

Epistle of Romans XIV Abraham and the Covenants of God

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We're not going to cover anything in the book of Romans this time, but what is related to Abraham and salvation or Abraham and the covenants of God. Everything that God has done from the time of Abraham to now, comes from Abraham and is mentioned all the way through.

The first covenant was given in Gen. 15, where God said, 'Look at the stars of heaven and if you can number them so shall your seed be.' Which then was the promise of the spiritual, glorified sons of God.

When we come to Gen. 17 we find something that was a little different. Now it was going to nations and kings (v 6), the father of many nations (v 5), then we come over and the same blessing is given to Sarah: 'You'll be the mother of nations, kings of people shall come from you' (v 16). This is the *physical* covenant for *physical* Israel. This is another covenant.

The thing we need to understand about a covenant is that once a covenant is made no one changes it; not even the covenant maker. In order to have something different, you have to make a new covenant. This is the second covenant given to Abraham, which then is going to guarantee the physical nation of Israel. In this one, as compared to the one in Gen. 15, there was not a sacrifice that was given with the animals, but the sacrifice was the circumcision. There was the covenant cut—notice what it is:

Genesis 17:4: "As for Me, behold, **My covenant is with you**, and you shall be a **father of many nations**. Neither shall your name any more be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a **father of many nations**. And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and **I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you**. And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your seed after you" (vs 4-7). So, they agreed to it.

After the covenant was made then was the circumcision, v 10: "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your seed after you. Every male child among you shall be circumcised. And you shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin. And it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you." (vs 10-11).

There was no animal sacrifice given here,

yet, there was the shedding of blood to guarantee the covenant. That's why it was circumcision for the *physical* seed, *physical* people, for a **physical** covenant for the children of Israel as they would be through Isaac. Though Isaac comes both the children of Israel, the *physical seed*; through Isaac also comes the *spiritual children*. This is an aspect of it here.

Then the promise was given that Isaac would be born, v 21: "But I will establish **My covenant with Isaac...**" So, God already told Abraham what the name of the child would be before it was born; before it was even conceived.

"...whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time in the next year" (v 21). We don't have an exact date for that, and it's very hard to speculate when it was, so we won't do that. But it was at the *set time* that God had determined.

Then they had the circumcision that day and that confirmed the covenant. Notice with this one, God did not do anything in the way of confirming this covenant with a sacrifice that God passed through, as we found in Gen. 15. This one, the *physical* people did the *physical* circumcising and that was the token of the covenant.

Now when we come to Gen. 22, we have something that guarantees both of them. I'm not going to get into the chronology of this; I will expand upon this later, but let's look at it and go through it and then we're going to see something quite important.

Genesis 22:1: "And it came to pass after these things that God **tested** Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.'"

Let's understand, and get some sort of perspective of his age at this particular time. Right after this Sarah died; Genesis 23:1: "And Sarah was a hundred twenty-seven years old, *these were* the years of the life of Sarah."

Abraham was ten years older so that meant that he was 137-years-old. This means that at the time, the oldest—and we've speculated on the age of Isaac, but we didn't tie it into the age of his mother. She was 90-years-old when Isaac was born. Abraham was 100. So this means that he could be a maximum of 37-years-old and for us to say 30-years-old would not be out of sight. There's one little difficulty we have, he is called 'the lad.' So, we don't know what the exact age is. I would assume

that he would be around 20 where he could be mature enough, but still be called ‘a lad.’

We’re going to see several parallels between what God the Father did and what Jesus Christ did in relationship to Isaac.

Genesis 22:2: “And He said, ‘Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac...’ Was Isaac his only son? *No!* Ishmael was his son through Hagar. But this is his only son by the miraculous birth, through Sarah, and the one to whom the promises would go.

So therefore, he is reckoned as: ...your only *son* Isaac, whom you love...(v 2). You could put a lot of different Scriptures there, that ‘the Father loves Me and I love the Father,’ Jesus said, and so forth.

“...and go into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon **one of the mountains**, which I will tell you” (v 2).

People seem to think that Mt. Moriah was the place where the temple was later built. But this is ‘one’ of the mountains of Moriah. So, you could actually have a situation this way: It’s pretty clear that Jesus was crucified on the Mt. of Olives, which would be one of the mountains of Moriah, because that was just across the Kidron Valley where the temple was. That’s very possible that this is where this even took place. It’s not like the Islamic religion has: They said that God told Abraham to take Ishmael and to offer him. But Isaac was the one, not Ishmael. ***Ishmael is not counted in the promises!*** God did not forget him, *but he is not in the promises given to Abraham!*

Verse 3: “And Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son. And he split the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up and went to the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off” (vs 3-4). This is really quite a test for him. But it is a very example of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 5: “And Abraham said to his young men, ‘You stay here with the donkey, and I and the boy will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.’” He had faith right there. ***He was believing*** (Heb. 11) that regardless of what happened, God would be able to raise Isaac from the dead because he conceived him from the dead through a figure in a dead body—Abraham’s body and Sarah’s body.

