

Redemption Through the Bible

Bible Study

A study of the Book of Genesis

Vol. 2

By

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(1915-1991)

Brother Camp was born in Munford, Alabama, in 1915. He began to preach in 1935. His father and grandfather were both preachers of the ancient faith before him. Both would be deeply pleased to see the great work that their son and grandson has done and continues to do by word of mouth and by the prolific pen he wields so mightily and magnificently. Brother camp attended David Lipscomb College and while there formed a lifelong friendship with brother Willard Collins. They were roommates in Lipscomb. He labored locally with the Munford, Alabama Church, his home congregation, for twelve years; Park Avenue in LaGrange, Georgia, for two

years; the church in East Gadsden, Alabama, thirteen years; began in 1962 at Shades Mountain congregation in Birmingham for some ten years; came to Adamsville Church in 1974 where he worked for some twelve years; went back to East Gadsden for two years and left in 1988; and returned to the Adamsville congregation until his death in 1991. Long ministries have steadfastly characterized his local ministries. His work of faith and labor of love among these churches have been fruitful and faithful. Since 1972 he has devoted his time to writing, lecturing, giving special lessons to Bible teachers, and holding gospel meetings throughout the country. "How to Study the Bible," "Evolution," "The Work of the Holy Spirit," and "Inspiration of the Bible" have been a few of the special themes on which he has lectured through the years. Much of Brother Camp's material has been made available through the years in book form or on cassette tapes and now on CD.

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FOREWORD

This volume takes up where the first ended without any introduction. It is intended to be the companion volume to complete the study of Genesis. I would suggest the student read the Foreword to volume one for important information concerning the purpose and outlay of this volume.

As with volume one, I wish to thank all who have helped me in the preparation of this book. I am grateful to the Smyrna congregation for the very pleasant working conditions that allowed me the time to devote to this work. I am deeply grateful to my wife, Nancy, who keeps the home in such a way that I can devote the needed time to my work as a preacher. Only eternity will reveal her enormous contribution to the kingdom and only God can adequately reward her!

I am grateful to faithful brethren who have encouraged my work through the years that allowed me to grow and render service in the kingdom.

May God get the glory in this and all our efforts.

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THE ORIGIN OF REDEMPTION

A study of the book of Genesis

Volume II

By Franklin Camp

"In the beginning God . . . And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel . . . But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD . . . And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you . . . 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 . . . Unto thy seed will I give this land . . . Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee . . . But my covenant will I establish with Isaac . . . Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." (Genesis 1:1; 3:15; 6:8; 9:9; 12:3,7; 17:5,21; 32:28)

Lesson 1

God's Faithfulness and Man's Faith

Lesson Text: Genesis 21, 22

Genesis Twenty One

Chapter 21 begins by calling attention to God's faithfulness. He had said the seed would come through Abraham, by Sarah, and now the time has come. This is intended to show the problem Abraham and Sarah had, throughout this period of time, appreciating and holding on to the promises God made. In spite of that, God is faithful to his promise and does things like he said. When we struggle trying to believe the promises of God, let us remember that even Abraham and Sarah, Abraham the father of the faithful, at times, struggled trying to believe the promises of God. He is weak like other people. That is not a reason to give up. There are times when all of us have things that bother us. We may not want to call them doubts, but our faith gets on the shaky side in certain areas. We ought to learn that does not mean we are gone, because God works to help us, if we will let him, even in situations like that. If we give in and give over, there is not anything God can do. There is a difference between a man doubting, simply because he does not want to believe, and honest doubts because you have problems you are struggling with. Thomas doubted, but he was an honest doubter. He was not like the Pharisees who did not want to believe and refused to look at the evidence. We need to strive to help our faith grow and develop. We need to remind ourselves that redemption was intended for humanity with its weaknesses and frailties. It is intended to meet us where we are and to help us.

There came the time for [God] to visit. The word, "visit," has reference to God's showing mercy in the fulfillment of his promise as in Genesis 50:24. You will find the same idea in Luke 1:68 in connection with the birth of Christ. Sometimes, the idea is used in connection with inflicting punishment [Exodus 32:34]. We have the birth of Isaac and Isaac being circumcised in exact keeping with what God had commanded Abraham. We have the age of Abraham. Abraham wandered around through this period of time and, in spite of Abraham's trying to

hide the situation by making out that Sarah was his sister, I think it would be quite evident that God had placed his purpose and promise with Abraham and through his seed. If that is the case, may this not have been God's way of trying to spread around the fact? When Abraham is a hundred years old, here is not something over here in a secret corner where God has made a promise concerning a man who would have a child, not according to the flesh, but there would be ample knowledge and evidence to show that Isaac was indeed a son of promise and a miraculous child. Since this was the first miraculous son, that was to be a type of the virgin birth of Christ or the son of God himself, you can see why all of this evidence would be built up.

