



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

The Book of Genesis

Lesson Number 42



TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE= International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV= Literal Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV= Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

----- GREEK LEXICON LEGEND -----

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT = Liddell Scott Lexicon, THAYER = Thayer's Greek Lexicon, LEH = LEH Lexicon, GINGRICH = Gingrich Lexicon

THE INSPIRED RECORD OF THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS: THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, MANKIND, SIN, THE FIRST CHOSEN AND BLESSED NATION, THE FIRST CURSE, THE FIRST PROMISE, AND THE FIRST FAITH.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

THE LORD APPEARS TO ISAAC

Gen 26:24 ¹¹ And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for My servant Abraham's sake. ²⁵ And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well. ²⁶ Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army. ²⁷ And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? ²⁸ And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; ²⁹ That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the LORD. ³⁰ And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. ³¹ And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. ³² And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. ³³ And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day. ³⁴ And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: ³⁵ Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah." (Genesis 26:1-23)

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

After going to Beersheba, the Lord appears to Isaac. This is the second time the Lord appeared to him (Gen 26:2). This time, the Lord confirms He will be with Isaac, bless him, and multiply his seed. In response, Isaac builds an altar, calls upon the name of the Lord, pitches his tent, and his servants dig a well. At that point,

Abimelech came to him, acknowledging that he had seen the Lord is with Isaac, and pleading that he make an agreement with him not to do him harm. Isaac responds by making a feast for them, after which the requested agreement was made. Then Isaac sent them away, keeping their association at a minimum. The same day, Isaac's servants report they have found water.

He named the well "Sheba," which prompted the naming of the city Beersheba, the southmost border of the promised land. This name was a permanent one. It is then reported that Esau took two wives of the Hittites, which action caused grief to mind to both Isaac and Rebekah.

SOMETHING TO NOTE

The Lord appears to Isaac assuring him He would bless and multiply him for Abraham's sake, Abimelech again confronts Isaac, and Esau marries – Given O. Blakely

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To this point in the book of Genesis, the Lord has focused His attention on special people. Following the fall of man, and the beginning of the multiplication of the race, the record represents the Lord as focusing on the

following seven people:

- ➡ Abel (Gen 4:4)
- ➡ Cain (Gen 4:5-15)
- ➡ Enoch (Gen 5:22-24)
- ➡ Noah (Gen 6-9)
- ➡ Abraham (Gen 12 through 25)
- ➡ Lot (Gen 19)
- ➡ Isaac (Gen 24-26)

Of all of the masses of people in the world during the first 1800-2000 years, God had revealed dealings with only seven men, one of them disassociated from any blessing (Cain). During that same period, there were also **three women** with whom He had direct dealings:

- ➡ Hagar (Gen 16:7-13; 21:17-19)
- ➡ Sarah (Gen 18:11)
- ➡ Rebekah (Gen 25:22-23).

During the first two millennia of time, God is recorded as having personal dealings with ten people, and two of them were not covenantal transactions (Cain and Hagar).

This helps to shape an accurate

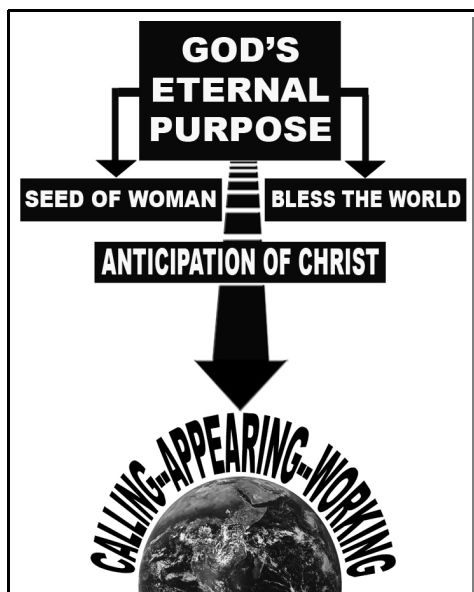
picture of the Living God. He obviously does not view everyone in the same manner.

To this point in Scripture, Whatever may be said about the love, mercy, kindness, and grace of God these Divine characteristics are represented as being expressed selectively. **Thus far, they are never represented as being directed toward all men.** It is true that in this day of salvation, these traits are offered to all men – but that is only because of the accomplishments of the Lord Jesus Christ, together with His present reign at the right hand of God. **Were it not the Christ Jesus, our situation today would be no different than it was with mankind during the time of Abraham and Isaac.**

I want to be careful and deliberate at this point. It is not that God is Himself not gracious, merciful, and full of goodness and kindness. That is His nature, to be sure. **However, the focus of those traits upon any mortal, at anytime, required the prospect of a Savior – even during the time of Isaac.**

THE LORD APPEARED UNTO ISAAC

Gen 26:24a *"And the LORD appeared unto him the same night. . ."*



By saying *"the same night,"* the text means the Lord appeared to Isaac upon his arrival at Beersheba (Gen 26:23).

Although the text does not say this appearance was a dream or a vision, I assume that since it was during the night that this was the manner of the appearance. This is the Lord's second recorded appearance to Isaac (Gen 26:2).

The reason for these appearances was to establish the certainty of the things to come. There was no other way to establish them, for all of the outward circumstances appeared to contradict what God had promised. Add to that the spiritually primitive nature of the times, coupled with only an introductory knowledge of God, and it

should be apparent why these appearances took place. They were not intended to establish a precedent for all times.

AN UNDERLYING PURPOSE

Appearances of the Lord must be considered within the context of His *"eternal purpose."* While many of these appearances revealed things that were not obviously associated with the coming of Christ, that coming was at the root of their cause.

This *"eternal purpose"* was in place before the foundation of the world. It is for this reason that believers are apprized, *"God . . . Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ"*

Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim 1:8-9). This being the case the various involvements of the Lord with men was actually driven by the purpose He *"purposed in Himself"* (Eph 1:9). All of these involvements had to do with the positioning and preparation of people for *"the fulness of the time,"* when God would send forth His Son into the world (Gal 4:4). **From God's point of view, these appearances were in anticipation of the coming "Seed."** From man's point of view, they were in preparation for that coming, even though God's *"eternal purpose"* was not made crystal clear in those appearances.

Recorded and Specified Appearances of the "Lord" or "God"

- ➔ TO ABRAHAM: Gen 12:7; Gen 17:1; Gen 18:1; Acts 7:2
- ➔ TO ISAAC: Gen 26:2; Gen 26:24
- ➔ TO JACOB: Gen 23:7; Gen 35:9
- ➔ TO ISRAEL: Ex 16:10; Lev 9:23; Num 14:10; Num 16:19; Num 16:42
- ➔ MOSES AND AARON: Num 20:6
- ➔ MOSES AND JOSHUA: Deut 31:15
- ➔ SAMUEL: 1 Sam 3:21
- ➔ DAVID: 2 Chron 3:1
- ➔ SOLOMON: 1 Kgs 3:5; 1 Kgs 9:2; 2 Chron 7:12
- ➔ MICAHIAH: 1 Kgs 22:19-23
- ➔ AMOS: Amos 9:1

Visions of God

- ➔ EZEKIEL: Ezek 1:1; 8:3; 40:2
- ➔ DANIEL: Dan 7:13-22

Appearances of the Risen Christ

- ➔ MARY MAGDALENE: Mk 16:9
- ➔ THE WOMEN WHO CAME TO THE TOMB – Matt 28:9-10

All of these involvements had to do with the positioning and preparation of people for "the fulness of the time," when God would send forth His Son into the world

- ➔ TWO ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS: Mk 16:12;
- ➔ THE ELEVEN: Mk 16:14
- ➔ THE DISCIPLES: John 20:20; 21:1,14
- ➔ THE APOSTLES: Acts 1:3;
- ➔ SAUL OF TARSUS/PAUL: Acts 9:17; Acts 26:15,16; 1 Cor 15:8

- ➔ CEPHAS: 1 Cor 15:5
- ➔ ABOVE 500 BRETHERN: 1 Cor 15:6
- ➔ JAMES: 1 Cor 15:7
- ➔ JOHN: Rev 1:12-15

Appearances of angels

- ➔ MOSES: Ex 3:2; Acts 7:30,35
- ➔ GIDEON: Judges 6:12
- ➔ SAMSON'S MOTHER: Judges 13:3,21
- ➔ JOSEPH: Matt 1:20
- ➔ ZECHARIAS: Luke 1:11
- ➔ JESUS CHRIST: Lk 22:43
- ➔ CORNELIUS: Acts 10:3; 11:13
- ➔ PETER: Acts 10:7-11
- ➔ PAUL: Acts 27:23

Things of another order appearing

- ➔ ELIJAH AND ELISHA: 2 Kgs 2:11
- ➔ EZEKIEL: Ezek 10:1; Ezek 10:8
- ➔ ON PENTECOST: Acts 2:3

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Notice how appearances diminished with the commencement of the Gospel. (*"Gospel,"* as in Mark 1:1). With the possible exception of the book of the Revelation (Rev 5:1-7), there were no appearances or likenesses of God Himself – as took place with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Israel, Moses, Aaron, Samuel, David, Solomon, Micaiah, and Amos.

The Promises Given to the Fathers

In the case of the fathers – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – the word delivered to them all pertained to the future.

- ➔ *"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."* (Gen 12:2)
- ➔ *"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."* (Gen 12:3)
- ➔ *"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."* (Gen 13:16)
- ➔ *"Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I WILL give it unto thee."* (Gen 13:17)
- ➔ *"And I WILL make my covenant between me and thee, and WILL multiply thee exceedingly."* (Gen 17:2)
- ➔ *"And I WILL make thee exceeding fruitful, and I WILL make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee."* (Gen 17:6)

- ➡ *"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 17:7)*
- ➡ *"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 17:8)*
- ➡ *"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." (Gen 17:16)*
- ➡ *"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 22:17)*
- ➡ *"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 26:3)*
- ➡ *"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 26:4)*
- ➡ *"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 26:4)*
- ➡ *"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." (Gen 35:12)*

I have taken the time to list the promises made to the fathers to confirm their consistency – **they all pertained to what God WOULD do in the future.**

In our day, there has, by presentation and human reasoning, been such a corruption of the nature, effects, and intent of salvation, that the Gospel is viewed by the modern church as a creedal system rather than "glad tidings of good things."

The Promises Delivered by the Prophets

The same was true of the Messianic promises delivered by the Prophets. They emphasized what God **WOULD** do. Here are some samples of those promises. (Isa 11:3-4; 40:11; 3; 42:1-4; 53:1-12; Jer 23:5-6; 33:13; Dan 9:27; Hag 2:7; Zech 3:8; Mal 3:1).

Peter summarized this matter in his words to an audience in the Temple court: *"Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days"* (Acts 3:24).

