



The Book of Genesis. 07/11/2014

Lesson Number 84



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.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot 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; CEB =Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV =English Majority Text (2002); ERV =English Revised Version (1885), ETRV = Easy to Read (1999), 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), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); 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

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.

EXAMPLES OF APOSTOLIC EXPRESSIONS FOUNDED ON GENESIS, #2

REVIEW OF GENESIS, #2

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor 2:12-13)

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

There are expressions and concepts revealed and developed in Genesis that are used by Jesus and the apostles to establish a unique spiritual nomenclature. These are not concepts developed by the world, or reflecting the wisdom of this world. They are as unique as the work of the Lord, which reflects His unequalled character. **If God is really supreme – and He is – then neither He nor His work can be comprehended by borrowing definitive terms and concepts from the wisdom of this world.** This lesson will focus on some of the expressions in Genesis that

are foundational in the communication of the mind and purpose of God to men. The terms themselves are not imbedded in a kind of theological dictionary, but in God's creation and dealings with men. They are wrapped in the cloak of human experiences that have been determined and arranged by God Himself. In other words, Divine traits and intentions are made known in His ordained dealings with men – dealings that He initiated and strictly controlled.

It is important to especially note several things that are made known in Genesis, and they are intentionally

made known–i.e. God creates the circumstance to serve His purpose.

- That God is only pleased by what He has done, and what men insightfully and conscientiously do for Him (creation, Abel, Abraham, etc).
- That God does not allow His purpose to be interrupted by the activities of Satan and his hosts, or men (promised Seed, Ishmael/Isaac, Esau/Jacob, Laban, etc).
- That what God makes alive is intended to bring forth fruit–

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whether it is the grass of vegetation, the impersonal creation, men, or groups of men (creation, Adam/Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob).

- ➔ That God never promises something He does not intend to fulfill.
- ➔ That God reminds people of what He has said, whether it is a warning or a promise (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob).
- ➔ That God cannot, and will not, ignore sin (Adam/Eve, Cain, the world, Babel, Sodom, Er, Onan, Abimelech, etc).
- ➔ That God is the principle Worker in the world, and His purpose is the only purpose that will stand (creation, Noah, Abraham/Isaac/Jacob, and Joseph).
- ➔ That Divine examination is followed by some form of judgment, either favorable or unfavorable (Adam/Eve, Cain, the world, Babel, Sodom, etc).
- ➔ That God favors certain people, without any reason for doing so that is obvious to men (Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, etc).
- ➔ That circumstances are controlled by God (Noah, Abraham, Lot, Isaac, Jacob, etc).

- ➔ That God gives wisdom (Noah, Joseph, etc).
- ➔ That those who are chosen by God can survive any circumstance (Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, etc).
- ➔ That God can change one person's condition by another person's prayer (Abraham for Pharaoh).
- ➔ That those chosen by God can resist and survive very strong temptations (Joseph).
- ➔ That those who are chosen by, and faithful to God are hated by those who are not (Cain-Abel, Ishmael-Isaac, Esau-Jacob, Joseph's brothers-Joseph, Egyptians-Israel, etc).
- ➔ That those who are chosen of God can be in a strange country, face hostility, yet survive and prosper (Abraham-Egypt; Isaac-Gerar; Jacob-Padanaram; Joseph-Egypt; Israel-Egypt).
- ➔ That a person can be exalted in the earth, yet remain pure and faithful to God (Joseph).
- ➔ That a person can prosper, have extensive progeny, and yet be rejected by God (Cain, Ishmael, Esau).
- ➔ That God can completely remove the wicked, with not a trace of them, remaining (the flood, Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim).
- ➔ That God can mandate that a person survive when there is no apparent

- way of escape (Noah, Lot).
- ➔ That the outward status of a person can change in a day (Joseph).
- ➔ That greatly outnumbered people can have the victory (Abraham and the five kings).
- ➔ That God can be against men (Cain, the whole world, Cain, Er, Onan, Abimelech, Laban, Sodom and the cities of the plain, etc).
- ➔ That God comes to the aid of the oppressed (Leah, Jacob, Joseph, etc).
- ➔ That God, as great as He is, has profitable dealings with individuals (Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph), families (Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph), and whole nations (Israel).

SCRIPTURE IS PROFITABLE

That is just a very brief sampling. It demonstrates something of what it means for the Scriptures to be *"profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"* (2 Tim 3:16).

It is possible to become so absorbed with life in the world that one overlooks the profitableness of the Scriptures, and therefore neglects them. When both Moses and Jesus said, "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God" (Lk 4:4), a great and needful principle was revealed. Men *"live"* by every Word of God when they peer beneath the surface of the words. When they perceive some of the things mentioned above, they receive a kind of spiritual nutrition that enables results in the maintenance of spiritual life. This is

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more than simply knowing what the Bible says. That is essential, to be sure, and cannot be neglected. **However, living by every Word of God has more to do with comprehending what the Word has said, what is made known by it, and how it reflects the nature of God**

Himself. I do not believe this is generally known among professing Christians.

I will now consider some terms and principles to which we are introduced in Genesis, all of which have everything to

do with life in Christ Jesus. It must be remembered that God Almighty has never said or done anything that is not related to His eternal purpose, and to the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. I consider the following to be key terms and concepts.

FRUIT

FRUIT: The Divinely appointed means by which life is sustained and generations perpetuated.

IN THE CREATION

We are introduced to “fruit” in the book of Genesis. On the third day God created “the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself” (Gen 1:11). On the sixth day the Lord told newly created man, “And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.” (Gen 1:29-30).

We Learn Two things From This

- ➔ **FIRST**, the fruit included the seed of the vegetation whereby it could perpetuate itself.
- ➔ **SECOND**, the fruit of the vegetation was given to man for nourishment, to keep him alive.

RIGHT AND WRONG ESTABLISHED BY FRUIT

The second chapter of Genesis provides an aspect of creation – two trees were made to grow in the Garden in which man was to be placed later that day: “And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for

food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen 2:9). The destiny of man on the earth was determined by these two trees, As long as they could eat of “the tree of life,” they would remain – and Adam and Eve could eat from this tree freely.

God told Adam, “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: **But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.**” (Gen 2:16-17). The commandment was certainly clear enough, and required no further explanation.

It was not long, perhaps on that very day, that Satan, in the form of a serpent, beguiled the woman. Thinking that the fruit of that forbidden tree was pleasant to look upon, good for food, and desired to make one wise, Eve ate of its fruit, then gave it to Adam, and he also ate of it. Their perspective of life changed immediately. They were ashamed, saw that they were naked, and were now afraid of God. Their disobedience brought sin and death into the world, and they were expelled from

the garden forever – all because they ate some fruit from which they were commanded to abstain.

We Learn Several, Things From This

- ➔ Man is blessed or cursed by what he takes into himself: into his heart, his mind, his conscience.
- ➔ What a person does is the door through which either good or evil enters into him. “Doing” is any form of expression: thought, word, or deed. If we speak, think, or do the wrong thing, we are at once contaminated, and death commences to work in us – just as surely as it did in Adam and Eve.
- ➔ Satan always focuses on what is wrong, and seeks to beguile men into thinking that wrong is really right, and that there are advantages to be realized in doing it.
- ➔ Satan promotes the idea that God is not really seeking the best for us.
- ➔ All sin is self-centered, resulting from thinking more highly of oneself than they should.

There are things and words that are “of God.” And, there are things and words that are “of the devil.” Their source is what makes them good or evil, contaminating or life-giving.

➔ Increase comes from “seed,” which is found in what we ingest, not from a humanly devised system. Any imagined fruit that is not the germination of seed, is not real. In the matter of believers increasing in number, that can only happen when the people are eating from the right tree.

Ultimately the expressions of men are caused by something greater than themselves – either the Lord God, of the god of this world.

