

CHAPTER NINE

ONE NATION UNDER GOD

Quickly, let me remind you that Genesis is a book of beginnings. First, God spoke the heavens and the earth into existence. Next was the beginning of mankind and his being placed in the Garden of Eden. The post-flood beginning came about through Noah and his sons. Now, we are going to study about the beginning of God's chosen nation. I am not going to be talking about the founding of America. Instead, I will be referring to the making of a nation, perhaps, better called a family which was chosen to be members of God's family. It was only through the grace of God that this family came into being. To learn more about who the family is, we will be starting with Genesis, chapter 12.

GEN 12:1

1 NOW THE LORD HAD SAID UNTO ABRAM, GET THEE OUT OF THY COUNTRY, AND FROM THY KINDRED, AND FROM THY FATHER'S HOUSE, UNTO A LAND THAT I WILL SHEW THEE:

The word "Lord" in this verse denotes the God of Glory. It also has the connotation that a kingdom is somehow involved. So, the message here is that God is telling Abram about His kingdom and that it was going to be established here on earth. Mankind had tried his own way to achieve success, but now God is going to reveal the right way. God was about to progress with His plan which had been predestined in eternity past when there was nothing except the God-Head. He was going to reveal a way, along with specific directions, for sinful mankind to once again have a means of acquiring a right relationship with Him.

This was the first recorded visitation that God had had with mankind since the Garden of Eden. He, through the "election of grace" had chosen one particular man named Abram to be the channel through which He would reach out to lost mankind. With God telling Abram to give up all that was dear to him for an unknown land, God was adding a new dimension to His GPS. God was showing that in order for mankind to be restored to a right relationship with Him, it will require faith on man's part. Faith was to be placed in the Plan of Salvation which had originated with God and had included the fact that the sacrifice of a living thing was necessary. He did not force Abram to obey. Abram willingly accepted God's call. Abram denied his own natural instincts and placed absolute trust in the Word of Jehovah, the God of Covenant. This was real faith. Abram was willing to give up the ways of the world, including his own immediate family, familiar surroundings, and traditions, in order for the blessings of God to flow through him.

MATT 10:37

37 HE THAT LOVETH FATHER OR MOTHER MORE THAN ME IS NOT WORTHY OF ME: AND HE THAT LOVETH SON OR DAUGHTER MORE THAN ME IS NOT WORTHY OF ME.

MATT 19:29

29 AND EVERY ONE THAT HATH FORSAKEN HOUSES, OR BRETHREN, OR SISTERS, OR FATHER, OR MOTHER, OR WIFE, OR CHILDREN, OR LANDS, FOR MY NAME'S SAKE, SHALL RECEIVE AN HUNDREDFOLD, AND SHALL INHERIT EVERLASTING LIFE.

These verses do not advocate the breaking up of families. They just emphasize the importance of having God as our number one priority. When that relationship is in the right order, God will be at the center of all of our other priorities. For example, one's spouse must be the second priority. The children are to be the third priority. Work assumes the fourth place and church attendance comes in fifth place. Let me remind you again. When God is in first place, He will be at the center of the order of each of the remaining priorities.

Abram realized that separation from the world is the starting point for the life of faith. He also knew that God would have to give him step-by-step instructions. He had not been taught that hearing the Word of God produces faith, but he sensed in his spirit that would have to be the method of his receiving instruction from God.

GEN 12:2, 3

**2 AND I WILL MAKE OF THEE A GREAT NATION, AND I WILL BLESS THEE, AND MAKE THY NAME GREAT; AND THOU SHALT BE A BLESSING:
3 AND I WILL BLESS THEM THAT BLESS THEE, AND CURSE HIM THAT CURSETH THEE: AND IN THEE SHALL ALL FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED.**

The literal translation says that God will make a great multitude of descendants stemming from Abram. They would later become known as Jews, One of whom would be Jesus. It would be through Him that all the families of the earth would be blessed. God also said that all of the pieces of the earth would kneel down. The promise which God gave to Abram was in very general terms. At this point, there was no assurance that God was going to give Abram any land whatsoever. The promise did offer compensation for Abram's giving up his home land. Abram would make a great family. The blessings of Jehovah would more than make up for any carnal joys which Abram might lose. The promise included within its scope, the call and blessing of the Gentiles.

Even though Abram was a good man and wanted to be obedient to God, he did not make a total separation from the world. God had told him to go alone into the land that would be shown to him. Instead, he took people with him—his wife, Sarai, his nephew, Lot and his father, Terah. Abram, whether he realized it or not, was still holding onto the world with one hand and trying to hold onto God with the other hand. This never works. Terah literally means delay. Because of taking his father with him, Abram was delayed for at least five years. He was delayed in a place called Haran. That name means parched. Have you ever been delayed in a place that seemed to be parched from the presence of

God? That is what happened to Abram. But God being God forgave Abram. You will find in the New Testament that Abram obeyed God.