THE DISTINCTION OF THE NEW COVENANT

The infrequency, and sometimes absence, of this kind of appearance is evidence of the nature of the New Covenant. **Everything presently, revolves around a message** – *"The Gospel of Christ,"* by which we are saved (1 Cor 15:2). This Gospel is also referred to as the following:

- ➡ *"The Gospel of the grace of God"* (Acts 20:24).
- ➡ *"The Gospel of God"* (Rom 1:1; 1 Tim 1:1).
- ➡ *"The Gospel of His Son"* (Rom 1:9).
- ➡ *"The Gospel of peace"* (Rom 10:15; Eph 6:15).
- ➡ *"Glad tidings as of good things"* (Rom 10:15).
- ➡ *"The Gospel of your salvation"* (Eph 1:13).
- ➡ *"The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (2 Thess 1:8).

- ➡ *"The glorious Gospel of the blessed God"* (1 Tim 1:1).

In all of the above, the word is not a message of what is to come, but what already has occurred – *"a more sure word of prophecy"* (2 Pet 1:19). It is a word of what has occurred – a report, announcement, and good news.

What Has Taken Place Is Announced in the Gospel

- ➡ SIN HAS BEEN PUT AWAY. (Heb 9:26)
- ➡ RECONCILIATION HAS BEEN MADE. (Heb 2:17)
- ➡ SATAN HAS BEEN DESTROYED. (Heb 2:14)
- ➡ PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS HAVE BEEN PLUNDERED. (Col 2:15)
- ➡ PEACE HAS BEEN MADE. (Col 1:20)
- ➡ THE LAW HAS BEEN ENDED AS A MEANS TO RIGHTEOUSNESS. (Rom 10:4)
- ➡ JESUS HAS BEEN EXALTED ABOVE ALL. (Phil 2:9; 1 Pet 3:22).
- ➡ JESUS IS LIVING TO MAKE INTERCESSION FOR THOSE COMING TO GOD THROUGH HIM. (Heb 7:25).
- ➡ JESUS IS A GREAT HIGH PRIEST WHO CAN BE TOUCHED WITH THE FEELING OF OUR INFIRMITIES – A MINISTER OF THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY. (Heb 7:14-15; 8:1-2)
- ➡ HE HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE CHURCH AS THE HEAD OVER ALL THINGS. (Eph 1:20-23)
- ➡ HE IS PRESENTLY THE BLESSED AND ONLY POTENTATE, THE KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. (1 Tim 6:15)

None of these things are being

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revealed overtly, by appearances, or by visions. Their truth is contained in a message, which is to be believed, embraced, and kept in the memory. That message is “*the power of God unto salvation*,” from its beginning unto its total fulfillment (Rom 1:16).

In our day, there has, by presentation and human reasoning,

been such a corruption of the nature, effects, and intent of salvation, that the Gospel is viewed by the modern church as a creedal system rather than “*glad tidings of good things*.” It is further being withheld from the church under the misconception that it is only intended for the lost. Religious leaders appear totally ignorant of the fact that the Gospel is the subject of apostolic

exposition. It is the overriding theme of every Epistle.

This obscuring of the Gospel has given rise to all manners of humanly devised plans, systems, and methods. These methodologies cover such things as evangelism, church planting, and recovery systems. These have now upstaged the Gospel of Christ. Church leaders that are considered successful are generally noted for their organization and administrative skills – not their preaching.

The result has been that the nominal church has become mired in the mud of carnality, and the Gospel of Christ has been placed on the shelf of neglect.

THE LORD’S PRESENCE, BLESSING, AND MULTIPLICATION

^{24b} . . . 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.*”

The revelations and promises of God are always focused on what He is doing. They are never applied to the plans or purposes of men. During the times prior to the Scriptures, God would repeat His promises again and again to all of the generations to whom they applied. In our text, Abraham’s first generation is informed of the promises given to Abraham, which were intended for His seed as well as Himself.

As simplistic as it may appear, religious men have had great difficulty perceiving that God’s promises and commitments revolve around His purpose. Men have the tendency, inherited from Adam, to consider their own desires as the preeminent ones. However, this is a delusion, and there is not the smallest segment of truth in it.

What the Lord now says to Isaac has to do with His purpose, not merely the well-being and success of Isaac.

I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM
“ . . . and said, *I am the God of Abraham thy father . . .*”

This is the first time the expressions “*God of Abraham*” or “*God of Abraham thy Father*” are found in Scripture.

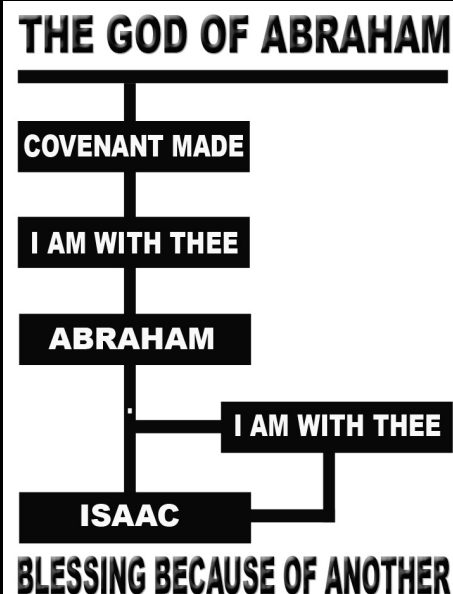
It is true that later God will be known as “*the God of Isaac*” (Gen 28:13; Ex 3:6,14; 4:5; Matt 22:32; Mk 12:26; Lk 20:37; Acts 7:32). However, at this point it would have been inappropriate to speak in such a manner, for the blessing of Isaac was linked to the promise made to Abraham. It did not stand on its own.

It is the Divine manner of God to speak of His promises from the standpoint of their origin – the One upon whom they depend – and His revealed purpose.

The foundational point of God’s promises is not the individual or individuals to whom they are addressed. They are, in a sense, incidental. It is what God is doing – His purpose – that is the point. In the case of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the real point was the

“Seed” of Abraham through whom the world would be blessed (Gen 12:3), and the “*Star*” that would come out of Jacob (Num 24:17) – the coming Messiah. He, as the angel of the Lord declared to John, “*is the Spirit of prophecy*” (Rev 19:10).

I AM WITH THEE
“*...fear not, for I am with thee...*”



The reason why Isaac had no need to fear, and could live with the confidence that God was with him, was because He was Abraham's promised heir. His connection with Abraham was the secret. The Divine order was "ABRAHAM and his seed," not "the seed, and Abraham." Thus we read, "Now to **Abraham AND his seed** were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal 3:16). As is evident from that text, those in Christ are also Abraham's seed – not by their own doing, anymore than Isaac received the blessing because of his doing. He was linked to Abraham by miraculous birth. Those in Christ are linked to Abraham by their faith. **Those**

he would be safe and productive.

I WILL BLESS THEE

" . . . and will bless thee . . . "

This was an extension of the covenant God had made with Abraham (Gen 12:2; 22:17). **The blessing of God meant that Isaac would prosper in whatever he did.** The necessary framework of his doing was the revealed will of the Lord. God would not allow anything to come upon him that would interfere with the covenant He had made with Abraham and his seed.

I WILL MULTIPLY THEE

" . . . and multiply thy seed . . . "

This was also in strict accord with

is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom 11:23-26).

The Lord always works in view of His purpose. Even when He divided the sons of Adam, it was "according to the number of the children of Israel" (Deut 32:8).

FOR MY SERVANT ABRAHAM'S SAKE

" . . . for My servant Abraham's sake." Other versions read, "because of my servant Abraham," ^{BBE} and "because of my promise to Abraham, my servant." ^{NLT}

Our first exposure to this kind of reasoning is found in the Lord's dialog with Abraham concerning the destruction of Sodom. Abraham asked the Lord if He would destroy the righteous with the wicked. He presented the possibility of fifty righteous being found in those cities, and asked if the Lord would spare the city for the sake of fifty righteous people. He then asked concerning the possibility of forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, and ten. In His response to Abraham, God said, "I will not do it **for forty's sake**;" "I will not destroy it **for twenty's sake**;" "I will not destroy it **for ten's sake**" (Gen 18:29,31,32). **That is our first exposure to this aspect of the Divine nature: God reacts to certain people and circumstances because of someone disassociated with the contemptible situation, who is acceptable in His eyes.**

In the case of Abraham's plea, there was not a demonstration of that

That is our first exposure to this aspect of the Divine nature: God reacts to certain people and circumstances because of someone disassociated with the contemptible situation, who is acceptable in His eyes.

who do not "*the faith of Abraham*" (Rom 4:16) are not associated with him, and therefore are not associated with Jesus Christ. That has some arresting implications, but men do need to ponder them.

God's promise to be with Isaac was because of his involvement in His covenant. It assumed that he would remain in the land of Canaan as God has instructed him, and would rely upon His promises as Abraham did.

The Implications

The Lord has no beneficial associations with anyone who is not found in Christ, any more than the covenantal blessing vouchsafed to Abraham would be conferred on someone who was not of his seed–i.e. Ishmael or Esau.

The Lord being "with" Isaac meant

the covenant the Lord had made with Abraham (Gen 17:2; 22:17).

The expansion of Abraham's seed was for at least two reasons.

- ➔ To have sufficient people to fully occupy the promised land of Canaan. Even when they first occupied the land, God did not allow them to totally drive out the occupants of the land because they did not have sufficient people to fill it. "And the LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee **by little and little**: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee" (Deut 7:22).
- ➔ In anticipation of them being grafted into their own olive tree after some of them had been cut off. "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God

Divine quality, for the minimum of ten righteous people could not be found in Sodom. Even so, the deliverance of Lot from the destruction of Sodom came because, as it is written, *"God remembered Abraham"* (Gen 19:29).

However, in our text, the commitment to be with Isaac, bless him, and multiply him, is made for the sake of Abraham.

This is not the last reference to this kind of Divine commitment.

A DIVINE TRAIT REVEALED

Throughout Scripture, this Divine trait is revealed: **the fact that God deals with some people and circumstances because of someone else.**

- ➡ The ground was cursed for the sake of Adam (Gen 3:17).
- ➡ When Lot was delivered out of Sodom, it was because God *"remembered Abraham"* (Gen 19:29).
- ➡ Laban saw that he was **blessed for the sake of Jacob** (Gen 30:7).
- ➡ Potiphar's household was blessed for the sake of Joseph (Gen 39:5).
- ➡ Pharaoh and the Egyptians were judged for the sake of Israel (Ex 18:8).
- ➡ David sought to bless anyone left of the house of Saul *"for Jonathan's sake"* (2 Sam 9:1,7).
- ➡ God did not divide the kingdom of Israel because of Solomon's sin until after he had died, doing so **for David his father's sake** (1 Kgs 11:12-13).
- ➡ In the division of Israel, one tribe was especially kept **for "David's sake"** (1 Kgs 11:31-32).
- ➡ God made Solomon to be *"prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept My commandments and My statutes"* (1 Kgs 11:34).