THE MENTION OF “FRUIT” IN GENESIS

The “tree” of all good is TRUTH, as it is embodied in Christ Jesus, who Himself is “the Life.” The “tree” of all evil is THE LIE, which is embodied in Satan, the “old serpent.”

➔ Both good and evil come from, so to speak, a “tree.” All good comes from a tree – **something that is larger than the good thing itself.** The same is true of what is evil. It is the expression of a larger principle. The “tree” of all good is TRUTH, as it is embodied in Christ Jesus, who Himself is “the Life.” The “tree” of all evil is THE LIE, which is embodied in Satan, the “old serpent.” There are things and words that are “of God.” And, there are things and words that are “of the devil.” **Their source is what makes them good or evil, contaminating or life-giving.**

- ➔ Fruit tree (Gen 1:11-12).
- ➔ Sea creatures and fowls of the air **fruitful** (Gen 1:22).
- ➔ Mankind **fruitful** (Gen 1:28-29).
- ➔ Eating of **fruit** (Gen 3:2).
- ➔ Forbidden to eat of certain **fruit** (Gen 3:3).
- ➔ Eating **fruit** that was forbidden (Gen 3:6-7).
- ➔ Cain offered the **fruit** of the ground

- to God (Gen 4:3).
- ➔ Noah saved of every kind of animal in order that they might be **fruitful** (Gen 8:17).
- ➔ Noah commanded to be **fruitful** (Gen 9:1,7).
- ➔ God promises to make Abraham **fruitful** (Gen 17:6).
- ➔ God promises to make Ishmael **fruitful** (Gen 17:20).
- ➔ Isaac confesses God had made room for him in the land, that he might be **fruitful** (Gen 26:22).
- ➔ Isaac asks that the Lord bless Jacob to be **fruitful** (Gen 28:3).
- ➔ The **fruit** of the womb (Gen 30:2).
- ➔ God promises to make Jacob **fruitful** (Gen 35:11).
- ➔ Joseph confesses that God caused him to be **fruitful** (Gen 41:52).
- ➔ Jacob tells Joseph God promised to make him **fruitful** (Gen 48:4).
- ➔ In a prophesy, Jacob says Joseph is going to be a “**fruitful bough**” (Gen 49:22).

LIFE

LIFE: The means through which Identity and Expression are achieved.

The word “life” in all of its varied forms occurs eighty-two times in Genesis. The first three chapters contain thirteen references to life (Gen 1:20-21,24,28,30; 2:7,9,19; 3:14,17,20,22,24). The “breath of life” was breathed by God into the nostrils of Adam, constituting him a “**living soul**” (Gen 2:7). In the record of Noah’s salvation from the flood, God said that

the living creatures brought into the ark also possessed “*the breath of life*” (Gen 7:15).

We find in Genesis that the greatest gift is the gift of life, and the greatest loss is the loss of life (in the fall of Adam, and the judgment of the flood).

GOD CREATED LIFE. Life, whether natural or spiritual is created by God, and God alone. No other personality, be it angel or men, can create, or produce life.

LIFE MUST BE SUSTAINED. Genesis substantiates that Life must be sustained by nourishment (Gen 2:9; 6:21).

ONLY WHAT IS ALIVE GROWS. In Scripture, growth is more than getting larger. It rather has to do with being mature, and maturity has to do with bearing fruit. Rocks do not grow because they are not alive.

FRUITFULNESS CAN ONLY BE REALIZED THROUGH LIFE. We see in Genesis that whatever bears fruit, or reproduces, must be alive. Life is an absolute

requisite to fruit bearing.

THE DURATION OF A PERSON IN THE EARTH IS THE TIME DURING WHICH THEY WERE ALIVE. Whatever a person does in this world must be done when they are alive. Concerning that kind of activity, *"there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest"* (Eccl 9:10).

THE RECORD OF LIFE IN GENESIS INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING

- ➔ Moving creatures in the waters and fowls of the air said to have **life** (Gen 1:20-21).
- ➔ Cattle, creeping things, and beasts of the earth said to be *"living"* (Gen 1:24-25,30).
- ➔ God breathed into man *"the breath of life"* (Gen 2:78).
- ➔ Man was made *"a living soul"* (Gen

2:7).

- ➔ The tree of **life** (Gen 2:9; 3:22,24).
- ➔ **Living** creatures given a name (Gen 2:19).
- ➔ A lifetime defined as *"days of thy life"* (Gen 3:14,17).
- ➔ Eve called *"the mother of all living"* (Gen 3:20).
- ➔ Because of sin, man prohibited from **living** in the world forever (Gen 3:22-24).
- ➔ There was *"living substance"* on the earth (Gen 7:4,22-23).
- ➔ Animals spared in the ark had *"the breath of life"* (Gen 7:15).
- ➔ At the conclusion of the flood, God *"remembered Noah, and every living thing"* (Gen 8:1,17).
- ➔ There is *"everything living"* (Gen 8:21).

- ➔ The **life** of the animals is defined as *"the blood,"* and forbidden to be eaten (Gen 9:4).
- ➔ Whoever shed man's blood was to have his **life** taken (Gen 9:5-6).
- ➔ Certain periods of **life** defined (Gen 18:10,14).
- ➔ When men was delivered, it was *"life"* that was saved (Gen 19:17-19).
- ➔ The duration of men called *"the days of"* their *"life"* (Gen 23:1).
- ➔ One person's **life** bound up in another person's **life** (Gen 44:30).
- ➔ Joseph was sent by God into Egypt to *"preserve life"* (Gen 45:5,7,25).
- ➔ The details of one's life is called *"the days of my life"* (Gen 47:9).
- ➔ Jacob said God fed him *"all my life long"* (Gen 48:15).

DEATH

DEATH: The inevitable consequence of sin – the cessation of life, and also of functionality in the body.

ADAM, EVE, AND DEATH. From the standpoint of death, the first commandment given to man involved **avoiding death.** Adam and Eve did not accomplish this avoidance.

Now, spiritually speaking, men are to avoid death – not to touch, ingest, culture, or make friends with anything or anyone that leads to death.

Death, in some way, is referenced in the book of Genesis sixty-seven times. The reason for it is given, together with numerous examples.

- ➔ God Himself is established as the One who imposes death (Gen 2:17).
- ➔ Satan contradicts the Divine statement concerning death (Gen 3:4).
- ➔ The phrase *"and he died"* is mentioned ten times, and done so in regards to people who lived for an extraordinary length of time (Gen 5:5,8,11,,14,17,20,27,31; 9:29; 25:18).
- ➔ God imposed death on the entire world, on a single occasion, with only those in Noah's ark exempted

- (Gen 6:17). Although heavily populated, this took place in totality over a period of one hundred and fifty days (Gen 7:17-24).
- ➔ The fear of death became an incentive (Gen 20:7).
- ➔ Death is called *"giving up the ghost,"* or one's spirit (Gen 25:8,17,29; 49:33).
- ➔ Death is identified with one being *"gathered unto his people"* (Gen 25:8,17; 35:29; 49:29,33).
- ➔ Some people knew when they were going to die, and acted accordingly

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(Gen 27:2; 48:21; 50:5,24).

In Genesis, there are no records of anyone being raised from the dead.

SPIRITUAL DEATH

Spiritual death is referred to as

being “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (Eph 2:1). It is a state in which the individual cannot respond to God – a state in which they do not have “*ears to hear*” or “*eyes to see*” (Deut 29:4). The correction of that condition takes place when God “*quicken*s” the individual,

making them alive, or raising them from the death in which they are found (Eph 2:1,5; Col 2:13).

This, then, is when their spiritual life really begins–i.e. being alive to God (Rom 6:11).

SUFFERING

SUFFERING: A facet of life because of sin. It is common to all men, with only the reason for suffering differing from time to time.

