, and so does the Bible. Nearly all commentators now agree on the partial extent of the deluge. And very many of them suppose it to have taken place in that part of Asia which includes the modern Mount Ararat.”

**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 assuaged;

**Gen. 8:2** The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained;

*Four things happened:* (1) a wind began to blow over the earth; (2) the fountains of the deep were stopped because the land that had gradually sunk now began to gradually rise; (3) the windows of heaven were stopped because the water that had cascaded down at the poles when the canopy broke, flowing into the Flood area, ceased to do so; and (4) the rainfall ceased. At the 150-day demarcation, or midpoint, of a 300-day period, the waters began to recede from off the earth continually. The first 150-day period is mentioned in Genesis 7:24, and the second 150-day period is stated in Genesis 8:3.

Put succinctly, the four occurrences were (1) a wind blew, (2) the land began to rise, (3) waters stopped flooding in from the broken canopy, and (4) the rain ceased. From the 150-day midpoint on, the continent began to rise. In other words, a reversal took place. The land gradually rose, pushing water back to the seas. The water had prevailed or dominated for 150 days, but now the water was being pushed back into the seabed that had been drained dry. Stated another way, the seabeds sank for 150 days, and the seabeds rose for 150 days.

The term “windows of heaven” refers to the holes in the canopy at the poles through which the water poured. Hence the rain was one event, and the water rushing through the veil was a separate occurrence.

**Gen. 8:3** And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

The word “returned” means “receded” (see the Revised Standard Version and the Hebrew). It took 150 days for the waters to abate; that is, the waters receded and receded and receded, and after 150 days, they were pushed back into the seabeds from which they originally came. But there was *still quite a residue* of water in the Flood area.

**Gen. 8:4** And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

The Ark rested on the mountains (plural) of Ararat (on the 17th day of the seventh month). “Mountains” refer to Greater and Lesser Ararat, which comprise one system. After floating for many days, Noah and family would have sensed a type of stability now and hence knew that the Ark had grounded. But being on the mountaintop, they were not able to see anything except water at this point. (The mountaintops were not seen until the tenth month.)

The first 150 days, a broad period of time that included the 40 days and 40 nights of rain, extended from the 17th day of the second month (when the Flood started) to the 17th day of the seventh month (when the Ark rested atop Mount Ararat) (Gen. 7:11,12; 8:4). We know that the days recorded in Genesis chapters 7 and 8 in regard to the Flood are important because God took the time to spell them out in detail and with specificity. The 354+ days in a synodic year, plus the 10+ days, add up to a solar year of 365+ days.

A region, a town, and a mountain are all called Ararat. Ararat was once considered a “holy land,” that is, when there were no such places as Jerusalem and Mount Sinai. Until the Israelites exited Egypt, Mount Ararat was venerated as the place to worship Jehovah.

**Gen. 8:5** 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.

Verse 5 suggests that the waters began to recede on the 17th day of the seventh month, when the Ark rested on Ararat (verse 4). Verse 3 covers the entire second 150-day period of the abating waters. Verses 4 and 5 cover the second 150-day period plus an extra 2 1/2 months, at which time the mountaintops were seen.

The tops of the mountains that Noah and his family saw were probably the Caucasus Mountains, which are north of and as high as Ararat. The Ark rested on Greater Ararat, and from there, 2 1/2 months later, Noah and his family could see the Caucasus Mountains. (Their visibility was blocked by the Ark so that they could not see immediately up or down; that is, they could not see Ararat itself.) When Noah saw only the tops of the mountains, he knew that he and his family could not leave the Ark yet. Moreover, Noah waited until *God* told him he could leave the Ark (Gen. 8:15,16). How remarkable, for after all those months, they would have been anxious to leave the Ark! It was a lot of work to feed and clean up after the animals. Yet even after they were convinced that the face of the earth was dry, Noah waited (Gen. 8:13). The delay was smart, for both humans and animals would have sunk in the mud. God told Noah to leave the Ark when the topsoil was sufficiently firm for safe disembarking.

To exit the Ark, Noah removed the top, or roof, which would have been composed of big structural beams (Gen. 8:13). Of course the wood from the roof was helpful to Noah and family in a number of ways. Therefore, a fair section of the roof was probably removed.

The window was only one cubit (18 inches) high, so the view was limited, and because of its size, Noah could not squeeze out or even look down the side of the Ark. Both the thickness of the Ark and the height of the window limited Noah and his family so that they could only look *outward* and then downward; that is, they could only look out at a certain limited angle.

Noah and family left the Ark through the roof, but a makeshift ramp arrangement was probably built for the animals to exit the Ark. Part of the sturdy, rigid roof could have served as a ramp. Or Noah may have opened the door from the outside for the animals.

The window went all the way around the Ark under the roof but was probably supported by dowels up against the roof. In other words, the “window” was actually open air all the way around, and the roof was supported by just enough dowels to secure it. There was no glass—just openness.

**Gen. 8:6** And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:

Noah removed that part of the Ark by cutting back the roof dowels. Or possibly a hatch or covering of some kind that had kept out the rain was lifted up. Let us consider the matter.

At the end of 40 days, “Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made.” Compare Genesis 6:16. (1) “A window shalt thou make to the ark,” and (2) “in a cubit shalt thou finish it above.” The account is telling that there were *two* types of windows: (1) One was the *open* air space that circuited the entire Ark for a space of one cubit, or 18 inches, all the way around. This air was needed because of the carbon dioxide given off by the animals and the humans. Ventilation was necessary to supply oxygen. Hence the 18-inch window could not have been closed-off glass or any other material. (2) The fact that Noah opened a window means there was an additional contrivance that could be opened—like a trapdoor of some kind—so that he could get a greater visual perspective of his surroundings. We do not know if this window was in the roof covering or on a side, but it was probably more like a transom type of window.

The earlier study of Genesis 8:1-5 could not be reconciled in the open-discussion type of study we had because we were comparing *solar* days with synodic months and a year. There were two 150-day periods. The Flood began on the 17th day of the second month, and the Ark rested on the mountains of Ararat on the 17th day of the seventh month. Therefore, from a solar standpoint, which we cannot normally figure, it would seem that 5 x 30 (a lunar month) would be 150 days. When the Ark rested on the top of the mountains of Ararat on the 17th day of the seventh month, the waterline on the Ark would have been at least 15 cubits; that is, the mountain would have been at least 15 cubits beneath the surface (compare Genesis 7:20).

After the next or second 150 days, it was about a week before the 601st year, first month, first day (Gen. 8:13), which is one of the fixed periods. The fixed periods were (1) when the Flood began, (2) when the Ark rested on Ararat, (3) when the tops of the mountains were seen (Gen. 8:5), and (4) when the face of the earth was dried (Gen. 8:13) in the 601st year, first month, first day.

But five months from the time the Ark rested on Ararat (the expiration of the second 150 days) was near the end of October, close to the first day of the first month—only about one week before. It was a little more than 300 days from the day the Flood began until the 601st year, first month, first day. Stated another way, two 150-day periods equal 300 days. Two 40-day periods equal 80 days. And there were two or three 7-day periods. All of these occurred *prior* to the 601st year, first month, first day. In other words, all of the days are *literal, accurate, solar* days, but the dates, which are *fixed points of time*, are *synodic*, a different measuring rod.

When Noah opened the window here in verse 6, he of course looked out. He had seen the mountaintops earlier (on the first day of the tenth month), and the Ark had rested on Ararat even earlier (on the 17th day of the seventh month). Now, after a 40-day period, Noah opened the window and sent forth a raven (Gen. 8:7).

**Gen. 8:7** And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

**Gen. 8:8** Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground;

**Gen. 8:9** 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.

Why did Noah send forth a raven first and then a dove? Does the expression “to and fro” mean that the raven went from mountaintop to mountaintop, resting as needed, or does it mean that the raven went back and forth to and from the Ark to the mountaintops?

The dove was a *homing* pigeon. Homing pigeons can go out all day, but when it is time to sleep, they return by instinct to the roost. So the dove definitely came back to the Ark at day’s end. That is why a dove can be taken hundreds of miles away and a message tied to its feet, and it will return home with the message.

It seems likely that the raven went to and fro between the mountaintops. When the raven did not return, Noah was satisfied that ground was out there, not just mountaintops. Then Noah sent out the dove, knowing it would come back. The first time the dove came back empty-handed; the second time it returned with an olive leaf; the third time it did not return at all.

Why did the raven find rest but not the dove for the sole of her foot? Since the Caucasus Mountains were quite far away, the dove, which is a gentler bird, probably did not have the stamina to get there. The Caucasus range to the north in Russia is higher than even Mount Ararat, let alone Lesser Ararat and other peaks there.

The fact that Noah sent forth a dove “to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground” seems to support the possibility that the window he had made was in the center of the roof. A window in this location would prohibit him from seeing over the edge of the Ark, and therefore, he could not tell if the face of the ground was dry. After all, if he could see, why would he have to send out a dove? Noah was at a very high elevation with surrounding mountains being lower. The only higher mountains were the Caucasians, which were a long way off. Hence Noah could not see if the water had dried completely off the earth, and he sent out the birds. When the dove returned with the olive twig, Noah had some assurance.

**Q:** In the Egyptian religion, was the ibis a takeoff on the dove and the horus a takeoff on the raven?

**A:** That could be.

When the Flood occurred, the demons dematerialized but found that they were imprisoned, incarcerated, in *tartaroo*. From there, they saw all the details of the Flood. Hence other accounts of a flood (Babylonian, e.g.) can be part truth mixed with error. The only fully reliable account is the Hebrew one. Satan and the fallen angels have influenced the religions of the various Gentile nations, using a *little* truth with their slant on error.

Therefore, in observing the false religion of Egypt, we do see certain things. For example, the Ka is the symbol of the soul in the departed life. When a person dies and then is resurrected to the spirit plane, there is a change. We sow not only the body we will obtain, but we sow bare grain. Everybody’s life is being recorded in a “bank” so that at the time of resurrection, each can be called back as an individual with his own peculiar identity and a similar body. This truth

is shown in the Egyptian religion. The doubling or duplication will occur, for the same identity will be put in a new body. *Perfect* “dubs” have been made for use in regenerating the human race.

“The waters were on the face of the *whole earth*” in the area where the Flood was. Luke 2:1 uses the phrase “all the world” to mean *part of the world*. In the beginning of Young’s *Analytical Concordance*, page xi, #29, reads: “The *whole* is frequently put forth for a *part*, e.g.—The ‘world’ for the Roman Empire or Palestine.” Also see #54.

**Gen. 8:10** And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;

**Gen. 8:11** 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.

The dove represents peace and the Holy Spirit. The “olive leaf [was] plucked off”; that is, there was a snapping off of an olive twig. The twig represents Christ. (The Hebrew says “leaf,” but to be “plucked off” implies part of the stem or twig too.) Jesus is the stem out of Jesse, and “Nazarene” means branch (Isa. 11:1). It is significant that the peace aspect was seen on the dove’s *second* return.

**Q:** Would the fact that the dove brought back an olive leaf indicate this was the spring of the year? Wouldn’t the Flood have swept away vegetation so that new growth would have to sprout?

**A:** If the continents sank, some areas were just submerged, and the trees and the grasses would have survived.

**Q:** Wouldn’t the leaves and grasses have rotted during the 150 days that the waters prevailed? Even things put in water in the refrigerator start to putrefy in a few days.

**A:** The trees would not rot. The leaves sprout as soon as sunlight and air reach them; they revitalize.

The order of sending forth the birds is as follows: (1) the raven did not return, (2) the dove returned, (3) the dove returned with an olive leaf and twig, and (4) the dove did not return (Gen. 8:12). The raven pictures the prevalence of sin, chiefly Satan. The sending forth of the dove the first time represents Jesus’ First Advent. The sending forth of the dove the second time and its return with the olive branch pictures Jesus’ Second Advent, when the Kingdom will be set up and the message of peace and hope will go out to the world.

As birds of prey, ravens were considered unclean under the Law (Lev. 11:15). The raven shows that Satan seemed to have a free hand until Christ came. Jesus’ coming at the First Advent—his leaving the holy courts of heaven to come to sinful earth—must have been a startling experience for the angels to observe. And it would have been traumatic for the angels, who did not have knowledge or understanding, to see Jesus being put to death. His life would have seemed to be a waste—until his resurrection. Both the holy and the fallen angels observed.

**Comment:** When the dove was sent out the third time, it did not return. The activity of the dove seems to picture Jesus’ turning the Kingdom over to the Father at the end of the Millennium, and the Father will then be all in all. The world will no longer need a Mediator at that time, so Jesus will assume another role *elsewhere* in the universe.

**Q:** When did the 601st year begin?



**A:** It started in the fall, around October, which was the beginning of each year, until the Passover was instituted. At that point, the year began in April. The Flood started in the second month (in November).

**Q:** With the different climate before the Flood, would the seasonal cycles have been the same?

**A:** There was a hothouse condition until the veil broke. Germination was quite different in the pre-Flood conditions. For example, the same crops were harvested two or three times each year.

**Q:** Would the timberline have been a factor on the mountains?

**A:** When the Flood subsided, no snow or ice was present. Snow, ice, and glaciers are the result of an accumulation. Noah's descent on Mount Ararat was a different circumstance than going down the mountain now. At high altitudes, the snow and ice accumulated over the centuries. Each year some of the ice and snow melt, but not all; then more is deposited each winter. The snow and ice recede because of the heat in the summer and then build up even more each winter. Glaciers resist the heat, so water flows result underneath, causing the glaciers to move or slide. A glacier is very thick, but in time, it begins to work its way down.

Trees germinated at a certain level under the hothouse pre-Flood conditions, but after the Flood, as time passed, the trees did not prosper as much at the same altitude because of gradually changing conditions. Crops were planted at lower and lower levels to the point where we see them today.

**Q:** Of course summer, winter, cold, and heat, as mentioned in Genesis 8:22, would be a different condition from what existed prior to the Flood, but if Noah and family disembarked the Ark in November, would that first winter have been "normal" with snow and ice, or at least with the first snowfall? The question is being asked because the canopy had broken.

**A:** It was probably not a normal winter because trade winds were involved. A whole new system was developing, which may have taken a couple of years. Even the incident when Noah got drunk from the wine occurred quite some time later. Thermal ocean currents, the jet air stream, etc., all had to gradually develop into a condition where they can now even be charted. In time, snow and ice accumulated, and the very accumulation created new conditions.

**Gen. 8:12** And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.

The dove was sent forth three times with the following results: (1) The dove returned empty-handed. (2) The dove returned with an olive leaf. (3) The dove did not return. "Noah knew that the waters were abated [vanished] from off the earth" when the dove brought back an olive leaf. However, the ground was still muddy and unstable, so Noah waited in the Ark lest the animals and humans sink into mud. In fact, he waited almost 57 more days for the ground to get firm enough for them to leave the Ark safely.

**Gen. 8:13** 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.

In the 601st year, the first month, the first day, the *surface* of the earth was dry, and Noah removed the "covering" (roof) of the Ark. "The waters were dried up from off [the *face* of] the earth: ... the *face* of the ground was dry." The *surface* was dry but not the ground itself. One and

a half months later (verse 14) the *ground* was dry, and God said to leave the Ark. These *two* ending periods are significant.

The Ark would not have been on the peak of Ararat, for if it had been, the animals could not have walked down to lower altitude. The Ark lodged at one end where the mountain slopes downward. Over the years, excessively warm summers resulted in glacial movement, which caused the Ark to move down in one direction until it got to a still lower level. At present, the Ark is located at the end of the ice level where, in unusual years, it has been seen and even entered. Just before the Russian Revolution, 50 Russian soldiers made a geodetic scientific survey. They were on Ararat for quite some time, and they found the Ark. An English paper wrote up the account, but when the soldiers returned to Russia, the Revolution occurred, preventing the 50 men from being found and/or interviewed. Nouri saw the Ark but could not descend to it because of the ice and not having crampons. He wanted wealthy men to finance a trip to Ararat for the sacrilegious purpose of disassembling the Ark so that the pieces could be brought to Chicago and reassembled for the World's Fair. With both sightings, there were *multiple* witnesses.

Verse 7 states that Noah sent forth a raven, which went to and fro until the waters were dried up from off the earth. But when were the waters "dried up from off the earth"? Verse 13 says it was the 601st year, first month, first day. The face, or *surface*, of the earth was dry at this point but not the ground itself. It is hard to sort out the sequence of some of these days.

The account backtracks, goes forward, repeats, goes ahead, goes back, etc. If the Flood is a type from the standpoint of the days that are enumerated, they would all have to harmonize and be significant. The dates might pertain to important happenings in the Time of Trouble. Perhaps, for example, when the Time of Trouble is occurring, there will be a glimmer of hope, as shown by the olive leaf. However, if one date has a special application, so do the other dates. Thus the year of the Flood could have a literal antitype, but the events are another matter—they have to be spiritually interpreted. Solar days are mixed in with a lunar arrangement in the books of both Genesis and Revelation.

**Gen. 8:14** And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

One month and 26 days later the ground was sufficiently dry for Noah, his family, and the animals to leave the Ark and not sink into a quagmire. But, nevertheless, Noah waited until God gave the OK (verses 15-17).

**Gen. 8:15** And God spake unto Noah, saying,

**Gen. 8:16** Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

Noah had waited almost *two months* before getting God's commandment to leave the Ark. Now God said, "Go forth." Notice the order *He* specified: Noah, his wife, his sons, and his sons' wives. Verse 18 gives the order in which they *actually* left the Ark, as recorded by *Noah*: Noah, his sons, Noah's wife, and his sons' wives. The natural deference among themselves was not the order God had announced. The same order according to natural deference had been followed in entering the Ark: Noah, his sons, Noah's wife, the sons' wives (Gen. 7:7). In regard to *God's* order, it could be that each husband entered *with* his own wife; that is, they entered in pairs, two and two, for the twain were one flesh (Gen. 2:24).

The Logos probably spoke for Jehovah in this instance. At any rate, Noah would have heard an audible voice, perhaps just in the inner ear or perhaps an outward voice. We do not know if

others heard this voice, but it was probably heard externally. Incidentally, Noah wrote down his experiences during the Flood and afterward.

**Gen. 8:17** 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.

**Gen. 8:18** And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

**Gen. 8:19** Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

**Gen. 8:20** 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.

God said that the birds, the animals, and the creeping things would “breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.” Hence God indicated there would be a prosperity in their reproduction. And Noah *believed* this statement, for when he subsequently built an altar and sacrificed unto the Lord, he sacrificed “of every clean beast [animal], and of every clean fowl.” Noah had sufficient *faith* to go ahead and sacrifice of these precious few animals and birds, *knowing* the rest would multiply. God had provided for the sacrifices in advance by having Noah take *seven* pairs of each clean beast and bird (and only *one* pair of the unclean).

Imagine Noah and his family coming out of the Ark with the birds and the different kinds of animals of all shapes and sizes *one full year later!*

**Comment:** Some friends who own a large dairy farm in Maine said how joyous the cows are, after being cooped up in the barn all winter, to be let out into the barnyard that first spring day. Imagine, after one *whole* year, how these animals would have acted in leaving the Ark. All kinds of sounds would have been heard: brayings, honkings, neighings, mooings, etc. What a lot of excitement!

**Reply:** Yes, leaving the Ark was like resurrection into a new world—like coming into heaven—after being boxed in for so long.

Noah built an altar unto God, who had not yet specified any order for the sacrifices. The sacrifices were probably burnt offerings, and they may have been offered in pairs, male and female. Otherwise, since all of the birds and the animals were in pairs, to offer only the male or only the female would have left an oddball survivor.

Noah knew which animals and birds were clean and which were unclean because he was told to take seven pairs of the clean into the Ark but only one pair of the unclean. To offer the unclean would have made an extinct species. Deuteronomy 14:4-6 lists the clean animals: “These are the beasts which ye shall eat: the ox, the sheep, and the goat, The hart, and the roebuck, and the fallow deer, and the wild goat, and the pygarg, and the wild ox, and the chamois. And every beast that parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, and cheweth the cud among the beasts, that ye shall eat.” When the clean birds were added, Noah’s sacrifice was very impressive and *time-consuming*. The animals and birds were probably all offered in one day.

**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.

God “smelled a sweet savour.” In other words, the sacrifice was pleasing to Him, and He said in His heart that He would “not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth.” God promised to never again smite every living thing. The curse on the ground from Adam’s day was not removed, but there would not be an *additional* curse to destroy *all flesh* as in Noah’s day. The thorns and briars remained, however.

Notice that God has a nose and a heart (plus eyes, ears, etc., according to other Scriptures). Man was created to resemble God in miniature—mentally, morally, and physically (instead of ethereally or spiritually).

God will never again curse the ground in any sense to bring about such a *proportionate* loss of life as occurred in the Flood. Millions will live through the Time of Trouble despite the great loss of life. “Neither will I again smite any more every thing living.” This promise proves God will not destroy the entire earth in the Time of Trouble or all flesh on it.

Even though the Flood “cleansed” the earth, there was still sin in Noah and his family, for none are righteous. The Adamic curse is on all. Noah was not being criticized, but the curse of death was on the genes. Theoretically, if the genetic makeup were properly arranged, man would not die. Scientists are searching for the elixir of life through genetic engineering.

**Gen. 8:22** While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

The climates will *moderate*, but “cold and heat” and the change of seasons will continue. The deserts will blossom, and extreme cold will become more moderate, so that the North and South Poles will not always be as icebound as at present. One way this change may be accomplished is that the earth could be tilted on its axis, affecting its orbit about the sun.

The expression “seedtime and harvest” shows that men will “work” as Adam did in Eden, and some toil is good. Seed “*time*” indicates there is a time to cultivate fruit trees, plant them, etc., and the trees bring forth their fruit in season.

“While the earth remaineth,” the beginning clause, can be tied in with Hebrews 1:10-12, “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.” Going into the far, far future, a time will come when the earth itself will wear out, and the human race will be transferred to another planet. There will be *extensive* interplanetary travel—way, way down the road, maybe a million years away. The extensive travel will be not just to other planets but to other *solar systems*. Man will be able to travel faster than light, but in order for that speed to function, man will have to be outside our solar system.

The earth will abide forever (Greek *olam*), but a time will come when it will be replaced (Eccl. 1:4). The replacement will be like going from one house to another—nothing radical, just a change. When one house decays, the inhabitants move to another house. Without this interpretation, Hebrews 1:10-12 would not mean too much. Some give it only a spiritual application, likening the *kosmos* to the present order, which is doomed for change. However, the passage is talking not about society but about the planet. And Psalm 102:25-27 supports the thought of planet Earth: “Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the

same, and thy years shall have no end.” Natural observations confirm this thought, for all of the mountains are gradually coming down to the level of a plain, and erosions are irrevocable. Ultimately there would be a flat surface.

Verse 22 is another proof that there were climatic changes following the Flood. Prior to the Flood, distinctions were not made between cold and heat, and between summer and winter. There existed more of a hothouse condition.

The change of seasons is beautiful. The cycle reminds us of resurrection in the spring, for example. And Sinai, with its rock, is beautiful. Snow, too, has lessons and can be lovely.

Before the Flood, the eating of flesh was not authorized. In the Garden of Eden, fruit trees (plus the tree of life) provided variety in the human diet. Between Eden and the Flood, crops and vegetables were added to the diet. Cain was a tiller of the soil. The question is, Will man eat flesh forever? No. The diet will revert to that in Eden (plus vegetables?). Also, Genesis 9:3 indicates that when man was permitted to eat meat after the Flood, animosity then began between man and the animals. God said, “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.” When man started to hunt, fear and dread of man came on the animals. When hunting ceases, friendship will be re-established. On remote islands where man has not lived, birds and/or animals do not fear man. Therefore, when man eventually reverts to a fruit diet, a natural consequence will be peace between man and the animals. Isaiah 11:6, “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, ... and a little child shall lead them,” shows there will be harmony between man and the animals. The eating of meat is more of an expediency at present.

**Q:** But won't the animals multiply too much and overrun the earth?

**A:** If man, after the Millennium, is like the angels and is thus unable to procreate, the same could be true of other flesh beings: the animals. The purpose of procreation was to fill the earth. Once the earth is filled, procreation will cease. The death sentence passed on the human race through a genetic factor. Procreation, too, can be altered by a genetic factor—overnight.

**Q:** Did the animals become carnivorous at the time man began to eat meat? Or were they carnivorous earlier? If the animals were still so docile and easily loaded on the Ark, perhaps they were not carnivorous yet, and certainly they were not carnivorous in Eden.

**Comment:** When Noah loaded food on the Ark for the animals, it was just herbage.

**Reply:** That reasoning would answer the question. The animals did not become carnivorous until after the Flood. They were not predators in the Ark, but when the fear and dread of man came on them after the Flood because they were hunted and cornered, they reciprocated for their own survival. Environment can change the temperaments of both man and beast. In fact, both heredity and environment can affect behavior.

Skins and hides that were used for clothing prior to the Flood came from sacrificed animals, so there was no unnecessary slaughter. Also, if the slain animal represented Jesus and the need for the shedding of blood, the spiritual lesson was interesting. The skin covering from the slain animal was used to make shoes, coats—coverings. Hence the sacrifice had side benefits for man. And Jesus had to die to procure the robe to cover our sins. The *one* sacrifice does *both*.

**Q:** If man lived longer prior to the Flood and did not have children until an older age, couldn't that also have been true of the animals? An extended period before the animals bore their young would have prevented an overpopulation problem.

A: We do not know.

**Gen. 9:1** And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

God's words to Noah are similar to those spoken to Adam. Although verse 1 starts a new chapter, God's words followed Noah's sacrifice of the last chapter and thus occurred shortly after leaving the Ark.

**Gen. 9:2** 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.

Now the animals, the birds, and the fish would fear man. Their former affinity for man would be replaced by a *dominion of fear*.

"Into your hand are they [animals, birds, and fish] delivered." This statement gives the thought of man now having a *dominion of fear*. Beasts could devour man, and some became carnivorous. Before the Flood, man had a fruit and vegetable diet. That diet would now be supplemented with meat (verse 3). By the end of the Kingdom, conditions will be reversed. Man, animals, and birds will again eat just fruit and vegetables, including the tree of life.

**Gen. 9:3** Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

"Every moving thing," clean and unclean, could now be eaten—whatever was found edible. Later, after the Law was instituted, even locusts were eaten, for they were clean insects.

While Genesis chapter 7 mentions clean and unclean animals being brought into the Ark and thus makes a distinction, it was *God* who made the selection of the animals, birds, etc., and caused them to come to Noah. Therefore, we should not assume that Noah knew all the distinctions regarding clean and unclean that later became part of the Law. With God at that time calling some animals clean and some unclean, Noah would have realized *that* distinction but not the symbolic reasoning and detail given subsequently in the Law. When Noah offered of every clean beast and fowl after the Flood, it was because of the *multiplicity of pairs*, and not because he understood so much.

We should keep in mind that much of the Book of Genesis was written later by Moses. Adam would not have known about the six Creative Days—at least there is no evidence that he knew. Proof of a *later* writing or recording of *past* incidents is that some towns in Genesis have dual names (the old name and the name at the time the Book of Genesis was written).

**Gen. 9:4** But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

The animals, etc., had to be killed and the blood drained (kosher style) before they could be eaten. Man could eat meat but not while the blood was in it. This prohibition meant that man could not eat animals that had been dead for a while, for the blood would separate and clot and thus could not be drained. For example, an individual could not eat an animal that had been killed by another animal and left, or an animal that had died by itself. The individual had to kill the animal and drain the blood quickly before it separated and clotted. There were sanitary or health reasons for this injunction, but the primary reason is the *symbolic* one. Since God gave this prohibition, it was to be obeyed—whether or not the reasons behind it were understood. Similarly, Adam and Eve were not to eat of the forbidden fruit. Knowledge alone will not save man. Knowledge must be according to *God's* terms. Obedience to *God's* law is necessary.

From the standpoint of *man* (not the Jew or the Christian), the following is the symbolic reason for forbidding the eating of blood. In the Kingdom, man must “eat” the spiritual flesh, the bread of life, that is, Jesus. In the Memorial, the Christian partakes of the bread and the wine. When Jesus said, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you,” he was referring to *symbolic* flesh and blood, but Genesis 9:4 is talking about *literal* blood (John 6:53). The cup that Jesus and the Church partake of will never be offered to the world. Man in the Kingdom will partake of Christ’s merit (the bread) but not his blood. Hence this instruction to Noah symbolically pertains to the Kingdom Age. Incidentally, the Noachian Covenant will change somewhat as we go along.

**Gen. 9:5** 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.

If a beast killed a man, the beast had to be put to death by man. But man could kill a beast for food. This distinction showed that the blood *in man* had a special importance; hence a beast was not to kill a man and eat him with his blood. The blood in man was more important than the blood in an animal.

If a man was murdered, the murderer was to be put to death. Thus the penalty for murder was death. However, killing *in war* was not considered murder (an exception about war was added to the Law). Accidents, which were spelled out later, were also an exception. With war, when God told the Israelites to slay others, the principle usually applied of iniquity having already come to the full in those individuals. Thus there was a retribution factor. When a murder occurred, the surviving brother could kill the murderer. Under certain circumstances, the term “brother” could be broadened to be more inclusive.

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

Verse 6 teaches capital punishment—a man’s life for a man’s life. Murder, the taking of a life, was prohibited because God had created man in His own image. A man’s life is more precious than the “golden wedge of Ophir” (Isa. 13:12). The golden wedge of Ophir refers to a large structure that had a peaked arch in which a golden stone of sterling quality was wedged. This very valuable gold-wedge keystone was a marvel of the ancient world.

**Gen. 9:7** And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

Verses 1-7, which were spoken on one occasion, began and ended the same way. The repetition indicated that God would bless the multiplication of the human race.

**Gen. 9:8** And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

God gave the following formal statement to Noah and his sons. The wives were considered as being included in their husbands (Gen. 2:24).

**Gen. 9:9** And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

God will similarly make a covenant with Jesus and the Church. After the Time of Trouble (the Flood) at the end of this age, Jesus and his Church will awaken men from the tomb and deal with them. The Church will be able to populate the universe, as was said to Rebekah, a symbol of the Church: “Be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate

of those which hate them” (Gen. 24:60).

When the feet members are changed, they will be caught away to meet the Lord in the air. This change is not a physical catching away but a *literal* transfer into a *new body* to meet the Lord in the air.

**Gen. 9:10** And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

**Gen. 9:11** 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.

In other words, in addition to there not being another flood to destroy all flesh, a guarantee is implied that never again will God destroy everyone—*by any means*. Jesus promised that the days will be cut short in the future; hence there will be survivors of the Time of Trouble (Matt. 24:22).

**Comment:** Since no rain had fallen prior to the Flood, and since man’s first experience with rain was the *cataclysmic* Flood, it was merciful of God to make this promise to never again bring a flood to destroy all flesh. Otherwise, each time the sky darkened and it rained hard, the people would have wondered if another judgment was coming.

**Reply:** An element of mercy is implied. God will not destroy all flesh again.

**Gen. 9:12** 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:

**Gen. 9:13** I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

The rainbow was the token, or sign, God gave to assure His promise to man and the animals that all flesh would not be extinguished henceforth. Notice, however, that this promise applied to the bird and the animal species that were *on the Ark*. Therefore, dinosaurs, for example, will not be preserved. Certain species will become extinct, but not those on the Ark. Not only was this occasion the first time a rainbow appeared, but its appearance was an indication that climatic conditions were different after the Flood.

A rainbow, which consists of the sun shining on many droplets of water in the atmosphere, is usually seen after a storm when the sun is shining. A rainbow is really a circle, as would be seen from an airplane. Like a ring, a rainbow symbolizes a covenant. The thought of the circle is “never ending.” Revelation 4:3 says that God’s symbolic throne has an emerald-like bow around it. Again the portent is hope, a promise, and a covenant.

God’s promise to Noah was an unconditional, one-sided covenant. Notice the repetition of at least three witnesses saying the rainbow is God’s sign that He will never again destroy all flesh. The Abrahamic Covenant was also made and repeatedly reaffirmed—and even confirmed with an oath (Heb. 6:13,14).

**Gen. 9:14** And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

**Gen. 9:15** 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.



**Gen. 9:16** 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.

Here is another witness that God will never again destroy all flesh by a flood or, by implication, any other means.

**Gen. 9:17** 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.

At this point, God caused the rainbow to appear and Noah actually saw it. In verses 12-16, God said He would bring the rainbow and then promptly followed through. In other words, as God was explaining what the rainbow would signify—that it would be a symbol of a covenant—the bow appeared, and He said, “*This is the token ... which I have established.*”

**Gen. 9:18** And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan.

“Ham is the father of Canaan” is like a preface, which will become more meaningful later.

**Q:** Ham was the father of Cush and Canaan, and both sons were significant. Nimrod was born through Cush, but was Canaan singled out here because his posterity were the ones the Israelites subsequently had to battle (see Gen. 10:15-18)?

**A:** Yes, we will probably have a discussion on this point later.

**Gen. 9:19** These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.

“Of them [Shem, Ham, and Japheth] was the whole earth overspread.” Here is a clue that at least parts of Genesis were written many years later. Certain historical fragments were handed down, and Moses put together some parts and Ezra other parts. Regardless of race or nationality, the entire human family after the Flood can be traced back to Noah through one of his three sons.

**Gen. 9:20** And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard:

Verse 20 implies the passage of time, for it would take at least three years for a vineyard to be planted and to produce grapes. This verse also fulfills an earlier prophecy. Lamech named his son Noah and said that Noah would “comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.” (See comments under Genesis 5:29.) Noah’s carpentry expertise in building the Ark would now enable him to invent farming implements to reduce the labor in tilling the soil.

Since Noah planted a vineyard, we know that he intended to stay in that area for a while. He would not eat the fruit for one season and then move on. That area was to be his residence.

**Gen. 9:21** And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.

Hebrews chapter 11 commends Noah for his righteousness, and so does the Apostle Peter. Historically and traditionally, he is also known for his righteousness and holiness and for being just (although the latter trait is described with different words).

Noah partook of the fruit of the vine and became drunk, a condition that was *unexpected*. Unbeknownst to Noah, fermentation had taken place because of the changed conditions after

the Flood. In the drunken state, Noah lay naked in his tent.

**Gen. 9:22** And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.

Seeing the nakedness of his father, Ham told his two brothers without.

**Gen. 9:23** 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.

The implication is that Ham *mocked* his father when informing Shem and Japheth. Then Shem and Japheth discreetly took a garment, put it on their shoulders, went into the tent backwards, and covered Noah's nakedness. Their actions in covering their father indicated they were in a more proper heart condition than Ham at that time. Hence Ham's *attitude* and his *lack of participation* in covering Noah were the reasons the curse was subsequently put on Canaan.

**Comment:** This incident of Ham's lack of respect, coupled with Elisha's being followed by a group of children who mocked his bald head and two "she bears" killing them in retribution, shows the respect God requires (2 Kings 2:23-25). Since that segment of Elisha's life is a Kingdom picture, it shows the respect that must be accorded the Ancient Worthies. God's standard is very high for those walking in His paths of righteousness.

**Reply:** Yes, the principle is there.

Verse 22 is the first recorded incident of Ham's impropriety. Noah was approximately 600 years old, and his three sons were about 100 years old. Unfortunately, youth does not respect age as much as it should. The Ten Commandments say, "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exod. 20:12). We honor them not because they are perfect or model parents—they may or may not be—but we are to give them due respect. If they are far from model parents and yet we want to obey this commandment, then we should approach them in an endearing attitude of respect but call attention to the wrong they are doing. We should use a respectful manner rather than bluntly charge them. The Law does not encourage the blind honoring of parents when they may be wrong or wicked, but a general deference should be shown.

Neither Noah nor Ham knew that wine fermented. Hence Ham judged the situation on circumstantial evidence, probably attributing Noah's sloppy attitude to his age. The ridiculing followed. Respect should have been shown, for not only was Noah Ham's father, but also it was because of Noah's righteousness that the Ark had been built and his sons saved.

When Shem and Japheth heard about Noah, they never looked at him to verify Ham's report but simply covered their father in a discreet way. They probably reasoned that regardless of how or why this had happened, Noah was righteous. They could not explain the drunkenness, but Noah's past life and deeds more than offset this one incident. Based on God's dealing with Noah, they did not want to cast any reflection on their father, even though they could not explain the current situation. All four—Noah, Ham, Shem, and Japheth—may not have known that the wine had caused Noah's drunkenness until afterwards, when they reflected on the incident. The lesson is that we should not be too precipitous in judging others. We should give them the benefit of the doubt until we are sure. But when sure, we should take a stand.

**Q:** Why didn't fermentation occur previously?

**A:** The bacterial content is transmitted more readily when moisture is in the air. The breaking of the last canopy at the time of the Flood produced an acidulous condition of the atmosphere

that tended toward ferment and also directly affected human longevity. The ferment changed the character of the grape product, making it alcoholic.

Respect for the human body has changed today too. Now nakedness is flaunted by some. A question will be, What about the nakedness in Eden? But the Edenic condition occurred *before* sin and *before* the fall. Since that time, man cannot look at nakedness and be impervious. Fallen flesh is fallen flesh.

**Comment:** Matthew 24:37-39 speaks about the days before Noah, saying that the people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. “Drinking” in that context was simply partaking of liquids; it had no reference to alcoholic beverages because there was no fermentation prior to the Flood.

**Reply:** Yes, Jesus was referring to ordinary everyday activities, which were completely permissible under normal circumstances. His emphasis was on the people’s *ignorance* of the coming Flood. They did not believe Noah.

**Gen. 9:24** And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.

Obviously, when Noah awoke, Shem and Japheth told him what had happened and what Ham had done. Perhaps Noah saw the garment covering when he awoke and began to ask questions. He would have been mortified to realize his condition, and eventually Shem and Japheth would have said they covered him.

**Gen. 9:25** And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

Verse 25, which shows that Canaan had already been born, is another clue that some time had passed since the Flood.

**Q:** Why was the curse on Canaan and not on Ham himself?

**A:** The sins of the father were visited upon the children—that was the principle. In the Kingdom, that principle will be changed.

Why did the curse come upon Canaan and not on another son? The four sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan (Gen. 10:6). Although Canaan was mentioned last because of the curse, he was probably the firstborn. As the firstborn, Canaan would logically receive the curse. Also, for Canaan to be the last son born, too much time would have elapsed after the Flood. Surely the effects of fermentation were discovered in the first several years.

Shem’s first son, Arphaxad, was born two years after the Flood (Gen. 11:10). Following the Flood, God had ordered Noah and his sons to be fruitful and multiply, and they did. The planting of the vineyard could have taken up to five or six years but not 20.

If Canaan was Ham’s firstborn, the penalty would have hit Ham *hard*. Ham’s laughing at Noah may have been simply a disrespectful attitude rather than malicious intent, yet from God’s standpoint, that was a reflection on faithful Noah. Ham mocked—he did not overly mock. Despite what it seems, the penalty was not an undue punishment. Consider the Law: If a child manifested an attitude of disobedience and disrespect to his parents, he was to be stoned to death. Ham’s mocking was a serious offense from the standpoint of God’s respect for Noah. Ham got a *very strong* lesson for the curse to rest on his dear baby son.

**Gen. 9:26** And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

Noah's words, "Blessed be the LORD God of Shem," show that of the three sons, Shem had the priority. The emphasis is on God: "Blessed be the *LORD God!*" Noah was saying that Shem would be his successor. As God had dealt with Noah, so that same God would be the Lord God of Shem (in contradistinction to the other two sons). Japheth was the oldest, Shem was next, and Ham was the youngest. "And Canaan shall be[come] his [Shem's] servant."

**Gen. 9:27** God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

"God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." It was as if Shem were the honored host and Japheth enjoyed the hospitality. Stated another way, Shem was the householder, and Japheth could dwell there as a friend or associate. In honor, Shem was first, Japheth second, and Canaan third.

Verses 26 and 27 have a significant historical impact. Being very poetically expressed in the Hebrew, these two verses are a *prophecy* of the development of the age of faith. A great test comes on the natural progeny of Shem and Japheth in succeeding chapters—and also on the spiritual progeny many years later.

Noah's statements regarding Shem and Japheth were prophetic utterances. During the building of the Ark, Shem probably manifested a more filial attitude, but these statements were really *God's* prediction. Although Noah was in harmony with the prophecy, he did not understand it.

The clause "God shall enlarge Japheth" is a play on words. The word "enlarge" is related to "Japheth." It was like saying, "Japheth, your name is more significant than Noah realized when he gave it to you." Some feel that Japheth was given the name because of his stature, and in mythology and ancient tradition, Japheth was very large and very strong. However, the "enlarging" mentioned under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit goes far beyond that natural trait; it pertains to stature in other senses of the word.

**Q:** Does Canaan's curse indicate the start of the black race?

**A:** We will wait a little on that question and first study Cush and Nimrod. The Flood had ended shortly before, and God gave a rainbow promise. Noah planted a vineyard and unintentionally got drunk. Simple pronouncements followed. To answer the question, we will have to read the next two chapters, which are based on the dispersion of the races in different ways.

**Q:** The King James marginal reference for "enlarge" is "persuade." In the concordance, the Hebrew word is *pathah*. Is this alternate definition a hint as to what would happen and the test that would come?

**A:** There is so much information, and the study is so difficult that we had better wait. The Genesis account is like an acorn or a seed. Genesis means "beginning," and a seed is a beginning. The statements are so compressed in the Book of Genesis that the rest of the Bible is the unfolding. Genesis starts with the perfection in Eden followed by the fall, and the Book of Revelation ends with restoration. The Millennial Age will be an upright condition with a return to Edenic conditions. In between is the story of mankind with terrible things happening. Genesis is like the seed, and way down on the stream of time is the flower. As the hymn goes, "The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be its flower."

Canaan was to be the servant of both Shem and Japheth. Shem and Japheth were both blessed, but Japheth's blessing was on a secondary level.

**Gen. 9:28** And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

**Gen. 9:29** And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

Noah's total age was 950 years. He lived 350 years (about one third of his life) after the Flood. A radical change occurred in individuals born after the Flood in that their life spans were much shorter. Noah's years post-Flood were much longer than Abraham's entire life, for example.

**Gen. 10:1** Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

This sequence of Noah's sons is not according to age (which would be Japheth, Shem, and Ham) or importance (which would be Shem, Japheth, and Ham). This different sequence will be explained later.

**Gen. 10:2** The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.

These were the sons of Japheth. Four of the names are in Ezekiel chapter 38.

**Gen. 10:3** And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

The sons of Gomer, which were the next (or third) generation, were the grandsons of Japheth. Today's Jews are usually broken down into two categories: Sephardic or Ashkenazi.

**Gen. 10:4** And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

Again the third generation is listed, this time the sons of Javan, who were also grandsons of Japheth. Some of the names in verses 3 and 4 appear in Ezekiel chapter 38.

**Gen. 10:5** By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

Verse 5 is a summary of Japheth's progeny, who are called "Gentiles" in contradistinction to the Semitic races, who came through Shem. (Ham's offspring were also "Gentiles.") Verse 5 was true both before and after the Tower of Babel, for some of Japheth's offspring spread out even prior to that incident.

Verse 5 describes conditions that existed after the Flood. Some of these names appeared in Ezekiel chapter 38 and other places thousands of years later. In the meantime, a natural migration occurred. Verses 2-4 merely show the origin of such individuals—that they were of Japheth. Generally speaking, Japheth's children went north and west, and Shem's and Ham's offspring migrated in other directions.

**Gen. 10:6** And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.

These were the sons of Ham. Note the order here: Cush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan. Although Canaan was the firstborn, he was listed last because of the curse. He had already been born and named when the curse came as a punishment for Ham's mocking of his father.

Verse 1 listed the order of Noah's three sons as Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now the details were being presented in reverse order: Japheth, Ham, and Shem.

**Gen. 10:7** And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtecha: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.

Sheba and Dedan are mentioned in Ezekiel chapter 38. The name Havilah appears in Genesis 2:11. The river Pison (the most important of the four rivers outside of Eden) encompassed the land of Havilah, which had gold and bdellium.

**Gen. 10:8** And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth.

Cush begat Nimrod, who “began to be a mighty one in the earth.” This elevation of a human being above what was proper was the start of a false worship.

**Gen. 10:9** He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.

Nimrod was “a mighty hunter before the LORD [Jehovah].” “Before the LORD” signifies that reverence belonging to Jehovah was going to Nimrod. His influence was such that those who esteemed him regarded him *above* Jehovah. Nimrod became an idol because of his prowess in hunting. Probably he had a good physical build too.

The commandment was, “Thou shalt have no other gods *before* me” (Exod. 20:3). There can be mighty ones in the earth but not in the sense of robbing something that belongs to Jehovah, not in the sense of worship.

**Gen. 10:10** And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

Babel was the *beginning* of Nimrod’s kingdom and also the beginning of the Babylonian kingdom. The tower was in Babel. A couple of these towns or cities, under *other* names, were excavated recently.

Shinar is mentioned in Zechariah 5:11. Shinar, another name for Babylon, was the territory in which these four cities were located: Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh.

**Gen. 10:11** Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah,

The King James margin is correct: “Out of that land [Shinar] he [Nimrod] went out into Assyria, and builded Nineveh, and the city of Rehoboth, and Calah.” “Asshur” was Assyria. In addition to being a mighty hunter, Nimrod built Nineveh and other cities. His deflection from the Lord began early in life. No doubt he was proud and self-confident, and others admired his abilities, industry, and activity. Admiration, if given in moderation, is all right for one who is humble before the Lord, but here the object of admiration had a big head. Those who did the admiring put Jehovah secondary.

**Gen. 10:12** And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city.

Nimrod also built Resen, “a *great* city.”

**Gen. 10:13** And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,

**Gen. 10:14** And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim.

A lot of the names in verses 13 and 14 end in “im,” which can indicate either singular (as in the

individual named Ephraim) or plural (as in the tribe of Ephraim). Context is the deciding factor in determining whether “im” is singular or plural in meaning, and here the names Mizraim, Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, Casluhim, and Caphtorim—each having an “im” ending—all refer to a *single* individual. The multiplicity of *singular* “im” endings is interesting because Trinitarians stress the “im” ending of *Elohim* to indicate the plurality of God.

**Gen. 10:15** And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth,

The fact that Sidon was mentioned as the “firstborn” of Canaan indicates that other sons listed first in this chapter were not necessarily the firstborn, for example, Shem and Cush. Thus there were other reasons why an individual was listed first. For example, Canaan was important because of the curse that came through Ham, and Sidon was important because a city with that name still exists today in Lebanon.

**Gen. 10:16** And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite,

Hundreds of years later, when the Israelites entered the land, they failed to subdue and capture all the pockets of resistance. The Amorites and the Girgasites were traditional enemies of the Israelites. The Jebusites occupied Jerusalem, and David had to conquer them in order to make Jerusalem the capital of Israel.

**Gen. 10:17** And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,

**Gen. 10:18** And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.

Verses 17 and 18 list more traditional enemies of Israel: Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites.

**Q:** The thought is often presented that when the curse was put on Canaan, his skin became black, but his offspring, the traditional enemies of Israel, were not of the black race, were they?

**A:** No, and neither was Cush, although his name later came to mean “black.”

**Comment:** Since the curse was not on Cush, the change in skin color had to be something additional.

**Reply:** That is correct, and Nimrod was black.

**Q:** Canaan was the cursed one. Since many of his offspring became resistant and recalcitrant enemies of the Israelites, is there any way we can pin down what that curse was?

**A:** That is the third topic we will go back to. The three subjects are (1) the sequence of Shem, Ham, and Japheth in verse 1; (2) the story of Nimrod; and (3) the curse on Canaan. There is something paradoxical about Canaan.

**Gen. 10:19** And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.

Verse 19 describes the Canaanite borders and territory: from the city of Sidon in Lebanon on the Mediterranean to the *north*, to Gaza on the Mediterranean to the *south*, to Sodom and Gomorrah under the Dead Sea to the *east* (and also to the south) and to Admah, Zeboim, and Lasha also on the *east* (but up north).

**Gen. 10:20** These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations.

Verse 20 completes the lineage of Ham. Notice the similarity to verse 5, which pertains to Japheth's progeny.

**Gen. 10:21** Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were children born.

Here in chapter 10, Shem's lineage was mentioned last, but he was mentioned first in verse 1. Shem was "the father of all the children of Eber"; that is, Shem was the ancestor of the Hebrew race. "Eber" means Hebrew. Of the three sons of Noah, Japheth was the oldest, the firstborn.

**Gen. 10:22** The children of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.

Today there is a Syria but no Assyria. The two have a similarity and yet a dissimilarity. Assyria's farthest, northernmost point was originally up near Mount Ararat, Kars being the capital city at one time. This "Asshur" is different from the Asshur/Assyria of verse 11 under Ham's lineage. The "Mount Ararat" Assyria was related to Shem; the Syria of today is connected more with Ham and Nimrod.

Elam was a nation associated with Media-Persia. Arphaxad, Shem's firstborn son, was born two years after the Flood (Gen. 11:10). He is listed in Messiah's lineage (Luke 3:36). Although Arphaxad was the firstborn, he was mentioned third; hence the names in Genesis chapter 10 are neither in birth sequence nor according to importance. What, then, one might ask, was the purpose of this tenth chapter? It gives the *geographic distribution* of Noah's posterity.

**Gen. 10:23** And the children of Aram; Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash.

Job was associated with Uz (which became Oz in stories). Job lived a little after Abraham—probably in the time gap following Joseph but before Moses.

**Gen. 10:24** And Arphaxad begat Salah; and Salah begat Eber.

The lineage was as follows: Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, and 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.

Eber had two sons: Peleg and Joktan. "Peleg" means *division*. When he was born and given that name, his parents would not have realized the full significance. The prophetic name pertained to the incident of the Tower of Babel, which occurred in Peleg's lifetime. (The Tower of Babel will be described in the next chapter; hence this is advance information.) The lineage of Noah indicates a passage of time between his leaving the Ark and the building of the Tower of Babel five generations later.

**Gen. 10:26** And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,

**Gen. 10:27** And Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah,

**Gen. 10:28** And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba,

**Gen. 10:29** And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: all these were the sons of Joktan.



**Gen. 10:30** And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar a mount of the east.

**Gen. 10:31** These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.

**Gen. 10:32** These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

Joktan had 13 sons—more than the others. Ophir and Havilah stand out in the lineage, and Sheba is mentioned. In Abraham's day, Keturah's children included another Sheba and Dedan.

A man's life is "more precious ... than the golden wedge of Ophir" (Isa. 13:12). This golden wedge, a tremendous block of solid gold that adorned a gateway, was the keystone that kept an arch from caving in. The Romans used the following method to build an arch. They laid arch stones on top of a pile of mud bricks. The mud held the arch stones in position. Once the uprights were in place to hold the arch, the dirt and/or mud was dug out. The arch was built in a slightly graduating curve with mortar holding the arch stone. However, at a certain height, there was danger of collapse because of the weight of the stones. Thus the mortar was allowed to dry up to a certain level, and then, near the peak of the arch, the stones were held in place by men, and a wedge was dropped in. The wedge was a keystone, locking the arch stones in place.

Solomon had a navy of ships by contracting with Hiram, king of Tyre, to cooperate on naval expeditions. Gold was plentiful in Solomon's kingdom. He rented ships from Hiram to bring back gold from Ophir and Havilah, which were quite a distance away. Havilah was mentioned in connection with Eden. The Pison River encompassed the whole land of Havilah, where there was gold, and the gold of that land was "good" (Gen. 2:11,12).

**Q:** This question pertains to verses 5, 20, 31, and 32. Weren't all peoples of one tongue until after the Tower of Babel? What is the time sequence here?

**A:** We will discuss that in the next chapter. There were two types of division: (1) natural migration and (2) a *forced* separation of the group of people who were involved in building the Tower of Babel. Certain families lived in the area and were thus connected with constructing the Tower—but not all people living on the earth at that time. Thus the confusion of tongues involved a lot of people but not everyone.

We would now like to discuss certain points about the verses covered thus far.

1. *Sequence of names* (Gen. 10:1). Shem, Ham, and Japheth are listed according to the *geographic dispersion* of the families and the time elements involved.
2. *Nimrod* (Gen. 10:10-12). These verses tell about the *beginning* of Nimrod's kingdom. Eventually, many years later according to tradition, Nimrod died in Egypt. Although he did not build cities in Egypt, he was worshipped there. When Ham asked Shem to liberate Egypt from the despotic rule of Nimrod and his worship, Shem slew Nimrod. Thus Shem helped Ham, who was the Pharaoh in Egypt, called in the Psalms the "land of Ham" (Psa. 105:23,27; 106:22). The Book of the Dead tells a lot about Egyptian worship, which imitated many things in the Hebrew religion but gave an immoral twist, emphasizing strength and lust instead of righteous principles. Incidentally, in Egyptian, Ham was Khamu Khufu and Noah was Sneferu or Nofru.

The list of cities shows the passage of time, for it would have taken many years for Nimrod to build so many cities. The Bible does not say how long Ham, Nimrod, or Japheth lived. We know only that Shem died at 600 years of age because Messiah's lineage went through him

(Gen. 11:10,11). The others probably lived to an age somewhat comparable.

3. *Canaan's curse* (Gen. 9:25-27). "And he [Noah] 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." Canaan was to be the servant of Shem and Japheth, and Japheth would dwell in the tents of Shem, yet history *seems* to completely contradict this prophecy—at first. Canaan had a desirable territory from Sidon to Gaza, etc.; that is, he had the land of Canaan. And Abraham lived and died without receiving the inheritance in the land of Canaan promised in the covenant that God had made with him. Abraham owned only his burial cave, which he bought in Hebron. Canaanites possessed Canaan until Joshua's day, when Joshua fought them and other peoples involved with this family. Hence many people living back there questioned the prophecy uttered by Noah. In other words, Noah's prophecy became a *test*. The same principles of testing the faith and trust of Christians in God during the Gospel Age were upon the Jewish people, who were told they would inherit the Promised Land. They did not enter the land until Joshua's day, so for a long time, Canaan seemed to be prospering.

The situation is the same for us as Christians. If faithful, we will get into the *spiritual* Promised Land, but in the present life, we are in the testing period when everything *seems to be the opposite*. We are nobodies now, without the world's esteem, but if faithful, we will reign as kings and priests.

For a long time, Canaan's descendants seemed to be superior to both Shem's and Japheth's descendants. Eventually, however, the tables began to turn. Joshua did conquer the Canaanites—but not fully. In the 450-year Period of the Judges, there was a problem with the Canaanites. Only later, in the Period of the Kings, did the Canaanites begin to fade out entirely, relatively speaking. Then the Shemites clearly occupied Canaan. Finally, the prophecy began to take place from the natural standpoint. Later on, "Japheth" was involved with the Phoenicians to the north. He was successful over the Canaanites faster than the Shemites.

Meanwhile, the test was to walk *by faith*. Hebrews chapter 11 lists heroes of faith from the Old Testament. The Ancient Worthies all died not having received the promises, for the Little Flock must first be fully developed. Hence the full entrance into the Land of Promise in the *spiritual* sense will not occur until the Kingdom. Stated another way, the Land of Promise will be *fully* entered in the Kingdom.

Christians are not the only ones who have to *live* by faith, for the Ancient Worthies did too. Both classes have similar experiences. The Ancient Worthies got rewarded certain ways in the present life, and so do Christians. We have a large "family" of sincere brethren. We get blessings of prophetic understanding. We have hope and peace. We know about the past, the present, and the future. We are living on the threshold of a new era, yet we are still laboring to enter into the *full* rest beyond the veil. The Ancient Worthies labored too, still awaiting the *full* promise. The inheritance will come in God's due time.

The Canaanites and Ham's descendants prospered for a long time. Egypt was a great world empire. (Nebuchadnezzar's image started *later* in history, from the Babylonian Empire on, but earlier Egypt and Assyria were great world empires.) Today we can see that the Jews are the top intellectuals in the world in every area. Israel has had a great influence among the nations. Hence we see the superiority of the Shemites over the Hamites and the Japhethites. More is to come, *in fullness*, in the Kingdom.

There are three great time periods: (1) the very early period prior to Israel's establishment as a nation, (2) Israel's development, and (3) the Christian Age. Not only did testing periods occur in each great time span, but also the bitter seemed to predominate over the sweet—and will

continue to do so until the Kingdom. Then Israel will be the blessing nation, and the Church will be the kings and priests. As an addendum, the Bible went westward to Europe and then to the United States. Where the Bible and the Reformers went, the blessings were greater.

**Q:** Did the development of the black race come through Cush and Nimrod? The lineage was Ham, Cush, and then Nimrod.

**A:** Yes, through Cush and through Ham's children. In a broad sense, Canaan developed into the "Canaanites." And there were bedouins of Ham's children. "Ethiopia" and "Cush" mean black. The Cush aspect included Ethiopians and Nubians in Egypt, but Ham and his other children were not marked with dark color as much—only to a certain degree.

The Old Testament prophets and the New Testament apostles come from Shemites. Most of the early Church were Jews. The gospel Church is composed of Jews and Gentiles, of Japheth and of Shem. The twelve apostles (Shemites) will have the chief place in the Little Flock.

**Gen. 11:1** **And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.**

The whole earth was of one language and one dialect/pronunciation.

**Gen. 11:2** **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.**

Most of Noah's progeny journeyed southeastward from Mount Ararat to the land of Shinar. The plain in Shinar, ancient Babylon, was a great and a fertile plain, whereas now it is desert. The several cities in Shinar indicate its large size (Gen. 10:10). The NIV reads, "As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there." The bulk of Noah's progeny dwelled there until the dispersion in regard to the Tower of Babel.

**Gen. 11:3** **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.**

"Go to" means "come." The composition of the building material is described here: fired, kiln-dried brick (not sun-dried).

**Gen. 11:4** **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.**

The people said, "Come, let us build a city and a tower, whose top will reach unto heaven; ... lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." The Tower of Babel, which was involved with Nimrod's false worship, was built with the motive of assuring survival in case of another flood. Practically speaking, the tall tower would be a beacon so that those in the plain could see it and thus would not wander off and be "scattered abroad." The tower was intended to provide protection. The people were making the city and tower the "capital" of the world, whereas God intended the capital to be Jerusalem eventually.

After the Flood, God told Noah and sons to be fruitful and multiply *in the earth* (Gen. 9:7). Building a city was making roots and encouraging a stationary situation, which was contrary to God's purpose. The people were supposed to scatter and migrate as progeny were born. "Lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth" could also refer back to corpses being strewn in all directions at the time of the Flood.

Traditionally, the Tower of Babel was the Ziggurat Birs-Nimrud, Nimrod being its chief

advocate. It was built in seven courses or steps in ziggurat fashion.

**Q:** How high was the ziggurat? The people back there knew that the Flood had covered Mount Ararat, so unless they built something higher, their idea did not make sense.

**A:** Nimrod, the grandson of Ham, was not alive to witness the Flood and, therefore, probably had not seen Mount Ararat, especially since Babylon was quite far from Ararat. Hence he and the others would not have rationalized in this manner. The building of the Tower of Babel occurred about 150 years after the Flood, in the days of Peleg and Reu (Gen. 10:25; 11:16-20).

**Comment:** Apparently, there is a relationship between the Tower of Babel on the Plain of Shinar, the image (or statue) of Bel on the Plain of Dura, and the image of the beast in our day. Just as the first two were associated with false worship and were built in prominent places so that they could be seen, so the image of the beast will be associated with the Trinity and will be visible, figuratively speaking, and prominent.

**Comment:** Satan said in the beginning, “I will be like the most High [God]” (Isa. 14:14). Similarly, Nimrod, in building his city and high tower, wanted to have a kingdom to show his greatness and mighty power. It was the same kind of thinking in both cases. Nimrod (and Satan through him) wanted to attract the people to him and thus to centralize his power.

**Reply:** This aspect would answer the statement “Let us make us a name.” The Hebrew word translated “name” is *shem*.

**Q:** Was this a play on words? God was favoring Shem, and now Nimrod was counteracting that favor with his false worship.

**A:** Nimrod was a false Shem, an anti-Shem. Like Satan, Nimrod aspired to greatness. Satan said, “I will *ascend* into heaven, ... I will sit ... in the sides of the north,” and here a high tower was involved (Isa. 14:13). Thus several factors motivated the construction of the tower.

The people began to build the city first, then the tower. The city was contrary to the divine edict to replenish the whole earth—it was a contraction instead of a spreading-out action—but the tower was another aspect. Incidentally, the use of kiln-dried brick with mortar showed the people wanted to make an *enduring* city that would restrict scattering.

Not only was the tower a beacon that could be seen from afar, but its height enabled the people to see an approaching enemy from a great distance. With the addition of the religious aspect and supposed protection from a flood, their *natural* reasoning seemed to be correct. However, the people should have heeded *God’s* instruction. Human reasoning seemed logical and right, but *God’s* commandment was to the contrary. The city and the tower were built on a false religious premise. Originally the name Babel signified “gateway of God,” but the meaning was changed to “confusion.”

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

God “came down to see the city and the tower” from the standpoint of *inspection and judgment*. Of course God could see all that was happening from the heavens, so more was implied by this statement; namely, His *representatives* (the Logos and the holy angels) came down here. The first dispensation was under subjection to the angels. The second dispensation, following the Flood, has been under Satan as the god of this world. If we put ourselves in the place of the holy angels back there when the Flood occurred, we would see that the disobedient angels were confined in chains of darkness. (After Adam sinned, the holy angels tried to uplift man,

but their efforts resulted in complete failure, for in trying to save the human race, many of the angels fell.) Now the holy angels were nervous as to what to do. Previously, before the Flood, they came and went freely. Only the disobedient stayed here, taking wives. It is true that the holy angels ministered here, but they kept their first estate in heaven. Now, in the second dispensation, the holy angels wanted to wait and get instruction, but there was *silence*. God did not say, “Now, Satan, see what you can do.” (We know about the permission of evil and the present evil world through the apostles and present truth, but the angels did not know.) Satan is the god of this world by usurpation, not by authorization. God was silent, and Satan took the initiative of again pursuing what he had wanted to do in the first dispensation. From the chains of darkness, Satan and the evil angels continued to influence man to disobey God.

**Gen. 11:6** 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.

“And the LORD said....” The Logos was God’s official representative up to the time he came to the earth as Jesus. Before that, he was Michael, the Logos, the archangel. “Jesus” was another role, another title, which he did not have prior to the First Advent.

God was apprising others: “Behold! Look what the people are doing!” The purpose of these words was to help others see, for God knew all about the situation. He predicted and foresaw conditions as they would subsequently occur.

This simple demonstrative method shows that if mankind were left to their own imaginations, the divine purpose would have been completely frustrated.

**Gen. 11:7** Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.

The language was confounded so that the people could not understand one another’s speech. The change was *immediate*. Without the ability to communicate and be understood, all kinds of misunderstandings and fightings would arise. As a result, the people reasoned, “It is better that we separate.” Probably each family kept the same understanding and tongue so that the dispersion would be by family. (If every single individual had had a different language, anarchy would have resulted.) The misunderstanding was *between* families, not within families.

**Q:** Adam did not learn to talk as a baby does but was created with the ability to speak. Doesn’t this fact indicate that the part of the brain which controls speech was tampered with so that an individual’s thoughts were all retained, but the speech was in a different language?

**A:** There was a genetic change. The brain is like a computer that was simply reprogrammed. By remote control, as it were, God interfered with a particular “circuit” to change the speech.

**Comment:** Speech was also changed at Pentecost.

**Reply:** Pentecost is a good comparison. *Suddenly* the Holy Spirit miraculously enabled the waiting disciples to speak in other languages. We are computerized, and speech is a genetic factor. Along another line, when Adam disobeyed, God programmed the death sentence into him, and the whole human race inherited that defect.

**Q:** Since there will be one language in the Kingdom, will the reversal also be sudden? In Zephaniah 3:9, the King James margin has “lip” instead of “language”: “For then will I turn to the people a pure language [lip], that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.”

**A:** Yes, the impediment will be removed suddenly.

**Comment:** Prayers are offered in different languages, but God understands them all—as if they are just one language to Him.

**Reply:** Yes. At the United Nations, the various delegates speak before a machine that translates the language of the speaker into the language of the hearer. It is the same idea with a computer. Man has been marvelously made. What mysteries! Truly truth is stranger than fiction.

**Gen. 11:8** So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

“They left off to build the city.” In other words, the project was stopped by God *before* completion. The same is true of the Tower of Babel.

**Gen. 11:9** 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.

God’s intervention caused the *opposite* to happen of what the people were attempting with the city and the tower (compare verse 4): “From thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.” God undid their actions. They wanted to restrict, confine, and keep back (that is, to disobey the divine commandment), but God broke that whole infrastructure by confounding their language.