GEN 12:5, 6

**5 AND ABRAM TOOK SARAI HIS WIFE, AND LOT HIS BROTHER'S SON, AND ALL THEIR SUBSTANCE THAT THEY HAD GATHERED, AND THE SOULS THAT THEY HAD GOTTEN IN HARAN; AND THEY WENT FORTH TO GO INTO THE LAND OF CANAAN; AND INTO THE LAND OF CANAAN THEY CAME.
6 AND ABRAM PASSED THROUGH THE LAND UNTO THE PLACE OF SICHEM, UNTO THE PLAIN OF MOREH. AND THE CANAANITE WAS THEN IN THE LAND.**

Notice that Abram and his crew passed through the land of Canaan. Even though God, through Noah, had declared that the people of Canaan would become servants, Abram did not occupy the land. At this point, God had only told Abram that he was to leave his home and go to a land the He would show him. The promise that God had made with Abram did not state that he would receive any kind of compensation for leaving his home. What God did promise Abram was that if he was obedient, he would become the father of a great family, translated to be a great nation. The blessings of Jehovah would make-up for any carnal joys that Abram might lose.

The promise included within its scope the call and blessings of the gentiles. Understand that God was telling Abram that all of the families, both Jews and gentiles, would be blessed because of his obedience. This was fulfilled through the birth of Jesus since He is the Savior for all mankind. It will be continued and completely fulfilled in the 1000 year reign of Jesus which is still in the future.

When Terah died, Abram was able to move on into a closer walk with God. Often, it takes death of a thought, a desire, or a tradition—not necessarily the death of a family member—for us to get closer to God. It is death which separates the believer from that which unites him with the old nature. It takes death for us to become new creatures in Christ.

As was stated in the Scripture above, Abram did not stop in Canaan, but passed through the land to a place called Sichem. This name means shoulder or place of strength. Abram stopped here to rest and acquire strength to continue on with the journey. Moreh was the next stop. Moreh means instruction. Abram had already passed through the designated land. He was confused. He definitely instruction as to what he should do next. Well, God did not let Abram down. God spoke to him again.

GEN 12:7

7 AND THE LORD APPEARED UNTO ABRAM, AND SAID, UNTO THY SEED WILL I GIVE THIS LAND: AND THERE BUILDED HE AN ALTAR UNTO THE LORD, WHO APPEARED UNTO HIM.

God now states that He was going to give the designated land to Abram's descendants. Abram, like Noah, now builds an altar to God. He seemingly had made a complete Separation from the world, making it possible to have a genuine relationship with God.

Now we come upon another word, Bethel. Bethel means House of God. Abram found Himself half way between Bethel and a place called Hai meaning heap of ruin. Often, we find ourselves in a similar situation—the new spiritual nature on one side and the old carnal nature on the other side. It was here that he pitched his tent.

Obviously, Abram did not understand all of the instruction that God had given him. He continued his journey southward. This was a big mistake. He was headed straight toward Egypt. This is the first mention of Egypt in the Bible. Even at this point it represented a menace to the people of God. It symbolizes alliance with the world and reliance upon the arm of flesh. Egypt actually means bondage.

GEN 12:9-10

**9 AND ABRAM JOURNEYED, GOING ON STILL TOWARD THE SOUTH.
10 AND THERE WAS A FAMINE IN THE LAND: AND ABRAM WENT DOWN INTO EGYPT TO SOJOURN THERE; FOR THE FAMINE WAS GRIEVOUS IN THE LAND.**

As Abram had passed through Canaan, he had observed that there was a famine in the land. Fear of starvation may be the reason that he went on to Egypt. Fear is the opposite of faith. It can make us rely on reason rather than God. When we move into places that God has not told us to go, we wind up in bondage. Abram practiced deception while in Egypt. He denied that Sarai was his wife. Abram had once again got caught up in the ways of the world. He was practicing deception which is what the devil does. Even though he was not doing what God had commissioned to do, he was still blessed with great wealth while in Egypt. It was at this point that Sarai got an Egyptian handmaiden named Hagar.

The trip into Egypt, however, was really a waste of time since bad things would result from the trip. The great wealth that he had gained was not worth the future trouble that he would experience.

GEN 13:1-2

**1 AND ABRAM WENT UP OUT OF EGYPT, HE, AND HIS WIFE, AND ALL THAT HE HAD, AND LOT WITH HIM, INTO THE SOUTH.
2 AND ABRAM WAS VERY RICH IN CATTLE, IN SILVER, AND IN GOLD.**

Abram returned to the place where he had built the altar and renewed his relationship with God. When we get caught up with the things of the world, we, like Abram, must go back to the place where we first gave our hearts to God. As time passed, Abram and Lot had to go separate ways because of their great wealth. Abram wanted to avoid conflict at all cost. He truly wanted to please God, so he gave Lot a choice of the land he would like to have. We, too, must avoid strife with one another. Peaceful communion with one another and with God is a must.

GEN 13:8-9

8 AND ABRAM SAID UNTO LOT, LET THERE BE NO STRIFE, I PRAY THEE, BETWEEN ME AND THEE, AND BETWEEN MY HERDMEN AND THY HERDMEN; FOR WE BE BRETHERN.

9 IS NOT THE WHOLE LAND BEFORE THEE? SEPARATE THYSELF, I PRAY THEE, FROM ME: IF THOU WILT TAKE THE LEFT HAND, THEN I WILL GO TO THE RIGHT; OR IF THOU DEPART TO THE RIGHT HAND, THEN I WILL GO TO THE LEFT.

In the waivering of his rights, Abram foreshadowed Christ. The land really belonged to Abram's descendants, not Lot. Abram could have told Lot all of this land belongs to my descendants. Instead, he was now determined to become the blessing that God had promised that he would be. Jesus could have demanded control of this world and all the people in it because everything really does belong to Him. Abram, like Jesus, took on the role of a servant.