Various forms of suffering are made known in the book of Genesis.

Suffering is under the general umbrella of death. If there was no death, there would be no suffering. When “*sin and death entered*” into the world, everything associated with deterioration, corruption, and vulnerability entered with it. In order to thoroughly escape these consequences, we must inhabit another world, for sin has defiled the entire realm of nature.

Even the creature suffers, groans under the weight of mortality. As it is written, “*For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now*” (Rom 8:20-11). Suffering in child birth was imposed upon the woman (Gen 3:16).

God will not allow life and death

to be blended–i.e. man who was now dying could not, in that state occupy an undying realm. Therefore, mortality was also imposed upon the entirety of the impersonal creation.

There is a principle to be seen here. Life and death are antithetical to one another. They cannot be blended. It is this principle that necessitates suffering. From this perspective, suffering is seen as the unavoidable accompaniment of death.

In Christ Jesus this is addressed by the new creation (2 Cor 5:17); Eph 2:10). Those who are born again are really suited for another world, where there is no death, and consequently no suffering. The ministry of suffering is simply this: it confirms that are not yet in our homeland. While we await being there, suffering makes us aware of the hostility of this world, and assists us in not feeling at home here.

REFERENCES TO SUFFERING IN GENESIS

- ➔ In **sorrow** man was consigned to obtain his bread (Gen 3:17).
- ➔ Cain **rose against** Abel (Gen 4:8).
- ➔ Ishmael **mocked** Isaac (Gen 21:9).
- ➔ Rebekah was **wearied** with the daughters of Heth (Gen 27:46).

➔ Joseph’s brothers **persecuted** him (Gen 37:4,11,18-28).

➔ Jacob was **oppressed** by the deeds of Levi and Simeon (Gen 34:30).

➔ Jacob **grieved**, thinking his favorite son Joseph had been killed (Gen 37:32-35).

➔ Joseph was **oppressed** by Potiphar’s wife (Gen 39:12-18).

➔ Potiphar had Joseph **imprisoned** on the strength of his wife’s lie (Gen 39:20).

➔ Jacob said the archers had shot at Joseph, **grieved** him, and **hated** him (Gen 49:23).

You see how that some suffering was imposed strictly because of the sin of the individuals (Adam, Eve, Cain, and Ishmael). Most of the suffering of men, however, is not owing to their personal sin (although enough reason can surely be found there), **but because we are in an environment that is conducive to suffering**. All of this accents the importance of seeking to dwell forever with ther Lord where there will be “*no more death*” (Rev 21:4), and consequently nothing that comes with death. **Seen correctly, our experience in this present evil world gives us reason enough to seek the Lord, find Him, and walk consistently with Him.**

GOD CALLING MAN

The word “*called*” is used six | hundred and twenty-four times in | Scripture – ninety-eight times in

Genesis, one hundred and seven times in the Gospels, forty-eight times in Acts, and sixty-five times in the epistles and Revelation.

GOD CALLING MAN: The Divine initiation of His purposeful work in men.

As it is used in Matthew through Revelation, the word “called” can mean “invited”(Matt 20:16; 22:14; or “appointed” (Rom 1:6; 8:28-30; 1 Pet 2:9), depending on the context. ^{THAYER}

The fact of Divine calling is established in Genesis. This is a most wonderful facet of truth that is rarely expounded in our time. In fact, throughout human history, with the

power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph 2:2). Satan is a graveyard worker, moving about in the spiritual cemetery of humanity. In his role of “the god of this world,” Satan “blinds” the minds of all who “believe not,” so that they cannot see or comprehend the God who made them.

Even the appointed vocation of all men to “seek the Lord” (Acts 17:27), it is still true that by natural aptitude, “there is none that seeketh after God” (Rom 3:11).

Add to this fact that God is not accessible to any human sense, for He is ever “the invisible God” (Col 1:15).

Thus, by nature, man is locked in an unreconciled and inimical state, and

high calling of God” (Phil 3:11). Paul wrote to believers that he prayed always for them that God would “count you worthy of **this calling**” (2 Thess 1:11). God Almighty is declared to have “saved us and called us with a **holy calling**” (2 Tim 1:9). Believers are said to be “partakers of **the heavenly calling**” (Heb 3:1), and admonished to “make your calling and election sure” (2 Pet 1:10).

Being called “unto” something (1 Cor 1:9; Gal 5:13; Rev 19:19) always refers to the calling of God, and never to what men have done. Men call upon the name of the Lord (Gen 4:26; 12:8; 26:25), **but they can never call themselves into anything that has to do with God. It is God Himself that initiates all such calls.**

It should be apparent that the calling of God is more important than the calling of man. His calling is an integral part of our salvation, and is what enables men to call upon the name of the Lord.

The “God Calls Every One” View

When considering the calling of God, some take the view that His call is always an invitation, and, with that in mind, insist that, in regard to salvation, He calls everyone. There is no question that there is a very definite sense in which “many are called, but few are chosen” (Matt 22:14). **However, when it comes to the foundational book of Genesis, no such calling can be found. The callings recorded in this book are always focused and never general – and the initial call always comes from God.**

In the book of beginnings – Divine beginnings – involvement with God is always preceded by a calling from God – and there are no exceptions.

➔ **THE CALLING OF NOAH** (Gen 6:8,13-14). When Noah was called of God to build an ark, it was a unique call. It did not go forth to everyone. Only Noah was told to build an ark. Only Noah was told he and his family would be saved. Only Noah was told to enter the ark with his family. In

Although this a foundational book regarding the associations of men with God, there is not a solitary example from Genesis 1:1 through 50:26 of a person who had any kind of communication with God that was not initiated by God Himself.

exception of a few noble souls, the subject and doctrine of the calling of God has been largely neglected. It is difficult, if not impossible, to exploit the calling of God for personal or doctrinal advantage.

SOMETHING MUST BE UNDERSTOOD

In order to understand the calling of God, something of the impact sin had upon the human nature and race must be comprehended. By nature men are now “alienated from God” (Eph 4:18), “enemies of God” (Rom 5:10), “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph 2:1), and are “children of wrath” (Eph 2:3). Outside of Christ, the primary person who works in men is the devil. As it is written, “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the

not only is he unaware of it, there is really nothing he can do about it.

The book of Genesis accents this point. Although this a foundational book regarding the associations of men with God, **there is not a solitary example from Genesis 1:1 through 50:26 of a person who had any kind of communication with God that was not initiated by God Himself.** This even applied to Adam (Gen 2:19,22). Only the call of God is able to penetrate the darkness and ignorance that has enveloped man.

Apostolic doctrine speaks of “the calling of God” (Rom 11:29). Those in Christ are reminded of “your calling” (1 Cor 1:26; Eph 4:4). They are reminded of “His calling” (Eph 1:18), and “the

the case of the food, God did not call everyone to be saved. It was ONLY Noah that “*found grace in the eyes of the Lord*” (Gen 6:8).

- ➔ **THE CALLING OF ABRAHAM** (Gen 12:1-3; Heb 11:8). It is said of Abraham alone, “*he was called to go out to a place which he should after receive for an inheritance*” (Heb 11:18). **No one else was called to be the progenitor of a chosen race.** The call was to be used by God to commence a lineage that would lead up to Jesus was not a universal call.
- ➔ **THE CALLING OF ISAAC** (Gen 26:2-5; Heb 11:18). The calling of Isaac was also unique to him. Although he had a half-brother, Ishmael, God made clear that Isaac alone had been chosen to inherit the promise of Abraham (Gen 21:12; Rom 9:7; Heb 11:18). Abraham had seven other sons beside Isaac, but none of them were called as was Isaac. None of them were invited to participate in what God was doing through

This same view of the calling of God will continue throughout Scripture. Men having an absolute unique call include Moses, Aaron, Joshua, David, Solomon, the prophets, John the Baptist, and the apostles.

