



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, 08/22/2014 – FINAL

Lesson Number 86



TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot 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 Standard 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=Literary 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 Tanakh (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.

DIVINE APPEARANCES IN GENESIS

REVIEW OF GENESIS, #4

"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)

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

It was nearly one thousand years after creation before God had any productive associations with men. Enoch was the first recorded person having a prosperous connection with God – well over 900 years after the fall. This was after Adam died at 930 years of age. Enoch is said to have “walked with God” (Gen 2:22-24).

However, we do not know what all was involved in Enoch walking with God. We gather from his prophecy (Jude 1:14-15), that God must have shared with Him concerning how He would judge the world for its wickedness with a pervasive flood in which “all flesh” would die – with the exception of eight souls. Seven of those souls were saved because they were

aligned with Noah. Still, even in the case of Enoch, nothing is said about God appearing to Him.

God spoke to Noah about 1,500 years after creation. His first **recorded appearance** was to Abraham about 2,000 years after the fall of man. Until Moses, and not counting Moses, there are seven recorded appearances of God to men – a period of 2,500 years. None of these were requested appearances, and all of them were driven by Divine objectives – not human needs or petitions.

All of this testifies to the immediate impact sin had upon the human race. While the Scriptures do not say that Adam enjoyed frequent visitations of God, the fact that God

called out “Adam, where art thou,” suggests that this could have been the case – unless the fall occurred on the day Adam was created, or possibly the first day of the week – which is a distinct possibility. I cannot imagine Satan waiting a long time to tempt Eve, unless he was restrained by God.

Once Adam sinned, an ignorance of God and natural spiritual obtuseness hung like a darkening cloud over the human race. Now birth into the world was accompanied by an inherent ignorance of God, and a nature that was prone to sin. The absence of Divine communication was not merely from the human point of view. It had to do with the Divine nature's aversion to iniquity, and intolerance of the human tendency to choose that one's own

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desires that consistently sat upon the throne of the heart.

If these things can be discerned by thoughtful men, it will have a telling affect on their view of God Himself, humanity, sin, salvation, and the grace of God. The Scriptures clearly proclaim the fallen state of all humanity following Adam (Psa 14:1-3; 53:1-3; 143:2; Eccl 7:20; Rom 3:9-23; 5:12,19; 11:32; Gal 3:22; 1 John 1:8

It is one thing to be able to say

with total acquiescence, *"all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"* (Rom 3:23). It is quite another to realize what an awful gulf was created between God and man as the result of a solitary sin, committed a single time. If there is any question concerning God's attitude toward sin, and its alarming malignancy, the book of Genesis surely confirms this is the case. It confirms it in His response to:

- ➔ **ONE ACT OF DISOBEDIENCE.** *This involved disobeying a direct commandment. Adam and Eve's sin (Gen 3:24).*
- ➔ **INVOLVED IGNORING A WARNING.** *No commandment was involved. God rather issued a warning, saying that if Cain did well, he would be accepted. Cain's iniquity (Gen 4:11-16).*
- ➔ **THE RISE OF VIOLENCE.** *Again, there was no commandment disobeyed. The world of Noah's time (Gen 6:11-13). Violence was a sin against the Divine nature, an image of which was in man.*
- ➔ **THE RISE OF PRIDE.** *No commandment was given or violated. This involved ignoring God, not seeking Him and being filled with pride, thinking the people could protect themselves, and make a name for themselves. The builders in the plain of Shinar (Gen 11:6-8).*
- ➔ **THE RISE OF UNNATURAL IMMORALITY.** *Again, no commandment from God*

had been given or broken concerning this sin. It was a sin against nature (Rom 1:26-27). The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was especially grievous to God (Gen 13:13; 19:13-14).

- ➔ **THE VIOLATION OF ADAM'S PRONOUNCEMENT ON MARRIAGE.** Again, no Divine commandment was broken. This was a sin against what Adam had said about marriage, which was a reflection of Divine intent (Gen 2:23-24). **God's response to Abimelech taking Sarah to be his wife (Gen 20:3).**

Genesis teaches us that at its root, sin is contrary to the nature of God, in whose image man was created (Gen 1:26-27). Sin is not merely the violation of a Divine proscription. **There are things that are inherently displeasing to God (Gen 38:10; Num 11:1; 2 Sam 11:27; 1 Chron 21:7; Isa 59:15; Zech 1:2,15). There are also things that anger God (Gen 18:30-31).**

Rather than men asking if there is anything in the Bible against this or that, **they should consider whether or not the thing they are pondering is against the Divine nature, potentially displeasing to Him, or will make Him angry.**

If men will honestly consider such things, it is arresting how many will arrive at a proper conclusion. The acid test is whether not they will consider the impact of their word or deed upon God Himself, and act accordingly.

DIVINE APPEARANCES

APPEARANCE ONE, ABRAHAM

"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)

WHAT WAS SAID?

- ➔ ***"Unto thy seed will I give this land"*** (Gen 12:7). This was more that God revealed when He first spoke to him: *"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will*

show thee: 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: 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 12:1-3).

- ➡ God would show him *"a land"* to which he was to commence his journey.
- ➡ God would make of him as great nation.
- ➡ God would bless him.
- ➡ God would make his name great.
- ➡ God would make him a blessing.
- ➡ God would bless those whom blessed him.

- ➡ God would curse those who cursed him.
- ➡ In Him all families of the earth would be blessed.

These were foundational blessings. They confirmed that, when it comes to His purpose, God does not see everyone alike. No other fleshly lineage was promised God would curse or bless others according to how they treated that lineage.

Also, at the threshold of His dealings with Abraham God informed him that He was going to bless all

families of the earth through him.