GEN 13:14-16

14 AND THE LORD SAID UNTO ABRAM, AFTER THAT LOT WAS SEPARATED FROM HIM, LIFT UP NOW THINE EYES, AND LOOK FROM THE PLACE WHERE THOU ART NORTHWARD, AND SOUTHWARD, AND EASTWARD, AND WESTWARD:

15 FOR ALL THE LAND WHICH THOU SEEST, TO THEE WILL I GIVE IT, AND TO THY SEED FOREVER.

16 AND I WILL MAKE THY SEED AS THE DUST OF THE EARTH: SO THAT IF A MAN CAN NUMBER THE DUST OF THE EARTH, THEN SHALL THY SEED ALSO BE NUMBERED.

It is clear then that Abram's descendants would be so many that there would be no way to number them. The most important thing to note here is that now Abram was truly alone, God tells Abram that the land is to belong to him, as well as his offspring. He is to walk through the land again and think of it as belonging to him. This is what faith really is—calling things that be not as though they were. We are to take God's Word, apply it to our situation and see things as if we already had the answer. There is no reason for us to ever worry or fret. The key to this is getting alone with God. In actuality, the land did not belong to Abram, but because God had said that it would, Abram knew it would one day be his.

Abram then moved to the plain of Mamre. That name means fatness. This place was in Hebron, meaning fellowship. When we truly get alone with God we are in a place of blessing because we are in fellowship with God. While here, Abram learned that Lot was in trouble, so he rushed to Lot.

GEN 14:14-17

14 AND WHEN ABRAM HEARD THAT HIS BROTHER WAS TAKEN CAPTIVE, HE ARMED HIS TRAINED SERVANTS, BORN IN HIS OWN HOUSE, THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN, AND PURSUED THEM UNTO DAN.

15 AND HE DIVIDED HIMSELF AGAINST THEM, HE AND HIS SERVANTS, BY NIGHT, AND SMOTE THEM, AND PURSUED THEM UNTO HOBAB, WHICH IS ON THE LEFT HAND OF DAMASCUS.

16 AND HE BROUGHT BACK ALL THE GOODS, AND ALSO BROUGHT AGAIN HIS BROTHER LOT, AND HIS GOODS, AND THE WOMEN ALSO, AND THE PEOPLE. 17 AND THE KING OF SODOM WENT OUT TO MEET HIM AFTER HIS RETURN FROM THE SLAUGHTER OF CHEDORLAOMER, AND OF THE KINGS THAT WERE WITH HIM, AT THE VALLEY OF SHAVEH, WHICH IS THE KING'S DALE.

Abram calls Lot his brother. Abram knew that Lot was his spiritual brother. Abram set an example for us. When we see someone in trouble, we should go to their rescue. We need to help them get re-established. Because of Abram's kindness, Lot was able to gain the victory.

Abram was truly thankful that he had been able to help Lot. He, himself, had been blessed with great wealth.

GEN 14:18-20

18 AND MELCHIZEDEK KING OF SALEM BROUGHT FORTH BREAD AND WINE: AND HE WAS THE PRIEST OF THE MOST HIGH GOD.

19 AND HE BLESSED HIM, AND SAID, BLESSED BE ABRAM OF THE MOST HIGH GOD, POSSESSOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH:

20 AND BLESSED BE THE MOST HIGH GOD, WHICH HATH DELIVERED THINE ENEMIES INTO THY HAND. AND HE GAVE HIM TITHES OF ALL.

Melchizedek was a type of Christ as a Priest. The Bible does not even record that he had parents. He did, of course, but since we are not told who they were is an indication that he was eternal. He was not eternal, but nothing is stated about his birth or death. All we know is that Melchizedek did exist. Jesus Christ existed and He is eternal. You can understand why he is considered a type of Christ.

Another likeness to Christ is that his priesthood was not handed down to him. No high priest ordained Melchizedek to become a priest. It was his own priesthood. Jesus did not inherit His priesthood. It originated with Him.

In addition to Melchizedek being a priest, he was also a king. Jesus is also both a Priest and a King. Melchizedek name means "righteousness," literally "king of righteousness." Jesus is the King of Righteousness. Melchizedek was the king of Salem which means "peace." Jesus is the King of Peace. Both Melchizedek and Jesus were called the Most High Priest.

When Abram responded to Melchizedek by giving him one-tenth of all his possessions, Melchizedek pronounced blessing upon Abram. Jesus blesses people. Melchizedek received Abram's tithes. Jesus Christ receives our tithes. This is the only time that we are to pray directly to Jesus. All the other times, we are to pray to the Father in the Name of Jesus. We are to present our tithes to our High Priest and that is Jesus. He in return takes our faith and presents that to God the Father in our behalf.

GEN 14:22-24

22 AND ABRAM SAID TO THE KING OF SODOM, I HAVE LIFT UP MINE HAND UNTO THE LORD, THE MOST HIGH GOD, THE POSSESSOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH,

23 THAT I WILL NOT TAKE FROM A THREAD EVEN TO A SHOELATCHET, AND THAT I WILL NOT TAKE ANY THING THAT IS THINE, LEST THOU SHOULDEST SAY, I HAVE MADE ABRAM RICH:

24 SAVE ONLY THAT WHICH THE YOUNG MEN HAVE EATEN, AND THE PORTION OF THE MEN WHICH WENT WITH ME, ANER, ESHCOL, AND MAMRE; LET THEM TAKE THEIR PORTION.

Abram refused to take any of the spoils from the king of Sodom. He wanted no man to be able to say that he was the resource of Abram's blessings. God was Abram's only source. God is our only source.