- Abraham.
- ➔ **THE CALLING OF JACOB** (Gen 35:10-12). The calling of Jacob was also unique. He not only had a full-blood brother, it was his twin, Esau. Yet Esau was never intended to inherit the promise given to Abraham and Isaac. As compared to Jacob, God “*hated*” Esau (Mal 1:3; Rom 9:13).
- ➔ **THE CALLING OF JOSEPH** (Gen 37:5-10; 50:20). The calling of Joseph to preserve much people alive (Gen 50:20) was also unique to Joseph. He had eleven brothers, but none of them were invited by God to do the

work assigned to Joseph. Further, there was no universal search for someone else to do that particular work.

This same view of the calling of God will continue throughout Scripture. Men having an absolute unique call include Moses, Aaron, Joshua, David, Solomon, the prophets, John the Baptist, and the apostles.

We can understand their choice better when we have a gasp of the callings of Genesis.

MAN CALLING UPON GOD

**MAN CALLING UPON GOD:
A recognition of man’s total dependency upon the Lord.**

Genesis introduces us to men calling upon the name of the Lord. Although men calling upon the name of the Lord is not mentioned frequently, we are introduced to that activity in this first book of Moses.

Calling “*on the name of the Lord*” is mentioned sixteen times in Scripture (Gen 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 21:33; 26:25; 1 Kgs 18:24,25; 2 Kgs 5:11; Psa 116:4,13,17; Joel 2:32; Zeph 3:9; Acts 2:21; 22:16; Rom 10:13).

This phrase means “*TO CRY TO ANOTHER FOR HELP, AND HENCE TO PRAY.*” McCLINTOK & STRONG’S “*TO CALL UNTO, CRY (FOR HELP), CALL (WITH NAME OF GOD).*” STRONG’S
The indicates a sense of need that

cannot addressed by man himself. Adam and Eve did not have this awareness when they sinned, for they sewed fig leaves together as aprons, seeking to resolve their dilemma themselves.

Men first **began** to call upon the name of the Lord when Enos was born to Seth (Gen 4:16. This means men did not call on the name of the Lord for the first two hundred and forty-five years of human history.

Adam begets Seth	140
Seth begets Enos	105
Number of years before men called on the name of the Lord	
	245

This confirms what sin did to mankind – how it dulled the spiritual senses of men, and forced them to live

at a distance from God. It appears as though, in some significant way, men did not realize their deep need of the Lord – even in the first stage of time.

After Enos was born, the first man recorded to have called on the name of the Lord was Abraham, about eighteen hundred years from Enos. We assume

Adam beget Seth	140
Seth beget Enos	105
Enos beget Cainan	90
Cainan beget Mahalaleel	70
Mahalaleel beget Jared	65
Jared beget Enoch	162
Enoch beget Methuselah	65
Methuselah beget Lamech	187
Lamech beget Noah	182
Noah beget Shem	500
Shem to Abraham	est - 1934
Number of years, Adam to Abraham ...	2000

that Enoch called on the name of the Lord, for he *“walked with God,”* being the first recorded man to do so (Gen 5:22-24). Noah, who was also before Abraham, *“walked with God”* (Gen 6:9), inferring that he also called upon the name of the Lord.

For the first two thousand years of human history, no particular man is said to have called upon the name of the Lord. Abraham is the first person specifically said to have called upon the name of the Lord. That practice began in the days after Enos was born to

Seth. It was apparently not common practice – even after Abraham (until the end of the Genesis narrative).

Again, I want to stress what sin did to mankind. I do this because I do not believe there is anything near a satisfactory understanding of this in the church of our time. We cannot read the book of Genesis comprehending God’s involvement with men by making comparisons to His dealings with men in Christ Jesus. While God Himself has nor changed, man had to be tutored

concerning His nature and ways.

THE RECORD IN GENESIS OF MEN CALLING UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD

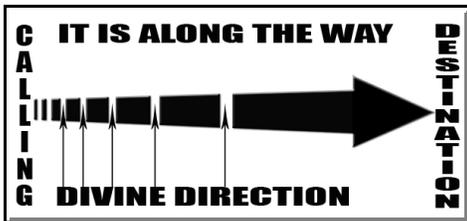
- ➔ When men began to call on the name of the Lord (Gen 4:26).
- ➔ Abraham called upon the name of the Lord (Gen 12:8; 13:4; 21:33).
- ➔ Isaac called upon the name of the Lord (Gen 26:25).

ALONG THE WAY

ALONG THE WAY: Diving direction takes place when men are actively involved in the will of the Lord.

In Genesis we are exposed to Divine direction while men are obeying the Lord. **It is as a person is engaged in the will of the Lord, as it has been revealed to him, that the Lord directs him.**

Those who refuse to do what the Lord has said will **not** be directed by Him in a profitable way. The way of blessing is, and always has been, **while one is engaged in the revealed will of the Lord – doing what he knows he should be doing.**



There must be a conscious awareness of the Lord to be able to receive a blessing, or profitable direction from Him. This consciousness is maintained in a life that is being lived solely for the Lord. The person who is not living for God is not able to hear

Him, even if God should speak to him. Such a person will be frightened, and withdraw from God, as Adam in the Garden, and Israel did at Sinai. Do you recall their withdrawing words? *“And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die”* (Ex 20:19).

Examples of this principle are found in Genesis.

- ➔ God directed Abraham from Ur to Canaan (Gen 12:1).
- ➔ God directed Abraham to the mountain on which he was to offer Isaac (Gen 22:2).
- ➔ God directed Abraham’s servant in finding a wife for Isaac (Gen 24:27,48).
- ➔ God directed Isaac to stay in the land He would tell him of (Gen 26:2).
- ➔ God directed Joseph to Egypt (Gen

47:7-8; 50:20).

EXAMPLES AFTER CHRIST’S EXALTATION

There are further examples of this principle in the record of Christ’s followers.

- ➔ The disciples were to wait for the *“promise of the Father”* (Acts 1:4). Then they would know what to do (Acts 1: 6-26). Immediately they engaged themselves in the work of the Lord. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, *“they were all with one accord in one place”* (Acts 2:1).
- ➔ Before Saul of Tarsus would be directed concerning his appointed work, he spent time in fasting and prayer, and was ready when the Lord’s messenger came (Acts 9:9-18).
- ➔ When the Lord called Barnabas and Saul for a special work, they were ministering to the Lord with the rest of the church in Antioch (Acts 13:1-2).

The individual who desires Divine direction, or to know further concerning God’s will for him, must immediately involve himself in what he already knows to be God’s will.

- ➔ When the Lord called Paul and company to go to Macedonia, they were engaged in the work of the Lord (Acts 16:8-10).
- ➔ When the Lord instructed Paul to remain in Corinth, he was engaged

in the work of the Lord (Acts 18:8-10).

The individual who desires Divine direction, or to know more concerning God's will for him (and that should be everyone), must immediately involve himself in what he already knows to be

God's good, and acceptable, and perfect will. Waiting on the Lord does not consist of doing nothing. It is rather being engaged in the good and acceptable and perfect will of God now. That will sharper the spiritual senses to be able to be directed.

SACRIFICE

SACRIFICE: The forfeiture of something possessed, in order to give to God.

The word "sacrifice" in all of its varied expressions is found only twice in Genesis. It is found three hundred and ten times in the rest of the Scriptures.

The first mention of sacrificing is found in Genesis 31:54. *"Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount."* (Gen 31:54). This took place after Jacob finally parted from Laban on a peaceable basis.

their acceptance by God: *And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."* (Gen 46:2-4).

Most of the time that sacrifices are referred to in Genesis, it is under the term "offered." There are thirteen references to something being offered to God in Genesis.

A DEFINITION OF TERMS

In order to assist us in seeing the significance of an offering, let us first

personal expense.