Now, in His first appearance to Abraham, the Lord tells him something He had apparently not said before: He was going to give the land toward which he was journeying to his seed, or progeny. This was a promise God would make repeatedly. This was important, because the land had to be readied to be the place wherein His Son would be raised to manhood. This could not be done in Egypt, or Syria, or one of the other countries that were wholly given to idolatry. Thus the purpose of God is gradually being unfolded. **Now we know it involves a particular land.**

APPEARANCE TWO, ABRAHAM

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect." (Gen 17:1).

Abraham was ninety-nine years of

after the fall. However, there was also a spreading of the ignorance of God owing to the infrequency of an awareness of the Lord's presence, word, and will. **Those who imagine that God can be found by searching must face the fact that no such finding is**

perfect." (Gen 17:1b)

- ➡ *"My covenant is with I will make My covenant between thee and Me."* (Gen 17:1c)

- ➡ *"And I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly."* Gen 17:2)

- ➡ *"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations."* (Gen17:4)

- ➡ *"Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee."* (Gen17:5).

- ➡ *"And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee."*

- ➡ *"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."*

- ➡ *"And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein*

It is important to note the infrequency of God's direct dealings with men during those early times – years, even decades spaced between those appearances.

age when God is said to have appeared to him the second time. The word of the Lord did come to Abraham in a epochal vision. Shortly after that vision, Ishmael was born when Abraham was eight-six years old (Gen 16:16). **It is important to note the infrequency of God's direct dealings with men during those early times – years, even decades spaced between those appearances.**

Again, this is a kind of commentary on the effect sin had upon mankind – particular with regards to conscious involvement with God. Often we point out the pervasive nature of sin

recording for nearly two millenia – one third of the time the earth has been here.

WHAT DID GOD SAY?

What did God say to Abraham during this second appearance. You will note that God did not merely repeat what was revealed years before. **In each appearance, the vista of the will of God, and of God Himself, increased.** He increases the amount of revelation.

- ➡ *"I am Almighty God."* (Gen 17:1a)

- ➡ *"Walk before me and be thou*

thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

- ➔ *"Thou shalt keep My covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations." (Gen 17:9)*
- ➔ *"This is My covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised." (Gen 17:10-)*
- ➔ *"And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you." (Gen 17:11-14)*
- ➔ *"As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. 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 17:15-16)*
- ➔ *"And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish My covenant with him for*

There is a penalty that will be paid when one's life is filled up with the mundane. There is a downward pull that cannot be successfully resisted when one's mind is occupied with carnal things. This is a generally unaccepted fact in our time.

an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." (Gen 17:19)

- ➔ *"And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." (Gen 17:20)*
- ➔ *"But My covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year." (Gen 17:21)*

Once Abraham was in the proper land the amount of revelation increased

significantly. It often does make a difference where a person is when confronting the living God. There are environments, like the Temple of old, where more was made known than in the marketplace. If men are going to have holy experiences, they will more than likely have to separate from the common and the unclean. Even Jesus did this when He repaired to the mountain to pray (Matt 14:23; Mk 6:46; Lk 6:12; Lk 9:28). **There is a penalty that will be paid when one's life is filled up with the mundane.** There is a downward pull that cannot be successfully resisted when one's mind is occupied with carnal things. This is a generally unaccepted fact in our time.

APPEARANCE THREE, ABRAHAM

"And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day." (Gen 18:1)

This appearance occurred when Abraham was ninety-nine years old (Gen 17:17,21 with 18:10,14). The appearance was in the form of three men: ***"And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground"*** (Gen 18:1-2).

This is the only time God is expressly said to have appeared to anyone in the form of a man or men. It

accents the fact that God cannot appear in all of His effulgence to men. As Moses had to put a veil over His face because of the brightness of the reflected glory that remained after God has passed by him, so God must veil His glory when He appears to men.

In this instance, the *"men"* were actually angels, sent as messengers from God. Yet, because God had sent them, it was no different than if God had vacated heaven, so to speak, to hold a caucus with Abraham. As soon as He had finished communing with Abraham, the text says, ***"the LORD went His way"*** (Gen 18:33). The next chapter begins the report of the destruction of the cities of the plain: ***"And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom . . ."*** (Gen

19:1).

The angels told Lot, ***"the LORD will destroy this city,"*** declaring that is what they had been sent to do (Gen 19:13-14).

- This is something men must learn: when dealing with an angel, Moses, or a prophet, or the Lord Jesus, an apostle, or any messenger sent by God, **we are to know we are dealing with God Himself. It ought to require no further explanation of the fact that men simply cannot deal directly with God –not and live** (Ex 33:20). The need for a messenger, the chief of which is the Lord Jesus (Isa 42:19), is seen in the warning words of the Lord Jesus Himself: ***"Jesus cried and said, He that***

You see, then, how that the Divine accommodation to human frailty does not diminish the necessity of hearing and obeying what is being communicated by the messenger of God.

believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me. And he that seeth Me seeth Him that sent Me" (John 12:44-45). Again, He said to His apostles, *"He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me"* (Matt 10:40). Again He said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent*

Me" (John 13:20). You see, then, how that the Divine accommodation to human frailty does not diminish the necessity of hearing and obeying what is being communicated by the messenger of God.

Flesh will lead men to associate God *"humbling Himself to the things in heaven, and in the earth"* (Psa 113:6), with Him somehow becoming more tolerant of wayward men. It reasons the

same about Jesus humbling Himself to take on *"the form of a servant"* (Phil 1:28), to be made *"like unto His brethren"* (Heb 2:17). It will even lead men to think that the grace of God *"which brings salvation"* (Tit 2:11), somehow suggests the Divine toleration of spiritual dulness and sinfulness.

But this is not the case. Divine condescension is in order to Divine communication, not mere toleration. The Lord could not speak with us if He did not *"come down,"* so to speak. The fact that he accommodates Himself to men confirms the urgent need of men to hear Him. O, that men were not so slow to perceive this! Holy men always feared when they in any way confronted the Living God. No one was ev casual in His presence.