Abram indicated that he practiced lifting up his hand as a means of worshipping God. His willingness to worship God was one of the main reasons God had blessed him so much. He obviously remembered that God had said to him that his seed would be a blessing to the whole earth.

It should be noted that Abram had made some enemies, especially by helping Lot. He figured that these enemies would regroup and try to take back what Lot had gained with the help of Abram. As always, God comes through at the right time.

GEN 15:1

1 AFTER THESE THINGS THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME UNTO ABRAM IN A VISION, SAYING, FEAR NOT, ABRAM: I AM THY SHIELD, AND THY EXCEEDING GREAT REWARD.

Abram asked in faith about whom his heir was to be. God told him that he would have a son and many descendants.

GEN 15:2-5

2 AND ABRAM SAID, LORD GOD, WHAT WILT THOU GIVE ME, SEEING I GO CHILDLESS, AND THE STEWARD OF MY HOUSE IS THIS ELIEZER OF DAMASCUS?

3 AND ABRAM SAID, BEHOLD, TO ME THOU HAST GIVEN NO SEED: AND, LO, ONE BORN IN MY HOUSE IS MINE HEIR.

4 AND, BEHOLD, THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME UNTO HIM, SAYING, THIS SHALL NOT BE THINE HEIR; BUT HE THAT SHALL COME FORTH OUT OF THINE OWN BOWELS SHALL BE THINE HEIR.

5 AND HE BROUGHT HIM FORTH ABROAD, AND SAID, LOOK NOW TOWARD HEAVEN, AND TELL THE STARS, IF THOU BE ABLE TO NUMBER THEM: AND HE SAID UNTO HIM, SO SHALL THY SEED BE.

God was telling Abraham that his descendants would be as the stars. The word can also be translated "ministers." Just as Jesus is the Bright and Morning Star, we, as ministers of the Word of God, are called stars. We, through Jesus, meet all of the requirements to be the third-party judges. Jesus, the King of all Kings, has restored dominion of the earth to us, that we as kings have a territory over which to rule. The Law of God—love—has been written on our hearts. We are people of love, that is law-abiding citizens. We have been given the mind of Christ, so we have a correct discernment of good

and evil. Public opinion cannot sway us. Therefore, we are perfect judges to come up with a verdict for the final war which will still be over God's love for all of His creation, including us. With this information that he would have a multitude of descendents, Abram stayed himself upon the Lord. Although his own body was as good as dead, sexually speaking, Abram did not stagger at God's promise. Abram had living faith.

I call it resurrection faith. He believed the promise pointed to Christ.

GAL 3:16

16 NOW TO ABRAHAM AND HIS SEED WERE THE PROMISES MADE. HE SAITH NOT, AND TO SEEDS, AS OF MANY; BUT AS OF ONE, AND TO THY SEED, WHICH IS CHRIST.

God told Abram again that the land was to belong to him. Abram asked for a sign.

GEN 15:

6 AND HE BELIEVED IN THE LORD; AND HE COUNTED IT TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

7 AND HE SAID UNTO HIM, I AM THE LORD THAT BROUGHT THEE OUT OF UR OF THE CHALDEES, TO GIVE THEE THIS LAND TO INHERIT IT.

8 AND HE SAID, LORD GOD, WHEREBY SHALL I KNOW THAT I SHALL INHERIT IT?

9 AND HE SAID UNTO HIM, TAKE ME AN HEIFER OF THREE YEARS OLD, AND A SHE GOAT OF THREE YEARS OLD, AND A RAM OF THREE YEARS OLD, AND A TURTLEDOVE, AND A YOUNG PIGEON.

10 AND HE TOOK UNTO HIM ALL THESE, AND DIVIDED THEM IN THE MIDST, AND LAID EACH PIECE ONE AGAINST ANOTHER: BUT THE BIRDS DIVIDED HE NOT.

11 AND WHEN THE FOWLS CAME DOWN UPON THE CARCASSES, ABRAM DROVE THEM AWAY.

So, the sign was given; it was a type of Christ. The typical picture shows that the sacrifice belongs to and is for God. The animals named here are tame. They did not have to be captured by Abram. They were already willing servants of man's need. Each one foreshadowed a distinctive aspect of Christ's perfections and work. The heifer pointed to the freshness of His vigor; the goat gave the sin offering aspect; the ram is connected with consecration. The birds told of the One from Heaven. The "three" years indicated the length of ministry for Jesus.

The blood of all the animals was shed. The dividing of the animals indicated that this sacrifice was to form the basis for a covenant.

JER 34:18-19

18 AND I WILL GIVE THE MEN THAT HAVE TRANSGRESSED MY COVENANT, WHICH HAVE NOT PERFORMED THE WORDS OF THE COVENANT WHICH THEY HAD MADE BEFORE ME, WHEN THEY CUT THE CALF IN TWAIN, AND PASSED BETWEEN THE PARTS THEREOF,

19THE PRINCES OF JUDAH, AND THE PRINCES OF JERUSALEM, THE EUNUCHS, AND THE PRIESTS, AND ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND, WHICH PASSED BETWEEN THE PARTS OF THE CALF;