“Therefore [that is, after the confounding of language] is the name of it called Babel.” What was the city called previously? The people intended the city to be the gateway of God, so they may have nicknamed it “Babel” with a different pronunciation to indicate such. After the language was confounded, it was still called “Babel” (same consonants), but the pronunciation now indicated “confusion.” Vowels were lacking, so the pronunciation of consonants was the key.

**Comment:** Young’s *Analytical Concordance* has “gate of Bel” after the “confusion” definition of Babylon.

**Reply:** The “confusion” aspect is seen in the Law. The union of woman with beast is “confusion.” Revelation chapter 17 shows that the union of the harlot with the kingdoms of earth has led to confusion.

**Comment:** And the supposed union of God and Jesus in the doctrine of the Trinity definitely leads to confusion!

**Gen. 11:10** These are the generations of Shem: Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood:

**Gen. 11:11** And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

**Gen. 11:12** And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah:

**Gen. 11:13** And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

**Gen. 11:14** And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber:

**Gen. 11:15** And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

**Gen. 11:16** And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg:

**Gen. 11:17** And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.

**Gen. 11:18** And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu:

**Gen. 11:19** And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.

**Gen. 11:20** And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug:

**Gen. 11:21** And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

**Gen. 11:22** And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor:

**Gen. 11:23** And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

**Gen. 11:24** And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah:

**Gen. 11:25** And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters.

**Gen. 11:26** And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Compared to the genealogy before the Flood (Genesis chapter 5), children were now being born to their parents at an earlier age (at approximately 30 versus 80 years of age). The total life span decreased noticeably after the Flood (to approximately 400 instead of 800 to 900 years). And after the language was confounded in the days of Peleg and Reu, the life span went down to about 200 years. Incidentally, these verses furnish the chronology links of the *Second Volume*, page 44, which shows it was 427 years from the Flood to the covenant with Abraham.

The radical change in life span after the Flood—it was halved approximately—was the result of changed climatic conditions. The life span was halved again after the language was confounded, and in Abraham's day, it decreased even further.

Notice that there were *two* Nahors. This understanding will serve a purpose later. The order of birth was as follows:

$$\begin{array}{r} / \text{ Haran} \\ \text{Nahor} \text{ --- Terah --- } \text{Nahor} \\ \backslash \text{ Abram} \end{array}$$

As with earlier chronology, verse 26 lists Terah's sons in order of importance, not birth. The thought is that when Terah was 70 years old, he *began* to have sons (he did not have triplets).

**Q:** Wouldn't the fact that girls and boys mature so young today, and thus are capable of having children in their teens, be a *proof* that man has fallen further than in Abraham's day, let alone in the pre-Flood days?

A: Yes.

**Gen. 11:27** Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.

Terah had three sons, listed here in order of importance: Abram, Nahor, and Haran. From the standpoint of age, Haran was the oldest, Nahor was in the middle, and Abram was the youngest. Lot was Haran's son and Abraham's nephew.

**Gen. 11:28** And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.

“Ur of the Chaldees” means there was at least one other Ur, and “of the Chaldees” identifies which one. Ur was in southern Babylon (the Chaldea portion of Babylon). Ur was southeast of the capital city of Babylon (at the lower end of the Fertile Crescent, between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers). Since Haran died in Ur, he was probably considerably older than Abraham.

**Comment:** Then they were all related.

**Reply:** After the Flood, only eight people began to populate the earth. Now, roughly 400 years later, we see the results of close intermarrying. (The Genesis account was prior to the Law and, therefore, before genetic damage occurred from close intermarriage.)

**Comment:** The time setting was about when the Great Pyramid was built.

**Reply:** Yes, and Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek (Shem).

**Gen. 11:29** And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

Abram married Sarai. Nahor married Milcah (Haran's daughter). Nahor's listed offspring are Milcah and Iscah. Terah may have had two wives. Sarai could have been the daughter of Terah by the second wife, and Abram could have been the son of Terah by the first wife. If so, Sarai was Abraham's “sister.”

**Gen. 11:30** But Sarai was barren; she had no child.

Sarai was barren back in Ur, thus even before she and Abram left Ur.

**Gen. 11:31** And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

Notice the emphasis on *Terah's* taking Abram, Sarai, and Lot from Ur to go to Canaan, but they stopped at Haran and dwelled there. Genesis chapter 12 shows that God was especially dealing with Abram, but here Terah was given the priority.

The pronoun “them” should be “him”: “And they went forth with *him* [Terah] from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan.” To “dwell” in Haran indicates the passage of a little time.

**Gen. 11:32** And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in



## Haran.

Terah died at age 205 in Haran. The 205 years are a chronology link, proving that there were 427 years from the Flood to the Abrahamic Covenant. Abram did not go into the Land of Promise until the death of his father, and he was 75 years old when he left Haran (Gen. 12:4).

Terah was 70 years old when he begat Haran (Nahor and Abram were later sons). Hence Terah lived in Ur a long time before departing, and during that time, he saw the death of Haran, his firstborn. While in Ur, Abraham's family was exposed to idolatry.

**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:

“Now the LORD had [previously] said unto Abram [in Ur]...” Abram was now in Haran, and God's previous words to him were being reviewed. In Acts 7:2-5, Stephen said that God appeared to Abram in Mesopotamia, before he dwelled in Haran, and declared, “Get out of your country, and from your kindred.”

Haran was located far northwest of Ur, yet it was still situated in the Fertile Crescent between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. To have gone south from Ur to Palestine would have meant crossing an immense desert. Therefore, Abram and his family took the pleasurable route with water.

There were three parts to God's instruction to Abram:

1. “Get thee out of thy country,” that is, “Separate from the *land* of Chaldea/Mesopotamia.”
2. “Get thee ... from thy kindred,” that is, “Separate from your relatives.” Some relatives accompanied Abram (Terah and Lot), but he left many behind.
3. “Get thee ... from thy father's house.” “Kindred” could be more distant relatives, whereas “father” is close.

“Terah took Abram,” yet the LORD told Abram to leave the land (Gen. 11:31). How do we harmonize the two perspectives? God spoke to Abram, and Abram told his father. Terah, being older, was given respect because of his age. Terah did take Abram, but he did this because *God had told Abram*. Genesis 11:31 slants the matter from the standpoint of Terah's seniority. When Terah heard from Abram about God's instruction, he had enough faith and respect for his son that he departed too. The twelfth chapter of Genesis gives the proper focus that God was dealing especially with Abram. Terah could have stayed behind with Nahor, so the fact that Terah went with Abram shows his faith.

**Gen. 12:2** 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:

If Abram complied with the three conditions, God would make of him a “great nation.” What a nice incentive! Initially, the Abrahamic Covenant was *conditional*. The covenant became *unconditional* only when Abraham entered the land of Canaan. God promised to make Abram a “blessing” (that is, a *blessor* of others) if he complied and separated himself.

**Gen. 12:3** 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.

God would bless those who blessed Abram and curse those who cursed Abram. (The same principle applied when the apostles were told to shake the dust off their feet against a house that rejected them and bless the home with peace that favorably received them.) Moreover, in Abram would all the families of the earth be blessed.

If Abram took the step of leaving Ur and entering the land of Canaan, he would be wonderfully blessed. Separation was the *start*; entering the land was the *end*. In other words, once Abram entered the land of Canaan, God would *unconditionally* fulfill His promises.

**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.

Abram departed according to God's words; hence *Abram* was the leading personality, not Terah. Lot's going with Abram shows his confidence in Abram—and his faith in God too. The fact that Terah, Abram, Lot, and Sarai *dwelled* in Haran, instead of just passing through, may indicate Terah was in poor health. They remained in Haran for a while, that is, until Terah died.

Abram and Lot were about the same age because Abram was born much later than Lot's father, Haran. Hence Abram and Lot were companions as they grew up. Terah was 70 years old when Haran was born and 130 years old when Abram was born (205 - 75 = 130); see Genesis 11:32; 12:4.

**Gen. 12:5** 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, Sarai, Lot, and "souls" (that is, servants) from Haran entered the land of Canaan.

**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.

Abram and the others passed through Canaan until they got to Shechem (also called Sichem, Sicar, and Nablus).

**Gen. 12:7** 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.

"God" appeared to Abram and said He would give the land to Abram's seed. Abram built an altar unto the LORD in the plain of Moreh in Shechem. "God" had appeared to Abram in Ur and now also in Canaan, sealing the covenant.

#### Spiritual Application

Terah represents the old man, the old nature. The house Abram left pictures Adam's house. The old man is a product of father Adam.

Abram represents the new creature. Leaving Ur pictures leaving the world or Babylon; that is, it pictures *consecration*. We consecrate to enter a land (heaven) that God will show us if we are faithful. There we will be kings and priests with the Lamb, be blessers of others, have immortality, etc.

The journey from Ur to Haran represents our Christian walk. Haran pictures the end of our earthly course. In other words, Ur represents the First Veil (consecration), and Haran represents the Second Veil (actual death).

After Terah (the old man) died at Haran, the Promised Land (heaven) could be entered. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 15:50); that is, we must *die* to seal our walk.

*This spiritual picture ends here. What Abram experienced in Canaan—the fact that he did not get his inheritance—pictures the Christian walk from another perspective.*

**Gen. 12:8** And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el 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.

A second stopping point in Canaan was a mountain between Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. Later Abram would come back to this point. He built a second altar there—a very significant altar. From there, Abram could see Jericho and the whole plain.

**Gen. 12:9** And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

**Gen. 12:10** 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.

**Gen. 12:11** 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:

**Gen. 12:12** 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.

**Gen. 12:13** 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 had been journeying south into Canaan. When famine came, he continued on into Egypt, which was known at that time for its fertility. His going to Egypt probably was not disapproved of God, but his strategy regarding Sarai was wrong. However, it was proper for him to subsequently return to Canaan, build an altar (at the site of the earlier second altar), receive assurance from God regarding the covenant, and start all over again.

The strategy with Sarai shows a frailty in Abram's character, but there is "none righteous [or perfect]," and he probably thought the subterfuge was wise (Rom. 3:10). Sarai was technically a stepsister of Abram (of Terah and another wife), as shown in Genesis 20:12. Abram thought the strategy would not only protect him but also assure that Sarai would continue to have him for a husband. If Abram did not do so, he should have taken the matter to the Lord in prayer before going down to Egypt. Incidentally, when Abram went to Egypt, it was about 150 years after the Great Pyramid was built. A son of Ham was probably the Pharaoh at the time.

Abram entered Canaan at age 75. Sarai, being 10 years younger, was age 65. The famine took some time to develop, so they would now be a little older, perhaps two or three years older.

**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.

**Gen. 12:15** The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

**Gen. 12:16** 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.

**Gen. 12:17** And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife.

**Gen. 12:18** 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?

The fact that the Egyptian people and the nobility noticed Sarai's beauty suggests that the commoners told Pharaoh of her beauty to get into his good graces. To be admired by Pharaoh at age 67 or so, Sarai was evidently regal in stature and demeanor as well as beautiful; that is, she had a natural-born nobility in both character and demeanor. Pharaoh took her into his house. He gave Abram servants and temporal goods for her sake, but he was not familiar with her. No doubt Pharaoh thought that ultimately he would marry Sarai, but the Lord providentially intervened with "great plagues" (plural) on Pharaoh's house. The nature of the plagues is unknown, but they were *sudden, startling, and very apparent*. Also, the plagues could have been linked to Sarai's appearance. At any rate, the *series* of plagues was convincing to Pharaoh, for he associated them with her presence in his house. Hence Pharaoh must have questioned Sarai and found out her relationship to Abram—they were husband and wife. Pharaoh called Abram and asked why he had not stated the relationship in the first place.

**Gen. 12:19** 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.

**Gen. 12:20** And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

Abram and Sarai were sent away—with all their servants and temporal goods retained and intact. Pharaoh's generosity suggests that he thought very highly of Sarai. And allowing Abram to keep the goods was like making an offering to the Lord for what Pharaoh had mistakenly done, even though the fault was not his. Pharaoh was, in effect, saying, "No more plagues, please." Incidentally, Sarai was not in Pharaoh's house very long, for, chronologically speaking, the plagues would have occurred in rapid succession.

**Q:** Based on Pharaoh's actions, wouldn't he have had some reverence for the Lord? He observed the providences and allowed them to soften his heart.

**A:** Yes, and that was especially true of Abimelech in the second incident in which Abraham said Sarah was his sister (Genesis chapter 20). With regard to Pharaoh, though, there was *some* self-interest to relinquish Sarai lest the plagues continue and increase in intensity.

**Q:** Why did the plagues come on Pharaoh's house and not on Abram?

**A:** The whole human race is condemned to death, so if a calamity comes on an individual, no inequity has been done. Calamities happen to "good" people and to "less good" people. Sometimes a calamity is of the Lord, sometimes it is of the Adversary, and sometimes it is a happenstance. In addition, Pharaoh had plenty of resources, so whatever the plagues were, he could recoup his losses.

**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.

**Gen. 13:2** And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

**Gen. 13:3** And he went on his journeys from the south even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai;

**Gen. 13:4** Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

Abram had been in Egypt, but verse 3 says that he went from the *south* to Bethel. Here “south” means the Negev, a desert in southern Israel. Actually Abram went north from Egypt.

Lot accompanied Abram to Egypt and back, and Abram now returned to the site of the second altar he had built earlier in northern Israel (on a mountain between Bethel on the west and Ai on the east). There Abram called on the name of the Lord God.

Why did Abram continue all the way to Bethel and the Ai area, where he had been prior to the famine? Upon returning from Egypt, he wanted reassurance that God was still favorably dealing with him. In other words, he wanted a reiteration of the covenant. It was providential that the site was on a mountain, for from that mountain, he had a good view of the land God had promised he would inherit. Going to Egypt because of the famine was like a side trip. Now he was returning to where he had last felt he was *definitely* in harmony with the Lord. (The Christian may do this too. If he sees a dead end or something fruitless, he then goes back on track to discern the next leading. He asks, “Where do I go from here?”)

**Gen. 13:5** And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

**Gen. 13:6** 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.

**Gen. 13:7** 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.

**Gen. 13:8** 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.

**Gen. 13:9** 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.

**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.

**Gen. 13:11** Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

The mountain altar was in a strategic location where, visually, there was a panoramic view. Hence the site was providentially overruled earlier so that Abram could now return to it. From the mountain vantage point, Lot could look down and see the fertile Jordan valley. Let us consider Abram’s statement letting Lot choose the land he wanted. With Abram *clearly* being the superior, the one God was dealing with, he could have dictated to Lot, “You go that way.” Instead Abram left matters in the Lord’s hands, took the more peaceful approach, and allowed Lot to select.

Abram had the better attitude. When he gave Lot the liberty of first choice of the land, Lot should have declined and let Abram, the senior, make the selection. However, Lot looked to see what appeared best and then chose the fertile plain of Jordan that was “well watered every where.” This incident occurred before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and, therefore, before the Dead Sea existed. Water was there as well as cities that no longer exist because they are under the Dead Sea. “Lot chose ... all the plain of Jordan”; that is, he wanted the *entire* plain.

Lot pictures the Great Company, and of course Abram represents the Little Flock. Abram never got the land he was to inherit. He was a stranger and a *wanderer*, whereas Lot took up *residence*. The only land Abram had was a burial plot he purchased in Hebron so that his family could be buried in the Land of Promise. Lot's attitude shows a trait of the Great Company class, who have one foot on earth and one foot in heaven. Lot *dwelled* in Sodom and was even recognized as a judge. He had an honorable position in the land, whereas Abram was a wanderer. In antitype, the "land of promise" is not secured until death or the Kingdom. The primary lesson of the Lot-Abram picture is that the Great Company do not, in reality, fully cut off earthly possessions.

There is a double picture here. The Ancient Worthies will get a temporary earthly inheritance in the Kingdom. They will be visibly seen before men as princes of the spiritual King and Queen (Psa. 45:16). Their permanent inheritance will not come until the end of the Kingdom Age, when the enemy will come up to the camp of the "saints" (Rev. 20:9). At that time, the Ancient Worthies will get their change from earthly to spiritual nature.

Up to this point, Lot had accompanied Abram everywhere. He had left Ur of the Chaldees, Haran, the land of Canaan, and Egypt and had gone with Abram back to this altar, whence they separated. Lot could have said, "I want to stay with you, Abram." Spiritually speaking, there comes a time when the Lord removes the offer of the prize from an individual and offers the crown to another.

Pertaining to Genesis 12:6 and 13:7, when Abram entered the land of Canaan, the Canaanite was already there. Abram was a stranger in that land. The curse on Canaan was that he would be a servant of the Shem seed, which included Abram, yet here the situation was reversed. How do we harmonize the seeming contradiction? The fulfillment was *future* from Abram's day. Nevertheless, the situation was a test of Abram's faith. As a test, God allows certain things to happen to His people and *seeming* delays to occur to His promises. The test is whether we have confidence in the Lord under those circumstances. Do we *really love* the Lord with all our heart—and without ulterior motives? Do we love Him for *His goodness and His character* rather than from the standpoint of what happens to us and what we think we should have?

The Perizzites were not driven out until Joshua's day—a long time later—and the beginning of the Period of the Judges, which was 876 years hence. (This incident with Abram and Lot occurred 400+ years after the Flood. To that time period are added the 430 years until the Exodus, 40 years in the wilderness, and 6 years until the land was divided.) In other words, more than half a millennium passed before the curse that Canaan would become a servant began to materialize.

**Gen. 13:12** Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan. Lot dwelled in the vale of Siddim (the valley of Sodom) on the plain of Jordan, which was on the other side of the Dead Sea but down near the southern end (Gen. 14:8). Of course the Dead Sea did not exist at this time, that is, not until Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Lot "pitched his tent toward Sodom," which was a city in the valley of Sodom. At this time, the plain was broad, extensive, "well watered," and fertile (Gen. 13:10).

**Gen. 13:13** But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

Sodom was notorious for sin and wickedness—"exceedingly" so. Lot, picturing the Great Company, made his choice of land according to the flesh. Spiritually, such a choice would be unfavorable to the new creature.

**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:

**Gen. 13:15** For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

Abram was on a mountain between Bethel and Ai (Gen. 12:8; 13:3,4). From there, he could see in all four directions. God promised that Abram and his seed would acquire all the land he could see—including the land Lot had just chosen. It is interesting that right after Lot chose what looked the best, God told Abram *privately*, “You will get *all that land!*”

Abram lived and died not possessing any of the land except the burial plot he purchased for his family, but after his death, the land was possessed in one sense. When the Israelites entered the land under Joshua, 9 1/2 tribes possessed Canaan, and 2 1/2 tribes got a portion of Transjordan. Hence, in one sense, Abram’s seed did occupy the land, although it was only a *temporary* abode at that time. In the future, Israel will *permanently* receive Canaan, etc.

“And he [God] gave him [Abraham] none inheritance in it [the land], no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he [God] promised that he would give it to him [Abraham] for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child” (Acts 7:5). Abraham received no inheritance in the land up to the time of his death, but his seed got a partial fulfillment of the promise. However, the primary fulfillment is future and *will include Abraham*.

“All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.” Compare Genesis 17:8, as follows: “And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, ... all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession.” In this case—and from the *literal* standpoint, not the spiritual—Abraham represents the Ancient Worthies. Abraham never got the land in the past but was a stranger all his life. When he gets the land in the Kingdom, it will not be for eternity, however, for he is an Ancient Worthy, and eventually the Ancient Worthies will receive a *spiritual* inheritance. Abraham will get the land temporarily, but it will be turned over to his seed when he gets the “heavenly city” he is looking for—at the end of the Millennium. Incidentally, Lot is not an Ancient Worthy, but he is probably of the comparable Great Company class of ages prior to the Gospel Age.

The term “thy seed *after thee*” is a further amplification and clarification of the original promise. *We grow with Scripture*. First, God lays down a broad premise, a generality; then further Scriptures progressively add details and distinctions.

**Gen. 13:16** 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.

From God’s standpoint, the “seed” of Abram can be numbered, but from man’s standpoint, the seed seems innumerable. Verse 16 is interesting, especially since, at this time, Abram *did not have even one child*.

At this point, only the “earth” was mentioned. Later the detail about the “stars” was added. The addition of details as the account progresses shows that the Bible was meant to be studied sequentially.

**Gen. 13:17** Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

Verse 17 applies to the Israeli side—in Canaan. Spiritually speaking, Canaan represents heaven,

the Land of Promise, and Abram pictures the Church. In the present life, we walk through the length and breadth of “Canaan” through the Bible, which describes the Promised Land of heaven. We walk with our imagination according to the word picture God gives us. And we have no inheritance in the present life. We must secure our inheritance by faith—at death.

**Gen. 13:18** 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.

Abram moved his tent to Hebron, to the plain of Mamre, and built an altar. From the mountain between Bethel and Ai, he went south to Hebron, which is 18 miles south of Jerusalem. Abram was brought back to Hebron when he died at age 175, for the cave of Machpelah was in this vicinity (Gen. 25:9).

**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;

**Gen. 14:2** That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar.

Four kings to the north warred with five kings in the Sodom-Gomorrah area, the plain of Jordan, the vale of Siddim. “Shinar” was Babylon, and Amraphel may be Hammurabi. Greater priority was given to Chedorlaomer as the leader. When a rebellion occurred in the thirteenth year, he gathered forces and came down to quell it (Gen. 14:4). Zoar was formerly called Bela. We will recall that Lot asked to flee to Zoar when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed.

**Gen. 14:3** All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea.

The Valley of Siddim became the site of the Dead Sea later.

**Gen. 14:4** Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

**Gen. 14:5** 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,

The four kings ruled over the five kings for 12 years. In the thirteenth year, the five kings rebelled. Elsewhere the land of Egypt is called the land of Ham, but this Ham was in Canaan. Ham was an abbreviation of Ammon. (The city known as Adam was a little farther north in Transjordan.) The Flood had occurred only 400 to 500 years earlier, so this was an early period of history when migration from Mount Ararat was still beginning. In other words, one of Ham’s children came down and founded the city called by his name.

**Gen. 14:6** And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto El-paran, which is by the wilderness.

Mount Seir was south of the Dead Sea, and Seir was the capital of Edom. El-paran was near Kadesh-Barnea and also in the vicinity of Petra, or Sela. From Petra, which was anciently a part of Edom, one can see Mount Hor, where Aaron died.

**Gen. 14:7** And they returned, and came to En-mishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezon-tamar.

The account is telling us that these incidents took place before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. On the way down to fight the five kings at Sodom, the four kings destroyed and pillaged villages and towns. The five kings and towns were in the Valley of Sodom, where Lot



was. The “valley” was a relatively level plain.

**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;

**Gen. 14:9** 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.

The battle between the five kings and the four kings took place.

**Gen. 14:10** 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.

The “slimepits” were composed of bitumen but in a soft, runny state more like quicksand. Bitumen is also like pitch or tar—gooey, sticky, and strong. A by-product of bitumen is sulfur. In addition, bitumen is medicinal. The Valley of Sodom was “well watered” with pockets of, basically, fresh water (Gen. 13:10). It is interesting that the Dead Sea, which existed subsequently, has a very high concentration of bitumen, and at one time, the bitumen even floated on the water. As a result of a study of the land, it is conjectural but reasonable to conclude that Noah’s Ark was built in this area. The natural slime, which was plentiful, would have been used to pitch the Ark.

Some fled to “the mountain,” which was actually a long mountain range. On both sides of the Dead Sea, there is a mountain range for a hundred miles or so. The Israeli or western side is high (Masada, etc.) but not as high as the range to the east, on the Transjordan side. This area is isolated. Mount Nebo and Madeba are at the north end of the Dead Sea, but the southern area is still desolate. The term “the mountain” referred to any part of the Transjordan mountain range. Jesus told the Israelites to flee to this mountain range when the Roman siege was relaxed (Luke 21:20,21). It is also where Sela, or Petra, is to the far south. In addition, Lot was told to flee to “the mountain” at the time of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, but he asked to go to Zoar instead (Gen. 19:17-22).

**Gen. 14:11** And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way.

Without lingering, the four kings looted and plundered and then went on their way north.

**Gen. 14:12** And they took Lot, Abram’s brother’s son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

The four kings took Lot, Haran’s son.

**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.

Here Abram was called a “Hebrew” for the first time. In fact, this verse is the first use of the term “Hebrew,” which comes from Eber (Gen. 11:15-17). Abram was a descendant of Eber.

**Gen. 14:14** 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.

Abram took his trained armed servants “born in his own house.” Wherever Abram sojourned,

the 318 servants went with him. It is interesting that they were trained not only as shepherds but also for battle. (As a foreigner in Canaan, Abram feared that others would have hostile intentions regarding his traveling up and down in “their” land.) Abram pursued the enemy to Dan, which was in northern Israel but not the extreme north at this time.

**Gen. 14:15** 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.

Abram continued to pursue the enemy up to the Damascus area in the far north.

**Gen. 14:16** And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

Abram was victorious. He brought back Lot and all of the goods, women, and people taken captive by the four kings.

The 318 servants of Abram were able to defeat the four “kings” and their armies. However, these kings ruled over towns or villages, not kingdoms. It was too soon after the Flood (only 400+ years) for there to be hundreds of thousands to defeat.

**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.

The Valley of Shaveh, the king’s dale, was just outside Jerusalem (near Absalom’s Tomb). The king of Sodom came out from there to meet Abram. Chedorlaomer was the leader of the enemy host. Abram was on his way south, coming back from the victory in the north.

**Gen. 14:18** And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

Melchizedek had bread and wine ready; hence he was anticipating Abram’s victorious return. He also knew that after the battle, Abram and his servants would need food for strength.

How startling that Melchizedek was called “*the* priest of the most high God,” a title that indicated he was *more important* than Abram. Melchizedek was in “Salem,” that is, Jerusalem.

Hebrews 7:1,2 brings out an important principle: Melchizedek was, first, the King of *righteousness* and, second, the King of *peace*. As Christians, we are to be first pure, then peaceable. “Melchizedek” signifies “king of righteousness”; “Salem” means “peace.”

**Gen. 14:19** And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

Melchizedek blessed Abram.

**Gen. 14:20** And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

Melchizedek blessed Abram, and Abram gave tithes to Melchizedek of all the goods taken. The mysterious personage Melchizedek was Shem, a patriarch. This identity was suggested by the Edgar brothers, John Taylor, and Piazzzi Smyth.

In Hebrews 7:1-22, the Apostle Paul showed that the Church is not under the Law or the

Levitical priesthood because a priesthood existed in the person of Melchizedek *before* Aaron lived, that is, *before* the Levitical priesthood.

Jesus was of the tribe of Judah and thus was not a son of Aaron. It was a hard truth for Jews to accept that Jesus could be a priest when he was not of the tribe of Levi. They failed to see that that which was literal was a *type*. Paul said that the fact a new Law Covenant will be made shows the Levitical priesthood will expire and be replaced by a different priesthood and a "new covenant" (Jer. 31:31-34). Paul went back before the existence of the Levitical priesthood to the existence of the mysterious personage Melchizedek, whose name means primarily "King of righteousness" and secondarily "King of peace." And Melchizedek was "the priest of the most high God."

Even though Levi was not yet born, he paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abram, for Levi was in Abram's seed. The lineage, in sequence, is as follows: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses.

Many Bible chapters discuss the Levitical priesthood, but the Melchizedek priesthood is more important, for Melchizedek represents Jesus. Melchizedek was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life" (Heb. 7:3). Two objections might be raised: (1) Jesus had a Father, and (2) Melchizedek could not be superior to Jesus. We reply, "Without father or mother" means "without descent." Since *only God* has no beginning of days, these terms regarding Melchizedek are used from a different perspective. *Only God* is without beginning and ending, whereas Jesus died (had an ending) and had a beginning. So that Melchizedek can be a type, the Bible purposely does not tell who his parents were, when he was born, and when he died. He did have a beginning, but the Bible does not say so. Of course these facts are stated regarding Shem, but the connection between Shem and Melchizedek is intentionally omitted in the Book of Genesis in order to make him a type of a new priesthood. Lesson: We should not overdraw types but are to consider only the facts given.

In his Epistle to the Hebrews, Paul elaborated on the Melchizedek priesthood, showing that it is an *unending* priesthood. Both the Old and the New Testaments say that Jesus is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (Psa. 110:4; Heb. 7:17). Aaron and his sons, the sons' sons, etc., *died*; and this priesthood *ends*. The Melchizedek priesthood will supplant the Aaronic/Levitical priesthood. The Bible gives details on the Levitical priesthood because it pertains to the *present life*—it is a *temporary* priesthood—whereas the Melchizedek priesthood is Jesus and the Church *in glory*. Aaron was only a priest, but Melchizedek was both king (*melchi*) and priest (*zadok*). *When glorified*, the Church will be both kings and priests.

**Gen. 14:21** And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

**Gen. 14:22** 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,

**Gen. 14:23** 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:

**Gen. 14:24** 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.

Abram declined the goods (the spoils) offered by the king of Sodom. Abram lived in Mamre, and now these three men (Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre) wanted to accompany him.

The Apostle Paul *accepted of* the brethren, but he did not *live off* them. It is wrong for ministers and priests of Christendom to live off their congregations.

**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.

After the war in which Abram was victorious and recovered Lot, the word of God came to him in a vision: “Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy *exceeding great* reward.” What was the basis of Abram’s needing this encouragement? He feared he would die childless, and being a stranger, he feared attacks by residents of the land. This incident occurred prior to Ishmael’s birth, which took place when Abram was 86 years old (Gen. 16:16). It was now ten years after Abram had entered Canaan, and he was 85 years old (Gen. 16:3).

**Gen. 15:2** 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?

**Gen. 15:3** And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

Since Abram was childless, he thought maybe Eliezer, his steward over the servants, would be his heir.

**Gen. 15:4** 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.

God corrected Abram and said that the heir would not be Eliezer but one born of his own bowels. It is easy to see how Sarai and Abram would now reason: Sarai is barren, so if the heir has to come from Abram’s bowels, it must be through another woman, that is, Hagar.

**Gen. 15:5** 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.

**Gen. 15:6** And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

The vision continued—and it was so real that it was as if God spoke direct to Abram. God said (paraphrased), “Thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven in number.” Abram *believed* God, and it was counted to Abram for *righteousness*. In other words, it was just as if God had actually spoken the words.

Verse 5 was the first mention of Abram’s seed being as the *stars of heaven*. Previously the seed was likened to only the *dust of the earth* (Gen. 13:16).

**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.

God gave Abram a strong assurance: “I brought you out of Ur to inherit this land.”

**Gen. 15:8** And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

Abram asked, “How may I know that I shall inherit the land?”

**Gen. 15:9** 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.

**Gen. 15:10** 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.

In answer to Abram's question in verse 8, God told him to take the following, which are to be calculated in symbolic time using the principle of a day for a year:

Heifer	3 years old
She goat	3 years old
Ram	3 years old
Turtledove	1 year old
Pigeon	<u>1 year old</u>
	11 years x 360 = 3,960 years

The 3,960 years extended from the original promise to Abram ten years earlier, when he was 75 years old (or 2045 BC) to 1914, when Chaim Weizmann was told that if he could invent a means of supplying England with TNT to fight the Germans (and he did), he would be remembered and Israel would be looked on with favor as a homeland (Gen. 12:4).

Abram was 75 years old when he entered Canaan, and he was 86 years old when Hagar bore Ishmael—an 11-year difference. No doubt Abram and Sarai thought the 11 years indicated by the sacrifice were 11 *literal* years, and Sarai thought the timing would be right if Hagar could have a son to fulfill 11 literal years. (Years can be literal, but days are symbolic. Jeremiah talked of 70 literal years of desolation of the land while the Israelites were in captivity.) The implication of 11 “years” in verses 9 and 10 renewed the hope of Abram and Sarai for a child. And as a result of World War I, hope was given to the Jew of a homeland. With this sign (not the fulfillment), Jews began to return to Palestine.

Abram took the animals (heifer, she goat, and ram) and divided them in the middle, *separated* them, and laid the matching pieces together with a little space in between. In other words, he chopped the backbone in half and laid the pieces parallel to each other. The birds were cut down the backbone and opened up, but they were left as *one piece*; that is, the halves of the birds remained *joined*. The halves symbolized the Old and New Testaments, which are not separate. Just as the two Testaments are bound together in the Bible, so they are joined figuratively as well. Another example in Scripture where animals were associated with time periods was Joseph's dream of seven fat and then seven lean cows.

The sacrifice (of a heifer 3 years old, a she goat 3 years old, a ram 3 years old, and a turtledove and a pigeon, each a year old), showing 11 x 360, brings us up to AD 1914 and answered Abram's query, “How shall I know that I shall inherit the land?” (verse 8). As a result of World War I, the Turkish rule over Palestine was broken. In 1917, the Balfour Declaration was signed, giving Jews the right to colonize land in Palestine.

Heifer (female cow) represents the Ancient Worthies.

She goat (female goat) represents the “Great Company” of ages prior to Christ (the school of the prophets).

Ram (male sheep) represents Jesus.\*

Turtledove (male or female—sex is hard to determine with these birds, but probably a male) represents the Little Flock.†

Pigeon (male or female—sex is hard to determine with these birds, but probably a male) represents the Great Company.

Note: The following footnotes give proofs for the interpretation of the symbols.

\*John the Baptist called Jesus “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The Apostle Paul said, “Christ our passover [lamb] is sacrificed for us” (1 Cor. 5:7). A ram was the central or *focal* point. Chronologically speaking,

a ram (Jesus) was *between* the development of these four classes when the First Advent occurred. It was 4,128 years from Adam's creation to Jesus' birth, plus 33 1/2 more years to the Crucifixion. Since less than 2,000 years have expired following the Crucifixion, the first two classes are top-heavy (years prior to Christ) versus the last two classes (years after Christ).

†In Song 6:9, Jesus called the Little Flock “my dove, my undefiled [one].” One difference between those prior to Christ and those after Christ in regard to being more-than-overcomers is that Christians have been peacemakers. And the dove is a symbol of peace, gentleness, and purity. The dove that returned to Noah in the Ark with a branch represents Christ, and the branch shows peace and reconciliation. The Ancient Worthies often fought battles; in contrast, peacemaking was urged by Jesus, for the Gospel Age is a different calling. Jesus said, “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” (Matt. 26:52). We are to be *peacemakers* with *faith in God*. Jesus is the *Prince of Peace* to the Christian Church.

Incidentally, the advice of John the Baptist to the people when the time of trouble at the end of the Jewish Age was imminent was as follows (Luke 3:9-14):

1. To the soldiers: Do violence to no man. Do not accuse anyone falsely. Be content with your wages.
2. To the publicans (tax collectors): Collect only what you are supposed to collect.
3. To the people: If you have two coats, give one coat to someone who has none. The same principle applied to food.

The heifer and the she goat classes were developed simultaneously. The turtledove and the pigeon classes were developed simultaneously. The heifer and the turtledove classes were more-than-conquerors. The she goat and the pigeon classes were conquerors.

**Gen. 15:11** And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

Abram drove away the fowl that tried to tear pieces of carcass flesh to consume it. To have let the fowl do so would signify breaking the contract. It would have broken the continuity of thought and distracted from the meaning. (For the same reason, babies should not be allowed to cry in meetings.) The fowl would also have desecrated or polluted the arrangement.

The “fowl” picture Satan and the fallen angels. (We are reminded of the Parable of the Sower, in which fowl came along and devoured seed that fell by the wayside.) Abram's driving away the fowl is comparable to the Christian's repelling evil thoughts and distractions. For the *aged* Abram to run around trying to ward off the fowl required *effort*, and it takes *effort* on our part as well.

**Gen. 15:12** And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

The sun (a symbol of favor) was going down. The woman of Revelation 12:1, representing the true Church, was “clothed with the sun,” that is, the gospel. Specifically here in Genesis, the “sun” represents the favor Abram received in having the vision of the 3,960 years. Before the sun had sunk below the horizon (verse 17), Abram was given an assurance regarding his inheritance. But as the sun was going down and it was growing darker, he was getting the sensation of danger.

**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;

**Gen. 15:14** And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

**Gen. 15:15** And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

Abram was told of trouble for his seed and affliction for 400 years, but his seed would be liberated after that period of time. This communication was a hint to Abram, if he heeded it, that the 11 years had to be symbolic, for the 400 years would occur within the 11 “years.”

Abram was told that he would soon have a seed, that his seed would have problems for 400 years, and that he would live to “a good old age” (but not 400 years). The seed would enter the Promised Land after the 400 years.

For Abram’s seed to be a “stranger” (verse 13) meant being a foreign *resident* in the land. In contrast, a “sojourner” just passed through or stayed temporarily and thus lacked rights; that is, he had no roots in the land. God was saying to Abram, “You are a stranger in the land as far as others are concerned but not from my standpoint. This land is yours. You have rights in the land, but it will not appear that way. Later you will inherit the land.”

Abram was told his seed would be a stranger in Egypt, and for 215 years, the Israelites were in Egypt. Also, from the covenant with Abram to Jacob’s entering Egypt was a period of 215 years. Hence a total of 430 years, starting when the covenant was first made with Abram, passed until the Exodus. The “four hundred years” here are *round* numbers, for Exodus 12:40,41 and Galatians 3:17 specifically state the time period as 430 years. God promised Abram the land when he stepped into Canaan, but Abram did not inherit it then. Abram was a sojourner, and the period of sojourning of the Israelites was 430 years.

From the covenant with Abram to Jacob’s entering Egypt = 215 years  
From Jacob’s entering Egypt to the Exodus = 215 years

Notice, however, that verse 13 says the *affliction* would last 400 years, and that statement is more accurate. When Abram first entered Canaan, he was not especially afflicted. The affliction began with the birth of Isaac 25 years later, which is only a five-year difference from the round number of 400 years (or 405 years). At the end of the 400 years, the land where the Israelites dwelled (that is, Egypt) would be judged. And what happened? There were plagues on Egypt, destruction in the Red Sea, etc., and the Israelites left Egypt with “*great substance*” (all their own cattle and possessions plus gifts bestowed by the Egyptian people).

**Gen. 15:16** But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

The Amorites were considered the residents of Canaan, probably because they were more populous than the other peoples there. The Amorites regarded Abram, etc., as sojourners with no rights.

The “fourth generation” was 400 years, a hundred years being equivalent to a generation. In Scripture, a “generation” can be 40, 70, 100, or 120 years. The four generations in Egypt were Levi, Kohath, Amram, and Moses.

“For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.” This statement is an example of God’s foreknowledge. He knew not only that their iniquity *would come to the full* but also *when*.

Hence this was *definite* foreknowledge. Also, this statement shows that there are occupation rights. (A more up-to-date example is “squatter’s rights,” which were recognized in the Western part of the United States in the past.) The Amorites occupied the land at that time and thus had rights. God told Abram, “If you do as I say and go to Canaan, I will give you the land.” That promise was based on God’s foreknowledge that iniquity would come to the full for the Amorites, but until then, they had occupation rights. In warfare, one who defeats the enemy and occupies the land obtains a right to occupancy. Iniquity in full results in forfeiting occupancy rights. Today Israel has occupancy rights by defeating enemies, but the enemy (the displaced) dictates the terms—improperly.

**Gen. 15:17** 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.

Abram saw a smoking furnace and a shining light pass between the pieces of the animals. This development showed God’s acceptance—as if God was going between the pieces. Abram had already fulfilled his part of the covenant by leaving Ur and going to Canaan. The covenant was conditional until Abram entered Canaan, but now it was unconditional.

The passing of a smoking furnace (representing God) between the pieces of the sacrifice signified the ratifying of the covenant. Jeremiah 34:18-20 provides helpful information by referring to a prior sacrifice in which a calf had been cut down the middle with each part being laid opposite to the other. The individuals passed between the pieces to show their agreement to abide by the covenant. Later, after disobedience, God criticized Judah and said punishment would come for violating the covenant.

Abram did not walk through the animal pieces because he had already fulfilled his part of the covenant by leaving Ur and his kindred. It now remained for God to fulfill His part of the covenant. Hence the smoking furnace and the burning lamp represented that God was going through the animal pieces. God thus ratified the covenant that was *previously* made with Abram. (God did not inaugurate the covenant at that time, for the fulfillment was *far future*—even future to today.) Abram had a test of faith and confidence in God’s promises, and as with the Christian, the reward was not received in the present life. Another point: Because no man can see God and live, His presence was shown representatively by the smoking furnace and the burning lamp.

How or why was the “smoking furnace” a representation of Jehovah? Smoke showed God’s dedication of both the Tabernacle of Moses and Solomon’s Temple, events that were future to Abram’s day. God spoke to Moses out of the fiery pillar of the Tabernacle cloud. The cloud was a “pillar of fire by *night*” to guide the Israelites with a luminescence. If the cloud moved at night, the Israelites were to travel, following the cloud. That same cloud was a cloud of smoke (that is, a *dark* cloud) by day. With the cloud being fire at night and a little darker by day, a “smoking furnace” representation of God led the Israelites through the Wilderness of Sin.

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet” (Psa. 119:105). God’s Word is a token of His presence. Hence the “burning lamp” going between the pieces, in connection with the smoking furnace, was a confirmation of the symbolic picture.

Abram had a vivid dream originally, but he actually walked through the animal pieces to fend off the fowl lest they pollute the sacrifice. Now God Himself was ratifying the covenant, thus assuring Abram that the covenant *would be fulfilled*.

**Comment:** Happening at night, this event would have been very dramatic. Abram had sacrificed the animals earlier in the day and for hours chased away the fowl. Now that it was dark, the sight of the smoking furnace and the burning lamp would have been very



impressive—awesomely reverential.

**Gen. 15:18** 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:

Abram's seed would get the land from the "river of Egypt" to the "great river" Euphrates. Twice previously God had promised Abram the land (Gen. 12:7; 13:15). Now He reiterated the promise again, and each time there was an added detail.

Previously God told Abram he would get all the land he could see by looking north, south, east, and west. Now he was told that the boundaries would be far greater than what he could see, that is, from what is presently the Suez Canal to the river Euphrates in Lebanon. Hence Lebanon will eventually go to Abraham and his seed. Under Solomon's reign, the Euphrates was the northern boundary, and it will be again.

In connection with Joshua's giving the land to the 12 tribes, the "river of Egypt" was the Wadi El Arish (Josh. 15:4,47). A wadi is normally a dry riverbed, but it flows with water at certain times of the year when the rains come. In other words, a wadi is not a continuously flowing body of water.

In contrast, the "river of Egypt" here in verse 18 was actually a river that had water year-round. This river could not be the Nile because prophecies regarding Egypt would bar such an interpretation. Therefore, this "river of Egypt" refers to a river that was dug out to make the Suez Canal, which goes from the Mediterranean Sea to the Gulf of Suez.

**Gen. 15:19** The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,

**Gen. 15:20** And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,

**Gen. 15:21** And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

In verses 19-21, ten peoples are mentioned who will be displaced from the land when Abram receives his inheritance. Abram will get the land from the Suez Canal to the Euphrates, and that land was then occupied by these ten peoples.

The ten peoples are a reminder of the ten toes of the image in Daniel chapter 2, which will be displaced by the stone (Christ's Kingdom). After the stone strikes the image, it will grow until eventually it fills the whole earth. From Jerusalem, or Israel, will radiate God's blessings. Before the stone strikes the image, it represents the Church in glory, but after it strikes the image, the stone will center down here. The stone kingdom will be Israelitish under the Ancient Worthies. "Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth" (Zech. 8:3). "In those days ... ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you" (Zech. 8:23). The Jews referred to here are *Jews indeed*, not just Jews outwardly.

**Gen. 16:1** Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

**Gen. 16:2** 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.

**Gen. 16:3** 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.

**Gen. 16:4** And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

**Gen. 16:5** 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.

**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.

Abram was now 85 years old. (He was 75 when he entered Canaan, and as verse 3 states, ten years had passed.) Abram and Sarai would have felt that, based on their ages, the animal sacrifices of Genesis chapter 15 indicated Abram was to have a seed 11 years after entering Canaan. Moreover, God had told Abram that neither his steward Eliezer nor any other servant born in his house would be the heir of the promise—the heir must come from his *own* bowels. The events of the sixteenth chapter occurred immediately after those of the fifteenth chapter. When Sarai remained barren, she felt the covenant had to be fulfilled anyway, and on time, so she suggested that seed be conceived through Hagar to represent her.

In the time setting of verses 1-6, Hagar was pregnant; that is, Ishmael had not been born yet. While expecting, Hagar looked at Sarai with contempt for being barren. Hagar felt superior. Thus conflict already began to set in between what would eventually be the Isaac seed and the Ishmael seed.

Abram was the master of the servants. Hence Hagar should have had respect for Abram and Sarai and not have allowed feelings of contempt to surface. Also, arrangements were different back there in that it was permissible for one to have a “concubine.”

We should keep in mind that Sarah is highly commended in Hebrews 11:11, “Through *faith* also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed ... because she judged him [God] faithful who had promised.” If we had been in Abram’s or Sarai’s place, her suggestion would have seemed reasonable, especially after the passage of ten years, when they were both quite old.

Verse 2 also shows Sarai’s faith in God. Her statement that God had restrained her from bearing indicates she was relying on His providence. When unable to bear a child that had to come from Abram’s bowels and the years seemed to be expiring, she felt it was God’s will for her not to be the mother. In her zeal to fulfill God’s promise—and her faith was strong in that promise—she offered Hagar. So even though the decision was wrong, Sarai’s heart was right. Hence Sarai should not be faulted.

As a maid, Hagar should not have shown contempt for her mistress and despised her for being barren. Hagar was to abide by the rules of the household (verse 9). Later (verse 10) Hagar was also given a promise that her seed would be multiplied *exceedingly*. So, in the final analysis, any shortcomings of Hagar and Sarai are overlooked or relatively minimized. The seed of Ishmael is a different story, however, for there the Scriptures do find fault.

Sarai misread the situation, but we probably would have done the same thing if we had been in her shoes. She thought, “I am barren. Abram is to have a seed of his own bowels, and perhaps that will occur next year, the eleventh year.” The whole situation was overruled because of a typical and prophetic significance.

Sarai tried to shift the blame for Hagar to Abram, and Abram tried to shift the blame back to Sarai. When Sarai was given the responsibility for the decision, she overreacted. Hagar should

have been reprimanded, but instead Sarai dealt harshly with her. However, Sarai did not put Hagar out—Hagar fled *voluntarily*. For Hagar to flee when she was pregnant shows some character, for a woman in that condition would be especially susceptible to danger. Hence she was an individual with backbone. She did not abjectly submit to Sarai but fled.

**Gen. 16:7** And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

By sending His “angel” to Hagar, God was reasonable with her. Her independence was passed on to Ishmael, a “wild man” (verse 12). Incidentally, the Muslims honor Abraham but think the promise goes through Ishmael, not Isaac.

Hagar was fleeing to Shur, which was en route to Egypt; that is, as an Egyptian, she intended to go back home. She was taking the inland desert route that Moses later used. Hagar got into Abram’s household when he and Sarai had gone down to Egypt. The king, admiring Sarai’s beauty, had wanted to marry her until he learned that she was already married. Abram and Sarai were sent out of Egypt with animals and men and maid servants (Gen. 12:16,20).

**Gen. 16:8** 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.

**Gen. 16:9** And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

**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.

**Gen. 16:11** 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.

**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.

Hagar was honored with a promise from the angel. He addressed her as “Sarai’s maid” and told her to return and submit to Sarai; that is, Hagar was given certain promises, but they were not to be overread, for she was still Sarai’s maid.

The angel gave Hagar a consoling promise: “I will multiply thy seed *exceedingly*.” Then the angel told the name of the child to come: Ishmael. The point was that Ishmael was not an ordinary birth or child but would be someone to reckon with in the future. Notice that the angel used the pronoun “I,” which indicates he was the Logos, the mouthpiece of Jehovah, the Word of God.

“The LORD hath heard thy affliction.” God commiserated with Hagar in connection with Sarai’s harsh treatment that had caused her to flee. Even though Hagar was really at fault for despising Sarai, Sarai had overreacted.

Ishmael would be a “wild man.” “His hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him.” The Ishmaelites are difficult to reason with. The Arabs can be traced to lineages other than just Ishmael, and they are more a religion than a tribe. However, many Arabs do come from Ishmael and have this trait. They will cut off their nose to spite their face, yet they can be very hospitable—just don’t cross them. The prophecy about Ishmael indicated there would be continual conflict of disagreement, and that has been true. If the Arabs could really unify, they would wipe out Israel with a proportion of 100:1, but they fight among themselves.

“He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.” Generally, the Israelites settled in Canaan west of Jordan, and the Arabs were east of Jordan, one over against the other. With the Ishmaelites bordering Israel, the two were adjoining “neighbors.” Hence they came in contact with each other.

**Gen. 16:13** 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?

Hagar called God by the name “Thou God seest me.” The next part of the verse should be a statement, not a question: Hagar said, “I have also looked after Him that seeth me.” The name “Ishmael” means “God shall hear” and hence is a proof, as well as the name by which Hagar addressed God, that she was acknowledging God’s recognition of her in her distress. Hagar was appreciative: “I will look after Him who has now recognized me.” The NIV reads, “I have now seen the One who sees me.”

**Gen. 16:14** Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

The well where the angel had found Hagar (verse 7) was called Beer-lahai-roi, meaning “the well of Him that liveth and seeth me.” The name is another confirmation that God saw Hagar in her plight. The well was between Kadesh and Bered, which was probably Kadesh-Barnea in southern Israel on the way to Egypt.

**Gen. 16:15** And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son’s name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

Hagar gave birth and called her son Ishmael according to the angel’s earlier instruction.

**Gen. 16:16** And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

Abram was 86 years old when Ishmael was born. Since he was 75 when he entered Canaan, it was now 11 years later, which was *seemingly* right on time for the offering of Genesis 15:9, that is, 3 + 3 + 3 + 1 + 1. In other words, the time setting was 11 years after God had confirmed the covenant to Abram when he first entered Canaan. The offering of the three animals and the two birds had been made one year earlier, or ten years after entering Canaan.

Hagar fled the first time of her *own* initiative. The second time she was cast out (Gen. 21:9-14). Paul said that the second time was a type. As Hagar, the bond woman, was cast out, so the Law was changed as regards the new or Christian calling. Under the Law, the natural seed was developed. Under the gospel, an “Isaac” seed was developed. When Hagar was cast out, the new call was open to both Jews and Gentiles instead of just Jews, as was previously the case.

The Apostle Paul identified Hagar with Mount Sinai; hence he pointed out the Law Covenant type, which culminated with the second fleeing, as beginning at Mount Sinai (Gal. 4:22-25). The second fleeing occurred when Jesus cast off the nation of Israel: “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate” (Matt. 23:38).

**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.

Abram was now 99 years old. Hence it was 13 years after Ishmael’s birth that God again confirmed the covenant with Abram. Thirteen years was a *long* time to wait in silence.

God instructed Abram to walk upright and to be blameless; that is, “*Continue to walk upright.*” (The covenant was already unconditional.) Abram had been faithful a long time, ever since leaving Ur, and now he was told to keep on being faithful. We do not know how long he lived in Haran before Terah died. In fact, we do not even know how old Abram was when he left Ur, but he was 75 when he left Haran and entered Canaan. Much that Abram did was typical—like Elijah. But with Elijah the pictures are sequential, and with Abram they are separate.

**Gen. 17:2** And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

God repeated the covenant. Notice the phrase “between *me* and thee.” Several times this same phrase is mentioned in chapter 17, and always God’s name is first (verses 7, 10, and 11).

**Gen. 17:3** And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

Abram prostrated himself on the ground to hear further what God had to say.

**Gen. 17:4** As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

The covenant was *unilateral* (one-sided) and *unconditional*. God *would do* such and such. He was saying in effect, “My responsibility now is to fulfill *my* part of the promise, and I intend to fulfill it”—but He did not say *WHEN*.

**Gen. 17:5** 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.

God changed Abram’s name to Abraham. With “ab” meaning “father,” Abram means “high or exalted father,” and Abraham has the thought of “father of a multitude.”

**Comment:** It is interesting that Abram, the original name, and the new name both contain the thought of “father,” the latter giving a further detail. He was named from birth for a purpose, or stated another way, his name was overruled even at birth.

**Reply:** Abraham would look back later and realize there was a greater significance. The covenant was elaborated on, and so was his name.

**Gen. 17:6** And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

“I will make thee *exceeding* fruitful.” Ishmael had already been born, and Isaac was born later. After Sarah died, Abraham married Keturah and had six more sons (his daughters are not mentioned) (Gen. 25:1,2). God promised that Ishmael would be multiplied *exceedingly* (Gen. 16:10), and so would Isaac. However, if we put ourselves in Abraham’s place, we can see that he had to exercise *much faith*. At this time, Ishmael seemed to be his only heir, yet God said that Abraham would be very fruitful.

The term “kings” has a double application. (1) Abraham is the “father” of the faithful spiritual class. Those who have the spirit of Abraham in the Gospel Age have spiritual promises; they give up earthly hopes in their desire to be with Jesus. In other words, the “kings” are the Church. (2) The Ancient Worthies will be princes in all the earth in the Kingdom. A prince is an heir-apparent, and thus can be considered a ruler or a king. The glorified Church will have the Ancient Worthies as their mouthpieces. The world will look to the Ancient Worthies for instruction, not to the Church, for the latter will be invisible. Stated another way, The Christ,

The King of that age, will be invisible. The word of the Ancient Worthies will be *law*, for the law will go forth from Zion and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem, that is, by appointed human agencies (Isa. 2:3). The principle is similar to Jesus' being the Word, or Logos, of the Father; the words he taught at the First Advent were like the words of *God*.

“Princes” are “kings” in another sense too. Daniel 12:1 says that Michael, “the great prince,” will stand up for Daniel’s people (Israel) and deliver them when Gog comes down. If Michael the Prince is in reality the King, then sometimes “prince” can be equated with “king.” Therefore, the “princes” in the earth in the Kingdom (that is, the Ancient Worthies) will be like kings as far as the world is concerned.

**Gen. 17:7** 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.

**Gen. 17:8** 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.

**Gen. 17:9** And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.

Notice the repetition: “thee and thy seed after thee”; “unto thee, and to thy seed after thee” (twice); and “thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.” Although Abraham was now a stranger in Canaan, all the land would someday be given to him and to his seed after him, and God would be *their* God. In other words, the inheritance and fulfillment would not occur in Abraham’s day.

From a *natural* standpoint, Abraham’s seed after him did go into Canaan and possess it but not in the fullest sense. Abraham died, not having received the inheritance. Since God is not a God of the dead but a God of the *living*, He will give Canaan to a *live* Abraham. Abraham died without getting the land, and since he *must* receive it, the implication is that he will be raised from death to get his inheritance. The statement in Genesis 15:13 that Abraham’s seed would be afflicted for 400 years is another proof that the inheritance would not come in his day back there but when he is *resurrected*.

Hebrews chapter 11 proves Abraham (and the other Ancient Worthies) concluded that the fulfillment of the promise was a long way off and not in the present life. “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.... These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them *afar off*, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they ... declare plainly that they seek ... a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God ... hath prepared for them a city” (Heb. 11:10,13,14,16).

*Temporarily* in the Kingdom, the Ancient Worthies will be involved down here. Jesus said that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, etc., will be in the Kingdom, but the scribes and the Pharisees will be thrust out (Luke 13:28). Abraham will get the land temporarily and after that, a permanent spiritual inheritance: a “heavenly” city.

“Unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.” In one sense, the “seed” after Abraham were his natural posterity who actually entered the land; but in the fuller sense, the “seed” will inherit the land in the Kingdom, especially when the Ancient Worthies get their spiritual inheritance. Under Joshua, land boundaries were given, but under Ezekiel, the new Kingdom boundaries were given, plus a new city, temple, and conditions. Those born in Israel—even if they are Arabs—will have a right to the land in the Kingdom, but in name, the land will be called

“Israel” and the Kingdom will be Israelitish. The temporary Kingdom “camp” condition of the Ancient Worthies will be changed to a heavenly condition at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20:9). The Abrahamic promise is like a *tiny* acorn that will grow into a *giant* oak.

**Gen. 17:10 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.**

**Gen. 17:11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.**

**Gen. 17:12 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.**

**Gen. 17:13 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.**

**Gen. 17:14 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.**

Circumcision has a typical significance. Paul referred to the Book of Genesis in many epistles and gave the deeper meaning. Hence much of Genesis is *spiritual*, not just natural.

The Jewish Christian thought circumcision was mandatory for the Christian (whether Jew or Gentile), but Paul showed that when Abraham was called at age 75, he was not even circumcised (see Romans chapter 4). *Years later*, at age 99, he was circumcised. Circumcision was to be a sign or token of the covenant made with Abraham. Hence the Jewish people were recognized as a circumcised people. Back there sharp stones were used to circumcise the males.

*Spiritual* circumcision is consecration, the cutting off of earthly hopes, aims, and ambitions. When one consecrates, he enters into a covenant. The “sign” of this covenant is the cutting off of the old man with his deeds and the putting on of the new man. It is a cutting off of the “excess” (we are still in the flesh) and leading a changed life.

Abraham was 99 when circumcised. From then on, however, every male child who was born was to be circumcised on the eighth day. Hence a *time* period was established for the natural Israelite, and circumcision was to remind them that they were different from the uncircumcised Gentiles. The term “eighth day” is significant and can be considered from several aspects, some of which follow:

(1) Those who enter the eighth day, the age beyond the Kingdom, will have passed the test of the “little season” and hence will live forever (Rev. 20:3). They will be thoroughly “circumcised,” thoroughly proved fit for life, and thus be sons of God as Adam was.

(2) The eighth day begins a new week. Seven days, the past week, represents the past life. The eighth day is the turning of a new leaf, that is, consecration. Therefore, the eighth day symbolizes a beginning. The context indicates *what* beginning, and *when*? For the Christian, the seven days are the old life, and the eighth day marks the beginning of the new consecrated life. Also, from the standpoint of a *class* (not individuals), the eighth day began at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the waiting disciples, granting them official recognition.

(3) Regarding the world in the Kingdom, there will be seven stages just as there are in the Gospel Age; that is, there will be a succession of development. The new age, the age beyond the Kingdom, will be the eighth day. Those who attain the eighth day will be like the angels

and not die anymore, being children of the resurrection in the fullest sense (Luke 20:35,36).

(4) The eighth day is also the fifty thousandth year, the year following the seven Creative Days (7 x 7,000). This eighth day is the Jubilee of Jubilees, which signals an unending “day” of everlasting life.

(5) The number 8 signifies “resurrection” or “newness” in some pictures.

“He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised.” “Every man child ... that is born in the house, or bought [of any stranger] with money ... *must ... be circumcised.*” In other words, natural male Jewish children, as well as male children of servants, had to be circumcised. Male servants who were purchased as adults also had to be circumcised. The antitype applies to the Kingdom and signifies that both Jews and Gentiles must be spiritually circumcised. Gentiles will have to become Israelitish. Notice the penalty for failure to be circumcised: *death*.

**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.

The meaning of both Sarai and Sarah is “princess.” “Sarai” was the birth name back in Ur of the Chaldees, as was “Abram.” When these names were transferred to Hebrew, an “h” was added. “Abraham” is a little more significant in the Hebrew than “Abram,” although essentially they are the same.

**Gen. 17:16** 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.

God told Abraham that he would have a son through Sarah. He also said, “She shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.” With the lineage being Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), and Jacob’s 12 sons, verse 16 is a reference to natural Israel—but also to spiritual Israel from another standpoint.

When Isaac and Ishmael are considered, the comparison is different. The promise to Ishmael is given in verse 20. He would be multiplied exceedingly and would beget 12 *princes*, but through Isaac would come *kings*. The Isaac seed will reign with Jesus, spiritually speaking, and the Ishmael or princely seed will be the Ancient Worthies. The distinction in rank is significant. And through Esau (or Edom) will come *dukes* (Gen. 36:15-18).

**Gen. 17:17** 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?

**Gen. 17:18** And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

At news of the announcement, Abraham said in his heart (not aloud), “Shall a child be born to me when I am 100 years old and Sarah is 90?” He realized that a double miracle would be required: with himself and with Sarah.

God was telling Abraham these things. Abraham could have heard a voice from a cloud or from the air or in his inner ear. Or he could have been in a tent and heard the voice. Whatever the method, Abraham’s audible response was, “O that Ishmael might live!” What does this account tell us about Abraham? He was 99 years old (verse 24). The promise was originally made when he was 75—24 years earlier. He had first thought that his chief servant, Eliezer, would be the heir, but God said the seed would come out of Abraham’s loins. Then he and



Sarah thought that perhaps the seed was to come through Abraham but not through Sarah, so 13 years earlier (verse 25) he conceived Ishmael through Hagar the concubine. Abraham's comment here in verse 18 indicates that he was resigned to Ishmael's being the seed. He was saying, "I will be satisfied if Ishmael is the seed." Abraham was not pressing the matter but was simply expressing a spirit of resignation and submission. Subconsciously, too, he was probably thinking of Sarah's age. It would be a greater miracle for Sarah to bear a child now than for him to sire one, for he had fathered Ishmael when 86 years old. However, Abraham probably felt he, too, could no longer have children; that is, he probably became impotent after having Ishmael. And Sarah was definitely barren. Therefore, the miracle with Abraham and Sarah was *twofold*. (Many men over 100 had children both before and after Abraham, so impotency seemed to be his situation.)

**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.

God ignored Abraham's response and said in effect, "Sarah shall bear a son indeed (because *I* have said it), and his name shall be Isaac." Notice that *God* named Isaac, whose name means "laughter." The thought of laughter, a play on words, is pure joy in both the natural and the spiritual sense. Abraham laughed within himself at this current announcement, and later Sarah laughed (Gen. 18:12). After Sarah was barren for so many years, we can imagine her joy at the thought of having a son. Her laughter would become explosive with joy—to have a beautiful son in her old age! Her inward laughter became *outward* laughter. And of course spiritually speaking, joy and laughter will come to all the families of the earth through Isaac.

God continued, "I will establish my covenant with *him* [Isaac], ... and with *his* [Isaac's] seed after him." God had already established the covenant with Abraham, and He would confirm or reaffirm the same covenant with Isaac. The expression "his seed after him" showed that Isaac would also have children and that the covenant was everlasting and would be for many "nations" (verse 16).

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

God told Abraham that He would bless Ishmael and make him fruitful and multiply him exceedingly. The same promise was made earlier to Hagar (Gen. 16:10-12) when God told her to return and submit to Sarah. Now God added a detail: Ishmael would beget "twelve princes."

Just as Isaac was a *miraculous* seed, so the calling of the Church, the seed of promise, is *miraculous*. For the Church to be changed from human to divine is a miracle of the highest order.

**Gen. 17:21** But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

Sarah would bear Isaac at "this *set time* in the next year," that is, not in a calendar year from that date but in *nine months*.

**Gen. 17:22** And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

God "left off talking" with Abraham and "went up" from him, but how? If the Logos was speaking to Abraham, there could have been a visual representation of the Logos rising up to heaven (compare the account of the angel with Manoah in Judges 13:20). However, Abraham

probably heard a voice explaining all these things, and then the voice trailed off or upward—it receded—at the end. In other words, God’s voice got fainter and fainter.

**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.

**Gen. 17:24** And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

**Gen. 17:25** And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

**Gen. 17:26** In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.

**Gen. 17:27** And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

Now we get a time perspective. The whole chapter took place *in one day* (“the selfsame day”—verse 26). After hearing all the things God had to say, Abraham performed the circumcision on the very same day—according to the instruction given earlier that day.

Abraham must have been extremely busy, for he had 318 male servants of battle age plus younger males (Gen. 14:14). Circumcision was a quick procedure. Each one stepped up to the rock and was circumcised with a small sharp rock on that larger rock. Abraham was 99 years old when he was circumcised, and Ishmael was 13. Abraham would have circumcised himself last so that he could supervise the others first.

**Comment:** Probably Abraham alone heard God’s voice, so the respect the servants rendered to Abraham in submitting to circumcision was remarkable. Circumcision was something new, and yet all obeyed Abraham, their master. The servants did not know whether this procedure would cripple them.

**Comment:** If Abraham circumcised Ishmael first, his own son and only heir, that would be an example for the servants, who would reason that the rite must be safe, for Abraham would not harm his own son.

**Reply:** Yes, Abraham circumcised Ishmael first and himself last.

One who is circumcised cannot resume normal duties for three days, and it takes about a week to be healed completely, especially an adult. About a million male Israelites were circumcised many years later at the Jordan River (Josh. 5:2). As a result, the Israelites were temporarily helpless. However, instead of capitalizing on the situation, the people of Jericho were providentially so fearful that they stayed within the city walls.

**Gen. 18:1** And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

**Gen. 18:2** 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,

The arrival or appearance of the three “men” to Abraham was like an appearance from Jehovah. The detailed description makes us feel that we were there with Abraham.