- ➔ It is offered in recognition of who God is and what He has done.

A lot of what is purported to be offered to God is nothing more than a charade. Today there are exceedingly few people who can say with David, *"neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing"* (2 Sam 24:24). Blessed determination, indeed!

Under the Law, where sacrifices were standardized by God, **only the best was to be offered in sacrifice to God** (Num 19:2; 28:3,9,11; 29:17; Ex 29:1; Lev 1:3). There was never a relaxation of this requirement. God upbraided the people when they offered the lame and the sick to Him (Mal 1:8,13).

Today the saints offer to God *"the sacrifice of praise"* (Heb 13:15). As disciples of Jesus, we are to *"present"* our bodies as a *"living sacrifice"* (or sacrifice of life) unto God, *"holy and acceptable"* (Rom 12:1-2). Paul referred to the service of the faith of the Philippians as a *"sacrifice"* (Phil 2:17). He referred to a gift they sent him as *"an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God"* (Phil 4:18). Also doing good and sharing with others was called *"such sacrifices"* with which God was *"well pleased"* (Heb 13:16). All believers are built up together *"to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ"* (1 Pet 2:5).

May our sacrifices be willing, and of the very best quality.

A lot of what is purported to be offered to God is nothing more than a charade. Today there are exceedingly few people who can say with David, "neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing"

The second time a sacrifice is mentioned, it also pertained to Jacob: *"And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac."* (Gen 46:1).

The response of God to Jacob's sacrifices is commentary enough on

define the terms.

- ➔ **OFFER.** To formally present something as a gift to God—a tribute. This involves the relinquishing of all rights to what is offered.

- ➔ **SACRIFICE.** The sacrifice is what is offered to God, and is offered at

The following are the offerings and sacrifices to which we are introduced in Genesis. They assist us to have a proper view of sacrifices and how and why they are offered.

- ➔ Cain brought **an offering of the fruit** of the ground to God (Gen 4:3).
- ➔ Abel brought **of the firstlings of his flock as an offering**, and God had respect unto it (Gen 4:4-5).
- ➔ God had no respect to Cain and his

offering (Gen 4:6).

- ➔ After the flood, Noah built an altar and **offered burnt offerings** of “*every clean beast, and every clean fowl*” (Gen 8:20).
- ➔ God commanded Abraham to offer Isaac as a **burnt offering** (Gen 22:2).
- ➔ Abraham set out to offer Isaac as a **burnt offering** to God (Gen 22:3,6-8).
- ➔ Abraham **offered a ram**, supplied by God, as a burnt offering in the place

of his son Isaac (Gen 22:13).

- ➔ Jacob **offered a sacrifice** upon a mountain, calling his brethren to eat bread (Gen 31:54).
- ➔ Jacob poured out a **drink offering** to God in the place where God had talked with him (Gen 35:14).
- ➔ Before going with his entire household to see Joseph in Egypt, Jacob “**offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac**” (Gen 46:1).

ALTAR

ALTAR: Built for use in the honoring of God by sacrifice or by remembrance.

The word “*altar*” is mentioned eleven times in Genesis. By definition, an altar was “A STRUCTURE ON WHICH SACRIFICES OF ANY KIND ARE OFFERED. IN ANCIENT TIMES THIS WAS ALWAYS DONE BY SLAUGHTER OR BY FIRE. ALTARS WERE ERECTED ON SUCH SPOTS AS HAD BEEN EARLY HELD SACRED.” McCLINTOK & STRONG’S

Quite frequently the building of an altar was occasioned by some blessing from the Lord. Once God commanded Jacob to go to Bethel “*and make there an altar*” (Gen 35:1). One time Abraham returned to the place where he had built an altar (Gen 13:3-4).

Altars were a place of holy remembrance, as well as a place where sacrifices were offered to God.

Genesis contains the records of the following altars being built.

- ➔ The first reference to an altar is when Noah built an altar unto the Lord following the flood, offering of every clean beast and clean fowl unto the Lord (Gen 8:20). That took place about sixteen hundred years after the fall of man.

- ➔ After God appeared to Abraham, promising He would give the land of Canaan to his seed, Abraham built an altar unto the Lord (Gen 12:7). That was about four hundred years after Noah built his altar.

- ➔ After he pitched his tent close to Bethel, Abraham built another altar (Gen 12:8).

- ➔ Later, God told Abraham to go to Bethel, to the place where he had built an altar (Gen 13:4).

- ➔ When Abraham came to Mamre, he built another altar (Gen 13:18).

- ➔ Abraham built an altar on which to offer Isaac, and laid his son upon it (Gen 22:9).

- ➔ After the Lord promised Isaac he would bless him and multiply his seed for Abraham’s sake, Isaac built an altar and called on the name of the Lord (Gen 26:25).

- ➔ When Jacob came to Shalem, he bought a parcel of land and built an altar, naming it “*Elelohe-Israel*”–i.e., “*God, The God of Israel*” (Gen 33:20).

- ➔ God commanded Jacob to go to Bethel and build an altar (Gen 35:1).

- ➔ Jacob went to Bethel and built an altar unto God (Gen 35:3).
- ➔ When he came to Luz, Jacob built an altar, and named the place “*Elbethel*”–i.e. “*The God of Bethel*” (Gen 35:7).

As you can see, Abraham and Jacob were particular noted for building altars.

WE HAVE AN ALTAR

Those in Christ are told, “*We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle*” (Heb 13:10). This is an altar like the brazen altar associated with the Tabernacle and, later, the Temple (Ex 27:1-8; 39:39; 1 Kgs 8:64).

In this case, the altar is not viewed as the place where the sacrifices were offered, but as the altar from which the priests ate (Lev 2:10; 10:12; Deut 12:27).

Paul refers to this practice in his letter to the Corinthians: “*Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are **partakers with the altar?***” (1 Cor 9:13). And again, “*Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices **partakers of the altar?***” (1 Cor 10:18).

Our altar is the place from which we obtain the flesh of Jesus, which is to be eaten. Jesus, soaring over the heads of His hard-hearted audience, said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed" (John 6:53-55). This is His flesh and blood that is associated with His death, not that which was associated with His walk among men. It is His sacrificed flesh and blood.

To eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood has to do with participating in His death. We begin that participation when we are baptized into Christ's death (Rom 6:3). We continue that participation when we bear "about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (2 Cor 4:10). This involves being "dead to sin" (Rom 6:2), and being "dead with Christ to the rudiments of the world" (Col 2:20). All, of this is pictured at the Lord's Table, which is a kind of confession of the way we are living, as well as our anticipation of the Lord's

Those who seek to serve the Lord after the manner of the Old Covenant, choosing the lesser glory to that which is superior are excluded from this table.

return. Unlike the Passover, the Lord's Table is not a mere ritual. It is a place of remembrance – like an altar – where we recall the basis of our acceptance by God, and pledge to faithfully wait for the coming of the Lord.

The Lord's Supper itself is not an altar on which something is offered, but a table from which something is eaten. The high priest did not stand by the altar, take some of the burnt flesh, and eat it. He rather removed the sacrifice for sin from the altar, eating it "in the holy place" (Lev 6:26).

Those who have a ritualistic religion – "which serve the tabernacle" – "have NO RIGHT to eat" at this altar. There is no place at this table for those who "as though living in the world, are subject to ordinances" (Col 2:20-23). If you do not know what that means,

then be serious enough to pursue an understanding of it.

Those who seek to serve the Lord after the manner of the Old Covenant, choosing the lesser glory to that which is superior (2 Cor 3:7-18) are excluded from this table. They are not excluded by a mere commandment or prohibition. God will not allow such people to benefit from Christ's death. He will not let them be "partakers of Christ" (Heb 3:14), and there is no possibility for men to reverse His judgment.