APPEARANCE FOUR, ISAAC

"And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of" (Gen 26:2).

As we go through these recorded appearances, you will note **they all centered in what God was doing, and what He had purposed, as revealed in His promises.** God never *"appeared"* merely to allay the fears of anyone – although those appearances often did that. Further, **the appearances were always confirmatory of what God had promised,** as compared to the independent desires of men.

In this particular appearance a prohibition was made known – something that did not blend with the purpose of God. *"The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live"* (Gen 26:2). Remember, this was a time of famine: *"And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham"* (Gen 26:1). When Abraham came to the land, and there was a famine, he was permitted to go *"into Egypt to sojourn there"* (Gen 12:10).

Further, he was blessed in doing so, for when he returned to Canaan, he was *"very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold"* (Gen 13:2), God having prospered him in Egypt.

But this was not appropriate for Isaac. He was to stay in the land, in spite of the famine, and God would sustain him. God told him during this appearance:

➡ **GOD WOULD BE WITH HIM AND BLESS HIM.** *"I will be with thee, and will bless thee."* This is the first time in Scripture that God said *"I will be with thee."* He had previously told Abraham, *"I will bless thee"* (Gen 12:2; 22:17).

➡ **ALL OF THOSE COUNTRIES WOULD BE GIVEN TO HIM AND HIS SEED.** *"For unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries."* This is the first and only occasion when God said *"I will give thee all these countries"* – and He said it twice (verses 3 and 4).

➡ **HE WOULD DO WHAT HE HAD PROMISED ABRAHAM.** *"I will perform the oath*

which I swear unto Abraham thy father." (Gen 26:3).

The oath sworn to Abraham is recorded in Genesis 22:16-18 – the occasion when Abraham set out to offer Isaac as burnt offering, as God has commanded him (Gen 22:2).

"And said, By Myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice." (Gen 22:16-18).

BEHOLD THE EXTENT OF THIS BLESSING:

- ✦ In blessing He would bless Abraham.
- ✦ In multiplying He would multiply Abraham's seed.

◆ His seed would possess the gate of his enemies.

◆ In His Seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

➔ **HE WOULD MULTIPLY HIS SEED.** *"And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries."* **God first promised this to Abraham** (Gen 15:5; 22:17).

➔ **IN HIS SEED WOULD ALL NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED.** *"... and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"* (Gen 26:4). **This was previously promised to Abraham** (Gen 12:3; 22:18).

◆ **THE CAUSE FOR THE BLESSING.** *"Because that Abraham obeyed My*

voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (Gen 26:5).

SOME OBSERVATIONS

This is the first time a blessing was conferred because of how God responded to another man. This is the only place in Scripture where this is stated with this precision. It is true, one might reason this was the case with Noah's family, who *"built an ark to the saving of his house"* (Heb 11:7). In this case, however, I am pointing out a Divine utterance that affirms such a blessing.

We therefore have a sterling example of the doing of one person becoming the basis for the blessing of another person – which is the precise

thing that takes place in salvation. Believers are saved because of what Jesus did – **not** in His earthly ministry and life – when He went about doing good, and healing all that were possessed of the devil – but what He did on the cross, which was the ultimate act of obedience. As it is written, *"by the obedience Of one shall many be made righteous"* (Rom 5:19).

Think of it! This marvelous basis for salvation was depicted during the early stage of human history – before the Law, with all of its types and shadows, was given. This indicates that the Divine nature involves such a thing as blessing one upon the basis of another. **God was, in His great salvation, acting in perfect conformity with His Divine nature. That is why His salvation is so effective and thorough.**

APPEARANCE FIVE, ISAAC

"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." (Gen 26:24)

This appearance is estimated to have taken place about fifty years after the appearance recorded in Genesis 26:3 (Usher's chronology). A number of things had happened in the interim:

➔ Isaac's encounter with Abimelech concerning Rebekah (Gen 26:6-10).

➔ Isaac's success in Gerar – so much so that the Philistines envied him (Gen 26:11-16).

➔ The digging of wells and the confrontation of the *"herdmen of Gerar"* (Gen 26:17-22).

➔ Esau married two Canaanite women, bring grief to Isaac and Rebekah (Gen 26:34-35).

It was a time when God saw fit to renew his covenant with Isaac. In this

"... fear not." God had spoken these words to Abraham (Gen 15:1). Now He speaks them to Isaac. The words indicate the Sovereignty of God – that He is over all, and is controlling the circumstances in the fulfilling of His will.

appearance He said:

➔ *"I am the God of Abraham thy father."* This is the first time God had specifically said He was the God of a particular person. Earlier, Abraham had referred to God as *"the God of all the earth"* (Gen 24:3). Now, however, God reveals Himself as *"the God of Abraham."* **This meant God was dealing with Isaac BECAUSE of Abraham, and the promises He had made to him.**

➔ *"... fear not."* God had spoken these words to Abraham (Gen 15:1). Now He speaks them to Isaac. The words indicate the Sovereignty of

God – that He is over all, and is controlling the circumstances in the fulfilling of His will.

➔ *"... for I am with thee."* God had told Abraham that His covenant was with him (Gen 17:4). Abimelech had told Abraham, *"God is with thee"* (Gen 21:22). The Lord had previously said to Isaac, *"I will be with thee"* (Gen 26:3). Now He says it the second time to Isaac – a pledge that, so far as the record is concerned, was never articulated by God Himself before Abraham.

➔ *"... and will bless thee."* The blessing of the Lord speaks of His

favor, and kind disposition toward a person. So far as the record is concerned, these words were spoken by God three times before this text: Twice to Abraham (Gen 12:3; 22:17), and once to Isaac (Gen 26:3). These were not common words during those early times, once again confirming the

impact sin had upon mankind.