- ➡ God set a moral and spiritual lamp in Jerusalem *"for David's sake"* (1 Kgs 15:4).
- ➡ God *"would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him always a light, and to his children"* (2 Kgs 8:19).
- ➡ God defended the city of Jerusalem for His *"servant David's sake"* (2 Kgs 19:34; Isa 37:35).
- ➡ God added fifteen years to the life of Hezekiah, and defended the city of Jerusalem for His *"servant David's sake"* (2 Kgs 20:6).
- ➡ Knowing the nature of God, the Psalmist prayed, *"For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed."* (Psa 132:10)
- ➡ God said He preserved the nation of Israel *"for Jacob my servant's sake"* (Isa 45:4).
- ➡ God will shorten days of great tribulation *"for the elect's sake"* (Matt 24:22).

PRINCIPLE

In clear distinction from the Law, which constituted the words of the Old Covenant (Ex 34:28), the New Covenant is of a different kind, or order.

The Old Covenant

The Old Covenant was based upon the individuals carrying out the words of the covenant to the finest detail, and without a single violation. The Ten Commandments were the *"words of the covenant."* The covenant itself was the agreement of the people to consistently, and without fail, carry out those commandments. That agreement was expressed in Exodus 19:8: *"And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD"* (Ex 19:8). That agreement, or covenant, was, then, sealed with blood: *"And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words"* (Ex 24:8). The covenant God made with the people was simply this: *"All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye*

In our day, there has, by presentation and human reasoning, been such a corruption of the nature, effects, and intent of salvation, that the Gospel is viewed by the modern church as a creedal system rather than *"glad tidings of good things."*

- ➡ The saved are told, *"God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."* (Eph 4:32).
- ➡ There are sufferings that had been left behind for us, and they are experienced and endured *"for His body's sake, which is the church"* (Col 1:24).

SALVATION IS BUILT UPON THIS

may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers" (Deut 8:1). And again, *"Ye shall therefore keep My statutes, and My judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD"* (Lev 18:5). The fact that the first table of the Law was summarized in these words, *"And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy*

might" (Deut 6:5), meant that whatever God told them to do, they were to do. This included all of the ceremonial Law pertaining to feasts and clean and unclean distinctions.

The New Covenant is based upon faith, not man's accomplishments. That faith is placed in Jesus Christ, who

Himself is the Cause of and, and the One who bestows eternal life. Those who are saved, are saved because of, or for the sake of, Jesus Christ. The means through which that conferment takes place is faith, which alone can form a connection between Jesus and the One being saved. Thus, we are saved *"for the sake of Christ."*

Here, in Genesis, we are introduced to that marvelous principle. It is what makes salvation secure, just as the promises were made sure to Isaac because of Abraham. This is one of the reasons why Jesus is *"precious"* to those who believe (1 Pet 2:7). Everything really hinges on Him.

AN ALTAR, CALLING, DWELLING, AND A WELL

*"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.**"*

From the experiential point of view, the response of men to the revelation of God is very important. **In Scripture, men of faith never were exposed to God, only to go their way, resuming their lives in a normal manner.** Confrontations with God had an impact upon the souls of the sensitive.

HE BUILT AN ALTAR

Worship and Honor

*"And he **builded an altar there...**"*

This is the sixth time building an altar has been mentioned in Genesis. It is the first altar Isaac built.

➔ **NOAH:** UPON EXITING SAFELY FROM THE ARK. *"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."* (Gen 8:20)

➔ **ABRAHAM:** AFTER ARRIVING IN CANAAN AND HEARING THE PROMISE OF GOD. *"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."* (Gen 12:7)

➔ **ABRAHAM:** AFTER RECEIVING THE PROMISE OF GOD AND RELOCATING NEAR BETHEL. *"And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east:*

*and there he **builded an altar** unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD."* (Gen 12:8)

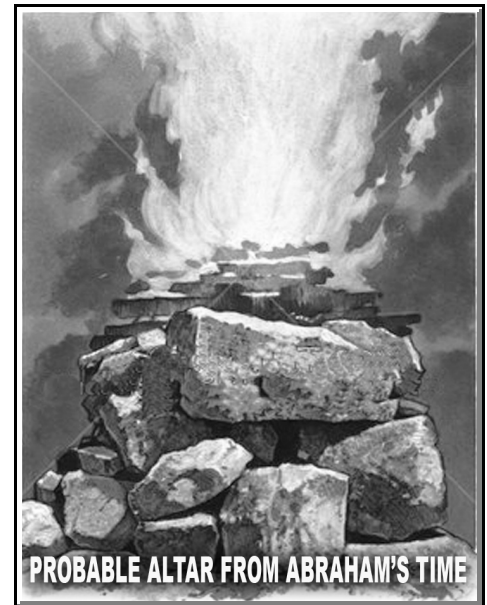
➔ **ABRAHAM:** AFTER BEING TOLD TO WALK THROUGH THE LAND. *"Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and **built there an altar** unto the LORD."* (Gen 13:18)

➔ **ABRAHAM:** WHEN ARRIVING AT THE DESIGNATED MOUNTAIN TO OFFER ISAAC. *"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."* (Gen 22:9)

➔ **ISAAC:** AFTER RECEIVING THE PROMISE OF GOD. *"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.**"* (Gen 26:25)

Observe that the records do not say that God commanded any of these men to build an altar. In fact, the first altar God commanded to be built pertained to the First Covenant (Deut 27:5). God also told Israel **how** to build an altar (Ex 20:24-25; Deut 27:5-8).

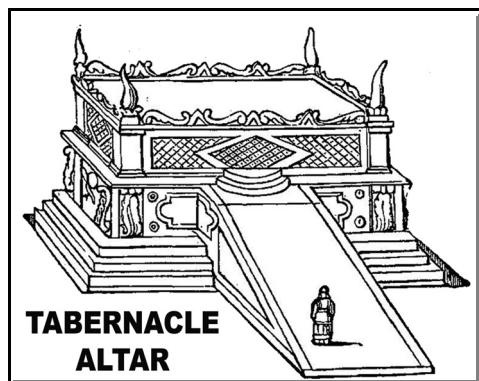
However, in the cases of Noah, Abraham, and Isaac, the building of an altar was not their response to a commandment. **Rather, it was their response of thankfulness for the working of the Lord, whether a deliverance, as in the case of Noah, or**



a promise.

It is supposed that Abraham built an altar of stones – whole stones. This is based upon the directives given by the Lord during later times (Deut 27:5-6; Josh 8:31), as well as the practice of holy men (1 Kgs 18:32).

When the Law was given, the altar was a fundamental piece of furniture. The directions for making the altar were given in Exodus 27:1-8. It was much more elaborate than the altars built by the patriarchs. The Tabernacle and Temple altars were also associated with certain fundamental concepts, with which early altars were not clearly identified: atonement (day of atonement), substitutionary sacrifices, priestly duties, a consuming fire that came from God, etc.



HE CALLED ON THE NAME OF THE LORD

Recognition and Dependence

" . . . and called upon the name of the LORD . . . "

This is the same thing Abraham did (Gen 12:8; 13:4; 21:33). The practice of calling upon the name of the Lord began during the days of Enos, son of Seth (Gen 4:26) – two hundred and thirty five years after Adam fell (ADAM BEGET SETH WHEN HE WAS 130, AND SETH BEGET ENOS WHEN HE WAS 105 – GEN 5:3,5).

What Does It Mean to Call Upon the Name of the Lord?

As used here, to *"call"* means to express absolute reliance on the Lord in some specific matter. It may be for deliverance, for sustenance, for direction, for protection, or for thanksgiving. It can be a cry for Divine intervention, or even revelation. **Calling upon the name of the Lord is the reflection of a heart that trusts in the Lord and earnestly seeks His attention.** When Ananias admonished Saul of Tarsus, he associated being baptized with calling upon the name of the Lord:

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). This can be correlated with having faith *"in the operation of God"* (Col 2:12). Paul also associated believing and responding to the Gospel with calling upon the name of the Lord (Rom 10:13). He additionally identified it as a manner of life for those who are in Christ Jesus: *"Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours"* (1 Cor 1:2).

In the salvation of God, total, and consistent reliance upon the Lord, as depicted in *"calling upon the name of the Lord,"* is the intended norm.

HE PITCHED HIS TENT THERE

Dwelling in the Presence

" . . . and pitched his tent there . . . "

After he had been told by God to walk through the land, Abraham also located his tent in the mountain from which his walk would begin (Gen 12:8).

By this we see that Isaac chose to live where there was a continual reminder of what the Lord has said to him. The place of blessing was his chosen habitation. This is equivalent to David preferring to dwell in *"the courts of the lord,"* even if he was but a *"doorkeeper"* (Psa 84:10). **It parallels believers setting their affection on things above, and not on things on the earth** (Col 3:1-2).

ISAAC'S SERVANTS DIGGER A WELL

Provision for Sustenance

" . . . and there Isaac's servants digged a well. "

Reflecting Isaac's intention to dwell in the place of blessing, his servants dug a well which would be a continual supply of refreshing water. Isaac knew that water would be required to sustain them where he had chosen to dwell, and therefore a well was dug.

Proper Responses

The record of Isaac is introducing us to proper responses to the blessings and promises of the Lord. **Under the administration of Babylon the Great, proper responses to God have become virtually unknown.** Men have no compunction about asking the Lord for help, and the desires of their hearts, but appear to have no sense of responding appropriately when their requests are graciously granted.

When God has dealt favorably with us, it is incumbent that we offer ourselves to Him, choosing to live and walk in the light in increased measures, remaining in the place of blessing. This is why the saints are admonished to present their bodies *"a living sacrifice to God, holy and acceptable"* (Rom 12:1-2). It is why they are admonished to be *"holy"* (1 Pet 1:15-16), and to walk *"as dear children"* (Eph 5:1).

Such responses are like calling on the name of the Lord, pitching our tent in the place of blessing, and digging a well for sustaining water.

ANOTHER CONFRONTATION WITH ABIMELECH

"²⁶ Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army. ²⁷ And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?"

Although Abimelech asked Isaac to leave, he will not give him rest. **This is the manner of the ungodly.** They do not want the godly around them. Yet, when their request is honored, they cannot see the saints as being peacemakers. They have no understanding about a preference for

peace, nor can they discern the motives of those who seek to please the Lord, and live in thanksgiving for the benefits they have received from Him. These traits are now confirmed to have been in Abimelech.

THE IMPRESSIVE ENTOURAGE

"Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phicol the chief captain of his army."

As stated in our last lesson, it is not likely that this is the same Abimelech that Abraham confronted when he was in Gerar. That incident occurred at least 75-80 years before this event. Some are of the opinion that it was as many as one hundred years earlier. JOHN GILL

Bolstering his presence, Abimelech brings two more men with him. This is the only time in the Scriptures we read of Ahuzzath. While the KJV reads, *"one of his friends,"* the idea is not that he was one of many common friends, but a special friend, as indicated by the circumstance. In view of this, other versions read, *"his advisor Ahuzzath,"* NASB/NRSV *"Ahuzzath his personal advisor,"* NIV *"Ahuzzath his friend,"* DARBY *"Ahuzzath his counselor,"* TNK *"Ahuzzath his groomsman."* ABP One of the meanings of the word translated *"friend"* is *"CONFIDENTIAL FRIEND."* STRONG'S

I gather, therefore, that Ahuzzath was a **"friend" in an official capacity** – one who may have attended to Abimelech, and offered advise on matters that were of concern to Abimelech.