Notice Abraham's posture: he was sitting in the door of his tent "in the heat of the day," that is, around noontime when it was *hot*. The tent was located in the plains of Mamre in Hebron (Gen. 23:17-19). The burial plot Abraham later bought for Sarah was in a cave in the field of Machpelah in Mamre.

Abraham *ran* to meet the three men. He had been sitting in the tent door when he noticed in the distance the three men coming toward him. Although Abraham was about 100 years old at this time and he had been sitting, he rose up like a youth and ran to meet them. Here is an older man doing something few young people would do! Most would just rest and wait and stand up only when the visitors were within speaking distance. Abraham exhibited enthusiasm and hospitality. And he "bowed himself toward the ground." God Himself had communicated with Abraham several times, and yet here Abraham bowed before the three strangers. No doubt they looked very noble, but it was still commendable of Abraham. And hence we are told, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb. 13:2). Such generosity of spirit was a practice of Abraham's.

**Gen. 18:3** And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

Abraham's use of the address "My Lord" indicates that one of the three "men" had an even more noble appearance—and of course he would be the Logos.

**Gen. 18:4** Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

Verse 4 informs us that Abraham's tent was near a tree. He told the three to sit in the shade, and he would get some water so that they could wash their feet and refresh themselves.

**Gen. 18:5** 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.

Abraham said he would "fetch a morsel of bread," which turned out to be a *feast*. A Mideastern bedouin custom is to extend hospitality and safety to a guest. Since both Arabs and Jews descended from Abraham, the custom no doubt had its origin here.

**Gen. 18:6** 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.

**Gen. 18:7** 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.

**Gen. 18:8** 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.

The words "hastened," "quickly," "ran," and "hasted" give the thought of *speed*, for Abraham wanted to fulfill his obligation before the three continued on to their destination. He told Sarah to quickly knead and make bread of three measures of fine meal—these were generous portions. Next Abraham ran to the herd to get a choice "tender and good" calf, which "a young man" dressed in haste. Abraham then took butter, milk, and the dressed calf and served the three "men" (spirit beings). Like a servant, he stood under the tree with them while they ate to make sure everything was all right. When the meal was over, it was time for some conversation.

**Gen. 18:9** And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

**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.

The three personages asked, “Where is Sarah thy wife?” The question shows they knew her name, recently given (Gen. 17:15). Now Abraham realized the three were more than just nobles, for they had superhuman intelligence—they were angels!

Sarah was in the tent. When she heard her name, her ears perked up. It is interesting that after “they” (plural) asked where Sarah was, the Logos (“he”) took over, announcing that Sarah would have a son.

The details of verse 10 reveal that the tree was in front of the tent door. Therefore, earlier, when Abraham had “sat in the tent door in the heat of the day,” the tree had shaded him (verse 1).

**Gen. 18:11** Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

Abraham and Sarah were old, and Sarah’s child-bearing years had ceased.

**Gen. 18:12** Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

Sarah laughed *within herself*, saying, “After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?” In other words, she laughed *silently*, and her thoughts are revealed to us. Evidently, the Logos had his back to her while he talked to Abraham.

Here we learn that Sarah was hearing the message about Isaac’s birth for the first time, so Abraham had not told her of the experience that had taken place about a week earlier, when God announced the coming birth of Isaac in nine months (Gen. 17:15-21). The proof is that “Sarah laughed within herself” when she heard the news.

In regard to Genesis 18:1,2, we can surmise that while Abraham was sitting in the tent door around noon, he was probably thinking about God’s message, but he had not told Sarah because he did not want to discourage her. While he was meditating, the three “men” appeared in the distance.

**Gen. 18:13** And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

**Gen. 18:14** 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.

The Logos asked Abraham, “Wherefore did Sarah laugh?” Then he rebuked her: “Is any thing too hard for the LORD [Jehovah]?”

**Gen. 18:15** Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

Sarah denied that she had laughed because she was now afraid. (Her statement was true, for she had not laughed audibly.) However, the Logos responded, “You did laugh,” showing that even our thoughts are noted—and we are accountable for them.

Abraham had the same reaction when first told the news that Sarah would have a son (Gen. 17:17). He had laughed and said *in his heart*, “Shall a child be born to one who is a hundred years old, and to Sarah, who is 90?” Sarah laughed *within herself* and said, “Shall we, who are old, have such pleasure?” (Gen. 18:12).

**Gen. 18:16** And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

The three rose up and started to depart, their faces being set in the direction of Sodom. Abraham realized they were determined to go to Sodom, and he “went with them to bring them on the way.” An Arab/bedouin custom is not only to greet and extend hospitality to visitors but also to escort them a short distance to see that they start safely on their journey.

**Gen. 18:17** And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

**Gen. 18:18** Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

**Gen. 18:19** 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.

Speaking for Jehovah, the Logos said in effect, “Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, seeing that he will be faithful?” In view of the fact that Abraham was proclaimed faithful even though he had not finished his course—and hence would have prophetic information disclosed to him—what is the lesson for us? The principle is that God always informs His people *in advance* of things necessary for them to know *if they have sufficient interest*. When the due time comes for revealing, the information is given to the Lord’s servants. “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).

**Gen. 18:20** And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;

**Gen. 18:21** 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.

**Gen. 18:22** And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.

“Sodom” represents Christendom. Because of his faithfulness up to that point, Abraham was told that Sodom was to be destroyed. Abraham was the father of the faithful, that is, the father of a *special class* of the faithful (Rom. 4:16). Sometimes the revealing does not come until prophecy is fulfilled, but *many* prophecies are to be understood *in advance*.

In telling Abraham, the three tried to maintain their role that they were just passing through. The revealing occurred along *seemingly* natural lines, but Abraham realized the three were superior beings. Although they knew the condition of Sodom, they intentionally used a casual method for Abraham’s development and to give him time to think. If things are done too suddenly, opportunities are lost—both for the teller and for the recipient—so a diplomatic approach was used here to bring out certain responses in Abraham.

The report was that Sodom’s sin was “very grievous,” and the three were going there to see if the report was accurate. Right away the thought dawned on Abraham that Lot was in Sodom,

and Abraham was concerned for the few righteous. The other two “men” continued on, but Abraham delayed the Logos.

**Gen. 18:23** And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

**Gen. 18:24** Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

**Gen. 18:25** 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?

**Gen. 18:26** And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

**Gen. 18:27** And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:

**Gen. 18:28** 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.

**Gen. 18:29** 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.

**Gen. 18:30** 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.

**Gen. 18:31** 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.

**Gen. 18:32** 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.

**Gen. 18:33** And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

What an interesting account! Abraham kept trying to bargain, but he was afraid to go below ten righteous individuals because Lot and his family might get destroyed too. However, Abraham would have realized that there were not even ten righteous in the whole city. His words are interesting each time he asked that the number be lowered. He became increasingly timid to speak but asked anyway. How dreadful was the condition of Sodom that not even ten righteous could be found!

**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;

Two angels went to Lot “at even.” At the time, Lot was sitting in the gate as a judge. Like Abraham, Lot bowed toward the ground before them (Gen. 18:2). Both Abraham and Lot were humble, but Abraham was more notably so. Evidently, the angels were impressive in their attire and bearing—and probably very handsome.

Two angels appeared to Lot; *three* had appeared to Abraham. With Abraham, “the LORD” (that is, the Logos) spoke frequently. With Lot, the angels spoke. Hence Lot’s experience, lacking the personal connotation that Abraham’s experience had, was a less favorable indication.

**Gen. 19:2** 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.

Abraham had a tent and lived like a bedouin, whereas Lot had a house; that is, Lot had more of this world’s goods from one standpoint. Abraham lived a simpler life.

**Gen. 19:3** 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.

As Abraham had done, Lot prepared a feast for the angels—although Abraham’s atmosphere and spirit were more admirable.

**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:

Before the two angels lay down to rest, Lot’s house was surrounded by *all* the men of Sodom, the old and the young, from *every* station and occupation of life.

**Gen. 19:5** 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.

The men of Sodom wanted to “know” the two angels, that is, become sexually familiar with them as homosexuals.

**Gen. 19:6** And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,

**Gen. 19:7** And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

**Gen. 19:8** 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.

**Gen. 19:9** 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.

**Gen. 19:10** But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.

**Gen. 19:11** 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.

When the men of Sodom surrounded the house, Lot realized immediately what their evil intentions were. He went out, closed the door behind him, and made an offer: The men of Sodom had better satisfy their desires on his two virgin daughters instead of on the two strangers. However, the men of Sodom were so angry with Lot for trying to stop them that they said they would now “deal worse” with him; that is, they would kill him.

This incident shows the condition of Sodom. Its sins were more than just pride, fullness of

bread, and abundance of idleness (Ezek. 16:49). Indeed homosexuality was the grievous sin. All the men of the city were involved except Lot (and perhaps his two prospective sons-in-law). With Sodom being a symbol of Christendom, the implication is that conditions will get worse and worse as the end of the age draws closer. As for the antitype, it is significant that the sin was occurring *in Sodom* and that Lot was present there—as well as his wife and two daughters.

This grievous sin of Sodom was a desire for “strange flesh,” new flesh, new ideas, new methods (Jude 7). There seems to be an intimation that the city was even given to animal relations.

The two angels opened the door of Lot’s house from the inside, yanked Lot in, shut the door, and smote the men of Sodom with blindness. From inside, Lot and the two angels could hear the blinded men of Sodom groping for the door. The men of Sodom continued to hunt for the door until they were exhausted (“wearied”); that is, they were so intent on finding the door and breaking it down to perform their wickedness that they persisted until their prolonged frustration exhausted them. Finally they returned home. Then it was quiet.

**Comment:** It was a sacrifice on Lot’s part to offer his own virgin daughters in lieu of the two angels. His offer shows that homosexuality is so unnatural and abominable in God’s sight that it would exceed the sin incurred in the use of his daughters. It is remarkable that Lot himself was not contaminated with such an influence around him daily.

**Reply:** The Apostle Peter wrote that God turned “the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes.... And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation [conduct] 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;)” (2 Pet. 2:6-8). Even the Great Company class must ultimately experience this vexation—a righteous indignation to a certain extent but a milder form than with Noah, Moses, etc.

**Comment:** The Lord had to be with Lot in order for him to be left alone in the midst of such evil all that time and yet to be able to sit as a *just* judge in the gate.

**Reply:** No doubt providential care was exercised on his behalf. The same is true of all the consecrated in greater or lesser degrees. The indication, too, is not merely that Lot was a judge in the gate but that he was raised to a prominent position. He had come to Sodom as a wealthy stranger perhaps 25 years earlier.

**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:

**Gen. 19:13** 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.

**Gen. 19:14** 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.

The daughters were not married yet, so the “sons in law” were *prospective*. God was merciful in allowing the benefaction to extend beyond Lot’s immediate family to his prospective sons-in-law, but they declined the offer through disbelief. Thus there were not even ten righteous individuals in Sodom. Only four left the city, and of the four, Lot’s wife was turned into salt (verse 26). Therefore, only three individuals were considered “righteous” in the final analysis.

Conditions were now so quiet in Sodom that Lot could go out to the homes of the sons-in-law



and try to reason with them—but to no avail. They thought the matter was a joke.

**Gen. 19:15** 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.

**Gen. 19:16** 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.

**Gen. 19:17** 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.

Verses 15-17 give an insight into Lot's character. When told the destruction of Sodom was *imminent*, he *lingered*, but why? He lingered because leaving Sodom would cost him something—the loss of his goods, servants, etc. Nevertheless, God was merciful to him. The two angels (with four hands between them) grabbed Lot and his wife and the two daughters by their hands and pulled them forth and “set” them without the city. The wording shows that the Great Company will be *forced* out of Babylon when it falls. The leaving will not be voluntary.

Lot and his family had to be *yanked* outside of Sodom's influence—just far enough outside—to come to their senses. From that moment on, their destiny was their own responsibility. The two angels took them just so far and then left them with the instruction “Escape for your life to the mountain lest you be consumed! Do not stay in the plain or look behind you.” In other words, “Escape to the mountain as fast as you can, and do not look back or you will be consumed.” Lot and his family were to flee in panic! They were extricated from the influence of Sodom and then given advice.

**Gen. 19:18** And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord:

**Gen. 19:19** Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shown unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

**Gen. 19:20** 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.

Lot did not think he could make it to the mountain, so he asked the Lord for a favor. He requested that he be allowed to flee to a little city that was nearer. God granted the accommodation as a *temporary* solution.

**Comment:** Because Haran, Lot's father, was much older, Abraham and Lot were approximately the same age, even though they were uncle and nephew, respectively. Therefore, both Abraham and Lot were about 100 years old, yet Abraham had been strengthened by the Lord in a way that Lot was not. Lot's feeble physical condition, which is indicated here in the type, beautifully fits the antitype. Since the strengthening of the Holy Spirit is received according to faithfulness, the Little Flock are stronger as new creatures than the Great Company. Abraham lived in a condition that was more conducive to spirituality.

Lot's rescue from Sodom and the instruction he was given to flee farther indicates that the Great Company will get a chance to wash their robes white (Rev. 7:14). Although they will come to their senses, a real shock will be required. Some of the consecrated will not be rightly

exercised, as shown by Lot's wife.

**Gen. 19:21** 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.

**Gen. 19:22** Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

Lot was given permission to flee to Zoar, which was a smaller mountain nearer Sodom. The original "mountain" was the mountain range proper on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea; it was the range that contained mounts Nebo and Pisgah and, as such, represents heaven. Zoar, a miniature mountain in a wadi apart from the mountain range proper, represents the lesser destiny of the Great Company. A fort was later erected there. Incidentally, Mount Nebo was the highest peak of the Pisgah mountain range.

Formerly called Bela, Zoar was a ghost city without inhabitants in Lot's day (Gen. 14:8). After fighting and wars, Bela was evacuated. Because of Lot's experience, the city was subsequently historically renamed Zoar.

The angel said that Sodom could not be destroyed until Lot was removed from the city. Hence the fall of Babylon will be a proof that the Church has gone beyond the veil but not that the Great Company is off the scene. The Lot class will get a temporary deliverance from Babylon but will remain in the flesh for development, purging, and testing.

The pronoun usage in verses 17 and 21 contrasts "he" and "they." The Logos could have joined the two angels who originally went to Lot. In that case, the Logos ("he") would be the spokesman. However, in regard to the antitype, *three* angels went to Abraham and only *two* went to Lot. The *authoritativeness* of the speaking suggests the Logos, but the speaker could also have been one of the subordinates, that is, one of the two angels.

**Gen. 19:23** The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

**Gen. 19:24** Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

**Gen. 19:25** And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

The overthrow and/or destruction was comprehensive, encompassing Sodom, Gomorrah, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and "that which grew upon the ground." Now we can see why Lot had to flee *beyond* Sodom, *out of* the plain to *higher* ground.

The "plain" was the well-watered fertile plain that had looked so attractive to Lot in the first place (Gen. 13:10). Later, after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plain became inundated. In other words, the land was changed so radically that the water of the Jordan River, which formerly went down to Eilat and entered the Gulf of Eilat, no longer exited out of the plain. The exit was blocked and the Dead Sea formed. In time, the Lisan Peninsula, the boot protruding into the Dead Sea, was covered over with water. Now, from an airplane, when the light is right, the promontory can be seen under the water. Sodom and Gomorrah were at the tip of the boot. It took time for the Dead Sea to fill with enough water to cover the peninsula.

The sun was risen when Lot entered Zoar. Thus his flight took place while it was still dark, even though it was "morning" (verse 15). When the sun came over the horizon, Lot had reached Zoar. Incidentally, the word "then" in verse 24 does not mean the actions were sequential, for

the destruction occurred *while* Lot was fleeing to Zoar. In antitype, the orb of the sun will be visible when the Kingdom is established but not when Babylon is being destroyed.

**Gen. 19:26** But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

Lot's wife pictures a Second Death class who will "look back." Although Lot resisted, he also had the temptation to look back because he lingered and dillydallied in Sodom. In fact, it was so hard for him to leave that if God had not been merciful and yanked him out, he and his household would have perished in the destruction.

From the type, we can see that the demise of the Second Death class will take place *shortly after* the fall of Babylon. The death of the "Lot's wife" class will happen in such a manner that the other consecrated (those who have not made their calling and election sure) will see it and be energized in a positive way to wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb, to fill their lamps with oil, and to plead with the Lord for the salvation of the high calling—only to realize that the door is already closed (Rev. 7:14; Matt. 25:1-12).

**Q:** Will the Great Company witness the death of *all* the Second Death class on the scene at that time, or will they see the death of just a *portion* of that class—such as the Judas class?

**A:** This is a *general* picture. In the destruction of Babylon, some will be extricated who subsequently look back. Also, in the rescue of the Great Company, others will be forcibly removed at the same time because of their close relationship. The Judas class will be *in* the movement of the brethren; that is, they will be so much a *part* of the "truth brethren" who do not make the Little Flock but are to escape the destruction of Babylon that they will be extricated from Babylon at the same time. The two classes are interrelated, but *after* the fall of Babylon, a separation will occur between the extricated Great Company and the extricated Second Death class. Just as with Jesus, Judas sat at the *same* table with the other apostles. To repeat: the Judas class will be such an *intimate* part of the truth movement that both classes will be extricated from Babylon.

The fact that Lot was strengthened and the foolish virgins got the oil shows that the Great Company class will become energized, do witnessing work, etc.—but, first, they must be severed from the life they are leading. One foot is on earth, and one foot is in heaven. They have trouble separating themselves from the world and its influence—until forced apart. Then there will be a radical change, and they will become as zealous as the Little Flock—but too late.

**Q:** Is the turning of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt tied in with the suicide of Judas? If so, that will be a startling removal of a betraying element.

**A:** Yes.

We will digress a moment to consider the use of salt in Scripture. Jesus said that the Lord's people are the salt of the earth, but if the salt loses its savor (or flavor), it is not good for anything except to be trodden underfoot (Matt. 5:13). Salt without savor is thrown on the floor to absorb blood in a butcher shop or on a sidewalk in winter; it is no good except to be used in this demeaning fashion. Therefore, salt is a symbol of *perishing*.

Lot's wife symbolizes those who go into Second Death, but the type is not limited to the Judas class. The picture includes those who formerly were truly consecrated but who subsequently look back. In addition, there is a Judas class, and exactly when those of this class die is shown by other types.

In the past, salt was used by a conquering people to make soil infertile for years. Hence salt can

have either a preserving, life-giving effect or a killing effect depending on usage. In moderation, salt is good, refreshing, exhilarating, tasty, and purifying, but en masse, it is destructive. On the one hand, molten lava, which was sulfurous *salt*, encased Lot's wife. On the other hand, the Apostle Paul said, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col. 4:6).

The Second Death class will be destroyed at the conclusion of the destruction of Christendom (Sodom and Gomorrah). They will die not in the destruction but in relation to it—very shortly thereafter. Although they will get a fair opportunity to reconsider their stand, they will not wash their robes. The tribulation will become a hindrance instead of an energizing factor because they will look at what they have left behind.

**Gen. 19:27** And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD:

**Gen. 19:28** 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.

When Abraham accompanied the three angels earlier, he had gone to a place where he could look down on the plain and on Sodom and Gomorrah. Now he retraced the route "early in the morning" from Hebron to this overview. From there, he could see the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The country appeared like the "smoke of a furnace." Volcanic rock on the surface of a field in Jordan is evidence today of the earthquake and volcanic eruption. The molten lava burned all grass, grain, etc., as the fire rained down from heaven.

Abraham, picturing the Little Flock, viewed the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah from afar. Antotypically, the Little Flock will be complete beyond the veil at this time, and they will view the destruction of Christendom from heaven. The Great Company will be snatched out of the destruction *as it is occurring*.

**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.

Lot was rescued from Sodom based on Abraham's pleading with God to save the city if even ten righteous remained (Gen. 18:23-32). In the final analysis, only three were "righteous," and Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed.

Verse 29 shows that God does make a distinction in His love—just as Jesus loved three of his apostles more than the other nine. There are *gradations* of love. Abraham is shown to be more important than Lot. Out of consideration of the promise made to Abraham, Lot was spared. A statement in Song of Solomon expresses the sentiments of the Little Flock shortly after being glorified: "We have a little sister with no breasts. What shall we do for her?" (Song 8:8 paraphrase). Following the marriage, Jesus and the Little Flock will go to the aid of the little sister, the Great Company.

The north end of the Dead Sea is 1,300 feet deep, whereas the south end is only 13 feet deep. The difference proves where the water once flowed out. At the time of Sodom's destruction, the Jordan was dammed up just enough to create the Dead Sea and stop the outlet. The *intense* evaporation rate caused by the Dead Sea being far below sea level prevents incoming water from overflowing the dammed-up portion and creating a new outlet. God had calculated this balance beforehand. Even though much of the Dead Sea will be "healed," the southern end will be salty *everlastingly* (Ezek. 47:8-11). Never again will there be an outlet at the southern end.

**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.

**Q:** Why did Lot “fear” to dwell in Zoar?

**A:** When God gave the command to flee, Lot said he could not make it to the mountain and asked permission to go to Zoar. Once he got to Zoar, he thought he would not be safe there if another earthquake occurred. Lot “feared to dwell in Zoar” and went on up to the original mountain. A comparison with Genesis 19:21,25 shows that a *miracle* had preserved the little mountain of Zoar. Zoar was in the midst of the destruction but was not destroyed. Meanwhile, lava spewed out a great distance—even down near Petra, which was 50 to 75 miles away.

In antitype, the Great Company will be spared in the destruction of Babylon. When Babylon falls, “all” nations will be affected because that system is in all nations. The Great Company will be delivered in Babylon’s fall, but they will not be delivered to heaven. They will get a temporary escape when they flee from the midst of Babylon. Just like Lutherans, Catholics, and those in other denominations, we as Bible Students are professed Christian people. However, for Bible Students to be identified as a cultist group is helpful preparation because we are not seen as part of orthodoxy and will not be affected when Babylon falls. Thus distinctions will be made in the Time of Trouble. Being identified as a “cult” will help the feet members to lose their life earlier—and thus get their reward. In other words, for such to be singled out as ringleaders will be a benefit because they will then be changed to resurrection glory.

The Great Company will be delivered out of Babylon and then changed at a *later date* to *less honor*. They will be changed from the little Zoar to the mountain, from the *temporary escape* to the *heavenly escape*.

Before the destruction of Sodom, Lot dwelled in a house with temporal means. He lived comfortably, even though he was vexed with unrighteous conditions around him. After the destruction of Sodom, he was reduced to living in a cave. In being taken out of one environment into another, Lot was being educated and disciplined to see that he was lowly and of the dust.

**Gen. 19:31** 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:

**Gen. 19:32** Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

Lot’s two daughters thought they were the *only* survivors of the earthquake destruction. As far as they could visually see, the quake was a worldwide catastrophe. Since Lot was old, they thought they should act fast to repopulate the earth; that is, they deemed their actions *essential* for survival. The progeny from this “seed” were the Moabites and the Ammonites.

**Gen. 19:33** 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.

Lot was not responsible in that “he perceived not when she [the oldest daughter] lay down, nor when she arose.”

**Comment:** Lot was responsible in that he allowed himself to become intoxicated—and twice.

**Reply:** Wine is deceptive and not like hard liquor where one knows he can become intoxicated. Wine can sneak up until one is intoxicated without realizing what is happening. And wine was

drunk almost universally back there. Remember, Lot is called “righteous” (2 Pet. 2:7,8). He may have been depressed over losing his wife, and when the wine seemed to console him, he continued to drink at the urging of his daughters. Also, if Lot ate less that day, the wine would have affected him more.

**Gen. 19:34** And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay 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.

The very next day the older daughter suggested that they again make their father drunk, and this time the youngest should lie with her father to “preserve seed.”

**Gen. 19:35** 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.

Again Lot did not realize when a daughter lay down or arose.

**Gen. 19:36** Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

Both daughters became pregnant through Lot.

**Gen. 19:37** And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.

**Gen. 19:38** And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.

The son of the oldest daughter was named Moab, and in time, he became the father of the Moabites. The son of the youngest daughter was called Ben-ammi, and he became the father of the Ammonites. In Psalms 60:8 and 108:9, Moab is called God’s “washpot.”

**Gen. 20:1** And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar.

Abraham moved from the vicinity of Hebron to a spot to the south (Gerar) between Kadesh and Shur in northern Sinai.

**Gen. 20:2** And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.

Sarah, who was ten years younger than Abraham, was 89 or 90 years old at this time, yet she must have been *beautiful* to be desired by Abimelech, king of Gerar. (She had had a similar experience some years earlier with Pharaoh, king of Egypt—see Genesis 12:10-20.) Abraham said that he had instructed Sarah to say he was her brother when they first left Ur of Chaldees (Gen. 20:13).

God had shut Sarah’s womb for typical reasons. Even though she was old, when the time was right, He simply opened her womb. In addition, Abraham’s impotence was miraculously reversed. In verses 17 and 18, God’s power to close and open wombs is shown in His dealing with Abimelech and his people; it was like turning a key.

**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.

**Gen. 20:4** But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?

**Gen. 20:5** 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.

The people were not responsible for Abimelech's taking Sarah. In the dream, he reasoned for them: "Wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?" He was pleading on behalf of his innocent subjects. Abimelech said he did not know Sarah was married. "In ... innocency ... have I done this." Abimelech continued to reason that Sarah herself had said she was Abraham's sister. How wonderful that God gave Abimelech the dream just in time to keep him innocent!

**Gen. 20:6** 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.

**Gen. 20:7** 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.

God appeared to Abimelech, king of Gerar, in a dream, explaining that strange happenings had occurred in the household because Sarah was the wife of Abraham. A little time would have passed for the closed wombs to be observed (compare verses 17 and 18).

If Abimelech had "touched" Sarah, the sin would have been against *God* because Abraham had a special relationship with God and the promised seed was to come through Sarah. Abimelech was not willfully trying to sin. He took Sarah in the "integrity" of his heart, so God, reading his heart, made an allowance. Abimelech had some principles.

Notice that Abraham was called a "prophet." The fact that if Sarah was restored to Abraham, he would pray for Abimelech shows Abraham had a unique relationship with God. We are reminded of Job, who prayed for the three "comforters" (Job 42:10).

**Gen. 20:8** 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.

Abimelech rose early in the morning and reported the dream to all of his servants. The servants were very fearful. Why? (1) They had been having experiences they did not understand (verses 17 and 18). All the wombs had been closed. Incidentally, Abimelech had an interesting rapport with his *servants*, for he told them the dream first, before calling Abraham. (2) God had said in the dream that all would die if Sarah was not restored (verse 7).

**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.

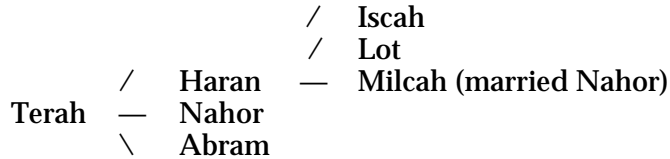
**Gen. 20:10** And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

Abimelech summoned Abraham and asked in effect, "What have you done to *us*? Why did you bring a great sin on *us*?"

**Gen. 20:11** 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.

**Gen. 20:12** 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.

Abraham said he thought those of Gerar would kill him because of Sarah. He did not think the fear of God was on that place. And technically, Sarah was his sister as well as his wife. She was the daughter of his father, Terah, but not the daughter of his mother; hence she was a half sister. By marrying Abraham, Sarah was both daughter and daughter-in-law of Terah (Gen. 11:31).



Here was one of the world (Abimelech) reproving Abraham, a servant and friend of God, for a misdeed. We may get a reproof, too, from those of the world if we violate a principle.

**Gen. 20:13** 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.

Way back when Abraham left Ur of Chaldees, he had told Sarah to say he was her brother when they came to a place. Thus Abraham tried to justify his position to Abimelech.

**Gen. 20:14** And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife.

Abimelech gave Abraham sheep, oxen, and male and female servants somewhat similar to what Pharaoh of Egypt had done earlier (Gen. 12:16). Although Abraham was enriched by a situation wherein he had not acted quite properly, Abimelech was really reproving him. What is the principle? Why was Abraham rewarded with material goods in this case? Abimelech wanted to have a clean slate and also a reversal of the calamities that had happened to him and his household. He wanted to be exonerated and not have any retribution come on him. Just because Abraham got rewarded does not mean his actions were right. It was a freewill offering from Abimelech.

**Q:** Abraham would not profit—he refused the spoils—when he rescued Lot and the king of Sodom (Gen. 14:22-24). Here, however (and in Genesis 12:16), Abraham accepted the temporal gifts. Why did he do this?

**A:** It was distressing for Abraham to have been without Sarah. He experienced much apprehension in regard to her condition, and now he was being compensated for the mental distress that would have lasted at least several months. Perhaps, also, Abimelech insisted that Abraham take the goods. Moreover, Abraham did pray for God to be merciful to Abimelech (verse 17), so maybe Abraham felt obligated to accept the reward.

And there is another point. A freewill offering is different from the booty of war, which Abraham declined. Spoils of war would be considered more like a wage, not a gift. The situation was complex. In some of our experiences, we, like Abraham, do not always know the full reason why we do certain things.

**Gen. 20:15** And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee.



**Gen. 20:16** 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 reproved.

*Much* was given to Abraham, for in addition to the thousand pieces of silver, Abimelech gave him sheep, oxen, and male and female servants. In discussing the thousand pieces of silver, Abimelech reproved Sarah according to the KJV (paraphrased): "I have given Abraham, your brother, a thousand pieces of silver. Abraham is to you a covering of the eyes and to all with you." The RSV renders Abimelech's statement to Sarah as follows: "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; it is your vindication in the eyes of all who are with you; and before every one you are righted."

Abraham was at fault to a certain extent for instructing Sarah what to say, but she was at fault for cooperating with him (verse 5). Hence the King James can be right as well as the Revised Standard. The translators did not know which thought to take, and both versions seem plausible. The original Hebrew needs to be checked. Incidentally, when Abimelech said to Sarah, "I have given your *brother* a thousand pieces of silver," the term "your brother" was a little reproof.

**Gen. 20:17** So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children.

**Gen. 20:18** For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.

Abraham prayed to God to heal Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants, and they bore children. (God had closed all of their wombs because of Sarah.)

**Q:** Sarah's "set time" was nine months from when the statement was uttered in Genesis 17:21 and 18:14. Is Genesis 21:1 sequential, or does the verse flash back in time, just meaning that Sarah was already pregnant when Abimelech took her into his house?

**A:** Sarah was already pregnant. That is one reason why God would not let Abimelech touch her.

**Comment:** Obviously, some time had to pass for Abimelech to notice that all the wombs had been closed up, but the time period could not have exceeded three months, for then Sarah's pregnancy would have shown.

**Reply:** The time period was probably about three months or less.

**Gen. 21:1** And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

**Gen. 21:2** For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

**Gen. 21:3** And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

Sarah conceived and bore a son, whom Abraham called Isaac as God had instructed (Gen. 17:19). We know that Sarah was pregnant when taken into Abimelech's quarters, for she had conceived previously (Gen. 17:21; 18:14).

**Gen. 21:4** And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

When Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him (Gen. 17:10,12).

**Gen. 21:5** And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

Abraham was 100 years old (and Sarah was 90) when Isaac was born. Since Abraham was 75 when he entered Canaan, the promise was fulfilled 25 years later. Abraham was 86 years old when Ishmael was born, so Ishmael was 13 or 14 years old at this time.

**Gen. 21:6** And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.

Sarah had laughed inwardly when she first heard the angel say she would bear a son in her old age (Gen. 18:12). Then there was joyous outward laughter after she gave birth. And the neighbors, upon hearing, also laughed favorably. "Isaac" means "laughter."

What about Sarah's earlier inward laugh? Hebrews 11:11 states that she conceived *by faith* and bore Abraham a son in her old age; that is, Isaac's conception was considered an act *of faith*. Her initial laugh was probably one of incredulity, but when she thought about the angel's announcement and his superhuman knowledge of her inward laughter, etc., she had great faith. Hence her initial response was not as important as her reaction when she considered the matter and manifested faith. For 25 years, she had been promised a child and had even gone through change of life. And evidently, Abraham had become impotent after the birth of Ishmael, that is, when he was 86 years old (Rom. 4:19). "God hath made me to [really] laugh" is the thought—in other words, "I have a son now!"

**Gen. 21:7** 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.

**Gen. 21:8** And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.

Isaac grew and was weaned. He would have been up to age 5 at this time, and Abraham made a great feast that day. "Weaned" means to no longer drink the mother's milk. Thus the weaned child would be on his own and eating solid food. Incidentally, Samuel was probably 3 years old when weaned and taken to Eli. The clue is that Hannah took three bullocks with Samuel when giving him to Eli (1 Sam. 1:24).

#### Spiritual Weaning

Isaac can picture Jesus alone, The Christ, or just the Church (Gal. 3:29; 4:28). "For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of *righteousness*: for he is a babe" (Heb. 5:13). Separation from the *milk* of the Word to the *meat* of the Word is the difference between a babe and a more mature Christian. Just as literal meat in a diet provides strength, so the more mature Christian, who uses the "meat" of the Word, is less apt to fall spiritually.

One can be a Christian for a number of years and still not have matured past the milk stage. "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it [meat], neither yet now are ye able" (1 Cor. 3:2). The babes were "yet carnal" (1 Cor. 3:3).

Spiritual weaning pertains to a change in the diet—but still under the Sarah Covenant. We leave the milk but then get solid food (meat) from the *same* mother (covenant).

We cannot discern in ourselves or in others the *day* that spiritual weaning occurs. Only God or Jesus knows that moment in time. In regard to Abraham's feast, the Isaac class are down here on earth, and "Abraham" (the Heavenly Father) is in heaven. The date of a Christian's spiritual weaning is significant and is a cause for celebration in heaven.

Weaned Christians, who use meat rather than milk, "have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14). Christians have needed the basic principles in *every* stage of the gospel Church, and the weaning of the Isaac class pertaining to character development has been taking place *throughout* the Gospel Age. Weaning is a separation (1) from milk to meat and (2) from carnality to spirituality. Spirituality is the opposite of carnality.

**Gen. 21:9** And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

Sarah saw Ishmael mocking Isaac. Earlier Hagar had mocked Sarah. This present incident indicated that Hagar had not learned a lesson and that Ishmael had been influenced by her wrong attitudes. Ishmael's action was a malignant type of mocking, for he "persecuted" Isaac (Gal. 4:29). Being from 17 to 19 years old, Ishmael could have caused harm to a 5-year-old. Jealousy may have been one of the factors, for Ishmael, the *firstborn*, was not the promised seed. Abraham had great wealth, and Ishmael might have wanted it. The teasing or mocking was dangerous, for it would get out of hand if not checked.

Ishmael is a type of those who persecute the Isaac seed. The period of persecution was brief, for once Ishmael was cast out, the persecution of young Isaac ceased. Later on, persecution between the Isaac and the Ishmael seeds was renewed.

**Gen. 21:10** Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondsman and her son: for the son of this bondsman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

**Gen. 21:11** And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

Abraham had a great fondness for Ishmael, so he was grieved at Sarah's request to cast out Hagar and Ishmael.

**Gen. 21:12** And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondsman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

**Gen. 21:13** And also of the son of the bondsman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

After telling Abraham to listen to Sarah, God said He would take care of Ishmael and make a nation of him. Thus Ishmael was destined to be great. However, God said that Sarah was right in regard to Hagar and Ishmael. Sarah had faith that the seed would be called "in Isaac."

In telling Abraham that he would be the "father of many nations" (plural), God was referring to both Isaac and Ishmael (Gen. 17:4,5).

The Isaac seed was to be kings.	}	
The Ishmael seed was to be princes.	}	12 sons in each
The Edom seed was to be dukes.	}	

**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 Beer-sheba.

**Gen. 21:15** And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

The Hebrew *yeled*, translated “child,” has the thought of “young man,” “son,” etc. Hence Ishmael was older at this time than what we would usually consider a “child”; he would have been 17-19 years old.

Hagar’s being put out is the first case of a “legal separation.” Despite Abraham’s wealth, Hagar and Ishmael were cast out with the most meager of provisions, apparently at the Lord’s instruction. Also, Abraham would have had faith in the promise God had just given that He would make of Ishmael a nation. Thus Abraham trusted that God would provide for Ishmael. Incidentally, the water would have been in a skin.

**Gen. 21:16** 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.

The fact that the water was gone shows Hagar and Ishmael had wandered in the wilderness for a while. Hagar cast Ishmael under a shrub and went a “bowshot” distance off, not wanting to see him die. She wept. The Revised Standard Version states that Ishmael wept. Perhaps both did weep.

In antitype, Ishmael’s being cast out could picture the Jews being cast off in the Diaspora, where, as shown in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, they did not have even a drop of water for their tongues. The Genesis account is a condensed picture of what happened to Israel as a nation. The well of water in succeeding verses pictures the awakening of Zionist hopes in 1878. If this parallel is carried further, Ishmael represents natural Jewry, and Isaac pictures spiritual Israel.

**Gen. 21:17** 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.

God heard the lad but addressed the mother. Both Hagar and Ishmael were crying, but God heard the voice of the lad, thus giving him the priority as the son of Abraham.

**Gen. 21:18** Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.

While Hagar was weeping, she was instructed to arise and lift up Ishmael, who was far spent and near death. Then God said, at this *lowest* ebb, “I will make him a great nation,” which was a *high* promise. The promise to make Ishmael a nation was given earlier and then repeated here at a crucial time (Gen. 16:10; 21:13). This incident shows that Hagar was a physically strong woman. In antitype, Hagar (the Law Covenant) lifted up Ishmael (the Jewish nation).

**Gen. 21:19** 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.

We do not know if the well of water had been there all along and then God “opened” Hagar’s eyes to see it, or if the well was suddenly and miraculously produced. At any rate, the casting out of Hagar and Ishmael (verse 14) represents Israel’s going into Diaspora. Hence the well of water represents the Zionist hopes that revived the Israelites from 1878 on. The Zionist movement was inspired by the Old Testament promises of Israel’s restoration. Thus the water of the Word was ministered to Ishmael by Hagar, who gave Ishmael literal water to drink.

In the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the rich man (the Jewish nation) was perishing for lack of water. Here the lad Ishmael was perishing for want of water. The revival of Jewish hopes occurred in 1878 with the birth of the Zionist movement; that is, the fig tree brought forth its first sign of life at that time. The wineskin (“bottle”) was filled with truth (“water”) from the Word of God (the “well of water”).

**Gen. 21:20** And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.

Ishmael grew, dwelled in the wilderness, and became an archer. It was prophesied that he would be a “wild man” (Gen. 16:12). As an “archer,” Ishmael lived a harsher life than Abraham the herdsman. Spiritually speaking, the Jews, by force of circumstance, have been aggressive and thus have advanced in science and other fields. They are superior as a people. It is interesting that Esau was also a hunter.

How did the lad “grow” in antitype? From 1878 on, “Israel” has experienced miraculous growth and development. Even in warfare, the Jews have excelled. Through God’s providence, that little nation has survived.

In the final analysis, Ishmael pictures the Holy Remnant, for the majority of Jews do not have the faith of Abraham. God will deal with the faith element as a part of the nucleus of His Kingdom.

**Gen. 21:21** And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

Hagar had some faith in the promise. In her first fleeing, she was headed for Egypt (Gen. 16:7). Now she was content to stay in Paran, a part of Sinai that bordered Israel. The “well” of water, that is, the Scriptures, was the *source* of her strength.

Verse 21 does not mean that Hagar actually went to Egypt to get Ishmael a wife. Hagar chose an Egyptian because she herself was Egyptian. It was customary for the father to choose the wife. Hagar had to take the place of the father, for she was both mother and father to Ishmael.

**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:

Abimelech and Phichol, the chief captain, spoke to Abraham, saying, “God is with you.”

**Gen. 21:23** 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.

Abimelech and Phichol constrained Abraham to make an oath so that no later unkindness would develop between their people and those associated with Abraham. Earlier God had told Abimelech that he would be a dead man if Sarah was not restored to Abraham (Gen. 20:1-7). Probably that fear had stayed with Abimelech, and he knew God was with Abraham—hence his desire for the covenant. Abimelech wanted *long-term* peace.

**Gen. 21:24** And Abraham said, I will swear.

**Gen. 21:25** And Abraham reproveth Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech’s servants had violently taken away.

**Gen. 21:26** And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but today.

Abraham said he would make the oath and then gave a reproof because Abimelech's servants had violently taken away a well that belonged to him. Apparently, Abraham appreciated Abimelech's sentiments and trusted that the matter of the well would be straightened out afterwards, but the well situation had to be settled before the covenant was actually made. Just as earlier Abimelech was unaware that Sarah was married to Abraham, so now he was unaware that his servants had unjustly seized the well. Abraham could have fought for the well at the time (as he had fought to retrieve Lot), but being peaceful by nature, he suffered the loss (Gen. 14:1-16).

**Gen. 21:27** And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant.

Abraham gave Abimelech sheep and oxen, and they both made a covenant. Earlier, when Abimelech took Sarah, he tried to heal the wound by giving Abraham menservants, maidservants, and livestock. Abimelech was generous because he had been warned in a dream and punishment had come upon his house by the wombs being closed up (Gen. 20:17,18). Now Abraham was the generous one, even though it was Abimelech who had asked for the covenant. Abraham thus sealed the covenant in a natural way by giving Abimelech the sheep and oxen. There is a spiritual antitype here; namely, it was appropriate for Abraham to give gifts because The Christ will bestow blessings on the world in the Kingdom. Both Abraham and Abimelech made an oath.

**Gen. 21:28** And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.

**Gen. 21:29** And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?

**Gen. 21:30** 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.

When Abraham separated out seven ewe lambs, Abimelech asked why. Abraham replied, "Take the seven ewe lambs from me as a witness that I dug this well." The seven female lambs represent the Church in the seven stages of the Gospel Age. Abraham dug the well, and the seven female sheep bore witness to this act. The well was violently exploited initially by Abimelech's servants, who did not dig it. Abimelech, Phicol, Abimelech's servants, and the Philistines all represent nominal Christendom. Abraham represents God, and the well is a symbol of the Bible. Promises from the Scriptures, as well as the authority of the Word, were taken by nominal (tare) Christians. The well was for the seven ewe lambs.

**Gen. 21:31** Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba; because there they sware both of them.

"Beersheba" means "well of the oath" (*Beer* = well; *sheba* = oath). "Sheba" also means "seven"; in other words, there were seven wells in Beersheba. The place was named Beersheba because that is where Abraham and Abimelech made the covenant. Many years later Elijah fled to Beersheba to escape from Jezebel. He was en route to Sinai when he slept in Beersheba under a broom tree. In both cases, Beersheba was a resting place of the Word. Elijah was refreshed by an angel. Elijah's life is sequential as a *type*, whereas Abraham's life consists of *separate pictures*.

**Gen. 21:32** Thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phicol

**the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines.**

Abimelech and Phichol were Philistines. The oaths made by Abraham and Abimelech are one reason the Philistines were not among the seven peoples that the Israelites were to completely destroy out of the land of Canaan when they entered in Joshua's day.

**Gen. 21:33** And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.

The Hebrew word translated "grove" can be either tree (singular) or grove (trees plural). Elijah slept under a tree (singular) in Beersheba.

**Gen. 21:34** And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days.

Abraham sojourned in Philistine land, moving around freely, for several years.

**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.

"God did tempt [or test] Abraham." James 1:13 states, "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." We are tested for our loyalty and fidelity to God and to the truth, and such tests are designed by the Father. The motivation of the Adversary is different—he tries to ensnare and entrap us.

James 1:13 contains an important clause (paraphrased): "God tempts no man *with evil*." There are two methods of tempting:

1. *Tempting/testing for good.* Testing with the intent of bringing out qualities that are more or less dormant—forming, kneading, and shaping them so that a person becomes crystallized in righteousness. Such experiences are necessary for "muscular" development. One may be innately inclined to righteousness, but tests bring to the forefront, in the crucible of experience, the quality of righteousness, developing it into hardness and firmness. Thus God tempts no man with evil or with evil intent, but tempts individuals for their *good*.
2. *Tempting/testing with evil intent.* The Adversary designs such tests, hoping that the Christian will stumble and fall.

When God called Abraham, the reply "Here I am" shows a responsiveness. Abraham could have just been silent and listened. (Some of us are inclined this way by temperament—to obediently pause and listen—but Abraham responded as Samuel did.) Abraham was *responsive and alert* to do God's bidding. The following types should be kept in mind: Abraham represents God (the Father), and Isaac pictures Jesus.

### Types

With a type like the Tabernacle, which contains measurements, the weight of silver sockets, etc., all of the meticulous details picture something very structured in fulfillment. The fact that the Tabernacle is treated mathematically shows that we are to look acutely at the various details and to expect an antitypical significance. The same is true of certain pictures as, for instance, when God, on Mount Sinai, gave Moses a visual representation of His character. Another example is the vision of a wheel within a wheel in the first chapter of Ezekiel. Since these types are "mathematical," we are to weigh every word in the antitype.

The lives of *individuals* are another matter, however. We are to examine the life of an individual something like a parable in that we do not expect every detail to have an antitype. Otherwise,

the personages in these incidents would be robots, and it would be hard to draw a line between predestination and free moral choice. The point is that we should note the feeling of the incident itself. Some pictures are quite accurate in regard to the antitype, and others are just generalizations.

**Gen. 22:2** 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.

The Heavenly Father's words were very touching. He said to Abraham, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah—and offer him there as a burnt offering." This test brought out qualities in Abraham. God did not just say, "Take your son for a burnt offering," but the words played on the chords of sympathy and affection that Abraham had for Isaac.

Why did God say of Isaac, "Thine only son"? (1) Isaac was the son God recognized as the promised seed, the product of the union between Abraham and Sarah. (2) Ishmael and his mother had been cast out by this time. (3) This incident is a type, and Jesus (prefigured by Isaac) was "the Son of His [God's] love," that is, God's "beloved Son." In other words, there is a special attachment or affection between the Father and the Son.

The destination was the land of Moriah, which means "God will provide." This was an appropriate name since, in the final analysis, God did provide the ram in the thicket (and also Jesus in antitype). Mount Moriah is where Adam died; where Jesus was crucified; where Isaac was offered up; the site of Ornan's threshing floor, which was purchased by King David; the burial place of many tombs of the kings of Judah; and the site of Solomon's Temple, Herod's Temple, and the future Ezekiel's Temple. The Dome of the Rock sits on the mount today.

Originally, Mount Moriah was one continuous mount, but 200 years before the First Advent, the Maccabees excavated a trench to make the mount and Jerusalem more defensible. Prior to the excavation, Jerusalem had a strategic weakness on the north side. The future earthquake at the time God delivers the Holy Remnant will occur along a fissure from Jerusalem to Azal, affecting the Temple Mount (Zech. 14:4,5).

Abraham began his journey to Mount Moriah from Beersheba, which was about 50 miles to the south. Isaac was to be a "burnt offering," that is, *wholly* consumed by fire. With a *sin* offering, the animal was killed and only certain organs put on the fire; the hide, dung, etc., were burned outside the camp. With a *burnt* offering, the hide was removed, and the rest was completely burned. The point is that Abraham knew the implication of Isaac's being a burnt offering—that after being killed, he was to be wholly consumed by fire. The journey to Mount Moriah was a very sad one for Abraham.

**Gen. 22:3** 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.

"Abraham rose up *early* in the morning." Despite the severity of the test, he got up early, ready to do God's will. Abraham took wood because, never having seen Mount Moriah, he did not know if there were any trees at the site. He also took two young men with him as well as Isaac.

**Gen. 22:4** Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

On the third day of traveling from Beersheba, Abraham saw Mount Moriah afar off. With each day representing a year, the three-plus days picture Jesus' 3 1/2-year ministry.



**Gen. 22:5** 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.

Telling the two young men to stay there with the ass, Abraham said that he and Isaac would go ahead and worship and then return *again* to them. Abraham's statement to his two servants proves he believed Isaac would be raised from the dead—and right away. "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the *lad* will go yonder and worship, and *come again to you*." Even after Abraham arrived at Moriah, it took time to climb the mount and prepare an altar.

We are reminded of Mary, who was ready to do God's bidding without hesitation, even though a stigma would attach to her in regard to Jesus' birth. Here Abraham just wanted to obey God and did not worry about how he would explain Isaac's death, which some would think was murder. Neither Mary nor Abraham worried about the consequences—they just promptly obeyed God. We, too, should be promptly obedient "handmaidens" to do God's will.

Both Abraham and Mary manifested a good principle; namely, take *one step* at a time because "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:34). We should not stop to rationalize that there could be repercussive effects from something we might do in the future. We are to live each day as it comes, obeying the Lord's will and not worrying about the consequences, for after all, consequences can be overruled if such be the Lord's will.

The three-plus days' journey gave Abraham opportunity to turn back, but he did not do so. He kept going forward in obedience.

**Gen. 22:6** 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.

Abraham took the wood and laid it on Isaac. Then he took a knife and a censer with coals of fire. Here is a clue as to how men went on a journey in those days. They carried censers with coals of fire, which could be used for cooking (or other) purposes.

Isaac's carrying the wood is like Jesus' carrying the Cross. Jesus carried the Cross from Jordan to Calvary, indicating that he brought persecution upon himself. His *faithfulness* in doing his Father's will led to his death. Jesus instructed those who would follow him, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24).

**Gen. 22:7** 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?

Seeing the fire and the wood, Isaac asked Abraham, "Where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

**Q:** Is there any way of knowing specifically how old Isaac was, or do we just say 25-30 years?

**A:** Sarah was 127 years old when she died, and Abraham was 137 at that time (Gen. 23:1). Since Sarah was 90 when Isaac was born, he was 37 when she died. Hence Isaac had to be less than age 37 and at least 25 years old. Therefore, the 25-30 age range seems reasonable.

**Gen. 22:8** And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

**Gen. 22:9** 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.**

Abraham said God would provide the lamb, and they continued on together. When they got to Mount Moriah, Abraham built an altar, put the wood on it, bound Isaac, and laid him on the kindling wood. Isaac was like a lamb going to the slaughter. He was meek and offered no resistance when tied.

Isaac must have had *tremendous* faith in and reverence for God. He would have been told and retold over and over again of the circumstances surrounding his birth as the child of promise. His very life was the result of miracles, so he had reverence from a very personal standpoint.

**Gen. 22:10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.**

Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife to slay Isaac. In the picture, the artist shows Abraham with the knife raised high and ready to plunge. This is probably an overdramatization. The angel would not take the chance of waiting until that moment because the knife could have *suddenly* been used.

Two qualities of God are represented here: mercy and justice. To all effects, however, Abraham slew Isaac, for he had mentally agreed to kill him and was in the process. But “love” (*God’s* love) forbade the slaying.

**Gen. 22:11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.**

**Gen. 22:12 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.**

**Gen. 22:13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold 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.**

The angel (the Logos) called to Abraham from heaven, “Do not kill Isaac.” Speaking for God, the Logos said, “I know you fear [reverence] me, for you have not withheld your dear son.” The sound of the voice caused Abraham to look up, and then he noticed the ram caught in the thicket. The ram, picturing Jesus, was offered instead of Isaac. This substitution shows that in a type, an animal can prefigure an individual or a class.

Hebrews 11:17,19 reads, “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac ... accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” This text tells us Abraham’s innermost thoughts. When the instruction came to slay his own son, his faith reasoned that even if he slew Isaac, God was able to raise him; that is, since Isaac was to be the seed of promise through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed, the son whom he dearly loved would not remain dead, for God would raise him up. Nevertheless, Abraham’s faith was *strongly* tested, for he could have reasoned, “I dearly love my son Isaac, and I cannot kill him because the promise has to be fulfilled through him.” Hebrews 11:12 states, “Therefore sprang there even of one [Abraham], and him *as good as dead*, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.” From the impotent, aged Abraham came the seed of promise. This thought would have fortified his faith.

The provision of the ram was a wonderful faith lesson for Isaac to carry with him the rest of his

life. Isaac had grown up watching the example of Abraham's faith. His father's example helped him to submit to the instruction and also to face up to this temptation, or trial, and to manifest the faith of his father. The Scriptures tell us much about Abraham and Jacob but relatively little about Isaac, so this incident helps us to appreciate Isaac.

Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the ram caught in the thicket. The ram must have made a noise that caused Abraham to look "behind him." The ram would be struggling to get free of the thicket. Abraham heard the angel say, "Do not lay your hand on the lad," and then he became aware of something behind him. Hence the expression "lifted up his eyes" is figurative, meaning the matter dawned upon his mind. We can "lift up our eyes" in understanding a type or a lesson, for example. The same meaning applies to verse 4, where Abraham "lifted up his eyes" and saw Mount Moriah. He would have realized at that point that the mountain he saw was his destination.

The large rock on Mount Moriah on which Abraham offered up Isaac is the place where the altar of Solomon's Temple was later built. Today that rock is under the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount, and it is surrounded by a railing. A hole in the side of the rock was used to drain the blood from sacrifices or to channel it to go underground, and some say the blood ended up in a spring below. Subsequently, however, the rock was hollowed out and made into a place of worship so that visitors can now go under the rock where the altar once stood.

Mount Moriah was originally like a loaf of bread—all one complex. It was connected to the hill where Jesus was crucified. At a later date, the separation between Calvary and the Temple Mount was artificially excavated. In the future, the mountain will again be one. The gap will be closed up so that Calvary and the Temple area are close to each other.

#### Review

Abraham pictures God, and Isaac prefigures Jesus. However, we must be careful about certain parts of the account. For example, the following debate took place. One brother felt that at times, God is not omniscient in the sense normally thought, that He does not know everything long in advance, the end from the beginning. But, the brother continued, God is able to confront the situation and to give a solution immediately. He used Abraham and Isaac as an illustration, but this reasoning is *wrong!* Being omniscient, God is *never* confronted with anything suddenly. God sees things in advance—before they occur—and never has to make a quick decision.

Abraham *loved* Isaac, his dearly begotten son. The Logos in heaven was submissive to the Father, and thus endeared to Him, long before coming down here to earth, as Jesus, to give his life as a ransom. God had a plan in which beings here on earth, as well as future beings yet unborn, should know about evil through the exercise of free moral agency so that they would not be tempted inordinately if certain things happened. For instance, Adam had no knowledge of sin or death when he was created, but he made an unwise decision. He did not see that one cannot trifle with the Father in any sense of the word. His lack of experience enabled Satan to succeed in tempting him to the point of disobeying the specific injunction of the Father not to eat certain fruit. The permission of evil on the earth will benefit not only those who have lived here but also those not yet born on other planets, who will see earth's experience via movies, photography, etc. Thus *all* will know that God is just, and evil will not have to arise elsewhere to teach this lesson. So strict is God's justice that Jesus had to die to cancel it. In seeing movies, populations on other planets will vicariously experience what earth's inhabitants went through.

God *loved* His Son before the Logos came down here, and this relationship compares with the account of Abraham's love for Isaac. However, one point we cannot compare in the antitype is the fact that Abraham was tested, for *nobody* tested God. The Father devised the plan of the ages even before the Logos was created. And when the planets and the stars were created, He

gave them all names, showing that they were *designed for a purpose*. In the vast universe, with all of the named stars, is the earth, an insignificant planet of a particular sun. “Earth” was designed in advance as the place where Jesus would come and die. *Before the Logos was created, God purposed or planned his creation, and He planned that the Logos would have companions (the Church) and what their functions would be and that evil must be experienced here on earth as an object lesson for all of God’s future creations. The point is that we cannot say every detail in Abraham’s life accurately pictures the Father, but the love Abraham had for Isaac is a picture of the love the Father had for the Son before the Son was offered on the Cross.*

God’s character of *justice* cannot be treated lightly, for He will not and cannot lie. In fact, it is *impossible* for Him to lie, and He will not and cannot do things that would vitiate His own principles—principles that are very important for the peace and happiness of His subjects. All who get everlasting life must have respect for and knowledge of the Father. We get insight into the secret workings of God’s mind by certain things that happen. By what was created in the physical universe, we have some concept of His greatness, power, intellect, etc. By Jesus’ works and words, we get to “see” the Father. In other words, the Father’s character is revealed in Jesus. God felt the lesson was so important that His very *own* Son would have to be offered. Jesus had the *sterling character* needed to work out God’s plan.

Genesis 22:4 states, “Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.” The term “third day” is significant. Before Jesus came down here, he knew he was coming to give his life as a ransom; that is, he had some foreknowledge of his mission (Matt. 20:28). However, as a little infant, he did not know. In fact, he did not know of his prehuman existence until he was baptized in Jordan and the heavens were opened unto him. He then “found [himself] in fashion as a man, ... and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:8).

**Q:** Didn’t Jesus’ statement to Mary, “I must be about my Father’s business,” indicate that he knew about his mission (Luke 2:49)?

**A:** Jesus knew about the miraculous circumstances surrounding his birth (the singing of the angels, the coming of the shepherds and the wise men, Joseph and Mary’s flight with him to Egypt and their return, etc.). And his own family knew that he was destined to be the Savior, but they did not know he had a preexistence. They knew only that a promised seed was to come and be the Deliverer.

When Jesus became aware of his preexistence, he was driven by this realization into the wilderness to meditate how to go about his mission in the best way possible. He knew the Crucifixion would terminate his ministry, but that knowledge was put on a back burner, for he was concerned how to start the mission. He had to call his disciples, for example. Thus he dwelled on what was needful for the moment, taking things step by step. Not until the Mount of Transfiguration, the last year of his earthly ministry, did Jesus talk more about his death. This timing corresponds with the type. Isaac knew about the mission to offer a burnt offering, but not until the end, when he was being tied up, did he know with certainty that he was to be the offering, that he was the lamb. And so Jesus thought more keenly on all the minutiae of detail that had to be fulfilled in regard to his death as the date approached. The same is true for the Christian Church. As the date for the Church to be complete approaches, we should be proportionately interested in pertinent prophecies.

As these comparisons are made, type with antitype, we should keep in mind that *not* everything in the type has an antitype. What is especially emphasized is the Father’s *love* for the Son, yet the need for his sacrifice, his *death*. The antitypical Isaac did die, but mercy and justice were combined. God loved His Son dearly but could not sacrifice justice. The fact that Jesus was the propitiatory lid of the Ark of the Covenant when he died enables God to be just yet the

justifier of those who come to Him through Jesus. Justice is really the foundation of love. Without the satisfaction of justice, there could be no grace and real forgiveness because of God's own nature. Jesus had to die in order for God to redeem the race. Thus justice and love are combined in this one sacrifice. Both God's and Jesus' reactions are prefigured by Abraham and Isaac, respectively.

The three-plus days of Genesis 22:4 correspond with Jesus' ministry of 3 1/2 years. After Abraham saw the mountain afar off on the third day, it would have taken part of that day to get to Moriah and prepare for the sacrifice.

**Comment:** If Calvary and the rock where Isaac was offered will be moved close together and the gap filled in, then Adam's place of death will also be close. The kernel of God's plan will thus be visibly demonstrated in the Kingdom Age.

**Gen. 22:14** And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

Abraham called the place "Jehovah-jireh," that is, "Jehovah's providence" or "God will provide." Abraham knew that God would provide, so his naming the place was an outward manifestation of his faith. The name made the mount a kind of memorial.

The picture here of Abraham and Isaac brings out the mutual tender affection between father and son. That is the faith of Abraham. All Christians must be developed similarly if they are to get the crown. They must, somewhere in their life, have an equivalent test—of the dearest thing being sacrificed in obedience to the Father. Many do not get that test because they are not developed to the point of having this rounded-out experience. Two things are necessary: (1) leaving Father Adam's house (making a consecration) and (2) finishing the consecration. Passing the test of sacrificing one's Isaac is the development of the mark of perfect love and obedience. Not all of the consecrated get that experience.

**Gen. 22:15** And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

The Logos (the "angel" of Jehovah) called out of heaven the second time unto Abraham. (The first time the Logos called is stated in verse 11.)

**Gen. 22:16** 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:

Abraham had just demonstrated that he was willing to obey God and, if necessary, to slay his son as a burnt offering. What is the difference between a burnt offering sacrifice and the custom of other peoples of committing their firstborn to the flames? (1) A burnt offering was killed *before* it was burned. With the Canaanites, etc., *live* offerings were often consumed by fire. In God's arrangement, the animal was put to death first—and in a painless way by cutting the jugular vein. (2) Abraham was obeying a *direct* commandment from the Father, as opposed to false religions that developed along other lines. In some cases, *pride* led to the sacrifice of one's son in order to be regarded in higher esteem by fellow men. In cults, those who are most extreme get elevated. They are promoted in proportion as they show fidelity to Satan. In contrast, Abraham was obeying a proper instruction from a proper source: God. (3) *Age* is an important factor. Very often infants were sacrificed by the heathen (for example, to Molech); hence they did not acquiesce to the sacrifice but were forced. However, Isaac, being 25-30 years old, fully submitted to the instruction.

It is important to distinguish between right and wrong. As far as zeal is concerned, other people are willing to commit their life unto death. For instance, people douse themselves with

gasoline and set themselves afire for a cause. Therefore, other factors must be considered. We must love God with *all* our heart, mind, soul, and strength and thus be sure we are obeying *Him* in any decision.

The sacrifice was a real test upon both Abraham and Isaac, for both were involved in rendering the sacrifice. And Jesus' giving his life as a ransom involved thought, meditation, and sacrifice on the part of both the Father and the Son. God devised the plan whereby it was necessary for His Son to die to bring salvation to the human race.

*Willingness to die* is only one facet of Christian development. There must also be a *willingness to be instructed by God's Word*. We must be dedicated to searching out what God's will is. We must *develop the fruits of the Spirit* too. As far as dedication is concerned, other people are equally committed to giving their lives but *not according to proper understanding*.

**Gen. 22:17** 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;

**Gen. 22:18** And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

God said to Abraham, "I will bless you and multiply your seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand upon the seashore, and your seed shall possess the gate of its enemies. And in your seed *all* the nations of the earth shall bless themselves, because you have obeyed my voice." The multiplication of the seed will be (1) as the stars of heaven and (2) as the sand of the seashore. This is the first time in Scripture that the heavenly and the earthly promises are combined. Why the distinction? There is a double blessing: spiritual and natural. The spiritual is the antitype of the Isaac seed, or The Christ, which will be as the stars of heaven. In other words, Abraham's seed is to be multiplied. The "star" aspect is primarily The Christ, whereas the "sand" aspect is primarily the Ancient Worthies during the Kingdom; that is, the Ancient Worthies will have a *temporary* natural inheritance. (The rebellion at the end of the Millennium is called going up against the "camp" of the saints. Dissatisfaction will be voiced against the Ancient Worthies and the arrangement.) Abraham looked for a "heavenly" city, that is, for a *spiritual* inheritance at the end of the Little Season. Daniel 12:3 says the Ancient Worthies will be as the "stars [picturing their *heavenly* inheritance] for ever and ever" after their change at the end of the Kingdom.

The fact that the spiritual seed will be multiplied to be as the stars of heaven signifies a *much greater* number than just the 144,000. Although the number of the Great Company class is not now known, it will be known when they receive their change. However, even adding the number of the Great Company to the Little Flock will not produce a multitude equivalent to the stars of heaven. In regard to the earthly seed, the Ancient Worthies are a limited number, 144,000, one for each saint. Hence the Ancient Worthies alone are not equal to the sand of the seashore. An alternate translation for verse 18 is the following: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth *bless themselves*." In becoming that seed, the nations shall bless themselves. In identifying themselves with the Kingdom, with the Lord's arrangement, people will become blessed.

There are so many stars (suns) that man cannot number them, and the spiritual seed is likened to the stars. "And he [the LORD God] brought him [Abram] forth abroad [in a vision], and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he [God] said unto him [Abram], So shall thy seed be" (Gen. 15:5). This prophecy suggests that the Church in glory in future ages will generate life both spiritually and naturally. Just as with the earth, planets in other solar systems were not created in vain but are to be inhabited; that is, at least *one planet* in each solar system (not all planets) will be inhabited. Planets have various

functions; for example, some are for signs and some mark time. And some planets will be peopled by physical beings (this will be a *natural* increase). In addition, the Church, with the Lord Jesus, will generate other spirit beings (this will be a *spiritual* increase).

For the *natural* multiplication to be as the sand on the seashore, it will have to include more than just the earth. Otherwise, the amount of people could be numbered. The multiplication would have to include other planets in other solar systems. Incidentally, the promise that the Church (pictured by Rebekah) will be the mother to thousands of millions (that is, to billions) applies to the Kingdom on earth (Gen. 24:60).