Let me explain more. Never was a blood covenant entered into lightly. It was an agreement that was to last forever—there was no way out without death. Even if the people who made the covenant later became at odds with one another, they had to still uphold the covenant. Serious thought had to go into who would best represent the people on each side before the covenant could be implemented. It had to be someone who would sum up the whole tribe. The covenant site was chosen where all parties could see. The animals were selected. The covenant cut was different from any other. It was parted down the backbone. The pieces fell opposite of each other leaving a walkway of blood. Each man took off his coat. The coat stands for “who I am and all that I am.” This signified being totally open and honest with each other. “I am giving myself to you.” They then exchange weapon belts. This indicated a giving of strength. It also said that your enemies are now my enemies. “Even if I die, I stand with you.” The covenant makers were to walk between the halves twice. They were to stop in the middle and say, “Even as this animal has died, I will stand with you even in the midst of death. Standing in the blood, they promised to never break the covenant. Each representative swears by God to keep his promises, making God the third party and witness to the covenant. The wrists or hands of both persons were cut. The life blood of the family is being shed. The hand is lifted as the oath is worn, with blood running down the arm to keep the terms of the covenant “so help me God.” The scars became the seal of the covenant because they will never go away. The scars were a constant reminder of the terms of the covenant to each person. The scars showed that the two had become one. The persons involved in the covenant changed their names showing that they had become members of the same family. The participants were declared to be friends only after the covenant vows had been made. A covenant meal was prepared. This is the culminating activity in establishing the covenant. Each drank from the wine cup saying, “ Drink my life’s blood as I drink your life’s blood.” “I see you fulfilling all the terms of the covenant as I fulfill your life.” They fed each other the break as a final statement. “Take me—all that I am. Eat of me, I am yours.”

This is the kind of covenant that God made with Abram. There is just one difference, and it is a big one. Normally, the blood covenant required both parties to make vows. But in this one, God did all the vowing. Abram was asleep.

GEN 15:12

12 AND WHEN THE SUN WAS GOING DOWN, A DEEP SLEEP FELL UPON ABRAM; AND, LO, AN HORROR OF GREAT DARKNESS FELL UPON HIM.

In the "deep sleep" and the "horror of great darkness" Abram, as it were, entered in spirit into death, as that through which all his seed would have to pass. The covenant declared that God would be with Abram’s people. God would protect them as if Abram’s family was His family. God’s deliverance would come in the death of the Paschal Lamb. There would be four hundred years of affliction, and then the inheritance. Often God’s people experience suffering, but then God delivers.

ROM 8:17

17 AND IF CHILDREN, THEN HEIRS; HEIRS OF GOD, AND JOINT-HEIRS WITH CHRIST; IF SO BE THAT WE SUFFER WITH HIM, THAT WE MAY BE ALSO GLORIFIED TOGETHER.

ACTS 14:22

22 CONFIRMING THE SOULS OF THE DISCIPLES, AND EXHORTING THEM TO CONTINUE IN THE FAITH, AND THAT WE MUST THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Also, by this deep sleep we, learn how God was showing the patriarch, symbolically, that he would not inherit the land during his natural life; instead, he must go down into the grave and inherit it together with the Promised Seed.

Let's read Genesis 15:13.

GEN 15:13

13 AND HE SAID UNTO ABRAM, KNOW OF A SURETY THAT THY SEED SHALL BE A STRANGER IN A LAND THAT IS NOT THEIRS, AND SHALL SERVE THEM; AND THEY SHALL AFFLICT THEM FOUR HUNDRED YEARS;

There was the suffering, here is the deliverance.

GEN 15:14-17

14 AND ALSO THAT NATION, WHOM THEY SHALL SERVE, WILL I JUDGE: AND AFTERWARD SHALL THEY COME OUT WITH GREAT SUBSTANCE.

15 AND THOU SHALT GO TO THY FATHERS IN PEACE; THOU SHALT BE BURIED IN A GOOD OLD AGE.

16 BUT IN THE FOURTH GENERATION THEY SHALL COME HITHER AGAIN: FOR THE INIQUITY OF THE AMORITES IS NOT YET FULL.

17 AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT, WHEN THE SUN WENT DOWN, AND IT WAS DARK, BEHOLD A SMOKING FURNACE, AND A BURNING LAMP THAT PASSED BETWEEN THOSE PIECES.

These verses contain a sevenfold prophecy received a literal and complete fulfillment.

(1) Abram's descendents were to be strangers in a land theirs. (2) They were to serve in that strange land. (3) They were to be afflicted for four hundred years.

EXOD 12:40

40 NOW THE SOJOURNING OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, WHO DWELT IN EGYPT, WAS FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS.

(4) Abram's descendents who served God would judge. (5) Abram's offspring were to come out of Egypt with great substance.

PS 105:37

37 HE BROUGHT THEM FORTH ALSO WITH SILVER AND GOLD: AND THERE WAS NOT ONE FEEBLE PERSON AMONG THEIR TRIBES.

(6) Abram would be spared the suffering and allowed to die in peace. (7) The fourth generation would return again to Canaan.

JER 11:3-4

3 AND SAY THOU UNTO THEM, THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL; CURSED BE THE MAN THAT OBEYETH NOT THE WORDS OF THIS COVENANT, 4 WHICH I COMMANDED YOUR FATHERS IN THE DAY THAT I BROUGHT THEM FORTH OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT, FROM THE IRON FURNACE, SAYING, OBEY MY VOICE, AND DO THEM, ACCORDING TO ALL WHICH I COMMAND YOU: SO SHALL YE BE MY PEOPLE, AND I WILL BE YOUR GOD:

2 SAM 22:29

29 FOR THOU ART MY LAMP, O LORD: AND THE LORD WILL LIGHTEN MY DARKNESS.

PS 119:105

105 THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET, AND A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH.