The king was also accompanied by the captain of his army, Phicol. During the time when Abraham was in Gerar, there was also a Phicol who was the captain of that army. While it is not an impossibility, it is not probable that this is this the same Philcol. Some suppose it might have been his son.

At any rate, what Abimelech will suggest is something on which he and these two men were apparently agreed. That, to Abimelech made for a strong case. This, however, is not the manner of godly reasoning. As it is written, *"Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered"* (Prov 11:21). And again, *"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he*

shall not be unpunished" (Prov 16:5). **When it comes to the people of God and their involvement in the purpose of God, consensus and fleshly agreement are meaningless.**

WHY??

"And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?" Other versions read, *"since you were hostile to me and sent me away?"* NIV *"seeing that in your hate for me you sent me away from you?"* BBE *"me, a man whom you hate, and have thrust out from you?"* GWN *"seeing that you hate me and have driven me away from you?"* NAB *"You obviously hate me,*

is ours" (Gen 26:20).

➡ When Isaac's servants dug another well, the Philistine herdmen *"strove for that well also"* (Gen 26:21).

There hardly needed to be more proof of the hatred the Philistines had for Isaac. Neither, indeed, was Isaac hesitant to point it out. Further, he did no wrong in rebuking Abimelech for the condition of mention, and Isaac had retaliated. He had not irritated the men of Gerar by staying under their noses. In fact, he had conducted himself admirably, confirming that he was trusting in the Lord.

It remains true, that as soon as a person or a group of persons are solidly aligned with the Lord God, they at once become enemies of all who are not so aligned.

since you kicked me off your land," NLT *"This is obviously no friendly visit, since you kicked me out in a most uncivil way,"* LIVING and *"You were not friendly to me before. You even forced me to leave your country."* ERV

Isaac does not shrink back from pointing out the hostility that existed between himself and those of Gerar.

- ➡ Abimelech himself admitted that his people would have abused Rebekah of given liberty to do so (Gen 26:10-1).
- ➡ The Philistines had stopped up the wells that were dug by Abraham, filling them with earth (Gen 26:15).
- ➡ Abimelech had personally come to Isaac and said, *"Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we"* (Gen 26:16).
- ➡ When Isaac left that areas, and is servants dug in the valley and found a well of springing water, *"the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water*

The Hostility Of the World Is Created by Divine Affiliation

The enmity that Isaac faced was owing to his affiliation with the Living God. **It remains true, that as soon as a person or a group of persons are solidly aligned with the Lord God, they at once become enemies of all who are not so aligned.** That is because the natural state of man is that of enmity against God, while only a lively affiliation with God through faith removes such hostility.

James made quite clear that even the desire to be a friend of the world constitutes one **the** enemy of God: *"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God"* (James 4:4).

Jesus brought this fact home to His disciples, knowing that if they were not aware of this reality, they would be confused by their experience. *"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of*

the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18-19).

This hostility, or antagonism, is created because in Christ there is no place for the world. In fact, it is written, "... our Lord Jesus Christ, "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal 1:3-4). Furthermore, "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the

pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:16).

Add to that the fact that the wisdom of the world is not allowed in any portion of salvation. As it is written that God "made foolish the wisdom of this world" (1 Cor 1:20). At its very best, "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (1 Cor 3:19).

This means that those in Christ think differently than the world. They focus on different things. They look forward to different things. They reason with God, Christ, the end of the world, and the day of judgment in mind. They

have a different reason for living.

For this reason, there can be no peace made with the world. It cannot be allowed a dominant place in our thinking, and no place has been made for it in our theology, which is the knowledge of God.

These principles are introduced to us in the dealings of Abraham in Egypt, and with Abraham in Gerar. It is also seen in conflict of Isaac with the men and herdmen of Gerar. **As soon as God makes Himself known to an individual, a certain hostility from the world is experienced.**

THE BLESSING OF THE LORD WAS EVIDENT

"²⁸ *And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; ²⁹ That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the LORD.*"

WE SAW THE LORD WAS WITH YOU

"And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee . . ." Other versions read, "We see plainly that the Lord has been with you," ^{NASB} "the Lord was with you," ^{NIV} "the Lord is with you," ^{RSV} "we can plainly see that Jehovah is blessing you," ^{LIVING} and "We saw that the Lord was certainly with you." ^{AMPLIFIED}

The manner of the ungodly is seen here. What they meant was they could

not stop Abraham from being blessed. In spite of all their efforts and opposition, God had overridden their desires, and there was not a thing they could do about it. When Isaac was close to them he was blessed, and when he was separated from them he was blessed.

Something to be duly noted here is that these Philistines made no inquiry about God and His truth. They made no effort to learn His ways, and become worshipers of Him themselves. They did not seek the blessing of the Lord for themselves.

In Our Day

In our day we frequently face people who may acknowledge that what we say in Christ is the truth. They may even express an appreciation for the fact that we live the way we do. However, they do not want to embrace

the truth themselves, for they consider that too much of an investment of their time. **Like the rich young ruler, they would like to obtain eternal life – but not if it means forsaking their riches.** Like the young man who wanted to follow Jesus, but first sought to fulfill some duties at home, they have other priorities. They like to "attend church," but not for long. They see the value of reading the Scriptures, but not living by every Word of God.

However, there is no virtue to merely saying one believes in God, and "reads the Bible." No Divine assistance will be granted to a person simply because they say they recognize God is blessing another person. There is more of this kind of attitude among the people of this nation than we dare to imagine.

AN EXAGGERATION

" . . . and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee 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 . . ."

At this point Abimelech and those with him went too far. It was true they had not physically harmed Isaac and

However, there is no virtue to merely saying one believes in God, and "reads the Bible." No Divine assistance will be granted to a person simply because they say they recognize God is blessing another person.

those with him – at least it appears that way. However, in order to ensure his people would do no harm to either Isaac or his wife, Abimelech had to issue a special decree. **That certainly does not speak of an amiable situation.** Also, what was involved in the herdmen of Gerar contending for the wells Isaac's servants dug is not fully known.

I suppose it is possible that Abimelech did not know of the harassment of the herdmen of Gerar – although there is no evidence that he lacked information about this. At any rate, the king overstated his case.

THOU ART NOW THE BLESSED OF THE LORD

" . . . thou art now the blessed of the LORD." Other versions read, *"now the blessing of the Lord is on you,"* ^{BBE} *"but with peace have sent thee away increased with the blessing of the Lord,"* ^{DOUAY} *"Henceforth, Yahweh's blessing on you,"* ^{NJB} *"now look how the LORD has blessed you!"* ^{RWB} and *"You are now the blessed or favored of the Lord!"* ^{AMPLIFIED}

There are at least two things to see in this statement.

➔ **First, although it is a bit ambiguous, Abimelech suggests that the blessing of the Lord was partly owing to them sending Isaac away "in peace."** Of course, Abimelech had really not sent them away in peace. At the time he told Isaac,

Their's is an intellectual assessment that carries with it no moral or spiritual compulsion. They are not impressed enough by the truth to embrace it.

"Go from us," the Philistines were envious of him (Gen 26:14). The Philistines had also stopped up all of the wells Abraham had dug (Gen 26:15). It is true that they had not launched a military initiative against Isaac – but that was only because, as Abimelech acknowledged, Isaac and his group were mightier than they (Gen 26:16).

➔ **Secondly, Abimelech acknowledges that although he and the Philistines did not want Isaac in the land, yet God had given His resounding approval of Isaac.** It appears as though there was some degree of conviction that had settled upon Abimelech, although he was not willing to do anything significant about it.

Unbelievers do not have a sound view of doing good. To them it is largely not being harmful, or expressing some temporal benefit out of some sense of obligation, of in an effort to impress men.

Some Observations

Isaac's experience was much like that of those in Christ. Let us not be confused about this. Those who are willing to acknowledge that the saints of God have the truth, and are doing right in living for Him, are not necessarily speaking from their heart. **Their's is an intellectual assessment that carries with it no moral or spiritual compulsion.** They are not impressed enough by the truth to embrace it. They do not respect the people of God enough to join them. They are willing to admit to the value of truth, but they do not want much of it. They can endure an occasional visit with the people of God, but really have no compelling appetite for the truth or the fellowship of the brethren.

Let us not be confused by such poor souls by imagining they have received the love of the truth, or have noble spiritual intentions. Jesus once said to a significant audience, *"And why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"* (Luke 6:46). That is still a pertinent question, and there is still no satisfactory answer that can be given to it.

A FEAST, AN AGREEMENT, AND A PEACEFUL DEPARTURE

"³⁰ And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. ³¹ And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace."

In keeping with his general nature of being a peacemaker, Isaac confirms his willingness not to be contentious. He fulfilled a trait that is characteristic of those in Christ Jesus. Chastening,

for example, yields *"the peaceable fruit of righteousness"* (Heb 12:11). Righteousness, then, causes a person to be *"peaceable."* Further, the *"wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable"* (James 3:17). Lest we be tempted to think this is attended with too much difficulty, Isaac, without redemption, and without the advantages realized in Christ Jesus, was a peaceable man. It is not comely for him to be more advanced in this

matter than professing "Christians."

HE MADE THEM A FEAST

"And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink . . ." Other versions read, *"a banquet,"* ^{CJB} *"a special dinner,"* ^{GWN} *"a covenant feast,"* ^{NLT} *"s great feast,"* ^{LIVING} *"a big feast,"* ^{CEV} *"a party,"* ^{ERV} and *"a formal dinner."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

A *"feast"* was an elaborate meal

with a variety of both food and drink. Lot prepared a “feast” for the men (who were really angels) who came to him in Sodom (Gen 19:3). He “entertained angels unawares” (Heb 13:2). Those who had some profitable acquaintance with God were not noted for selfishness, but were inclined to be generous and thoughtful.

Salvation Likened to a Feast

Salvation is likened to a great feast, with all manners of food and drink. Isaiah foretold the day of salvation in these words, “*And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees* [aged wine ^{NIV}], *of fat things full of marrow* [best of meats ^{NIV}], *of wines on the lees well refined*” (Isa 25:6).

Again Isaiah referred to the abundance that would be realized in Christ Jesus: “*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness*” (Isa 55:1-2).

Jesus referred to the provisions of salvation as “a great supper” (Lk 14:16-24), revealing that those who declined

restriction, and proscription. To be sure, there are things God does not allow His people to do. However, the benefits of salvation far outweigh the things that are forbidden.