Verse 6: “And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son....” What is the parallel with Christ here? ***Christ bore His own cross!*** At least part of the way.

“...And he took the fire *pot* in his hand, and a knife. And they both went together” (v 6). This was between just the father and the son. Just exactly like the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It was for the world, but it was an agreement between the One of Elohim Who became the Father and the One of Elohim Who became the Son.

Verse 7: “And Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, ‘My father.’ And he said, ‘Here I *am*, my son.’ And he said, ‘Behold the fire and the wood. But where is the lamb for a burnt offering?’.... [there was the missing ingredient] ...And Abraham said, ‘My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering.’....” (vs 7-8).

Isaac also had to believe this. You don’t find him rebelling; you find him just questioning. Much like Christ when He prayed that last prayer: ‘Not My will be done, but Your will be done.’

“...So, they both went on together. And they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar...” (vs 8-9).

I don’t imagine he was doing this too swiftly. To build an altar you take huge round stones. An altar that was to be built had to be built of whole stones; no tools put on it. And it had to be big enough to lay Isaac out on; so it was quite a job in building the altar.

“...there and laid the wood in order. And he bound his son Isaac and laid him on the wood, upon the altar” (v 9). I wonder what was on Isaac’s mind when this was happening; when Abraham said ‘God will provide a lamb, a sacrifice.’ Yet, it hadn’t been provided. There it was all ready.

So, he put him on the wood, v 10: “And Abraham stretched out his hand...” We can learn a lesson here, a very deep and profound lesson. Sometimes God does not rescue us until the very last second. Why? *To test our heart, our mind and our attitude to see what we’re going to do!* That’s what happened here.

“...and took the knife to slay his son” (v 10). I don’t know if he had it raised up in the air. I don’t know exactly what it was. But generally with a sacrifice they would slit the throat of the lamb, which was not a raising of the knife, it was just taking the knife and slitting the throat.

Verse 11: “And the angel of the LORD called to him from the heavens and said, ‘Abraham! Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I *am*.’ And He said, ‘Do not lay your hand upon the lad... [he hadn’t come to that point, yet] ...nor do anything to him, **for now I know that you fear God...**” (vs 11-12).

When we look back at all of the years, Abraham here was probably 130-plus years old. We figured he was 137 in Gen. 23:1, so he must have been close to that. He was called at age 75. So, if he was a 135-years-old then we have a total of 60 years that he was tested; 60 years to know, *to know* that you know. That's what God was saying here: **Now I know that I know!** "...seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." (v 12).

Let's go to one of the very basic Scriptures in the New Testament, Luke 14. We're to do the same thing. In a sense this was Abraham 'counting the cost.' This is something that we have to know and live all of our lives so that God will know.

Luke 14:26: "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters..." That means *to love God more!*

- Did Abraham love God more than he loved Isaac, though Isaac was his only son whom he loved? *Yes, he did!*
- More than his wife? *Yes!*
- More than his other children? *Yes!*
- More than his brethren and sisters? *Yes!*

"...and, in addition, **his own life also**... [that's the same requirement] ...he cannot be My disciple" (v 26). This means the impossibility of being a disciple of Christ.

Verse 27: "And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple." So, it's the same thing. Bearing your cross is whatever trouble or difficulty that comes upon you in following God, regardless of where He takes you or leads you or the circumstances.

Likewise, it's the same thing here with Abraham. He was fulfilling that term of the New Covenant: *to love God more than anything else*, that there would be nothing at all between him and God. That is difficult for human beings to do, because we love our own; we like to ask God to help us in everything, but when it comes to really just laying our lives out like that—bearing the cross, as Christ said—that is a difficult situation. Abraham did that; also Isaac had to do that. He was willing to die! He was willing to bear the wood on which he would be burned, a type of the cross.

Genesis 22:12: "...for **now I know** that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.' And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked.... [I'm sure that he was looking all the time before that, too.] ...and behold, behind *him* a ram was entangled in a thicket by its horns...." (vs 12-13).

Let's look at this just a little bit. As I've said before—and I'm more convinced of it now, not that I'm trying to convince myself of something that is not Scriptural. This ram—notice it was not a lamb, full, mature—I believe was supernaturally created for this event. Just like Isaac was supernaturally created to carry on the seed of Abraham. Also, we have that it is a substitute sacrifice in place of Isaac.

"...And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son" (v 13). We have the same substitute type of offering that Christ gave to us, that instead of *us* dying for our sins, **He** died for our sins; He was made sin and we were made righteousness. Quite a profound lesson! This is all contained here.

Verse 14: "And Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide; so that it is said *until* this day, 'In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.' And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, '**By Myself have I sworn,**' says the LORD..." (vs 14-16).