He alone can make this determination. It is not on our part to determine who may or may not eat from this table. God alone can do it –and He will do it! That is part of the government He is presently carrying out in righteousness. Think on these things!

FAMINE

The book of Genesis introduces us to the phenomenon of a famine – a dearth – a time when nothing is grown or harvested. We are taught in Genesis that such times are initiated by God, and that He also provides means through which the people can be nourished during a famine.

FAMINE: An imposed cessation of fruitfulness that is caused by God.

We are introduced to famines in Genesis, and see that, while grievous, they did not have any impact on the purpose of God. They were imposed

famines, not merely the result of human neglect, or aberrant natural conditions.

- ➔ When Abraham first arrived in Canaan, there was a famine there (Gen 12:10).
- ➔ When Isaac was in Canaan, there was also a famine, as when Abraham was there (Gen 26:1).
- ➔ Through Joseph, God informed Pharaoh of a coming seven-year famine (Gen 41:27,30,31,36,56-57)
- ➔ The famine was in Canaan also (Gen 42:5).
- ➔ During the famine, Jacob sent his

sons to Egypt for food (Gen 42:19,33; 43:1).

- ➔ Jacob and his household came to Egypt in the second year of the famine (Isa 45:6).
- ➔ Joseph nourished Jacob's household during the remainder of the famine (Gen 45:11; 47:4).
- ➔ Joseph administered the distribution of food during the famine (Gen 47:13-20).

A SPIRITUAL FAMINE

It is not enough to merely be acquainted with causes and circumstances of famines in nature. It seems to me that such famines assist

us in better understanding another kind of famine that is imposed by God. The prophet Amos speaks of such a famine:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst." (Amos 8:11-13).

An Imposed Famine

As in nature, this spiritual famine

An Effective Famine

The famine would be effective, not a mere theoretic famine, abbreviated famine, or some kind of metaphor: *"And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst"* (Amos 8:13).

Sustenance Available During the Famine

As established in natural famines sent by the Lord, sustenance was still available for those chosen by God. Such were *"kept alive in famine"* (Psa 33:19).

Covenant, other spiritual famines have taken place. Commencing with the popularization of Christianity by Constantine, spiritual famine was imposed upon men for a period of about one thousand years. Generally, the Word of God was not declared. The Scriptures were locked up in monasterial vaults, and, as time passed, the people did not even hear Scripture read or quoted in their own language. All of this was a judgment from God because of a general lack of regard for His Word.

After "The Enlightenment," or Age of Reason" (Eighteenth Century), another spiritual famine commenced to develop. The apostles had spoken of such a famine: *"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables"* (2 Tim 4:3-4).

The apostles also declared there would be a condition where the churches maintained a form of godliness, while rejecting its power (2 Tim 3:1-5).

These conditions are again present, and to an alarming degree. The preaching of philosophy, corrupt interpretation, and religious tradition have supplanted the declaring of the Word. Most thoughtful men know this is the case, but few have connected the condition as being a Divinely imposed spiritual famine.

The situation is that professing believers have learned to live within a surrounding of spiritual impoverishment. However, God will not long endure that kind of accommodating spirit– just as He did not allow it in Israel.

Therefore, as I see things, God has stopped His Word from being spoken freely. Men wander here and there looking for it, but have great difficulty finding it, just as those in the days of the Egyptian famine had difficulty procuring food. You may rest assured that Satan cannot stop God's Word from being spoken – especially

As in nature, this spiritual famine of hearing the Word of the Lord was imposed upon men. God says, "I will send a famine." He also distinguishes the kind of famine that would be imposed: "not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD."

of hearing the Word of the Lord was imposed upon men. God says, *"I will send a famine."* He also distinguishes the kind of famine that would be imposed: *"not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD."* It is important to note that He does **not** say a famine of the Word itself, but *"a famine of HEARING the words of the Lord."* That is, men would not speak it, declare it, or proclaim it. It would not be HEARD. **God would take the Word out of the mouths of the speakers, so that the people would no longer hear His words.**

Just as it was with some recorded famines of bread (Lev 26:26; Jer 24:10; 29:17; Ezek 5:16; 14:13), **this would be a judgment.** God makes this clear in His words prior to the announcement of this famine (Amos 8:1-10).

- Abraham was kept alive during a famine (Gen 12:10).
- Isaac was kept alive during a famine (Gen 26:1,12).
- Elijah, a widow, and her son, were sustained during a lengthy famine (1 Kgs 17:3-6,10-16).
- Jacob and his household were sustained during a famine (Psa 105:15; Gen 45:6-7).

The Reality of SPIRITUAL Famine

From Malachi until John the Baptist there was a spiritual famine in Israel – a period of 400-500 years. There is no record of the Word of God being sounded forth to any measurable degree.

Now, during the time of the New

when it is flourishing in the hearts of those who hear it.

However, God can stop His Word from being spoken, so that there is a famine of **HEARING** the Word of the Lord. Aside from secondary conditions – like people not receiving the love of the truth, or not being able to endure sound doctrine – the primary cause for the cessation of HEARING the Word of God is God Himself. **Further, that judgment is always owing to a lack of response to His Word, which lack is always accompanied with its distortion by men.** That neglect was not owing to a lack of Divine beneficence. As in times of old, God will say, *"Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: Yet they hearkened not unto Me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers"* (Jer 7:25-26). This kind of activity always precedes a spiritual famine.

Sustenance During Spiritual Famine

Just as in the famine of bread, the people of God can be kept alive during

Our role is to join with those who fear the Lord and speak often one to another. It is to be an oasis for those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

the spiritual famine of hearing the Word of the Lord. Once, during the days of Malachi, when such a famine was under way, *"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him"* (Mal 3:16-17). **THEY WERE KEPT ALIVE DURING THE FAMINE OF HEARING THE WORD OF THE LORD.**

Our Role in This Good Work

Our role is to join with those who fear the Lord and speak often one to another. It is to be an oasis for those who are hungering and thirsting after

righteousness. There are certain things that cannot accomplish spiritual survival during a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord. **Church programs, outings, community service, and the likes cannot sustain the soul that is hungry for the Word of God.** Those who confess, *"I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food."* (Job 23:12), and say to Him, *"Therefore I love Thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold"* (Psa 119:127), will regard such meager offerings as chaff at the best, and bitter gall at the worst. **The discerning and liberated soul demands the nourishment that comes from hearing the Word.** They cannot do without it. Such people extend themselves to survive, finding the places and people that are being favored by God with nourishment.

DIVINE DISPLEASURE

DIVINE DISPLEASURE: God being displeased with a person or human deed.

It may not be preferable to hear about God's displeasure, but it is necessary to do so. First of all, **there is such a thing as God NOT being pleased.**

Extensive teaching about Divine displeasure is found in the prophets and apostolic doctrine. By "displeasure," I mean God's dislike, aversion, distaste, disapproval, dissatisfaction, or disfavor. This is stronger than merely not liking or preferring something. **When God is displeased, it moves Him to do something about the condition that**

caused the displeasure.

When, for example, Israel *"complained,"* it **"displeased the Lord,"** and *"the fire of God burnt among them"* (Num 11:1). When David took Bathsheba as his wife, *"the thing that David had done displeased the Lord"* (2 Sam 11:27). When David numbered Israel, God was *"displeased with this thing"* (1 Chron 21:7). When truth *"failed"* in Israel, and *"he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey . . . the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no judgment"* (Isa 59:15).

We are introduced to the reality of God's displeasure in the book of Genesis. That displeasure is seen in

individuals and the whole world as well.

In the early days of Genesis, we are introduced to Divine displeasure, although that word is not employed.

- Adam and Eve expelled from the Garden (Gen 3:24).
- A curse placed upon Cain (Gen 4:11-15).
- The provocation at the decadence of humanity (Gen 6:5-7).
- The reaction to the project at Shinar (Gen 11:7-8).
- The reaction to Pharaoh taking Sarah (Gen 12:17).