For the spiritual seed to be as the stars of heaven, it will have to include other spirit beings—the creation of many more angels. At present, there is not a superabundance of angels but just a sufficiency to aid in God’s plan *here on earth*, where God’s physical creation began. The clue is Hebrews 1:14, “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Whatever the number of holy angels is now, it is sufficient for preparing the New Creation down here, but there certainly would not be enough for the entire universe if other planets are peopled someday.

It is no exaggeration to say that God created the earth with His fingertips (Isa. 45:11,12). We are like tiny microbes in a rug down in this small segment of the universe. God is *way high above*, dwelling *above the heavens*. We look down and see a *tiny* bug crawling along. From the bug’s standpoint, the earth seems illimitable, but to us, the earth is “numbered.” The principle is the same when God looks down on tiny man, and tiny man looks up at the universe. God knows the number of the stars and has names for each. The stars have a finite number, known only to Him. The universe is infinite from *our* standpoint, and finite from *God’s* standpoint. Earth is only the very, very beginning of God’s creation of human beings. That is why Jesus Christ came *here*. Those on other planets, who will be created in the future, will learn by observing what took place here in connection with the permission of evil and its outworking in God’s plan. Different orders of spirit beings are all considered “stars.” Even Jesus, as the Logos, was a “star”—the bright and morning star, an archangel (Rev. 2:28; 22:16).

**Comment:** The earth is like a physical embryo; The Christ is like a spiritual embryo.

The Abrahamic promise should not be underestimated in regard to how *great* the seed will be. Abraham, in this sense, represents The Christ. Abraham’s “seed” will be those who are developed in future generations. In the beginning, Abraham’s seed will be Isaac, the spiritual seed, but there will also be a natural seed: the Ancient Worthies, Israel, and those of the world who come into harmony with the arrangement in the Kingdom Age. All will be gathered in Christ, the top stone of the Pyramid, The Christ. Next comes the Great Company (although that sequence is debatable), then the Ancient Worthies, Israel, and the world of mankind. God purposes that all will be united in Christ, so in one sense, Abraham represents God, for it is *His* plan. But as “children of Abraham,” we are part of Abraham. God made the promise to Abraham, that is, to The Christ. God said, “I will make Abraham the father of the spiritual and the natural seeds.”

Verse 17 can be paraphrased as follows: “In blessing, I [God] will bless The Christ, and in multiplying, I will multiply the seed of The Christ [1] as the stars of heaven and [2] as the sand on the seashore.” That is the thought going *beyond* the Millennium. Continuing, “The seed of The Christ shall possess the gate of their enemies.” In other words, Abraham represents not just an individual but a *seed class*.

“Thy seed shall possess the gate [the seat of authority] of his enemies.” The seat of authority will be taken from the enemy and replaced by the holy power. From another standpoint, years ago castles had moats for protection, and a drawbridge was the only means of access to the

gate of the castle. When the bridge was drawn up, the enemy could not cross the moat and get to the gate, or entrance, of the castle. To have control of the gate would be to control the city or the castle. Hence the gate was the vital organ of the castle's or the city's control. For example, Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, was the "gate" of Judah and the nation (Micah 1:9). Whoever controlled Jerusalem controlled the nation. Similarly, to control Washington, DC, is to control the United States. The capital of the "enemy" (Satan) is (1) Rome down here on earth and (2) Satan's personal headquarters in the spirit realm. Satan issues commands and exercises influence and power from his capital, or headquarters, in earth's atmosphere. Therefore, for Abraham's seed to possess the gate of their enemies shows that there will be a *complete* reversal of power from the bottom up and the top down.

The promise was given to Abraham because he *obeyed* God's voice. In verses 17 and 18, God *confirmed* the covenant He had already made with Abraham. When first given, the covenant was conditional upon Abraham's leaving Ur of the Chaldees. Because of his obedience, the covenant became *unconditional*. The covenant was confirmed several times. The question might be asked, Why does the covenant again sound conditional here, as if it were dependent upon Abraham's offering his son? The answer is that the covenant, already made, was *reaffirmed*. It was like saying, "God made the right choice when He initially called Abraham." When the covenant was first made conditionally, Abraham's character was not apparent to others. He was "called out" of Ur of the Chaldees, and each step of his obedience further vindicated God's wisdom in choosing him. (Incidentally, this is the earliest mention of an "ecclesia," or a called-out class.) Abraham developed under God's providence. Although a master craftsman was needed to mold Abraham's character, there was something intrinsically good that God could see, and God was not surprised that Abraham obeyed. It was as if God said, "You obeyed my voice, but I always knew you would because I knew your character." It would have been comforting for Isaac to hear the promise made to Abraham, for from a natural standpoint, Isaac was assured he would have children.

**Gen. 22:19** So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

Abraham returned to the two young men, and they all went back to Beersheba, where he was sojourning before he left for Mount Moriah (Gen. 21:33,34; 22:3,5). The two young men had no idea of the drama that had just taken place. It would be interesting to know if Abraham and/or Isaac said anything about it on the return trip. The world and nominal Christians are likewise oblivious as to the character and trials of the Church class as they develop.

**Gen. 22:20** 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;

**Gen. 22:21** Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram,

**Gen. 22:22** And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

**Gen. 22:23** And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

**Gen. 22:24** And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

Milcah was the daughter of Haran and the wife of Nahor. Also, she was a niece of Abraham. Milcah and Nahor had eight sons, Bethuel being the last. This news was reported to Abraham. (Probably *later*, that is, by Ezra, the information was added that Bethuel begot a daughter named Rebekah.) Abraham would have reasoned: With all these sons, there was probably a



potential bride for Isaac among the daughters born. Nahor's concubine had four sons.

**Gen. 23:1** And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah.

Sarah was 127 years old when she died. This verse may be the only recorded life span of a woman in the Scriptures. Isaac would have been 37 years old at this time.

**Gen. 23:2** And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

Sarah died in Hebron, the very place where she and Abraham had been years before in the plains of Mamre when the angel told Sarah that she would bear a son in her old age and then told Abraham that Sodom would be destroyed. Sarah would be buried in Hebron, where the cave of Machpelah was.

The fact that Abraham went to see her shows that they were apart at the time of her death. Abraham rushed to Hebron from Beersheba to be with her and to mourn and weep. Sarah had probably been visiting friends in Hebron, for she and Abraham had lived there earlier.

**Gen. 23:3** And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying,

**Gen. 23:4** I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a buryingplace with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

**Gen. 23:5** And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him,

**Gen. 23:6** Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.

**Gen. 23:7** And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth.

**Gen. 23:8** And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar,

**Gen. 23:9** That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me for a possession of a buryingplace amongst you.

Why were the children of Heth so solicitous to please Abraham by answering his request? (1) This incident took place in Hebron, where Abraham had dwelled and was told that Sodom and Gomorrah would be destroyed and that Sarah would bear a son, Isaac. (2) Abraham lived in Mamre in Hebron at the time he went to rescue Lot (Gen. 13:18; 14:1-16). Hence Abraham was known in the area, and now the children of Heth called him a "mighty prince among us"; that is, they had a healthy respect for Abraham. The ancients viewed Abraham as a mighty warrior. Abraham had accompanied the 318 men who went to rescue Lot. Tradition says that his father, Terah, had been a warrior too.

The sons of Heth were Hittites. The term "Canaanites" can be used specifically to refer to a people related to Canaan, Noah's descendant, or generally to designate the people of Palestine, who included Amalekites, Amorites, etc.).

Abraham wanted to bury Sarah right there in Hebron, where she had died. And he knew what site he desired and who owned the site: Ephron, the son of Zohar. He wanted the cave of Machpelah in the end of the field, and he would pay what it was worth. The sons of Heth were receptive, and so was Ephron.

Acts 7:5 states that God gave Abraham “none inheritance” in the land, yet He promised to give Abraham an inheritance “for a possession.” The word “possession” was used here in Genesis 23:4, when Abraham said to the sons of Heth, “Give me a possession of a *buryingplace* with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.” The fact that Abraham bought this little plot does not violate the statement in the Book of Acts because the inheritance would be what *God* would give him, not a forced acquisition.

**Gen. 23:10** And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying,

**Gen. 23:11** Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead.

**Gen. 23:12** And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land.

**Gen. 23:13** 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.

**Gen. 23:14** And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him,

**Gen. 23:15** 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.

**Gen. 23:16** 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.

Notice the polite procedure. Ephron said Abraham could have the land gratis, but Abraham paid the 400-shekel value, as he was actually *expected* to do.

Abraham wanted the field in addition to the cave. The field was well defined because trees bordered it (verse 17). The cave was originally a double cave. Machpelah means “winding,” “spiral form.” Six people would eventually be buried in the cave of Machpelah: Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah (Gen. 49:28-33; 50:13,14).

No written deed or paper was involved, and nothing was signed. The purchase was just an *oral* agreement that was *witnessed* by others. The land was specified accurately before the children of Heth and passersby. By word of mouth, the transaction would be known and passed on. *To this day*, Machpelah is recognized as Abraham’s acquisition.

**Comment:** It is unusual that the three patriarchs most closely connected with the Abrahamic promise were all buried together, as if that promise was locked up for a future revelation.

**Reply:** It does seem providential because the covenant was verified several times to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

**Q:** Is it possible those three will be brought forth as resurrected Ancient Worthies at that very spot? That would be very dramatic. Just as a tomb was specially provided for Jesus to call Lazarus forth, so it would seem that something special might occur here—especially since both Arabs and Jews revere the spot as Abraham’s burial place. Also, the cave has a hole on top that goes way down to the burial chambers below.

**A:** That resurrection scenario would be dramatic, and such a potentiality exists. If that occurs, the three would be pleasantly surprised to see one another. They would be raised in a state of perfect health and manhood and thus not recognize one another immediately but would make inquiries of each other and then rejoice at the discovery.

The weighing of the money for the oral deed would have been done ceremoniously before witnesses and with scales. To weigh 400 shekels would take a little time. Money would have been weighed the same way with Boaz when the nearest of kin declined to marry Ruth and the refusal was made public by Boaz (Ruth 4:1-12).

**Gen. 23:17** 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

**Gen. 23:18** Unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city.

**Gen. 23:19** And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan.

**Gen. 23:20** And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a buryingplace by the sons of Heth.

Trees served as a boundary of the land Abraham bought. The field and the cave were “before” Mamre, that is, to the east of Mamre.

**Gen. 24:1** And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

**Gen. 24:2** 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:

**Gen. 24:3** 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:

**Gen. 24:4** But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

**Gen. 24:5** 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?

**Gen. 24:6** And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.

**Gen. 24:7** The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father’s house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my

son from thence.

**Gen. 24:8** 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.

**Gen. 24:9** And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.

Note the carefulness with which Abraham wanted Eliezer to select a wife for Isaac. The spiritual lesson is that if we consecrate in the single state and decide to marry, we should marry one in the household of faith. We are not to return to an environment that is not conducive to spirituality.

The mood changes in this chapter. Sarah had died and Abraham was old. He felt his days were numbered, even though he lived for a while yet. (Abraham was 137 when Sarah died, and he lived until he reached the age of 175.) Abraham wanted Isaac to marry the proper girl so that faith would not be interfered with. The *solemnity* of the oath Eliezer took also suggests that Abraham thought he might die soon.

Abraham's instructions to Eliezer in selecting a bride for Isaac were as follows:

1. The woman could not be a Canaanite.
2. Isaac could not go to live in Ur.

Why was Isaac not to become a resident of Ur? Even though Abraham was a stranger in Canaan, this was the land promised for an inheritance. To leave the land would mean he was not living the promise. Therefore, Isaac not only had to have the right wife but also had to remain in Canaan.

This incident happened not long after Sarah's death, so Isaac was still grieving for his mother. Getting a wife would compensate for her loss. When Rebekah eventually arrived, Isaac brought her into his mother's tent (Gen. 24:67).

Eliezer came from Damascus (Gen. 15:2). As the *oldest* servant of Abraham, he represented the Holy Spirit, the *oldest* servant of God. The Holy Spirit predated Jesus, just as Eliezer existed before Isaac was born. Jesus did only the things the Father had said; in other words, Jesus was taught. Hence he esteemed both God and His Spirit (or Word) as being superior to himself. Eliezer (the Holy Spirit) was sent on a mission to procure a bride for Isaac (Jesus).

Abraham trusted that the Holy Spirit would select the *one* right woman, for if that woman was not willing to return with Eliezer, the servant would be free from his oath. The point is that Eliezer was not to choose one woman and then another and another, etc. And Eliezer had that idea, too, in praying for God's assistance in finding a bride for Isaac.

Putting the hand under the thigh in making a promise or an oath was an ancient custom. If an individual felt he was going to die and pass off the scene, he could exact a solemn promise. He would have a person put his hand below the generating organs to indicate the promise was to be fulfilled not only to the individual himself but also to the individual's seed. This was the *most solemn* type of oath. It was as if to say, "Though I pass off the scene, this is your responsibility to me and to my seed." Abraham did that to Eliezer, and Jacob did that to Joseph (Gen. 47:29). The word "thigh" should be "loins," meaning the generating organs. If Abraham had died, Eliezer would still be bound by the oath. Abraham had great trust in Eliezer. At one time, Abraham thought Eliezer would be the heir to the promise (Gen. 15:2,3).

Sarah's death occurred *before* Isaac's marriage. Since Sarah pictures the new Jerusalem, the

mother of us all, a covenant, how do we explain that the type shows the Sarah Covenant expiring *before* the marriage? Before the Church is complete beyond the veil, it will be complete from *God's* standpoint because He will know who of those still in the flesh will be faithful to complete the 144,000. Hence at that point, when God can foresee that the full number will be reached, He will cease to call new ones to consecrate. Thus the call will cease before the marriage takes place, and the marriage will occur after the door is closed, as shown in the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins. When the door was closed in the parable, “they that were ready went in with him to the marriage” (Matt. 25:10). The door of opportunity is still open at the present time, but it will close from *God's* standpoint *before* we realize it down here.

From three different perspectives, there are three closings of the door, as follows:

1. The first closing of the door will take place when the call ends. The call is an invitation to the high calling. *Only God* will know of this closing. In 1881, when the *general* call ended, if all of the called had been faithful, the door would have closed. After 1881, the call was selective. We are in a *gleaning* period today. As long as the call remains open, there is a bona fide opportunity for the respondent to make his or her calling and election sure.
2. The second closing of the door will occur when all 144,000 are gathered beyond the veil. The complete Church will know at that time. At the present time, the risen saints probably do not know who of the consecrated still in the flesh will be faithful, but when the last members go beyond the veil to the marriage, the 144,000 will know.
3. The third closing of the door pertains to those of the consecrated still down here when the Church is complete, although they will not know the exact moment of the completion. *Shortly* afterwards, however, they will know because of the *events* that will take place. The remaining consecrated will try to get in the door only to be informed, “It is too late. The bride has made herself ready, but it is a blessing to be even invited to the marriage supper” (Rev. 19:9). The remaining consecrated will be informed by a message, but it will take other, more visible *events* for them to discern that the door must be closed. And among the consecrated who remain behind, those with present truth will know ahead of those still in the nominal system.

Just as with the time of trouble, the closing of the door has different perspectives. The door will be closed down here before all of the Little Flock have gone beyond the veil. First, the crystallization of character takes place—those individuals *will make* their calling and election sure—but then they have to *stand* in faithfulness.

**Q:** At what time will the Sarah Covenant no longer be in effect?

**A:** That will happen when there is no more calling to a spiritual hope, for there is *one calling* only—and thus no calling to a Great Company. When the door closes to the high calling, there will be no more spirit-begettal to a spirit nature. In order for any to be part of the Great Company, they must be spirit-begotten and have first run for the prize. In other words, the Great Company runs for the prize but fails; they are begotten with that hope. Hence when the door closes, no more will be called to be of the bride of Christ. The Great Company is a by-product. (This same principle also applied to the comparable “Great Company” class of ages prior to the Gospel Age.)

**Q:** How can Little Flock members still be in the flesh, and how can God be dealing with them, unless there is a Sarah or Grace Covenant in existence?

**A:** The principle was the same with Abraham. The angels said, “Shall we not disclose to Abraham what will happen to Sodom, *seeing that he will be faithful?*” (Gen. 18:16-19 paraphrase). In other words, he was a crystallized character at that time, and the angels could see that his

character would secure to him the inheritance.

The Sarah Covenant is like a mother. When a mother brings forth a child, she nurses it, etc. The antitypical Isaac goes into the covenant (Sarah's tent), but the covenant ends as respects the calling of any *new* ones when there is a sufficiency of those already here who *will be faithful*. Isaac went into the tent in *fulfillment* of the covenant after Sarah had died. Stated another way, the personal death of Sarah herself pictures the end of the call, but the covenant arrangement is pictured by the tent, into which Isaac and Rebekah go. Thus the Sarah Covenant remains, but it is *no longer active* in the sense of *new development*. It may be obvious, but the representations in the type are as follows: Abraham pictures God, Isaac pictures Jesus, Eliezer pictures the Holy Spirit, and Rebekah pictures the bride of Christ.

**Gen. 24:10** 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 ten camels are a symbol of the nominal Church. The number 10 is indicative of this side of the veil, as in the ten toes, the ten virgins, and the ten horns.

“All” of Abraham's goods were in Eliezer's hands; that is, the Holy Spirit operates in different ways and through various agencies. The Holy Spirit is a channel; it is like a life-supplying sap or electricity that furnishes the Christian, through Christ, all his spiritual needs and temporal necessities.

Eliezer went to Mesopotamia. “Potomac” means “river”; hence the plural “Mesopotamia” signifies “between the two rivers.” The city of Nahor was in Mesopotamia. Nahor was mentioned because of the requirement that Isaac's bride come from family and/or relatives. To travel all the way to Mesopotamia was a long trip for Eliezer to make with the ten camels.

**Gen. 24:11** 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.

Eliezer made his camels kneel down outside the city of Nahor near a well of water at “evening” (3 p.m.), the time *women* came out to draw water. How providential that Eliezer should arrive at this time! The well of water pictures the water of truth, the Word of God. “Evening” represents the *beginning* of the Gospel Age. (Remember, the Hebrew day began and ended with evening.) Incidentally, camels are patient but make much noise. They characteristically kneel down near a well and wait for water to be brought.

**Gen. 24:12** 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.

**Gen. 24:13** Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:

**Gen. 24:14** 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 shown kindness unto my master.

Eliezer prayed that God would speedily show kindness to Abraham. (The answer came so fast that he almost could not believe it!) He prayed that when he would say, “Let down your pitcher so I may drink,” he would recognize the bride for Isaac by her reply, “Drink, and I will also bring water for your camels.” Eliezer laid down stipulations: the fleece, as it were. What an

extraordinary test—that the woman would water all ten camels! He was looking for a bride with the proper attitude, one who was willing to go beyond what was required and render *more* out of *love*. Not only did Eliezer want a miracle, but also he wanted it right away and at this particular well. He did not desire to tarry in his mission.

It is interesting that even though the bride had to come from a particular family, Eliezer did not ask to see those women first and *then* set the test. He just laid down the stipulations *openly*. *Later* it was confirmed that Rebekah was of the right family.

We see here an antitypical oneness between the Holy Spirit and the Father. The Holy Spirit acts on behalf of and in harmony with the Father. Eliezer knew that the well was there and that it was time for the women, as was customary, to draw water. Incidentally, Abraham could have sent Isaac to get his own bride. By Abraham's sending Eliezer, the type harmonizes with the antitype, for *God* selects the bride through the Holy Spirit.

The prospective bride of her *own volition* had to leave the country from whence she came to go and meet Isaac. Jesus said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out [in the initial reception]" (John 6:37). He also said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden [weary], and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). It is an invitation, but the response has to be *self-determination*.

Isaac was in the Land of Promise, and it would not have been proper for him to leave it. The promise was given to Abraham and his seed. Abraham now thought he was dying, as proved by the nature of the vow between him and Eliezer, his servant. However, Abraham lived another 40 years or so. The type occurred providentially at this time.

Camels drink a *tremendous* amount of water. They drink and store enough water for a couple of weeks. Hence for a woman to volunteer to draw water for *ten* camels is unbelievable! Probably the Lord was merciful by arranging that the camels had drunk some water earlier. Nevertheless, Rebekah had to make repeated trips *down* the steps to the well and then carry the heavy filled vase back *up* to the camels (Gen. 24:16).

The Holy Spirit (Eliezer) desired to do the Father's (Abraham's) will. The Holy Spirit was manifested in Jesus by the statements he made.

**Gen. 24:15** 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.

**Gen. 24:16** 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.

Eliezer got a *fast* answer to his prayer: "It came to pass, *before he had done speaking...*" As Rebekah approached, Eliezer saw that she was young and beautiful. It was providentially arranged that Rebekah should come out alone with a pitcher on her shoulder, for usually two or more women were together. A circular stairway led down to the well. There Rebekah filled her pitcher and came up.

Ezra added certain details later such as Rebekah's family relationship and the fact that she was a virgin. Nahor, Abraham's brother, and Milcah bore Bethuel, who had a daughter, Rebekah.

**Gen. 24:17** And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.

Eliezer, who would have been a little distance away, ran to meet Rebekah.

**Gen. 24:18** And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.

Notice Rebekah's attitude. She "hasted" to get water for Eliezer to drink. She had concern for an older man of repute (the ten camels would have made her think he was important).

**Gen. 24:19** And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

After she had given Eliezer water to drink, she said she would also draw water for the camels until they had *finished* drinking.

**Gen. 24:20** And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.

The "trough" was a receptacle into which water was poured for the animals to drink. Rebekah emptied into the trough the water Eliezer did not want and then *ran* back to the well to draw water for *all ten camels*.

**Gen. 24:21** And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.

Everything had happened so fast that Eliezer did not know if his prayer was being answered.

**Gen. 24:22** 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;

By the time all ten camels had finished drinking, Eliezer was sure Rebekah was the bride for Isaac. Sometimes we have experiences like Eliezer. We pray earnestly about a matter, and then the prayer is answered so quickly that months or years pass before we realize the answer was given. Then we feel ashamed. At times, we pray and fail to watch; at other times, we watch but do not pray.

Eliezer put a gold earring in Rebekah's nose and two gold bracelets on her wrists. A ring is a symbol of consecration, a divine covenant. If a ring is put in a bull's nose, that strong, dangerous animal can be easily led about because the nose is tender. Of course consecration and the doing of God's will are *voluntary*, but a ring in the nose carries the thought of being led in consecration.

The ring was given *before* Rebekah said anything. Therefore, in this case, the ring represents the *hope of consecration*. Before consecration, we had some information about God and Jesus. We knew that there is to be a bride class, that suffering with him will result in reigning with him, etc. Although the details of God's plan were not understood, we knew that we would benefit if we gave our heart to Him and that we would get life for faithfulness unto death. The bracelets, which were also given *before* Rebekah said "I do," represent the *hope of activity* in God's service.

The earring weighed a half shekel. The ransom/atonement money for each Israelite delivered through the Red Sea was a bekah, that is, a half shekel. Hence a ring is associated with redemption, with being delivered from the kingdom of darkness; it is a remembrance of the Ransom price that Jesus paid.



The Word of God was forgotten for a period in Israel's history until Ezra got the scrolls and pieced them together in harmonious fashion, adding comments where appropriate. Ezra found the scrolls in the library in Babylon. Incidentally, there is no original New Testament. Our translations are based on old manuscripts but not the original. The Sinaitic is the most reliable manuscript, but it is not perfect. The Vatican Manuscript dates back to the same century.

**Gen. 24:23** And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?

**Gen. 24:24** And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.

**Gen. 24:25** She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

**Gen. 24:26** And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD.

When Eliezer asked Rebekah whose daughter she was, she replied that she was of Nahor's lineage. Upon hearing these words, Eliezer bowed his head and worshipped God—a natural reaction. He thanked God for fulfilling the mission, for providing a bride for Isaac. The servants with Eliezer represent God's agencies that help in the selection and development of the bride.

**Gen. 24:27** 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.

Since Abraham was getting old, Eliezer was happy that the prayer was answered quickly and that Abraham would not be left destitute.

**Gen. 24:28** And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things.

Rebekah *ran* back to her mother's house. Since she could not have run with a big, heavy pitcher, the implication is that she was so excited she did not carry water back. Once there, it would have taken time for her to narrate the events.

**Gen. 24:29** And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well.

**Gen. 24:30** 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.

When Laban saw the gold ring and bracelets and heard Rebekah's words, he went out to greet Eliezer, who had been standing by the well all that time.

**Gen. 24:31** 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.

Laban invited Eliezer to come home with him.

**Gen. 24:32** 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.

Laban ungirded Eliezer's camels, gave them straw and food, and provided Eliezer with water for washing his feet and the feet of his servants.

**Gen. 24:33** 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.

When food was served, Eliezer devotedly would not eat until he had told his errand. God's will came first; the eating was secondary. In the antitype, the Holy Spirit acts immediately and without distraction or diversion, as shown by the four living beings, who go straight out and back on an errand (Ezek. 1:12).

**Gen. 24:34** And he said, I am Abraham's servant.

**Gen. 24:35** 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.

**Gen. 24:36** 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.

**Gen. 24:37** 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:

**Gen. 24:38** But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.

**Gen. 24:39** And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me.

**Gen. 24:40** 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:

**Gen. 24:41** 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.

**Gen. 24:42** 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:

**Gen. 24:43** 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;

**Gen. 24:44** 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.

**Gen. 24:45** 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.

**Gen. 24:46** 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.

**Gen. 24:47** 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.

**Gen. 24:48** 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.

In verses 34-48, Eliezer carefully reiterated all that had happened and in sequence. He wanted to make sure that everyone present was aware of the providential circumstances so that he would, hopefully, get a favorable answer.

Eliezer mentioned Sarah, who bore “a son ... when she was old.” Being a daughter of Terah, Sarah was also related.

The “angel” of verse 40 was literally either the Logos or Gabriel. In the antitype, the Holy Spirit has various distributions. Whether an “angel” is the wind or something else, the Holy Spirit just carries out the errand.

**Gen. 24:49** 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.

“Tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left”; that is, “Tell me so that I may know what to do.” The right hand would be favorable, and the left hand would be negative. If the response was negative, Eliezer would be released from his oath.

**Gen. 24:50** Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.

**Gen. 24:51** Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken.

**Gen. 24:52** And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth.

**Gen. 24:53** 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.

**Gen. 24:54** 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.

**Gen. 24:55** 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.

**Gen. 24:56** 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.

**Gen. 24:57** And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth.

**Gen. 24:58** And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

After Eliezer's reiteration of all events, the members of Rebekah's family could not say no, so they left the matter up to Rebekah. Her response, “I will go!” was the climax. She was ready to go without any hemming and hawing. That was quick decision making, for the encounter at the well had taken place only the “evening” before, and now it was morning.

The family wanted her to wait a little while—"a few days, at the least ten," that is, a month or at least ten days—but she would not hear of a delay. She was willing to leave her father's house immediately. The lesson for us is to be careful not to let "duty love" for family wean us away from spiritual things. However, we should not be disrespectful toward unconsecrated family members; it would be wrong to take no cognizance of them. The point is not to get entangled. Consecration is a definite cleavage and determination for leaving. One can consecrate and stay in the same home, but it should be made clear that the Lord's will comes first.

Bethuel was present and alive but probably feeble and incapacitated, perhaps suffering from something like senility. Therefore, the gifts were given not to him but to Laban and to Rebekah's mother (Gen. 24:50,53).

Rebekah, representing the Church, received gifts: jewels of silver (truth), jewels of gold (divine blessings), and raiment (the imputed robe of Christ's righteousness). Before the Lord drew us and we consecrated, we were not new creatures. It was the old nature that responded. (For that very reason, natural signs were given to natural men at Jesus' resurrection.) The truths that came to us initially were given to the old mind to consider, and the old mind made the decision to consecrate. Many refuse the high calling when they get an opportunity. They delay a little, and as they procrastinate, the old mind reasons, "Wait; think it over." It is important *not to tarry*.

The old man has to agree to consecrate. That is what happened with Terah, who went with Abraham. The Bible says that Terah took Abraham. Abraham reasoned with his father on what God had said. Then Terah, as the head of the family, consented, and they left Ur of the Chaldees. However, a further separation was necessary, that is, of Abraham from Terah. Terah had to die before Abraham could enter the Promised Land.

**Gen. 24:59** And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men.

**Gen. 24:60** 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.

**Gen. 24:61** 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.

Laban and Rebekah's mother sent Rebekah away, along with her nurse and "damsels," or bridesmaids. Eliezer and the men with him left also. The fact that Rebekah's nurse accompanied her indicates she was fairly young. The nurse had brought her up, being like a second mother. Genesis 35:8 mentions Rebekah's nurse by name: Deborah.

Laban and Rebekah's mother realized that Rebekah was taking an important step. Although Rebekah was their sister and daughter, respectively, they wished her a blessing that was on a higher level; namely, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions [that is, billions], and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." The blessing constituted a prophecy, even though it came from their mouth. Similarly, Balaam uttered an important prophecy despite his disobedience. And so did Caiaphas, who said, "It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (John 11:50). The next verse tells us that Caiaphas spoke this prophecy through the Spirit: "And this spake he *not of himself*: but being high priest that year, he *prophesied* that Jesus should die for that nation" (John 11:51).

"Let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." Abraham was also told that his seed would possess the gate of their enemies (Gen. 22:17). God promised to bless those who blessed

Abraham's seed and to curse those who cursed his seed (Gen. 12:3). For Laban and Rebekah's mother to repeat some of these words shows that the family was aware of the Abrahamic promise, which was originally given while Abraham was still in Ur of the Chaldees. A "gate" was the means of ingress into and egress from a city by its citizenry; hence the one who controlled the gate controlled the city. Accordingly, the word "gate" in this context signifies "control."

Rebekah arose with her damsels, and they rode upon the ten camels. They followed Eliezer, the "man," Abraham's servant, a representation of the Holy Spirit. The ten camels picture the nominal Church, and Rebekah's damsels portray the Great Company. Thus verses 61-67 are a picture of the entire Gospel Age. Down through the age, the consecrated have been associated with the nominal Church. Jesus taught that the wheat and the tares would grow together until the time of Harvest; then Rebekah (the Little Flock) alights off the camel (comes out of Babylon). The Holy Spirit has led Rebekah and her damsels throughout the Gospel Age.

**Gen. 24:62 And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south country.**

The well Beer-lahai-roi, which means "the well of him that liveth and seeth me," is where God spoke to the pregnant Hagar after she had fled from Sarah's reprimand. There Hagar was told to return to her mistress, and she was given a prophecy about the yet-to-be-born Ishmael (Gen. 16:7-14). The prophecy was encouraging, for while the blessing would come through the other seed, Ishmael was to be a great one and would multiply exceedingly, but along more materialistic lines.

Although Isaac lived a bedouin existence, he dwelled at this time in the "south country," the Negev, the lowest extremity. In order to preserve the picture of Isaac's representing Jesus, not many details are given about his life. In contrast, there is much detail about Abraham and Jacob.

**Gen. 24:63 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.**

Isaac (Jesus) went out to meditate (to pray or mourn according to some translations) in the field (the Christian world) at eventide (toward evening, that is, toward the close of the Gospel Age). Of course the Gospel Age is approximately 2,000 years long, and the last 100-plus years would be the close, the Harvest. Isaac's going out in the field at eventide refers to the return of Christ at his Second Advent.

Isaac saw the ten camels coming. The men who accompanied Eliezer would have been walking and guiding the camels as the damsels rode.

**Gen. 24:64 And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.**

**Gen. 24:65 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.**

When Rebekah saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel, for she had previously asked Eliezer, "Who is the man walking in the field to meet us?" Rebekah then took a veil and covered her face.

In regard to the ten camels picturing the nominal Church, Rebekah's getting off the camel takes on greater significance. The account does not say that the bridesmaids (the Great

Company) got off the camels. Hence, in antitype, the *spirit of nominalism* is entertained by the foolish virgin class, even if they leave mystic Babylon. The wise virgin class are *truly separate*.

Camels are ships of the desert. If a desert guide loses his way, his camel is given free rein, for it has a sense of where there is water. In fact, the camel is a water carrier; it can travel long distances, for days, without having to drink again. The water-carrying trait is synonymous with the nominal system, which was formerly a golden cup in the Lord's hand. The "cup" pictures truth, the divine promises that are in the Word of God, but much error was mixed in with truth as time went on. At one time, the nominal Church was more or less a steward of truth, but it proved unfaithful in the final analysis. The true Christian was in the nominal system down through the age—and especially during the 1,260-year desert period—for the wheat was to grow together with the tares until the end of the age. After the French Revolution, the separation of the host and the sanctuary class began from one standpoint, but the separation became more dramatic with the Harvest message.

Under "camel," Young's *Analytical Concordance* has the following: "It was often adorned with chains, treated with great care, esteemed a valuable prize, yet liable to *plagues*." The description is interesting in regard to the antitype. The nominal system has ornately adorned cathedrals. Esteeming the building as a great prize, the systems have had more pride in the actual building than in Christian character development. And being "liable to plagues" would fit the antitype. Not only do the seven plagues of Revelation chapter 16 come upon the nominal system, but also the three plagues of Revelation 18:8 (death, mourning, and famine) will come upon Papacy in one day.

Rebekah's taking a veil and covering herself show modesty, humility, and special preparation for her returned Lord. The time setting is between the beginning of the Second Advent and the marriage. Hence Rebekah's covering herself with a veil can also pertain to the Church's going beyond the veil and her death. According to bedouin and Arab custom, a married woman has to keep her face veiled in public. Hence from one standpoint, the picture is one of a marriage that has already taken place, but from another standpoint, it is a picture of one who is espoused, that is, before marriage. From the second perspective, the veil shows the woman's meek consent to the arrangement, her harmony with the coming marriage. Her eyes are *single* for the Lord in antitype.

Song 1:7 reads, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside [as one that is veiled—see King James margin] by the flocks of thy companions?" The bride class asks for closer communication with Jesus, her espoused. The others seem to have a wonderful rapport with the Master, and she is like a veiled woman, like one shut out—as though joined to someone else. But Jesus is the one she wants. Other *professed* Christians seem to have all the joy, fellowship, and recognition, while the standing of the true Christian appears questionable. The Church class is given the servile position of going out in the vineyards and getting sunburned and dark. She is the worker but does not get the recognition. Jesus counsels to follow "the footsteps of the flock," the example of true Christians down through the age (Song 1:8). True Christians are espoused with the veil, whereas professed Christians are unveiled as if already married. Yearning for a closer walk with the Lord has been the experience of the true Church. Others seem to be prospering more because of their outward joy, but that joy is ephemeral, transitory, and superficial.

The two veilings—Genesis 24:65 and Song 1:7—do not contradict. The Lord has returned, and we are in the field at the present time. Some have gone beyond the veil and are *unveiled*. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then [we will see] face to face [that is, be unveiled]" (1 Cor. 13:12). It is an espousal state down here. The marriage will occur beyond the veil. Our present state is like approaching the veil between the Holy and the Most Holy. Once in the Most Holy,

we will be unveiled.

Eliezer said, "It is my master." Earlier Abraham was called the master of Eliezer; here Isaac is given that title. The two thoughts can be harmonized by considering that the calling is of God, but we call Jesus our "Master." All things were committed to the Son, and the type shows that in Abraham's old age, Isaac was given more and more responsibility. Isaac was now 40 years old (Gen. 25:20). Abraham was age 140, but he did not die until he reached 175 (Gen. 25:7). When Abraham sent Eliezer to get a bride for Isaac, he was 137, for Sarah was 127 when she died (Gen. 23:1), and Abraham was 10 years older. Hence Eliezer's trip, including preparation time and a long journey in both directions, was a maximum of three years (140 - 137 = 3).

**Gen. 24:66** And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.

**Gen. 24:67** 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.

Eliezer told Isaac all that had happened in finding Rebekah. Isaac would have realized from the providences that Rebekah was the bride God had selected for him. Rebekah's sweet and loving spirit and desire to do the Lord's will would be most apparent, and Isaac could not help loving her. Her attitude in watering the camels and her readiness to leave immediately were commendable and would have endeared her to Isaac and indicated that she was of the Lord. The type pointed to the antitype, for Jesus said that he would in no wise cast out those who came to him, for they were all called of God.

The type of Isaac and Rebekah shows that Jesus' love for the Church is based on *obedience* to the Father's will. Psalm 45:10,11 reads, "Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; [and] so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty." "Beauty" is not the outward appearance but the heart condition. Whoever loves the Father and obeys His Word with a more-than-overcoming spirit will be greatly loved by Jesus.

Once the antitypical Isaac and Rebekah enter Sarah's tent, the covenant will be finished as regards that seed. That will be the soon-to-come fulfillment of the Sarah (or Grace) Covenant.

**Gen. 25:1** Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.

**Gen. 25:2** And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.

**Gen. 25:3** And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.

**Gen. 25:4** And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

Keturah bore six sons to Abraham. Hence Abraham had a total of eight sons, including Isaac and Ishmael. Keturah's sons prefigure the world in the Kingdom under the New Covenant. Ishmael represents natural Israel, and Hagar, his mother, represents the Law Covenant. Isaac portrays the Church, developed under Sarah, a picture of the Grace Covenant. Hence the three wives of Abraham represent three covenants.

Two of Abraham's "wives," Hagar and Keturah, are sometimes called concubines. A concubine is a wife with a little lower status. Sarah, however, was a wife in the highest sense.

"Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman ... Which things

are an allegory: for these are the *two covenants*; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is [H]Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai ... and answereth to Jerusalem.... But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.... Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise” (Gal. 4:22,24-26,28). Hagar and Sarah represent “two covenants.” Therefore, by inference, Keturah also represents a covenant: the New (Law) Covenant of the future.

In regard to the age factor, Abraham was 137 when Sarah died. Isaac was 37 at the time and was 40 when he married Rebekah. Hence Abraham was 140 when the marriage took place. Since the twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis follows the marriage, we assume that Abraham was at least 140 years old when he married Keturah.

It was a miracle that Abraham sired Isaac in his old age. Ishmael was born when Abraham was 86, and then he became impotent, until his virility was miraculously restored and lasted well past age 140. Abraham was 100 when Isaac was born.

There are other Scriptural examples of children sired in old age. (1) After Job’s health was restored, he had a second family to replace the one that had died (Job 42:12,13). (2) Noah was over 500 when he began to have children. (3) Terah died at age 205 (Gen. 11:32). Immediately at that point, Abraham entered the Promised Land—at age 75. If we subtract (205 - 75 = 130), we see that Terah was 130 years old when Abraham was born. (4) Jacob was over 90 when Joseph was born, and Benjamin came after that. Following Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, there came a marked change along these lines.

Keturah means “incense,” “praise,” that is, in regard to the New Covenant. In the Kingdom, the *whole* world will recognize God’s plan, and there will be *much* praise. Concubine Hagar was a “bondwoman”; wife Sarah was a “freewoman” (Gal. 4:22,23). The wife had a higher status, although both were married.

Jesus said at the institution of the Memorial, “This is my blood of the new testament [covenant], which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28). Other Scriptures clarify the meaning of the “new covenant,” as used here. For example, the blood preceded the new covenant in the type. The blood seals the covenant for *others*. The blood “of bulls and of goats” was used to establish the Law Covenant, and this blood *preceded*, just as Jesus’ and the Church’s sacrifice *precedes* the New Covenant’s going into effect (Heb. 9:13). Plural “bulls” and “goats” are mentioned because of the quantity of blood that was needed. *Two million* people were sprinkled individually. In the Tabernacle service, only limited blood was needed—to sprinkle the horns of the altar and to pour the rest on the ground. Isaiah 49:8 states that Christ will be given “for a covenant”; Christ is not under that covenant, but he will mediate it. And the Church, in a secondary sense, will be associated with Jesus in mediating the New Covenant.

The Sarah Covenant is also called the Grace Covenant. Paul said in Romans 6:14, “Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under *grace*.” In Galatians 4:26, the same apostle said, “Jerusalem which is above ... is the mother of us all.” This text is an allusion to Sarah, who had been barren a long time. We are children of the free woman, Sarah, as Isaac was. Isaac pictures a seed *class*.

The Sheba and Dedan of verse 3 were of Shem’s lineage, whereas the Sheba and Dedan of Genesis 10:7 were of Ham’s lineage. In regard to prophecy, particularly Ezekiel chapter 38, it is important to determine which Sheba and Dedan line is being referred to.

**Gen. 25:5** And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.

**Gen. 25:6** 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.

Abraham gave “all” that he had unto Isaac, yet the account says that he gave generous gifts unto Ishmael’s and Keturah’s sons. (Here is a case in Scripture where “all” does not mean all.) Isaac got Abraham’s property rights and birthright—the more personal things—and also the burial place at Machpelah. The spiritual promise was the most important.

The children of Hagar and Keturah went eastward, across Jordan. Of course, Ishmael had left earlier.

Verses 5 and 6 took place about 500 years after the Flood. From the tenth chapter of Genesis on, the genealogy is important. Pre-Flood genealogy is more nebulous in that the ages of individuals are given but not where they lived.

There is a spiritual application for the statement “Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.” The Abrahamic promise was, “In thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of earth be blessed.” The privilege of being the initial channel of blessing to all mankind was given to Abraham. Therefore, Abraham and his seed will be blessers. This promise is primarily spiritual, yet as the possessor of spiritual blessings, Abraham and his spiritual seed will be able to dispense natural blessings. Just as Abraham gave all to Isaac, so in one sense the Father gave all to the Son. Jesus inherits everything under Jehovah.

**Gen. 25:7** And these are the days of the years of Abraham’s life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years.

Abraham died at age 175. Terah, his father, had died at 205. Thus ages were diminishing.

**Gen. 25:8** 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.

“Abraham ... was gathered to his people.” God has a book of generations, a memory book, in which the names are “gathered” with a classified identity. God’s book of remembrance in death probably has various files or chapters. Since Abraham was buried in the cave of Machpelah, the expression “was gathered to his people” has to have another meaning; namely, Abraham was gathered in the Shem line or category (verse 9).

**Gen. 25:9** 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;

**Gen. 25:10** The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

Isaac and Ishmael buried Abraham. It is interesting that Ishmael came for the interment. Sarah had been buried there earlier, in the cave of Machpelah in Mamre, or Hebron.

**Gen. 25:11** And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi.

Isaac dwelled by the well Lahai-roi. He was at this same well when Eliezer brought Rebekah back, and Hagar fled to this well when she was pregnant and the Lord told her to return to Sarai (Gen. 16:14). “Lahai-roi” means “[the well of] him that liveth and seeth me.” There God made a covenant, a Jewish oath, with Hagar’s progeny. Ishmael pictures Israel according to the flesh, and Isaac pictures Jesus. A Jew according to the flesh, Jesus obeyed the Law perfectly, remaining under it until the fulfillment at his death. A “Star” rose out of Jacob (Num. 24:17).

The beginnings of the Jews were at Lahai-roi. Isaac later removed to Beersheba (Gen. 26:33).

**Gen. 25:12** Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham:

**Gen. 25:13** 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,

**Gen. 25:14** And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa,

**Gen. 25:15** Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah:

**Gen. 25:16** These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.

**Gen. 25:17** 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.

Hagar was an Egyptian. Egypt pictures the world, so Ishmael represents a natural picture, that is, according to the flesh. The Hagar Covenant is a natural, fleshly covenant, whereas the Sarah Covenant is spiritual. Ishmael pictures natural Israel, and his 12 sons, who are called "twelve princes," represent the 12 tribes of Israel. Abraham was promised that (12) *kings* would come through his seed. Of Esau would come "dukes" (Gen. 36:15). Notice that the sons of Ishmael were the names of towns as well as the names of individuals. This custom continued.

In connection with childbearing, God only has to push a lever, as it were, to arrange that a certain number of children are born. Abraham, a *very virile* man, was made impotent for a period of time to create a type. Just as Ishmael had to be born before Isaac, so natural Israel preceded spiritual Israel in history. And Sarah was barren for a time. God does not interfere with free moral agency, but He does guide certain things. The potter has power over the clay; that is, God does manipulate certain things, but those things have nothing to do with free moral agency.

Earth will be an example *forever* to all intelligent beings. Mathematically and schematically, it will be seen that nothing got out of hand. God has guided these types not just for us but for future posterity. At present, we understand only a small portion of what He has been doing.

Ishmael died at age 137; Abraham died at 175. Some translations have "expired" instead of "gave up the ghost." It is true that when one expires, there is the last breath, but there is also a record of the individual who is dying. The expression "gave up the ghost" is significant, for it means that the identity of the deceased is transferred and preserved. The record of the deceased life is given to God. Stated another way, the spirit, or transferred identity, goes back to God whence it came. The body, the breath, and the identity are all separate.

**Gen. 25:18** 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 generations of Ishmael dwelled from Havilah unto Shur. Shur, to which Hagar had tried to flee many years earlier, is in Sinai across the Gulf of Suez from Egypt. Bible maps show the Wilderness of Shur, which was a natural wall about 50 miles long. Shur means "wall."

Ishmael died "in the presence of all his brethren"; that is, his children were all in his presence. (Similarly, Ishmael and Isaac both attended Abraham's funeral service.) At one time, it looked as if Ishmael would die from lack of water, but now a mighty race was coming from him.

One of the rivers of Eden flowed through Havilah. Havilah, or Assyria, was far to the north. Verse 18 is saying that Ishmael's and Keturah's sons, progeny, and families were numerous on the east side of Jordan, and they kept spreading out north and south, from Assyria (near Ararat) to Shur (near Egypt).

The Arabs of today could be descended from either Ishmael's or Keturah's children, but they are *all Shemites*, kinsmen to the Jews. In other words, if the lineages were traced back, they would *all* lead to Shem. "Arab" is a loose term that *includes* many nationalities but is *not* a nationality. "Arab" is a religious term like "Christian." A Christian can be a Jew, a German, a Chinese, etc. The only restriction for the Arab is that regardless of nationality, he must be *of Shem*.

**Gen. 25:19** And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac:

By comparing verses 19, 20, and 26, we see that Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebekah and 60 when she had Jacob and Esau. In other words, Rebekah was barren for 20 years.

**Gen. 25:20** And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

Twice Rebekah's Syrian background was mentioned. Other prophecies tell that Israel's father, Jacob, was a Syrian (Deut. 26:5). Through this Syrian strain came problems—genetic habits.

**Gen. 25:21** And Isaac entreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

Isaac entreated God for Rebekah's barrenness. The prayers would have continued for *20 years* in a constancy of importuning. Sarah had been barren, and now Rebekah was also barren. There are other similarities as well, for Rebekah pictures the Sarah Covenant.

**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.

**Gen. 25:23** 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.

During the quickening phase (at five months), Rebekah felt the struggle within her womb. Also, rivalry and contention existed later, during part of the life of Jacob and Esau. The inner movement was so great that Rebekah inquired of the Lord: "Why is this happening to me?"

Rebekah "went to inquire of the LORD." She did not just ask the Lord at night in her tent when ready to retire but "went" some place. Where? There was no official Tabernacle structure at this time. (It was 430 years from the making of the covenant with Abraham until the giving of the Law to Moses.) With Melchizedek, who was at Jerusalem, being called "the priest of the most high God," there was some kind of arrangement, but we have no details (Gen. 14:18). In the days of Moses, *before* he was given the vision on Mount Sinai and the Tabernacle was built, there was a tabernacle, or tent, outside the camp where he went to inquire of the Lord. An altar was probably in front of it.

Rebekah may have gone to the well Lahai-roi, where God had spoken to Hagar in her despair. This is also where Isaac was meditating when Rebekah first arrived, and they were living near

the well now (Gen. 25:11). Wherever God spoke became a holy place.

An answer came from the Lord: “There are two nations in your womb. Each of the two who come forth from your womb will be the progenitor of a seed. The contention that is beginning inside your womb will occur outside too. The older one will eventually be subservient to the younger one.” (The latter part of God’s reply was contrary to custom whereby the firstborn got the inheritance.)

In discussing election in Romans 9:12, the Apostle Paul referred to Rebekah in the Book of Genesis: “It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.” The reason for this statement was that God intended to make a picture, or type. “(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;)” (Rom. 9:11). God told Rebekah that the reason for the commotion in her womb was the existence of *two* seeds in opposition to each other. The fact that the elder would serve the younger implied choice or favoritism, for God would honor the supplanting, which normally would be wrong. Paul continued, “As it is written, Jacob have I [God] loved, but Esau have I hated [loved less]” (Rom. 9:13).

**Gen. 25:24** And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.

God’s statement was fulfilled. Two sons, fraternal twins, were born.

**Gen. 25:25** And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau.

The first son to come out was red (he had a ruddy complexion) and hairy. Hence he was named Esau, meaning “hairy,” and later his name was changed to Edom, which means “red.” Adam, also meaning “red,” comes from the same word as Edom, for the Hebrew has no vowels. “Adam” means red in the sense of the color of *earth*. From the *ground*, he came forth.

“They [Isaac and Rebekah] called his name Esau”; that is, they agreed Esau was quite different. The implication is that both parents thought of that fitting name.

The significance of Esau’s being hairy suggests desires along *natural* lines. Esau was physically stronger than Jacob but not spiritually stronger. Jacob was not weak, however, for he *wrestled* with the angel all night (Gen. 32:24-30). The point is that he did not use the strength aggressively, whereas Esau did, becoming a hunter. “Hair” here represents *fleshly, earthly* desires, and the nation of Israel is satisfied with earthly promises. Today, for example, Jews highly value money and the education needed to get the money. Also, the hair afforded an opportunity for deception when Isaac gave his blessing regarding the birthright (Gen. 27:6-36).

**Gen. 25:26** 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.

Jacob was the younger of the two, the second to be born, but how startling! Esau was born first, and then a tiny hand reached out of the womb and grabbed his heel. One twin, Esau, was fully born, taken from the womb; then the other twin, Jacob, reached out and took hold. Jacob’s name, meaning “the supplanter” or “he who supplants,” became very significant.

With a newborn babe, the head flops and there is very little muscular control, but the grasping ability is disproportionately strong compared to the other movements. It is interesting how the Lord used this ability prophetically. At birth, the head usually comes out first, with the arms and hands against the side, so it would be most unusual for a hand to reach out at the moment

of separation.

After waiting 20 years, Rebekah now had two little ones! Isaac was 60 years old at this time, a fact that gives a link in the chronology.

Abraham sired Isaac and Ishmael. Isaac sired Jacob and Esau. Again there was a duplication regarding the Sarah (or Rebekah) Covenant versus the Law Covenant. Some friction existed between Ishmael and Isaac in the beginning. For example, Ishmael mocked Isaac at the feast for Isaac's weaning (Gen. 21:8,9). And Jacob and Esau had friction. In addition to the literal friction for a time between Ishmael and Isaac and between Jacob and Esau, antitypical friction occurred from several standpoints: (1) between Israel and the Arabs in the *natural* sense, (2) between Judaism and Christianity in the *spiritual* sense, and (3) between nominal and true Christians from another standpoint.

**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.**

Jacob is called "a quiet man" in the Revised Standard Version. He was quiet and peaceable, living a bedouin life and being content to take care of the flocks. (Later, he served Laban by tending sheep and goats.) In contrast, Esau lived an active, wilder existence.

The hunter was being compared with the shepherd, who peacefully pastured flocks and lived a bedouin type of existence. Hunters usually built cities—like Nimrod. Genesis 16:12 gives a prophecy of Ishmael: "And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." Again there is a first- and second-generation similarity between Ishmael and Esau. Ishmael "became an *archer*," and Esau "was a cunning *hunter*" (Gen. 21:20). Jacob was humble; Esau was more aggressive.

**Gen. 25:28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.**

Spirituality is indicated on Rebekah's part (as was also shown earlier in her willingness to leave her people and follow Eliezer). Isaac could have been very religious too, but verse 28 shows that parents do not always make the right choice with their children; they may fail to recognize the virtue of one above another. Rebekah probably cherished in her heart the specific answer she got from the Lord: "the elder shall serve the younger."

**Gen. 25:29 And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint:**

**Gen. 25:30 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.**

Esau was also called Edom, meaning "red," which showed he had a desire for *earthly* things. "Pottage" was stew or soup. The pottage was red, and Esau had a ruddy complexion (Gen. 25:25). Esau was given to satisfying an earthly appetite. Incidentally, lentils and bread are substantial to one who is famished.

Esau sold his birthright for a morsel of bread (Heb. 12:16). Esau pictures: (1) the Jewish nation, who were given the opportunity of the high calling but forsook it as a nation; (2) the professed people of God, who forsake the high calling; and (3) among the truly consecrated, a class who reap condemnation because they sell that which is spiritual for some earthly, fleshly desire. Those of this class could be the Great Company, who lose the high calling, or they could be the Second Death class, who lose all life. The degree or nature of the selling of the birthright determines whether one is Great Company or Second Death. Hear the context of Hebrews

12:16, which follows:

“And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

“Looking diligently lest any man fail of [fall from] the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

“Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.” (Heb. 12:13-16)

**Gen. 25:31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.**

**Gen. 25:32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?**

**Gen. 25:33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.**

**Gen. 25:34 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.**

“Thus Esau despised [disregarded] his birthright”; that is, he did not sufficiently appreciate it. The Adversary attacks along the lines of one’s greatest weakness, which is usually the flesh. The fact that Esau had no success that day in hunting providentially brought out this facet of his character and also created a type.

**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.**

Again there was a duplication/similarity of the first and second generations (see Genesis chapter 20). “Abimelech” was a title meaning “father [ab] king [Molech].” Since a number of years had passed, this Abimelech was different from the one Abraham had had contact with in Gerar.

**Gen. 26:2 And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:**

**Gen. 26:3 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 sware unto Abraham thy father;**

**Gen. 26:4 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;**

**Gen. 26:5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.**

God told Isaac, “Do not go to Egypt, but sojourn in this land,” that is, in the Land of Promise, or Canaan. The famine had started earlier, and Isaac went down to Gerar perhaps with the intention of going on to Egypt like Abraham. Later Jacob and his sons went to Egypt, preceded by Joseph, in time of famine. Thus there was a famine in the days of each of the patriarchs:

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In back of the famines, the Lord's providence was being exercised. Abraham did go to Egypt, Isaac was forbidden to go, and Jacob eventually went to Egypt in his old age.

Gerar was on the way to Egypt. Why did God forbid Isaac to go to Egypt? That question will be answered later.

When God told Isaac to "sojourn" in the land, the thought was, "For the time being, stay in the vicinity of Gerar." God promised to bless Isaac in Gerar, to give him "all these countries," and to "perform the oath" He had sworn unto Abraham. But notice, there was no promise or statement as to *when* the oath would be performed. Acts 7:5 tells that Abraham lived and died without receiving the inheritance except as a promissory note. The fulfillment will come in the Kingdom.

Verses 3-5 were a reaffirmation of the promise made earlier to Abraham. Isaac was the promised seed, so the promise was unconditional. However, Isaac viewed the promise as conditional, for God said in effect, "If you sojourn in this land, I will bless you." In other words, God would bless him there, in the Promised Land, in a time of famine. Isaac's experiences in the Gerar area helped to develop his faith.

What about the phrase "all these countries"? Isaac was in Philistine territory. God was saying, "Do not go to Egypt. Stay here and I will bless you and take care of you, even though it is enemy territory."

The multiplication of the seed was mentioned but only the *heavenly* aspect: "I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven." To Abraham, *both* the heavenly and the earthly seeds were mentioned: "... in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore" (Gen. 22:17).

Since the Philistines had a reputation for trouble, both Abraham and Isaac feared initially. And Abraham did have some strife with the herdsmen after he had dug wells. Abimelech later made an oath with him at Beersheba, recognizing Abraham's right to the *system* of wells (off one main well). Hence this strife was amicably resolved. A similar situation occurred with Isaac, as we will see.

Abraham had a deed to the wells, but after he left, the Philistines filled them up with sand. Isaac dug the wells again, and more trouble followed. (Note: The Philistines did not appropriate Abraham's wells unto themselves because the wells belonged to Abraham according to the deed. However, they "stopped" the wells.) Finally, the Philistines wanted Isaac to get out. Things did, however, work out, as with Abraham earlier (Gen. 26:17-33).

Isaac's attitude was proper in taking the promise as conditional, but verse 5 proves it was unconditional. "Because ... Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge...." The principle is the same in Matthew chapter 24. The faithful and wise servant is Pastor Russell, but he never applied that text unconditionally to himself. Why not? Because he said the next verse pertaining to the evil servant proved it was conditional upon his not smiting the brethren and not delaying the Lord's coming. Now, however, in looking back, we can see that he had to be the faithful and wise servant.

Isaac's trial was a test of time, but God foresaw that he would be obedient. Isaac was married 20 years before a seed was born (he was age 60). Also, the oath was not fulfilled in his day.

The "stars of heaven" are innumerable from man's standpoint, yet God counts them and has a name for each one. In regard to the sand of the seashore, again the sand is innumerable to

man, countable to God. Isaac received only the “stars of heaven” part of the promise, that is, the *heavenly* promise. This is a clue as to why Isaac was told by God not to go down to Egypt. Isaac represents The Christ, Head and body members. Paul said, “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise” (Gal. 4:28). When we consecrate to leave the world, we cannot return to it. Therefore, it would have been incongruous for Isaac to go to Egypt, a picture of the *world*. With Abraham, it was different, for he was given, comprehensively, both parts of the promise.

Rebekah, who represents the Church, was both the sister and the bride of Isaac. Of course Isaac represents Jesus, and Jesus is the Church’s husband and elder brother.

**Q:** What about Abraham? He said Sarah was his sister, but she was also his wife.

**A:** Abraham is a picture in a larger sense. He was the father of three covenants: Law, Grace, and New.

**Gen. 26:6** And Isaac dwelt in Gerar:

**Gen. 26:7** 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.

**Gen. 26:8** 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.

**Gen. 26:9** 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.

**Gen. 26:10** And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lain with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.

**Gen. 26:11** And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

**Gen. 26:12** Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him.

Verses 6-12 are similar to the accounts in Genesis chapters 12 and 20. Sarah was beautiful, and so was Rebekah. Abraham called Sarah his sister out of fear lest he would be killed, and so did Isaac. Since there truly was a family relationship, the term “sister” could be used loosely back there, just as Lot was called the “brother” of Abraham (Gen. 14:12,14).

When Abimelech looked out the window and saw Isaac and Rebekah “sporting,” he knew this action was a little too intimate for brother and sister. “Sporting” could be just an embrace. Abimelech then warned his subjects not to touch Rebekah lest they be put to death. Again God protected the seed that would come through a patriarch, this time Isaac and Rebekah. As a result, Isaac was afforded a measure of peace for a year. Verse 12 says that when Isaac sowed, he received a hundredfold that same year. This abundance is proof that God did not rebuke Isaac for his act of prudence.

**Gen. 26:13** And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:



**Gen. 26:14** For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.

**Gen. 26:15** 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.

**Gen. 26:16** And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

In Abraham's absence, all the wells that his servants had previously dug were filled up with earth by the Philistines. Since the Philistines respected the deed given to Abraham by Abimelech, they did not use the wells themselves but "stopped" them instead as another way of getting back at Abraham.

Now Isaac was prospering *exceedingly* with his flocks—so much so, in fact, that the Philistines envied him—and finally the king said, "Go away from us, for you are mightier than we." For the prosperity to occur in *enemy* territory in time of *famine* would have been very encouraging to Isaac. For two reasons, Isaac was asked to leave: (1) The Philistines envied him, and (2) they feared him. Because Isaac's "possessions" were becoming so numerous, the Philistines thought he would conquer them.

**Gen. 26:17** And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

The famine had brought Isaac south to the land of the Philistines (to Gerar). His original intention was to go on to Egypt, but for antitypical reasons, God told him to stay where he was. Subsequently, when Isaac's prosperity caused envy and fear on the part of the Philistines and they told him to depart, he removed to the valley of Gerar.

**Gen. 26:18** 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.

**Gen. 26:19** And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

**Gen. 26:20** 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.

**Gen. 26:21** And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.

When Isaac dug out the wells of his father, Abraham, the land immediately became more valuable, and especially when additional wells were dug. The valley of Gerar was actually the wadi of Gerar; hence it was dry most of the year. Isaac gave the wells the same names that Abraham had used for them. The new wells were called Esek ("contention") and Sitnah ("hatred") because of the strife caused by the herdsmen of Gerar, that is, the Philistines.

The Hebrew would have to be checked for the meaning of a "well of springing [living] water." Sometimes the word translated "well" is actually a cistern. A cistern is made by digging a hole and lining it with bricks or stone to keep out sand. When a wadi flowed with water, the water entered the cistern, which acted as a storage bin. Today we view a well as a hole dug down into the water table to supply a continuous stream. "Springing water" seems to imply that it was the latter—and that the well was not dependent upon a flash flood to fill the wadi.

**Gen. 26:22** 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.

The third new well was named Rehoboth (“room”) because the herdsmen of Gerar did not contend over this one. Why did Isaac say, “For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land”? (1) The contention having ceased, there was relative calm, and Isaac felt that constructive things like planting could be done. Incidentally, verse 22 is proof that Isaac had a relatively docile nature, for he did not fight for each well but simply moved on when contention occurred. (2) Isaac could see God’s hand in the peace because part of the promise (verses 3 and 4) was that he would be fruitful.

**Gen. 26:23** And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.

Isaac could not stay in the valley of Gerar indefinitely because it was a wadi with the potential hazard of a flash flood. Therefore, even though he had peace and quiet there, he moved on to Beersheba.

**Gen. 26:24** 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.

On the very night Isaac got to Beersheba from the valley of Gerar, God appeared to him 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.” Significant events occurred at Beersheba in Abraham’s day, and future events will also take place there. Beersheba has three meanings, one of which is “well of the oath.” That was the significance when Abraham made a covenant with Abimelech (Gen. 21:31). Now God made an oath or promise to Isaac in the same vicinity.

**Gen. 26:25** 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 built an altar to God at Beersheba, and his servants dug yet another well.

**Gen. 26:26** Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army.

Abimelech; Phichol, chief captain of the Philistine army; and Ahuzzath, a third party, went to Isaac from Gerar. Except for Ahuzzath, the same thing had happened to Abraham (Gen. 21:22). “Abimelech” and “Phichol” are *titles*, so these were not the same individuals as in Abraham’s day.

**Gen. 26:27** And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

**Gen. 26:28** 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;

Abimelech and Phichol wanted to make a covenant with Isaac, for they saw that God was with him. Again there is a similarity to Abraham’s experience. Isaac would have known of the covenant with Abraham; hence he realized his covenant was a duplication, that is, a reaffirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant. God would deal with Isaac now as He had previously dealt with Abraham.

**Gen. 26:29** 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.

The covenant was that Isaac would not hurt the Philistines. “The blessed of the LORD” was a title.

**Gen. 26:30** And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.

Isaac made a feast for Abimelech, Phichol, and Ahuzzath.

**Gen. 26:31** And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

**Gen. 26:32** 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.

**Gen. 26:33** And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba unto this day.

Previously, before the covenant with Abimelech, Isaac’s servants had dug a well (see verse 25), but they were unsuccessful in finding water until now. Water was a precious commodity and hence caused excitement.

Isaac called this new well Shebah. “Therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba unto this day.” Earlier Abraham had named this place Beersheba when he made his covenant with Abimelech (Gen. 21:31). However, it was Isaac’s naming the well Shebah that made the name Beersheba stick. *Beer* means “well”; *Shebah* means “oath,” “good fortune,” “seven.” Thus it was the well of the oath, the well of good fortune, and the well of the seven. In regard to the third definition, there was a system of wells, seven in all. Also, Abraham had given Abimelech seven ewe lambs when their covenant was made (Gen. 21:28-30). The Abrahamic promise is all of these: the well of the oath, good fortune, and seven. The terminology sets a precedent that helps us to understand, through innuendo, certain prophecies of the future in the books of Daniel and Revelation.

**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:

**Gen. 26:35** Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

Esau was 40 years old when he married two heathen (outside the faith) Hittite wives without parental approval. Isaac was also 40 when he married Rebekah.

**Q:** Shouldn’t Esau’s improper marriages, plus the prophecy given to Rebekah at the birth of Esau and Jacob, have caused Isaac to go to God in prayer to see whether or not Esau should have the birthright?

**A:** Yes. It was a grief of mind to both Isaac and Rebekah when Esau married Hittite wives, but Rebekah was the most concerned. Later she suggested what Jacob should do to get the blessing. Isaac was a good man, but sometimes being a “good man” does not mean one has proper discernment along certain lines. Isaac did not meditate sufficiently on Esau’s actions to see his unworthiness.