The point to be seen is that those who refuse salvation’s abundance cannot partake of it at all. God has not prepared a special table that is small, with only a few samples of what He has to offer. **A person either eats at the full banquet table, or he does not eat at all.**

“*Legion*” is the name of countless religious multitudes that have no appetite for spiritual abundance. They only want a little of this, and a little of that – just enough to keep them barely alive, so to speak. They prefer short homilies, brief gatherings, and presentations that are more entertaining than substantive. They will not sit at the banquet-table.

The caveat in all of this is that God has not even provided a salvation that allows for such meager appetites. Whatever such minimal provisions may be called, it is not “salvation.” Isaiah said it well when he wrote, “*Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness*” (Isa 55:2).

The truth of the matter is that

salvation was never, and is not now, designed to sustain life with minimal portions. Once this is perceived, it revolutionizes one’s approach to life.

THEY SWARE TO ONE ANOTHER

“*. . . And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another . . .*” Other versions read, “*they arose early and exchanged oaths,*” ^{NASB} “*Early in the morning the men made a treaty with each other,*” ^{NET} “*Early the next morning, they each took a solemn oath not to interfere with each other,*” ^{NLT} and “*And they rose up early in the morning and took oaths [with a curse] with one another.*” ^{AMPLIFIED}

The type of oath Isaac and Abimelech took probably bore some similarity to an oath Ruth took. “*And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me*” (Ruth 1:16-17). This consideration prompted the representation of the Amplified Bible: “*took oaths [with a curse] with one another.*”

This was, in fact, a covenant of peace – not a compromising peace, but an agreement not to launch a military initiative or persecution against each other.

ISAAC SENT THEM AWAY

“*. . . and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.*” Other versions read, “*Isaac sent them on their way,*” ^{NRSV} “*Isaac sent them away peaceably,*” ^{DOUAY} and “*Isaac bade them farewell.*” ^{NAB}

The idea is that Isaac sent them away in an environment of peace and consideration, probably giving them supplies for their return home.

As For Us

Following Isaac’s example, it is good for believers to agree to “*follow peace with all men*” (Heb 12:14). Or as

We prefer peace, but sometimes we must make war against those who eagerly press iniquity, and insist that we be silent about it.

His invitation would not be allowed to enjoy what He provided. Again, He likened salvation to God preparing a marriage supper for His Son, to be served at His wedding (Matt 22:2-14).

Unfortunately, many view life in Christ only as one of prohibition,

salvation does not allow a “pick-and-choose” approach, where some of the benefits may be selected, while others are rejected. **If a person imagines they can subsist on beggarly spiritual portions, they are simply wrong.** Such will eventually succumb to the pressures of the world. This is because

stated elsewhere, *"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men"* (Rom 12:18). That is, we will not agree to adopt the ways or manners of those who are not in Christ Jesus, nor will we agree to be silent

concerning the truth, or adjust our lives to please the ungodly.

We prefer peace, but sometimes we must make war against those who eagerly press iniquity, and insist that

we be silent about it. We will not look for a reason to fight. However, if an enemy tries to bring ungodliness or false doctrine into the church, let there be no mistake about it. We will resist their efforts.

WATER IS FOUND AGAIN

"³² And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. ³³ And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day."

THE SAME DAY

"And it came to pass the same day . . ."

Before that day had passed, an assuring confirmation took place – a token from the Lord assuring Isaac that he had done the right and wise thing. It also confirmed the Lord's promise to him: *"Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee"* (Gen 26:3).

As one might expect, the experience of Cain and that of Isaac were quite different. To Cain God said, *"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"* (Gen 4:12). However, with Isaac, the land yielded its strength. **The first year he planted in Gerar, he reaped a hundredfold. In addition, the land even yielded its water to Isaac, for he found water every time he or his servants dig for a well.** Instead of being a *"fugitive and a vagabond,"* he was able to dwell in the land of Canaan, and be prosperous as he did so.

The Pilgrimage of the Believer

There are aspects of the pilgrimage of the believer that parallel the experience of Isaac.

➔ First, although they are promised they will inherit the earth (Matt 5:5), as Isaac, they journey through it as pilgrims and strangers (Heb 13:9;14;

1 Pet 2:11).

➔ Second, unlike the *"the fowls of the air"* (Matt 6:26), they have to sow to the Spirit in order to reap of the Spirit, reaping a harvest of the firstfruits of *"eternal life"* (Gal 6:8). As they yield themselves *"unto God as those who are alive from the dead"* (Rom 6:13), they commence to reap benefits that are described as sin not having dominion over them (Rom 6:14), and *"reigning in life"* (Rom 5:17). Like Isaac, they are able to stay alive in famine (Psa 33:19).

➔ Third, although they are on the move, they are privileged to journey in the proper country, so to speak. They remain in *"heavenly places,"* where God has placed them (Eph 2:6), living by faith (Heb 10:38), and walking in the Spirit (Gal 5:16,25).

In this present world there are moral and spiritual deserts where it is most difficult to survive. Should God, in His infinite wisdom, station a person in such a place (like the faithful in Sardis (Rev 3:4), they will plant and dig, and survive by the grace of God. **Such souls will realize a spiritual harvest and find water for the soul, even though it seems unlikely to do so.** Thus, they will survive until the time comes when a more commodious place can be found.

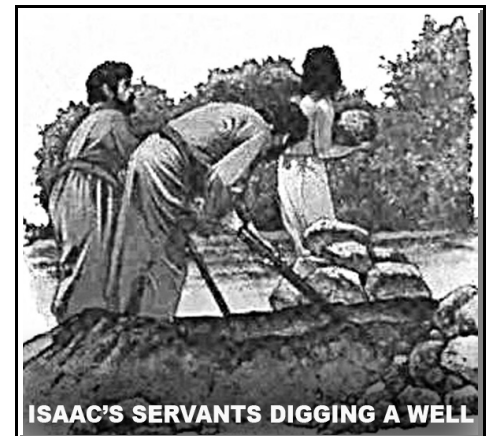
WE HAVE FOUND WATER

" . . . that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water . . ."

While the Philistine manner was to contend for, and dominate, the wells dug by others, this was not Isaac's

manner. After digging *"again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham"* (Gen 26:18), this is now the fifth well the servants of Isaac have dug – finding water each time (Gen 26:19,21, 22,25,32).

Behold the tenacity of Isaac and his servants! They are totally unlike the Philistines, who lurked unnoticed until someone else dug a well, then claimed that well for their own. But it was not so with the heir of the promise and his servants!



It is obvious that a lot of effort was required to dig a well. I do not doubt that the famine that had been near there had made it even more difficult to dig a well than under ordinary circumstances. **However, there comes a time for the believer when obtaining water is worthy of every ounce of effort that it requires to do so.**

So it was with Isaac's servants. They knew they needed water for themselves, their flocks, and their herds, so they dug another well. The herdmen of Gerar had not beaten them

down! The word of Abimelech to leave the area in which they residing did not cause them to loose heart. They did not allow the circumstances to dominate them, but took charge of the situation by faith.

A Parallel Found In Those In Christ

There is a remarkable parallel found in those who are *"born of the Spirit"* (John 3:6,8), becoming a new creation in Christ Jesus (2 Cor 5:17). They have come to realize the absolute need for *"the water"* that Jesus gives (John 4:14). While in the glory, that water will be in such abundance that the saved will not have to dig for it, that is not their experience while they are in *"this present evil world"* (Gal 1:4). A Samaritan woman had to come to a certain well, and then obtain the needed water from the Lord Jesus Himself (John 4:6-26).

HE CALLED THE WELL "SHEBAH

"...And he called it Shebah . . ."

Lexical aids say the word *"Sheba"* can mean *"OATH," "SEVEN."* McCLINTOK & STRONG'S /EASTON Smith's Bible Dictionary adds the meaning *"ABUNDANCE."* The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia assigns the meaning *"WELL OF OATH."* Jerome said it means *"FULNESS."* JOHN GILL John Calvin says the Hebrew word used here is ambiguous, yet feels the word reflects the meaning of an oath.

If the name does mean *"oath,"* as most allege, I prefer to see it as referring to the oath God made to Isaac, not the oath Isaac made with Abimelech. It is not necessary to pursue this subject any further, as such a pursuit certainly cannot be viewed as a refreshing well.

THE NAME OF THE CITY

" . . . therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day."

Earlier, Abraham had named this place *"Beersheba"* (Gen 21:31), where he had made a covenant with Abimelech (Gen 21:31-33). This was also the place to which Isaac journeyed after he had observed the Lord had made room for them in the land (Gen 25:23). Later, when Israel took the land



of Canaan, Beersheba was the inheritance of Judah (Josh 15:20-28; 2 Sam 24:7). After that, it was assigned to the tribe of Simeon (Josh 19:2).

The wilderness of Beersheba is where the Lord opened Hagar's eyes to see a well of water when all hope was lost (Gen 21:14-19).

The city of Beersheba was the southmost boundary of the land of Israel. Thus we frequently read the phrase, *"from Dan even to Beersheba"* (Judges 20:1; 1 Sam 3:20; 2 Sam 3:10; 17:11; 24:2,15; 1 Kgs 4:25).

***"Beersheba,"* although significant to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the nation of Israel, is not mentioned from Obadiah through Revelation.** From Joshua through Malachi, *"Jerusalem"* is mentioned six hundred and sixty-seven times. From Matthew through Revelation, the city *"Jerusalem"* is mentioned one hundred and forty-four times – seventy times in the Gospels, sixty times in the book of Acts, and fourteen times from Romans through Revelation (four of the times it is used in a spiritual sense). As mentioned, several times that name is used in a spiritual sense: *"Jerusalem which is above"* (Gal 4:26); *"new Jerusalem"* (Rev 3:12; 21:2); *"heavenly Jerusalem"* (Heb 12:22). That means *"Jerusalem,"*

the city in Canaan, is mentioned ten times to the churches. Of those ten times, all are historic references to various trips and certain believers living there.

Something to Note

None of the references to the city of Jerusalem in Acts through Revelation are doctrinal in nature. This is because there has been a change of covenants, and the **center** of Divine activity is not on the earth. The single reference to a *"reign on the earth"* (Rev 5:10) has to do with the saints being given charge of the *"new earth,"* or *"the world to come"* (Heb 2:5-9). According to apostolic doctrine, since His exaltation to the right hand of God, Jesus is never represented as reigning in earthly Jerusalem, or anywhere else in the present world.

All of this, however, was not in place during the times prior to the exaltation of Christ. Thus, much was often made of certain cities in the world: like *"Beersheba"* (34 times), *"Jerusalem"* (667 times), *"city of David"* (44 times), *"Samaria"* (28 times), *"Babylon"* (274 times), etc.

This is the fatal flaw of much of the eschatology of our time. There is a great deal of stress placed on worldly cities, and worldly governments and their rulers. But no such stress is found in apostolic doctrine. Rather than **emphasizing** a great deal of worldly activity during the end times, they accentuate the end, burning up, or passing away of the world (1 Cor 7:31; Heb 1:112; 2 Pet 3:10-13; 1 John 2:17; Rev 20:11; 21:1).