ISA 62:1

1 FOR ZION'S SAKE WILL I NOT HOLD MY PEACE, AND FOR JERUSALEM'S SAKE I WILL NOT REST, UNTIL THE RIGHTEOUSNESS THEREOF GO FORTH AS BRIGHTNESS, AND THE SALVATION THEREOF AS A LAMP THAT BURNETH.

GEN 15:18

18 IN THE SAME DAY THE LORD MADE A COVENANT WITH ABRAM, SAYING, UNTO THY SEED HAVE I GIVEN THIS LAND, FROM THE RIVER OF EGYPT UNTO THE GREAT RIVER, THE RIVER EUPHRATES:

The covenant was made before Abram was eighty-six years old. This was a covenant of grace. Abram had not really done anything to earn it. He had only exhibited faith. But that was all that God needed to be able to re-enter human affairs here on earth without going back on His original Word concerning the authority that He had given to mankind. Remember, God had given Adam dominion over the earth and Adam had given that authority to satan. God had to have a human channel through which to work in order to get hold on that authority again. Even then, it would require that human channel to snatch back that authority from satan before it could be returned to God. Abram was to become the forefather of this future human channel which would be able to regain the dominion from satan and give it back to God so He could once again return it to mankind. It was God's will for humans to control the earth. As you know, Jesus is the One, in particular, who would actually accomplish this task. Unlike satan who had slipped in another way other than the normal, natural way of becoming a part of the human race, Jesus was born into the race as a human baby. That way, Jesus as a man could rightfully conquer satan and take from him what belonged to the human race.

Abram realized how blessed he was to be used of God in this manner. Yet, circumstances looked as if the promise could never become a reality. Abram was an old man and Sarai, Abram's wife, was barren and past the age of having children. She told Abram that if God had really told him he was going to have a son, it would be necessary for him to go in to her young handmaid. Abram did. The handmaid conceived.

Sarai then acknowledged that she had made a mistake. Hagar. The relationship between the two became very strained. The handmaid left. The angel of the Lord (Jesus) appeared to her and told her to return to Sarai. Hagar did return. In due time Hagar gave birth to a son, whom she named Ishmael. Abram was eighty-six when Ishmael was born.

Thirteen years passed after Abram went in to Hagar. Thirteen means unbelief, rebellion, or apostasy, all of which occurred during these years.

GEN 17:1

AND WHEN ABRAM WAS NINETY YEARS OLD AND NINE, THE LORD APPEARED TO ABRAM, AND SAID UNTO HIM, I AM THE ALMIGHTY GOD; WALK BEFORE ME, AND BE THOU PERFECT.

This is the first time that God had revealed Himself as Almighty. He was saying that He was El Shaddai, the All-Sufficient One. God knew that Abram's body had to be sexually dead before He could bring about the promise. God also included a rebuke for Abram for what had taken place during the last thirteen years. But God rebuked him in an exhibition of Divine Love.

As God renewed the covenant with Abram, He changed Abram's name to Abraham. This is exciting because God was actually giving Abram a part of His own name. God was taking the letter "h" from His name Jehovah and adding it to Abram. This showed the blood covenant relationship between Abraham and Himself. It also showed that God now had a way of getting back into human affairs.

God now adds more to the covenant. He told Abraham that he would also be the Father of kings.

GEN 17:6

6 AND I WILL MAKE THEE EXCEEDING FRUITFUL, AND I WILL MAKE NATIONS OF THEE, AND KINGS SHALL COME OUT OF THEE.

God continued by telling Abraham that the blessings upon his descendents would be everlasting. This, of course, was on the condition that the descendants kept their part of the covenant.

GEN 17:10

10 THIS IS MY COVENANT, WHICH YE SHALL KEEP, BETWEEN ME AND YOU AND THY SEED AFTER THEE; EVERY MAN CHILD AMONG YOU SHALL BE CIRCUMCISED.

The first requirement was to circumcise the males. The work of circumcision was to be a sign that the already justified Abraham was in agreement with the covenant. Future

generations were to show their agreement and commitment to the covenant by doing the same work of circumcision.

Water baptism does the same for us today. It is an outward sign of an inward work. When we accept as Savior and Lord, an inward experience takes place. Like circumcision, Water baptism is a physical act with a spiritual meaning behind it. The old heart of stone is replaced with a heart of flesh. We then symbolically express to others what has happened in our spirits by water baptism. Symbolically, the old man is buried in the water and a new creature is raised up out of the water.

MARK 16:16

16 HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED; BUT HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT SHALL BE DAMNED.

ACTS 2:38

38 THEN PETER SAID UNTO THEM, REPENT, AND BE BAPTIZED EVERY ONE OF YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, AND YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

MATT 28:19

19 GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST:

God changed Sarai's name to Sarah. Again, God was adding a part of His name to a human name. God specifically tells Sarah that she would bare a son. Abraham laughed because he was now one hundred years old and Sarah was now ninety. God went on to say that Isaac would be born to Sarah and that the covenant would be established with him.

GEN 17:19

19 AND GOD SAID, SARAH THY WIFE SHALL BEAR THEE A SON INDEED; AND THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME ISAAC: AND I WILL ESTABLISH MY COVENANT WITH HIM FOR AN EVERLASTING COVENANT, AND WITH HIS SEED AFTER HIM.