Isaac and Esau probably did not realize the providence connected with their both marrying at age 40. They may have thought it was a coincidence and nothing more. However, from the standpoint of the type, things are involved far beyond our understanding. Events connected with the Abrahamic Covenant will be repeated *billions* of years from now. It is significant that Christ came to planet Earth to get his bride, and future generations will want to know how this divine family was developed—and about the types, pictures, details, etc. Therefore, it was not just a happenstance that Esau married at age 40. Certain circumstances no doubt occurred to keep him from marrying earlier. Some coincidences are very remarkable because of the great unlikelihood of their occurring without providential overruling. For example, the similarity of experiences of Abraham and Isaac are a lesson not discerned now but designed for future generations to look back to. God guided the experiences of these individuals without interfering with their free moral agency. Exterior events were permitted to shape their lives.

Isaac sometimes pictures Jesus alone, but usually he pictures the Church, Israel according to the spirit. In some pictures, Esau represents natural Israel, Israel according to the flesh. As we proceed, we will see why God made the covenant with three individuals. He made it with Abraham and reaffirmed it with Isaac and then with Jacob.

**Q:** With Esau picturing natural Israel, was his marrying Hittite women a picture of the nation's being tied to the earth?

**A:** Yes. Natural Israel was more interested in material rewards and natural promises: prosperity, success in warfare, and so forth. Although the spiritual promises were potentially theirs, they were not really interested in them. The Jewish nation could have inherited the high calling entirely, but they lost it as a nation because they rejected Jesus.

The spiritual work since World War I has been a gleaning work. Few have consecrated since 1918 with the hope of the high calling. The date 1918 was prominent with the Johnsonites, the JW Society, and the Stand Fast Movement, who discouraged running for the high calling. As a result, the truth is not popular today. There was a 40-year general Harvest from 1874(78) to 1914(18), but not until the last grain of wheat is brought into the barn will the Harvest be over.

**Q:** Is "40" a symbol of testing? Isaac's period of testing ended with a "spiritual" bride; Esau's, with a "natural" bride.

**A:** Yes, but more is involved. For instance, God gives us a specific time period to make progress. If the intended progress is not attained, the individual is relegated to another class. A testing period is definite. God continually has time periods in mind; He does not ramble in His dealings with us or with others.

**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.

**Gen. 27:2** And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death:

**Gen. 27:3** Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison;

**Gen. 27:4** 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.

**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.

Isaac, feeling that his death was drawing nigh, wanted to give the parental blessing and the blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant. He requested that Esau go out hunting to get meat to make a savory stew.

**Q:** Did Isaac request venison stew so that he would be refreshed and invigorated before giving the blessing?

**A:** Usually when one is hospitably entertained, his conversation is freer and his joy stimulated. The venison would produce a more conducive atmosphere and would also invigorate Isaac. His eyesight was dim, so he must have been quite weak at this point. Perhaps Isaac thought the meat would strengthen him to give the blessing to Esau.

**Gen. 27:6** And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying,

**Gen. 27:7** Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before my death.

**Gen. 27:8** Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee.

**Gen. 27:9** 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:

**Gen. 27:10** And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.

**Gen. 27:11** And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man:

**Gen. 27:12** 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.

When Rebekah overheard Isaac speak to Esau, she acted hastily. We are reminded of the time Sarah listened in the tent door and overheard the angel telling Abraham she would have a child.

Rebekah prompted Jacob to act speedily and obey her instructions in order to thwart the blessing from coming upon Esau.

**Q:** The RSV does not say “venison” but “game.” When Rebekah prepared goat meat, Isaac did not seem to notice the difference, so was the “game” something other than “venison”?

**A:** “Venison” included ibex, deer, and similar animals.

Rebekah told Jacob to kill *two* “kids of the goats” because one goat was for stew and the other would provide skins for Jacob’s hands and neck. It is remarkable how quickly Rebekah thought ahead to plan the deception.

The following factors made Rebekah realize that Jacob was the one to get the blessing:

1. The name Jacob means “supplanter.”
2. A prophecy was given prior to Jacob’s birth when Rebekah felt turmoil in her womb: “Two nations are in thy womb, ... and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger” (Gen. 25:23).

3. Esau married heathen wives.

4. Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage (perhaps Jacob had told his mother about this incident).

**Gen. 27:13** And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.

**Gen. 27:14** And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved.

**Gen. 27:15** 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:

**Gen. 27:16** And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck:

**Gen. 27:17** And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

The deception was well planned. Rebekah would have made the goat stew as savory as possible to camouflage it as “venison.” Also, she was under a time constraint, not knowing how long it would take Esau to hunt and prepare an animal. Rebekah showed her faith by saying, “The curse be upon *me*.”

The skins fastened on Jacob’s neck and hands would have been well fitted to prevent lumps and wrinkles. Although a *kid*’s skin, being supple, is easier to wrap, Rebekah’s dexterity with a needle was thus manifested. Esau must have been quite hairy to feel like a goat. Rebekah gave the savory meat to Jacob to present to Isaac, his father.

**Comment:** Rebekah felt she was doing the Lord’s will because of events that had transpired.

**Reply:** We can see her faith and actions in that direction. Jacob himself yearned for the promise, for he had supplied a meal to Esau and bargained for the birthright. Jacob desired to inherit the spiritual blessing.

**Gen. 27:18** And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son?

**Gen. 27:19** 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.

**Gen. 27:20** 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.

**Gen. 27:21** 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.

**Gen. 27:22** 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.

**Gen. 27:23** And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau’s hands: so he blessed him.

**Gen. 27:24** And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am.

**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.

**Gen. 27:26** And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

**Gen. 27:27** 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:

Isaac was more than 100 years old at this time, but he did not die until age 180 (Gen. 35:28). Hence, just like Abraham, Isaac lived many years after he thought he would die.

And a similarity occurred between Isaac and Jacob in that both were blind in their old age when the blessing was given to their offspring (Gen. 27:1; 48:10). In each case, the younger son got the birthright of the firstborn.

**Comment:** It is interesting that Jacob had to repeat his lie several times. Once he committed to the deception, he persisted in it.

**Reply:** Yes. Deceptions subsequently happened to Jacob to reverse what he had done to Isaac, but nevertheless, the Abrahamic promise was not disannulled or vitiated. Sometimes a higher law takes precedent over a lower law. The more important higher law supersedes the lower law, but the lower law still stays in operation. For example, a *kid of the goats* was killed and its blood put on Joseph's coat of many colors to *deceive* Jacob into thinking Joseph was dead (Gen. 37:31-33). Retribution had to come, but for Jacob, it was well worth his securing the blessing. Justice was satisfied when retribution operated on Jacob—even though Esau, in his earlier life, did not consider the spiritual blessing that important and sold it for some pottage.

**Q:** Did Rebekah get the curse?

**A:** We do not know, for the account does not give us much information.

**Comment:** Rebekah did suffer as a result of this experience, for she lost Jacob when he had to flee from Esau's hatred.

**Reply:** Yes, she suffered in that way, but we have no information about her being deceived as retribution later on.

**Q:** What is the difference between the blessing and the birthright?

**A:** Jacob gave a blessing to each of his 12 sons. Moses blessed the 12 tribes. Hence the blessing is not as limited or confined as the Abrahamic promise, which was a *particular* blessing that was to go through a *specific* seed. The Abrahamic promise could not be given to two people. Thus the birthright was the double portion, and it included the spiritual blessing. The birthright normally goes to the *firstborn*, and that is what Esau forfeited—the firstborn birthright, which was a double portion.

In this case, the double portion was both a spiritual and a fleshly promise. If Israel had been obedient, the nation would have inherited the two aspects of the Abrahamic Covenant: the heavenly and the earthly. In other words, the 144,000 would have been all Jews, and the nation of Israel would still be the channel of blessing on an earthly plane. But Israel forfeited the spiritual blessing—and a good deal of the natural too.

Isaac was suspicious, but he could not see. He heard Jacob's voice, but the hairy hands and neck seemed like Esau's. Still he was a little suspicious, so he asked Jacob to come near and kiss him. Then Isaac smelled "the smell of a field" and decided Jacob was Esau. Probably Jacob tried to imitate Esau's voice.

Rebekah's methods were clever, namely, putting goat skins on the nape of Jacob's neck and on his hands and also dressing him in Esau's clothes, which had the odor of the field. Perhaps the Holy Spirit helped her think of these things, overruling because of the type.

**Gen. 27:28** Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:

**Gen. 27:29** 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.

A portion of Isaac's blessing on Jacob sounds like part of the Abrahamic promise: "Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." The "dew of heaven" is contrasted with the "fatness of the earth." Also, Esau would now have to be subservient to Jacob—a condition that was quite galling to Esau.

**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.

**Gen. 27:31** 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.

**Gen. 27:32** And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau.

**Gen. 27:33** 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.

**Gen. 27:34** 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.

**Gen. 27:35** And he said, Thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing.

What a shock to both Isaac and Esau to learn that the blessing had gone to Jacob! Hebrews 12:16,17 comments on the situation: "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 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." Esau lost the *chief* blessing but got a blessing. The lesson is not to parley with God's arrangement and calling. *A vow is to be kept.* Incidentally, an interesting detail with regard to the type is that Rebekah represents the *Sarah Covenant*, and she made the savory meat for Jacob to give to Isaac, whereas Esau made his savory meat *himself*.

**Comment:** It would seem that Esau's crying bitterly at losing the chief blessing would fit the Great Company, whereas natural Israel has not realized what they lost.

**Reply:** The nation of Israel does not realize the loss yet, but they *will*. The Great Company will



become aware of their loss when the door is closed.

Both temporal and spiritual blessings were included in the Abrahamic promise: the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth, plenty of grain and wine, and the promise of being the chief one. A double portion was included in the birthright. Therefore, the Little Flock receives not only the spiritual inheritance but also the earth, but they pass the earthly portion over—they forfeit it.

The following is an example of the firstborn double portion. If there were four children, the firstborn would get  $2/5$ . In other words, add one to the number of children, divide by that number, and add one to the firstborn ( $4 + 1 = 5$ ;  $5/5 = 1$ ;  $1 + 1 = 2$ , or  $2/5$ ). The firstborn portion was later reckoned this way, but *originally*, the firstborn portion was the *spiritual* plus the *natural*. After the Law was given, the reckoning became mathematical, and the firstborn literally got a double portion.

After Isaac realized he had been deceived, he said to Esau, “Yea, and he [Jacob] shall be blessed.” In other words, the blessing *would stand* because Isaac began to see the situation as providential. He thought, “Maybe I have not properly judged my sons. I loved Esau more than I should have.” For instance, notice the timing. Jacob had no sooner gotten the blessing and left his father when Esau appeared with savory meat. Once Isaac saw the blessing of Jacob as God’s will, he accepted it. Isaac had *integrity*, even though his judgment needed correction.

**Gen. 27:36** 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?

**Gen. 27:37** 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?

**Gen. 27:38** 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.

**Gen. 27:39** 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;

**Gen. 27:40** 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.

**Comment:** It is kind of touching. Esau asked, “Don’t you have one little blessing for me?” and when the blessing did come, it was along material lines.

**Reply:** Esau wept, but he did get a blessing. The Holy Spirit seems to have mechanically operated, for the blessing was given on the spur of the moment under emotional stress. The “dew of heaven” was mentioned again but in reverse order—*after* the “fatness of the earth.” In the antitype, the Great Company will get a spiritual resurrection but a *secondary* one.

Esau recognized that Jacob was the “supplanter,” but he said, “He [Jacob] *took away* my birthright.” In reality, however, Esau *gave away* his birthright. Esau felt he had been robbed twice, whereas he had not fully appreciated the birthright.

The blessing to Esau was along natural lines: “You shall live by the sword and serve your brother. And when you have the dominion, you shall break his yoke from off your neck.” The latter part of the blessing in regard to the yoke was fulfilled at a much later date. During the

history of the kings, Esau more or less seceded from the dominion (2 Kings 8:20-22). In the next age, the Abrahamic promise will be fulfilled, and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will get their inheritance. With that inheritance will come the double dominion, which will not be broken. The Esau class will be servants at that time, but in the interim, the yoke was broken.

**Q:** If we switch the picture so that Jacob represents the true Church and Esau symbolizes natural Israel, do Rebekah and Isaac still represent the Sarah Covenant and Jesus, respectively?

**A:** Yes.

**Gen. 27:41** And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.

**Gen. 27:42** And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.

**Gen. 27:43** Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran;

**Gen. 27:44** And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

**Gen. 27:45** Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?

**Gen. 27:46** And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?

Rebekah suggested that Isaac give Jacob the same advice that Abraham had given Eliezer in regard to finding a bride for Isaac: "Go to Haran, and get a wife of your kindred." Verse 46 tells us that Jacob was still dwelling in the tents of Isaac as well as Esau and his wives, and there was friction between Jacob and Esau. For a time, there had also been strife between Ishmael and Isaac when they dwelled with Abraham. And Hagar was a burden to Sarah. Thus similarities of friction and grief took place in the two generations. Rebekah was grieved over Esau's Hittite wives being right there in the family.

**Comment:** We are given an insight into Rebekah's character. She realized the importance of marrying into the faith.

Rebekah, hearing that Esau planned to kill Jacob when Isaac died, told Jacob to flee to Laban, her brother, in Haran and take a wife. When Esau's anger cooled, Rebekah would send word to Jacob to return. But when Jacob left, he was gone a long time. (Much later when Esau's blessing came to pass and he got flocks and prosperity, he felt that he had adequate temporal goods, but Jacob pressed Esau further, desiring peace.)

Esau's saying, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand," means he thought his father was dying. And when Rebekah said, "Why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?" she was thinking, "If the sons fight and one kills the other, the survivor will be cast out."

**Comment:** Rebekah will be gratified when she comes forth in the Kingdom and realizes the chain of events she set in motion based on her faith. How well the lie turned out!

Jacob did get to see Isaac again before his father died, that is, after the 21 or so years he spent with Laban (Gen. 35:27-29).

**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.

Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and told him not to take a wife of the Canaanite women. Rebekah had made this suggestion by telling Isaac she did not want Jacob to marry a heathen wife (Gen. 27:46). When Esau married the two Hittite women, he probably acted presumptuously (Gen. 26:34). Esau should have married properly, for surely he would have known about Abraham's sending Eliezer to get a bride for Isaac from their kindred. The account is silent as to whether or not Isaac had previously instructed his sons in regard to whom they should marry.

Rebekah knew that Esau intended to murder Jacob after their father Isaac's death (see Gen. 27:41-45). The account does not say whether Isaac was privy to this information. If not, it is likely that Rebekah withheld this information from him because of his age and infirmity. Rebekah knew Jacob had to flee quickly, and marriage was a good reason (or excuse) to hurry him off. Few details are given about Isaac's life, so faith must trust God's choice of him as an Ancient Worthy.

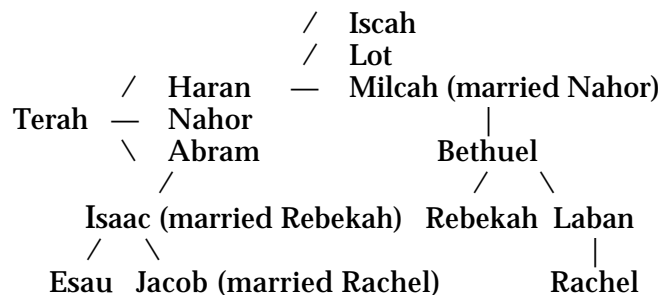
**Gen. 28:2** Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

**Gen. 28:3** And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

**Gen. 28:4** 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.

**Gen. 28:5** And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

Bethuel was Rebekah's father, and Laban was her brother. The lineage is important, for the account established it *twice* in five verses. Verse 5 also points out Rebekah's *Syrian* heritage.



In Isaac's blessing upon Jacob (verse 3), three times the thought of fruitfulness was mentioned: "fruitful," "multiply," and "multitude." This blessing combines the blessings earlier bestowed on Isaac and Rebekah, who was told, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions" (Gen. 24:60). Isaac conferred "the blessing of Abraham" (the Abrahamic promise) upon Jacob. Now Isaac was *fully* in harmony with Jacob's receiving the Abrahamic promise and birthright. Jacob then departed, his destination being Padan-aram in Mesopotamia.

**Gen. 28:6** When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, 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;

**Gen. 28:7** And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram;

**Gen. 28:8** And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father;

**Gen. 28:9** 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.

When Esau realized that Jacob had left to get a wife of their kindred, and that his own Hittite wives did not please his father, he went to Ishmael and married Mahalath, Ishmael's daughter. Esau's action showed his lack of understanding. To marry Ishmael's daughter at this point in time may have pleased Isaac to a certain extent, but it was *too late*. Muddy water was being mixed with pure water. Furthermore, although Ishmael was a son of Abraham, he had been rejected for the chief blessing. And Ishmael himself had married an Egyptian woman selected by his mother Hagar (Gen. 21:21).

Of course God providentially overruled Ishmael's and Esau's marriages because of the types involved, but He did not interfere with their free moral agency. Both Ishmael and Esau had *natural* inclinations and *mixed* hopes; that is, they did not concentrate on the true Abrahamic spiritual promise.

**Gen. 28:10** And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.

**Gen. 28:11** 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.

**Gen. 28:12** 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.

**Gen. 28:13** 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;

**Gen. 28:14** 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.

**Gen. 28:15** 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.

Jacob received wonderfully encouraging words as he set out on his long journey. In the vision of the ladder, he was blessed with, as it were, a direct communication from God that confirmed what Isaac had given him as a birthright. The vision occurred at Luz, which he subsequently renamed "Bethel," meaning "house of God" or "gateway to God." The vision occurred on the first or second night as he slept out in the open with stones for a pillow. (Even today some Arabs and/or bedouins use a stone for a pillow.) This detail indicates that Jacob did not have much with him. He fled with few possessions and had no camels or servants, for example.

In the dream or vision, a ladder that was set up on the earth reached unto God in heaven, and angels ascended and descended upon it. (John 1:51 brings out the thought that the angels

ascend and descend *before* the Son of God.) Thus God talked down to Jacob from His standing position above the ladder. Although God did not explain the ladder, He assured Jacob that His presence would go with him on the trip to Padan-aram and that Jacob would be fruitful. To Jacob, the ladder meant communication with and protection by God, that is, a line of communication between heaven and earth.

The vision of Jacob's ladder reminds us of Jesus' initial conversation with Nathanael in John 1:45-51. Jesus indicated that he knew Nathanael had been praying under the fig tree in secret. Realizing that Jesus had supernatural knowledge and could answer prayer—and thus was the Messiah—Nathanael worshipped him. Jesus said, "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open [in the Kingdom], and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man [to answer prayer]" (John 1:50,51). In other words, "Nathanael, this experience you had of answered prayer will occur a millionfold in the Kingdom. Just as Philip was an 'angel,' or human messenger, telling you about Messiah, so in the Kingdom, angels will communicate and answer prayer for the world of mankind."

Let us consider further the antitype for the vision of Jacob's ladder. God said to Jacob, "*Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth,*" thus identifying Jacob with the earth as a picture of the Ancient Worthies, the *earthly* connection in the Kingdom. Jesus and the Church will be the *heavenly* connection, and the Great Company will operate as spiritual messengers or go-betweens in the Kingdom arrangement, ascending up and down the "ladder." Having no authority in themselves, the Great Company will carry messages and be able to materialize and dematerialize like the angels before the Flood, who communicated with man. The law (the instruction, the command) will go forth from (or out of) Zion, the spiritual phase of the Kingdom, and the word of that law will go forth from Jerusalem, the earthly phase (Isa. 2:3). As divine beings, The Christ will judge the earth through the Ancient Worthies. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be in the Kingdom, sitting with authority on the thrones of the 12 tribes of Israel, and in back of them will be the upper connection, pictured by God at the top of the ladder (Luke 13:28; Matt. 8:11; 19:28).

**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.

**Gen. 28:17** 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.

**Gen. 28:18** 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.

**Gen. 28:19** And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

**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,

**Gen. 28:21** So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God:

**Gen. 28:22** 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.

As a result of this experience, Jacob called the place Bethel and made a vow unto God. Bethel is only about 12 miles north of Jerusalem. Jacob built a pillar monument of his stone pillow—like

an altar—to be a memorial of that which he had experienced in having the vision, or dream. The stone had been under his head, guiding his mental faculties. Incidentally, this purported stone, the Stone of Scone, was put under the chair of the King of England when he was crowned. Not the actual stone, it was used like a relic.

Awed by the communication from God, Jacob poured oil on the stone he had used for a pillow and made a vow. If God would bless him as promised and give him food and clothing so that he would return eventually to his father Isaac's house in peace, he would give one tenth of all he got to the Lord. Jacob's vow reveals that he had departed in haste from Isaac as soon as possible after the blessing, leaving possessions behind for fear that Esau would find out and kill him and taking few or no provisions with him. What little oil he took, he now poured out on the stone pillow. (He may have taken flour and oil, intending to knead and make cakes.) Jacob was in a perilous situation in trying to get to his destination. In anointing the stone, Jacob used what little he had to honor the situation. Similarly, Spikenard Mary anointed Jesus. Probably the oil was all Jacob had of worth, so he used it to show his appreciation.

**Comment:** The situation was even more poignant because Esau was a hunter, and Jacob was not used to living off the land. It took faith for Jacob to flee, and the journey was long.

Evidently, this was a low period in Jacob's life. He was fleeing for his very life with the barest of necessities. Had he been able to stay with Isaac, he had the potential for blessings and riches. In his depression, Jacob was told by God, "I am with thee, and will keep thee" (Gen. 28:15). This assurance renewed Jacob's spirit. He had desired the spiritual blessing earlier, and now his spirit was revived. Christians, too, have highs and lows, and so did Jesus—Gethsemane was a low, for example. In pouring the oil, Jacob made the stone an altar. Jacob gave his little *all*.

Before the Law, Jacob promised a tithe to God in appreciation. Here, for the second time, a tithe is mentioned in the Book of Genesis. As read earlier, Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:20). This tithing, *prior* to the Law, would have been based on something else that is not mentioned, of which we have no idea. Similarly, there was a tabernacle before the one we are familiar with. No details are given, but the earlier one was outside the camp, whereas the regular Tabernacle was in the midst of the camp.

**Gen. 29:1** Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east.

Jacob continued his journey and got to "the land of the people of the east." Haran was northeast of Israel—that is, way to the north and slightly to the east—yet it is described as "the land ... of the east." This detail shows that the Ishmaelites in particular had branched out in that area to the north. Esau had gone due east to Edom.

**Gen. 29:2** 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.

Jacob saw a well and then three flocks of sheep in repose near the well. A "great" (or large and heavy) stone covered the mouth of the well.

**Gen. 29:3** 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.

Verse 3 is a commentary, or editorial comment, on the custom in that locale for watering the sheep. The sheep were not watered until all of the flocks had gathered. Then several men rolled the stone from the mouth of the well so that the sheep could drink.

Why was the well covered with a stone? Why were the sheep all watered at once? The reason was to protect the well from pollution and evaporation. This “well” was probably a cistern, a receptacle to collect rain water, rather than a spring from the ground.

**Comment:** Nominal Christendom controlled the access of the “sheep” to water (truth).

**Gen. 29:4** And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? And they said, Of Haran are we.

**Gen. 29:5** And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him.

**Gen. 29:6** And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

When Jacob found the others were from Haran, he asked if they knew Laban. They said yes, and that his daughter Rachel was coming with sheep. Apparently, Rachel was the only woman there with a flock of sheep. We are reminded of Rebekah’s timely appearance to Eliezer.

**Gen. 29:7** 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.

Jacob commented, “It is high day and not time for the flocks to be gathered together. Water the sheep, and then go and feed them.”

**Gen. 29:8** 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.

**Gen. 29:9** And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep: for she kept them.

**Gen. 29:10** 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.

Rachel arrived with her father Laban’s sheep. Jacob boldly went to the well, removed the “great stone,” and watered Laban’s sheep. Jacob’s act proves that he was strong and powerful, for he rolled back the stone alone, whereas “they” (more than one) had customarily done this (verses 2 and 3).

**Q:** Why did some shepherds go to the well so early if they could not water the sheep until a later time?

**A:** They wanted to be first in line, for it took time to water flocks and to wait for others.

**Q:** Why didn’t the shepherds intervene to keep the stranger Jacob from rolling the stone away?

**A:** They not only saw his strength but also probably made allowance, knowing that Jacob had come from a distance. And they could see his interest in Laban’s family.

Jacob was very strong but humble. Some strong men will humbly take insults without fighting back.

**Comment:** Jacob represents Jesus, and now was the time to pour out water (truth) for the sheep.

In the Book of Genesis, a “well” was frequently a theme—Gen. 16:7 with Hagar, Gen. 21:19 with Hagar, Gen. 21:25 with Abraham and Abimelech, Gen. 24:13 with Eliezer and Rebekah, Gen. 26:17-33 with Isaac and Abimelech, and here in Gen. 29:10 with Rachel and Jacob. The Bible (the Well, the truth) is for the Lord’s people, but others have used the Scriptures out of various motives.

**Gen. 29:11** And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

Jacob kissed Rachel—perhaps cheek to cheek in a *perfunctory* manner—and then he wept emotionally in gratitude for having reached his destination.

**Gen. 29:12** 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.

**Gen. 29:13** 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.

**Gen. 29:14** And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month.

When Rachel learned who Jacob was, she *ran* to tell Laban, and Laban then *ran* to meet Jacob. Laban embraced and kissed Jacob and took him home. After Jacob had recounted his experiences, Laban said, “Surely you are my bone and my flesh.” No doubt it was Jacob’s telling of details about his mother, Rebekah, that convinced Laban Jacob truly was his relative.

Initially, Laban was eager to greet Jacob and grant hospitality, but later greed and deception shone forth. God gave schooling and discipline to Jacob through his hard experiences with Laban.

**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?

“Brother” can mean “kinsman” depending on context. By this time, Jacob had been staying with Laban for a month. Jacob was looking for a wife.

**Q:** Why now, after this time period, did Laban ask Jacob what he wanted for wages for serving him?

**A:** Jacob had been working for Laban. Probably Laban had not asked him to work—it was just Jacob’s nature to feel that he should earn his keep. As a result, Laban’s conscience began to bother him. Possibly, too, there had been tender looks between Jacob and Rachel.

**Gen. 29:16** And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

**Gen. 29:17** Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and wellfavoured.

Verses 16 and 17 are a parenthetical editorial comment about Laban’s having two daughters, Rachel being the beautiful one.



**Gen. 29:18** And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

As his wages, Jacob said he would like to have Rachel for his wife, and he gave the proposition: he would work for Laban for seven years to have her. (This is a picture of Christ and the Church.)

Jacob was penniless when he arrived. He did not come as Eliezer did with camels, servants, riches, etc., so Jacob was in an embarrassing situation. But he was a thinking man, very pragmatic. To serve Laban seven years was a dowry he could give.

**Gen. 29:19** And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.

Laban's character is reflected in his reply to Jacob. Notice that Laban did not actually say he would give Rachel to Jacob at the end of seven years—just “It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.” Laban was scheming. He wanted Jacob's service, for Jacob was a good worker.

**Gen. 29:20** And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.

What a beautiful comment about Jacob's love for Rachel!

**Gen. 29:21** And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.

**Gen. 29:22** And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.

**Gen. 29:23** 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.

**Gen. 29:24** And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid for an handmaid.

**Gen. 29:25** 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?

**Gen. 29:26** And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.

**Gen. 29:27** Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.

**Gen. 29:28** And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.

**Gen. 29:29** And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid.

**Gen. 29:30** And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.

Two “weeks” were involved: one week for Leah and one for Rachel. These were weeks of years, that is, two seven-year periods. Symbolic weeks are years (a day for a year), as in

Daniel's 70 "weeks," or years.

Laban practiced deception. He had a ready excuse in regard to the custom in that locale, but nevertheless, he beguiled Jacob in giving Leah instead of Rachel at the end of seven years. Laban also gave Zilpah to Leah to be her handmaid, and later he gave Bilhah to Rachel for a handmaid.

**Q:** What is the significance of Leah's being first and Rachel second?

**A:** Leah pictures natural Israel, who first got the opportunity to be the Bride class, but the antitypical Rachel proves to be the Little Flock. More particularly, there were two "seven-year" periods, for both the Jewish Age and the Gospel Age have seven stages. The two periods suggest the "double," that is, two equal periods of time. From Jacob's death to the Crucifixion was the first period of 1,845 years (1813 BC to AD 33). From the Crucifixion to 1878 was the second period of 1,845 years.

The type can be extended further. If Leah represents the Ancient Worthies and Rachel pictures the Little Flock, then (1) Bilhah would be the Great Company given to the Church after the marriage, and (2) Zilpah would be a comparable Great Company class in the Jewish Age to be given to the Ancient Worthies as assistants in the Kingdom Age.

The Jewish nation was called the Lord's people and/or kingdom. David sat on the throne of that kingdom. If the nation had been faithful, all of the Little Flock would have been Israelitish. It is interesting that Hagar brought forth fruitage before Sarah, and Leah brought forth fruitage before Rachel.

Hosea 12:12 reads, "And Jacob fled into the country of Syria, and Israel [Jacob] served for a wife [Rachel in the final analysis], and for a wife he kept sheep." The Old Testament "Syria" was Haran, Mesopotamia, Padan-aram. Jacob "fled"; that is, he went quickly, without possessions, because Esau intended to slay him.

Over and over in Scripture, the second-born was favored over the firstborn. Several examples are Isaac versus Ishmael, Jacob versus Esau, and Rachel versus Leah. "The first shall be last, and the last shall be first" is the principle and deep lesson. As the potter, God chooses people in His own way. By *grace*, we are called. For example, God bypassed Asia for the Western world, which does not mean people of the West are better than people of the East. From the poor, plain, and uneducated (primarily), God works miracles to develop Christlike characters.

**Q:** Is verse 30 saying that after Jacob married Rachel, he served another seven years, for a total of 21 years?

**A:** No. Jacob served seven years and married Leah. Then Laban said that Jacob could have Rachel too if he served another seven years, but Jacob married Rachel *before* serving the full additional seven years. Therefore, verse 30 refers to the second seven years. The proof is Genesis 31:41, which states, "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." In other words, Jacob served Laban for six years *after the 14 years*, for a total of 20 years, not 21. God arranged that after Jacob got two wives, he would serve a few more years and be able to leave with goods (flocks).

**Gen. 29:31** And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren.

**Gen. 29:32** 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.

**Gen. 29:33** 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.

**Gen. 29:34** 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.

**Gen. 29:35** 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.

Leah gave birth to four children, but after these four were born, she evidently could not have any more children for a while, for God shut up her womb. The sequence of the four children was Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah (the tribe Messiah came from). The names were given by Leah based on circumstances she underwent in bearing the children; that is, a distinctive experience occurred in her life, in her emotions, or in her thinking. For instance, “Reuben” means “Look, a son.” The name was based on her realization that Jacob loved her less than Rachel.

For the time that Jacob was married to Leah only, there was no conceiving. God has a master “computer” or “control switch” whereby He can open and close a womb in order to make a type. Rachel had to suffer the experience of barrenness in order to fulfill a type. The same was true with Sarah. God does not interfere with free moral agency, but whether we know it or not, He does shape providences and circumstances in our lives to a large extent—either for good or for testing. However, God does not tempt anyone with evil intent. As it were, then, the button was pressed down for Rachel—she had to be barren while Leah bore four sons.

Jacob loved Rachel more, but Leah, in contrasting her sons with the barrenness of Rachel, would proportionately feel the Lord was favoring her. Hence the interpretation of providence is tricky. Satan also provides circumstances in our lives but to deter us, so it is difficult to properly interpret providences. Prayer is needed and even fasting at times. Sometimes we learn through wrong choices, which may lead to hard experiences. Hopefully, mistakes become stepping-stones in the future. If our senses are rightly exercised, we can discern good from evil in both doctrine and principle.

The name Simeon pertains to hearing. God heard Leah’s prayers and desires and rewarded her with a second son. Levi means “joined,” for with his birth, Leah thought that surely now her husband would be joined to her and the bond with Jacob would be closer. Judah means “praise.” How Leah rejoiced to have four sons! As we will see, the names of all 11 children (not Benjamin) pertained to the rivalry between Leah and Rachel for the number of children. When considered prophetically, the emotions of Leah as a mother can be lifted to a higher plane than she ever realized.

The consolation for Rachel was that her husband loved her dearly. We are reminded of Hannah. When she was crying because of her barrenness, her husband Elkanah, said, “Am not I better to thee than ten sons?” (1 Sam. 1:8).

Jacob served seven years and then got Leah. Laban promised Jacob that he could have Rachel if he agreed to serve another seven years, but he could marry her before the seven years were fulfilled. (The wording allows this possibility.) Leah had the four sons during the second seven-year period when Jacob was also married to Rachel and Rachel’s barrenness was apparent. Greed showed forth in Laban, but he seemed to fight this weakness at times—such as when he

gave Rachel to Jacob before the second seven years were served.

Because of the type and the antitype, the account seems to have been purposely worded in an ambiguous way to allow either interpretation—that Jacob served two full seven-year periods before marrying Rachel or that he married her after Leah and then fulfilled the second seven-year period of service to Laban. In the antitype, the Church will not become the Bride of Christ until the fulfillment of the seven-stage “week.” The seven periods of the Church are seven days in one sense, as taught by the seven days of waiting by the Levitical priesthood before entering service (Lev. 8:33-35). The seven “days” of the Gospel Age are seven unequal periods of time. Incidentally, the meaning of the word “day” depends on context. It can mean 24 hours, a year, a long but definite period of time, 1,000 years, or 7,000 years (a Creative Day).

The ambiguous wording in regard to the two seven-year periods shows the reality versus the ideal, the ideal being the antitype. Jacob needed Rachel during the second seven-year period in order for 11 children to be born by the time he left Laban. Other places in Scripture seem to indicate one thing, but a closer examination shows another meaning is intended. For example, Antiochus Epiphanes seems to fulfill the prophecy in Daniel chapter 11. And Jesus’ parables must be examined from the standpoint of what is hinted at for the antitype.

**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.

**Gen. 30:2** 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?

**Gen. 30:3** 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.

**Gen. 30:4** And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her.

**Gen. 30:5** And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son.

**Gen. 30:6** 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.

**Gen. 30:7** And Bilhah Rachel’s maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son.

**Gen. 30:8** And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali.

When Rachel saw that she was barren, she thought of having a child by proxy, as it were, by her handmaid Bilhah. By being in close proximity with Bilhah, Rachel would consider the child her own. We are reminded of Sarah and Hagar.

Rachel’s suggestion regarding Bilhah shows her desperation. When the handmaids were known by Jacob, they became concubine wives, that is, more than just servants. They were secondary but had a legal standing. In making the suggestion that children come through their handmaids with the result that actual births took place, Rachel and Leah relinquished their handmaids to concubine status. (Note: A concubine was not to usurp the prerogatives of a wife, as Hagar attempted to do.)

Rachel’s barrenness was discerned in the second “week” (the second period of seven years). After Rachel had had relations with her husband, Jacob, for a year or two, her barrenness was apparent. Even the bearing of children by Zilpah and Bilhah would have occurred within the

second “week.”

Rachel said, “Bilhah ... shall bare upon my knees.” Not only was Rachel on the scene when Bilhah gave birth, but she probably positioned herself as though she were the one giving birth. In other words, Rachel was emotionally involved to the point of flesh contact and enacting the birth.

**Gen. 30:9** When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife.

**Gen. 30:10** And Zilpah Leah’s maid bare Jacob a son.

**Gen. 30:11** And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad.

**Gen. 30:12** And Zilpah Leah’s maid bare Jacob a second son.

**Gen. 30:13** And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher.

Seeing that Bilhah bore two sons, Leah gave Zilpah to Jacob as a concubine lest Rachel have children to outnumber or equal hers. Rachel had two sons through Bilhah, and Leah had four sons of her own at this point but was temporarily barren. A real rivalry existed between Leah and Rachel. Of the 20 years that Jacob stayed with Laban, eight of the children could have been born or were in the process of being born by the expiration of the 14 years (two “weeks”). Gad, whose name means “a troop cometh” or “five,” was reckoned as the fifth son of Leah.

**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.

**Gen. 30:15** 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 tonight for thy son’s mandrakes.

Mandrakes, called “love apples” in some translations, were considered a fertility food that increased amorous tendencies (an aphrodisiac, in other words). Mandrakes grow in the ground as a tuberous plant—like a giant carrot. They have a pleasant smell and are good for food, but the species is not plentiful.

Reuben found mandrakes “in the days of wheat harvest” and brought them to his mother, Leah. When Rachel saw them, she traded a night with Jacob for the mandrakes. To trade something for material benefit seems to have been genetically implanted in this lineage. Isaac desired venison. Esau sold his birthright for pottage. Rachel traded Jacob for the mandrakes for one night. Incidentally, all of Jacob’s children (by Leah, Bilhah, Zilpah, and Rachel) were *timed by the Lord*, for they are types that will be more fully understood in the future.

When the Law was given in Moses’ day, a man could not marry two sisters. This situation with Leah and Rachel—their rivalry and jealousy—shows the wisdom of the Law.

**Gen. 30:16** 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.

Leah said to Jacob, “I have hired thee with my son’s mandrakes”; that is, a trade was made—

the mandrakes for a night with Jacob.

**Gen. 30:17** And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son.

**Gen. 30:18** And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar.

Leah gave birth to a fifth son: Issachar.

**Gen. 30:19** And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son.

**Gen. 30:20** 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.

Leah bore Jacob a sixth son: Zebulun.

**Gen. 30:21** And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah.

**Q:** After Leah had her sixth son, a daughter was born to her, whom she named Dinah. Was this the first daughter for any of the four (Leah, Bilhah, Zilpah, and Rachel)?

**A:** It would seem so.

**Comment:** Dinah means “judgment” according to the King James margin, and Dan means “judging.” Dan was the first son born in any way to Rachel (he was born to Bilhah, her handmaid). Now, with the first opportunity Leah had for a daughter, she copied that name, appropriating it for the female line.

**Reply:** Yes, the rivalry was real. In time, the rivalry will be seen from a historical standpoint.

The order of children thus far was as follows: Leah had four sons, Bilhah had two sons, Zilpah had two sons, Leah had two more sons, and Leah had one daughter. Rachel’s two sons (Joseph and Benjamin) were yet to come.

The name Leah means “weary.” Rachel means “ewe,” that is, a female lamb or sheep, hence the Bride of Christ. Thus, from the standpoint of the antitype, the Lord even overruled, years earlier, the names they were given.

**Gen. 30:22** And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.

**Gen. 30:23** And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach:

“God ... opened her [Rachel’s] womb.” This statement is proof that God controlled the timing and the sequence of the births for Jacob’s wives and concubines. God also controlled the number of sons born to each because they were types.

God has a master computer on which the life of every living being from Adam on has been stored in memory. When a person dies, his disk is removed and stored for future retrieval. In the resurrection—whether to an earthly or a spiritual body—the ego, or life, is put into a new vessel. “Thou sowest not that body that shall be” (1 Cor. 15:37).

God’s control is seen in this type. When Rachel was barren, that restriction had been put there. By nature, Rachel had the capability to bear children, but it was stopped. These types were made without the individuals’ realizing what was happening.

**Comment:** Rachel lived only about 2,000 years from the creation of perfect Adam and Eve, so perhaps infertility was not common back there. For that reason, Rachel definitely felt her barrenness was a reproach. And so did Sarah.

**Reply:** Yes, the proof is the number of children so many women had. Ishmael had 12 sons, and so did Jacob eventually, although four females were involved in his case. The children of *promise* were limited and especially controlled. The limitation and control were a form of discipline in developing the faith and the character of the individuals God was particularly dealing with.

**Gen. 30:24** And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son.

Rachel's womb was opened, and she bore a son: Joseph. The account is stated simply, with no embellishments. We must think about the situation to realize the joy, the *tremendous emotion*, when Rachel said, "God hath taken away my reproach." The Bible is purposely written low-key so as not to attract the curiosity seeker. We must *study* to understand the problems of Leah and Rachel. We must read the details and *reflect* on the struggle and the pent-up emotions.

When Joseph was born, Rachel uttered a prophetic statement, "The LORD shall add to me another son." The name Joseph means "adding." Moreover, she said "son" (singular), not "sons." Benjamin, who was born years later, was that son, and Rachel died in childbirth. The delay in his birth tested her faith.

The fact that Joseph's name meant "adding" merits further discussion. The prophecies concerning Joseph that Jacob and Moses had just prior to their deaths show what the "adding" was (Gen. 48:1-5; Deut. 33:13,17). Joseph had a double representation in the tribes: Ephraim and Manasseh. Therefore, one adding occurred when Joseph's name was dropped out and the names of his two sons were substituted. There were additional addings as well.

**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.

**Gen. 30:26** 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.

**Gen. 30:27** 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.

**Gen. 30:28** And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.

When Jacob asked Laban for liberty to return to his homeland, what was the time period? Jacob had served Laban for 14 years (he would stay six more years before leaving, for a total of 20 years). In those 14 years, Jacob had obtained two wives (plus children) but no crops, flocks, etc. Therefore, Jacob's wage for working 14 years was his two wives, but by faith, Jacob was willing to go back to Canaan.

Laban wanted Jacob to tarry because Jacob was a good worker. Laban's reply was to ask Jacob what wages he wanted, and Laban said he would pay Jacob. Note: Laban's temporal prosperity had noticeably increased, and he did acknowledge that Jacob's term of service had been a blessing to him personally.

**Gen. 30:29** And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle

was with me.

**Gen. 30:30** 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?

**Gen. 30:31** 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.

**Gen. 30:32** I will pass through all thy flock today, 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.

**Gen. 30:33** 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.

**Gen. 30:34** And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.

**Gen. 30:35** And he removed that day the he goats that were ringstraked 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.

**Gen. 30:36** And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

Verse 32 is not clear in the King James Version: "I will pass through all thy flock today." Fourteen years had now expired, and Jacob wanted to go home. Laban wanted Jacob to tarry, but he asked Jacob to name his wages. Jacob said he would take all of the animals that were striped, speckled, and spotted for his wages, plus brown sheep. However, Jacob, knowing that Laban would connive, had *long-term* plans to take the newborn.

One interpretation is that Jacob would go through Laban's flocks and gather out the striped, speckled, and spotted animals that very day. A second reading indicates the proposition that Jacob would stay and care for Laban's sheep if he could have the newborn that were striped, speckled, and spotted, plus the brown lambs. Laban was conniving, but Jacob was shrewd too. Jacob had something in mind, which he did not disclose to Laban.

The flocks in the Near East are almost wholly black goats and white sheep. Very few are mottled. Jacob was asking as his wages the few that were speckled. Laban thought this arrangement was a wonderful deal for him, for he would automatically get 95 percent. But even that percentage did not satisfy him, so he told his sons to remove all of the striped, speckled, and spotted of the flocks, plus the brown sheep, and take them a three days' journey away. Laban had these removed because they would tend to have similar young—striped, speckled, and spotted.

The phrase "in time to come" in verse 33 indicates that Jacob knew Laban would use deceit, so he said his own righteousness would be manifested in due time. Jacob did not trust Laban and vice versa. Laban thought that he was clever and that if Jacob got anything out of the agreement, it would be a miracle. And Jacob was saying, "If I prosper in this deal, it will vindicate my righteousness." If Jacob prospered, it would be *providential*.

When Jacob said, "I will pass through all thy flock today," he was expressing what he would like to do, but he knew that Laban would go ahead and pull out all the specified animals. Laban



had been deceitful all along, and now would be no exception. Laban may even have served Jacob a leisurely meal in order to give his sons time to remove the sheep. Laban was greedy, but Jacob exercised *faith* in making such a seemingly one-sided proposition.

**Gen. 30:37** And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut tree; and pilled white strakes in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods.

**Gen. 30:38** 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.

**Gen. 30:39** And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted.

**Gen. 30:40** And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstraked, 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.

When Jacob made the proposition, he probably had this strategy in mind. Jacob had had years of experience tending flocks—14 years with Laban in addition to many years earlier during his family's bedouin type of existence. With this experience, he had probably observed an environmental influence. Just as the human mother's disposition, thinking, and experiences leave an impress on the embryo, so here Jacob was exerting a physical influence in a physical way with the flocks. When a striped, speckled, or spotted animal was born, he put it in front of the others, penning them together. Initially, he used the rods to get things started, peeling the rods to achieve a striped, speckled, and spotted effect. Once some striped, speckled, and spotted animals were born, he penned them with the ewes so that the ewes would see them. Hence he used an environmental influence. In other words, Jacob started with the rods and ended up using the speckled, etc., young themselves as "rods." This procedure went on for six years.

**Gen. 30:41** 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.

**Gen. 30:42** But when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's.

**Gen. 30:43** And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.

Jacob also made another selection. First, he selected according to the mating ewes. Then he selected according to strength and health. The law of genetics favored Jacob by creating the right conditions. Nevertheless, Jacob proceeded largely according to faith because in the final analysis, the miracle had to be produced by God.

The two theories, the Pavlovian and the Mendelian, are true. Environment can influence the genes to a certain extent, and so do the genes. Jacob used both theories. By selecting out the stronger animals, he used heredity and genes. By placing the striped, speckled, and spotted rods and the young born, he used environment.

The rest of Jacob's exceeding wealth was obtained by trading some of his striped, etc., flock. He thus got "cattle," male and female servants, asses, and camels. He needed shepherds as his flocks grew, and they brought their families. Imagine Laban watching this process for six years! What a grievous sore! While Laban's own flocks diminished, Jacob's prospered *exceedingly*.

**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.

Jacob's flight from Laban was about to take place. The circumstances led Jacob to think it was expedient for him to make the separation then and there. The word "glory" is rendered "wealth" in the Revised Standard Version. Laban's *sons* were accusing Jacob of taking that which was their father's. They *forgot* that when Jacob first arrived, Laban was not prosperous. Laban was blessed materially for Jacob's sake.

The opposition to Jacob was initiated by Laban's sons. Later Laban got stirred up too. The sons were showing *greed*, for what their father had would eventually be theirs.

**Gen. 31:2** And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before.

Jacob could tell from Laban's countenance that there had been a change of attitude toward him. Laban's sons had probably aroused this change. Perhaps up to this time, Laban had felt he was in control of the situation. No matter what transpired, he could manipulate matters to his own advantage. Now it was apparent that things were out of control. (They were out of control because God had overruled the breeding process.)

**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.

When Jacob was in Bethel before leaving for Padan-aram, God had told him to return to the land of his fathers and promised to be with him (Gen. 28:15-22). Jacob made a vow that if God would feed and clothe him and allow him to return in safety, he would give God one tenth of all he had. Now 20 years had elapsed since this original covenant. At this critical time, when Laban and his sons were opposed to Jacob, God told Jacob to return to his homeland.

**Gen. 31:4** And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock,

Jacob called Rachel and Leah to come out *to him* in the fields; that is, he did not go individually to each tent and repeat the story. It was expedient for them to go to Jacob out in the field so that he could inform them of his intention to leave.

**Gen. 31:5** 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.

Verses 5-13 relate what Jacob told Rachel and Leah. Jacob said that Laban was even more opposed to him than before, but God was with him.

**Gen. 31:6** And ye know that with all my power I have served your father.

Although Laban had deceived Jacob and taken advantage of him, Jacob could say, with a clear conscience, "With all my power I have served your father." For *20 years*, he did this.

**Gen. 31:7** And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.

**Gen. 31:8** If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled; and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstraked.

**Gen. 31:9** Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me.

**Gen. 31:10** 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 ringstraked, speckled, and grisled.

**Gen. 31:11** And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I.

**Gen. 31:12** And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.

**Gen. 31:13** I am the God of Beth-el, 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.

Laban changed Jacob's wages *ten* times.

**Q:** Are the "ten times" literal, or are they an idiom?

**A:** They are probably an idiom, but Jacob's wages were changed many times. However, if the account is a type, the ten times would be literal and accurate. Verse 41 mentions them again.

For the first 14 years, Jacob had nothing to show for all of his labor except two wives and two handmaids. His work had just enriched Laban. When the sons said Jacob had all of their father's wealth, the reference was to the newborn. In the last six years of Jacob's 20-year service to Laban, he prospered more because Laban was getting the weaker, less numerous animals. The striped, speckled, and spotted animals would normally have been a minority, but not under God's providence. Thus the sons' criticism of Jacob pertained to the last six years, and they conveniently overlooked the first 14 years.

Jacob said, "God suffered him [Laban] not to hurt me" (verse 7). God favored Jacob in the miraculous birth of flocks according to whatever Laban said. For example, one year Laban said, "Whatever is born speckled is yours." Another year he said, "Whatever is born spotted is yours." Each time the "rules" were changed, God overruled the births to favor Jacob.

Laban failed to recognize God's providence. As with Pharaoh, each occurrence just hardened his heart more. A repeated series of circumstances deepens the faith of the right-hearted and hardens the heart of the wrong-hearted. Greed has a blinding influence.

In verse 9, Jacob told Rachel and Leah, "God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me." Verses 10-13 tell that Jacob was reminded in a dream that this intervention was from God. While Jacob earlier devised a method to prosper the mating, it was really God's overruling (Gen. 30:37-42). At first, Jacob carved and peeled rods in a way he thought was conducive to bringing forth newborn with that same pattern, coloring, etc. Later Laban stipulated what pattern of newborns should be Jacob's, and he kept changing the "rules" to try to outwit Jacob.

In verses 5-13, Jacob was giving a little discourse to Rachel and Leah when they came out to him in the field. He had served Laban faithfully for 14 years with no wages. In the additional six years, God had prospered him. Then he set a proposition before Rachel and Leah: "I am going to leave; what will you do?" Notice Jacob's approach: he first recounted his loyalty to Laban and then told God's advice.

In verses 11-13, Jacob told how God had appeared to him in a dream and told of the overruling in the mating of animals to Jacob's advantage and Laban's disadvantage. For example, the speckled offspring were Jacob's, both male and female. As they matured, the result of their mating was more speckled young. The results were similarly favorable to Jacob with the striped and the spotted offspring. All marked cattle were Jacob's. God overruled that like animals would mate.

God reminded Jacob of his promise, or vow, 20 years earlier when en route in his flight from Esau. Originally, Jacob was to return home when Esau's anger abated. Rebekah said she would send word to Jacob, but no word had come in 20 years. Now God sent word. We do not know if Rebekah was still alive, as the account is silent on this point.

**Gen. 31:14** And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?

**Gen. 31:15** Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

**Gen. 31:16** 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.

Now Rachel and Leah responded. Both were ready to go and *without hesitation*. (We are reminded of Rebekah's previous reaction to Eliezer.) The quick response was commendable, for Rachel and Leah both saw their father's injustice and were united in this matter despite their jealousy over children. They knew that going with Jacob meant *flight*, but in faith, they were willing to go.

Laban had been unjust to Rachel and Leah, as well as to Jacob, for what he withheld would have been theirs and their children's. Also, when Laban gave Leah and Rachel to Jacob, he gave no dowry—nothing except the two handmaidens. Laban's stingy, greedy nature was becoming more and more apparent, even though he said the opposite at times.

There had been a *miraculous* increase for Jacob in the last six years. He probably got more in those six years than Laban had gotten in the 14 earlier years. Incidentally, when Laban removed all of the striped, spotted, and speckled animals, the animals may have been sold and the money kept (Gen. 30:35,36).

**Gen. 31:17** Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels;

Jacob, his sons, and his wives departed for the land of Canaan.

**Gen. 31:18** 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 Padan-aram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.

Jacob took all of the goods and flocks that were legitimately his.

**Gen. 31:19** And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's.

With Laban being preoccupied in sheep shearing, the time was favorable for Jacob to leave. Unbeknownst to Jacob, Rachel stole her father's images/teraphim/gods (Gen. 31:32).

**Gen. 31:20** And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that

he fled.

**Gen. 31:21** 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.

**Gen. 31:22** And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled.

**Gen. 31:23** And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

**Gen. 31:24** 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.

Not until three days later did Laban learn of Jacob's flight. Since it took Laban seven days to catch Jacob, the latter was then a total of ten days away and already in the hill country of Gilead (and not on a particular mountain). Normally "Gilead" (Ramoath-Gilead) is across Jordan on the east, but this incident took place in a much earlier period of history, so "Gilead" here can be a different territory, one that was farther from Israel.

Jacob passed over "the river" Euphrates, just as Abraham had done at Terah's death. Jacob was going toward "mount Gilead" en route to the land of Canaan.

God told Laban not to speak to Jacob "either good or bad." Why not? Laban was not to try to persuade Jacob to come back to Padan-aram with offers of wages, etc., nor was he to do Jacob any harm. Laban was not reliable. He would say one thing one time and do another thing another time. He was not to make promises, speak flattery, use threats, and so forth; that is, he was to speak civilly and properly to Jacob and mind his own business.

Before the Mosaic Law was given, it was not considered especially wrong to have idols. Different religions used idols, which were usually made of terra-cotta and were three to four inches tall. The idols functioned as charms for various purposes: fertility of the land, fertility of the body, etc.

Nominal Christianity uses icons and statues even today. There are different degrees of degradation depending on the motive—for example, is the statue used as a memento, or is it prayed to? We use a cross and crown as a reminder, or memento, and that purpose is certainly permissible.

What about Laban's idols? There was a time when God winked at such practices, allowing them to go on until the Law was given (Acts 17:29,30). Sometimes artifacts are beneficial, but where to draw the line is the question. Teraphim are not necessarily personages even if they represent imaginary gods. They can be more of a charm, just as one wears a cross on the neck, and to wear a cross is not a sin depending on motivation. Insignias and signs have their place, but we must be careful about where to draw the line. It is acceptable to wear a button, for instance, to hopefully provoke questions that lead to a witnessing experience, but it would be wrong to attach a mysterious power to a button or a piece of jewelry.

God did not strongly criticize the use of teraphim back there. To us, the practice seems abominable, but we are viewing matters from an enlightened standpoint. Today a Christian who does this should be excommunicated, but for those who lived back there, we must view matters as presented in Genesis and then on down through the years. The Apostle Paul said that once the commandment was given, it brought enlightenment and sin if not obeyed, but before the Law, it was different.

**Q:** If the teraphim were sometimes associated with fertility, could Rachel have stolen Laban's images in the hope of gaining fertility? Only Joseph had been born at this point, and she had prophetically said at his birth, "The Lord shall add to me another son" (Gen. 30:24).

**A:** That could well have been Rachel's motive in stealing the images.

**Gen. 31:25** Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

**Gen. 31:26** 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?

**Gen. 31:27** 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?

**Gen. 31:28** And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing.

Laban, accompanied by his "brethren," overtook Jacob at Mount Gilead and began to chide him for departing secretly, saying he would have kissed his sons and daughters good-by and had songs, mirth, and fanfare. What *hypocritical* words (based on Laban's previous actions)! Laban had deceived and changed Jacob's wages ten times. If Jacob had not departed secretly, Laban would have hindered his going. He would not have sent Jacob away gladly.

Laban accused Jacob of stealing "away unawares" and of carrying away his daughters "as captives taken with the sword." Leah and Rachel had *quickly* responded in the affirmative to Jacob's announcement that he was departing for home according to the dream God had given him (Gen. 31:14-16). Thus Laban's statement here was false in regard to Jacob's taking them as captives at sword point. Leah and Rachel had responded, "Are we not counted of him [Laban] strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money." The most Laban had given them was a handmaiden apiece—there was no dowry after all those years.

Verse 28 was continued hypocrisy, for the daughters had mentioned their father Laban's lack of interest in them (Gen. 31:15). In fact, Laban's words were hypocrisy underlain with treachery! Laban's *possessiveness* is seen; he was not personally concerned about the welfare of Leah, Rachel, and their children.

**Gen. 31:29** 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.

The previous night God had warned Laban not to hurt Jacob. Laban was not to speak to him "either good or bad." In other words, Laban was not to interfere with Jacob's desire to return to his homeland. Incidentally, "yesternight" means the previous night, that is, "last night." There are the words "yesterday" and "yesternight."

**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?

Next Laban accused Jacob of having stolen his "gods" (images, idols, teraphim). Thus Laban's chief animosity toward Jacob now became the loss of the teraphim from his household. There was mutual distrust between Laban and Jacob. Of course Jacob had good reason not to trust Laban, but Laban had no reason to distrust Jacob. Whatever Laban would say—good or bad—would be untrustworthy, for his statements did not square with his actions. Unknown to Jacob,

Rachel had taken the idols—and probably because they were associated with fertility.

**Gen. 31:31** And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me.

Jacob did not tell Laban in advance about his desire to leave because he was afraid Laban would prevent his leaving and take his daughters back—just as Laban had tried deceit in regard to the flocks earlier. Being possessive, Laban still considered his daughters his possession even though they had been given in marriage (Gen. 31:28). Jacob had served seven years for Leah and then another seven years after being given Rachel, yet the two women and their handmaids were the *only* wage for 14 years of serving. In addition, Jacob had worked another six years as the caretaker of Laban's flocks. Jacob had made a proposal that of the newborn, his wage would be all of the speckled, spotted, and striped. Laban thought this proposal was a bargain not only because the bulk were otherwise but also because he first removed and sold the adult animals of this description. But God providentially overruled in Jacob's favor, and *many* striped, speckled, and spotted were born. The strong ones became Jacob's; the weak ones were Laban's. The Lord so miraculously multiplied Jacob's flocks that he became a very wealthy man. Moreover, Jacob gave Laban the option from year to year of changing the formula for deciding which newborns would be his. *Whatever the arrangement*, Jacob's flocks increased dramatically, so that they eventually outnumbered Laban's.

**Gen. 31:32** 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.

Unaware that the teraphim were with Rachel, Jacob said, "With whomsoever you find your gods, let him not live." To have images back there, prior to the Law, was not considered as dreadful as later, for God "winked the eye" at this time. Initially, individuals may have considered these artifacts to be helpful reminders of certain blessings in their lives. (Roman Catholic statues are a very degraded subsequent condition.)

**Comment:** A Scofield footnote reads, "Excavations in ... Mesopotamia ... show the possession of the household gods of a father-in-law by a son-in-law was legally acceptable as proof of the designation of that son-in-law as principal heir." Thus household gods were considered like an heirloom to be handed down to the favored son.

Jacob made a rash vow in regard to what he would do if one in his household were found with Laban's gods. Many years later Jephthah made a rash vow (Judges 11:30,31). Lesson: We should not make vows impulsively; we should soberly appraise the facts before saying what we will do. However, there was an escape clause in Jacob's vow: "With whomsoever *thou [Laban]*" would find the gods, that person would be put to death. Laban did not find the gods and was off the scene before Jacob realized that Rachel had them. Therefore, he did not have to put Rachel to death.

Jacob had a very strong sense of right and wrong. When he made the initial bargain about the sheep and the goats, he said that if any animal was found in his possession other than the specified newborns, that animal would be "counted *stolen*" by him (Gen. 30:33). Hence Jacob had a strong sense of not infringing on someone else's property rights. Here, too, he was indignant in regard to Laban's accusation of stealing the teraphim because of his strong sense of right and wrong. (Verses 38-40 will show this quality too.) Jacob wanted to be more than fair in his bargaining, whereas Laban was conniving and unfair.

**Gen. 31:33** 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.

Verse 33 provides interesting insight. Each of the women had a separate tent, and Jacob had one too so that there were five tents in all. Rachel's tent was the last to be searched—as if Laban least expected the teraphim to be there. And Laban, who was aware of the wording of Jacob's vow, *personally* searched the tents; he did not delegate the job to another with him. Jacob's tent was the *first* to be searched because Laban had the most animosity for him.

Note Laban's great possessiveness over his "gods." The fact that he searched Leah's and Rachel's tents shows that he wanted the idols back even if it meant the loss of a daughter's life. He could have backed off after Jacob's indignant vow.

**Gen. 31:34** 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.

**Gen. 31:35** 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.

Rachel had put the images in the camel's saddle, a boxlike structure that stored items. Her excuse for not rising up was that she was having her period. It was strange but providential that Laban, the suspicious one, was not suspicious of Rachel. If her theft had been discovered, it would have been a hardship on Jacob, for he had sacrificed much to get her for his wife—14 years of labor.

**Comment:** It does not say in Scripture that Rachel told a lie here. It could well have been this time of month for her, which conveniently worked into the situation.

**Reply:** Yes, for then the other family members would not have been suspicious either. All were deceived except Rachel.

Images of a cross, a cross and crown, etc.—inanimate objects—are not as harmful as images of a person(ality), which is a much greater danger. It is wrong to think that there is inherent power in kneeling before an image. For example, Mary becomes the Mediatrix in the Roman Catholic Church with parishioners thinking she is more sympathetic than Jesus.

**Gen. 31:36** And Jacob was wroth, and chode 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?

**Gen. 31:37** 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.

**Gen. 31:38** 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.

**Gen. 31:39** 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.

**Gen. 31:40** Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

**Gen. 31:41** 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.



**Gen. 31:42** 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.

Jacob repaid Laban in full by giving a *healthy* animal if a tragedy struck an animal of a flock. Laban required Jacob to do this (see verse 39). Laban was cold, calculating, and mercenary. His terms of the contract show he drew a hard bargain, and Jacob abided by the terms.

Jacob's care of the animals is an insight into his character. For example, he tenderly oversaw how they bore their young, and he protected them from evil under all climatic conditions. He was a true shepherd. A good shepherd, in the employ of a master, also had to bring back a torn piece of an animal such as an ear or a foot to prove that he had tried to save the animal from the attack of a wild beast. The torn piece was proof that he had valiantly fought to save the master's animal, that the attack was forcibly resisted (Exod. 22:13). David is another example of a good shepherd.

Twenty years had expired, and Jacob stressed how he had faithfully served Laban, who had changed his wages ten times. For example, by repeatedly changing the formula in regard to the newborns that were to be Jacob's, Laban hoped to ward off the ill effects he was experiencing, but God overruled so that Jacob prospered greatly in those last six years.

Then Jacob reminded Laban of his own testimony that God had warned him in a dream not to interfere (verse 29). In other words, Jacob was saying, "If it were not for that dream, by which God *rebuked* you, you would have done harm to me. God justifies me—I am innocent. You have treated me unfairly."

**Q:** What is the "fear of Isaac" in verse 42?

**A:** Jacob had the same reverential fear of the Abrahamic Covenant that Isaac had. Jacob was revering his father and his grandfather (Isaac and Abraham, respectively). He was identifying his God with their God and the continuity of that relationship.

**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?

Laban still thought all of Jacob's possessions were his—even though Jacob had served 14 years for the two wives, etc. What a warped mind! Misers have changed characters and looks after a period of time. Miserliness is a devastating disease, and certainly Laban's greed for possessions manifests this fact. However, Laban could not harm Jacob because of God's warning not to do so. Nevertheless, Laban could not suppress his warped thinking.

**Gen. 31:44** Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.

Therefore, Laban said, "Let us make the best of the situation and have a covenant between us." The covenant would apply to their progeny too. Laban made the covenant out of frustration, for he could not stop Jacob.

Mount Gilead was on the border of what was considered the Promised Land at that time, so the covenant is interesting from that standpoint. They were near the Jabbok River, which was one of the feeding arteries into the Jordan River and just a short distance from where the two rivers joined. At this landmark boundary, Laban the Syrian made a covenant with Jacob.

**Gen. 31:45** And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar.

Jacob symbolized the covenant by taking a stone and setting it up for a pillar.

**Gen. 31:46** And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.

Jacob told his brethren to gather stones and make a heap. Jacob and Laban ate upon the heap; that is, there were enough stones to make a “platform” on which they could have a repast. An ancient custom was that when two hostile parties had a feast together, it meant reconciliation and a contract of lasting peace.

God was actually the witness. He was the neutral party between these two parties who mistrusted each other. The stone “pillar,” or cairn on the ground, served as the “written document”—it was like a signed contract—and God would do injury to the violator of the contract.

**Gen. 31:47** And Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed.

Two different names with the same meaning were given to the heap of stones, or cairn, one in Chaldean (or Syrian) and one in Hebrew.

**Gen. 31:48** And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed;

**Gen. 31:49** And Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

“Mizpah” means watchtower. We usually view “mizpah” in a favorable sense, but here, in *this* context, it was really a barrier that neither one should overstep to harm the other. It was like the current “Maranatha” bumper sticker of the “Born-agains,” which has an unfavorable context in Scripture, but they use it favorably (1 Cor. 16:22). “Mizpah,” as the name of the heap of stones, was like a *watchdog* to make sure there was no infringement of rights; it marked a separation. “When we are absent one from another” was not said in the sense of “absence makes the heart grow fonder.” Laban and Jacob would both live far from this landmark, so in effect, God would watch lest the covenant be violated.

**Gen. 31:50** 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.

**Gen. 31:51** And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee;

**Gen. 31:52** 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.

While neither party could pass over the boundary line for harm, they could cross it for peaceful purposes and intermarriage. Two conditions were stipulated: Jacob was not to afflict Laban’s daughters, and should there be intermarriage in coming generations, neither side could take advantage of the other. In short, there was to be no grudge carrying.