Unlike the promises delivered to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the *"promises of God in Him [Christ]"* (2 Cor 1:20) **postulate the destruction of the present heavens and earth,** and the coming of a *"new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness"* (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1). Sound theology must be able to make the transition from the old to the new, where the things *"above"* are the fundamental things (Col 3:1-2), and being forever with the Lord is the

ultimate objective. Where these primary things are upstaged by an emphasis of

this world and the things that are in it – whether present or in the future – a

deep-rooted error has been committed, and a lie has been embraced.

ESAU'S CHOICE CAUSES GRIEF OF MIND

“³⁴ And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: ³⁵ Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.”

There is something to be seen in a comparison of Isaac with Esau. We see in them that Divine choices are matched

Being a “profane person,” and a “fornicator” as well (Heb 12:16), Esau took two Hittite women to be his wives, and later took yet another wife who was the daughter of Ishmael (Gen 28:6). After that he took wives of “the daughters of Canaan, among who was a daughter of a Hittite, the granddaughter of a Hivite, and another daughter of Ishmael (Gen 35:2-3). A

3:8,17).

However, Esau had no inclination to the seed of Abraham, for he was a profane man, and not dedicated to God. He had a different moral fiber.

IT WAS A GRIEF OF MIND TO ISAAC AND REBEKAH

“ . . . Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.” Other versions read, “brought grief,” ^{NASB} “a source of grief,” ^{NIV} “made life bitter,” ^{NRSV} “a cause for embitterment of spirit,” ^{CJB} “they both offended the mind of,” ^{DOUAY} “were provoking,” ^{SEPTUAGINT} “were a bitter disappointment,” ^{NJB} “made life miserable,” ^{NLT} “were bitter about his marrying them,” ^{LIVING} “they were contending with,” ^{ABP} “were provoking,” ^{BRENTON} “made . . . very unhappy,” ^{ERV} “turned out to be thorns in the sides,” ^{MESSAGE} “they made life bitter and a grief of mind and spirit.” ^{AMPLIFIED}

Not only was the fact that Esau married Hittite women a grief to both Isaac and Rebekah, the language indicates that the women themselves were a source of vexation: “which WERE a grief of mind,” ^{NKJV} “they were a grief of mind,” ^{NASB} “they brought grief,” ^{NIV} “they were a source of grief,” ^{NRSV} and “they made life bitter.”

These two women introduced bitterness, grief, and vexation to the lives of Isaac and Rebekah. The word “grief” is translated from two Hebrew words that mean “BITTERNESS OF SPIRIT.” ^{INTERLINEAR} The prominent idea here is “bitterness.” Grief is to the heart and emotions what a bitter herb is to the palate. It makes life more difficult, and introduces burdens, sorrows, aggravation, and vexation.

Isaac may have loved Esau, but he, as well as Rebekah, was vexed by his Hittite wives. This means that Esau and his wives were in the vicinity, as

ISAAC	ESAU
Promised Heir	Would be ruled over
Accepted	Rejected
Abraham's Heir	Not Abraham's heir
Lived in Canaan	Did not live in Canaan
Blessed of God	Did not receive the blessing
Married Rebekah at 40	Marries Hittite women at 40
God appeared to him	God did not appear to him
Promises made to him	Promises not made to him
God is “the God of Isaac”	God not associated with him
Faithful to his wife	A fornicator
A peaceable man	A profane man
Ancestor of chosen race	Ancestor of cursed race

by a godly character. How and where a person lives is determined by their dealings with the Lord, or lack thereof.

According to the flesh, Esau had the advantage. He was born first, and therefore possessed the birthright. He was a rugged man, and expert in hunting. He was loved by his father Isaac, whereas his mother, Rebekah, loved Isaac. However, this did not give Esau the moral or the spiritual advantage, confirming that “the flesh profiteth nothing” (John 6:63).

ESAU CHOOSES HITTITE WIVES

“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 . . .”

fornicator, indeed!

Further, his descendants, the Edomites, were avowed enemies of Jacob's seed (Obadiah 1:10-14). Behold the character of those who are rejected by the Lord!

The Preference of Abraham

The man who sold Abraham a piece of property in which to bury Sarah was a Hittite (Gen 23:10-20). Yet, when Abraham sought a wife for Isaac, he did not go to the Hittites, but directed his servant to go to his own kindred in Mesopotamia (Gen 24). God told Abraham that the Hittites were one of the nations that would be dispossessed of the land of Canaan, which He gave to Israel (Gen 15:20). He told Moses the same thing (Ex

the following chapter confirms. However, although Esau was Isaac's favored son, he could not abide his wives. They were a source of vexation to him, even though they were married to the son he loved.

THE UNGODLY ARE AN IRRITATION TO THE GODLY

I realize in this day it is not fashionable to say this – yet, it must be said. The ungodly are an irritation to the godly. This is not something that ought to be, but something that is. **As a person draws closer to the Lord, the ungodly become less and less tolerable.** Of course, this is the way God Himself is. Even *"the thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord"* (Prov 15:25). Because of their repugnance to God, it is written, *"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon"* (Isa 55:7). **However, God will neither show mercy nor pardon to those who stubbornly cling to their wicked ways.**

The man who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of the scornful is not considered to be an intolerant man, but is rather said to be a *"blessed"* man (Psa 1:1). David pled with God, *"Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men"* (Psa 26:9). It may not be popular to say so, but the Psalmist said without any sense of shame, *"Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD"* (Psa 104:35).

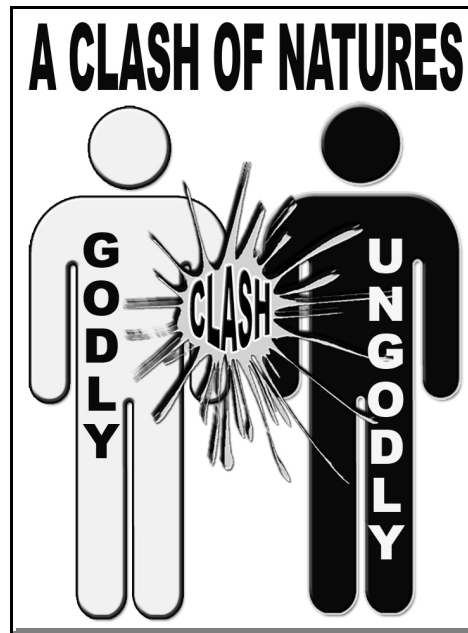
And why are these things written? Because transgressors, sinners, the wicked, and the ungodly are a source of grief, vexation, and irritation – both to God and to the godly.

Those who attempt to throw the righteous and the unrighteous together have only added to the grief of the saints. Whatever theories men may put forward concerning influencing the society around us, nothing they can say

will cause the wicked to cease to chaff against the spirits of the people of God.

Countless believers know by experience what it means to be vexed by the ungodly. Yet, they have been taught by erroneous teachers that they should ignore such vexation and be inordinately friendly. They imagine that such conduct will lead to the conversion of such people. Emphatically, this is not true, and woe to that person who does not see this.

Godly Character Cannot Abide Sin



After all of the theorizing concerning human relationships is finished, there is a stark reality that must be confronted – and that reality cannot be successfully avoided. **There is a clash of natures between the godly and the ungodly.** Outwardly, they are members of the human race. However, within, one is governed by the Lord, and the other by the devil. One has been made new, and one has not. One has been impacted by contact with the Living God, and one has not. One lives by faith, while the other dwells in unbelief. One worships the true God, and the other worships a false god.

In the case before us, Isaac and Rebekah have the promises of God, while the wives of Esau did not. They

had faith, and Esau's wives did not. They had both been addressed by God, and neither of the wives of Esau had experienced such a thing. At the root, that was the source of the grief these women caused Isaac and Rebekah.

In this, they shared the same reaction as righteous Lot, who was *"vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked"* (Jude 7). It is said of him, *"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 2:8). In spite of that clear revelation, there are still people who teach that Lot had a preference for Sodom.

For Those in Christ

It is not possible for a greater difference to exist than that between those who are in Christ Jesus and those who are not. For some, it may not be fashionable to speak of such things, but it is really necessary to do so. **The difference of reference has been caused by the Lord.** It is His work that has created the variance, and, frankly, it is wrong to ignore that difference, or pretend as though it did not exist.

Prior to conversion, the people of God were like the ungodly. When we describe their former condition, we are really describing the present condition of the ungodly.

- ➡ We were the *"enemies"* of God (Rom 5:10a). **NOW WE ARE RECONCILED** (Rom 5:10b).
- ➡ We were *"the servants of sin"* (Rom 6:17,20). **NOW WE ARE THE SERVANTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** (Rom 6:18).
- ➡ We were *"carried away"* to false gods (1 Cor 12:2). **NOW WE "WORSHIP GOD IN THE SPIRIT, AND REJOICE IN CHRIST JESUS"** (Phil 3:3).
- ➡ We *"were dead in trespasses and sins"* (Eph 2:1,5; Col 2:13). **NOW WE HAVE BEEN QUICKENED, OR MADE ALIVE** (Eph 2:1,5; Col 2:13).
- ➡ We *"walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince*

of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph 2:2). NOW WE HAVE BEEN RAISED UP, AND MADE TO SIT TOGETHER WITH CHRIST (Eph 2:6).

- ➡ We were *"without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world"* (Eph 2:12). NOW WE HAVE BEEN MADE NIGH BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. (Eph 2:13)
- ➡ We were *"alienated from the life of God"* (Eph 4:18; Col 1:21). NOW WE HAVE "LEARNED CHRIST," HEARD HIM, AND BEEN TAUGHT BY HIM, BEING RECONCILED (Eph 4:20-21; Col 1:21)
- ➡ Our understanding was *"darkened"* (Eph 18). NOW WE HAVE BEEN ILLUMINATED (Heb 10:32).
- ➡ We were *"darkness"* (Eph 5:8). NOW WE ARE "LIGHT IN THE LORD" (Eph 5:8b).
- ➡ We were *"enemies in our minds by*

wicked works" (Col 1:21a). NOW WE ARE RECONCILED (Col 1:21b).

- ➡ We *"were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world"* (Eph 2:12). NOW WE ARE "NO MORE STRANGERS AND FOREIGNERS, BUT FELLOWCITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS, AND OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD" (Eph 2:19).
- ➡ We *"were not a people"* (1 Pet 2:10a). NOW WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD (1 Pet 2:10c)
- ➡ We *"had not obtained mercy"* (1 Pet 2:10c). NOW WE HAVE OBTAINED MERCY (1 Pet 2:10c).
- ➡ We were *"as sheep going astray"* (1 Pet 2:25a). NOW WE ARE RETURNED TO THE SHEPHERD AND BISHOP OF OUR SOULS. (1 Pet 2:25b).