- ➔ The destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain (Gen 19:24-25).
- ➔ The reaction to Lot's wife (Gen 19:25-26).
- ➔ The reaction to Abimelech taking Sarah (Gen 20:3,18).
- ➔ The reaction to Laban (Gen 31:24)
- ➔ The reaction to Er's wickedness (Gen 38:7).
- ➔ The reaction to Onan's disobedience (Gen 38:10).

- ➔ "Behold My servant, whom I have chosen; My beloved, in whom my soul is well **pleased**: I will put My spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles." (Matt 12:18)
- ➔ "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good **pleasure** to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32)
- ➔ "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it **pleased** God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor 1:21)
- ➔ "But now hath God set the members

- (2 Thess 1:11)
- ➔ "For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well **pleased**." (2 Pet 1:17)
- ➔ "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy **pleasure** they are and were created." (Rev 4:11)

Note that in all of these texts, God was never moved to bless or do good to a person when He was displeased. Divine favor is only and always bestowed in the context of pleasing, not displeasing.

Armed with a proper understanding of God's displeasure, the saints are admonished concerning pleasing the Lord.

Note that in all of these texts, God was never moved to bless or do good to a person when He was displeased. Divine favor is only and always bestowed in the context of pleasing, not dis-pleasing.

- ➔ "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how **ye ought to walk and to please God**, so ye would abound more and more." (1 Thess 4:1)
- ➔ "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto **all pleasing**, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." (Col 1:10)
- ➔ "But without faith it is impossible to **please** Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb 11:6)

It is no wonder that the lethargic are warned, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than He?" (1 Cor 10:21-22).

TEACHING GIVEN TO THE SAINTS

When we read of God's **pleasure** being associated with our salvation, it brings great comfort to the soul. With so much displeasure in Genesis (with the exception of Abel, Enoch, Noah, "the fathers" and Joseph), an emphasis on God's pleasure and good pleasure is pleasant to hear.

- ➔ "Yet it **pleased** the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the **pleasure** of the LORD shall prosper in His hand." (Isa 53:10)
- ➔ "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well **pleased**." (Matt 3:17)

- every one of them in the body, as it hath **pleased** Him." (1 Cor 12:18)
- ➔ "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good **pleasure** of His will." (Eph 1:5)
- ➔ "Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good **pleasure** which He hath purposed in Himself." (Eph 1:9)
- ➔ "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good **pleasure**." (Phil 2:13)
- ➔ "For it **pleased** the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." (Col 1:19)
- ➔ "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good **pleasure** of His goodness, and the work of faith with power."

DIVINE CHOICE

For some, Divine choice, particularly of people, is a subject to

debate. Just a mention of "predestinate," or "chosen," has

sparked many an extended period of controversy. Yet words and expressions

that emphasize Divine choice are strategically scattered throughout the Word of God. Here are some examples:

DIVINE CHOICE: The selection of a person, place, or thing that is made by God, in which man plays no determining role.

- ➔ "Predestinate" (Rom 8:29-30)
- ➔ "Predestinated" (Eph 1:5,11)
- ➔ "Foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Pet 1:20)
- ➔ "Foreknowledge" (Acts 2:23; 1 Pet 1:2)
- ➔ "Elect" (Isa 42:1; 45:4; 65:9,22; Matt 24:24,31; Mk 13:22,27; Lk 18:7; Rom 8:33; Col 3:12; 1 Tim 5:21; Tit 1:1; 1 Pet 1:2; 2:6; 2 John 1:1; 2 John 1:13)
- ➔ "Election" (Rom 9:11; 11:5,7,28; 1 Thess 1:4; 2 Pet 1:10).
- ➔ "Chosen to" (Deut 12:21; 16:11; 21:5; 1 Chron 9:22; 1 Chron 15:2; Neh 1:9; Isa 58:6)
- ➔ "Chosen you" (2 Thess 2:13).
- ➔ "Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph 1:4)
- ➔ "Appointed" (1 Thess 3:3; 1 Thess 5:9; 2 Tim 1:11; 1 Pet 2:8)

- ➔ "His own purpose" (2 Tim 1:9)
- ➔ "His purpose" (Rom 8:28)
- ➔ "The purpose of Him" (Eph 1:11)
- ➔ "The purpose of God" (Rom 9:11)
- ➔ "Eternal purpose" (Eph 3:11)
- ➔ "His own purpose and grace . . . before the world began" (2 Tim 1:9).
- ➔ "Promised before the world began" (Tit 1:2).
- ➔ "I have raised thee up" (Rom 9:17)
- ➔ "From his mother's womb" (Lk 1:15).
- ➔ God "separated" Paul "from his mother's womb" (Gal 1:15).

Some men debate about the meaning of these expressions, but they cannot dispute their presence in Scripture. They are hesitant to accept them at face value, because they disrupt their manner of thought. Men should be skeptical about their views if raw Scripture appears to challenge or contradict them. If the meaning of anyone's words is to be questioned, it is the words of men, not God.

It should be obvious that the purpose of God is not in any way shaped by men. Paul alludes to this when he says, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been

His counselor?" (Rom 11:34). The intentions of God are "purposed in Himself" (Eph 1:9). It is His "good pleasure" that moves Him, not that of men (Psa 51:18; Lk 12:32; Eph 1:5,9; Phil 2:13; 2 Thess 1:11).

While all of this is declared in apostolic doctrine, and in the prophets as well, we are introduced to the idea of God's Divine choosing and preference in Genesis.

- ➔ Only **Noah** found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Gen 6:8).
- ➔ God chose and initiated a call to **Abraham**, preferring him above Nahor and Haran (Gen 11:27; 12:1).
- ➔ God chose to save **Lot** (Gen 19:16,22).
- ➔ God chose **Isaac** over Ishmael (Gen 21:12).
- ➔ God chose **Jacob** over Esau (Gen 25:23).
- ➔ God chose **Joseph** over his brothers to sustain the nation (Gen 45:7-8).
- ➔ God gave **Joseph** the rights of the firstborn, even though he was the second to the last son (1 Chron 5:1).
- ➔ God gave the scepter to **Judah** instead of the firstborn until the Deliverer Jesus should come (Gen 49:9)

DIVINE REVELATION

DIVINE REVELATION. When something known only by God Himself is revealed by God to those chosen by Him to have that knowledge.

ONLY BY REVELATION
There are things that can only be

known by revelation – revelation that comes from God. Some things CAN be known by deduction, such as reasoning upon the basis of revelation concerning duty (Rom 8:31; 1 Pet 3:11; 2 Pet 2:4; 1 John 4:11). Further, men are expected to reason upon Scripture and come to certain conclusions.

However, when it comes to what

will happen in the future, beyond the moment in which we find ourselves, we have no knowledge or capacity to predict what will take place. That requires revelation from God – and what is known by revelation cannot possibly be known any other way.

Divine revelation makes known the following:

- ➔ The Nature of God Himself–i.e. “*AM.*” (Gen 17:1; 31:13; 46:1; Ex 3:6,14; 6:6; Ex 22:27; Deut 32:39;)
- ➔ The nature of things existing in our realm–i.e. the world, mankind, the devil, etc. (1 Cor 7:31; 1 John 2:17; 2 Cor 4:4)
- ➔ Things pertaining to nations. (Psa 9:17; 33:23; Jer 18:7; 51:58; Zeph 2:5; Mal 1:4; Matt 25:35).
- ➔ Exceeding great and precious promises, addressed to God’s people (2 Cor 1:20; Gal 3:16; Heb 6:12; 2 Pet 1:4).

THE ROLE OF THE PROMISES

The promises of God are all revelations. Not a single one of them could possibly be known by human deduction, or insights of men. If God did not reveal them, they would remain unknown – totally obscured.