**Gen. 31:53** 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.

Abraham, Nahor, and Haran were all sons of Terah. Hence both Jacob and Laban claimed the same God but down two different lines. Laban referred to the God of Nahor; Jacob, to the God of Abraham and Isaac. This distinction is inbred in the Arab/bedouin race today—and so much so that in the Koran, the offering of Abraham’s son is said to be *Ishmael*, not Isaac.

**Gen. 31:54** 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.

**Gen. 31:55** 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.

Animals were sacrificed, and they ate and tarried all night in the mount. Early in the morning Laban arose, kissed his daughters, blessed his grandsons, and left for his homeland.

**Gen. 32:1** And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

Jacob continued on his way to his home country, and en route angels met him.

**Gen. 32:2** And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God’s host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

When Jacob saw the angels, he said, “This is God’s host [army],” and he named the place “Mahanaim,” for a *multitude* of angels met him. The King James margin has “two hosts or camps.” The purpose of the visit of this host was to show Jacob that God’s angels were protecting him in harmony with the promise made to him that if he left Padan-aram and returned to his home country, God would be with him (Gen. 31:3).

**Gen. 32:3** And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

Jacob sent messengers ahead to Esau in Edom (Seir), which was south of the Dead Sea and thus still a good distance away.

**Gen. 32:4** 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:

**Gen. 32:5** 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 told the messengers to say, “*Your servant* Jacob says, ‘I have sojourned with Laban until now, and I have many flocks and servants. I have sent word to you, Esau, *my lord*, so that I will find grace in your sight.’” Jacob told of his flocks and servants lest Esau think that he was coming to sponge and take or ask for possessions. Esau would remember that Jacob had fled 20 years earlier with virtually nothing. At that time, Esau had been very hostile, saying he would murder Jacob for taking the birthright.

Notice Jacob’s careful choice of words: he was Esau’s servant, and Esau was Jacob’s lord. Not only was this humble attitude a good strategy, but it was permissible. In the birthright and spiritual promises, Jacob was the superior, but in temporal matters, Jacob could acknowledge Esau as the superior. Jacob was humble by nature and also a strategist.

Through the messengers, Jacob was indicating that he had a present for Esau (flocks and servants) and also a sufficiency for himself. Jacob hoped that the reunion would be friendly.

**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.

It took time for the messengers to go to Esau and return. Meanwhile, Jacob was in the vicinity of Succoth, but he still had to cross the Jabbok River. The messengers reported that Esau was coming to meet Jacob with 400 men.

**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;

The report caused fear in Jacob, for why would Esau bring 400 men? There were several possible reasons, as follows:

1. Because Esau distrusted Jacob, he brought 400 men for protection against Jacob's supposed ulterior motives.
2. The 400 men indicated hostile intentions on Esau's part; that is, he wanted to kill Jacob.
3. Esau wanted to show Jacob how powerful he was with 400 men under him.

The King James margin has "two hosts" or "two camps" for the meaning of *Mahanaim* in verse 2. The translators may have been trying to associate that verse with the two bands of verse 7, into which Jacob divided his flocks and servants.

In regard to Jacob's "fear," Esau was aggressive by nature. He had intended to murder Jacob and would have done so years earlier had Jacob not fled. Jacob was also mighty, but being a peaceful man by nature, he could not enter into battle with Esau, his *brother*, and kill him. Thus, realizing his own nature, Jacob was fearful, for if Esau had hostile intentions, he could not kill his brother. Therefore, Jacob devised a way to spare at least some of the family, for he surely thought Esau wanted to kill him. Many think of Jacob as shrewd and tactical, but he had good points, as seen here.

**Gen. 32:8** And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

Jacob had a clever strategy. If Esau smote one company, the other company would be left and could escape.

**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:

Jacob began his prayer. His God was the God of Isaac (his father) and of Abraham (his grandfather). Jacob felt the superiority of Abraham especially and also of Isaac, and thus he honored them. Jacob further identified God as the One who had told him to return to his home country.

**Comment:** Verses 9-12 are the first recorded prayer in Scripture, and as a perfect prayer, it contained (1) adoration, (2) an expression of humility, (3) a request for help, and (4) a reiteration of a previous promise (see *Reprint No. 3969*, "A New Name—God-Given").

**Gen. 32:10** I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shown unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

Jacob continued to pray, "I am not worthy of all thy mercies and truth, for with my staff [only],

I fled, and now I have two bands of flocks and servants.” Jacob had fled with just his staff and a little oil that he subsequently poured out as an offering (Gen. 28:18). At this point, Jacob was at the Jabbok River, a tributary of the Jordan.

**Gen. 32:11 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.**

The word “mother” is correctly translated “mothers” (plural) in the Revised Standard Version, for Jacob was referring to both Leah and Rachel. Jacob prayed for deliverance from Esau for himself, his wives, and his children.

**Gen. 32:12 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.**

Jacob repeated part of the Abrahamic promise.

**Gen. 32:13 And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother;**

**Gen. 32:14 Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams,**

**Gen. 32:15 Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals.**

**Gen. 32:16 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.**

**Gen. 32:17 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?**

**Gen. 32:18 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.**

**Gen. 32:19 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.**

**Gen. 32:20 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.**

Here Jacob used good strategy again. He divided the present for Esau (200 female goats and 20 male goats, 200 ewes and 20 rams, 30 milk camels and babies, 40 cows and 10 bulls, 20 donkeys and 10 foals) into separate droves, each followed by a servant driving them to meet Esau. To better understand what was happening, we should try to put ourselves in Esau’s place. He saw 220 goats on the horizon. As they approached and passed, Esau asked the servant, “Who are you? Where are you going? Whose goats are these?” In turn, each servant would say, “Your servant Jacob is behind us. He wants to appease you with this present so that perhaps you will accept him.” Drove after drove (about five in all) followed. What a present! What a strategy!

**Gen. 32:21 So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company.**

**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.

**Gen. 32:23** And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

**Gen. 32:24** And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

Jacob sent his two wives, two maidservants, and 11 sons over the river Jabbok, and he stayed behind, alone. Perhaps he wanted to pray again.

Evidently, two documents were pieced together here, but that is not a problem. (Although pieced documents do cause some repetition, the narrative is not negated.) Jacob did cross the Jabbok but not until he had wrestled with the angel. Apparently, only one document mentioned the wrestling match.

The “man” Jacob met was an angel (Hos. 12:4). Something must have happened to make Jacob think this personage was a messenger of God. Since God did use human prophets to deliver messages, Jacob did not realize he was speaking to a materialized angel until later. The conversation must have been so inspiring that Jacob did not want the messenger to depart without giving a blessing. Hence Jacob began to wrestle with him for the blessing.

**Gen. 32:25** 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.

When the angel saw that he prevailed not against Jacob, he touched the hollow of Jacob’s thigh, causing it to go out of joint as the wrestling continued. This contest was contrived, for no human being is a match for an angel. The point is that *in proportion to the intensity* that Jacob wrestled, the angel resisted him.

Jacob’s perseverance is impressive—in fact, astounding! A wrestling match is very taxing. It is not like a boxing match where one can back up and get a breathing space. To wrestle *all night* would be exhausting, and Jacob wrestled until dawn. The angel was careful not to humiliate Jacob but to draw out his desire to a perfect conclusion. Jacob’s attitude was much like the importunate widow, who pleaded and pleaded with the judge, who finally gave in to her desires.

Jacob was left with a reminder so that he would realize he had been wrestling with an angel—he became lame. Something electrical or powerful must have happened where he could sense that the angel had been accommodating him in the wrestling match. By causing Jacob’s thigh to go out of joint, the angel showed that he had superior power if he had decided to use it.

**Gen. 32:26** And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

Verse 26 shows Jacob’s drive to get a blessing. He was left halt. We are reminded of Paul’s “Peniel”; namely, he was left with partial blindness or an astigmatism for the rest of his life (Gen. 32:30). Sometimes a Christian is left with a “scar” from an experience, but that scar can be very helpful.

Imagine the reaction when Jacob returned to his family, limping! And he limped until his death. His desired blessing was related to the Abrahamic Covenant.

**Q:** What is the significance of wrestling until daybreak?

**A:** Down through history, there has been the mythological thought that we get experiences at night, but when dawn comes, the trouble disappears. Therefore, dawn is the time of blessing. Daybreak is like a conclusion of one thing and the beginning of something new.

**Gen. 32:27** And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

**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.

Jacob did get a great blessing: a new name. “Jacob” was changed to “Israel” (a prince of God) as a result of the wrestling match. Jacob is the father of Israel, and his children are the children of Israel.

**Gen. 32:29** 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.

**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.

Jacob called the place Peniel, for he had “seen [a representative of] God face to face.” *Pen* means “face”; *el* means “God.” Although Jacob realized that the angel was superhuman and that the wrestling match had been a sham, the drawing out was valuable, and so it is with us and our prayers. Sometimes the “daybreak” is *death*. This incident seems to indicate that, spiritually speaking, Jacob was of the tribe of Naphtali, which means “wrestling.”

**Gen. 32:31** And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

**Gen. 32:32** 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 sinew “shrank”; that is, it was drawn short. The ultra-Orthodox Jews may observe this dietary restriction today.

**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.

Jacob had previously sent servants to Esau to indicate his intention to journey southward and to sound out Esau to see if the past grievance was abated. Jacob used strategy to break down Esau. He had sent droves of flocks as a present and had instructed his servants to call Esau “my lord” and Jacob “thy servant,” the emphasis being that Esau was superior. Esau had 400 men with him, and they were approaching. In addition to the droves for Esau’s present, Jacob had divided his flocks into two bands. Now would come his strategy regarding his family.

**Gen. 33:2** And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

Jacob put the handmaids and their children in front, then Leah and her children next, and finally Rachel and Joseph. This order showed Jacob’s preference in regard to who was the most expendable should Esau and the 400 men fight. Rachel and Joseph were most valued. This must have been Jacob’s general attitude, as indicated previously with the mandrakes and also

subsequently when Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery out of jealousy. Jacob would give the coat of many colors to Joseph.

**Gen. 33:3 And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.**

Jacob went first to meet Esau, ahead of the handmaids and their children. As Jacob approached Esau, Jacob bowed to the ground seven times. Hence Jacob was continuing the strategy of trying to soften up Esau. Jacob showed submission and willingness to have peace and be Esau's "servant," as it were.

By going first, Jacob exposed himself to the danger of captivity and gave the others a chance to escape should Esau have hostile intentions. The handmaids and wives were probably strung out in the distance so that if they saw anything untoward, they could flee in haste.

**Gen. 33:4 And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.**

Esau *ran* to meet Jacob and embraced and kissed him, and *they* wept. What a wonderful answer to Jacob's prayer! Whatever suspicions Esau had were allayed by all of Jacob's strategies. Now the others were encouraged to continue in their approach to Esau.

Esau's character is shown favorably here by his not carrying a grudge and not still planning to kill Jacob. Taking 400 men with him was probably at least partly because he wondered about Jacob's intentions. Twenty years had elapsed, and suppose Jacob had an army with him. Both Esau and Jacob had prospered during the 20 years of separation.

**Gen. 33:5 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.**

Esau now saw the women and children approaching and asked who they were. Jacob replied, "The children which God hath graciously given thy servant."

**Gen. 33:6 Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.**

**Gen. 33:7 And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.**

In a continuation of subserviency, the handmaidens, Leah, Rachel, and the children all politely bowed themselves. The children were young, and to see the young ones manifest such courteous respect would have further melted Esau's heart. There is no indication that the children were instilled with suspicion, hatred, or fear; that is, they were not trained in ill will towards Esau. In other words, they had not been hearing damaging stories about him.

From God's standpoint, Jacob was the superior, and this was only the beginning as far as his blessing was concerned. For instance, Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:28). Esau's name was not mentioned, so as time went on, that which Jacob represents became more and more superior. Back there they were closer to being equal from a *human* standpoint. When Jacob and Esau are compared in a general sense, Jacob represents a spiritual class who have faith in God and suffer for it, stepping out into the unknown. They will be richly blessed ultimately.



**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.

Esau said, "What do you mean by these droves that I met?" Jacob answered, "These are to find grace in your sight." The use of the word "drove" means that Esau was impressed with the immensity of the introduction as well as the ceremonial approach.

**Gen. 33:9** And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself.

**Gen. 33:10** 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.

Esau graciously declined Jacob's "present" of droves. The last time (20 years ago) that Jacob and Esau had seen each other, Esau felt that Jacob had stolen his birthright. Now, under different circumstances, when Jacob tried to bestow flocks on him, Esau said, "Keep the gift, for I have enough." Esau responded this way because during the 20 years, he had prospered temporally.

Remember, although Isaac got the chief blessing, Ishmael was blessed too. Isaac would be 12 kings; Ishmael would be 12 princes, and Edom (Esau) would be 12 dukes. All were honored positions but on a descending scale (see Gen. 36:15).

Jacob urged Esau to accept the present. The last part of verse 10 is poorly worded in the King James Version. Jacob was saying, "God has so richly blessed me that now when I come into your presence, I feel as if God is there. He has favored us both in this joyous reunion that it is as if we are in His presence." "Face" can mean "presence." Jacob felt as if they were in the presence of God.

**Gen. 33:11** 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.

At Jacob's insistence, Esau accepted the present.

**Gen. 33:12** And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.

Esau suggested that they go on together to Mount Seir, Esau's residence.

**Gen. 33:13** 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.

**Gen. 33:14** 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.

Jacob declined because the children were young and the flocks were ready to bear. If overdriven, the animals would die. Therefore, the flocks and children would proceed leisurely, at their own pace. Also, Jacob wanted to make a clear separation, as shown in verse 14. Esau could see that there was truth in Jacob's statement regarding the age of the children and the flocks about to bear offspring.

**Comment:** Another reason would be that Jacob did not want his family to intermingle with the Hittites and the Ishmaelites (Gen. 26:34; 28:8,9).

**Reply:** That could very well be true because Jacob saw that such intermingling would not be prudent. To settle too near Esau would eventually lead to intermarriage.

**Gen. 33:15** 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.

Esau next suggested he would leave some of his 400 men with Jacob. Jacob declined, saying it was not necessary. (Also, to have accepted Esau's offer would have continued a tie to him, which Jacob did not want.) Thus there was an abrupt separation but with goodwill and prudence. Jacob said "no" in a gracious manner.

**Comment:** Even after Esau's wonderful reception of Jacob, Jacob continued to call him "my lord." This form of address shows the sincerity of Jacob's desire to return under a peaceful situation.

**Reply:** Jacob was a man of a peaceful disposition, even though he was Herculean in physique and superior to Esau in bodily strength. The fact that he would not harm Esau physically was another factor that melted Esau—to see Jacob, a man of strength, calling him "my lord" and referring to himself as "thy servant."

**Gen. 33:16** So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.

Esau returned that day to Seir.

**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.

Jacob first went to Succoth, which was east of the Jordan River near the Jabbok tributary. The word "Succoth" means booths. (Note: This is not the Succoth of the Exodus.) Here Jacob built temporary shelters, a resting place, in which the pregnant animals could bear their young. The huts provided shade.

The word "house" is misleading, for the stay was temporary. For perhaps several weeks, Jacob and his family remained there and then proceeded on when the young animals were up to traveling.

**Gen. 33:18** And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram; and pitched his tent before the city.

Jacob and those with him crossed over Jordan and entered Canaan. Shechem, which is called Nablus today, was in north central Canaan, 32 miles north of Jerusalem. It was the valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim (the mounts of cursing and blessing, respectively—Deut. 11:29). Shalem, called a "city" in the area of Shechem, was really a village.

**Gen. 33:19** 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.

**Gen. 33:20** And he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-israel.

At Shalem in Shechem, Jacob bought a sizable parcel of land for 100 pieces of money from Hamor. There Jacob put his tent and erected an altar called "El-elohe-israel," that is, "God, the God of Israel." According to the King James margin, Jacob could have obtained the land by the barter of 100 lambs.

The next chapter, Genesis 34, took place in Shechem. Jacob's well was in Shechem—it was part of the land he bought. The woman of Samaria was at this well when Jesus spoke to her (John 4:5-7). The residents of Shechem at this time were related to Noah, some through Ham (Canaanites) and some through Shem. Joseph's bones were brought out of Egypt and buried in Shechem in Jacob's parcel of land (Josh. 24:32). Shechem later became a city of refuge (Josh. 21:21).

**Gen. 34:1** And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.

**Gen. 34:2** 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.

**Gen. 34:3** And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.

**Gen. 34:4** And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife.

**Gen. 34:5** 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.

The age of Dinah might be a question. Leah had four sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah. Then she was barren for a while, during which time her handmaiden bore two more sons. After that Leah bore two additional sons: Issachar and Zebulun. Finally Dinah was born—the ninth child counting the handmaidens.

Of the 20 years that Jacob served Laban, no children were born the first seven years. That leaves 13 years for the nine to be born in, Dinah being the last. Up until this chapter, there was a connected chronological account with Jacob, but now there is a time gap. Jacob probably spent about six months in Succoth, where he made booths, and chapter 34 took place some years later. Also, from Succoth to Shechem (Nablus), Jacob would have made other stops, which took time. We are reading highlights that the Holy Spirit deemed significant to narrate. At any rate, for Dinah to be old enough to be raped, and considering Mideast customs, Dinah had to be at least age 14, and maybe a year or two older.

**Comment:** Based on comments in subsequent verses, it would seem that none of the brothers had yet taken a wife. As a unit, or family, they were not mixing with the people of the land. Therefore, in verse 1, when Dinah “went out to see the daughters of the land,” her action led to an incident. It would have been better for her to remain with the lineage God was protecting.

**Reply:** Yes, she wandered.

**Comment:** Jacob had probably told his children to stay separate, for he and Isaac, his father, had specially selected wives from the proper lineage. Therefore, Dinah's venturing out, even for friendship, was unwise.

**Reply:** If she was not specifically told, at least reasonable inference, based on the history of the family, should have forewarned her.

Shechem, a Hivite, son of Hamor, had defiled Dinah, but he truly wanted her for his wife and spoke to his father to this end. It was proper for him to get parental assent, and Hamor agreed to Shechem's request. Meanwhile, Jacob was apprised of the situation, and his sons were in the field with the cattle.

“Jacob held his peace until they [his sons] were come.” Jacob refrained from action, waiting for his sons to come out of the field. He waited to hear the other side of the situation, for, after all, Dinah had wandered into Hivite territory. Hamor was “*prince* of the country,” and Shechem was important too, being Hamor’s son, so this was no small incident.

**Gen. 34:6** And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him.

**Gen. 34:7** 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.

**Gen. 34:8** And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife.

**Gen. 34:9** And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you.

**Gen. 34:10** And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein.

**Gen. 34:11** 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.

Shechem accompanied Hamor in trying to resolve the situation peacefully. Hamor said that Shechem wanted to consummate the matter in a legitimate marriage, and he offered to do whatever was required to heal the breach of conduct. Hamor also proposed that intermarriage continue even further between his people (the Hivites) and Jacob’s family. Meanwhile, Jacob’s sons were very angry and not amenable to a peaceful solution.

Hamor further proposed trading between the two peoples. Being a prince, he would have been wealthy, and Jacob had many possessions. No doubt Hamor felt that the trading would bring him more prosperity. And since Hamor and the Hivites were more powerful and numerous than Jacob and his sons and servants, Hamor would still be in control; that is, he would not be jeopardized by such an arrangement. Otherwise, he would not have made the proposal.

**Gen. 34:12** 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.

**Gen. 34:13** And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister:

**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:

**Gen. 34:15** But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised;

**Gen. 34:16** 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.

**Gen. 34:17** But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.

**Gen. 34:18** And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son.

**Gen. 34:19** 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.

The sons of Jacob deceitfully responded to Shechem and Hamor's proposition, saying that the Hivites would have to be circumcised. Shechem and Hamor agreed. Simeon and Levi (verse 25) may have been the ringleaders of the deceit.

Shechem was commended as being "more honourable than all the house of his father." He was sincerely trying to make the situation right, and he did not defer to be circumcised. Hamor had ulterior motives in regard to trade and wealth but not Shechem, who just wanted an honorable marriage.

**Gen. 34:20** And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying,

**Gen. 34:21** 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.

Shechem and Hamor went back to their city to mention the circumcision proposal to the other Hivites. They related that Jacob's family was "peaceable." For intermarriage and intertrade, the stipulation was circumcision. Jacob had dwelled in that land for a while now, so they judged that he was peaceable.

**Gen. 34:22** 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.

**Gen. 34:23** 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.

**Gen. 34:24** 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.

Hamor revealed his real desire—to get all of Jacob's wealth, flocks, etc.

**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.

**Gen. 34:26** 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.

**Gen. 34:27** The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister.

**Gen. 34:28** They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field,

**Gen. 34:29** And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house.

**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.

**Gen. 34:31** And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?

On the third day after the circumcision, when the Hivite males were sore, Simeon and Levi slew all of them and took Dinah out of Shechem's house. The other sons of Jacob came upon the slain and spoiled their city, taking their flocks, their wealth, their wives, and their little ones.

Notice the statement in verse 3 that Shechem "spake kindly" to Dinah ("spake to the heart of the damsel"—King James margin). The suggestion is that even though Shechem took Dinah against her will, she was mollified somewhat by his nice words to her and hence agreed to be his wife.

Simeon and Levi were the second and third sons of Leah. Reuben, the oldest, would normally be the leader but not here. These were full brothers of Dinah. Later on it was Reuben who dissuaded his brothers from killing Joseph and said to put him in a pit instead, intending to get Joseph back to Jacob (Gen. 37:21,22). Hence on two occasions, Reuben had less guilt than his brothers. Simeon and Levi paid a penalty for this viciousness subsequently, at the time of Jacob's deathbed prophecy (Gen. 49:5-7).

We are reminded of the incident at Jericho years later when all of the Israelite males were circumcised and the people of Jericho did not use the opportunity to defeat the Israelites, whom they feared. The restraint of the Jerichoites shows what respect they had for the Israelites' deliverance through the Red Sea. Superstitious fear that they would be punished for harming the Israelites indisposed them in this moment of crisis for the Israelites and Joshua.

This was a sad situation with the Hivites. Dinah was even in Shechem's house, so the marriage was to be an honorable one. And when the Hivite males (adults mostly) *willingly submitted* to the painful rite of circumcision, it was deplorable for Jacob's sons to kill them.

Jacob was pacified by Shechem's offer to marry Dinah, whereas his sons acted emotionally and improperly in saying, "Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?" Jacob was right, but as the saying goes, with the passage of time, one cannot cry over spilled milk. Jacob could not put life back into the corpses.

The Law, given later, shows God's thinking on such a matter. If an unmarried woman (that is, a virgin) was violated, the man had to marry her—and as soon as possible (Exod. 22:16; Deut. 22:28,29). A "shotgun wedding" approach does not excuse the circumstances, but it is the proper resolution of the situation. What Shechem was trying to do harmonized with how God saw the matter and with His law.

**Comment:** The reason for the insertion of this incident in Scripture could have been to show the Israelites how attempts at intermarriage caused problems.

Apparently, there was some responsibility on Dinah's part because she initially went out sightseeing (to see "the daughters of the land"—Gen. 34:1). Her attitude and/or action might have been a factor in Jacob's reasoning.

What Jacob's sons did was a "stink," but what could he do now—go and kill his own sons? Jacob remembered this incident to his dying day, especially the guilt of Simeon and Levi. He reasoned, "The damage is done, and it cannot be undone. If the Canaanites and the Perizzites hear what we did, they may consolidate their forces and decimate us as being much less in

number. All of us will be destroyed.” Jacob and his family would now be viewed as intruders and aliens.

The sons tried to justify their slaughter of the Hivites because of what Shechem had done to Dinah. Since the account does not say that *all* of Jacob’s sons spoiled the city, the presumption is that Joseph was not present. Perhaps those who killed the Hivites were all of the sons who were full brothers of Dinah, that is, Leah’s six sons.

**Gen. 35:1** And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.

God told Jacob to go to Bethel so that he and his family would be removed from the area where his sons had caused a stink by slaughtering the Hivites. Bethel is where God had appeared to him more than 20 years earlier and given him the vision of the ladder with angels ascending and descending (Gen. 28:12-19). Jacob had anointed his rock pillow with oil as a pillar.

**Gen. 35:2** 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:

**Gen. 35:3** And let us arise, and go up to Beth-el; 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.

Jacob told his household to put away their strange gods, to be clean, and to change their garments, for in Bethel he intended to make an altar to God, who had appeared to him years before when he had originally fled and had communicated at other times up to the present.

**Comment:** The “strange gods” included teraphim. Earlier in the Genesis study, some allowance was made for these images, but here Jacob clearly indicated he thought they were wrong.

**Comment:** In spoiling the wealth of the Hivites after slaughtering them, Jacob’s sons had no doubt taken their heathen gods.

Jacob’s family had to change their garments. The sons may have taken garments and robes, richly embroidered, when they plundered the Hivites. These things were to be left behind—before they departed for Bethel (compare Josh. 24:23)—so their departure was like a fresh start.

**Gen. 35:4** 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.

Jacob’s family readily handed over the “strange gods” and earrings, which he buried under the oak by Shechem. They were put in a mass grave, as it were. The earrings had probably been associated with the false heathen worship of Shechem (the Hivites). The earrings would have been engraved with letter or picture symbols, showing that the ear indicated reverence and hearkening to the supposed god(s).

**Gen. 35:5** 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.

Jacob and family began to travel to Bethel. God’s providence protected Jacob, who was not in a position to defend himself, especially if other people banded together against him. God similarly struck fear in the inhabitants of Jericho when the Israelites were helpless and being

circumcised (Josh. 5:1,2).

More and more it seems that God has genetic control with some master spiritual computer whereby all human beings are monitored. He does not listen to every monitor, but things are being recorded so that in the resurrection, with new bodies, the record of one's previous life will be implanted. Having the spiritual computer means that at any time, the recording can be interrupted and manipulated. Thus a common spirit of fear was artificially introduced for Jacob's protection and safety.

**Gen. 35:6** So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Beth-el, he and all the people that were with him.

**Gen. 35:7** And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.

Jacob arrived at Bethel and built an altar. More than 20 years earlier he had called the place Bethel; now he called it El-bethel ("the God of Bethel" or "God, the house of God"). Hence there was a *double* emphasis and reverence, a reaffirmation that indeed this was Bethel. In other words, "This veritably is Bethel."

**Gen. 35:8** But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el under an oak: and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth.

Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, was quite old, for Rebekah herself would have been old—probably dead at this time. Deborah had come from Nahor with Rebekah when Eliezer went to get a bride for Isaac (Gen. 24:59). She stayed with Rebekah until the latter died. Then Isaac would have released her, assuming she wanted her liberty. She would have been attached to Jacob, since Rebekah had a greater interest in Jacob than in Esau.

To give a name to the oak under which Deborah was buried ("the oak of weeping") indicates that Jacob was very fond of her. Deborah was nursemaid to both Jacob and Esau, the twins.

**Gen. 35:9** And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him.

**Gen. 35:10** 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.

**Gen. 35:11** 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;

God first gave Jacob the name "Israel" when he wrestled with the angel in regard to his concern about the reunion with Esau (Gen. 32:28). Hence this second renaming was a reaffirmation of the oath previously made. This time, however, more detail was supplied. "Israel" means "prince of God" or "with God," suggesting an *individual*. And Jacob, as an individual, was named Israel. However, the added detail implies that "Israel" would become a *nation*, for God told Jacob to be fruitful and multiply.

**Gen. 35:12** 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.

God said that the land He had given to Abraham and Isaac would be given to Jacob and to Jacob's seed, but the land would not be obtained until the *future*. Therefore, "gave" means "promised." God *promised* the land to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's seed. Thus Jacob



became the recipient of the Abrahamic Covenant. After Jacob, the covenant was to be with the *nation*, not with an individual.

In Acts 7:5, Stephen said that Abraham did not get the land for a possession. One proof is that Abraham had to *buy* a burial place for Sarah.

**Gen. 35:13** And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.

“God went up from him [Jacob]”; that is, an *angel* who represented God (probably the Logos, as the messenger or Word of God) spoke with the authority of God and then departed. Acts 7:30 states that an angel of God spoke to Moses. In other words, the angel spoke with so much authority that he could speak in the name of God Himself.

**Gen. 35:14** 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.

Notice that the pillar constituted an altar. Years earlier Jacob had set up a pillar (from his pillow stone) and anointed it with oil (Gen. 28:18). This time, the second instance of an altar pillar, Jacob anointed it with a drink offering and an oil offering. This altar would have consisted of multiple stones. A drink offering was of wine or water depending on the circumstance.

**Gen. 35:15** And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Beth-el.

Bethel was a very special place to Jacob.

**Gen. 35:16** And they journeyed from Beth-el; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour.

**Gen. 35:17** 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.

**Gen. 35:18** And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin.

**Gen. 35:19** And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem.

**Gen. 35:20** And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.

Jacob and family journeyed from Bethel to the outskirts of Bethlehem. The time came for Rachel to give birth, and she suffered in hard labor. The son was born healthy, but Rachel died in childbirth and “was buried in the way to Ephrath.” Incidentally, Ephrath (Bethlehem) is Bethlehem-Ephratah, where Jesus was born.

Jacob overruled the name Rachel had given to her second son. He used the name Benjamin (“son of the right hand”) instead of Benoni (“son of my sorrow”). For the head of a tribe, the name Benjamin was appropriate, and Benoni was too sad. The mothers gave the names to the 11 other sons of Jacob.

**Comment:** As Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel was his “right hand.” As the son of Rachel, Benjamin was the son of Jacob's “right hand.”

The type of Rachel, the type of Isaiah 66:7-9 about Zion travailing, and the Revelation 12 symbol of the woman and the man-child that was delivered are all different. In Isaiah 66:7-9,

“Zion” is *natural* Israel, not the nominal Church. Several reasons for this conclusion are given in *The Keys of Revelation*.

Rachel does not represent nominal spiritual Zion (the nominal Church), which will be destroyed when the Great Company comes out at the very end of the age. One reason is that Rachel died in connection with the birth of Benjamin. His birth in antitype, therefore, is not the coming out of Babylon but the *real birth* of the Great Company to *spirit nature*. The Great Company will be forced out of Babylon and then have to wash their robes in the Time of Trouble. *Several years after Babylon’s fall*, the Great Company will get their change.

Rachel pictures another aspect of the Sarah Covenant. It is true that Sarah gives birth to the Little Flock, but she is the New Jerusalem, the “mother of *us all*,” which includes the Great Company. When the Great Company class get their change, the Sarah Covenant will cease *entirely*, as shown by Rachel’s dying.

There is another proof that Rachel is an aspect of the Sarah Covenant; namely, Jesus was born in this area of Ephrath/Bethlehem, the same area in which Benjamin was born. When Joseph pictures Jesus, then Benjamin represents the Little Flock. When Joseph represents The Christ, then Benjamin pictures the Great Company. Rachel gave birth to Joseph and Benjamin (The Christ and the Great Company, respectively). From the standpoint of the Great Company, Rachel pictures the Sarah Covenant in its completion.

In Isaiah 66:7-9, the mother (Zion, natural Israel) does not die when she travails. Instead she has other children including the Ancient Worthies. In Revelation 12, the woman/mother did not die when Antichrist was born. Instead she fled into the wilderness for 1,260 years. Each type must be considered separately, in context.

In regard to Isaiah 66:7-9, Zion pictures nominal *fleshly* Israel because all the promises were given to natural Israel originally, even the promise of the spiritual Church. Both natural and spiritual promises were given to natural Israel, but with few exceptions, Israel forfeited the spiritual promises. The Church will sit on the thrones of the 12 tribes of *Israel*. Revelation 7:4 describes the 144,000 as the 12 tribes of *Israel*. In both cases, the Church is spoken of with the name *Israel*.

Benjamin, when picturing the Great Company, is the “son” of Rachel, who was the “right hand” of Jacob (God). Benjamin can also mean “son of the south.” Psalm 89:12 uses the same Hebrew word when speaking of the south. In the expression “son of the right hand,” “right hand” means “south” in the sense that south is to the right when one faces the east. Benjamin was the one son born in the south; all of the others were born in the north in Padan-aram.

These further details on the Sarah Covenant complement the details given when Sarah died and Isaac took Rebekah into his mother’s tent. That event showed the end of the *call* to be of the Bride, but the “tent,” or covenant, continued on.

In the highest idealistic sense, the Sarah Covenant shows the birth of just the *true* Church, the Little Flock. The additional details in the Book of Genesis show what happens to those who do not make the Little Flock, for there is *no separate* covenant for their development after the Little Flock is gone.

There may be confusion between the words “altar” and “pillar” (verses 3, 7, 14, and 20). A pillar is an upright stone (either a single stone or a pile of stones). Different Hebrew words with different meanings are used for “altar” and “pillar.”

**Gen. 35:21** And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar.

Jacob left Bethel and went beyond the tower of Edar to set up his tent.

**Gen. 35:22** 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:

Reuben, Jacob's firstborn son, defiled Bilhah, his father's concubine (Rachel's handmaid). No further comment is made here, but Jacob mentioned the incident subsequently in his deathbed prophecy. This incident shows Reuben's instability from a moral standpoint. He was unstable in other ways as well—he was “unstable as water” (Gen. 49:4).

The first three sons of Jacob (Leah's sons) disgraced him in some way: Reuben lay with Jacob's concubine, and Simeon and Levi slaughtered the Hivites. Judah, the fourth son, is listed in Messiah's lineage (Matt. 1:2).

**Gen. 35:23** The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun:

**Gen. 35:24** The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin:

**Gen. 35:25** And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali:

**Gen. 35:26** And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram.

Jacob's sons are enumerated here but not by order of birth (except in small sections). After the enumeration, verse 26 states, “These are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram. One of the sons, Benjamin, was not born there but in the outskirts of Bethlehem in Canaan (see verses 16-18). Hence the exception would be understood, and the statement applies to the other 11 sons.

The same principle applies to Hebrews 11:13, “These all died in faith, not having received the promises.” But Hebrews 11:5 had just said that Enoch did *not* die—he was the exception. Hence Genesis 35:26 is a precedent for Hebrews 11:13.

**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.

**Gen. 35:28** And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years.

**Gen. 35:29** 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.

**Comment:** Considering the time Jacob spent in Shechem, Bethel, and the Tower of Edar, we would have expected him to go immediately to Hebron to his father Isaac. But apparently, he waited on the Lord to direct him step by step.

**Reply:** Having immense flocks plus family and servants who were dependent upon him, Jacob could no longer act as an individual.

**Comment:** The account does not indicate, though, that Jacob even went to visit Isaac. Since he could have left servants in charge of the flocks, he must, instead, have waited on the Lord for each step of his journey.

**Reply:** Meanwhile, God dealt with Jacob, reaffirmed the Abrahamic Covenant, and changed Jacob's name to Israel. This favor suggests that God was dealing with Jacob as a separate entity. There comes a time for a family to be separated—sons and daughters leave and marry. Being no youngster at this point, Jacob probably did not feel the urgency to go back to Isaac.

At last, Jacob arrived at Mamre in Hebron where Isaac was. Thus Jacob met Isaac while his father was still alive. Isaac died at age 180. Esau and Jacob were together for the burial of their father. Since the cave of Machpelah was right there in Hebron, it was convenient to bury Isaac there with Abraham, Sarah, and Rebekah (Gen. 23:17-20; 25:8,9; 49:30-33). Abraham died at 175, Isaac died at 180, Jacob died at 147, and Joseph died at 110 (Gen. 25:7; 35:28; 47:28; 50:26).

**Gen. 36:1** Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom.

**Gen. 36:2** Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite;

**Gen. 36:3** And Bashemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth.

**Gen. 36:4** And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz; and Bashemath bare Reuel;

**Gen. 36:5** And Aholibamah bare Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah: these are the sons of Esau, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan.

**Gen. 36:6** And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob.

**Gen. 36:7** For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle.

**Gen. 36:8** Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom.

The detail here is not that important to us now, but the names will become more significant in the Kingdom. The names Esau, Edom, and Mount Seir are all associated. Since "Esau is Edom," the Edomites descended from Esau.

**Q:** Verses 6 and 7 say that Esau fled from Jacob to find room for his flocks. Wasn't the situation the other way around? Jacob was off the scene at the time Esau had selected that land.

**A:** These verses show that there was a migration, but we are not given the details about Esau as we were for Jacob. Esau was of a bedouin nature, sojourning and wandering until he settled in Mount Seir. Edom was also Esau's name, so it is logical that in time, Edom became the name of that area.

**Gen. 36:9** And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir:

**Gen. 36:10** These are the names of Esau's sons; Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau.

**Gen. 36:11** And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz.

**Gen. 36:12** And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these were the sons of Adah Esau's wife.

**Gen. 36:13** And these are the sons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife.

**Gen. 36:14** And these were the sons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

**Gen. 36:15** These were dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the firstborn son of Esau; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz,

**Gen. 36:16** Duke Korah, duke Gatam, and duke Amalek: these are the dukes that came of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these were the sons of Adah.

**Gen. 36:17** And these are the sons of Reuel Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah: these are the dukes that came of Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife.

**Gen. 36:18** And these are the sons of Aholibamah Esau's wife; duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these were the dukes that came of Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife.

**Gen. 36:19** These are the sons of Esau, who is Edom, and these are their dukes.

The dukes of Esau are listed here. Three terms were used: kings, princes, and dukes. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob received promises in regard to kings; Ishmael received a promise in regard to princes; and Esau received a promise in regard to dukes. A duke is a lower rank than a prince.

Esau lost the spiritual blessing but was certainly blessed temporally. He had a large family, many flocks, and numerous servants. His son Eliphaz was associated with Job. Amalek was the forebear of the Amalekites. The Israelites later fought with the Amalekites when they crossed the Red Sea and entered the wilderness.

**Gen. 36:20** These are the sons of Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah,

**Gen. 36:21** And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan: these are the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom.

**Gen. 36:22** And the children of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna.

**Gen. 36:23** And the children of Shobal were these; Alvan, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.

**Gen. 36:24** And these are the children of Zibeon; both Ajah, and Anah: this was that Anah that found the mules in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father.

**Gen. 36:25** And the children of Anah were these; Dishon, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah.

**Gen. 36:26** And these are the children of Dishon; Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.

**Gen. 36:27** The children of Ezer are these; Bilhan, and Zaavan, and Akan.

**Gen. 36:28** The children of Dishan are these; Uz, and Aran.

**Gen. 36:29** These are the dukes that came of the Horites; duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah,

**Gen. 36:30** Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan: these are the dukes that came of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir.

More dukes are listed. Depending on context, Seir was an individual, a place, or the capital of Edom. Israel was an individual (Jacob), Jacob's progeny, a land, or a nation, again depending on context. And the term "Babylon" could apply to the city, the province, the empire, or the nation.

Out of all these names, suddenly one is identified: Anah, who found the mules ("hot springs" according to the RSV) in the wilderness (verse 24).

As an individual, Seir was a Horite. Aaron died on Mount Hor. Mount Seir is now called Petra. From the Petra monastery mount, one can see Mount Hor, which is where Miriam died and Aaron was buried.

**Gen. 36:31** And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.

**Gen. 36:32** And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom: and the name of his city was Dinhabah.

**Gen. 36:33** And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead.

**Gen. 36:34** And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of Temani reigned in his stead.

**Gen. 36:35** And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith.

**Gen. 36:36** And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

**Gen. 36:37** And Samlah died, and Saul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead.

**Gen. 36:38** And Saul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.

**Gen. 36:39** And Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pau; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

**Gen. 36:40** And these are the names of the dukes that came of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names; duke Timnah, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth,

**Gen. 36:41** Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,

**Gen. 36:42** Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,

**Gen. 36:43** Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: these be the dukes of Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possession: he is Esau the father of the Edomites.

Consecutive reigning dukes are listed in verses 40-43. After the Exodus, Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness and then six years dividing the land. Next came the 450 years of the Period of the Judges, followed by the Period of the Kings; that is, 496 years expired from the time of the

Exodus until Israel had a king. The kings listed here in verses 31-39 show the history as it occurred in Edom during those 496 years.

**Gen. 37:1** And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.

Jacob dwelled in Canaan.

**Gen. 37:2** 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.

The fact that Bilhah and Zilpah are called “wives” shows that concubines had a legal, if secondary, status.

Joseph, only 17 years old at the time, was feeding the flock with his brothers (sons of Bilhah and Zilpah). He acted aright when he reported their wrong conduct to his father. The implication is that Joseph was given a preferential position with these other four sons. As a steward, Joseph felt a responsibility to report the wrongdoing, but the other four considered him to be a talebearer. By their attitude, they were sowing seeds of resentment. Joseph had acted in a *guileless* manner, but poisoned minds misconstrued his words and actions.

**Gen. 37:3** 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.

Jacob loved Joseph more than his other children because Joseph “was the son of his old age.” Since Benjamin was the last-born son, not Joseph, what does this expression mean? Based on the Hebrew, the wording can be different. Joseph “was the son of old age *to Jacob*”; i.e., Joseph was *mature way beyond* his 17 years. For example, when honoring Joseph, Pharaoh called him a “father,” meaning mature in wisdom, yet Joseph was still young—only in his thirties (Gen. 45:8). Joseph’s interpretation of dreams also showed he was advanced in his thinking.

When Jacob made Joseph “a coat of many colours,” this honor and distinction incited further jealousy in Joseph’s brethren. Old “art” in the Mideast shows robes of diverse colors, especially on the younger people. And a coat of diverse colors is painted on the wall of the Beni-Hassan tombs, which included Joseph’s tomb. Of course the coat of many colors could have had long sleeves too, as suggested by the alternate translation, but whether it did or not is immaterial. Joseph was worthy of favoritism, but Jacob could have been more discreet and thus have avoided inflaming envy.

**Gen. 37:4** 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.

With the exception of Benjamin, the other brothers were so jealous that they hated Joseph and “could not speak peaceably unto him.” To “speak peaceably” meant to greet one another with “Shalom,” as would be proper among family members. Jacob should have discerned the coldness of the other brothers toward Joseph—the lack of this courtesy, or greeting, when Joseph appeared on the scene. Although the brothers would not have displayed *open* animosity lest their attitude be too obvious, they did manifest a lack of respect. Jacob was either oblivious or did not want to recognize what was happening.

**Gen. 37:5** And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

**Gen. 37:6** And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:

**Gen. 37:7** 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.

**Gen. 37:8** 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.

When Joseph recounted the first dream to his brothers, they hated him even more. In those days, a dream was significant, and it was considered to be of either good or evil portent.

Dream No. 1: The wheat sheaves were lying down. Then Joseph's sheaf arose and stood upright. Presumably the sheaves of his brothers arose too but in a subservient fashion, for the brothers' sheaves did obeisance to Joseph's sheaf. Altogether, there were 12 sheaves, and 11 of them bowed to one sheaf. Since this dream applied to only the brothers, Joseph may have told just them and not his father. However, the second dream applied to his father as well as his brothers, so all were informed.

Joseph felt the dream was important, so he guilelessly told it. Being honest and open, he was looking for some explanation. He would have realized that he was the sheaf to whom the others did obeisance, but he was puzzled as to the significance.

Antitype for Dream No. 1: The brothers represent the nation of Israel, which will bow to Jesus in the Kingdom. In a secondary sense, they will bow the knee to the Joseph class. The antitype is more apparent later in regard to Joseph's becoming prime minister of Egypt.

**Gen. 37:9** 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.

**Gen. 37:10** 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?

**Gen. 37:11** And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

Dream No. 2: The sun, moon, and 11 stars did obeisance to Joseph. The sun was Jacob, and the moon would have been Leah because Rachel had died and Leah was a wife of higher status than the concubine wives. Of course the 11 stars were the brothers. Joseph realized he was being honored, for they all genuflected to him. The sun, moon, and stars probably came in front of him and dipped, while he remained stationary.

*Two dreams were two witnesses—and that was significant! In the second dream, obeisance was made to Joseph personally, not just to a representation (a wheat sheaf). Also, the setting was heavenly, as opposed to the earthly setting in the first dream.*

Although Jacob rebuked Joseph, he “observed the saying”; that is, he pondered it, as did Mary many years later when she “kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2:19). Jacob could not share this pondering with anyone now that Rachel was dead. To have told Leah would have been saying, “This son of Rachel will be over your sons.” It was puzzling to Jacob as to how this dream could ever be fulfilled. Joseph was young compared to the others, yet seemingly he would occupy a position of preeminence.



The brothers envied Joseph with malice and bitterness, although at this time, the malice was still hidden. Note: Even though 11 stars “made obeisance” to Joseph, Benjamin would have been too young to participate in the envy.

Antitype for Dream No. 2: The “sun,” that is, nominal spiritual Israel (the tares), will recognize “Joseph,” a representation of Jesus. Antotypically, the sun pictures Papacy, the moon is church canon law, and the 11 stars are the papal hierarchy—all will recognize and bow down to Jesus.

**Comment:** Bible comments comparing Jesus and Joseph are as follows:

1. Jesus and Joseph were both special objects of their father’s love.
2. Jesus and Joseph were both hated by their brethren.
3. The superior claims of both were rejected by their brethren.
4. The brethren of both conspired for their death.
5. Both became a blessing among the Gentiles.

**Gen. 37:12** And his brethren went to feed their father’s flock in Shechem.

**Gen. 37:13** 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.

**Gen. 37:14** 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.

**Gen. 37:15** And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou?

**Gen. 37:16** And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks.

**Gen. 37:17** 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.

Joseph’s brothers went to Shechem to feed the flock. Shechem is the locale where the Hivites were slain during soreness from circumcision following Dinah’s defilement by Shechem, son of Hamor. God had overruled at the time so that fear kept the other Canaanites from retaliating for the wrong done to the Hivites. Historically, the hatred of the Canaanites caused problems, but not at this time.

Jacob sent Joseph to find his brethren and to ascertain their condition. Joseph went *willingly* to Shechem. A parallel was Jesus’ willingness to come down to planet Earth at his First Advent. When Joseph got to Shechem, he wandered around, confused, because he could not find his brethren. A “certain man” observing him asked what Joseph was looking for. Joseph explained that he was trying to find his brothers, and the stranger replied that he had overheard them say they would go to Dothan. Joseph pursued them for another 15 to 18 miles to Dothan, a place with much verdure. There he found his brothers.

Hebrew folklore contains many stories, some way out. The story of Joseph says the “certain man” was an angel—Gabriel. (And it was Gabriel at the time of the First Advent who told Mary and Joseph separately about the Son, Jesus—Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:26-31.) Hebrew folklore may be correct in regard to Joseph, for if he had not been informed of the whereabouts of his brothers, he would have gone home and the type would not have been made.

**Gen. 37:18** And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they

**conspired against him to slay him.**

When the ten brothers (not Benjamin) saw Joseph approaching afar off, they conspired to slay him. Joseph's life contains incidents that are an allegory of Jesus. Joseph was rejected by his brothers, and so was Jesus. Jesus "came unto his own, and his own received him not. But [to] as many as received him, ... [he gave the privilege and] power to become the sons of God" (John 1:11,12). Jesus was slain, and there was an attempt to slay Joseph.

**Gen. 37:19 And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.**

They wanted to get rid of "this dreamer."

**Gen. 37:20 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.**

The plot was to kill Joseph and cast his carcass into a pit. Later they would tell Jacob that a wild beast had devoured him.

**Gen. 37:21 And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.**

**Gen. 37:22 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, to deliver him to his father again.**

Reuben "delivered" Joseph out of the other brothers' hands by persuading them not to kill him but to cast him alive into a pit. He intended to arrange matters so that Joseph would be subsequently freed and taken back to Jacob. In other words, Reuben planned to later rescue Joseph and return him to Jacob.

This incident shows the progression of evil if we harbor envy or hatred in our hearts. Such a heart condition could lead to murder. Earlier, when the brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more than he loved them, they hated Joseph. By not coming to grips with their feelings, they progressed in evil until they were ready to slay him. The lesson is that as soon as we recognize any envy or pride in our hearts or minds, we must take immediate steps to get rid of the feeling. Any root of bitterness or malice must be dealt with right away lest it grow.

It was Jacob's privilege to honor Joseph by making him a special coat of many colors. No doubt Joseph was a very obedient son. Jacob showed favoritism to Joseph, but what was the favoritism based on? (1) Joseph was the firstborn son of Rachel, whom Jacob especially loved. (2) Joseph had good character: faith, submission, obedience to God, etc. (3) At first, Jacob was indignant over Joseph's dream, but then he "observed the saying" (Gen. 37:11), perhaps thinking that the Abrahamic promise would go through him.

Why would the other brothers listen to Reuben? They listened because he was not only the firstborn son of Leah but also the firstborn of all Jacob's children. By his delaying tactic, Reuben intended to "deliver him [Joseph] to his father again."

**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;**

The coat of many colors was a sore spot with the brothers because it was a sign of favoritism. They also did not like Joseph because of his dreams, which showed he would be greatly honored in the future. The brothers stripped Joseph of his coat, which was obnoxious to them.

Later they used the coat to deceive Jacob.

**Q:** Is there a spiritual counterpart for this coat, a parallel with Jesus?

**A:** Yes, there is a remarkable parallelism. Jesus was *stripped* naked and hung on the Cross. Crucifixion was the utmost humiliation. Jesus' garments were divided, and lots were cast for them. He was also stripped of his clothes at the time of his flogging. Then a coat, a garment of royalty, was put on him, and a crown of thorns was pressed on his head. Also, a rod was placed in his hand to simulate a king with a scepter. Thus the Jews mocked Jesus after flogging him. Then, when he was blindfolded, one took the rod, hit him on the head with it, and said, "Prophecy who struck you." After that, the "mock" robe was removed, and his own garments were put back on. The parallelism can be carried further. In the Kingdom, every knee will bow to Jesus, and Joseph later became prime minister of Egypt, directly under Pharaoh. In this case, Pharaoh pictures God, and Joseph represents Jesus.

**Gen. 37:24** And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

The brothers threw Joseph into an empty pit that had no water.

**Gen. 37:25** 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.

While Joseph was in the pit, the brothers sat down to eat bread. How calloused! Genesis 42:21, a later scene in which the brothers felt guilty in thinking back on what they had done to Joseph, gives his emotional reaction at the time. "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." The point is that the brothers heard Joseph crying to them from the pit while they were eating and ignoring him. Then, as they were still eating, they saw a company of Ishmaelites from Gilead coming with camels laden with spices, balm, and myrrh en route to Egypt.

**Gen. 37:26** And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

**Gen. 37:27** 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.

Judah also displayed some sympathy for Joseph, "Let us sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites as a slave and not kill him, for he is our brother."

**Gen. 37:28** 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.

Here again is a parallelism to Jesus. Jesus was sold by Judas for 30 pieces of silver. Joseph was sold by his brethren for 20 pieces of silver. The profit motive existed in both situations. Judah and Judas are the same name (as is Jude), one being in the Old Testament and the other in the New Testament. Joseph was sold as a slave.

Why is there a difference between 20 pieces of silver in the type and 30 pieces of silver in the antitype? Joseph was 17 years old, and under the Law, given later, a male from age 5 to 20 was redeemed for 20 shekels (Lev. 27:5). Jesus was sold correctly for a male who was 33 years old.

**Q:** Why are the terms Ishmaelites and Midianites interchanged twice in this chapter?

**A:** The men were descended from Ishmael, but they came from the country of Midian. At that time, Gilead, which was across Jordan, was part of Midian, which was a very large territory that included part of Sinai and Saudi Arabia and extended north to Gilead. The Midian of Moses' day was restricted to a smaller territory. As children were born leading up to Moses' day, the land was divided, and portions were parceled out.

Joseph was taken to Egypt. Among the tombs of Beni-hassan in Upper Egypt, one tomb, the one of Khnum-hotep (Joseph), has a drawing of Joseph's coming into Egypt. He was originally buried in Egypt, but *in faith*, he had requested that his bones be taken to Israel when the Israelites would return in the Exodus (Heb. 11:22). His bones were eventually interred in Shechem, which is called Nablus today (Gen. 50:25,26; Exod. 13:19; Josh. 24:32).

**Gen. 37:29** And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes.

Reuben returned to the pit, and when he saw that Joseph was not there, he rent his clothes. Apparently, then, Reuben was not present when the others sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites. Reuben had wanted to return Joseph to his father, but if he had remained there eating dinner with his brothers and then, when the others were returning to Jacob, absented himself to retrieve Joseph, the brothers would have been suspicious. Therefore, his plan was to leave early, *presumably* to return home to Jacob, and then return to free Joseph. He was following a plan that he thought would be successful. Hence Reuben did not know that Joseph had been sold. Here we see a good characteristic of Reuben. Some other traits were unfavorable.

**Gen. 37:30** And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?

Reuben was beside himself: "The child is not. Where shall I go?" As the firstborn, the oldest, Reuben would be held responsible by Jacob, and he had no answer. He returned to the other brothers, who had already left the pit.

**Gen. 37:31** And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood;

**Gen. 37:32** 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.

The brothers plotted a deception. They killed a goat and dipped Joseph's coat of many colors in the blood. Then they took the coat back to Jacob and lied: "We found this coat. Is it Joseph's?"

**Gen. 37:33** 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.

Jacob knew the coat was Joseph's and naturally assumed a wild beast had killed and eaten him. Here was retribution, for Jacob had deceived his father Isaac to get the blessing, and now his own sons deceived him. In both cases, the deception came through the medium of a *goat*. (Earlier Jacob was also deceived by Laban in regard to Leah and Rachel.) But note: God did not disapprove Jacob's desire for the spiritual birthright, for Esau was a worldly man not interested in spiritual things.

**Gen. 37:34** And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his

son many days.

Jacob rent his clothes in grief, put on sackcloth, and mourned for Joseph *many* days. Here we see Jacob's great love for Rachel's firstborn son, Joseph.

**Gen. 37:35** 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.

The whole family tried to comfort Jacob but to no avail. Jacob wept for Joseph. He said, "I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning." The word translated "grave" is the Hebrew *sheol*, also translated "hell" and "pit." This text is an important clue in proving what hell really is, for Jacob, a man *approved of God* and one who will have an important position in the Kingdom, said he would go down into *hell* mourning.

The fire and brimstone in Scripture in regard to hell are figurative. Other texts speak of no wisdom, knowledge, or device being in hell (the tomb). Those in the tomb are completely unaware of what is happening—their memory perishes. If they are not conscious and their memory perishes, the logical conclusion is that there can be no pain in hell (Eccl. 9:10; Psa. 6:5).

In England, to "hell" potatoes meant to cover them with earth so that they would reproduce. The term had nothing to do with fire. *Hades* (New Testament Greek) and *sheol* (Old Testament Hebrew) are equivalent, both referring to the unseen state where the dead are buried below the ground in a condition of nonentity. All go there, good and bad. Upright Job went into hell (Job 14:13; 17:13). In the future, all will be *awakened* out of the sleep of death. In 1 and 2 Kings, even the most evil kings of Israel "slept with their fathers," awaiting a future awakening and reckoning (1 Kings 14:20,31; 16:6,28; 22:40; 2 Kings 16:20). Jesus said that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will have authority in the Kingdom on earth, yet Jacob expected to go to *hell*. To avoid confusion, the translators should have translated *sheol* and *hades* consistently.

**Q:** Does the phrase "all his [Jacob's] sons and ... daughters" include daughters-in-law and/or granddaughters, since only Dinah was mentioned as a daughter?

**A:** That could be, for Dinah was the only daughter when Jacob re-entered the Promised Land. However, it is possible that Jacob had more daughters subsequently.

**Gen. 37:36** And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.

The Midianites sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and a captain of the guard, in Egypt.

**Gen. 38:1** And it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah.

Just as Dinah did earlier, Judah wandered from his home territory and subsequently got into problems. He departed from his brethren and associated with Hirah, an Adullamite.

**Gen. 38:2** And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shuah; and he took her, and went in unto her.

In that area, Judah saw the daughter of Shuah, a Canaanite, and married her.

**Gen. 38:3** And she conceived, and bare a son; and he called his name Er.

**Gen. 38:4** And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she called his name Onan.

**Gen. 38:5** And she yet again conceived, and bare a son; and called his name Shelah: and he was at Chezib, when she bare him.

Shuah's daughter bore three sons to Judah: Er, Onan, and Shelah. The English word “err,” or “error,” was possibly derived from the name Er because of his evil actions (verse 7).

**Gen. 38:6** And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar.

Judah selected a wife for Er, his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. (We find out later that she was righteous in spite of what happens.)

**Gen. 38:7** And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him.

Er was wicked in God's sight—so wicked, in fact, that God, in His providence, saw to it that Er was slain.

**Gen. 38:8** And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother.

It was the custom at this time (and later part of the Law) that if a husband died leaving his wife childless, the next brother had to marry the widow so that a child would be born to her. To preserve the lineage, the son would bear the name of the deceased. According to this custom, Judah instructed Onan to marry Tamar to “raise up seed to thy brother” Er.

**Gen. 38:9** 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.

But Onan also did wickedly. The purpose of the marriage was to raise up seed in his brother's name, but Onan disobeyed, knowing that if he had a child, the birthright would be in the name of his deceased brother. And if this was the firstborn son of Onan, that child, now bearing his brother's name, would end up in a more favorable position than any son bearing his own name.

This was *Messiah's* lineage, and because Er was not worthy, the whole matter was overruled, as we will see. It would not be appropriate for a child bearing Er's name to be in *Messiah's* lineage.

Onan spilled his seed on the ground. Today we have contraceptives, which prevent fertility in a woman, but Onan practiced the natural contraceptive method that was used for thousands of years. What displeased the Lord was not the spilling of the seed, but the refusal to give Tamar the pleasure of having a child.

According to Roman Catholic teaching, it is a sin to use contraceptives, and this prohibition is based on the sin of Onan, the spilling of his seed. What is not considered is that he was supposed to raise up a son in his brother's name.

Judah may not be an Ancient Worthy. If not, another Ancient Worthy will be appointed head of the lineage of that tribe. We should observe the good and the bad character traits of those in the Bible. Reuben wanted to spare Joseph's life and return him to his father. Later Judah made

a suggestion not to slay Joseph, but he was willing to see him sold as a slave into Egypt. Judah thought that was a way out whereby the brothers would not be guilty personally of actually slaying Joseph. Then they could fake the matter by putting blood on Joseph's garment. Reuben's attitude was far more commendable, whereas Judah was a compromiser.

**Gen. 38:10** And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also.

Onan displeased the Lord, so God saw to it that he was disposed of in some way. That left only the third son, Shelah.

**Gen. 38:11** Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter-in-law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown: for he said, Lest peradventure he die also, as his brethren did. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.

Judah told Tamar to remain a widow in her father's house until Shelah had grown up enough to marry her and raise up seed, "lest peradventure he die also, as his [two elder] brethren did." Judah was saying that there would be *no delay* once Shelah had matured. Hence he made a *double* promise to Tamar: (1) to give Shelah as her husband and (2) to do so promptly when Shelah was old enough. Judah was a patriarch, so his promise to Tamar was like an *oath*. Even in early Colonial days in this country, just shaking hands on an agreement was binding. Today a *lawyer* has to word the contract.

**Q:** Did Tamar now have to raise up a son to both Er and Onan?

**A:** That would be a legal problem. When a son was born, would it be reckoned of Er or of Onan? God solved this problem in a very ingenious way, as we will see.

**Gen. 38:12** And in process of time the daughter of Shuah Judah's wife died; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his sheepshearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

Time passed, and Judah procrastinated in his promise to Tamar. When his wife died, he went to his sheepshearers in Timnath. There he wept with his friend Hirah, the Adullamite.

**Gen. 38:13** And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold thy father-in-law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep.

**Gen. 38:14** And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife.

Tamar was told that Judah, her father-in-law, was coming. She had been wearing widow's garments all this time, having remained unmarried and childless, waiting for Shelah. Genesis 3:15 promises that the seed of woman will bruise the serpent's head. Therefore, the mothers of Israel were always hoping the Messiah would come through them. It was very meaningful for a woman not just to have a son but to hope that she might be chosen for this honor.

The Scriptures do not criticize Tamar, yet here, because of the circumstances, she decided to play the harlot to Judah. She disguised herself by putting a veil over her face and positioned herself strategically so that Judah would pass by. She took this action because "Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife."

**Gen. 38:15** When Judah saw her, he thought her to be an harlot; because she had covered her face.

Of course Judah did not know the harlot was Tamar, his daughter-in-law.

**Gen. 38:16** 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?

**Gen. 38:17** 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?

**Gen. 38:18** 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.

Judah succumbed. We begin to see a little of his character here, for he was not righteous in what he was doing. He requested to be intimate with this woman.

Tamar was clever, and rightly so. She said, “I want some token for giving my services.” Judah offered her a young goat (“a kid of the goats”—see King James margin), but she asked for a *personal pledge* until Judah could send the goat; that is, she wanted something she could later show him and say, “These items are *your* signet ring, bracelets, and staff.” Judah gave her what she asked, even though a staff was personal and custom-made. The understanding was that as soon as she received the goat, she would return Judah’s personal items. Tamar conceived when Judah went in unto her.

**Gen. 38:19** And she arose, and went away, and laid by her veil from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood.

Tamar went away, removed the veil, and again put on her widow’s garments.

**Gen. 38:20** And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman’s hand: but he found her not.

**Gen. 38:21** Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where is the harlot, that was openly by the way side? And they said, There was no harlot in this place.

**Gen. 38:22** And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said, that there was no harlot in this place.

**Gen. 38:23** And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her.

Judah sent the kid of the goats through his friend Hirah, the Adullamite. But Hirah could not find the “harlot,” and when he inquired, he was told, “There was no harlot in this place.” When he reported back, Judah said, “Let her keep the personal items of mine lest we be shamed.”

**Gen. 38:24** And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter-in-law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt.

For the next three months, Tamar was back living with her father. Then word came to Judah that Tamar had played the harlot and was pregnant. Judah’s reaction was, “Let her be burnt.” He was righteously indignant. “To be burnt” meant that the person was first slain and then the body was burned. It is true that Tamar had played the harlot—but with a purpose in mind



based upon Judah's negligence and/or failure to give what was legitimately hers.

**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.

When Tamar was confronted, she sent word to Judah, "By the man, whose these [signet ring, bracelets, and staff] are, am I with child."

**Gen. 38:26** 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.

Judah acknowledged that the items were his, and then he realized in a flash what had happened—and that he was the guiltier one for not fulfilling his promise. "She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son." By the mouth of two or three witnesses is a thing established (Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:16). Tamar had three witnesses: the signet ring, the bracelets, and the staff.

Judah was ashamed that he was responsible for Tamar's condition, and so she was not put to death. He conceded that she was the more righteous, even though she had played the harlot. The whole circumstance was predicated upon *his* failure to provide her with a husband. Was she to go childless all her life when marriage was a *family* arrangement? Should she be condemned to widowhood for the rest of her life? We know that from God's standpoint, Tamar was justified in what she had done because she is in Jesus' lineage, which traces Judah (Tamar) and Pharez (Matt. 1:3; Luke 3:33).

**Gen. 38:27** And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb.

**Gen. 38:28** 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.

**Gen. 38:29** 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.

**Gen. 38:30** And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zerah.

Tamar's children, twins, were of *Judah*, not of any of his three sons (Er, Onan, or Shelah). Er and Onan died, and Shelah was bypassed. The twins were named Pharez (or Peres) and Zerah. *Pharez* signifies "breach, division." *Peres* means "your kingdom is divided." There is a similarity here with Jacob and Esau, where the seemingly younger twin supplanted the older twin, although in the case of Pharez and Zerah, the supplanting literally happened at the time of birth. Incidentally, if any of us traced our lineage back far enough, we would find some unsavory individuals in it.

The women in Israel each hoped to have the honor of bearing Messiah. Women are very important in the lineage. Certain ones are explicitly referred to by Matthew: Tamar, Ruth the Moabitess, and Rahab the harlot. Ruth was a proselyte Jew—a Jew by *faith*. Rahab forsook her former way of life and was more honorable than the whole city, for she hid the two Israelite spies at the risk of her own life. And she had *faith* in the God who had delivered the Israelites through the Red Sea dry-shod.

It was comforting to Judah to have two sons through Tamar to replace Er and Onan. However, the sons were also a reminder of his failure. Had Tamar not played the harlot, he would not have fulfilled his promise, and she would have had permanent widowhood. God overruled the situation with the two deceased sons, for now the lineage traced back to *Judah*, who was the father of Tamar's children.

**Comment:** One lesson is how careful we should be in our words and actions (or even our failure to speak or act), for if we lead another astray into a sin, we bear some of the responsibility, just like Judah. By *his neglect*, he led Tamar into a sin, for which she was forgiven, while he bore the brunt of the guilt.