- ➡ “. . . and multiply thy seed.” This same blessing was promised to Hagar (Gen 16:10), to Abraham (Gen 22:17), and now to Isaac.
- ➡ “. . . for my servant Abraham's sake.” It is because of Abraham that

Isaac was receiving the blessing. Once again, we see this aspect of the Divine nature. He will raise up a person to be the basis for the blessing of many others. The ultimate example, of course, is the Lord Jesus Christ. The saints of God are said to have “*forgiven*” “*for Christ's sake*” (Eph 4:32).

APPEARANCE SIX, JACOB

*“And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, **the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the***

Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac.” For the first time, God reveals Himself as the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac. **In this God was identifying Himself with those who were prominent in His purpose.** The virtues Abraham and Isaac had were the result of their involvement with God, which was based solely upon His purpose and working. By using this expression God was assuring that Jacob was also now involved in His own purpose. **The same reasoning is**

the east, and to the north, and to the south.” **The same promise of exponential growth was given to Abraham** (Gen 13:16; 15:5; 22:17), **and Isaac** (Gen 26:4,24). This presumes the control of God over marriage, fertility and potency, conception, birth, and rearing. It assumes the control of enemies, and inimical circumstances.

Any benefits that are realized by believers are strictly owing to the Lord Jesus Christ, and His centrality in the purpose of God.

families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Gen 28:13-15).

Now comes the third of “*the fathers*,” and God appears to him also. This appearance was in the form of a vision, where the Lord was seen above a ladder that was set up on the earth, supervising the ministry of holy angels, who were executing His will. Behold what was made known on this occasion.

➡ “. . . I am the LORD God of

seen in the expression, “*the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Rom 15:6; 2 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 11:31; Eph 1:3; 3:14; Col 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3). **Any benefits that are realized by believers are strictly owing to the Lord Jesus Christ, and His centrality in the purpose of God.**

- ➡ “. . . the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.” This same promise was made to Abraham (Gen 13:15,17; 15:7; 17:8; 22:17), Isaac (Gen 26:3,4), and now Jacob.
- ➡ “. . . And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to

➡ “. . . and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” This was also promised to Abraham (Gen 12:3; 18:18; 22:18), Isaac (Gen 26:4), and now Jacob. This is referring to the coming Messiah, which birth Satan would attempt to stop (Rev 12:4), but would not be able to do.

➡ “. . . And, behold, I am with thee.” This was also promised to Isaac (Gen 26:3,24), and now to Jacob.

➡ “. . . and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest.” This is the first record of God speaking this promise. This accounts for why “*the terror of God was upon the cities*” through which Jacob passed (Gen 35:5). God was keeping him.

➡ “. . . and will bring thee again into this land.” This is the first record of God affirming He was going to “*bring*” someone to a certain place. It is otherwise accounted for by the words, “*I will show thee*” (Gen 12:1), and “*I will tell thee*” (Gen 22:2).

➡ “. . . for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken

to thee of." This again is the first recorded promise of this kind. Later, it would become a common saying to all believers: "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb 13:5). However, during those spiritually primitive times, this was not common knowledge.

**GOD REFERRED TO THIS
APPEARANCE**

God Himself referred to the above appearance. "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother" (Gen 35:1). It is God's manner to provoke specific remembrances.

**JACOB REFERRED TO THIS
APPEARANCE**

Jacob also made mention of this appearance when speaking to his sons while they were in Egypt. "And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me" (Gen 48:3). This was a spiritual epoch in the life of Jacob – and it centered in what God did and said. Divine commitment was the nail on which everything was hung, and Jacob knew it.

APPEARANCE SEVEN, JACOB

"And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him" (Gen 35:9).

So far as the inspired record is concerned, Divine appearances are not, and never were common or frequent. This alone tells us something about both God and man.

ABOUT GOD

The Divine nature apparently does not allow for frequent and direct contact with men in the flesh. **That is the impact of a single transgression, committed one time.** The fact of salvation confirms that God was not willing for this condition to continue. In His infinite wisdom, He devised a salvation that would allow for an extensive introduction to His Person and purpose to men, while, at the same time, preparing them for uninterrupted communion with Him in the world to come. So far as men are concerned, this makes the salvation of God the greatest manifestation of God's Person, wisdom, power, and righteousness. **God will not tolerate men who insist on ignoring or neglecting this great salvation** (Heb 2:3).

ABOUT MAN

Although superior to the brute creation, man is essentially a fallen being. By nature he is ignorant of the Primary Person, and is not even aware of it. **Any involvement with God must be initiated by God Himself.** This is confirmed in Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob. Further the ONLY reason for that Divine initiative is in order to the working of God's purpose. **God has never appeared to any man merely to resolve some personal issue.** His appearances always had to do with what He was doing, and how the person to whom He appeared fit into that purpose.

AGAIN

"And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram . . ."

God first appeared to Jacob when He was on his way to Padanaram. He was in flight away from Esau, and also in order to find a wife (Gen 28:2-7).

Now, over twenty-two years later, Jacob is returning from Padanaram with "all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padanaram" (Gen 31:18). **All the time he was in Padanaram, working for Laban, there is no record of God appearing to him.** Once, during the close of his tenure with Laban, "the angel of God" spoke

to him (Gen 31:18). Again, when he went on to meet Esau, "the angels of God met him," but gave him no message.

However, in this text, after more than twenty-two years, "God appeared unto Jacob again."

AND BLESSED HIM

" . . . and blessed him." This time, there is no record of a word being spoken. It is just reported that God "blessed him." All versions, with a single exception, read the same way. The **Contemporary English Version** reads, "After Jacob came back to the land of Canaan, God appeared to him again. This time he gave Jacob a new name and blessed him by saying: I am God All-Powerful, and from now on your name will be Israel instead of Jacob. You will have many children. Your descendants will become nations, and some of the men in your family will even be kings." According to the record, this is totally wrong. Jacob was given his new name just before he met Esau, not after he arrived again in Canaan (Gen 32:24-28).