God was inspired by what Abraham did. God doesn't need to swear. Men swear so that they will have conscience against lying. You promise to 'swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.' Whatever God says is truth, so He doesn't need to swear. This makes a double guarantee from this time forward everything that God promised Abraham *was going to happen*, and it did not depend on the righteousness of the descendants, but on the promises of God. That's something we need to understand!

"...'**By Myself have I sworn,**' says the LORD, 'because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son; that **in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your seed...**'" (vs 16-17).

Notice the two-fold aspect of the rest of this verse; we have two descriptions describing what God was going to do:

1. *the spiritual creation of the spiritual nation*, which is "...like the stars of the heavens..." (17).
2. "...and as the sand, which is upon the seashore.... [*physical Israel*] ...And your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in **your seed**... [this then is referring to Christ—singular!] ...shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because you have obeyed My voice**" (vs 17-18).

There it is again!

Everything from the Bible now—the rest of

the Bible—*flows from Abraham!* All of the rest of the plan of God is contained in those three covenants of Gen. 15, 17 & 22. All of it now is guaranteed! God swore by Himself and He cannot go back on His word. It is going to happen! Let's see how this is referred to time and time again. We're going to take a survey showing that everything else in the rest of the Bible is keyed upon these three covenants.

This was the encounter with Esau when Jacob was fearing for his life, Genesis 32:9: "And Jacob said, 'Oh God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac...'" He's referring back to those promises; reminding God of what He had promised.

"...the LORD, Who said to me, "Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will deal well with you." I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth..." (vs 9-10).

When you think you're on the brink of death, notice what it does to your attitude. He was very tender before God.

"...which You have done to Your servant..." (v 10). He's looking at it now from God's perspective. When he was with Laban, he was looking at it from his own perspective. He said, 'Look, I've been here for seven years and then you made me work 14 more years for my two wives. Now I'm going to go. I need to get out from under your hand.' Now he's looking at it as a tender mercy because God kept him alive and blessed him, etc.

"...for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I have become two bands. Deliver me, I pray You, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and strike me, *and* the mother with the children. And You said, "I will surely do you good, and make your seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude"" (vs 10-12).

He was looking to the physical nation as the sand of the sea. Then all the rest is the story about how God gave him favor in the sight of Esau and so forth.

This is the account of Isaac, Genesis 26:24: "And the LORD appeared to him [Isaac] the same night, and said, 'I *am* the God of Abraham your father. Do not fear, for I *am* with you, and will bless you and multiply your seed for My servant Abraham's sake.'" Then he built the altar. So, there we have God again referring to Isaac and it was for the sake of Abraham.

Genesis 28:3: "And may God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, so that you may be a multitude of people. And may He give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to

your seed with you, so that you may inherit the land in which you are a stranger, which God gave to Abraham.'.... [this is the blessing of Isaac to Jacob] ...So, Isaac sent Jacob away...." (vs 3-5).

This is where Jacob complained to Laban, Genesis 31:41: "And I have been twenty years in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six for your flocks. And you have changed my wages ten times. Unless **the God of my fathers, the God of Abraham**, and the fear of Isaac had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty...." (vs 41-42).

Let's see what God says to Moses when He begins dealing with Moses and the children of Israel. This is when he had the first encounter with the 'burning bush.' Moses came up to see it.

Exodus 3:4: "And the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see. God called to him out of the midst of the bush, and said, 'Moses! Moses!' And he said, 'Here I *am*.' And He said, 'Do not come near here. Put off your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you stand *is* Holy ground.' And He said, '**I *am* the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.**'...." (vs 4-6). Again, before He starts anything to do with Israel, it comes back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Verse 13: "And Moses said to God, 'Behold, *when* I come to the children of Israel, and shall say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you," and they shall say to me, "What *is* His name?" What shall I say to them?' And God said to Moses, 'I AM THAT I AM.'...." (vs 13-14).

We're going to see that that's important in the New Testament in relationship to the seed of Abraham.

"...And He said, 'Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, "I AM has sent me to you."' And God said to Moses again, 'You shall say this to the children of Israel, "**The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.**" This *is* My name forever, and this *is* My title from generation to generation"" (vs 14-15).

This is something that we need to go through and show, just for the sake of repetition, how this follows through everything. If you look at modern Protestantism, they use Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but say there were no laws connected with it, so therefore, we are free to not have to keep any of the commandments of God except those that we deem that are good enough in our sight. That's the complete opposite.

Exodus 6:1: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh... [I don’t think he had a clue what was going to happen] ...for with a strong hand he shall let them go, and with a strong hand he shall drive them out of his land.’ And God spoke to Moses, and said to him, ‘I am the LORD. And **I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as God Almighty** [El Shaddai]. But I was not known to them *by My name JEHOVAH*’” (vs 1-3).

This tells us with each covenant God has *covenant names* to go with the covenant. He was El Shaddai with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Here He is now Jehovah, the Lord, unto the children of Israel.