You can see what a stark contrast there is between what we once were, and what we now are in Jesus Christ.

God no longer lumps us in with the rest of fallen humanity, but has separated us from the ungodly, taking out from among them a people for His name and glory (Acts 15:14).

Those who teach that "Christians" are sinners just like everyone else, except they are forgiven, have only displayed their ignorance before men. Their purported understanding denies the new birth (1 Pet 1:23), the new creation (2 Cor 5:17), and the workmanship of God (Eph.2:10). They ignore the implicit teaching that differentiates between what we once were, and what we now are. Their teaching is driven by the glaring lack of difference between multitudes of professing Christians and the world.

Wherever there is a misrepresentation of these matters, there is a corresponding lack of being offended by sin, and vexed by the ungodly. The lack of such a response is a betrayal that such people are living at a distance from the God they profess to serve – a God who cannot abide sin.

CONCLUSION

Isaac, like Abraham before him, sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange land, moving about as a stranger and a foreigner. Although that land had been deeded to him by God, he had adverse experiences within it: a famine, his wife being desired by others, and contention over the wells that he had dug. According to the flesh, the circumstances did not appear to justify the retention of hope and the

maintenance of faith. But Isaac held on his way, joining his father Abraham in looking *"for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God"* (Heb 11:9).

In this posture Isaac typified that of those who are in Christ Jesus. They also are journeying through the land they, when it has been made new, will inherit (Matt 5:5), anticipating that

eternal city, which is *"the mother of us all"* (Gal 4:26). They too are faced with sundry trials and difficulties, through which they safely pass by their faith.

It is not only good, but essential, that all believers posture themselves correctly in this world. Like Isaac, they are to dig for the refreshing water that sustains the soul, and remain within the boundaries established by faith.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 10/5/12. We will continue our series of lessons in the book of Genesis. The forty-third lesson will cover verses 1 through 17 of chapter twenty-seven: "THE RESULT OF ESAU DESPISING HIS BIRTHRIGHT." This is the incident where Rebekah tells Jacob to disguise himself so Isaac will think that he is Esau. She has overheard Isaac tell Esau to get him some venison, after which he will bless Esau. Her plan works, and Jacob receives the blessing belonging to the firstborn. We will show that this was how God worked out His will in an otherwise impossible situation. The meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

OCTOBER MISSION TRIP: BRETHREN AARON AND MICHAEL – OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 5, 2012

For your prayerful consideration

BURKINA FASO INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONVENTION (BICC2012)

FINAL ITINERARY

October 23: Bro Aaron and Bro Michael arrival in Ouagadougou
October 24 – 27: Ouagadougou Convention
October 28: Church service in Ouagadougou both morning and afternoon.
October 29: Departure and arrival in Bobo-Dioulasso
October 30 – Nov. 2: Bobo-Dioulasso Convention
Nov. 3: Departure & arrival in Ouagadougou
Nov. 3: Departure & arrival in Po
Nov. 4: Church service in Po (Morning)
Nov. 4: Departure & arrival in Ouagadougou
Nov. 5: Departure to USA

BURKINA FASO INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONVENTION (BICC2012)

(Word Of Truth Fellowship & LIWOFAM REFRESHING OUTREACH)

PROGRAM DETAILS

I – Theme: Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14: 6)

II – Expectations – Goals

- 1- Edification of the saints.
- 2- Salvation of lost souls.
- 3- Spiritual equipments for pastors and ministers of the Gospel that they may abound in the work of God and be fruitful in the end time soul's harvest.
- 4- Deliverance of those who are evil tormented and under satanic bondage.

III – Activities

- 1- Teaching the Word of Truth to edify, encourage and equip believers, ministers and all participants.
- 2- Preaching the saving Truth to set people free and give them the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.
- 3- Praying fervently for those who come with various personal needs such as restoration and renewal, provision, direction, protection, healing both spiritually and physically and so on.

FIRST THINGS IN GENESIS

As its name indicates, the book of Genesis is a book of beginnings. It accounts for the beginning of the heavens and the earth, the creation of humanity, the original family, the entrance of sin, and the effects of sin upon mankind. This book introduces us to God Almighty: His character, His responses to both sin and righteousness, and His purpose, conceived before the world began. Here is where we get our bearings, and prepare to think correctly about God, man, the devil, the world, sin, and righteousness. The following listing identified the “firsts” found in this book.

Genesis 1:1 thru 26:35

1. First mention of God (Gen 1:1)
2. First use of the word “created” (Gen 1:1)
3. First circumstance of chaos and disorder (Gen 1:2)
4. First mention of darkness” (Gen 1:2)
5. First mention of the Holy Spirit (Gen 1:2)
6. First commandment (Gen 1:3)
7. First mention of “light” (Gen 1:3)
8. First none-heavenly orderliness (Gen 1:4-10)
9. First Separation (Gen 1:4,7)
10. First Day and night (Gen 1:5)
11. First mention of “evening” and “morning” (Gen 1:5)
12. First mention of “firmament” (Gen 1:6)
13. First use of the word “appear” (Gen 1:9)
14. First Terrestrial substance (Gen 1:10)
15. First Vegetation life (Gen 1:11-12)
16. First Celestial substance (Gen 1:16)
17. First sea-life (Gen 1:20-22)
18. First fowl (Gen 1:20)
19. First Animal life (Gen 1:24-25)
20. First language of plurality in the Godhead (Gen 1:26)
21. First Man (Gen 3:19)
22. First Warning (Gen 2:17)
23. First Display of human wisdom (Gen 2:19-20)
24. First Woman (Gen 2:21-22)
25. First Marriage (Gen 2:22-24)
26. First Exposure to Satan (Gen 3:1)
27. First Temptation (Gen 3:1-5)
28. First delusion (Gen 3:6)
29. First Sin (Gen 3:8)
30. First Knowledge of nakedness and its shame (Gen 3:7)
31. First Divine interrogation (Gen 3:9-13)
32. First Vicarious death (Gen 3:21)
33. First Divinely provided clothing (Gen 3:21)
34. First Promise (Gen 3:15)
35. First Curse among men (Gen 3:17)
36. First expulsion (Gen 3:23-24)

37. First Birth (Gen (Gen 4:1)
38. First Offering (Gen 4:3)
39. First accepted sacrifice (Gen 4:4)
40. First rejected sacrifice (Gen 4:5)
41. First human reaction to a rejected sacrifice (Gen 4:5)
42. First time a man became angry (Gen 4:5-6)
43. First Divine response to human anger (Gen 4:6-16)
44. First Family hatred (Cain/Abel, Ishmael/Isaac, Esau/Jacob, Brothers/Joseph (Gen 4:8; Gen 21:9-10; Gen 38:3-4)
45. First Murder (Gen 4:8)
46. First wanderer or vagabond (Gen 4:12)
47. First mark put on a man (Gen 4:15)
48. First man to go out from the presence of the Lord (Gen 4:16)
49. First city built (Gen 4:17)
50. First case of bigamy (Gen 4L19)
51. First instance of retaliation (Gen 4:23)
52. First human substitute (Gen 4:25)
53. First Calling on the name of the Lord (Gen 4:26)
54. First genealogy (Gen 5:1-32)
55. First person said to have walked with God (Gen 5:22)
56. First Translation into heaven – Enoch (Gen 5:24)
57. First unequal yoke (Gen 6:2)
58. First men of the Spirit striving with men (Gen 6:3)
59. First reference to a society of ruthless men (Gen 6:4)
60. First reference to man's thoughts being corrupt (Gen 6:4).
61. First reference to God repenting (Gen 6:6).
62. First reference to a universal judgment (Gen 6:2).
63. First reference to a person finding grace (Gen 6:).
64. First reference to a man who was just and perfect in his generation (Gen 6:9).
65. First reference to the total corruption of humanity (Gen 6:12).
66. First reference to "the end of all flesh" (Gen 6:13).
67. First Large building project (Gen 6:4-16).
68. First boat built (Gen 6:14-15).
69. First reference to a flood (Gen 6:17).
70. First Covenant made with a man (Gen 6:18).
71. First reference to someone being saved (Gen 6:18).
72. First reference to the gathering of animals (Gen 6:19-20).
73. First reference to the gathering and storage of food (Gen 6:21).
74. First reference to someone doing all that God had commanded (Gen 6:22).
75. The first person God affirmed He saw as "righteous" (Gen 7:1).
76. First Salvation of a family (Gen 7:1).
77. First record of someone being saved because of another (Gen 7:1).
78. First record of animals being saved (Gen 7:8).
79. First rain (Gen 7:12).
80. First and only universal flood (Gen 7:18-20).
81. First opening of the fountains in the earth (Gen 7:2,11).
82. First opening of the windows of heaven (Gen 7:11).
83. First global curse (Gen 7:21-23).
84. First destruction of every living substance (Gen 7:23).
85. First time God is said to have remembered someone (Gen 8:1).

86. First record of a drying wind (Gen 8:1).
87. First confirmation of newness of life following a curse (Gen 8:11).
88. First record of a deliverance (Gen 8:18-19)
89. First building of an altar (Gen 8:20).
90. First known sacrificial offering of multiple creatures (8:20).
91. First time God is said to have been pleased with an offering (Gen 8:21).
92. First promise of continued seedtime/harvest, summer/winter, day/night (Gen 8:22).
93. First Deliverance from the world (Gen 8:18).
94. First New beginning (Gen 9:21-22).
95. The first mention of animals fearing mankind (Gen 9:2).
96. The first addition to the human diet (Gen 9:3).
97. The first approval of eating meat (Gen 9:3-4).
98. The first prohibition of eating blood (Gen 9:4).
99. The first authorization of capital punishment (Gen 9:5-6).
100. The first covenant established with the seed of a principle person (Gen 9:9).
101. The first covenant with living creatures (Gen 9:10).
102. The first promise to never again cut off all living beings with a flood (Gen 9:11).
103. The first token of a covenant (Gen 9:12).
104. The first reference to a rainbow (Gen 9:13-17).
105. The first reference to God remembering a covenant He made (Gen 9:15-16).
106. The first reference to a husbandman (Gen 9:20).
107. The first reference to a vineyard (Gen 9:20).
108. The first reference to wine (Gen 9:21).
109. The first reference to a person becoming drunk (Gen 9:21).
110. The first curse uttered by a man (Gen 9:25).
111. The first blessing uttered by a man (Gen 9:26).
112. The first reference to a servant (Gen 9:25-26).
113. The first reference to the enlargement of one's territory (Gen 9:27).
114. The first mention of the "Gentiles" (10:5).
115. The first mention of "nations" (10:5).
116. The first mention of "families," tribes, or classes of people (10:5,18,20,31,32).
117. The first mention of "isles," or maritime countries (10:5).
118. First mention of a hunter (Gen 10:9).
119. First mention of a kingdom (10:10).
120. First mention of Babel (Gen 10:10).
121. First mention of Nineveh (Gen 10:12).
122. First mention of Canaanites (Gen 10:18).
123. First mention of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 10:19).
124. First mention of "tongues," or languages (Gen 10:5,20,31).
125. The first mention of different nations "divided in the earth" (Gen 10:32).
126. The first mention of a group of people traveling (Gen 11:2).
127. The first example of agreement among men (Gen 11:3).
128. The first mention of "brick" (11:3).
129. The first mention of "mortar" (Gal 11:3).
130. The first mention of the tempering of brick (11:3).
131. The first mention of a "tower" (11:4).
132. The first mention of a fear of being "scattered" (11:4).
133. The first mention of the Lord coming "down" (11:5).
134. The first mention of human potential (11:6).
135. The first record of God's assessment of a collective work (11:5-6).