God has never appeared to any man merely to resolve some personal issue. His appearances always had to do with what He was doing, and how the person to whom He appeared fit into that purpose.

The Lord's blessing speaks of the expression of His favor toward men in the granting of some benefit, advantage, or aptitude. Those who are "blessed" by God are the better for it.

They are made more aware of the Lord, and of His beneficence toward them. Perhaps the Lord renewed his covenant with Jacob, or reassured him of his participation in the Abrahamic

covenant. At any rate, you may rest assured that Jacob knew he had been blessed by God. The true advantage of being blessed by the Lord is knowing it, or being convinced of it.

ANGELIC CONFRONTATIONS

Being confronted by a holy angel is closely related to being confronted by God Himself, for angels are sent out by God to do His will. It is written that they "excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word." They are "His hosts . . . ministers of His, that do His pleasure" (Psa 103:20-21). There are several recorded confrontations with angels recorded in Genesis. In them, we are being acquainted with the ways of God.

CONFRONTATION ONE, HAGAR

"And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur." (Gen 16:7)

Hagar was in flight from the face of Sarah, who had dealt with her "hardly," or "harshly" ^{NASB} because she had despised Sarah after conceiving Ishmael. The angel of the Lord "found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness," and spoke rather extensively with her.

➔ **CONFRONTING HER SITUATION:** "And he said, Hagar, **Sarai's maid**, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai" (Gen

16:8).

➔ **INSTRUCTIONS:** "And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands" (Gen 16:9).

➔ **A PROMISE:** "And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. (Gen 16:10).

➔ **A COMING CHILD AND THE NAME TO GIVE IT:** "And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction" (Gen 16:11).

➔ **A DESCRIPTION OF THE MANNER OF ISHMAEL:** "And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren" (Gen 16:12).

All of this had to do with the promise to Abraham that he would be the father of "many nations" (Gen 17:14-5), and that multiple kings would come from him (Gen 17:6). **The primary nation that would come from Abraham was Israel.** However, the other nations would, according to the purpose of God, play key roles in the formation and function of Israel. They would also be involved when the knowledge of the Lord would cover the earth (Isa 11:9).

CONFRONTATION TWO, LOT

"And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground." (Gen 19:1)

The corruption of Sodom was made known long before its destruction. When returning from Egypt, after being there during the

famine that was in Canaan when Abraham first arrived, the record observes: "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly" (Gen 13:13).

One year before Isaac was born, the Lord appeared unto Abraham, announcing that the promised son would be birthed by Sarah. During that time, angels were dispatched to Sodom

and the other cities of plain, to destroy them. Appearing as men, "two angels" came to Sodom in the evening, and confronted Lot at the gate of the city. It appears from the dialog that he was there to alert travelers to the wickedness of that city, and to provide a safe haven for them if required.

Here are the things made known by these angels.

➡ **THEY INITIALLY TURNED DOWN HOSPITALITY.** When Lot offered hospitality to them, they responded, *"Nay, but we will abide in the street all night."* Lot prevailed to persuade them to abide with him, where they were served *"a feast"* and unleavened bread. Intent on fulfilling their mission, they did not want to be in any way distracted.

his daughters. When the Sodom's men began to assert themselves against Lot, the *"men"* pulled him into the house and shut the door (Gen 19:6-10). This is one of the many confirmations in Scripture that you cannot reason with carnal men. The ultimate example is the reaction of the Jewish leaders to Christ Jesus.

➡ **THE PREEMINENCE OF OBEDIENCE.** The *"men"* then revealed, *"For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it"* (Gen 19:13). Behold the obedience of the angels. Not only will they do what they have been sent to do, they will not delay to do it.

I draw your attention to the ability of these angels to reason, respond, and discern what to do within the scope of their assignment.

➡ **INIQUITY CONFRONTED.** When the *"men"* laid down, the men of the city, old and young, surrounded the house and demanded of Lot, calling out to him. *"Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them"* (Gen 19:5). The New King James reads, *"that we may know them carnally."* The NIV reads, *"so that we can have sex with them."* This revealed some of the specifics of their wickedness. It appears that this was a confirmation of the Divine assessment of the city. Angels are not omniscient, but they are able to reason upon what is made known.

➡ **YOU CANNOT REASON WITH CARNAL PEOPLE.** Lot sought to reason with the men of the city, offering them

➡ **THE TENACIOUSNESS OF THE FLESH.** The *"men"* then smote the sodomites with blindness, and yet all of the men *"wearied themselves to find the door"* (Gen 19:11). Here we see just how tenacious flesh is. Even when all opportunity to express it is blocked, it continues to make every effort to have its desires fulfilled.

➡ The sent *"men"* then inquired of Lot if he had any other family members or sons in law, saying to *"bring them out of this place"* (Gen 19:12). I do not know how much God had revealed to these angels directly, but it is quite clear they were able to assess the situation properly, and that saving Lot including the possibility of saving everyone associated with him. This was a very gracious offer.

➡ **RELATED PARTIES DO NOT ALWAYS HEAR.** Lot immediately went out and told those pledged to be his sons-in-law, *"Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city"* However, *"he seemed as one that mocked to his sons in law"* (Gen 19:14). This must have grieved Lot, but it did not cause him to rethink what he had to do. His daughters would simply have to leave without their pledged husbands. I say *"pledged husbands,"* because Lot's daughters were still virgins, and had not known a man (Gen 19:8).