Verse 4: “And I have also established My covenant with them... [it was already done; He promised it] ...to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, in which they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, those whom the Egyptians are keeping in bondage. And **I have remembered My covenant**. Therefore, say to the children of Israel, ‘I *am* the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rescue you out of their bondage. And I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments. And I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God. And you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God, Who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the land concerning which I did swear to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. And I will give it to you for a heritage. I *am* the LORD!’” (vs 4-8).

Notice, right in the beginning, in dealing with the children of Israel, He starts out with *Abraham Isaac and Jacob*. Now let’s see how this carries through. This is Moses talking with God. Moses takes the words of God and holds them up to God to make sure that God will be true to His Word.

Exodus 32:7: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Go! Get you down, for your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*.’”

Isn’t that always one of the traits of the children of Israel—not only the physical children of Israel, but look how quickly the Church. Who would believe that they [WCG] would have Easter sunrise services in Big Sandy, and in the Auditorium, dedicated to God, paid for by God’s tithes and so forth?

Verse 8: “They have turned aside quickly out of the way, which I commanded them. They have made them a molten calf, and have worshiped it, and have sacrificed to it, and said, ‘These *are*

your gods, O Israel, who have brought you up out of the land of Egypt.’.... [which was not so] ...And the LORD said to Moses, ‘I have seen this people, and behold, it *is* a stiff-necked people. And now leave Me alone, so that My wrath may burn hot against them and that I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation’” (vs 8-10).

He said, ‘If they sin I’ll just go ahead and work it through you. It’ll take a little longer, but I’ll do it.’

Verse 11: “And Moses prayed to the LORD his God, and said, ‘LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people... [God says, ‘your people’ (v 7); down here Moses says back to God, ‘Your people.’] ...whom You have brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians speak and say, “He brought them out with an evil intent, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth”? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Your people’” (vs 11-12).

That’s a prayer we ought to pray for the Church today. That God may redeem some that are headed for judgment! Notice what he appeals to; he didn’t say, ‘Yeah, God, I’m the one, You called me.’

Verse 13: “**Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants**, to whom You swore by Your own self, **and said to them, ‘I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give to your seed, and they shall inherit it forever.’** And the LORD repented of the evil which He spoke of doing to His people” (vs 13-14).

That’s pretty powerful when you go back and claim the promise given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Now, let’s come to the book of Deuteronomy, the end of the 40 years of wandering and all the trouble, death and destruction. You would think that after 40 years of manna they would have learned which day was the Sabbath. You would think they would have learned Who God was.

Moses is telling the people what God has said, Deuteronomy 1:8: “Behold, I have set before you the land. Go in and possess the land which the LORD has sworn to your fathers, **to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob**, to give to them and to their seed after them.”

He reiterated the prayer from Exo. 32: Deuteronomy 9:26 “I prayed, therefore, to the LORD and said, “O, Lord GOD, do not destroy Your people and Your inheritance which You have redeemed through Your greatness, which You have brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

Remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Do not look to the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin” (vs 26-27). So, he was reiterating: you’re here because I intervened with God and God saved you.

Three is the number of finality or completeness, so we have Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But the thing that I want us to have impressed upon our minds is that everything from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is depended upon what they did. That comes down to Christ.

- we saw at the beginning of Deuteronomy
- we saw it at the beginning before the exodus began
- we saw it when Moses appealed to God not to vent His wrath

God is showing the same thing in Deut. 30. When He finishes the covenant, He finishes it where He began, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Deuteronomy 30:19: “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live... [everything we do is a choice] ...that you may love the LORD your God, *and* may obey His voice, and may cleave to Him; for He is your life and the length of your days, so that you may dwell in the land, which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give it to them” (vs 19-20). That was finishing the covenant; going into the land.

Joshua 24:1—after they divided the land; Joshua is giving his farewell sermon before he died: “And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers. And they presented themselves before God.... [that was right at the tabernacle of the congregation] ...And Joshua said to all the people, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel, “Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the River in old times... [after the Flood] ...Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed and gave him Isaac. And I gave to Isaac Jacob and Esau. And I gave Esau Mount Seir for his own, but Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt. I sent Moses also, and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them. And afterward I brought you out. And I brought your fathers out of Egypt. And you came to the sea, and the Egyptians followed after your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea”’” (vs 1-6).

You are here because of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We’ll just summarize the rest of it. He gave the rest of the warning and so forth. Again we see that it is appealed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all the way through.

Psalms 105:5: “Remember His marvelous works, which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth, O you seed of Abraham His servant, you children of Jacob His chosen. He is the LORD our God; His judgments are in all the earth. He has remembered His covenant forever, the word, which He commanded to a thousand generations; the covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac; and He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant” (vs 5-10).

Notice the progression of this again: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and then the confirmation of it with the giving of the Law.

(go to the next track)

Everything is threaded through the promises, or coming from the promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; everything that God did from that time on.