Promises are, in a sense, superior to commandments. This is because commandments concern what men are to do, while promises concern what God is going to do. This by no means denigrates the commandments of God. They are faithful (Psa 119:86), are to be our delight (Psa 119:143), are truth (Psa 119:151), are righteous (Psa 119:172), and are to be loved (Psa 119:127). **However, they are second to the promises, like the loving of our neighbor is second to loving God** (Matt 22:37-39).

For those in Christ Jesus, the exceeding great and precious promises of God are the appointed means through which we partake of the Divine nature (2 Pet 1:4). They are to be considered as something believers can “*inherit*” (Heb 6:12).

All of this is accentuated in the book of Genesis – written centuries after all of the events that are recorded there. Instead of prophesying of the future, most of what God revealed to Moses took place the distant past. Regardless of their age, there was not a person in the entire world, alive at the time of Moses, that was present during any of the events recorded in Genesis – from

Genesis 1:1 thru Genesis 50:26. Every single word recorded in the entirety of the book of Genesis was revealed to Moses from five hundred to two thousand years after they took place.

Further, throughout Genesis we are introduced to revelation – to God making known what He was going to do, and what was going to happen, in the future. Here are some of those revelations.

- ➔ The promised “*Seed*” of the woman (Gen 3:15).
- ➔ The details of the judgment because

to Abraham’s seed (Gen 12:7; 13:17; 17:8).

- ➔ The land of Canaan would be given to Abraham (Gen 13:17; 17:8).
- ➔ Promised Abraham He would be his Shield, and Exceeding Great Reward (Gen 15:1).
- ➔ Promised Abraham his heir would come from his own bowels (Gen 15:4).
- ➔ Promised Abraham, his seed would be as numerous as the stars of heaven (Gen 15:5).

Promises are, in a sense, superior to commandments. This is because commandments concern what men are to do, while promises concern what God is going to do. This by no means denigrates the commandments of God. They are faithful

of eating the forbidden fruit (Gen 3:16-19).

- ➔ The manner in which Cain would live (Gen 4:12-15).
- ➔ The flood foretold in detail (Gen 6:17; 7:4; 8:22).
- ➔ It was revealed that only one such flood would occur (Gen 9:11).
- ➔ Would bless Abraham, and make his name great (Gen 12:2; 17:13; 22:17)
- ➔ Would make of Abraham a great nation (Gen 12:2).
- ➔ Would bless them that blessed Abraham, and curse them that cursed him (Gen 12:3).
- ➔ In Abraham all families of the earth would be blessed (Gen 12:3; 22:18).
- ➔ The land of Canaan would be given

➔ Told Abraham his seed would be a stranger in a land not belonging to them, would serve them, and be afflicted for four hundred years (Gen 15:13).

- ➔ Told Abraham He would judge the nation afflicting his seed, and would bring his seed out of their land with great substance (Gen 15:14).
- ➔ Promised Abraham he would be “*buried in a good old age*” (Gen 15:15).
- ➔ Told Abraham his seed would come out of the afflicting land in “*the fourth generation*” (Gen 15:16).
- ➔ Angel of God promised Hagar Ishmael would have multiplied seed (Gen 16:10).
- ➔ God promised he would make His covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:2,4,7).

- ➔ Promised Abraham He would multiply him exceedingly (Gen 17:2; 22:17).
- ➔ Promised Abraham he would be the father of many nations (Gen 17:4-6).
- ➔ Promised Abraham He would make him exceeding fruitful (Gen 17:5).
- ➔ Promised Abraham kings would come out of him (Gen 17:6).
- ➔ Promised Abraham He would establish His covenant with his seed after him in their generations (Gen 17:7).
- ➔ Promised Abraham He would be the God of his seed (Gen 17:8).
- ➔ Promised Abraham He would bless Sarah, and give him a son through her (Gen 17:16,19).
- ➔ Promised Abraham Sarah would be a mother of nations, and kings would be of her (Gen 17:16).
- ➔ Promised Abraham His covenant would be with Isaac (Gen 17:19,21).
- ➔ Promised Abraham He would make

19:13,22).

- ➔ Promised Abimelech if he would restore Sarah to Abraham, Abraham would pray for him and he would be healed (Gen 20:7,17).
- ➔ Promised Abraham his seed would possess the gate of their enemies (Gen 22:17).
- ➔ Promised Rebekah that of the children of her womb, the elder would serve the younger (Gen 25:23).
- ➔ Promised Isaac He would be with him and bless him (Gen 26:3,24).
- ➔ Promised Isaac He would give him all of the countries of Canaan, and would perform the oath He swore to Abraham (Gen 26:3).
- ➔ Promised Isaac He would multiply his seed (Gen 26:4,24).
- ➔ Promised Isaac that in his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed (Gen 26:4).
- ➔ Promised Jacob He would give him the land of Canaan (Gen 28:13; 35:12).

- ➔ Revealed Jacob's name would be changed to "*Israel*" (Gen 32:28; 35:10).
- ➔ Promised Jacob a nation, a company of nations, and kings would come from him (Gen 35:11).
- ➔ Promised Jacob He would give the land of Canaan to his seed (Gen 35:12).
- ➔ Through dreams revealed to Joseph that his family would bow to him (Gen 37:6-10).
- ➔ Through Joseph and the dreams of others, revealed the destiny of a baker and a Butler, servants of Pharaoh (Gen 40:1-19).
- ➔ Through Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dream, foretold seven years of miraculous harvest, followed by seven years of grievous famine (Gen 41:1-36).
- ➔ God promised Jacob that He would make a great nation of him in Egypt (Gen 46:4).
- ➔ God promised Jacob he would see Joseph, and that Joseph would touch his eyes (Gen 46:4).
- ➔ Through Jacob God made known to Joseph the Abrahamic promises (Gen 48:3-6).
- ➔ Through Jacob revealed the future of the tribes of Israel (Gen 49:1-28).
- ➔ Through Joseph confirmed He would bring Israel out of Egypt into the land promised Abraham (Gen 50:24).

All of these promises pertained only to this world. Yet, in them God would demonstrate His faithfulness in a manner that could be observed throughout the ages.

- Ishmael fruitful, multiply him exceedingly; that he would beget twelve princes, and would make him a great nation (Gen 17:20; 21:13).
- ➔ Promised Abraham He would visit Sarah, and she would have a son (Gen 18:1,10,14).
 - ➔ Through angels told Lot He was going to destroy Sodom (Gen

- ➔ Promised Jacob his seed would be multitudinous (Gen 28:14).
- ➔ Promised Jacob that in his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed (Gen 28:14).
- ➔ Promised Jacob He would be with him and bless him in all places (Gen 28:15).

Although not a complete listing. There are fifty-four revelations given by God – **things that could not possibly have been known or deduced by any man.**

All of these promises pertained only to this world. **Yet, in them God would demonstrate His faithfulness in a manner that could be observed throughout the ages.** The sure fulfillment of His Word to "*the fathers*"

and their progeny confirm the Word delivered to those in Christ Jesus: “*God is faithful*” (1 Cor 1:9; 10:13), as the fulfillment of those promises confirms. You see, then, how the book of Genesis is designed to culture the soul, acquainting the believer with Divine manners and preferences.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 7/25/14. We will continue our review of the book of Genesis. The eighty-fifth lesson will be a review of: “DIVINE APPEARANCES IN GENESIS.” Genesis is the book that introduces us to Divine communication with humanity. We will find that such communications were both selective and timely. They were, as well, strictly in harmony with the purpose of God, which is delineated particularly by Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. Our 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.

2014
REFRESHING WATERS
RENEWAL
Location:
Wildwood Baptist Church, Joplin, MO
THE ATTRIBUTES AND
WORK GOD DECLARED
IN THE GOSPEL
Dates: August 5-7, 2014