I draw your attention to the ability of these angels to reason, respond, and discern what to do within the scope of their assignment. While I am not able to take this very far, it seems to me that this also holds true for men who are commissioned to do a certain work. Further, the things recorded in the book of Acts strongly suggests, to say the very least, that this is true. In fact, I would go so far as to say **that** is one of the evidences that a person has really been called and sent by God. A disobedient spirit is in no way compatible with God.

CONFRONTATION THREE, LOT

"And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city." (Gen 19:15)

I am considering this to be another angelic confrontation, even though it was the ext day. This assumes they had slept during the night, and

following Lot's appraisal of his sons-in-law of the necessity of leaving the city.

➡ **DOING THE WILL OF GOD DOES NOT ALLOW FOR LINGERING.** In the morning *"And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the*

city. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city" (Gen 19:15-16). The angels *"hastened Lot."* This can be likened to Peter's words on the day of Pentecost: *"Save yourselves*

from this untoward generation." It also parallels the warning issued by Paul, *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate"* (2 Cor 6:17). Additionally, it should remind us of the solemn warning concerning Babylon the Great: *"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."* (Rev 18:4).

➔ **BARELY OUT IS NOT ENOUGH.** After setting Lot outside of the city one of the angels said to Lot, *"Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed"* (Gen 19:17). It was necessary for Lot and those with him to put some distance between themselves and Sodom. The

destruction was going to be extensive, and they had to be far away from Sodom. This is a principle that is little known in our time. **Professing Christians are often found lingering too long in worldly environments, and maintaining unproductive spiritual associations.**

➔ **THE EXPERIENCE OF MERCY.** When Lot said he could not make it to a safe destination in time, asking that he might find safety in a little city, the angel replied, *"See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar."* (Gen 19:21-22). Note how the preservation of Lot had

been mandated in heaven.

In the epistle to the Hebrews, they are given this admonition: *"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares"* (Heb 13:2). I gather that the reference to entertaining angels applies to both Abraham (Gen18:2) and Lot (Gen19:1). At some time, they both obviously became aware that they were not confronting mere men – but at the first, that is not the way it appeared.

I do not doubt that this kind of thing still occurs as the Lord wills. Every believer should so live that they can respond appropriately should they experience such a visitation. One of the penalties for being wrapped up in oneself and the things of the world, is the loss of this alertness.

CONFRONTATION FOUR, HAGAR

"And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is." (Gen 21:17)

Any advantage realized by either Hagar or Ishmael was strictly owing to their identity with Abraham. Even though that gave them no covenant benefit, and they both remained slaves, yet some earthly advantages were given to them.

WHAT THE ANGEL TOLD HAGAR

➔ **GOD HEARD THE VOICE OF ISHMAEL.**

"What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is" (Gen 21:17). **The tenderness and pity of the Lord is seen in this incident.** Both Hagar and Ishmael were dying of thirst, and young Ishmael was crying. The sight was so pitiful that Hagar withdrew a short distance so she would not have to see her son die. No doubt for Abraham's sake, God heard the cries of the child, and sent an angel to assist his mother to care for him. After the appearance, the angel would open Hagar's eyes to see a refreshing well at hand.

➔ **GOD WOULD MAKE OF HIM A GREAT**

NATION. *"Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation"* (Gen 21:18). God had promised Abraham that nations would come from him – not only Israel, the chosen nation, but other nations as well. Some of them would come from Ishmael.

I do not doubt that to this day there are some children who, though aliens like Ishmael, are in some ways benefitted because of their believing parents. This stands as a witness of the tender mercies of the Lord, even though they are largely unknown. The day of judgment will find God vindicated for such marvelous pity.

CONFRONTATION FIVE, ABRAHAM

"And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I" (Gen 22:11).

This is the occasion when

Abraham was in the act of offering Isaac as a burnt offering, just as the Lord commanded him to do (Gen 22:1-2). Unknown to Abraham, there was an unseen observer. Notice the things that were said and took place at that time.

➔ **THE SACRIFICE WAS INTERRUPTED.** *"And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I"* (Gen 22:11). I believe you will find that this is the only

sacrifice God commanded by God, that was interrupted when it was being carried out. There eventually was a sacrifice, but it was of a substitute.

➔ **NOW I KNOW.** *"And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me"* (Gen 22:12). This is the response of the angel, who was apparently not omniscient. In the history of the world, well over 2,400 years, such an offering to the true God had never been attempted. The carrying out of the command to offer Isaac contradicted parental love, and appeared to contradict the promise of God. Yet, in a grand display of the effectiveness of faith, Abraham proceeded to do what God had commanded, even doing so with dispatch and thoroughness.

➔ **A SUBSTITUTE PROVIDED.** *"And*

Here, for the first time, we see a substitute offering that God accepted. Under the Law, substituted offering would not be accepted:—i.e. a goat for a heifer, or a heifer for a sheep

Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son" (Gen 22:13). Here, for the first time, we see a substitute offering that God accepted. Under the Law, substituted offering would not be accepted:—i.e. a goat for a heifer, or a heifer for a sheep. But this time, because of the offering that would be made for sin by the Son of God, a substitute was accepted that

would foreshadow the way men would receive redemption.

➔ **THE PLACE NAMED.** *"And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen"* (Gen 22:14). Over and above any other manifestation of Divine supply, Abraham saw the magnitude of Divine provision. This foreshadowed the provision of redemption through the atoning blood of another.

➔ **A SECOND CALL.** *"And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time"* (Gen 22:15). After the completion of the sacrifice, and not before, the angel called out to Abraham the second time.

We learn from this that a second benefit is not conferred until the first requirement has been met.

➔ **BECAUSE THOU HAS DONE THIS THING.** *"And said, By Myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou*

hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son." (Gen 22:16). Does obedience cause anything to take place. **While one must be careful in responding to that question, here is an example that says it does.** Speaking for the Lord, the angel declared **God** would do something **because** of what Abraham had done. This was an act of Divine discretion.