Comment on ‘a thousand generations’—if you figured a generation was 20 years, that would be 20,000 years. God is literally saying that He’s not going to run out of time to complete His plan. If you figured each generation was 35 years, then He had 35,000 years. In calculating the generation in Matt. 1, I found one set to be 42 years—so that would be 42,000 years. This is an expression of determined exaggeration—not to exaggerate the numbers—but to show that it’s going to be *forever*. You can’t number a thousand generations. This means *the expanse of time out into eternity!*

Isaiah 29:22: “Therefore, thus says the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, ‘Jacob shall not now be ashamed, nor shall his face now become pale. But when he sees his children, the work of My hands, in his midst, they shall sanctify My name, and sanctify the Holy one of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. Those who erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and those who murmured shall learn instruction’” (vs 22-24). That’s a whole converted process; may that happen in the Church of God!

We also find something very interesting here in Isa. 51; not only do we have the mention of Abraham, but we have also the mention of Sarah.

Isaiah 51:1: “Hearken to Me, you who follow after righteousness...” Let’s tie this in with the book of Romans and what we’ve study on the

righteousness of God’; the imputed righteousness which is given, that God gives to you.

“...you who seek the LORD... [that’s a prophecy of us] ...Look to the Rock *from which* you were cut... [that Rock is Christ] ...and to the hole of the pit *from which* you were dug.... [Look to your meager beginnings] ...Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah *who* bore you... [Sarah is likened unto the Church] ...for I called him alone, and blessed him, and made him many” (vs 1-2). This goes right back this time straight to Abraham.

Micah 7:18: “Who *is* a God like You, Who pardons iniquity and passes over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?... [talking about spiritually, the Church] ...He does not keep His anger forever because He delights *in* mercy. He will turn again; He will have compassion upon us. He will subdue our iniquities. Yea, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” (vs 18-19).

That’s a guarantee of the removal of sin. What does it say of our sins in Psa. 103? ‘He pardons all of our iniquities and forgives all of our trespasses and removes them from us as far as the East is from the West.’ Now we have it ‘cast into the depths of the sea.’ When you repent and you go to God and you ask God to have mercy on you and forgive you, it’s like going out here to the deepest part of the Pacific Ocean and dropping a huge rock down into the ocean and it’s gone forever! Think of that!

Verse 20: “You will perform the Truth to Jacob, and mercy to Abraham, which You have sworn to our fathers from the days of old.” There we have it again. Let’s understand something about Matthew; he was:

- a Levite
- a tax collector
- kept records
- knew Greek (the book of Matthew was written in Greek)

They began writing the New Testament immediately. Why? *Because the New Testament—the same as the Old Testament was written for the Old Covenant—was written because it was the New Covenant*, and all of the things here have to do with the New Covenant going out from here. Notice how Matthew starts this; no doubt, right at the beginning:

Matthew 1:1: “*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David...* [the promise was given to David] ...*the son of Abraham...* [notice where he starts]: ...Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob” (vs 1-2)—and so forth. Everything here is keyed back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

How did they get all of these things? Let’s just think about the account of Mary and Elizabeth. What was it Elizabeth said? Were there a crowd of reporters there writing down what she said? *No!* She probably wrote it down afterwards, or someone came to her and said, ‘What did you say?’ *Here’s what I said*; same thing with Mary. This was just between her and Elizabeth. It wasn’t a public thing. So, that had to be written down.

The father of John the Baptist understood what was going on, here’s what he said.

Luke 1:67: “And Zacharias his father was filled with *the* Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying, ‘Blessed be *the* Lord, the God of Israel, because He has visited and has worked redemption for His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; exactly as He spoke by *the* mouth of His Holy prophets since the world began; salvation from our enemies and from *the* hand of all those who hate us; **to fulfill the promise of mercy made to our fathers, and to remember His Holy covenant, the oath that He swore to Abraham our father;** to grant us *that*, being saved from *the* hand of our enemies, we might serve Him without fear, *walking* in Holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our lives. And you, little child, shall be called *the* prophet of *the* Highest; for you shall go before *the* face of *the* Lord, to prepare His ways” (vs 67-76)

- Did they know what was happening? *Yes!*
- Did they understand the mission of John the Baptist? *Yes!*

Verse 77: ““To give *the* knowledge of salvation to His people by *the* remission of their sins, through *the* deep inner compassions of our God; in which *the* dayspring from on high has visited us, to shine upon those who are sitting in darkness and in *the* shadow of death, to direct our feet into *the* way of peace.’ And the little child grew and was strengthened in spirit; and he was in the wilderness until *the* day of his appearing to Israel” (vs 67-80).

God literally separated John the Baptist so he wouldn’t be all involved with all the Judaism and all of the politics and their school. He was probably taught directly by the Spirit of God, by his father out in the wilderness. His father surely knew what was going to happen, otherwise he couldn’t have prophesied this.

Then he appeared; all of sudden there was John the Baptist, had a Nazarite vow, long hair, clothed in camel’s hair and had a leather girdle around him and he ate locust. I think that was actually eating real locust and honey, high in protein.