Sarah laughed when she overheard the angels talking with Abraham about her Giving birth to a child. Abraham, being strong in faith, knew God was telling the truth. He released his faith for both himself and Sarah.

Angels then revealed to Abraham that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were going to be destroyed. Once again Lot was in the wrong place at the wrong time. Two angels told Lot to flee Sodom because homosexuality was bringing about the destruction of the two cities. God did not approve it then and He called it an abomination then and He still does today. It is an act contrary to the nature that God put within against the human race. The Bible refers to this type of abomination as iniquity.

Abraham's faith had begun to wane to the degree that he sinned. When he was in

Egypt he lied about his relation with Sarah. Afraid that his life might be taken from because of his wife, Abraham caused Sarah to pose as his sister. It was through a direct intervention of God that Sarah was delivered from the effects of Abraham's sin.

But God being God, now has One of the angels, apparently, the Angel of the Lord to Tell Abraham that all the nations of the earth would be bless through him. God was predicting the coming of Jesus Christ, the Seed of Woman, in this verse.

GEN 18:18

18 SEEING THAT ABRAHAM SHALL SURELY BECOME A GREAT AND MIGHTY NATION, AND ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED IN HIM?

Isaac was born as had been predicted. Sarah remarked that God made her laugh so that every time any one hears about her experience, they, too, will laugh with her. For God to work the impossible is a funny thing, especially if you are the recipient! God had made the dead live. Satan must have really been upset with the birth of Isaac. He had heard God say back in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman would bruise his head. So, he probably heard God tell Abraham that it would be through his son that the Promised Seed would come. That is why he wanted to bring everything to a halt before the Promised Seed was manifested.

There are several similarities between the birth of Isaac and the birth of Jesus. Actually, the birth of Isaac was a type of the way the birth of Jesus would occur. Isaac was a promised seed. So was Jesus. A lengthy interval occurred between God's first promise to Abraham and its realization of both births. Sarah, an old woman, as Mary, a virgin, did about 4000 years later, wondered how it would be possible for her to have a baby. The names of both babies were specified before their births. Both babies were born at God's appointed time. Miracles were required for the births of both babies. Isaac means "father's delight." Jesus was His Father's Delight. God said that this is my Son in whom I am well pleased.

Abraham's faith is the reason that God was able to bring about the birth of Isaac. His faith was resurrection faith. He had believed that God would cause the dead reproductive organs in both his and Sarah's bodies to live once again. Sure enough, God had done exactly that. God had given Isaac to Abraham and Sarah. True, Abraham had already had another son, Ishmael, but now, for sure, Abraham knew that he was not the promised son. The name Ishmael refers to work done by human strength. For that reason, Abraham dismissed Ishmael, making him very jealous of Isaac. As a result, the Middle East problems today stem from the continuous conflict between the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael.

Abraham was now showing a separation of his mind and body from his spirit. He was now learning to rely on his spirit rather than his mind and body. His mind and body could not prepare him for the days ahead, but his spirit could. Abraham realized Isaac was only means by which he could become the blessing God had promised him that he would be. I'm sure, Abraham rejoiced and praised God for giving him this promised son. Abraham realized that now he could become what God had told him that he would be.

It was at this point that God now asked for Isaac back. This was the first time that God had distinctively specified that a human sacrifice would be required to expiate sin. This is one of the very few Old Testament types that brings before us not only God the Son represented by Isaac, but also God the Father represented by Abraham. Here, as nowhere else, are we shown the Father's heart. Here we are given, a foreshadowing of the Divine side of Calvary.

We are not told what when through Abraham's mind and spirit, but it almost seems That Abraham would have questioned God as to why this was happening.

GEN 22:1-2

1 AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THESE THINGS, THAT GOD DID TEMPT (PROVE) ABRAHAM, AND SAID UNTO HIM, ABRAHAM: AND HE SAID, BEHOLD, HERE I AM.

2 AND HE SAID, TAKE NOW THY SON, THINE ONLY SON ISAAC, WHOM THOU LOVEST, AND GET THEE INTO THE LAND OF MORIAH; AND OFFER HIM THERE FOR A BURNT OFFERING UPON ONE OF THE MOUNTAINS WHICH I WILL TELL THEE OF.

Notice "thy son--thine only son--whom thou lovest." God knew how much Abraham loved Isaac because He knew how much He loved His only begotten Son and yet had Him slain before the foundation of the world.

Abraham set Isaac apart to be the sacrifice. Just as the passover-lamb was separated from the flock four days before it was killed, Isaac was taken by Abraham three days before he was to be offered upon the altar. Christ was separated for His work even before the foundation of the world. It should be noted that the sacrifice was to be a transaction strictly between Abraham and Isaac. The same was true between Father God and His Son.

GEN 22:3-5

3 AND ABRAHAM ROSE UP EARLY IN THE MORNING, AND SADDLED HIS ASS, AND TOOK TWO OF HIS YOUNG MEN WITH HIM, AND ISAAC HIS SON, AND CLAVE THE WOOD FOR THE BURNT OFFERING, AND ROSE UP, AND WENT UNTO THE PLACE OF WHICH GOD HAD TOLD HIM.