➔ **I WILL MULTIPLY THEE.** *"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" (Gen 22:17a). Many years before this, God had already promised He would do this (Gen 17:2). Yet, that promise was not to this extent. In the past God said one time, "I will multiply thee exceedingly" (Gen 17:2). This time He says, *"in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore."*

➔ **THY SEED SHALL POSSESS THE GATE OF HIS ENEMIES.** *" . . . and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies"* (Gen 22:17b). **For the first time, God affirms that his seed shall not only be numerous, but will be superior to their enemies.** This accounts for the Israelites defeating the nations occupying Canaan. It ultimately speaks of Christ who defeated all enemies, including *"the last enemy,"* which is death (Acts 3:15).

➔ **ALL NATIONS SHALL BE BLESSED.** *"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"* (Gen 22:18a). Once again, for the third time, God promises Abraham that all nations will be blessed through his Seed (Gen 12:3; 22:18) – which is Christ (Gal 3:16). Once again, this confirms that faith can compel a person to live for God in view of what **WILL** take place, as opposed to current benefits alone.

➔ **BECAUSE THOU HAST OBEYED MY VOICE.** *" . . . because thou hast obeyed my voice"* (Gen 22:18b). If this was the only text we had concerning the benefit of obedience, it should be enough to compel all men to live in obedience to God. There is nothing that can compensate for disobedience. It is something that must be forgiven – washed away by the blood of Christ.

CONFRONTATION SIX, JACOB

"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." (Gen 28:12)

This was an epochal occasion for Jacob. His first recorded contact initiated by heaven. However, in this he was given a glimpse of angelic activity that had, according to the record, never been given before.

WHAT JACOB SAW

➔ A DIVINE WORK INITIATED ON EARTH.

"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth." In this vision Jacob was apprised of a Divinely willed, and heavenly controlled purpose being wrought in the midst of the earth. The specific work had to do with the carrying out of the Abraham promise, which would culminate in the coming of the Messiah, the completion of His earthly work, and His exaltation to the right hand of God.

➔ A WORK CONTROLLED FROM HEAVEN. "

. . . and the top of it reached to heaven." The "ladder" was like a

Angels are God's ministers to those God has determined will be the heirs of salvation. They are in no way the servants of men. They always return to God for directions.

intention of God, let down from heaven, but worked out in the earth. God Himself was at the top of the ladder, overseeing and totally controlling the operation.

➔ HEAVENLY MESSENGERS EXECUTING THE

WILL OF GOD. *" . . . and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."* The holy angels were carrying out the will of God upon the earth – being sent to do a task, then returning for further orders. Thus it is said of them, *"Bless the LORD, ye His angels, that*

excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Bless ye the LORD, all ye His hosts; ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure" (Psa 103:20-21). Even though some "blind guides" boast of being able to command angels, they lie, and do not the truth. Angels are God's ministers to those God has determined will be the heirs of salvation. They are in no way the servants of men. They always faithfully return to God for directions.

CONFRONTATION SEVEN, JACOB

"And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I" (Gen 31:11).

On this occasion, Jacob was working for Laban. He was in the process of obtaining flocks of his own that would be taken with him back to Canaan. In the keeping of Laban's flocks, he had arranged with Laban to retain all of the *"ringstreaked, speckled, and grisdled"* (spotted) animals. He had also placed streaked *"rods"* before the flocks at the watering troughs, *"that they should conceive in the gutters in the watering troughs"* (Gen 30:37-38).

WHAT THE ANGEL SAID TO JACOB

➔ *"And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstreaked, speckled, and grisdled."* The angel points out to Jacob what is happening. It is something that God has caused, for angels never provide profitable insights into what men have said or done. The animals

have responded to the stakes that Jacob had positioned in faith. The animals that were multiplying were the ones Laban had agreed to give to Jacob.

➔ *" . . .for I have seen all that Laban*

doeth unto thee." (Gen 31:12) The angel is speaking for God, even though the angel himself was well aware of what Laban had done. According to appearance, it did not seem that God was aware of Laban's conduct – but He was. Further, the Lord was involved in all of the things that happened during that period of time because He had promised much earlier, *"I will not leave thee, until I have done which I have spoken to thee of"* (Gen 28:15) – and that was at least twenty-years before this occasion.

➔ *"I am the God of Bethel, where thou*

anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto Me." *"The God of Bethel"* is the God who appeared

to Jacob in the dream he had in Bethel, where he saw a ladder set up on the earth and reaching into heaven. However, God also reminds Jacob that he had anointed a pillar there and made a vow to Him: *"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying."*

THE STIPULATION

◆ *"If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on."* (Gen 28:20). This is the stipulation of Jacob's vow: that God would keep him safely in the way he would go, and give him food and raiment.

HERE IS WHAT JACOB VOWED

◆ *"So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God"* (Gen 28:21). Jacob will soon be at his father's house in peace (Gen 35:27), having safely endured Laban's abuse, and imagined threats of Esau. Now God reminds

Jacob of the vow he had made.

- ▶ *"And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."* (Gen 28:22). This sanctified Bethel, which means *"house of God."* From this point on Jacob would associate this

place with God and His promises. He would also give a tenth of all to Him. The principle of the tithe, therefore was in existence long before the Law – even before God had said anything about the tithe. This necessarily infers that there is something in the Divine imagery that knows the tenth is the Lord's. Sensitive souls know this.

- ▶ *"...now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred"* (Gen 31:13). Jacob has been kept in the way. Laban has been subdued. The fear of Esau had been dissipated. God had been faithful to Jacob all along the way. He cannot deny Himself, or conduct Himself contrary to His nature.

CONFRONTATION NUMBER EIGHT, JACOB

"And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim" (Gen 32:1-2).

THE ANGELS OF GOD MET HIM

"And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him."