I've never had locust. I don't necessarily want to try one.

Luke 13:24: "Strive with *your* whole being to enter in through the narrow gate... [the difficult gate; true Christianity is difficult] ...for many, I say to you, will seek to enter in, but shall not be able." That's also a very interesting statement. Unless God opens the door, you're not going to go there; doesn't matter what you do!

Verse 25: "Once the Master of the house has risen up and has shut the door, and you begin to stand outside the door and knock, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us'; then shall He answer *and* say to you, 'I do not know you *or* where you are from.' And you shall begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets.' And He shall say, 'I tell you, I do not know you *or* where you are from. Depart from Me, all *you* workers of unrighteousness.' There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, but you yourselves are cast out" (vs 25-28).

So, this may be a warning for all of those who are inclined to go to Judaism. He's talking to those who practice Judaism. If you want Judaism, maybe the door is going to be shut to you. You need to think before you start running off after some of these false doctrines and all of the little clever-sounding things that people do.

I've gotten word back that some people have followed Darrell Condor in spite of everything. And that there are some people who now say—and they are practicing it—that you have to have a prayer shawl to pray. And the prayer shawl has to have the fringe on it. All of that is practicing Judaism. ***You cannot perfect spiritual things with physical means!***

This has to do with the firstfruits and it also has to do with *firstfruit pretenders*. The firstfruits that are willing to listen we can admonish and they will change. Those who need a little stronger, we can get stronger with them. Those who are downright stubborn we have to reveal to them what God is going to do in judgment in hopes that they would have the fear of God. One thing about all of these doctrines that are going around, I wrote that we're going to be *slammed* with all these false doctrines, and they are coming harder, faster and heavier than I ever figured. If you are not loving God and keeping His commandments, you're going to join the group of the 'workers of iniquity,' because iniquity is transgression and lawlessness.

Verse 28: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac

and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, but you yourselves are cast out" (v 28).

Again, the spiritual Kingdom of God is appealed to *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!* This verifies everything that I have been covering here that everything in the Bible from Abraham, keys from Abraham on down to the fulfillment of the plan of God.

Verse 29: "Then they shall come from *the* east and *the* west, and from *the* north and *the* south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God... [the resurrection] ...And behold, there are *the* last who shall be first, and *the* first who shall be last." So again, *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!*

Notice how this ties in with 'your seed shall be as the stars of heaven,' the glorified sons of God.

Luke 20:34: "And Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'The children of this age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are accounted worthy to obtain that age... [the age to come, the Kingdom of God] ...and the resurrection from *the* dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; and neither can they die any more, for they are as *the* angels... [in existence] ...and are *the* children of God, being children of the resurrection. But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed *by his words* at the *burning* bush, when he called *the* Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; for He is not *the* God of *the* dead, but of *the* living; for all live unto Him" (vs 34-38). There again, *the Kingdom of God goes back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!*

We're going to just take a look at how the whole covenant with Christ, and with us, keys back to Abraham; and Paul knew that.

Galatians 3:6: "*It is exactly as it is written:* 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness.' Because of this, *you should* understand that those who *are* of faith are the *true* sons of Abraham" (vs 6-7). We're going to look at some false 'sons of Abraham.'

Verse 8: "Now *in* the Scriptures, God seeing in advance that He would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed.' *It is* for this reason that those who are of faith are being blessed with the believing Abraham" (vs 8-9).

Verse 14: "In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus..."

Verse 16: "Now, to Abraham and to his Seed were the promises spoken...." That refers to

Christ.

Verse 29: “And if you *are* Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to *the* promise.”

There we have it, all the way through. You can tie that in with Rom. 4, *Abraham all the way through*.

Now, let’s see how it is further defined in relationship to Abraham. This is very interesting and also very profound, because the book of Hebrews was written to the Jews who were still there in Jerusalem, and were thinking that if they would all just get together and they would all offer the animal sacrifices. That’s what happened in 66_{A.D.} They had 3-million Jews there to keep the Passover. They thought they would force God to keep from destroying the temple, because it was well known that it was going to be destroyed. God had warned them. They didn’t hear. They said, ‘We’re going to force God. We’ll all come together and if we all show our righteousness, God is going to have to forestall His hand.’

God is interested in repentance—not works! So, they were all killed. Read in *Josephus*, the slaughter of Jerusalem—both accounts of the fall. It was something! I mean, it got down to cannibalism and zealots running back and forth, killing, looting, taking; it was unreal! That’s why Paul goes through showing that it has to be the sacrifice of Christ, not the animal sacrifices. He showed here that the One of Elohim Who became Christ didn’t take upon Him the nature of angels.

Hebrews 2:14: “Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil; and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham” (vs 14-16). And that’s right exactly where we started in Matt. 1.