The Bible gives us the unvarnished history with the weak as well as the strong points of individuals. We can understand why God honors certain ones. For example, David sinned but was honored because he publicly confessed his sin to the whole nation in the Psalms.

**Gen. 39:1** And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither.

“Potiphar” is an Egyptian title (like Abimelech), not a personal name, and the pharaonic relationship is right in the title. The Ishmaelites/Midianites sold Joseph to Potiphar, who was an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.

**Gen. 39:2** And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

God was with Joseph in Potiphar's house, causing him to be prosperous.

**Gen. 39:3** And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand.

Recognizing that the Lord was favoring Joseph and causing all that Joseph did to prosper, Potiphar concluded that Joseph was very unusual. In associating the prosperity of having Joseph as a slave in his house with the Lord's favoring Joseph, Potiphar felt that Joseph had some sort of relationship with the Superior Being of the universe. Nevertheless, he kept Joseph as a slave—although he did honor him.

Everything connected with a Christian does not turn to gold in business matters, but just as Potiphar could fully trust Joseph, so employers can trust Christians for complete honesty in regard to money, doing an honest day's work, etc. If the employer is at all perceptive, he will recognize this quality.

**Gen. 39:4** And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

Joseph found grace in Potiphar's sight, and Potiphar made him overseer of his house, putting him in charge of all that he had. Notice, Potiphar did not have Joseph doing manual work but made him an overseer in charge of the house; that is, Joseph was a steward for Potiphar, being in charge of everything. Potiphar was relieved of all onerous tasks because he had such confidence in Joseph. At this time, Joseph was probably 20 or 21 years old and evidently very mature for his age. With everything of Potiphar's being put in Joseph's hand, the suggestion is that Joseph had administrative authority over all except Potiphar's wife (see verse 9).

**Gen. 39:5** And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and

**over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.**

From the time Joseph was made steward, God blessed Potiphar's house for Joseph's sake. The blessing was on both house and field. Apparently, Joseph was first given charge of the house. When he proved to be very beneficial in that role, Potiphar set him in charge of the field too.

**Gen. 39:6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and wellfavoured.**

Potiphar put all he had in Joseph's hand and "knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat." The situation was rather humorous. Potiphar committed all responsibility unto Joseph and was living like a retired person.

"A goodly person, and wellfavoured," Joseph was gracious in manner. The Revised Standard Version states that he was "handsome."

**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.**

In time, Potiphar's wife "cast her eyes upon Joseph" and said, "Lie with me." She was physically attracted to Joseph and apparently figured, "If everything connected with Joseph prospers, then I will prosper too from association with him." Thus she was willing to risk jeopardizing her relationship with Potiphar if her seduction of Joseph became known. Obviously, she felt her future was secure with Joseph even if her husband cast her off.

**Gen. 39:8 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;**

**Gen. 39:9 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?**

Joseph refused and said, "My master has put me in charge of everything in his house and kept nothing from me except you. How, then, could I do such a great wickedness against him and sin against God?" Joseph tried to reason with her. To listen to her would be a breach in the confidence Potiphar had manifested in him by giving him all the authority. Thus Joseph tried to show the impropriety of heeding her suggestion even from a natural standpoint. Then he mentioned the religious aspect of conscience.

**Comment:** To say that adultery would be a sin against God is the same principle in regard to a Christian who commits a grievous sin. It is not just an individual matter but a sin against the Church and a sin against God.

**Comment:** It is far-fetched to say that one can be forgiven 490 times (70 x 7) no matter how grievous the sin. Joseph's noble character made him see that such a sin would be against God.

"God" here is *Elohim*, that is, not Jehovah but a title that should have appealed to her as an Egyptian because "God" was more or less international, whereas Jehovah was Jewish in its connotation. In other words, they would both be sinning against their respective God.

**Gen. 39:10 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 temptation continued. “Day by day” she spoke to Joseph, trying to seduce him, but he *steadfastly* resisted the *persistent* trial. It got to the point where he would not even be in the same room or area of the house with her, and then not in the house at all if she was there.

**Comment:** The Vow reminds us to be on guard at all times. We are to avoid not just the *sin* but even a situation that *might* cause problems and temptation because it could lead to sin.

**Reply:** We are to make straight paths for our feet.

**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.

One day when Joseph entered the house to perform a business function, none of the other men of the house were there. This fact leaves open the possibility that when Potiphar’s wife tried day by day to make advances to Joseph, the servants noticed.

**Gen. 39:12** 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.

This time she grabbed Joseph’s garment to hold him there and entice him. He fled, leaving his garment in her hand. This was a *severe* experience for Joseph, but he fled for his spiritual life, as it were. A scorned, rejected woman can be violent and seek revenge. As the saying goes, “There is no fury like a woman’s scorn.”

Although the servants knew Joseph’s character and knew of her repeated attempts to seduce him, they also knew where their financial security lay. Hence they did not stand up for *principle* (very few do) and tell Potiphar later. They did not want imprisonment or worse.

**Gen. 39:13** And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth,

**Gen. 39:14** 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:

**Gen. 39:15** 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.

Potiphar’s wife knew what she wanted and was getting more and more desperate. When she was rejected, therefore, she accused Joseph. She called the menservants of the house and said, “Potiphar has brought a Hebrew unto us to mock us. He came in to lie with me, but I cried out and he fled, leaving his garment behind.” In other words, *after* Joseph fled, she deviously contrived the lie that she had cried out *before* he fled.

Although the servants would not know the particulars, they did know the character of both Joseph and this woman. After hearing the story, they had to decide whether or not to back her up. Probably 99.9 percent of people would not risk telling the truth in such a situation. Besides, the garment was circumstantial evidence. Hence there could have been doubt that perhaps Joseph had succumbed.

**Comment:** The other servants may have been jealous of Joseph, a Hebrew—and a young one at that—being given so much authority. Potiphar’s wife could have played on their jealousy by saying, “He brought in a *Hebrew* to mock us.”

**Comment:** If the woman represents someone in a denomination and Joseph pictures a true Christian, she tried to force her wrong beliefs on him. He refused. Meanwhile, the servants would represent others in the denomination who were suspicious of this nondenominational outside person. They would not agree with the teaching of their own denomination but would be afraid to speak out lest they be excommunicated. They would consider the risk too great.

**Gen. 39:16** And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home.

Potiphar's wife kept Joseph's garment to show Potiphar when he came home.

**Gen. 39:17** 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:

**Gen. 39:18** And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

She repeated the falsehood to her husband, accusing Joseph and using the garment as circumstantial evidence.

**Gen. 39:19** 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.

**Gen. 39:20** 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.

Potiphar was angry at Joseph and reacted emotionally by putting him in prison, which was a place where the king's prisoners were bound. The prison placement was providential because of the butler's and the baker's dreams subsequently, for both were servants of the king.

Potiphar realized that if he backed up Joseph, he would lose his wife, and since she supposedly had the servants on her side, he had shame to consider. It was easier for him to get rid of Joseph. And he might have thought he had given Joseph too much authority.

**Comment:** This was all in God's providence. It looked as if Joseph was going lower and lower, but eventually he was uplifted to Pharaoh's house.

**Comment:** All things work out for good to those who love the Lord (Rom. 8:28).

**Reply:** What seemed to be jeopardizing Joseph's career at a time when a pinnacle of confidence had been placed in him turned out well. He ended up elevated to the right hand of the throne.

**Comment:** This incident is a reminder of Psalm 23:4, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me."

**Q:** Is there any significance to the fact that twice Joseph's garments were a problem? The first occasion was when his coat of many colors was taken by his jealous brothers and dipped in blood, and the second time was when Potiphar's wife grabbed his garment?

**A:** There may be something there that we do not perceive at the moment.

**Comment:** When Joseph was exalted by Pharaoh, he was rewarded with a garment of fine linen.

**Comment:** After Joseph was exalted, Potiphar would have realized it was providential for a

Hebrew to be so honored.

**Reply:** Yes, and Potiphar knew that his own house had prospered while Joseph was there, so when Joseph was exalted, Potiphar realized that Joseph had been telling the truth.

**Comment:** Potiphar's prosperity would have ceased when Joseph was put out of the household. And then to observe Joseph's great elevation would wake him up.

Potiphar put Joseph in the prison where the king's prisoners were bound. Psalm 105:18 gives further information: "Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron." Hence being "bound" means that Joseph was bound with iron fetters. His feet were in chains but probably not his hands, or he could not have performed other duties. Also, the antitype pertains to the *feet* members, the Joseph class, the John the Baptist class, who will be put in prison. Depending on the picture, Joseph can represent Jesus alone, The Christ, the Church, or the *feet* members.

**Comment:** It was logical (and providential) for Joseph to be put in the king's prison because Potiphar was an "officer of Pharaoh" (Gen. 39:1).

**Gen. 39:21** But the LORD was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

**Gen. 39:22** And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.

God was with Joseph, showing him mercy and giving him favor in the sight of the prison keeper. Of course it took time for Joseph to be so recognized by the keeper, probably several years. Seeing that Joseph was unusual, the keeper placed confidence in him similar to what Potiphar had done earlier. All prisoners were committed into the custody of Joseph, who was himself a *prisoner* and a slave or servant. What an unusual situation!

**Gen. 39:23** The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.

In what way would the prison keeper have been made aware of Joseph's character? (1) Joseph probably had a way with unruly men, being able to calm them and get them to work. Being well mannered, he was able to communicate orders in a way that made service seem like a privilege. (2) No doubt he had a sense of justice with the other prisoners, plus common-sense reasoning, with an approach something like the following: "Do you want to be put in isolation? Calm down." (3) The keeper of the prison may have prospered in that the prisoners had to do certain work (like a "chain gang"), and Joseph got notably increased production because of his attitude. (4) Joseph probably said he was in prison because of a false accusation, yet he submitted to the experience, waiting on the Lord. He was young and handsome but not hardened and embittered by the experience. (5) Although Joseph's feet hurt him, he did not complain. That would have been observed. (6) His previous experience with Potiphar helped him organize the men and get them to be productive.

**Comment:** In all of his experiences, Joseph never lost sight of the fact that he was subservient to his master: Potiphar, the prison keeper, and Pharaoh. He was loyal even in their absence.

Joseph was only 17 years old when he was sold into slavery. We do not know how long he served Potiphar or how long he was in prison, but at age 30, he was elevated by Pharaoh (Gen. 37:2; 41:46). That is a difference of 13 years. The prison term was probably longer than the time in Potiphar's house, for it would have taken time for the other prisoners to recognize Joseph in the sense of admiration and for the keeper to see that he was prospering through Joseph. Also,

Joseph's patience with his hurting feet became evident.

**Comment:** When one is 17 years old, 13 years is a *long* time, yet Joseph remained faithful, always giving God the glory. His attitude showed his character.

Joseph was 17 when he was taken to Egypt as a slave. He was in Potiphar's house perhaps five years at most. Then he was in prison about eight years, the last two years being after he had interpreted the butler's and the baker's dreams (Gen. 41:1). At age 30, he was made second in command to Pharaoh.

**Comment:** There was a similarity between Joseph's being in Potiphar's house and his being in prison; in both cases, he had full authority or control.

**Reply:** Joseph's experience was somewhat similar to that of Daniel. Both rose to great prominence. Daniel was promoted and had authority under three successive rulers. Both individuals were very talented.

**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.

**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.

It was providential that the chief butler and the chief baker were imprisoned with Joseph at this time. The butler's function was to taste the king's food and wine (as cupbearer) to prevent poisoning.

"Pharaoh was wroth," and having the power of life and death, as was characteristic of ruling monarchs at that time, he sent the chief baker and the chief butler to the dungeon. The following are other examples in Scripture of absolute power of the king:

1. Queen Esther fasted before going in to see the king, her *husband*, with a request. If the king showed disfavor by not holding the scepter the proper way, she could lose her life.
2. Nehemiah's sad countenance could have been the cause of his being put to death.
3. Queen Vashti was deposed for lack of respect for the king, her husband.

What was the age of Pharaoh at this time? We know he was young because Joseph, at age 30, was a "father" to him. In Genesis 45:8, Joseph said that he had been made "a *father* to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."

**Gen. 40:3** And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound.

Pharaoh put the butler and the baker in prison "in the house of the captain of the guard" where Joseph was imprisoned. The "captain of the guard" was Potiphar. Hence the prison was on Potiphar's property (compare Gen. 39:1,20). In Hebrew, "captain of the guard" means "chief of the executioners."

**Gen. 40:4** And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in ward.

Potiphar charged Joseph with the responsibility of serving the chief butler and the chief baker in prison. Being *Pharaoh's* prisoners, they were of a higher rank than Joseph.

The keeper of the prison, who was different from the captain of the guard, had committed all

the prisoners into Joseph's hand (Gen. 39:22). Although the keeper of the prison had put Joseph in charge, Potiphar, as captain of the guard, had more power and authority and thus could make Joseph subordinate to the chief butler and the chief baker, two special prisoners of very high rank. Of course Joseph would have retained his charge over the other prisoners. As captain of the guard, Potiphar was aware of Joseph's progress and elevation in prison by the keeper. Joseph is a picture of Jesus, who was "Lord" but also a "servant."

The statement "they [the butler and the baker] continued a season in ward" shows that there was a passage of time before their dreams.

**Gen. 40:5** And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison.

Both the butler and the baker "dreamed a dream"; that is, they had *separate* dreams on the *same* night with *different* interpretations. Each man had a dream that comported with his destiny, one favorable, one unfavorable.

**Gen. 40:6** And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad.

In the morning, Joseph noticed that their faces looked sad and troubled.

**Gen. 40:7** And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly today?

Joseph asked the butler and the baker why they looked so sad. Notice that they were in the "ward of his [Joseph's] lord's [master's—RSV] house"; that is, they were in *Potiphar's* house (compare Gen. 39:2).

**Gen. 40:8** And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.

The chief butler and baker were sad because there was no one to interpret their dreams. Joseph responded, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams." Joseph's sensitivity and caring for others were manifested in his observation that the two had sad countenances and then in his inquiring why.

The dreams seemed very significant to the chief butler and baker. Hence they were concerned that no interpreter was available. They considered the dreams to be an omen. Had they been free from prison, they probably would have consulted one of the magi.

The question "Do not interpretations belong to God?" gave *God* the glory *in advance*. Joseph was called a "dreamer," but he also interpreted dreams (Gen. 37:19). He gave credit to God in advance so that even if the interpretation was found to be self-evident, that glory would still stand. (For example, the meaning of Joseph's own dream about the sun and moon genuflecting before him was obvious to his family.) Daniel similarly gave God the glory (Dan. 2:28).

**Gen. 40:9** And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine was before me;

**Gen. 40:10** And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes:



**Gen. 40:11** And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

The chief butler told his dream. A vine had three branches that budded, and blossoms shot forth and produced ripe grapes. Pharaoh's cup was in the butler's hand, so the butler took the grapes and pressed them into the cup and gave the cup to Pharaoh.

**Gen. 40:12** And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days:

**Gen. 40:13** Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.

Joseph's interpretation that the three branches were three days would not have been self-evident knowledge to the magi. The account gives only a synopsis of the dream. The chief butler may have given Joseph more details such as, "The branches developed in succession." Both a *progression* of development (buds, blossoms, grapes, wine into Pharaoh's cup) and *time* (one, two, three branches) are suggested. The point of the dream was that the chief butler would be reinstated to his previous position in three days. The chief baker was listening to this interpretation (verse 16).

**Gen. 40:14** But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house:

**Gen. 40:15** For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

Joseph asked the chief butler to remember him and to kindly mention his name to Pharaoh. Joseph also asked the butler to request his release from prison and told of his innocence.

**Gen. 40:16** When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head:

**Gen. 40:17** And in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.

The chief baker's dream was that he had three white baskets on his head. In the top basket were all kinds of baked goods and dainties for Pharaoh. The birds ate of the baked goodies in the top basket.

**Gen. 40:18** And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days:

**Gen. 40:19** Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

There was a similarity between the two dreams: three branches versus three baskets. Only the top basket was filled with bread and royal dainties, however. The fact that the bottom two baskets were empty suggested an unfavorable destiny. The three tiered baskets (one, two, three) also suggested time—a representation of three days.

The top basket got depleted of the dainties that were for the king; that is, there was nothing left

to give to Pharaoh. A void, an emptiness, a lack of fulfillment or purpose, was thus shown. Hence the chief baker's destiny was unfavorable: the death sentence.

In three days, Pharaoh would hang the chief baker, and birds would eat his flesh. Dainty meats were associated with the baker's flesh—the birds ate both. The baker would be lifted out of the prison by his neck and hung on a tree.

Both the butler's and the baker's heads were lifted up: one to a favorable destiny and the other to an unfavorable destiny. "He [Jesus] shall drink of the brook [of experiences] in the way: therefore shall he [God] lift up [in death and resurrection] the head [Jesus]" (Psa. 110:7). In his earthly ministry, Jesus did whatever God's will was. Eventually Jesus' obedience led to the Cross, where God permitted him to be lifted up in death, but subsequently Jesus was elevated out of death and to the divine nature. Out of apparent defeat, therefore, came the victory.

**Gen. 40:20** And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants.

Pharaoh lifted up both heads but to two different destinies.

**Gen. 40:21** And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand:

**Gen. 40:22** But he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them.

The butler was restored and the baker hanged. Both were called out of prison, one for restoration and the other for execution. Hence the baker was lifted up out of prison and then hanged; birds ate his flesh.

**Gen. 40:23** Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.

But the chief butler forgot Joseph and did not mention his name to Pharaoh. Incidentally, in interpreting the Bible, *time* features can be shown by objects, animals, money weights, cows, branches, baskets, ears of corn, etc.

**Gen. 41:1** And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river.

*Two full years* elapsed from the time Joseph interpreted the butler's and the baker's dreams to the time he was summoned by Pharaoh. Joseph had asked the butler to remember him when he was restored to favor three days later, but the butler forgot. These two years would have been harder to wait than all the previous years because of Joseph's anticipation, expectation, and hope that he would be remembered and subsequently released. The two years gave Joseph tremendous character development and discipline because he was rightly exercised. *Two full years* meant that it was again Pharaoh's birthday (see Gen. 40:20).

**Gen. 41:2** And, behold, there came up out of the river seven wellfavoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow.

**Gen. 41:3** And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river.

**Gen. 41:4** And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven wellfavoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.

**Gen. 41:5** And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good.

**Gen. 41:6** And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them.

**Gen. 41:7** And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.

Pharaoh had two dreams: (1) One dream pertained to seven fat-fleshed cows (“kine”) and seven lean cows that came up out of the (Nile) river. (2) In the other dream were seven full ears of wheat, or grain (“corn”), and seven withered ears.

In Pharaoh’s dreams, the seven cows and seven ears represented seven *years*. In the previous chapter, three branches and three baskets represented three *days*. (Note: *Years* are the usual interpretation of symbolisms, not days.)

Imagine having these dreams! In the first dream, seven *lean* cows ate up seven *fat* cows, yet remained *skinny*. Also, the dream was contrary to nature, for cows are not carnivorous. In the second dream, seven ears of *withered* corn ate up seven ears of *full* corn, yet remained *withered*. Again the dream was startling. Back there dreams were very significant, just as they were in the early Church.

The chief butler and the chief baker each had a dream the *same* night. Pharaoh had his two dreams the *same* night.

**Gen. 41:8** And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.

The next morning Pharaoh was troubled about the dreams. He wanted to know their meaning, so he sent for all the wise men and magicians of Egypt. When Pharaoh related the dreams, none of them could interpret; that is, they may have tried to give an interpretation, but their explanations did not ring true.

We are reminded of Daniel, who was also a Hebrew. King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream and was troubled because he did not know its meaning (Daniel chapter 2). He was going to put all the magicians of Babylon to death because they could not tell his dream and interpret it. Then he summoned Daniel, who prayed, as did the three Hebrew children with him. Daniel both related and interpreted the dream of the great image with the head of gold, etc. A similarity in the two situations was that both Daniel and Joseph interpreted the *ruler’s* dream *after* the magicians and wise men could not do so.

Dreams were important back there, for it was one way the truth about God got noised around. Today we have a written Bible, and we walk by *faith*, not by sight.

**Gen. 41:9** Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day:

At this point, the butler remembered Joseph in prison and his ability to interpret dreams. The butler said, “I do remember my faults [plural] this day.” In other words, he had not remembered the request to mention Joseph to Pharaoh. Also, there apparently was a justifiable reason for Pharaoh’s earlier anger with the chief butler and for subsequently jailing him.

**Gen. 41:10** Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker:

**Gen. 41:11** And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.

**Gen. 41:12** And there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret.

**Gen. 41:13** And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

**Gen. 41:14** 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.

**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.

**Gen. 41:16** And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

Once Pharaoh gave the order, Joseph was *hastily* brought out of prison. In fact, Potiphar himself may have been involved in calling Joseph. The fact that Joseph shaved and changed his clothes before going to Pharaoh shows that despite his favored position in prison, he did not wear nice attire or get to shave.

Joseph's reply to Pharaoh, "God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace," reminds us of Daniel's reply to King Nebuchadnezzar and of Joseph's earlier reply to the butler and the baker; that is, they always gave *God* the credit for the dream interpretations. At this point, Joseph had not heard the dream and hence did not know if the interpretation would be favorable or unfavorable for Pharaoh. Therefore, by saying that God would give Pharaoh "an answer of peace," Joseph simply meant that Pharaoh would get an answer and that his mind would no longer be troubled by not knowing what he was dealing with.

**Gen. 41:17** And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river:

**Gen. 41:18** And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fatfleshed and wellfavoured; and they fed in a meadow:

**Gen. 41:19** And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and leanfleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness:

**Gen. 41:20** And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine:

**Gen. 41:21** And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke.

**Gen. 41:22** And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good:

**Gen. 41:23** And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them:

**Gen. 41:24** And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it to me.

The dreams were repeated. The repetition is valuable, for the following reasons: (1) It calls attention to the details. (2) Out of the mouth of two or three witnesses, a thing is established. (3) A second mention means the occurrence is significant. (4) Carefully comparing repetition often rewards one with additional details.

Pharaoh was *younger* than Joseph. Great responsibility already rested upon his shoulders at a young age—and then to have the puzzling dreams was very upsetting.

**Gen. 41:25** And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shown Pharaoh what he is about to do.

**Gen. 41:26** The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one.

**Gen. 41:27** And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine.

**Gen. 41:28** This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do he showeth unto Pharaoh.

**Gen. 41:29** Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt:

**Gen. 41:30** And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land;

**Gen. 41:31** And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous.

**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.

The seven cows represented seven years of plenty or famine depending on their condition. Joseph gave a methodical interpretation based on the common denominators of seven good cows and seven good ears followed by seven bad cows and seven bad ears, respectively. Notice that he said twice, “The dream of Pharaoh is one”; that is, the two dreams had the *same* meaning. Each dream had two parts, and the two parts were one.

Imagine being the young Pharaoh and hearing that there would be seven years of plenty followed by seven years of severe famine! Joseph’s words to the effect “God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do” must have touched Pharaoh—and comforted him. Not only was the riddle solved, but God was favoring Pharaoh with the interpretation. Of course the responsibility lay with Pharaoh to act upon the advice.

“The dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice.” In other words, the repetition was intended to impress the reality of what would happen: seven good years/seven full years and seven bad years/seven lean years. There is a very important principle here: “By the mouth of two or three witnesses is a thing established” (Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Num. 35:30). This is a pronounced principle in the Old Testament.

**Gen. 41:33** Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the

land of Egypt.

**Gen. 41:34** 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.

**Gen. 41:35** 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.

**Gen. 41:36** 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.

Joseph advised Pharaoh to put a wise and discreet man in charge of the land of Egypt. The man would appoint overseers who would gather and store 20 percent of the wheat in granaries in cities during each of the seven plenteous years. Then, during the seven years of famine, the people would eat the stored grain. To store up one fifth of the grain each year was a wise plan.

**Q:** When the 20 percent was saved each year, did the Egyptians eat the previous year's 20 percent and then save 40 percent the next year, etc.? Or did they actually eat 7- to 14-year-old grain by the end of the famine?

**A:** The former procedure was followed so that during the famine, the people ate relatively recently stored grain.

**Comment:** That was quite an administrative feat for Joseph in regard to the *whole* land and trying to save the most recent grain and eating the older grain even during the seven plenteous years.

**Gen. 41:37** And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

**Gen. 41:38** And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the spirit of God is?

**Gen. 41:39** And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shown thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art:

The younger Pharaoh said to the young Joseph, "You shall be the man in charge. Since God has shown you these things, no one could be wiser or more discreet. Where could we find another such man in whom is the spirit of God?"

**Gen. 41:40** Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

Joseph was 17 years old when taken as a slave to Egypt. He was 30 when Pharaoh elevated him to the No. 2 position in Egypt. Hence there was a 13-year gap. Potiphar, as captain of the guard in charge of the prison, would know all of these happenings in regard to Joseph. With Joseph's elevation, "*only in the throne*" was Pharaoh greater.

**Comment:** The crops must have been bountiful during the seven good years in order for the annually stored 20 percent to feed not only the Egyptians but also those who came from other lands to buy food (for example, Joseph's family from Israel).

**Reply:** Also, since the Egyptian people knew why grain was being stored in the cities, the farmers probably stored their own grain in the country.

**Comment:** Joseph must have had a great influence over Pharaoh, starting with the dream interpretations, which showed a connection with a higher power. And the interpretations did come to pass. The two individuals would have had a close relationship for Joseph to be a “father” to Pharaoh (Gen. 45:8). Apparently, Pharaoh looked to Joseph for counsel and wisdom.

**Gen. 41:41** And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

**Gen. 41:42** And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph’s hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck;

**Gen. 41:43** And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.

**Gen. 41:44** 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.

Joseph was given *great* authority, as shown by (1) Pharaoh’s ring, (2) clothes of fine linen or silk, and (3) a gold chain for his neck. Moreover, Joseph rode in the second chariot, and all of the people had to bow the knee before him. (Again we are reminded of Daniel.) As the acting prime minister, Joseph was more conspicuous before the public than Pharaoh.

In antitype, Joseph’s relationship to Pharaoh pictures Jesus’ relationship to the Father. Especially during the next age, when all judgment is given over to the Son, Jesus will be the main instrument of the Father in administering the Kingdom. Joseph was a double type, sometimes picturing Jesus alone and at other times The Christ. Just as Joseph was second in authority to Pharaoh, so Jesus is second in authority to the Father.

**Gen. 41:45** And Pharaoh called Joseph’s name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

Pharaoh called Joseph by the Egyptian name Zaphnath-paaneah, which means “savior of the world” or “the man to whom secrets are revealed.” The latter name is a reminder of Jesus’ getting the scroll in Revelation 5:6,7, enabling him to look upon God’s plan in detail.

There are a number of similarities between Joseph and Jesus. Among them are the following: In the Kingdom, all will have to “bow the knee” to Jesus, as they bowed the knee to Joseph. Joseph and Jesus were both rejected by their brethren with later reconciliation. Joseph and Jesus both get a wife out of the world (Egypt).

**Gen. 41:46** And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

Like Jesus when he entered the service of the Father at his baptism, Joseph was 30 years old when he began to serve Pharaoh in the high capacity as second in command, and he “went throughout all the land of Egypt,” which was a united empire at the time (that is, it was not divided into northern and southern kingdoms). Egypt pictures the world of mankind, and both Joseph and Jesus entered Egypt.

**Gen. 41:47** And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls.

The grain grew abundantly in the seven plenteous years.

**Gen. 41:48** And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.

One fifth of all grain grown during the seven plenteous years was stored, and this amount was one fifth of an *abundant* crop (Gen. 41:34). Much grain had to be stored because not only Jacob but also people from “all countries” came to buy grain in the seven years of famine (Gen. 41:57). It is likely that *double* the amount of grain was grown during the seven plenteous years.

Incidentally, here is another case in Scripture where “all” means “some.” Joseph “gathered up *all* [one fifth of] the food of the seven years.” The beginning of Young’s *Analytical Concordance*, Nos. 29 and 54 under the section “Hints and Helps to Bible Interpretation,” lists many Scriptures where “all” does not literally mean “all.”

**Gen. 41:49** And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.

Joseph gathered the grain and “numbered” it until there was so much that he stopped the numbering. He was organized and an excellent administrator, as proven by his authority under Potiphar and then in prison. Here, too, he was methodical, and he watched carefully the amount of grain collected. But God blessed the increase so much during the seven plenteous years that Joseph ceased to count. There was an *overwhelming* surplus. We are reminded of Malachi 3:10, “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

**Gen. 41:50** And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him.

Two sons were born to Joseph in Egypt before the famine started. Joseph’s wife, Asenath, was Egyptian. Jesus likewise takes a bride out of the world. Ruth, the Moabitess, represents primarily the *Gentile* Church, and so does Asenath, the *Egyptian*. Being Midianitish, Zipporah was also foreign.

“Poti-pherah” was a title, just as “Potiphar” was a different title; neither was a personal name. “Poti-pherah” was related to sun worship, which began shortly after the building of the Second Pyramid, and the Book of the Dead came a little later. These existed from the Sixth Dynasty on. As a side note, the Egyptians were disdainful of the Hebrews because the Hebrews raised cattle and were nomads back there.

**Gen. 41:51** And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father’s house.

**Gen. 41:52** And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

The name of Joseph’s firstborn, Manasseh, means “forgetting.” The name of his second-born, Ephraim, means “fruitful.” These two names, therefore, were connected with *Joseph’s* experiences. The other names on the breastplate, which were names of the tribes of Israel, were based on the *mothers’* experiences.

Joseph’s names for his sons are a wonderful insight into his character. Regarding Manasseh,



“God ... hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father’s house.” Regarding Ephraim, “God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.” Joseph was counting his blessings. His years in prison must have seemed very long, but he could put all that in perspective and thank the Lord.

Joseph forgot “all ... [his] father’s house” in the sense of now having his own family and house. (We know that he did not literally forget his family because he wept over them later.) The thought is that he was now comforted, for being alone in a foreign country, he could have felt like a fish out of water. And he realized that this experience was of the Lord—the fact that Pharaoh had elevated him to the No. 2 position and had given him a gold chain, fine clothes, etc., and even a wife.

**Gen. 41:53** And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended.

**Gen. 41:54** And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

Now started the seven years of famine, which was “in all [surrounding] lands.” Only Egypt had bread. The famine was extensive, and the other lands became dependent upon Egypt for survival.

It is hard to harmonize Egyptian history from a secular standpoint. One reason is that some of the Pharaohs had double names. Another problem is that monuments and records may pinpoint an event in the reign of a Pharaoh, king, etc., but not give the length of his reign. Also, there were often *contemporaneous* kings, and secular history interprets them as *successive*.

**Gen. 41:55** And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.

The Egyptians cried to Pharaoh for food. His reply was, “Go to Joseph, and what he says, do.” What authority Pharaoh gave Joseph! He thought, “Joseph has done such a good job that I will let him continue to be in charge.”

Pharaoh could have looked very good by taking the credit at this point. “I have stored the grain, and now I will dispense it.” Instead he honored Joseph, which fits the antitype. God has committed all judgment to the Son. Pharaoh got credit in that *he* appointed Joseph to do the work, and then Joseph performed successfully. Thus both Pharaoh and Joseph got credit, just as the Heavenly Father and His Son will both receive honor.

**Gen. 41:56** And the famine was over all the face of the earth: and Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.

**Gen. 41:57** And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

Grain from surrounding farmlands was stored in the cities. In other words, the grain was stored in the nearest city. The procedure was very efficient and methodical. Grain had been collected in the name of Pharaoh, and now it was sold back to them. Joseph used wisdom in having the people *buy* the grain. That way they did not waste the grain or take more than their share. Also, with the people buying just what they *needed*, the grain went further. Joseph’s method shows that the “gravy train” is not wise. Of course Pharaoh was enriched considerably from the sale of the grain.

The great Time of Trouble will be a time of trouble such as never was. In fact, all flesh would be

destroyed if divine power did not stop it (Matt. 24:21,22). Worldwide calamities have occurred in the past, but the future trouble will exceed them. Two examples follow:

1. The black plague terrorized China, Europe, and England—the whole *known* world. Half of the population of many nations died.
2. The Flood in Noah's day destroyed all but eight souls. The trouble that preceded the Flood was *worldwide* when the fallen angels were terrorizing the children of Adam. Brutality was rampant, but God protected Noah, who was building the Ark. And perhaps the fallen angels left Noah alone because they found him humorous. After all, it had never even rained on humanity up to that time, and Noah was a laughingstock.

**Q:** Will the great Time of Trouble be greater in intensity or just equivalent to past happenings but worldwide?

**A:** The trouble will be *intense* as well as worldwide. And there will be *mass* materializations by the fallen angels—a subject not usually treated by Bible Students. This future inundation of fallen angels will help raise the temperature.

Because of Joseph's help for the land of Egypt, he and the Hebrews were regarded favorably, including Jacob. (Joseph was 110 years old when he died and just 30 years old when he became governor—an 80-year difference.) When Jacob died, the Egyptians mourned, and many of them accompanied Joseph and others back to Israel to bury Jacob there (Gen. 50:3,7,11).

**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?**

**Gen. 42:2** 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.

**Gen. 42:3** And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.

**Gen. 42:4** But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him.

Jacob told ten of his sons to go to Egypt to buy grain. He kept Benjamin at home "lest peradventure mischief befall him."

**Gen. 42:5** And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

**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.

When Jacob's sons got to Egypt where Joseph was governor, they "bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth." Here was a partial fulfillment of Joseph's dreams more than 20 years earlier in regard to the sun, moon, and stars and the shocks of wheat bowing down to him.

Joseph *personally* supervised all of the Egyptians as well as the foreigners who came to Egypt to buy grain. Since *representatives* of families and communities would come, the numbers were not as great as might at first be supposed. When they came before Joseph, they probably had to wait in line to see him.

**Gen. 42:7** 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.

Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not know him. In addition to wearing Egyptian clothing and being at least 20 years older than when they had last seen him, Joseph spoke to them through an interpreter (verse 23), for he spoke Egyptian.

Joseph's wisdom and self-restraint are notable and commendable. Most people in his place would have immediately identified themselves. Instead Joseph let at least a couple of years go by, and his method of dealing with his brothers was good for their character. He had a strategic purpose for withholding his identity. Also, since Joseph is a type of Jesus, it was appropriate for him to remain unrecognized for a time. For Jesus to deal with individuals, certain required steps must first be taken. Joseph's brothers had sinned against him by selling him into slavery. Now he restrained his natural inclination to reveal his identity immediately, for he had several purposes in mind. And there are reasons in the antitype too.

**Comment:** Since Joseph knew from interpreting Pharaoh's dreams that the famine would last seven years, he could delay revealing his identity to his brothers because he knew they would have to return to Egypt a second time for grain.

**Gen. 42:8** And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.

**Gen. 42:9** 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.

**Gen. 42:10** And they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come.

**Gen. 42:11** We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies.

**Gen. 42:12** And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

**Gen. 42:13** And they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not.

**Gen. 42:14** And Joseph said unto them, That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies:

Joseph remembered his two earlier dreams in regard to his family's bowing down to him. He mentioned three times that the brothers were spies: verses 9, 12, and 14. When he questioned their truthfulness, they answered, "We are ten sons out of 12. One is not and the youngest is home with our father." Joseph was judiciously trying to extract information about Jacob and Benjamin.

Joseph accused them of coming to see the "nakedness" of the land. The Revised Standard Version says they wanted to see the "weakness" (the defenselessness) of the land. By coming ostensibly for grain, they could have been spies to see how well fortified Egypt was.

**Gen. 42:15** Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither.

**Gen. 42:16** Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies.

**Gen. 42:17** And he put them all together into ward three days.

**Gen. 42:18** And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live; for I fear God:

**Gen. 42:19** If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses:

**Gen. 42:20** But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so.

First, Joseph said, “Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you: or else *by the life of Pharaoh* surely ye are spies.” This command would have frightened the brothers.

Joseph put his ten brothers in prison for three days. The imprisonment made the brothers feel that they were in real trouble, and of course they did not know how long the imprisonment would last. For all they knew, they were there for the rest of their lives. The three days gave them a feeling of what Joseph had gone through in the pit at their expense. The three days also gave them time to think about their mistreatment of Joseph.

On the third day, Joseph released nine of the brothers but said, “I will keep one of you as a hostage in prison.” The other nine were allowed to go home with grain for the family’s needs. However, they were to bring their youngest brother back to verify their words. “And they did so” was a historical addendum, which meant, “That is what happened [eventually].”

The conversation was very interesting. Joseph spoke harshly and used an interpreter, so the interpreter had to transmit the message in a fragmented manner, using the proper inflections. “*If ye be true men...*” Joseph was rubbing this point in because his brothers had not been true in some things in the past. In other words, he was saying, “*If ye be honest men, upright...*” Joseph’s words bothered the brothers because they knew what they had done to Joseph.

**Gen. 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.

**Gen. 42:22** 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.

**Gen. 42:23** And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter.

**Gen. 42:24** And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

The ten remembered what they had done to Joseph. Even though they did not know Joseph was the governor, the way he interrogated them through the interpreter made them feel they were getting retribution for having sold him into slavery.

Joseph seized Simeon as the one to be kept in prison while the other brothers took grain home. The selection of Simeon indicates that he may have been the instigator in mistreating Joseph. At least Reuben and Judah had not wanted to kill Joseph.

For more than 20 years, the brothers had lived with the knowledge of their crime. They had

seen their father Jacob grieve during all this time over Joseph's supposed death. Reuben, especially, seems to have sorrowed and now saw the retribution aspect.

Joseph definitely had a strategy—right down to the time of Jacob's arrival in Egypt. He was very shrewd to hide his identity. For one thing, it brought his brothers to a repentant condition. The three days seemed to bring a climax. The anxiety of not knowing their fate called to mind Joseph's not knowing his fate when they had put him in the pit. But now other things had to be done.

Simeon was the second-born of Leah. Reuben was the firstborn, but he had shown some mercy. Therefore, Simeon, the next oldest brother, bore a lot of responsibility. Also, there may be a symbolic reason for Simeon's being chosen, for he is absent in the 12-tribe prophetic listing of Deuteronomy 33:6-25.

The brothers had the discussion in Hebrew, and Joseph heard all their words. Seeing that they were conscience-stricken softened Joseph—so much so, in fact, that he turned from them and wept. (He probably went into another room to weep and then returned when his emotions were under control.)

**Gen. 42:25** Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them.

**Gen. 42:26** And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence.

**Gen. 42:27** And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's mouth.

**Gen. 42:28** And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?

Now the brothers were even more conscience-stricken. Money was put in every sack, although at first, only one of them discovered it as he went to feed his animal. The brothers were greatly alarmed. They had gladly taken money for Joseph. Now they were getting it back under a peculiar situation, and they did not want it. They thought that God was against them—they saw His hand of *retribution*. Not only had they been accused of being spies, which was a serious crime, but now they were afraid of being accused as thieves as well.

The brothers were at a place of no return. If they went back to Joseph to explain about the money, they had a problem, for Joseph had said he would not see them again unless they brought Benjamin. It was dangerous to go back, so they were forced to continue on to Jacob. They could even have felt that they were being set up and that if they returned to Egypt, they would be apprehended. All of this was calculated to prick their consciences. Incidentally, the other brothers did not find their money until they had returned home (verse 35).

**Gen. 42:29** And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them; saying,

**Gen. 42:30** The man, who is the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country.

**Gen. 42:31** And we said unto him, We are true men; we are no spies:

**Gen. 42:32** We be twelve brethren, sons of our father; one is not, and the youngest is this

day with our father in the land of Canaan.

**Gen. 42:33** And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye are true men; leave one of your brethren here with me, and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone:

**Gen. 42:34** And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffic in the land.

The brothers reported events to Jacob even before unloading their animals. They were trying to prepare Jacob as to why Simeon was not with them. Joseph had said, “If you bring Benjamin back, you can traffic in the land. There will be no more suspicion.”

**Gen. 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.

**Gen. 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.

**Gen. 42:37** And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

**Gen. 42:38** And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

They all discovered money in their sacks and were very frightened, for the leadership of Egypt seemed to be against them. When Jacob expressed dismay upon hearing the instruction to take Benjamin to Egypt, Reuben nobly offered that his own two sons be slain if anything happened to Benjamin in Egypt. Reuben is also the one who had chided the other brothers upon their release from three days in prison (see verse 22). Incidentally, Reuben is No. 2 on the high priest’s breastplate. Judah, too, had favorable character aspects—and both Reuben and Judah had some unfavorable traits as well.

Jacob replied, “Me have ye bereaved of my children.” His statement was true, for the brothers were responsible for Joseph’s being gone, and Simeon was in prison because of what they had done to Joseph. Jacob refused to let them take Benjamin back to Egypt.

“Joseph is not.” The 11 brothers did not know where Joseph was. For all they knew, he could have been dead. The blood-soaked garment many years earlier had made *Jacob* think Joseph was dead.

What about the expression “is not”? The Apostle Paul used “was not” with regard to Enoch, who is still alive (Heb. 11:5). Hence the use of the expression “is not” (or “was not”) does not prove that one is dead, for Jacob also said, “Simeon is not,” and Simeon was merely incarcerated, not dead.

**Gen. 43:1** And the famine was sore in the land.

**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.

The famine continued for another (second) year, and the brothers remained in Israel until all of their grain was depleted. During the past year, the brothers had not returned for Simeon because Joseph had said they would not see his face unless they brought Benjamin, and Jacob would not permit Benjamin to leave. Now Jacob told his nine sons to return to Egypt to buy more grain. (Simeon was in prison in Egypt, Benjamin was to remain at home, and Joseph was in Egypt.)

**Gen. 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.

**Gen. 43:4** If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food:

**Gen. 43:5** 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.

Judah reminded Jacob that they could not see Joseph's face unless they brought Benjamin. Jacob was being pressured to relinquish Benjamin. In fact, the brothers refused to obey their father and go without Benjamin, for in their minds, to do so would be to commit suicide. Because their money had been found in their sacks, they were afraid of being accused not only as spies but also as thieves, and at least taking Benjamin would provide credibility.

Joseph had shown *great* wisdom in handling his brothers. In warning them, he had alerted their consciences in regard to what they had done to him years earlier. His questions led them to confess they had done wrong, and they recognized their problems as retribution.

For the following reasons, it was apropos that Simeon was the one to be imprisoned. (1) He was probably the ringleader in selling Joseph as a slave. (2) As the second oldest brother (after Reuben), he had more responsibility. (3) His slaughter of the men of Shechem when they were circumcised displayed a meanness of character.

**Gen. 43:6** And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?

Jacob is called "Israel" here and in succeeding verses to alert us that Israel would go into Egypt. And later God would call Israel, His "son," out of Egypt (Exod. 4:22). While in Egypt and dying, Jacob pronounced a blessing on each of his sons, and this act marked the beginning of Israel as a nation.

It is kind of humorous that Jacob asked, "Why did you have to tell the man that you have another brother?" Jacob's state of mind was thus revealed. He was looking for any excuse, for anyone to blame. His reasoning was not quite straight.

**Gen. 43:7** 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?

The brothers replied, "The man sprang this upon us with his questions. How could we know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"

**Gen. 43:8** 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.

**Gen. 43:9** 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:

**Gen. 43:10** For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time.

Judah spoke up again, taking a leading role. His offer was a little different from Reuben's (Gen. 42:37). Reuben had offered to slay *two of his own sons* if Benjamin was not brought back, whereas Judah offered his *own life*. The two sons would be for Benjamin and Simeon. Judah offered his own personal life as a *ransom*. It is interesting that Jesus is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5:5).

"Except we had *lingered...*" Jacob had delayed sending his sons to Egypt for more grain until it was an absolute *necessity*.

**Gen. 43:11** And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds:

Jacob was again called "Israel," which called attention to Israel's entering Egypt and 215 years later Israel's exit from Egypt. Jacob instructed his sons to take a present to Joseph as a pacifier. They were to "take of the best fruits in the land" balm, honey, spices, myrrh, nuts, and almonds. These items were not necessities, for one could not live on them. And they had only a *little* balm and honey to give. Their basic need for survival was the grain. Despite the famine, Israel was a land of milk and honey at this time in history in normal years. The balm came from Gilead (Gen. 37:25).

**Gen. 43:12** And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight:

"Take double money ... and the money that was ... in the mouth of your sacks." "Double" can mean twice as much or an equal amount. We do not know with certainty which meaning was intended here, but verses 15, 21, and 22 seem to indicate it was an equal amount to what they had taken to Egypt the last time.

**Gen. 43:13** Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man:

**Gen. 43:14** And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.

Now Jacob was submissive. This decision was a providential *test* on Jacob: to sacrifice, if need be, his nearest and dearest son (that is, "possession"). Jacob's attitude also let Judah off the hook; namely, "Whatever happens will be."

Among the brothers, Judah and Reuben were often the leading spirits who spoke out. In the high priest's breastplate, Judah was listed first, and Reuben was second. The apostles Paul and Peter were the corresponding leaders, respectively.

**Gen. 43:15** And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

The brothers left with the present, the money, and Benjamin. They stood before Joseph.

**Gen. 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.

When Joseph saw Benjamin and the others, he told the ruler of his house to take them to his



home and prepare a meal, for they would all dine together at *noon*. We know from this statement that the brothers had a morning audience. Joseph would not have known Benjamin by sight, but he spotted the others and could see that there was an eleventh brother.

**Gen. 43:17** And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house.

**Gen. 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.

The brothers were brought to Joseph's house, and they were all the more afraid because they were singled out. They thought that they were being apprehended because of the money found in their sacks and that they would be accused and taken as servants.

**Gen. 43:19** And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house,

**Gen. 43:20** And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food:

**Gen. 43:21** 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.

**Gen. 43:22** And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks.

The brothers talked to the steward of Joseph's house and related, hurriedly, what had happened. They gave a condensed account under emotional stress and ended with, "We cannot tell who put our money in our sacks."

**Gen. 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.

The steward said, "Peace be to you, fear not. Your God has given you the money in your sacks. I had your money." The steward's statement indicates that he respected Joseph and had accepted the Hebrew God. It also suggests that Joseph had *previously* communed with him about the returning of the money and the releasing of Simeon. Notice that although Joseph had not yet returned, the steward brought Simeon out of prison unto them. Therefore, prior to the return of the brothers to Egypt, Joseph had probably told his steward his intentions regarding them so that the steward would know what to do when they brought Benjamin.

**Gen. 43:24** 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.

**Gen. 43:25** And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there.

The steward supplied water for the brothers to wash their feet and gave food to the animals. The brothers had been told they would eat at Joseph's house, so they got the present ready for him when he would arrive at noon.

**Gen. 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.

When Joseph arrived, the brothers gave him the present and bowed to the earth before him. Now 11 brothers bowed to him in fulfillment of the dream that 11 sheaves of wheat would bow to Joseph's sheaf. Previously, only 10 brothers had bowed, at which time Joseph remembered the dream. Later, when Jacob and Leah came to Egypt, the second dream regarding the sun, moon, and stars was also fulfilled. In other words, there was a *progressive* fulfillment of the dreams, as is often the case with prophecy.

**Gen. 43:27** And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?

**Gen. 43:28** And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance.

Joseph inquired about the health of their father. The brothers replied that he was in good health and bowed *again*.

**Comment:** The brothers would have been concerned now in regard to any question they were asked. When Joseph inquired about their father, they must have been afraid that Joseph would next ask to have him brought to Egypt. They were afraid to answer, and they were afraid not to answer.

It seemed that something mysterious was going on, but they could not figure it out. They still did not know the ruler was Joseph, and Joseph continued to speak through an interpreter. It was like God's providence, and their consciences certainly were troubling them.

**Gen. 43:29** And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son.

When Joseph saw Benjamin, he said, "God be gracious unto thee, my son." The interpreter would have simulated the emotion, tone, and emphasis that Joseph used.

**Gen. 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.

**Gen. 43:31** And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread.

Joseph ran out of the room to weep. When composed, he returned. The emotion shows that Joseph had a tender as well as a stern side, as evidenced in his harsh questioning of his brothers. He had schooled himself to ask questions he knew would hurt them. The questions were like a rapier, awakening their consciences.

Now Joseph acted businesslike and said, "Start the meal. Let us eat." Even though the table was all set, the brothers had to wait until Joseph gave the order.

Notice that Joseph yearned for his "brother" *singular*, that is, Benjamin. This detail shows the other ten were half brothers from a different mother. Hence it was like two families, although Joseph had wept for the other brothers earlier. His bowels now yearned for Benjamin. Strong emotions affect even the stomach muscles and the diaphragm, as well as the bowels.

**Gen. 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.

Three tables were set: one table for Joseph alone, another for the brothers, and a third for the Egyptians. Joseph ate by himself because of his office—he was second in authority in Egypt and the “savior” of the nation, as it were. The Egyptians did not eat with the Hebrews because shepherds were an abomination to them (Exod. 8:26). As worshippers of the bull, the Egyptians were appalled at the practice of raising bulls for food.

**Gen. 43:33** 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.

The brothers looked with amazement to see that they were all arranged at the table according to birth or birthright. What was happening?

**Gen. 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.

But when the brothers started to eat, they forgot and just enjoyed the food. In time of famine, a lavish meal would be most appreciated. Joseph’s table must have had an *abundant* supply of food on it, for he sent food to the 11 brothers from there. Joseph dished out the food. There is a spiritual picture here. Joseph was acting paternal towards them.

**Q:** Does Benjamin picture the Little Flock here because he got *five times* as much food?

**A:** Yes, and Joseph pictures Jesus.

Joseph had a divining cup that enabled him to prophesy and see the future. The Egyptians probably regarded him much as the Israelites later considered Ruth the Moabitess.

**Gen. 44:1** And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men’s sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man’s money in his sack’s mouth.

**Gen. 44:2** And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack’s mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

**Gen. 44:3** As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses.

**Gen. 44:4** And when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?

**Gen. 44:5** Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing.

**Gen. 44:6** And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words.

**Gen. 44:7** And they said unto him, Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing:

**Gen. 44:8** Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks’ mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord’s house silver or gold?

**Gen. 44:9** With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen.

**Gen. 44:10** And he said, Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my servant; and ye shall be blameless.

**Gen. 44:11** Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack.

**Gen. 44:12** And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

**Gen. 44:13** Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

**Gen. 44:14** And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; for he was yet there: and they fell before him on the ground.

**Gen. 44:15** And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?

**Gen. 44:16** And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found.

**Gen. 44:17** And he said, God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.

Joseph told his steward to fill his 11 brothers' sacks with food and, unbeknownst to them, to return the money to each. The steward was also instructed to put Joseph's divining cup in Benjamin's sack. The 11 brothers had gone only a short distance when they were stopped by the steward and investigated for having taken Joseph's divining cup. For the second time, their money was restored. On their second trip to Egypt, they had brought back the money that was restored the first time—and now it happened again.

The steward searched the sacks sequentially, starting with the oldest brother and ending with Benjamin. This method gave a dramatic effect. As the investigation progressed, the brothers would have felt more and more justified that a false accusation was being made. But, to their dismay, the last sack examined—Benjamin's—contained the cup. This discovery had a great impact on them, for they would have considered Benjamin the least likely to have taken the cup. The other ten brothers voluntarily returned to Joseph rather than leave Benjamin behind and go back to Jacob without him.

This situation was like a reflection on what had happened to Joseph many years earlier. Joseph had been innocent, yet a misdeed was done to him. Benjamin was innocent, and now he appeared guilty. Proof that the brothers were connecting the two events is that they said (paraphrased), "We have sinned" (verse 16); that is, even though they had not taken the cup, they recognized that another providential circumstance had occurred to prick their consciences.

There is a picture in regard to the first return of money in the sacks and also in regard to the second return when the cup was put in Benjamin's sack. In this type, Benjamin pictures the Little Flock (Gen. 43:34). Mystic Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord's hand, but she lost that privilege when she mixed error with truth. With silver picturing truth, the cup represents her

privileged stewardship as custodian of the truth. Therefore, Joseph's [that is, Jesus'] silver cup being in Benjamin's sack represents that the understanding and spirit of prophecy of God's Word belongs to the consecrated, especially the Little Flock, who see into deeper truths. Stated another way, Jesus' word is given to the Little Flock.

The picture in regard to the second return of money and the silver cup takes place antitypically during the Gospel Age. During this time period, food has been given to both natural and spiritual Israel, that is, to those Jews who became Christians and to Gentile Christians. The gospel message contains a message of hope for natural Israel. The restoration of natural Israel is part of God's message, but the main message is the high calling. Therefore, *all* of the brethren got food and money, but only Benjamin got the silver cup, the hope of the high calling.

The first return of money took place antitypically in the Jewish Age. Israel was promised that, *if faithful*, they would be a kingdom of priests, inheriting both the natural and the spiritual promises. This promise was given to them before Jesus' earthly ministry.

The money in the sacks represents what the brothers paid for food; that is, they paid a price to obtain the wheat. When we consecrate, we become a steward of what would have been ours: the hope of restitution. That hope, which is for everybody, is sacrificed by the Church. The consecrated are given back their natural possessions, as it were, to use as stewards of the Lord's goods. The Christian sacrifices restitution hopes; that is, he burns the (restitution) bridges behind him. Stated another way, the price paid is returned to the Christian so that he can be a steward over that price.

What about Joseph's divining cup? An occult crystal ball is used by witches, mediums, etc., who actually see things in it and forecast thereby. In a sense, we have this phenomenon in the television, which has sound and visual representation of something occurring elsewhere in the earth. God has His own way of transmitting light and sound waves. Just as the fallen angels use mechanisms along this line to divine, so holy angels can do this. Natural laws are being used, even though they seem to be supernatural because of the effect produced. Thus, in the divining cup, God could help Joseph divine certain things *visually*. With the prophets, things were done orally (God spoke into their ear or gave them visual dreams). Hence Joseph's silver cup was just a different form of communication from God.

In verse 10, the steward took what the brothers had said in verse 9 and modified it. Only Benjamin would be Joseph's servant. However, the brothers were conscience-stricken and said, "We will *all* be your servants" (verse 16). They could not bear the thought of returning to Jacob without Benjamin.

Joseph's technique showed *wisdom*. He continually pressed on the ten brothers' consciences what they had done to him years before. Benjamin was the darling of his father, just as Joseph had been earlier. Joseph was testing the degree of love the ten had for Benjamin. (In antitype, the Benjamin class, who become the bondservants of Christ, die and yet are innocent.) Joseph knew that the overall effect of his technique would be to stir up his brothers' consciences, as well as to test their love for Benjamin and their respect for Jacob. The ten brothers could not bear the thought of taking bad news back to Jacob.

**Gen. 44:18** Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh.

**Gen. 44:19** My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?

**Gen. 44:20** And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old

age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.

**Gen. 44:21** And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.

**Gen. 44:22** And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die.

**Gen. 44:23** And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

**Gen. 44:24** And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.

**Gen. 44:25** And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food.

**Gen. 44:26** And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.

**Gen. 44:27** And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons:

**Gen. 44:28** And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since:

**Gen. 44:29** And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

**Gen. 44:30** Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;

**Gen. 44:31** It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave.

**Gen. 44:32** For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.

**Gen. 44:33** Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

**Gen. 44:34** For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.

Judah reviewed to Joseph what had happened, giving true details of Jacob's love for Benjamin. Imagine the passion with which Judah was pleading! He was very emotional, and all jealousy was gone. And picture Joseph's emotions as he heard these words (Gen. 45:1,2 elaborates). His emotions built and built. Because of his brothers' jealousy over him, Joseph had probably worried over their reaction toward Benjamin. Joseph must have been touched to see such tenderness for both Jacob and Benjamin.

Judah presented the matter in a stately manner and called Jacob "thy [Joseph's] servant"—and Jacob had not even come to Egypt yet! Here was another fulfillment of Joseph's early dream.

Jesus was of the tribe of Judah. Judah offered his life for Benjamin, and Jesus gave his life for the world and particularly for the Church class.

Joseph's brothers were being educated along character lines in the most beautiful manner. He kept delaying his revealment to extract from the brothers the best results. It was like the importunate widow, where the judge's delay in granting mercy brought out her innermost cravings. The account in the Book of Genesis would have gone much differently if the brothers had not shown true remorse. Joseph would have taken different actions. He was firm and wise in dealing with his brothers.

For many years, the brothers had seen Jacob sorrow for Joseph, refusing to be comforted. His grief continually pricked their consciences. If Benjamin were detained, they would have to view Jacob's sorrow again. As far as they knew, Benjamin was the only still-surviving direct son of Rachel. Incidentally, of the ten brothers, it is only of Leah's four oldest (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah) that we get much insight into their thinking, words, and character. We hear next to nothing about the handmaids' sons.

The word "grave" in verse 29 is the Hebrew *sheol*. Righteous Jacob said he would go to *sheol* sorrowing.

**Gen. 45:1** Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

**Gen. 45:2** And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

Joseph's emotions built up to a crescendo, and he could refrain himself no longer. At other times, he had left the room to cry, but this time he stayed in the presence of his brothers. He said loudly and hurriedly, "Cause every [Egyptian] man to go out from me!" Then he revealed his identity to his brothers. His crying was so loud that the Egyptians and Pharaoh's household heard him. What led to this emotional crescendo was Judah's plea on behalf of Benjamin, his offer to be Joseph's servant instead of Benjamin, and his concern for Jacob, their father.

Joseph's temperament was thus manifested. He was a feeling man, yet very wise and calculating, and very patient and forbearing, in delaying the revealment of his identity until now. This wonderful mixture was also seen in Jesus and the Apostle Paul: firmness in principle where necessary and emotionally moved by the right things.

**Gen. 45:3** And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

**Gen. 45:4** And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

When Joseph revealed his identity, the brothers were frightened and speechless. He repeated, "I am Joseph," as if to break through their speechless, terrified condition. "I am Joseph your brother, *whom ye sold into Egypt*" were his words the second time. His choice of words showed he was not an impostor. Joseph was dressed in Egyptian garb and older than when they had sold him into slavery, so it was necessary to refer to their selling him. Also, because he had previously used an interpreter to speak to his brothers, they had naturally assumed he was Egyptian and thus could not understand them. Now he spoke to them in Hebrew: "Your eyes see ... that it is *my* mouth that speaketh unto you" (verse 12).

**Gen. 45:5** Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither:

**for God did send me before you to preserve life.**

Joseph said in effect, “Do not be angry with yourselves for selling me, for God sent me before you to preserve life.” It would have taken some years even for Joseph to realize that his being sold was *providentially overruled*. Probably he did not become aware of the fact until he ascended to the position of Pharaoh’s right-hand man and recalled the dreams about the sun, moon, and stars bowing to him and also the wheat sheaves. Joseph had a broad perspective: “to preserve life” (not just his own or his family’s lives but even the lives of the Egyptians).

**Gen. 45:6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest.**

It is helpful to know that two years of the seven years of famine had elapsed. After year 1, the brothers came to Egypt the first time, and at the end of year 2, they came the second time. We can figure out Joseph’s age here. He was 30 years old when Pharaoh elevated him, so we add 30 + 7 years of plenty + 2 years of famine for a total of 39 years (Gen. 41:46).

**Gen. 45:7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.**

“God sent me before you ... to save your lives by a great deliverance” (this is a reference to the Exodus—see Genesis 15:13,14,16 in regard to the promise made to Abraham). In the fourth generation, the Israelites would come forth. Joseph’s words show that he had meditated deeply on the promises already made. Later, in his old age, he instructed his posterity to take his remains to the Promised Land when they would be delivered (Gen. 50:25).

**Gen. 45:8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.**

“It was not you that sent me hither, but *God*: and he hath made me [1] a father to Pharaoh, and [2] lord of all his house, and [3] a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.” What a remarkable statement! Joseph clearly saw that the events of his life were a providential overruling.

What about the expression “a father to Pharaoh”? After Joseph had interpreted Pharaoh’s dreams about the seven fat and the seven lean cows, and then the seven full and the seven withered ears of corn, as being seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine, he then advised Pharaoh to appoint a wise man to take charge of laying up provisions during the seven plenteous years. Pharaoh, being grateful, appointed Joseph to the task and commanded that all should bow to him. Joseph’s wisdom was far beyond his chronological age and experience, and Pharaoh recognized this quality, acknowledging him as a “father” in wisdom. In addition, Pharaoh was probably younger than Joseph.

We should view our experiences as Joseph viewed his: whatever our trials, or whoever the instrument, God has *permitted* the experience. If rightly exercised, we grow thereby. God means our experiences for our *good*.

Joseph mentioned three levels. He was “a father to Pharaoh” *personally*, the lord of all Pharaoh’s *household*, and a ruler over Pharaoh’s *country*. As preparation for being the lord of Pharaoh’s household, Joseph was put in charge of Potiphar’s household and subsequently over all the prisoners. Only in the throne was Pharaoh greater. Joseph’s positions were clearly an analogy of the relationship of the Son to the Father. Jesus is even called the “everlasting [age-lasting] Father” (Isa. 9:6). Incidentally, for Joseph to give this sequence shows that he had an *orderly* mind.



**Gen. 45:9** Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

**Gen. 45:10** And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

**Gen. 45:11** And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

After Joseph revealed his identity, the first order of business was to have his brothers *hurry* back to his aged father and bring him quickly to Egypt with all their families and flocks. Joseph was very concerned about Jacob and wanted to see him before he died.

Here we can see Joseph's authority—for him to invite such a large number of alien people into Egypt. Later Pharaoh said the same thing, but Joseph extended the initial invitation. He even specified the choice land of Goshen so that his family would be near him. Joseph probably dwelled in either Memphis (near Sakkara) or Heliopolis (On), both being on the border of Goshen. Goshen was between two branches of the Nile.

It was one thing for Joseph to forgive his brothers, but now they would have to go back and tell Jacob *everything*—how they had sold Joseph into slavery, etc. Would Jacob forgive his sons?

**Gen. 45:12** And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

**Gen. 45:13** And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

**Gen. 45:14** And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

**Gen. 45:15** Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

Joseph said to his brothers, "Your eyes see," and then, singling out Benjamin, "and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, [see] that it is *my mouth* that speaketh unto you"; that is, Joseph was now speaking directly to them, no longer using an interpreter. The fact that Joseph gave priority of *affection* to Benjamin helps to prove that Benjamin represents the Little Flock here. Again Joseph told the brothers to "haste" (hurry) and bring back "my father" Jacob.

**Gen. 45:16** And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.

Word spread in Pharaoh's household that Joseph's brothers were there. Notice the reaction: Pharaoh was well pleased—and even the *servants*. Their reaction shows how much Joseph was admired, respected, and appreciated. Again we are reminded of Jesus, for how much the Father and the angels loved and appreciated him!

**Gen. 45:17** And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan;

**Gen. 45:18** And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land.

**Gen. 45:19** Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.

**Gen. 45:20** Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.

Pharaoh provided transportation to assist in the move to Egypt, offering Joseph's family the fat of the land of Egypt when the brothers got back. And in regard to things that were difficult to move, Pharaoh said, "Regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours"; that is, "Do not worry about what you have to leave behind. You will get that and more when you come to Egypt."

**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.

**Gen. 45:22** 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.

Joseph gave his brothers wagons and provisions according to Pharaoh's commandment. Each brother received a change of raiment, but Benjamin got 300 pieces of silver and five changes of raiment.

Earlier Benjamin was given five times as much food (Gen. 43:34). This was *before* Joseph revealed his identity, that is, while the Benjamin class (the Little Flock) is still in the flesh. The five times as much food represent what the Little Flock feeds on in the present life: the exceeding great and precious promises, the Word of God.

The five changes of raiment represent the divine nature. A confirmation is found in the Great Pyramid, which has five levels of Construction Chambers. The top level with the peaked roof represents the divine nature. The five changes of raiment were given *after* Joseph revealed his identity; that is, after the Benjamin class goes beyond the veil.

The 300 (3 x 100) pieces of silver picture the three classes of the Little Flock at the end of the age, as shown by Noah (a representation of Jesus) and his *three* sons, the *three* wise men, and Gideon's *three* bands of 100 each (the feet members, who have the proper spirit of watching and waiting). Also, the Ark, which pictures the Church, was 300 cubits long.

**Gen. 45:23** 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 food gifts to Jacob—10 animals' worth. The number "10" is a symbol of completion (10 commandments, 10 toes, 10 kings, etc.) pertaining to *this side* of the veil. The food gifts on the ten animals picture the reward for the Ancient Worthy class, as represented in Jacob.

**Comment:** The word "and" ("and ten she asses") has the thought of "even."

**Gen. 45:24** So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way.

Joseph dismissed his brothers with the admonition "See that ye fall not out by the way." In antitype, the admonition applies to when the Kingdom is established. The ten brothers, who picture natural Israel, will need this admonition while they are being developed under the New Covenant.