Other versions read, *"Jacob came face to face with the angels of God,"* ^{BBE} *"God's messengers approached him,"* ^{CEB} *"God's angels encountered him,"* ^{NAB} *"angels of God came to meet him,"* ^{NLT} *"messengers of God come upon him,"* ^{YLT} and *"he saw the host of God encamped; and the angels of God met him."* ^{BRENTON}

The eighth angelic appearance in Genesis is not accompanied with a lot of details, nor does the record say there was a message delivered. The record simply says, *"the angels of God met him."* There must have been a large number of them, for Jacob observed, *"This is God's host"* – the ones he saw descending and ascending on a

Divinely-placed ladder twenty-two years earlier.

JACOB'S RESPONSE

- ▶ *"And when Jacob saw them."* It was God who enabled Jacob to see this host of angels, for angels are *"spirits"* – *"ministering spirits"* (Heb 1:14). The Psalmist wrote, *"Who maketh his angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire"* (Psa 104:4). Jacob's eyes were opened to see them, and what an impressive host it was.

- ▶ *"... he said, This is God's host."* Other versions read, *"This is God's camp,"* ^{NKJV} *"This is the camp of God,"* ^{NIV} *"This is God's army,"* ^{RSV} *"the army of God,"* ^{BBE} *"the camps of God,"* ^{DOUAY} *"God's encampment,"* ^{NAB} and *"God lives here."* ^{LIVING} The word translated *"host"* means "ENCAMPMENT, CAMP; PLACE OF ENCAMPMENT; CAMP OF ARMED HOST, ARMY CAMP." ^{STRONG'S} **This was evidently a Divine base of operation upon earth – in Canaan, the promised land, and in the place of Bethel, known for its associations with God.**

- ▶ *"... and he called the name of that place Mahanaim."* Other versions read, *"he named that sacred place Mahanaim,"* ^{CEB} *"He named that place Mahanaim Two Camps,"* ^{GWN} *"So he named that place Mahanaim. {Mahanaim means two camps}"* ^{NIB} *"he calleth the name of that place 'Two Camps'."* ^{YLT} The word *"Mahanaim"* means encampment, or camp, and it is in the plural. Therefore, some translations read *"camps."* I think this parallels the vision of angels ascending descending on the ladder that was set up on the earth. The Word of teaches us that God did have sacred places on earth – places particularly associated with Himself: *"His land Canaan, Jerusalem where He placed His name, the Tabernacle where He dwelt between the cherubims, the Temple where we dwelt between the cherubims, and Gethsemane. These were evidently places of angelic encampment, from which they were sent on Divine missions – the armies of God."*

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED IN THESE APPEARANCES?

We have seen in these appearances, as well as the rest of Genesis, that **all things begin and end with God Himself.** Purposes belong to Him, as well as their implementation and consummation. These appearances, whether by God Himself or angels,

either started, interpreted, or, in some way, finalized a phase of His purpose. They also were the means the Lord used to bring confidence to those He had brought into His purpose. Sometimes they were used to warn people, like Cain, Abimelech and Laban.

Now that *"the faith"* has been delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3), and a *"new and living way"* has been opened for heavenly commerce (Heb 10:20), so to speak, faith becomes the chief means of beholding God. Everyone who is in Christ can see *"Him whom is*

invisible" (Heb 11:27). With some few exceptions, appearances like those recorded in Genesis are not found in Acts through Jude. There have been some appearance of the glorified Christ: to **Paul** (Acts 9:17; 26:16;), **Stephen** (Acts 7:56), and **John** (Rev 1:12-19). Some angelic appearances have also taken place since Jesus was enthroned in heaven: **Cornelius** (Acts 10:3-7,22; 11:13), **Philip** (Acts 8:26), **Paul** (Acts 27:23), **Peter** (Acts 5:8-10), **John** (Rev 17:7; 19:17). But the number of these appearances is not to be compared to angelic appearances before Christ (Gen 16:7-12; 22:11-15; 31:11-14; Num 22:22-35; Ex 3:2; Judges 2:1-4; 5:23; 6:11-12,20-22; 13:3-21; 1 Kgs 13:18; 19:5-7; 1 Kgs 1:3-15; 1 Chron 21:15-18,20; Zech 1:9-19; Zech 2:3-4; 3:1-6;

4:1-5:11; 6:4).

The apostle Paul warns us about being unduly impressed by angels, and even be led into "*worshipping of angels*" (Col 2:18). **God is now communicating with His people on a much higher level.** Since the redeemed have been "*justified from all things*" (Acts 13:39), moved from a state of enmity to reconciliation (Rom 5:8-10), and are being changed from glory unto glory (2 Cor 3:18), God speaks differently. In the letter to the Hebrews, the Spirit says, "*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed Heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; Who*

being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Heb 1:4).

Let no man seek angelic visitations, when the exalted Christ is the appointed means of communication. The word from heaven is, "*Hear ye Him*" (Matt 17:5). If Jesus wants to send an angel, as appeared to Cornelius, that certainly is His prerogative. But it is not the standard mode of communication in this great day of salvation.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 9/5/14. We will begin a new series of lessons on the Gospel of LUKE: "THE REASON FOR THE BOOK" – Luke 1:1-3. This is letter written to a government official who had been converted to Christ. Luke writes to assure Theophilus of the certainty of ther things he has believed. This introduces to us the essentiality of being certain, or confidently sure, of the truth of the Gospel. Doubt, or a lack of confidence in the basis of faith is disastrous, even though it is quite common in our time. This Gospel will also shed light on the seriousness of tampering with the text of Scripture, and saying things that cause seeds of doubt to rise in the hearts of people. When great stress is placed on the original language, principles of interpretation, an inordinate emphasis on contextual considerations, etc, spiritual jeopardy is invited into the heart. Certainty will be found to be in affirmation. 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.