Hebrews 6:9—reiterates the promises: “But, although we speak these things, beloved, we are persuaded *of* better things concerning you... [rather being a castoff] ...even *the* fruits that accompany salvation. For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work, and the labor of love *by* which you have showed *honor* to His name, *in that* you have served the saints and are *continuing* to serve *them*” (vs 9-10). God isn’t going to forget that.

Verse 11: “But we earnestly desire that

every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the hope until *the* end.” You have to have the faith unto the end; the hope unto the end.

Verse 12: “that you do not become lazy, but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises. For God, **after promising Abraham...** [again keying the whole thing of eternal life on Abraham] ...**swore by Himself...** [Gen. 22] ...since He could swear by none greater, saying, ‘Surely in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.’ Now, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For indeed, men swear by the greater, and confirmation by an oath *puts* an end to all disputes between them. In this *way* God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed *it* by an oath; so that by two immutable things, in which *it was impossible for God to lie...*” (vs 12-18).

That’s believing God; that’s part of faith. When we don’t believe what God says, we are making God a liar. That’s what people don’t understand. You may not be fully convinced, but at least believe it and hold that belief until you are fully convinced. Don’t make God a liar!

“...we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope *that has been* set before *us*; which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and steadfast, and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil” (vs 18-19).

In other words, He’s saying ‘coming right into the presence of God!’ That’s something! God cannot lie! All the promises are based upon that which was given to Abraham.

Let’s look at some of the false claims that people hold onto. There are those who claim to be Abraham’s seed but are not. They don’t do the works of Abraham. This is when John the Baptist began preaching. He said:

Matthew 3:2: “...‘Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.’”

Verse 7: “But after seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, ‘*You* brood of vipers... [these were the political ministers of his day] ...who has forewarned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, produce fruits worthy of repentance... [evidence of change] ...and do not think to say within yourselves, “We have Abraham *for our* father”...’” (vs 7-9).

It’s not dependent on the physical things of

Abraham. You have to follow the spiritual example of Abraham in order to say that he is your father.

“...for I tell you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham” (v 9). Then he warns them that they’re going into the Lake of Fire unless they change.

John 8:28—there’s quite an encounter here; quite an exchange: “Then Jesus said to them, ‘When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you yourselves shall know that I AM...’”

Here is a special expression in the Greek. It is a double ‘I AM’; you have two ways of saying ‘I AM’ in the Greek: ‘ego’ or ‘emi.’ Most of the time they are used separately, but when it is used emphatically, it really is saying: I AM I AM. And that ties back to Exo. 3: ‘who shall I say to the children of Israel has sent me?’ Say to them ‘I AM that I AM has sent you.’ What Jesus is saying is that He is the One Who spoke to Moses. Now we will see that He is also the One Who says that He was the One Who spoke to Abraham.

“...and *that* I do nothing of Myself. But as the Father taught Me, these things I speak. And He Who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone because I always do the things that please Him” (vs 28-29). That’s what we need to have in our lives, strive for that.

Verse 30: “As He spoke these things, many believed in Him. Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, ‘If you continue in My Word... [conditional] ...you are truly My disciples. And you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free” (vs 28-32).

Verse 33: “They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s seed...’” This is important to understand, because He makes a difference in this section here concerning the ‘seed of Abraham’ and the ‘children of Abraham.’ Who were some of the seed of Abraham who were not counted as the children of Abraham? *Ishmael, Esau, Edom, all the sons through Keturah, all the sons of Ishmael, all of the sons of Esau!*

So, rather than saying *yes, we need the Truth, that will make us free*, they said, “...**We are Abraham’s seed and have never been in bondage to anyone.** What do You mean by saying, ‘You shall become free?’” (v 33). Let’s understand that at the time they were saying this, they were in servitude to the Roman Empire.

Verse 34: “Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin. And the servant does not live in the house forever; *but* the Son lives forever. Therefore,

if the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free. I know that you are Abraham’s seed; but you are seeking to kill Me, because My words do not enter into your *minds*. I speak the things that I have seen from My Father, and you do the things that you have seen from your father.’ They answered and said to Him, ‘Our father is Abraham.’ Jesus said to them, ‘If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham” (vs 34-39).

Notice that He changed it from ‘seed’—which He said they were—to ‘children.’ Could this be that there were a lot of these Jews who were there believing superficially on Him, that these were some of the Esauites who embraced Judaism? He said ‘if you were the children of Abraham’—so there’s a difference. This was a superficial belief. He was telling them, *if you believe you have to obey My words and believe the Truth!* They were believing, like basking in the light or the shadow of someone who’s important. Not believing unto salvation—believing and seeing Him.

“...Jesus said to them, ‘If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham” (v 39). Quite a difference! We’re talking about the ones who were the spiritual sons of Abraham *vs* the physical seed, which may not necessarily be of Israel or of Judah.