4 THEN ON THE THIRD DAY ABRAHAM LIFTED UP HIS EYES, AND SAW THE PLACE AFAR OFF.

5 AND ABRAHAM SAID UNTO HIS YOUNG MEN, ABIDE YE HERE WITH THE ASS; AND I AND THE LAD WILL GO YONDER AND WORSHIP, AND COME AGAIN TO YOU,

1 PET 1:18-20

18 FORASMUCH AS YE KNOW THAT YE WERE NOT REDEEMED WITH CORRUPTIBLE THINGS, AS SILVER AND GOLD, FROM YOUR VAIN CONVERSATION RECEIVED BY TRADITION FROM YOUR FATHERS;

19 BUT WITH THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST, AS OF A LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH AND WITHOUT SPOT:

20 WHO VERILY WAS FOREORDAINED BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, BUT WAS MANIFEST IN THESE LAST TIMES FOR YOU,

Two men had witnessed Isaac carrying the wood on his shoulder as they went up the mountain. They could not witness, however, what took place between Abraham and Isaac. Two men were close witnesses of the events of Calvary as they hung on each side of Jesus, but they could not know what took place between the Father and the Son.

Isaac was a full-grown man and could have resisted the action of the aged patriarch. He did not, however. He followed Abraham quietly. There was no voice of protest whatsoever. He carried the wood on his own shoulder. How much like Christ was Isaac?

GEN 22:6

6 AND ABRAHAM TOOK THE WOOD OF THE BURNT OFFERING, AND LAID IT UPON ISAAC HIS SON; AND HE TOOK THE FIRE IN HIS HAND, AND A KNIFE; AND THEY WENT BOTH OF THEM TOGETHER.

Divine Judgment is represented by fire. Fire expresses the energy of Divine Holiness which ever burns against sin. Isaac had to face the fire which had the ability to totally consume him. Jesus faced the Divine Judgment of fire for our sins.

ISA 53:4

4 SURELY HE HATH BORNE OUR GRIEFS, AND CARRIED OUR SORROWS: YET WE DID ESTEEM HIM STRICKEN, SMITTEN OF GOD, AND AFFLICTED.

If sacrifice for sin was ever to be found, God Himself must supply it. The sacrifice would be for God and by God at the same time. "...God will provide Himself a Lamb. . ."

Jesus was the sacrifice for God and was sacrificed by God before the foundation of the world.

GEN 22:7

7 AND ISAAC SPAKE UNTO ABRAHAM HIS FATHER, AND SAID, MY FATHER: AND HE SAID, HERE AM I, MY SON. AND HE SAID, BEHOLD THE FIRE AND THE WOOD: BUT WHERE IS THE LAMB FOR A BURNT OFFERING?

As Abraham was about to offer Isaac, a ram was supplied. Here the type passes from Isaac to the ram--offered up in his stead. Jesus died in our stead.

GEN 22:9-14

9 AND THEY CAME TO THE PLACE WHICH GOD HAD TOLD HIM OF; AND ABRAHAM BUILT AN ALTAR THERE, AND LAID THE WOOD IN ORDER, AND BOUND ISAAC HIS SON, AND LAID HIM ON THE ALTAR UPON THE WOOD.

10 AND ABRAHAM STRETCHED FORTH HIS HAND, AND TOOK THE KNIFE TO SLAY HIS SON.

11 AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD CALLED UNTO HIM OUT OF HEAVEN, AND SAID, ABRAHAM, ABRAHAM: AND HE SAID, HERE AM I.

12 AND HE SAID, LAY NOT THINE HAND UPON THE LAD, NEITHER DO THOU ANY THING UNTO HIM: FOR NOW I KNOW THAT THOU FEAREST GOD, SEEING THOU HAST NOT WITHHELD THY SON, THINE ONLY SON FROM ME.

13 AND ABRAHAM LIFTED UP HIS EYES, AND LOOKED, AND BEHOLD BEHIND HIM A RAM CAUGHT IN A THICKET BY HIS HORNS: AND ABRAHAM WENT AND TOOK THE RAM, AND OFFERED HIM UP FOR A BURNT OFFERING IN THE STEAD OF HIS SON.

14 AND ABRAHAM CALLED THE NAME OF THAT PLACE JEHOVAH-JIREH: AS IT IS SAID TO THIS DAY, IN THE MOUNT OF THE LORD IT SHALL BE SEEN.

Although he did not have to actually kill Isaac, Abraham made the sacrifice in his heart. God intervened just at the right moment to show that the intent of the heart is as good or better than outward performance. God proved that life, not death, is the ultimate goal of true sacrifice.

Once again resurrection faith was evident in Abraham's spirit. He knew all the time that God would either provide another sacrifice or would raise Isaac from the dead, even if Isaac had been burned to ashes. Abraham knew that God would not go back on His promise. The Angel of the Lord came upon the scene. God had provided, so Abraham called the place Jehovah-Jireh. Jehovah-jireh is the God who provides. The Angel of the Lord stated that Abraham's faithfulness was to be rewarded.

GEN 22:17-18

17 THAT IN BLESSING I WILL BLESS THEE, AND IN MULTIPLYING I WILL MULTIPLY THY SEED AS THE STARS OF THE HEAVEN, AND AS THE SAND WHICH IS UPON THE SEA SHORE; AND THY SEED SHALL POSSESS THE GATE OF HIS ENEMIES;

18 AND IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED; BECAUSE THOU HAST OBEYED MY VOICE.

It is interesting to note that the Angel of the Lord, whom we know to be Jesus Christ, was the one to deliver the message. He was not only referring to the descendants of Abraham, in general, but was really talking about Himself. This revelation of Jesus says that He will not only bruise the head of satan, but that He will conquer the governing seat of all His enemies.