- 136. The first record of God's response to a collective work (11:6-7).
- 137. The first record of God scattering a people (11:8).
- 138. First Judgment of a human project (11:8).
- 139. First Dispersion of humanity (11:8).
- 140. First record of a son dying before his father (11:28).
- 141. The first barren woman (11:30).
- 142. The first mention of the land of Canaan (Gen 11:31).
- 143. First Calling from one place to another (Gen 12:1)
- 144. First Divine direction concerning a move (Gen 12:1)
- 145. First Covenant of blessing (Gen 12:2-3)
- 146. First mention of a Divinely created nation (Gen 12:2)
- 147. First mention of acquired wealth (Gen 12:5)
- 148. First mention of servants, or slaves (Gen 12:5)
- 149. The first time God is said to have "appeared" to anyone (Gen 12:7).
- 150. First Famine (Gen 12:10)
- 151. First trip from Canaan to Egypt (Gen 12:10)
- 152. First person to treat another person well for the sake of another person (Gen 12:18)
- 153. First example of God cursing those who cursed Abram (Gen 12:17)
- 154. First examples of plagues coming from the Lord (Gen 12:17)
- 155. First trip from Egypt to Canaan (Gen 12:20-13:3)
- 156. First man mentioned who was rich: Abram (Gen 13:2)
- 157. The first example of a territory being unable to sustain those in it (Gen 13:6)
- 158. The first example of a dispute among employees (Gen 13:7)
- 159. The first separation of kindred spirits (Gen 13:8-12)
- 160. The first commanded perusal of the land of Canaan (Gen 13:17)
- 161. First use of the word "Hebrew" (Gen 14:13)
- 162. The first military initiative by a man of faith (Gen 14:14-15)
- 163. The first mention of Melchizedek (Gen 14:18a)
- 164. The first mention of a "priest of the most High God" (Gen 14:18b)
- 165. The first mention of a king who was also a priest (Gen 14:18)
- 166. The first mention of "bread and wine" (Gen 14:18)
- 167. The first mention of enemies being delivered into one's hand by the Lord (Gen 14:20a)
- 168. The first mention of "tithes" (Gen 14:20b)
- 169. First Vision (Gen 15:1).
- 170. First record of the words "Fear not" (Gen 15:1)
- 171. First revelation of God in a protective capacity (Gen 15:1).
- 172. The first reference to God as a "Reward" (Gen 15:1).
- 173. First reference to someone believing God (Gen 15:6).
- 174. First mention of righteousness (Gen 15:6).
- 175. First mention of man inheriting something (Gen 15:7).
- 176. First prophecy of a being judged (Gen 15:14).
- 177. First reference to iniquity being "full" (Gen 15:16).
- 178. First use of the word "handmaid" (Gen 16:1).
- 179. First mention of "Hagar" (Gen 16:1).
- 180. First mention of God restraining a woman from bearing children (Gen 16:2).
- 181. First time a wife's handmaid bore children to her for her husband (Gen 16:4).
- 182. First mention of an angel (Gen 16:7).
- 183. First mention of "the angel of the Lord" (Gen 16:7),
- 184. First message delivered by an angel (Gen 16:8-12).
- 185. First time a name was given to a child according to revelation (Gen 16:11).

- 186. First time someone gave a name to God (Gen 16:13).
- 187. First time “Almighty” is mentioned (Gen 17:1).
- 188. First time God is expressly said to have “talked” extensively with someone (Gen 17:3-22).
- 189. First time a person was told he would be the father of “many nations” (Gen 17:4-5).
- 190. First time someone was told “kings” would come out of him (Gen 17:6).
- 191. First time Abraham was told Sarah would bear the heir (Gen 17:19,21).
- 192. First time “circumcision” is mentioned (Gen 17:10-13).
- 193. First mention of “Isaac” (Gen 17:19).
- 194. First time circumcision was performed (Gen 17:23-27).
- 195. First example of more than one heavenly messenger appearing at a time (Gen 18:2).
- 196. First example of hospitality (Gen 18:4-8).
- 197. First example of entertaining angels unawares (Gen 18:2).
- 198. First reference to a godly man commanding his children and household (Gen 18:19).
- 199. First example of intercession (Gen 18:23-32).
- 200. First mention of mocking (Gen 19:14).
- 201. First record of angels being sent to destroy cities (19:19-38).
- 202. First record of the sin of sodomy (19:5).
- 203. First record of someone being struck blind (19:11).
- 204. First record of someone being cursed for looking back (19:26).
- 205. First record of a heathen reasoning with God (20:4-5).
- 206. First use of the word “prophet” (20:7).
- 207. First reference to a husband being a “covering” for the wife (20:16).
- 208. First reference to a person being “reproved” (20:16).
- 209. First time the word prayer is mentioned in any of its varied forms “prayed” – pray, prays, prayer, prayed, prayers, prayeth (Gen 20:16).
- 210. First reference to healing (20:17).
- 211. First reference to God closing the wombs of an entire household (20:18).
- 212. First miraculous birth (Gen 21:1).
- 213. First mention of an eight-day-old child being circumcised (Gen 21:4).
- 214. First mention of a child being “weaned” (Gen 21:8).
- 215. First mention of someone being cast out of the house (Gen 21:10).
- 216. First mention of Beersheba (Gen 21:14).
- 217. First mention of God opening someone’s eyes (Gen 21:19).
- 218. First mention of an “archer” (Gen 21:20).
- 219. First mention of “the wilderness of Paran” (Gen 21:21).
- 220. First mention of a wife being “taken” for someone else (Gen 21:21).
- 221. First mention of Philchol, Abimelech’s captain (Gen 21:22).
- 222. First mention of swearing, s in taking an oath (Gen 21:23).
- 223. First example of a covenant being made between two men (Gen 21:27).
- 224. First mention of a person planting a grove (Gen 21:33).
- 225. First mention of “Everlasting God” (Gen 21:33).
- 226. First reference to someone being “tried,” “tested,” “tempted,” or “proved” by God (Gen 22:1).
- 227. First time God required a man to sacrifice his son (Gen 22:1-2).
- 228. First mention of a “burnt offering” (Gen 22:2).
- 229. First time the word “Moriah” is mentioned (Gen 22:2).
- 230. First time the word “worship” occurs (Gen 22:5).
- 231. First record of an angel stopping a person from doing something (Gen 22:11).
- 232. First record of a substitutionary offering (Gen 22:13).
- 233. First use of the expression “the mount of the Lord” (Gen 22:14).
- 234. First time the age of a woman at death is mentioned (Gen 23:1-2).

- 235. First mention of “Kirjatharaba” (Gen 23:2).
- 236. First record of a man’s wife dying (Gen 23:1-2).
- 237. First mention of a “sepulcher” (Gen 23:6).
- 238. First record of a burial (Gen 23:19).
- 239. First mention of something that was purchased (Gen 23:9-16).
- 240. First mention of a “burying place” (Gen 23:9).
- 241. First mention of the “worth” of something (Gen 23:9,15).
- 242. First mention of a man burying his wife (Gen 23:19)
- 243. First mission to find a wife (Gen 24:1-8
- 244. First time the phrase “in all things” is mentioned (Gen 24:1).
- 245. First time the phrase “the God of the earth” is mentioned (Gen 24:3).
- 246. First time the word “beware” is used (Gen 24:6).
- 247. First time the phrase “the Lord God of heaven” is used (Gen 24:7).
- 248. First prayer requesting a sign from God (Gen 24:12-14).
- 249. First immediate answer to a prayer (Gen 24:15).
- 250. First mention of a “virgin” (Gen 24:16).
- 251. First mention of a person bowing their head in worship (Gen 24:26).
- 252. First occasion of a father giving his son everything (Gen 25:1).
- 253. First mention of giving up the ghost (Gen 25:8).
- 254. First mention of being gathered unto one’s people in death (Gen 25:8).
- 255. First time something was “purchased” (Gen 25:10; 23:16-20).
- 256. First mention of the Lord being “entreated” (Gen 25:21).
- 257. First record of a woman praying, or inquiring of the Lord (Gen 25:22).
- 258. First Twins mentioned (Gen 25:24).
- 259. First mention of a “birthright” (Gen 25:31).
- 260. First occasion of something being “sold” (Gen 25:33).
- 261. First example of someone despising their birthright (Gen 25:34).
- 262. The first commandment of God not to go down to Egypt (Gen 26:2).
- 263. The first reference to God performing His oath (Gen 26:3).
- 264. The first reference to God blessing one person because of the obedience of someone else (Gen 26:5).
- 265. The first record of a “hundredfold” harvest (Gen 26:12).
- 266. The first record of wells being stopped up by men (Gen 26:15).
- 267. The first record of stopped wells being re-dug (Gen 26:18).
- 268. First reference to spring water (Gen 26:18).
- 269. First record of God making room for someone (Gen 26:22).
- 270. First record of one being multiplied for the sake of someone preceding them (Gen 26:24).
- 271. First expression stating someone else hated the individual (Gen 26:27).
- 272. First record of a man or woman being grieved (Gen 26:35).

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THE WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP

WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP Website: <http://wotruth.com/wotf/wotindex.htm>

A place where believers can meet, fellowship, be edified, and express themselves.

Additional Website for Word of Truth Fellowship: <http://www.forministry.com/USMOINDPTWOTFW>

WORD OF TRUTH Website: <http://wotruth.com>

BROTHER BLAKEY'S ON-LINE COMMENTARIES

COMMENTARY on Nehemiah: <http://wotruth.com/nehindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Daniel: <http://wotruth.com/Daniel.htm>

COMMENTARY on Hosea: <http://wotruth.com/hoseaindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Romans: <http://wotruth.com/Romans.htm>

COMMENTARY on Second Corinthians: <http://wotruth.com/2Corinthians.htm>

COMMENTARY on Philippians: <http://wotruth.com/philippiansdindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Colossians: <http://wotruth.com/Colossians.htm>

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COMMENTARY on Malachi: <http://wotruth.com/Malachi.htm>

COMMENTARY on Galatians: <http://wotruth.com/Galatiansindex-new.htm>

COMMENTARY on Genesis: <http://wotruth.com/Genesis.htm>

COMMENTARY on Ephesians: <http://wotruth.com/Ephesians.htm>