As for the natural, literal picture, the brothers needed this instruction, for they left Egypt with many goods and might not have returned. Also, they now had to confess to Jacob what they had done to Joseph. The temptation was not to tell Jacob, to keep the goods, and not to return to Egypt.

**Comment:** Joseph was trusting that the ten brothers had truly repented, for otherwise, they could have slain Benjamin or in some manner have treated him like Joseph years earlier and then not have had to confess to Jacob.

**Gen. 45:25** And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father,

The brothers returned to the land of Canaan and their father Jacob. They knew all the way back from Egypt that they would have to tell their father how they had sold Joseph into slavery—the *whole* story. How many thoughts must have gone through their minds!

**Gen. 45:26** 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.

The brothers told Jacob, “Joseph is still alive and is governor over all the land of Egypt.” Jacob’s “heart fainted”; that is, he could not believe what his sons were saying. He had thought Joseph was dead for many years, and now he heard not only that Joseph was alive but also that he was the governor of Egypt. Jacob was almost afraid to believe the news at first lest he have another disappointment.

**Gen. 45:27** 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:

They told Jacob all of Joseph’s words, and when Jacob saw the wagons Joseph had sent to carry him, his spirit revived. The wagons gave credence to the brothers’ statements, for they would have been expensive to procure.

The account does not state the revelation to Jacob of the brothers’ mistreatment of Joseph, but undoubtedly, it was done. Joseph’s earlier words (paraphrased)—“God meant it for good; He sent me to Egypt to preserve life”—were probably emphasized strongly, for we do not hear of Jacob’s reacting angrily against his sons.

**Gen. 45:28** And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

Jacob said, “It is enough.” His words imply there was a long previous explanation. Jacob was convinced that Joseph was alive. “I will go and see him before I die.”

Joseph’s dreams many years before probably came back to the remembrance of Jacob and his sons with clarity as they realized how the fulfillment had now occurred. God had clearly elevated Joseph, and Joseph had saved not only their lives out of famine but also the lives of others. He was properly acknowledged as the “dreamer.” It would be a chastened group in the caravan that went down to Egypt.

Genesis chapter 46 will show how Jacob *first* thanked God and offered sacrifices to Him before leaving for Egypt. Jacob was 130 years old at this time (Gen. 47:9). He lived 17 more years and died at age 147 (Gen. 47:28).

At age 130, the trip was not easy for Jacob. The age span had now declined considerably since the Flood. Joseph lived to age 110, Moses to 120, and Aaron to 123. Later, when the Israelites entered the Promised Land, the age span declined even further.

Abraham was 175 when he died. He was 75 years old when he entered Canaan, age 86 when Ishmael was born, and 100 when Isaac was born. Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born. From the covenant with Abraham to the Exodus was a period of 430 years. And of those 430 years, the Israelites were in Egypt for 215 years, or one half of the time.

Benjamin was called a “lad,” yet he had children (Gen. 44:30,31; 46:8,21). Thus “lad” meant a young man, as Isaac was when Abraham offered him as a sacrifice (Isaac was probably 30 years old at the time). Age was relative to the longer life spans back there.

In harmony with the antitype of Jesus in the Kingdom, when the brothers moved down to Egypt, Joseph (Jesus) was the governor. The brothers had a certain reserve, for they knew that Joseph still had power to put them to death. At least two of Jesus’ brethren did not believe he was the Messiah until his resurrection. Thus there is another parallel here with Joseph’s brothers not believing the dreams until Joseph was revealed as governor.

**Gen. 46:1** And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.

Jacob took all his belongings and went to Beersheba to offer sacrifices to God, “the God of his father Isaac.” Genesis 21:31,33 tells of *Abraham’s* going to Beersheba and what happened there. Genesis 26:23,24,33 tells of *Isaac’s* going to Beersheba and offering sacrifice to God. Now *Jacob* was here—all three being patriarchs of the Abrahamic promise. With both Isaac and Jacob, God spoke in Beersheba.

Pharaoh had given the instruction for Jacob (paraphrased), “Do not be overanxious regarding what you leave behind because I will see that you are well recompensed when you arrive in Egypt.” Nevertheless, Jacob took “all that he had.”

Beersheba, which means “well of the oath/seven/good fortune,” was esteemed by Jacob somewhat like the place of an oracle. In ancient times, those who went to the oracle of Delphi or another oracle were trying to communicate with spirits or to get some advice, but God had His own method. Jacob’s going to Beersheba to offer sacrifice shows there is something to the principle of a place being helpful. Both Beersheba and Bethel were known as places of communication with God.

It was proper for Jacob to go to Beersheba before leaving for Egypt, especially since Isaac, whom he revered, had communed there with God. Jacob inquired of God in regard to the wisdom of going to Egypt—and so, too, we should go to the Lord in prayer when we have a momentous decision to make.

**Gen. 46:2** And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I.

God called Jacob by name in the visions of the night: “Jacob, Jacob.” Jacob’s reply, “Here am I,” is a reminder of Samuel. Notice that the account says, “God spake unto *Israel*,” but then called him Jacob. Here we see an example of the standpoint of the historian, for when Genesis was written in its final form as a book many years later, the historian’s perspective was frequently inserted. The name “Israel” emphasized the thought of a *nation*. The historian wrote, “And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night.” “Jacob” was the *personalized* standpoint, and “Israel” was the *national* viewpoint because out of Jacob was to come the nation of Israel.

Although Jacob was given the name Israel much earlier, the realization of the significance did not come until a future chapter, when the nation was born.

“Visions [plural] of the night” indicates that nighttime visions in a revered place were a characteristic method God used back there to communicate with man. Nighttime was a practical time to communicate—when all was quiet and there were no distractions. Consider how David would lie awake at night and contemplate the heavens in quietness. And Jesus went up into a mountain alone to pray at night.

**Gen. 46:3** 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:

God said, “I am the God of your father Isaac. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make of you a great nation.” The same promise was given to Abraham in regard to making of him a great nation (Gen. 12:2). In Genesis 15:13, God told Abraham that his seed would serve and be a stranger in a land not theirs for 400 years.

The term “great nation” meant that the Israelites would multiply exceedingly as a people in just two centuries of 215 years. (Seventy souls would become at least 2 million.) “And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them” (Exod. 1:7). Furthermore, the Pharaoh who “knew not Joseph” said, “Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more [in number] and mightier than we [Egyptians]” (Exod. 1:8,9). These verses show how fast the Israelites multiplied once they got to Egypt. Hence a later Pharaoh ordered the Hebrew midwives to kill all male babies. If carried out, this plan meant that ultimately the Hebrew women would have to marry Egyptian men. The other option was to issue a decree that all Jews should be killed, but since the Israelites were more numerous, such a decree would have mobilized them to fight.

**Gen. 46:4** 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.

God continued speaking to Jacob, “I will go down with you into Egypt and will surely bring you up again. And Joseph will put his hands on your eyes”; that is, “When you die, Joseph will close your eyelids” (Gen. 49:33; 50:1). Here was a message of hope: the Israelites would be brought out of Egypt back to Canaan. This promise ties in with Genesis 15:16, where God told Abraham that his seed would be persecuted but would be brought up out of Egypt in the fourth generation. Now Jacob received a reiteration of what God had told Abraham. And Joseph also knew and believed these things, for he made the Israelites promise to take his bones to the land of Canaan when they left Egypt. Jacob was *personally* taken back to Canaan when he died, and the *nation* was brought back via the Exodus.

**Comment:** The Christian is supposed to feed on the precious promises, to review them again and again. Back there the faithful ones did not have the written record, so it was good these promises pertaining to the Abrahamic Covenant kept getting repeated and reconfirmed. They needed the repetition as much as we need to keep filling our leaky vessels.

The Israelites were to be afflicted 430 years, but they were in Egypt only 215 years. How, therefore, do we reconcile this difference? The persecution began when Ishmael mocked Isaac. We are specifically told that it was 430 years from the making of the covenant with Abraham (at age 75) until the Exodus, so the Israelites could not have been in Egypt for 400 years. Both the 430 and the first 215 years are specifically mentioned—so we just subtract 215 from 430, and we know that the Israelites were in Egypt for 215 years.

**Gen. 46:5** And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their

father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

Jacob and his family, including their “little [young] ones,” went to Egypt in the wagons that Pharaoh had provided.

**Gen. 46:6** And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him:

**Gen. 46:7** His sons, and his sons’ sons with him, his daughters, and his sons’ daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

Jacob and family and goods and cattle (flocks) arrived in Egypt. One daughter was Dinah. The question might be asked, How many daughters did Jacob have? Genesis 37:35 says, “All his [Jacob’s] sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him [in regard to Joseph’s supposed death].” This verse indicates Jacob had more than two daughters.

**Gen. 46:8** And these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn.

**Gen. 46:9** And the sons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.

**Gen. 46:10** And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman.

**Gen. 46:11** And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

**Gen. 46:12** And the sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zerah: but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul.

**Gen. 46:13** And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron.

**Gen. 46:14** And the sons of Zebulun; Seread, and Elon, and Jahleel.

**Gen. 46:15** These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three.

**Gen. 46:16** And the sons of Gad; Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli.

**Gen. 46:17** And the sons of Asher; Jimnah, and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their sister: and the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel.

**Gen. 46:18** These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls.

**Gen. 46:19** The sons of Rachel Jacob’s wife; Joseph, and Benjamin.

**Gen. 46:20** And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him.

**Gen. 46:21** And the sons of Benjamin were Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard.

**Gen. 46:22** These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls were fourteen.

**Gen. 46:23** And the sons of Dan; Hushim.

**Gen. 46:24** And the sons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem.

**Gen. 46:25** These are the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls were seven.

**Gen. 46:26** All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six;

**Gen. 46:27** And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.

Verse 27 states, "All the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten [70]." Verse 26 reads, "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides [excluding] Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six [66]." How do we reconcile the difference?

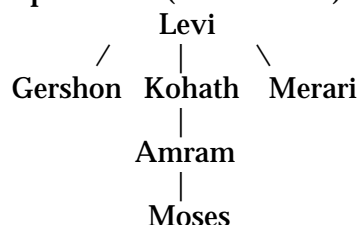
Verses 8b-15 tell us that Jacob's children through Leah, who were born in Padan-aram, numbered 33 including Dinah, a daughter. But when we add the names in these verses, we get only 32. Er and Onan, Judah's sons, died because of disobedience and hence were not counted because they did not go to Egypt. Verses 16-18 show that the children of Jacob through Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, totaled 16. Verses 19-22 state that the children of Jacob through Rachel numbered 14. Finally, verses 23-25 show that the children of Jacob through Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, totaled 7.

33 children	Leah	Hence the total of 70 is correct if we can establish 33 children for Leah
16 children	Zilpah	(not 32). See verse 8: "These are the names of the children of Israel,
14 children	Rachel	which came into Egypt, <i>Jacob and his sons</i> ." This verse shows that <i>Jacob</i>
<u>7 children</u>	Bilhah	has to be counted in the 70, and the logical (and only) place is his
70 children		insertion into Leah's listing: 32 + 1 (Jacob) = 33.

The word "daughters" (plural) is not a problem in verse 15, for it can mean Dinah, that is, "daughter" (singular), just as verse 23 says, "the sons [plural] of Dan" and then lists only *one*.

In verse 26, four individuals must be subtracted from the 70 in order to get a total of 66. Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh should be subtracted because they were already in Egypt. Also, Jacob should be subtracted because the 66 "came *with* Jacob." "With" can mean either "including" or "excluding" in the sense of the souls who accompanied Jacob into Egypt. The proper thought here would be "not including himself."

God's words to Moses verify that Jacob was included in the 70: "Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons" (Deut. 10:22). Moses' "fathers" included Jacob, Levi, and Kohath (Gen. 46:11).



How can we explain that Benjamin, the youngest son of Jacob, had ten sons, that is, the most

children at this point? Joseph was 17 years old when he had the dreams, and he is called “the son of his [Jacob’s] old age” (Gen. 37:3). The Hebrew says “a son of his old age,” for Jacob had two sons in his old age: Joseph, the firstborn, and Benjamin, who was born two or three years later. Joseph was born in Padan-aram. Jacob served Laban for six additional years (after the seven years plus the seven years) so that he would have some goods and flocks to take with him when he left Laban. During this time, Jacob got the ring-streaked, etc., sheep and goats. After 20 years, Jacob secretly departed from Laban, and several things happened subsequently: a covenant was made, Dinah was molested, and Rachel died in childbirth with Benjamin. The occurrence of these events means that at least two years passed between the leaving of Padan-Aram and the birth of Benjamin.

Joseph was 30 years old when Pharaoh elevated him to the position of governor. Then came seven years of plenty. Two years into the famine, Jacob and family came to Egypt. Thus Joseph was 39 years old when his family arrived in Egypt ( $30 + 7 + 2 = 39$ ). Benjamin, therefore, would have been no older than 37—and certainly old enough to have 10 sons. He could have married at age 20 and had a child every 18 months. And he could have had twins or triplets. Benjamin is probably typical of many children—he was the youngest, yet he had the “mostest”! Other listings of the children vary, but the differences can be explained, for example, in Chronicles and Exodus.

**Comment:** Since Jacob thought Joseph was dead, he considered Benjamin the only survivor of his most beloved wife Rachel. Therefore, Jacob may have encouraged Benjamin to have a lot of children, and Benjamin, wanting to please his father, may have married early and wanted to increase that portion of the lineage.

**Comment:** Because Shaul, a son of Simeon, is pointed out in verse 10 as being “the son of a Canaanitish woman,” it seems that we can assume all of the other children were sons of Jacob’s daughters, for at that time, brothers could marry sisters.

Numbers 26:5-51 provides the family lineages. Verses 38-41 list the sons of Benjamin, and we notice that some of those who were listed in Genesis chapter 46 were not mentioned here. In fact, about half of Benjamin’s sons were not listed at the time of the Exodus, 215 years later. The omissions show that certain family lines ended because of sterility or death or for other reasons.

For half the number to be missing, it would mean that half of Benjamin’s sons did not make the Exodus. In some pictures, Benjamin represents the Great Company. Thus we could say that the Second Death class of those who consecrate during the Gospel Age slips to the Benjamin class and then lower. When one consecrates, he is potentially a member of the Little Flock. He may be faithfully serving the Lord, and then sin gradually enters his mind. Consider Satan. The sin entered his mind *before* he actually tempted man. Then, when he committed the *act*, he sinned the sin; that is, the sin in Satan’s mind bore *fruitage* when he lied to Eve. Hence sin starts earlier than the actual act. Sin gradually enters the mind, and when such sinful thoughts are willingly entertained and not repelled, one can slip from the Little Flock to the Great Company, for such an individual is no longer fit for the Little Flock. The one who slips back into the Great Company may remain there or may slide further to Second Death status.

Several pictures indicate that many go into Second Death. The Second Death and the Great Company classes are quite numerous. From our perspective or eye, we would not be able to see most of the Second Death class. We see only the worst cases, in which one commits the unpardonable sin, and we do not pray for such obvious cases. But the obvious cases are only a small portion of the Second Death class. We cannot read the hearts as the Lord can. In summary, Benjamin pictures the Great Company, a large class, and spiritually speaking, only half of them “make the Exodus” (are called out of Egypt) in the final analysis.



Acts 7:14 reads, “Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen [75] souls.” How do we harmonize this total? If we take the 66 count and subtract the two females of Genesis chapter 46 (Dinah and Serah), this would leave 64, with a difference of 11 souls for the total of 75. It is possible that the *living* wives of Jacob and his sons were included. We know, for example, that Rachel died. Others could have died too, or some of the wives could have refused to go to Egypt.

There is another approach for explaining the different total in Acts 7:14. When Stephen gave this total, he was not an apostle; hence his words in Scripture are not infallible. And even the apostles, *prior to Pentecost*, made some inaccurate statements. For example, Thomas said of Jesus, “My Lord and my God!” And to one of Peter’s statements, Jesus said, “Get thee behind me, Satan!” *After Pentecost*, the apostles’ statements had their validity.

Note: Excluding Jacob from *Leah’s* listing leaves 32 offspring. The offspring of Zilpah, Leah’s handmaid, numbered 16, or *one half* of Leah’s. *Rachel’s* offspring totaled 14, and Bilhah, her handmaid, had 7, or *one half* of Rachel’s.

**Gen. 46:28** And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.

It is appropriate that Judah was selected to go to Joseph, for he was the one who had offered to be surety for Benjamin (Gen. 44:18-34). Goshen, a fertile area, was in the vicinity of Memphis, which was not the capital of Egypt at that time. Memphis and Heliopolis (On) were close together, and Goshen was in the suburbs of these cities. Since Joseph married the priest of On’s daughter, and Moses was educated in On, the Jews were in the area of Cairo, Heliopolis, and Memphis. As governor, Joseph resided in a city or municipality, whereas the rest of his family lived in a pastoral setting where they could raise their flocks.

**Gen. 46:29** 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.

Joseph fell on Jacob’s neck and wept “*a good while*.” What a joyful reunion to see one another face to face!

**Gen. 46:30** And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.

When they were reunited after all those years, Jacob said to Joseph, “Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.” Many years earlier, when Jacob had thought Joseph was dead, he had said, “I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning” (Gen. 37:35). Now came a reversal: Jacob could go to his grave happy.

**Gen. 46:31** 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;

**Gen. 46:32** And the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.

**Gen. 46:33** And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation?

**Gen. 46:34** That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

Joseph informed his father and brothers what he would tell Pharaoh in regard to their arrival. "Cattle" was a broad term that usually meant oxen, bulls, etc., whereas "flocks" were related to sheep and goats.

Why were shepherds an abomination to the Egyptians? There were several reasons, as follows.

1. There were Hyksos invasions of Egypt, including one at the time the Great Pyramid was constructed. Hyksos were "shepherd-kings" or "bedouin chiefs."
2. Since the Egyptians worshipped bulls, they considered it obnoxious to eat them.
3. Egyptians regarded the shepherds' nomadic way of life as inferior.

Joseph would go out of his way to inform Pharaoh that historically, "from our youth even until now," the Israelites had tended cattle and flocks. In other words, shepherding was their trade. He wanted Pharaoh to know that the Israelites had brought the animals with them and did not become shepherds just to irritate the Egyptians.

"Hyksos" was a term for an alien or foreign people, most of whom were bedouins or sheiks. Several invasions occurred down through history. As regards the Great Pyramid, they came in peaceably, and their coming pertained to the death of Nimrod.

Joseph's telling his brothers what to say when Pharaoh would ask about their occupation reminds us of a testimony Bro. Joseph Panucci gave a number of years ago. A "woman" on the plane en route to Guyana said to him, "There will meet you at the gate a man who will show you his credentials. You will have to go into the immigration office. Under no circumstances will you say you came for religious reasons or give the name of the sister." In other words, the Lord foresaw the circumstances and gave instruction. As a seer, Joseph had capabilities above those of an ordinary person. Thus he knew what would happen and how Pharaoh would question his family. Joseph gave instruction and coaching on how to respond.

Out of decorum and good taste, Joseph did not just go presumptuously ahead but informed Pharaoh of his family's arrival, thus giving recognition that Pharaoh was his boss. It was proper to defer to Pharaoh and get his okay a second time. And it was important to tell Pharaoh, first through Joseph and then through his brothers, that the family were shepherds and had come to Egypt on a temporary basis, for this would prevent Pharaoh from thinking of them as foreigners, marauders, spies, bandits, etc. Shepherding was their trade, and they just wanted to survive the famine with their flocks (Gen. 47:4).

Jacob was now 130 years old, and except for Benjamin, Joseph's brothers were probably in their fifties. Here was Joseph, the *younger* brother, laying down the rules. Not only was Joseph very mature and wise for his age, but he had great administrative skill and decorum.

**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.

**Gen. 47:2** And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.

**Gen. 47:3** 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.

**Gen. 47:4** 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.

**Gen. 47:5** And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee:

**Gen. 47:6** 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.

Joseph took five of his brothers to Pharaoh, and they *all* said they were shepherds. Their words were a confirmation of what Joseph had told Pharaoh. It was important—and an expediency—for them to also tell Pharaoh that they were in Egypt just “to sojourn” (to stay *temporarily*). The lesson here for us is not to overstay or take advantage of hospitality. “When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite” (Prov. 23:1,2). When we are in someone’s favor, we should not avail ourselves of too much but should put a knife to our throats, figuratively speaking; that is, we should not take advantage of hospitality.

Pharaoh, who had cattle too, told Joseph to let his father and brothers dwell “in the best of the land.” The thought would be “the best land that is *available*,” for no dispossession would have occurred to make room for them. Of Joseph’s brethren and family, Pharaoh wanted the most industrious and capable ones to take care of his cattle. The implication was that they would get paid; hence this would be an additional source of revenue.

A very polite Oriental courtesy that is sometimes used is for a “host” to make certain suggestions that are not to be taken literally. In other words, to show that we are welcome, the host makes statements of largesse regarding what can be ours. However, if we take the statements literally, those of the Orient would be very much offended. Although it is their way of saying we are in their favor, we must use discretion in availing ourself of either their hospitality or their generosity. For example, Pharaoh had said that those of Joseph’s family were not to “regard” their possessions and flocks, “for the good of all the land of Egypt” was theirs, yet Jacob and sons brought all their household goods and flocks anyway so that they would not impose on Pharaoh’s generosity (Gen. 45:20). Accordingly, Joseph told Pharaoh they had brought their flocks and “all that they have” (Gen. 46:32).

**Gen. 47:7** And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

**Gen. 47:8** And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou?

**Gen. 47:9** 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.

**Gen. 47:10** And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

Jacob was brought in to Pharaoh separately from his sons. Jacob said, “Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been.” “Evil” is the Hebrew *ra*, which has many translations including *adversity*, *affliction*, *calamity*, *hurtful*, etc., so “evil” would not have the connotation we usually give it. The point is that *no* moral infringement was implied here.

Jacob had experienced much adversity and affliction. Consider his life: (1) He had problems with Esau. (2) After working seven years for Rachel, he was given Leah. (3) He worked many years for no wages. (4) There was a wrong massacre over Dinah's violation by Shechem, and that stench burdened him. (5) Rachel died bearing Benjamin. (6) He grieved over Joseph's supposed death, etc. All the years of his pilgrimage he had seen affliction. Moreover, in comparing his 130 years (thus far) to Isaac's life span of 180 years and Abraham's of 175, Jacob felt that his life was ending, but he would live 17 more years in Egypt.

Jacob blessed Pharaoh in the sense that he was aged compared to Pharaoh, who was younger than Joseph. With Pharaoh's tacit decorum in recognizing age—Pharaoh acknowledged Jacob's length of days—Jacob could bless him both when he entered and when he departed. “Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name” (Psa. 103:1). We cannot bless God in the sense of giving Him anything He does not already have, but we can give Him praise, appreciation, thanksgiving, honor, etc.

Pharaoh had treated Joseph *so well* that Jacob would have expressed his appreciation. And of course Jacob was thankful for the gratuity extended to him and his other sons by being invited into Egypt. What a wonderful Pharaoh! Joseph was a favorite of Jacob, so anyone who showed kindness to Joseph would have been greatly appreciated by Jacob.

**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.

Pharaoh gave the command, and Joseph carried it out. This was proper decorum. Joseph “placed” his family in Goshen by distributing them, according to his wisdom, in regard to the *portion* each would occupy.

Goshen is called here “the land of Rameses.” The city of Rameses was not built until the cruel Pharaoh arose who set Egyptian taskmasters over the Israelites (Exod. 1:11). Hence Goshen was the name at this time, and Rameses was a later name inserted by the compiler of the Pentateuch years afterwards. Pithom and Rameses were the two “treasure cities” built by the Israelites before the Exodus.

**Gen. 47:12** And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.

Joseph nourished his family according to their numbers; that is, he gave them the necessities, their proper portions, and nothing extra. Because of the famine, food was rationed, and there was no preferential treatment for his family. Jacob, however, may have been honored because of his age, which was an extenuating circumstance.

**Gen. 47:13** 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.

A time lapse is indicated between verses 12 and 13, during which the severe famine continued in Egypt and Canaan. The term “bread” included any of the grains and some other things too. Incidentally, the portion of the Lord's Prayer “Give us this day our daily *bread*” is more inclusive than just literal bread.

**Gen. 47:14** And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

All of the money in Egypt and the land of Canaan was gathered up, and still the famine

continued. In other words, Joseph *sold* food to the people for money. He did not just donate from the granary but collected money for Pharaoh's coffers. This arrangement was providentially overruled to have a spiritual application, for Joseph's great wisdom beautifully fits the antitype. Joseph (Jesus) will buy back everything for Pharaoh (the Heavenly Father) in the Kingdom.

**Gen. 47:15** And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth.

When the money ran out, the people pleaded for mercy: "Do you want to see us die?"

**Gen. 47:16** And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.

Joseph said, "Give me your cattle [horses, asses, flocks, and cattle], and I will give you bread." This was a brilliant strategy on Joseph's part.

**Gen. 47:17** And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year.

The people brought their "cattle" to Joseph, and thus they had food for another whole year.

**Gen. 47:18** When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not aught left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands:

The next year, when the flocks had all been exchanged, the people came again to Joseph, saying, "All we have left are our lands and our bodies"; that is, "We are completely impoverished except for ourselves and our land."

**Gen. 47:19** Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate.

The people offered to give their land and themselves as servants in order to get bread. This was a good suggestion, for if they died, no one would be left to work the land, and it would become desolate. Thus money, cattle, land, and personal bodies were all given for bread. The allegorical lesson is that to get the bread of life, we must be willing to give up all we have. Joseph (Jesus) will feed and protect us if we give what we have.

**Gen. 47:20** And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's.

All the land of Egypt was bought for Pharaoh. The land became Pharaoh's (that is, God's in the Kingdom).

**Gen. 47:21** And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof.

The people were removed to cities from border to border in Egypt. Again there is an antitype. In the present life, many generations live on the same land, with each generation replacing the previous one. This could be a problem when the people return from the tomb, for certain

geographic areas will be limited in size. In places where there are too many people for a given area, some will be prudently and discreetly distributed elsewhere, as well as the princes, the Ancient Worthies, who will be placed throughout the earth.

In regard to the “famine” in the Kingdom, mankind will be in a starved situation when they come from the tomb. Food will be plentiful, but it will be in Jesus’ (the antitypical Joseph’s) storage bins. The people will be in crying need, and although Jesus will have an abundance, the food will be given judiciously and conditionally—under terms—for characters will have to be completely transformed. The crying need will entail a gradual giving up—a process—in order to be satisfied. By the end of the Kingdom, there will be no more famine, for the people will be full and the storage unnecessary.

**Comment:** The seven years of plenty preceding the famine seem to picture the seven stages of the Gospel Age, during which The Christ stores up “food” to give to the starving world in the Kingdom.

**Gen. 47:22** Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands.

Because Pharaoh had assigned a portion of land to the priests, their land was exempt from being bought or sold. According to the King James margin, the Hebrew word can be translated either “princes” or “priests,” and both terms would fit the antitype. In addition to the priests, the royal family (as royal heirs) would be exempt, and thus their lands were also retained. Under the Mosaic Law, given later, the principle was the same: the field/land of the Levites was a perpetual possession and hence could not be sold.

In regard to the Kingdom antitype, the holy oblation in Israel will be assigned to the priests and the princes, the Ancient Worthies (Ezek. 48:9-12,21). There will be no redistribution of that land during the temporary arrangement of the Kingdom period, that is, while the Ancient Worthies are still on the earth. After the Kingdom, the princes will get a spiritual resurrection, and their land will be left to their natural descendants.

Notice that Joseph did not interfere with Pharaoh’s personal possessions—with the authority Pharaoh had previously exercised in regard to the priests and the royal heirs. Again there was an overruling to fit the antitype.

The seven years of famine picture the seven periods or stages of the Kingdom. (Just as the Gospel Age has seven stages, so the Kingdom Age will have seven.) The people will be given instruction, benefits, and blessings, but these are *conditional* upon obedience and a proper heart condition. Those who pass the test in the Little Season at the end of the Kingdom, and thus prove they love God with all their heart, will be granted liberty. At that time, the earth will be given to the children of men without all the special monitoring of the rules and regulations.

During the Kingdom, there will be a crying need for help. The people will come forth from the tomb with the same characters and depraved tastes that they had in the present life, and these must be overcome in order to get life. The Kingdom is a reconstruction and survival period. The goal for the people is to love God with all their heart.

Obedience will be *mandated* in the Kingdom, whereas consecration and obedience are *voluntary* now. The true sheep *follow* Jesus in the Gospel Age. In the next age, the people will hear a voice *behind* them.

**Gen. 47:23** Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your

**land for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.**

Joseph said, “Lo, this day I have bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Here is seed. Sow the land.” The land was now Pharaoh’s (that is, *God’s* in antitype). When Joseph distributed seed, the implication was that the end of the famine had come, for seed would not grow during the famine. Joseph gave the people food to eat until the seed could begin to grow again.

**Comment:** How wonderfully the type shows the end of the Millennium, when Jesus will hand the Kingdom over to the Father so that God will be all in all!

**Gen. 47:24** And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

**Gen. 47:25** And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh’s servants.

**Gen. 47:26** And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh’s.

Now the people became sharecroppers, as it were. When the seed produced, they had to give Pharaoh 20 percent of the crop. For practical reasons, the 20 percent would become storage against a possible future famine. The 20 percent, which was like a tithe, was reasonable for land that was not owned by the people.

The people appreciated their survival through the years of famine. Realizing how sore pressed they were, they said, “You have saved our lives. Let us find grace in your sight, Joseph, and we will be Pharaoh’s servants.” This sentiment fits the antitype well regarding the end of the Kingdom. Earlier the people probably thought the terms were too strict—all of their money, etc., was taken for food—but now they appreciated the arrangement. Those of the world of mankind who pass the test at the end of the Millennium will say the same thing: “Jesus, you have saved our lives. Let us find grace in your sight. We will be God’s servants forever.” And they will not die anymore (Luke 20:35,36). The picture fits the antitype beautifully if we do not scrutinize too closely the characters of Pharaoh and the heathen priesthood.

**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.

After the seven years of famine, Israel prospered and multiplied *exceedingly* from a temporal standpoint.

**Gen. 47:28** And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.

Jacob was 130 years old when he went to Egypt. He lived there for 17 years and died at age 147. Jacob entered Egypt 215 years after the covenant was made with Abraham (after one half of the 430 years had elapsed).

**Gen. 47:29** 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:

**Gen. 47:30** 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.

**Gen. 47:31** And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

Jacob wanted complete assurance that he would be buried in Israel with Abraham, Isaac, and wives, and Joseph so promised. Putting the hand on another's thigh indicated a *solemn promise or oath*. Jacob believed the Abrahamic promise and wanted to be buried where it would be fulfilled—in the resurrection. Abraham saw Jesus' day and was glad (John 8:56).

**Gen. 48:1** And it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

Joseph may have thought his father's sickness would be unto death, so he took his two sons to see Jacob. The fact that someone else had to inform Joseph about Jacob's illness shows that Joseph did not live close to Jacob. The famine was long since over. (Jacob sojourned in Egypt for 17 years, and only the first five were years of famine.) As governor of Egypt, Joseph lived elsewhere; hence it was necessary for a messenger or servant to bring the news.

**Gen. 48:2** And one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed.

When Jacob heard that Joseph was coming, he sat up on the bed with his legs dangling over the edge.

**Gen. 48:3** And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me,

**Gen. 48:4** And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.

Jacob reviewed God's appearing to him in Luz (Bethel), the scene of the ladder dream or vision. God said there that He would make Jacob fruitful and multitudinous in seed and that He would give the land to Jacob's *seed after him* for an everlasting possession.

**Comment:** Earlier in the Book of Genesis, the blessing was broken down into the stars of heaven for Isaac and the sand of the seashore for Jacob. Abraham was told that the land would go to him and his seed. Here Jacob mentioned only that the land would go to his *seed after him*. This distinction confirms that Isaac is the spiritual (Church) portion of the promise and Jacob is the Ancient Worthy portion of the promise—and that the Ancient Worthies will get a spiritual reward at the end of the Kingdom. At that time, the land will pass to their seed.

Jacob understood that he would not get the land in his day, for it was a *future* promise. Thus Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were sojourners, and patience was needed. When the Ancient Worthies get their spiritual inheritance at the end of the Kingdom, the land will go to their seed after them. Ezekiel 46:16 shows that the land given to the princes will go to their children when they leave the earth. That land is in the "land of Canaan."

**Gen. 48:5** And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

**Gen. 48:6** And thy issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance.



Jacob said that Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born in Egypt before Jacob came there, were his and that sons born subsequently would be Joseph's. In other words, Joseph would be represented *doubly* among the other 11 sons of Jacob, and Ephraim and Manasseh would be reckoned as being of the 12 tribes of Israel.

The firstborn normally got the double blessing. However, in this case, the firstborn did not get the double portion—Joseph did. Reuben was Jacob's firstborn. Genesis chapter 49 gives reasons why Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and other sons born ahead of Joseph did not get the double portion. In addition, 1 Chronicles 5:1,2 states that Reuben lost the firstborn blessing because he defiled his father's bed. Put simply, Joseph received the firstborn portion lost by Reuben. The birthright was Joseph's.

**Comment:** Here is a justification for the substitution of Ephraim and Manasseh in some of the listings of the 12 tribes.

Joseph was the eleventh born of Jacob's 12 sons and the firstborn of Rachel, the wife Jacob loved. In 12-tribe listings where Levi was removed because the Levites had no inheritance in the land, Joseph was also omitted, and his two sons were substituted. Spiritually speaking, Jesus and the Church have no inheritance in the land because they will get a spiritual inheritance.

Jacob was saying to Joseph, "Ephraim and Manasseh are mine, and they will be considered the children of Israel, even though they were born in Egypt. Your subsequent children will also be considered Israelites because of their relationship to you and because of your relationship to me. They will be called Israelites after the names of their brethren."

**Observation:** The Great Company will get a spiritual reward. Hence they are reckoned as antitypical Israelites, not antitypical Egyptians; that is, the Great Company will have the same nomenclature, in one sense, as the Little Flock, but their status will not be as high.

**Gen. 48:7** And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem.

We are reminded of the Scripture about Rachel weeping for her children (Jer. 31:15; Matt. 2:18).

**Gen. 48:8** And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these?

**Gen. 48:9** And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.

**Gen. 48:10** Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them.

**Gen. 48:11** And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath shown me also thy seed.

**Gen. 48:12** And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth.

Jacob's eyesight had failed because of his old age, so he had to be told that Ephraim and Manasseh were there. Joseph and Jacob had talked about the two sons, but Jacob did not realize they were present. Also, since Joseph lived some distance from Goshen, Jacob did not

see Joseph's children very often. Therefore, Jacob may not have known who they were.

Ephraim and Manasseh were at least 20 years old at this time. Jacob had been in the land for 17 years, and the children were born before he entered Egypt. They were born before the years of famine, that is, during the years of plenty (Gen. 41:50).

Jacob was sitting on the edge of his bed with his legs extended over the edge. Joseph's sons were drawn over close to him—"between his [Jacob's] knees"—and Jacob kissed them. Incidentally, Jacob's posture of having Joseph's sons "between his knees" was symbolic of adoption back there (see some King James margins). Hence this detail is a further proof that the "knees" were Jacob's.

Jacob said that the two sons (or grandsons) would be his. The rest of Joseph's children would be Joseph's, but that did not mean they would not be Jacob's too. The rest of Joseph's children would be Jacob's in an *indirect* sense, whereas Ephraim and Manasseh were Jacob's in the *direct* sense of being numbered in as part of the 12 tribes of Israel.

**Gen. 48:13** And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him.

**Gen. 48:14** And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn.

Now came the formal blessing of Manasseh and Ephraim. Millions of years from now, people will be amazed at the intricacy and complexity of Scripture. This picture of Jacob has depth of meaning of which we can only scratch the surface at present.

Jacob and Joseph faced each other, so Joseph's right hand was Jacob's left hand. Joseph took Ephraim (the second-born) in his right hand towards Jacob's left hand, and vice versa with Manasseh (the firstborn). But Jacob reversed his hands in placing them on the sons' heads. Jacob's right hand of favor went to Ephraim; his left hand, to Manasseh's head. Jacob did this "wittingly"; that is, he *deliberately* bypassed Manasseh, the firstborn, even though Joseph had steered him toward the chief blessing. Why did Jacob do this? The crossed hands are a veiled picture of Israel, as a nation, not getting the chief blessing. The blessing goes to the faithful Christian instead. A lack of *sufficient appreciation* causes one to be bypassed, as with Esau, the Great Company, etc. In Scripture, Ephraim (the second-born) was usually mentioned first because of prominence, just as the Apostle John was more prominent than his brother James.

**Comment:** Jacob could not have known the symbolism, so it is interesting that the Holy Spirit reversed his hands. There is a pattern of the firstborn not getting the chief blessing, even going back to Cain and Japheth. Abel and Shem were the righteous ones.

**Gen. 48:15** 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,

**Gen. 48:16** 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.

In a literal or temporal sense, Jacob knew what it was to be fed by the Lord. When he fled from Esau years earlier, he had virtually no temporal provisions, and more recently he was provided for during the famine.

Jacob praised God, who had led and fed him, and also the Angel of God, who was used to communicate. Of course the “Angel” was the Logos, God’s representative. Jacob felt an attachment for the Angel, realizing that this being was in a very honored position, or station, to be favored with communicating the promises to Abraham, to Isaac, and more recently to him.

**Gen. 48:17** 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.

**Gen. 48:18** And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.

Joseph tried to remove Jacob’s right hand from Ephraim’s head to the head of Manasseh, the firstborn. The sons would have been kneeling before Jacob, so he could easily lay his hands on their heads while he was sitting on the edge of the bed. “From between his knees” (verse 12) was the proper position, since the issue proceeds from there. Thus there was a symbolic significance to the position, as well as a practical purpose.

**Gen. 48:19** 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.

Jacob said, “I know it. Manasseh also shall become a people and be great. But Ephraim shall be greater, and Ephraim’s seed shall become a multitude of nations.” The antitypical significance of Ephraim’s being greater than his brother pertains to numbers. Ephraim pictures the Great Company class, and Manasseh represents the Ancient Worthies, with one half of the tribe being on each side of the Jordan River. “Thousands” were associated with Manasseh and “ten thousands” with Ephraim (Deut. 33:17).

**Gen. 48:20** 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.

And Jacob blessed them and set Ephraim before Manasseh. While “Israel” and “Jacob” are synonymous terms when referring to Jacob as an individual, they also have a collective application. Here the two applications were mixed. Jacob was saying, “In the future, Israel as a people will hearken back to this account where I, an individual, pronounced this blessing upon Ephraim and Manasseh, and they will use this expression much as Moses did when he said, ‘The Lord be gracious and make His face to shine upon you.’” Today we frequently use Moses’ blessing for one another. Jacob’s point was that Israel (the people) would use the saying “The Lord bless thee like Ephraim and Manasseh.”

**Gen. 48:21** And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.

Jacob said to Joseph, “God will be with you and bring you back to the land of Canaan.” Jacob held to the promise given to Abraham (Gen. 15:13) that they would be a stranger in a land not theirs and be afflicted 400 years (actually 430 years, of which 215 were in Egypt). Of course Joseph did not live that long, but his bones were taken back to Canaan in the Exodus. Since he was familiar with the time period, he understood the words of Jacob to be prophetic. Incidentally, Joseph was buried in Shechem, not in the cave of Machpelah with Abraham, etc.

**Gen. 48:22** Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

The incident with the Amorite and Jacob does not seem to have been recorded in Holy Writ. Verse 22 proves Joseph inherited the double portion (in Ephraim and Manasseh) that, by birth, should have been Reuben's. Incidentally, Abraham was a warrior. With their large possessions and nomadic way of life, the patriarchs and their servants probably had to fight at times.

**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.

**Gen. 49:2** Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father.

Verse 1 starts a separate incident from what took place with Joseph and his sons in the previous chapter. Jacob anticipated that the Holy Spirit would enable him to make predictions in regard to the destiny of his 12 sons, and indeed prophetic utterances and blessings followed. There were three perspectives to these blessings: spiritual (see Appendix 1, "The High Priest's Breastplate," in *The Keys of Revelation*), natural (pertaining to the tribes of Israel), and natural (pertaining to the individuals themselves). "Jacob" and "Israel" are interchangeable terms from the natural standpoint—and sometimes spiritually.

**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:

**Gen. 49:4** 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.

The first four blessings went to Leah's children, in order: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah. Accordingly, Jacob started with the blessing of Reuben, who was his "firstborn," his "might," the "beginning" of his strength, and the "excellency" of his dignity and power. In other words, as Jacob's firstborn, Reuben was *potentially* all of these, but he forfeited them by defiling Bilhah, his father's concubine (Gen. 35:22; 1 Chron. 5:1). All of the desires—the best and the strongest influences—seemed to be especially concentrated on the first child. Succeeding children became more common, as it were.

In addition, Reuben had a certain quality that manifested itself as being "unstable as water." We should keep in mind, however, that Reuben was honored by always being included when the 12 tribes were listed. The point is that Jacob gave Reuben a *mixed* blessing; that is, "Reuben, you have many excellent qualities, but you lost the chief blessing because of what you did to my concubine."

**Gen. 49:5** Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.

**Gen. 49:6** 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.

**Gen. 49:7** 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.

The blessing of Simeon and Levi was almost entirely unfavorable. The only favorable part was that they would have a representation in the land, even though they would be scattered among the other tribes in their inheritance. More favorable things were said about Levi in other incidents of Scripture.

Simeon and Levi killed the circumcised Shechemites after Shechem defiled Dinah, their sister

(Gen. 34:25). In committing this treachery, they broke a sacred oath. This incident shows that Simeon and Levi were impulsive. Spiritually speaking, if those with this quality are properly schooled under the Holy Spirit, and thus *controlled*, the quality serves a good purpose. An example is the circumstance later, in Sinai, when Moses asked, “Who is on the LORD’S side?” The Levites reacted quickly by stepping over the line to Moses’ side (Exod. 32:26).

“In their selfwill they digged down a wall.” The translators were uncertain about the end of this statement. The King James margin says, “In their selfwill they houghed oxen,” which is probably the correct thought. Simeon and Levi hamstrung oxen by cutting a sinew to incapacitate the animals.

The expression “I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel” is a couplet. When Simeon and Levi got their inheritance, they were scattered in cities. Simeon was scattered in Judah primarily, and Levi was scattered throughout all of the tribes.

**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.

**Gen. 49:9** 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?

**Gen. 49:10** 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.

**Gen. 49:11** 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:

**Gen. 49:12** His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.

Judah’s blessing was long and favorable in regard to both him and his progeny. The name Judah means “praise.” “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise.” This statement shows that Judah would have prominence and a leadership position among the other tribes.

“Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies”; that is, “You will make them eat dust.”

“Thy father’s children shall bow down before thee.” This part of the blessing epitomizes David, who was very successful in warfare. Judah inherited the royalty. When David was first made king, the capital was in Hebron. When the capital was moved to Jerusalem, all of the tribes supported David, and the kingdom became united under him as king. The point is that Judah would be more honored with kingship and royalty than the other tribes.

In verse 9, Judah was likened to a lion. A *young* lion shows courage and bravery and is valiant and mighty in warfare. An *old* lion will not back down; it stands its ground. These lionlike characteristics were concentrated in David. The lion, as *king* of the beasts, is suggestive of regality and strength. Jesus was the “Lion of the tribe of Juda” (Rev. 5:5).

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah.” Delicate in design, a scepter represents the right to rule—and thus POWER. Verse 10 is a prophecy. The right to rule would continue through Israel’s history until the mysterious “Shiloh” (the Peacemaker, that is, Jesus) would come. This occurred at the First Advent, for the scepter departed in AD 33, when Jesus was resurrected and became heir. (Note: Ezekiel 21:27 refers to the Second Advent.) In other words, Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah.

Shiloh, in northern Israel, is where the Ark of the Covenant was taken after the Exodus. It

remained there for about 500 years until the Temple was built. These details about Shiloh are not pertinent to the Genesis account.

“Shiloh,” meaning “Peacemaker,” refers to when Messiah would come to provide the basis of peace (the atonement between God and man). Jesus had to be submissive and die as the Ransom price. His death and resurrection secured to him the right to rule. He is pictured as King in various degrees; for example, he was “born King of the Jews” (Matt. 2:2). Securing the technical right to rule and actually ruling, or *exercising* rulership, are two *different* things, however. Jesus could not reign until, first, the Gentile Times had expired, but the “Shiloh” aspect was at the First Advent, when he came peaceably as a sacrifice, meek and lowly. His earthly ministry was low-key in regard to exercising the King’s office. His words were strong, but he did not try to take over. Stated another way, Jesus inherited certain prerogatives at the First Advent that he will use at the Second Advent.

The “lawgiver” would not depart from Judah “until Shiloh come.” At first, the right to rule would seem to have expired when the last king, Zedekiah, was dethroned, but the removal of the crown did not, of necessity, mean the removal of the scepter. Messiah’s lineage in the Gospels goes back to David and even to Adam as the son of God, for in Eden the promise was given that the seed of woman would bruise the serpent’s head. The lineage or seed was fulfilled in Messiah at the First Advent. Through the Babylonian captivity, the lineage was preserved so that it could be traced to Messiah. The lineage records could not be disputed that Jesus was a son of David and hence of the tribe of Judah. After AD 70, the lineage records were lost.

“Unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” All of verse 10 applies to the First Advent. At that time, the people heard Jesus gladly. Thousands of the common people followed him.

Verse 11 also refers to the First Advent. Jesus came to the “vine,” “the choice vine,” that is, the nation of Israel, riding on a colt, the foal of an ass. At his crucifixion, “he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.” “Wine” and crushed grapes symbolize blood.

“His [Messiah’s] eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk. Verse 12 refers to Jesus (Shiloh). The eyes red with wine show his sympathy and compassion. Teeth white with milk show fair and just judgments. Thus Shiloh would have the two opposite characteristics of sympathy (love) and justice.

**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.**

Zebulun’s blessing referred to the land he would possess. The tribal land divisions varied down through history, but here the account said that Zebulun would occupy land to include Sidon, which is in Lebanon today. Zebulun had land bordering the Phoenicians. This prophecy along natural lines had spiritual intonations that go up to the First Advent. Jesus was born of the tribe of Judah as a literal man. Jacob’s deathbed prophecies were primarily along *natural* lines.

A natural haven on the coast of Israel is Haifa, a well-known port near Mount Carmel. The word “haven” is mentioned twice, indicating the quality of hospitality in the high priest’s breastplate.

**Gen. 49:14 Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens:**

**Gen. 49:15 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.**

Issachar’s blessing pertains spiritually to a humble class, a class who are satisfied with the

simple modicums of life. The name Issachar means “hire” or “wages,” that is, being satisfied to live without high aspirations. “Couching [crouching] down between two burdens” refers to beasts of *burden*, which accept a tremendous load. While a donkey, burro, or camel is at rest on its knees, the burden is placed on it.

Issachar’s land was described as “pleasant,” that is, fertile; it was a comfortable location. Spiritually speaking, the Issachar class are satisfied but work hard. They are earnest workers along evangelistic lines.

**Gen. 49:16 Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.**

**Gen. 49:17 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.**

**Gen. 49:18 I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.**

Next came Dan’s blessing. The name Dan means “a judge.” The unfavorable aspect of judging is referred to here, spiritually speaking. From a natural standpoint, Dan would be given to ambush and guerrilla warfare. The Dan tribe was less numerous but was skillful in military confrontation.

Dan’s blessing had a bad connotation, for no one likes a viper, which is small but deadly. From the spiritual standpoint, to be delivered from that characteristic is very difficult. One who has a venomous spirit by nature, being hypercritical and cynical, has to struggle to overcome this trait in order to be profitable for the Lord’s use. A backbiting, cunning tongue can undermine the reputation of others.

The Apostle James, who was a judge with extraordinary common sense, wrote about how deadly the tongue is. He overcame and gave valuable, searching counsel for others; that is, James had these judging characteristics, but they were controlled.

The *natural* picture pertains to literal, physical guerrilla ambush attacks. The *spiritual* picture pertains especially to attacks with the tongue. The Dan class are given to snide remarks, backbiting, and talking behind one’s back, as opposed to direct confrontation. This disposition can be harnessed, but what a struggle! Because of this characteristic, Dan pictures a Second Death class in certain instances. Verse 17 is marvelously expressed to show this trait. The adder *bites* the horse’s *heels* (backbiting is *unseen* but *felt!*).

Verse 18 is understandable only from the spiritual standpoint.

**Gen. 49:19 Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last.**

Jacob blessed Gad. From the military standpoint, Gad showed tenacity in warfare and the ability to bounce back from seeming defeat. Gad’s land was east of the Jordan River, being one of the 2 1/2 tribes on the east. Gad lost that land at one point but will gain it back.

**Gen. 49:20 Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties.**

Verse 20 pertains to Asher’s blessing. Asher had a fertile land area. “As for Asher, his bread shall be fat” is the thought. Prosperity is indicated here and elsewhere (“Let him [Asher] dip his foot in oil”—Deut. 33:24). “Royal dainties” would be delicacies fit for the royal table and prosperity. The name Asher means “glad,” “happy,” “content.” Under normal circumstances, people who have more of this world’s goods are happy.

**Gen. 49:21 Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words.**

In Naphtali's blessing, the expression "goodly words" refers to his territory near the Sea of Galilee where Jesus did most of his preaching. In regard to Zebulun and Naphtali and the First Advent, the Prophet Isaiah said, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land [Galilee] of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" (Isa. 9:2). Spiritually speaking, "goodly words" pertain to those who are eloquent and give good counsel.

At this point, we can give an overview of verses 3-21. With several of the blessings, an animal was used. Judah was a lion, Issachar was a donkey, Dan was an adder, Naphtali was a hind, and, still to come, Benjamin was a wolf. Along another line, Zebulun was an object: a boat.

**Gen. 49:22 Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:**

Joseph's blessing covers verses 22-26. Verse 22 refers to his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who occupied much of Israel, and their "branches" (one half of Manasseh) went over the Jordan River, a boundary or "wall" of Canaan proper. Joseph had a double representation in his *two* sons. As a "well," the Jordan River was used limitedly to water the land back there.

**Gen. 49:23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him:**

Verse 23 refers to Joseph's brothers, who had harassed and verbally persecuted him. Another translation says, "The archers sorely harassed him." In giving these blessings, Jacob showed the unkind nature of some of the brothers, who really wanted to kill Joseph.

**Gen. 49:24 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:)**

In Old Testament times, a bow and arrows were needed to hunt for food as well as to protect from enemies. Therefore, to lose the bow would be devastating. When Joseph became prime minister of Egypt, his "bow" was strengthened beyond his inheritance as Jacob's son. A bow can lose its resiliency but not Joseph's. A "bow" can also be a bow of promise. The "bow" was given when Joseph had the dreams, which showed that his brethren would bow down to him, but before he was made governor of Egypt, Joseph got exactly the opposite experience.

The spiritual significance is that Jesus, the antitypical Joseph, was disesteemed by his brothers. Jesus is appointed to be prime minister of the *universe*, and he, too, first had an opposite experience from his brethren. Joseph is a marvelous typical picture because of the detail.

God strengthened Joseph's "arms" to support his brothers during the famine. Of course strong hands are needed for proficiency with the bow and arrow. Joseph was strengthened for executive power and administrative capabilities, and in addition, he represents Jesus, the "arm of the LORD" (Isa. 53:1). Joseph was prophetically represented in Ephraim and Manasseh, his two "arms."

*Antitype of Ephraim and Manasseh*

When the two tribes are considered *separately*, apart from the other tribes, Ephraim represents the more numerous Great Company of the Gospel Age, and Manasseh pictures the Great Company of prior ages, especially the Jewish Age. (Note: In regard to the *Kingdom Age*, Ephraim represents the Great Company of the Gospel Age, and Manasseh pictures the Ancient Worthies with one half on each side of the Jordan River, showing their ultimate spiritual inheritance.) The Great Company will have a role beyond the Millennium into the future ages.



After the Kingdom, the Little Flock will be employed in other realms, for the earth will be given to the children of men at the end of the Kingdom. The Little Flock will have a creative role in regard to future worlds and dispensations, whereas the Great Company of both ages will be confined to earth for eternity. For instance, there will be occasional accidents in the billions of years to come. Nothing will “hurt nor destroy” in the *normal* sense, but every step will not be so divinely ordered as to preclude all accidents (Isa. 11:9). Although there will be no more “death,” there can be *accidental* deaths from which the people will be restored. And if a person breaks an arm, it will be fixed. Some kind of arrangement is needed for such things. The resurrection will be made possible by God’s having some mechanism in the spiritual realm to bring forth all who have ever lived. That mechanism is in *God’s* hands. The Great Company of both ages will be the connecting link between the spiritual and the earthly—not only in the Kingdom but also in the ages beyond—as “technicians.”

God is mathematical and orderly. The order of rank of the resurrected classes is as follows: Little Flock, Ancient Worthies, Great Company of prior ages, Great Company of Gospel Age. The Little Flock and the Ancient Worthies will go to other realms at the end of the Millennium. God has a name and purpose for all universes. At the end of the Kingdom, all of mankind who live on into the ages of ages will be “bulls” and kings, but technicians (the Great Company) will be needed (Psa. 51:19).

Jesus is “the shepherd, the stone of Israel” from God. At Bethel, Jacob’s head (picturing his mental faculties) rested on a stone pillow, and he had the vision of a ladder with angels ascending and descending before God. Following the dream, he anointed the stone. God is called “the Rock,” and Jesus is called “that Rock” (Deut. 32:4; 1 Cor. 10:4). God is the Great Shepherd; Jesus is the Good Shepherd (Heb. 13:20; John 10:11). “Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a *stone*, a tried *stone*, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation” (Isa. 28:16). It will be *God’s* Kingdom but in the hands of Jesus.

**Gen. 49:25** 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:

“The God of Jacob shall help thee” (paraphrase). Joseph would be blessed with celestial blessings “of heaven above”; that is, the atmosphere and heavens would cooperate in bringing blessings of rain, dew, etc. In addition, Joseph would have blessings from the “deep” (the earth); that is, he would be blessed with trees, fruitage, crops, etc. In other words, the growths would be supplied from underneath as well as from above. These natural blessings were also manifested in Joseph’s children, who *far outnumbered* those of the other brothers, for Manasseh had thousands and Ephraim had ten thousands. And geographically, Ephraim and Manasseh had *much* territory. Joseph would also have “blessings of the breasts” (providing nourishment and shelter, nurturing and giving suck) and “blessings of ... the womb” (giving birth). Joseph was blessed *profusely*. Imagine how the other sons felt upon hearing this pronouncement! The spiritual application is that Jesus, the antitypical Joseph, will inherit everything—all blessings.

**Gen. 49:26** 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.

Jacob said that his blessings prevailed above those of his progenitors (Abraham and Isaac). Abraham, the father of the faithful, was the progenitor of the seed of promise (both heavenly and earthly), yet if we consider Joseph as Jesus, then the blessings of promise are *far more abundant*, for Jesus will have blessings of heaven as well as of earth. Jacob was conferring upon the head of Joseph the blessings inherited from his progenitors. Jacob’s honor was in being called “Israel,” the name of the people, but Abraham had a more honorable position in that he

pictured the Gospel Age blessing. However, Joseph's inheritance exceeded that of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—it was greater than that of his progenitors. This statement was true of Jesus.

Verse 26 shows growth and change in Jacob's attitude. When he first entered Egypt, he said, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been" (Gen. 47:9). Now he said he was highly blessed. This statement manifested a more mature appreciation of how God, in His providence, had used Joseph not only to preserve Israel in the famine period but also to indicate a great blessing in the future.

Verse 26 emphasizes the *spiritual* aspect, that is, Jesus, who was the "crown" prince of God. Jesus "was separate from his brethren." "The utmost bound of the everlasting hills" signifies beyond the earth, extending into the limitless future.

**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.**

Benjamin, Rachel's second-born son, received his blessing and prophecy. For the meaning, see Appendix 1, "The High Priest's Breastplate," in *The Keys of Revelation*. "In the morning" refers to an incident that occurred early in Israel's history, in the judgeship era. The Benjaminites strayed far from the Lord when some of them engaged in a homosexual incident and the abuse of a Levite's concubine, and the rest of the tribe of Benjamin defended the offenders when the other tribes demanded punishment (Judges chapters 19-21). As a result, the other tribes went to war against Benjamin and, after suffering great losses themselves, soundly defeated the Benjaminites, almost decimating them. To preserve the tribe, elders suggested that the surviving Benjaminites be allowed to capture daughters of Shiloh at a festival. The rapacious way they seized the women was likened to a ravening wolf, which is rapacious for its prey.

The prophecy continued for Benjamin: "At night he shall divide the spoil." This good part of the blessing, or prophecy, referred to a much later time when Israel was under Persian control. Queen Esther and Mordecai, of the tribe of Benjamin, were instrumental in having Haman hung on the very gallows he had intended for the Israelites. All of the tribes shared in the blessing of being spared.

**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.**

Verse 28 is a summary. Jacob gave blessings to his 12 sons. Several of the blessings contained derogatory statements, but they were blessings because each son (or tribe) did get land apportioned—even Simeon and Levi got scattered cities.

This verse is the first reference to the "twelve tribes of Israel." This statement, which was made in connection with Jacob's imminent death, was the birth of the nation from a technical standpoint with Jacob as the father. Jacob's (Israel's) sons comprised the nation. From another standpoint, the beginning of the nation came in connection with the Exodus.

**Gen. 49:29 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,**

**Gen. 49:30 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.**

The burial cave in Hebron was where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah had already been buried. Much detail about the cave was given earlier in the Book of Genesis, and now

much detail was repeated for a second witness. The amount of detail seems to indicate that this site may play an important role when the Ancient Worthies are brought forth. In other words, the cave is a historic, geographic location where something important may occur. It is unusual that both the Arabs and the Jews use the *same* structure there for their services.

**Gen. 49:31** There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah.

Of the women, only Sarah's death circumstances were given, probably because she was the most outstanding. She is mentioned in Hebrews 11:11 as an Ancient Worthy.

**Gen. 49:32** The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Heth.

Verses 29-32 show that the Hittites were a factor in that area of Canaan (now called Hebron). The Hittites had come from Anatolia, Turkey.

**Gen. 49:33** 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.

Jacob died peacefully after being given just enough strength to pronounce the blessings. He was sitting with his legs over the edge of the bed, and when finished, he drew his feet up into the bed, lay back, and died. After having the satisfaction of accomplishing this pronouncement for the Lord, he experienced a complete feeling of peace.

Jacob yielded up the "ghost" (spirit)—similar to the way Jesus' death is described: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost" (Luke 23:46).

**Gen. 50:1** And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him.

It is nice that the Holy Spirit included this touch of emotionalism. Joseph also wept when his brothers came for food. Jacob's and Joseph's love for each other was mutually strong.

**Gen. 50:2** And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel.

Jacob's body was embalmed—a process that was necessary for transport to Israel. Joseph had authority for physicians to be in his household, and he commanded them to do the embalming.

**Gen. 50:3** 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.

The days of mourning were a period of 70 days, of which the first 40 were used to embalm Jacob.

**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,

**Gen. 50:5** 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.

Why did Joseph ask Pharaoh indirectly (through others) to take Jacob's body to Canaan for

burial? The Egyptians had a cleansing period in regard to death. Those who touched a dead body had to remain separate for a while. Also, Joseph was with his father in Goshen, which was some distance from Pharaoh. Here is an interesting detail: before leaving Canaan, Jacob dug a grave for himself in the rock of the cave.

**Gen. 50:6** And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.

Pharaoh said that Joseph could go. This verse shows the value that was put on an oath or promise even in Egypt, a heathen land. Pharaoh wanted Joseph to keep his oath in regard to burying his father.

**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,

It was *most unusual* for such an entourage to leave Egypt to bury a non-Egyptian. Included were *all* the servants of Pharaoh and *all* the elders of the land of Egypt. The Pharaoh at this time was still very sympathetic to Joseph, even though some years had passed since the famine.

**Gen. 50:8** 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.

**Gen. 50:9** And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company.

Only the small children and probably some of the women remained behind.

**Gen. 50:10** 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.

The *father* of Joseph was being honored, but this was out of respect for *Joseph*. In Egypt, the Egyptians had mourned for 70 days (including 40 days of embalming). Now, after the journey to Canaan, there was an additional seven-day period of “*great and very sore lamentation*.” The mourning was not superficial—even after the 70 days in Egypt and the excitement of the journey. The length of mourning shows that the Egyptians regarded Joseph in a very high light. They considered that he had saved their lives.

The threshing floor of Atad was “beyond Jordan” from Moses’ perspective east of Jordan (he never entered the Promised Land). Hence Atad was really in Israel and not far from Hebron and the cave of Machpelah.

This most unusual entourage is not recorded in secular history. So many important persons left Egypt that it was as if all went except Pharaoh himself. It was customary for the Egyptians to have elaborate, long funeral services for important leaders. The Jews, too, are characteristically demonstrative.

**Gen. 50:11** 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 Abel-mizraim, which is beyond Jordan.

The Canaanites were so impressed with the great numbers who were mourning that they named the threshing floor of Atad Abel-mizraim (“The mourning of the Egyptians”). *Mizraim* means “Egyptians.” With the chariots, the horsemen, and all of the Egyptians, the mourning appeared to the Canaanites to be *Egyptian*.

After the burial, the large entourage returned to Egypt, where the Israelites stayed for almost 200 more years (they were in Egypt for 215 years until the Exodus). During that time, the mourning was recalled because of the name given by the Canaanites.

The history that Moses later recorded was put in the *side* of the Ark (Deut. 31:26). (The tablets with the Ten Commandments were *in* the Ark itself.) Moses collected the history, recorded it on a scroll, and put the scroll in the side of the Ark to be carried for future posterity. Thus Moses wrote later about what had happened earlier. For that reason, a number of places were given two names—the earlier name and the name at the time Moses recorded the event.

**Gen. 50:12** And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them:

Jacob's sons followed his instructions for the burial.

**Gen. 50:13** 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.

**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.

The entire entourage returned to Egypt as a company.

**Gen. 50:15** 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.

At the funeral, the brothers were sort of in a trauma, but when they returned to Egypt, they became fearful as to how Joseph would treat them in their father's absence.

**Gen. 50:16** And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,

**Gen. 50:17** 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.

The brothers sent a messenger to Joseph saying Jacob had commanded them, before he died, to tell Joseph that his father was asking him to forgive their sin, and the brothers themselves also asked Joseph to forgive them. Joseph wept.

The brothers' reaction shows they did not realize the *nobility* of Joseph's character. It is a fact that a person cannot perceive the plane of thought and living of an individual who is above him. He cannot really empathize sufficiently because he has not reached that level himself. Thus the brothers were judging Joseph according to their own lower level of thinking as to what they would have done in his place. Joseph had sincerely voiced his forgiveness years earlier, but now the brothers wanted more assurance. Their fear shows the *great* position of authority that Joseph still retained. He could have done them real injury if he had wished. Moreover, the sin the brothers had committed against Joseph continued to bother their consciences; the scar was still there. Notice that the basis for forgiveness is *asking* for it.

**Gen. 50:18** And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants.

**Gen. 50:19** And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?

**Gen. 50:20** 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.

**Gen. 50:21** Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

Joseph had a beautiful attitude. He saw God's purpose behind the whole experience: "to save much people alive" both in Egypt and in other lands. Joseph said, "Fear not: ... I will nourish you, and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke "kindly" to them ("to their hearts"—King James margin). Because of his manner, Joseph's verbal assurance touched their hearts. His words were similar to what he had told his brothers originally, when he had revealed his identity. His heart had not changed. What he felt then, he still felt. Incidentally, Joseph was emotional by nature, but the emotionalism was *schooled*.

**Gen. 50:22** And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years.

Joseph lived 110 years (this fact is mentioned again in verse 26). Joseph's age is the last exact, unbroken chronological link. The gap between his life and that of Moses can be figured out, however. Also, Joseph's age shows that the life spans were decreasing. Jacob lived to age 147. There is a 65-year gap before the next chronological link.

**Gen. 50:23** 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.

Joseph lived to see his great grandchildren of both Ephraim and Manasseh.

**Gen. 50:24** 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.

When Joseph was dying, he told his brothers, "God will surely visit you. When He does, carry my bones from here to the Promised Land." The statement "God will surely visit you" was prophetic (Exod. 3:16,17).

**Gen. 50:25** 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.

Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel that they would transport his bones. All made the oath, and it was carried out (see Exod. 13:19).

**Gen. 50:26** So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Joseph was embalmed and temporarily put in a coffin in Egypt—until the Exodus.