Verse 40: “But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has spoken the Truth to you, which I have heard from God... [in other words, ‘I heard what I’m saying from God the Father’] ...**Abraham did not do this**” (vs 39-40). *Abraham believed!*

What He’s doing is showing the difference in their belief. They didn’t believe! They wanted salvation, but they wanted it on *their* terms. They wanted it *their* way, not God’s way.

Verse 41: “‘You are doing the works of your father.’ Then they said to Him, ‘We have not been born of fornication. We have one Father, *and that is* God.’ Therefore, Jesus said to them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love Me, because I proceeded forth and came from God. For I have not come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why don’t you understand My speech? Because you cannot *bear* to hear My words” (vs 41-43). In other words they cannot understand His message!

Verse 44: “You are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father you desire to practice. He was a murderer from *the* beginning, and has not stood in the Truth because there is no Truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he is speaking from his own *self*; for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I speak the Truth, you do not believe Me. Which *one* of you can convict Me of sin? But if I

speaking *the* Truth, why don't you believe Me? The one who is of God **hears the words of God**" (vs 44-47).

Here you have a double-action taking place. He that is of God, hears the words of God. God also has to separate out of all those people amongst the people of God who do not hear the words of God; they want to have *their* Christmas, *their* Easter and whatever *they* want to do.

This tie right in with it, because it's a two-fold thing, John 3:33: "The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true; for He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God; and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*" (vs 33-34).

In other words he's talking about the Son. But also it is true that whomever God sends as a teacher or minister, coming in the name of God, the way that you know that he's from God is whether he speaks the words of God or not. That is the test! Now then, when someone is speaking like Christ is, then the test is: **Do they hear** the words of God? So, you have the one whom God has sent and the one whom God is calling. The one whom God has sent **speaks** the words of God. The ones whom God is calling **hear** the Word of God.

John 8:47: "...For this reason you do not hear, because you are not of God." But they were standing there professing they believed in Him. A separation has to take place and that's what God is doing.

Verse 48: "Then the Jews answered and said to Him, 'Are we not right in saying that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?'" That shows the depth of their belief. They didn't believe in Him at all. They were only there cleaving in flatteries.

Verse 49: "Jesus answered, 'I do not have a demon. But I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. Yet, I do not seek My own glory; there is One Who seeks and judges. Truly, truly I say to you, if anyone keeps My words, he shall not see death forever'" (vs 49-51). Quite a different expression!

Verse 52: "Then the Jews said to Him, 'Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham and the prophets died; yet, You say, "If anyone keeps My words, he shall not taste of death forever." Are You greater than our father Abraham who died? And the prophets, *who* died? Who do You make Yourself *to be*?' Jesus answered, 'If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father Who glorifies Me, *of* Whom you say that He is your God. Yet, you have not known Him; but I know Him. And if I say that I do not know Him, I shall be a liar, like you. But I

know Him, and I keep His Word'" (vs 52-55).

This was quite a heated debate going on back and forth. I imagine that those Pharisees were out there just getting angrier and angrier and tighter and pinched-faced more by the minute.

Verse 56: "Abraham your father was overjoyed to see My day; and he saw *it*, and rejoiced.' Then the Jews said to Him, 'You are not even fifty years *old*, and You have seen Abraham?'" Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM'" (vs 56-58). He was telling them He was God!

Then they all ran to Him and embraced Him and kissed Him and were sorry for what they did. **NO!**

Verse 59: "Then they picked up stones to throw at Him. But Jesus concealed Himself and went out of the temple, passing through the midst of them, and in this manner departed." Quite a story! That's a powerful lesson for us!

That shows us that everything that we have concerning what God is doing comes from the time of Abraham, and everything refers back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all is keyed on the promises given to Abraham—Old Testament and New Testament.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 17:4-7, 10-11, 21
- 2) Genesis 22:1
- 3) Genesis 23:1
- 4) Genesis 22:2-12
- 5) Luke 14:26-27
- 6) Genesis 22:12-18
- 7) Genesis 32:9-12
- 8) Genesis 26:24
- 9) Genesis 28:3-5
- 10) Genesis 31:41-42
- 11) Exodus 3:4-6, 13-15
- 12) Exodus 6:1-8
- 13) Exodus 32:7-14
- 14) Deuteronomy 1:8
- 15) Deuteronomy 9:26-27
- 16) Deuteronomy 30:19-20
- 17) Joshua 24:1-6
- 18) Psalm 105:5-10
- 19) Isaiah 29:22-24
- 20) Isaiah 51:1-2
- 21) Micah 7:18-20
- 22) Matthew 1:1-2
- 23) Luke 1:67-80
- 24) Luke 13:24-29

- 25) Luke 20:34-38
- 26) Galatians 3:6-9, 14, 16, 29
- 27) Hebrews 2:14-16
- 28) Hebrews 6:9-19
- 29) Matthew 3:2, 7-9
- 30) John 8:28-47
- 31) John 3:33-34
- 32) John 8:47-59

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 15; 17:16
- Hebrews 11
- Psalm 103
- Romans 4

Also referenced: Book: *Josephus*

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