The problem of Ishmael. This gets to be a problem in that Sarah, after the birth of Isaac, tells Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away. Unless you think about some things, you can have some problems here. Is it being hard in that God tells Abraham to do what Sarah told him to do? If you just think about it from a human standpoint, that is what it would seem like. Let us remember, we are studying things that have to do with the scheme of redemption. God's purpose has been placed in Abraham and he had promised to Abraham that he would have a son by Sarah and that Ishmael was a son of the flesh, he was not a son of promise. Isaac is a child of faith and a child of promise and Ishmael, because he is a product of the natural flesh, comes to represent man as he is, in the flesh, controlled by the flesh, not the spirit of man that is to control him. This is the reason he is sent out and is not to be the heir. He cannot inherit with Isaac because it represents two different principles. To allow Ishmael to inherit on the same basis as Isaac would be like God allowing a man in the world to go to heaven with the man that is in the church, a Christian. That is the reason there had to be the separation and this is the argument Paul makes in Galatians 4. Because Ishmael represents the flesh, the Jews, who depended upon their fleshly lineage from Abraham, came, during the period of the church, when you have the spiritual institution, the gospel, the new birth, which is spiritual, to be exactly what Ishmael was. Paul says it is an allegory. He said Hagar represented the law, Ishmael the fleshly descendants of Abraham that tried to live by that law, ignoring the spiritual part of man, the principle of faith which has to do with a man's mind, heart, and spirit, and the result was, as Ishmael had to be cast out, Israel, as to the flesh, was cast out. When God destroyed

the Jewish nation, the temple, in AD 70, that was a counterpart of what you have in Genesis 21.

The fact that Ishmael was cast out and was not to inherit with Isaac does not mean Ishmael could not have, by faith, accepted the God of Abraham and the promise of Abraham and allowed that faith to affect his spirit, the inward man, and enjoyed the promises just like everybody else. It is a mistake to see Ishmael being cast out as though there is no hope for him. Ishmael, by faith, could leave that fleshly control, if he desired to leave that behind, and, in so doing, the promises God placed in Abraham, to be inherited by faith, would be open to anybody including Ishmael. This is the argument Paul makes in the Roman letter (9:4-8). Our chapter is the one Paul quoted from. That is what Galatians 3:26-29 says. It did not just begin at Pentecost, that was true from the time God placed his promise and purpose in Abraham. Our mistake has been to think it was not until Pentecost that everybody, by faith, could inherit the promises God made to Abraham, but that is not the case. Turn to Galatians 4:1-7. He closes chapter three talking about Abraham's seed according to the promise. Look at the difference between Isaac and Ishmael. Ishmael was the slave, a bond servant, because his mother was a handmaid. Isaac was a son. Look at the contrast between a son and a slave. Under the law, that is the situation the Jews were under during that period of time because the law did not free. When the Jews tried to continue to live under that law and failed to accept the gospel, they were living like Ishmael, not like Isaac. There is a different spirit that is to characterize people. One that lives as a son has freedom a slave does not have. Christians, being freed from sin, are to live in that freedom; they are to serve God by loving obedience, not like slaves. When we allow our Christianity to effect us so that we think about God as being a slave driver, we are living like Ishmael. When, out of loving obedience, we serve God, we have moved up to where Isaac was, we are sons and every Christian is a son.

Did you come here because you wanted to and looked forward to it or did you come here out of fear of being lost if you did not come? This is a matter of life and death because we are talking about things that have to do with the spirit of redemption. If I came here purely out of the fear of being lost and not because I love God and look forward to it, then I am serving God in the spirit of Ishmael, the spirit of the flesh,

not the freedom of spirit that should characterize the child of God. We need to rise above the level of Ishmael and get up on the plain with Isaac and live as sons of God and that means we enjoy serving God. My serving God is much more because I want to go to heaven than it is I am afraid to go to hell. If I am doing it just because I am afraid I will be lost, I am just like Ishmael. In Romans 7:25, Paul said, "then I with my mind," and the mind very often is put for the spirit. In Romans 1:9, Paul said, "I serve God in my spirit in the gospel," and that is what John 4:24 means; with my own spirit and in truth and that is the gospel. To do it in spirit is to do it out of joy. We need to have the attitude Jesus did (John 4:34). That is the spirit of sonship. When Jesus said we are to pray, "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," that is what he is talking about. I live to do the will of God. That is what Paul meant [in Galatians 2:20].

Ishmael was a product of the flesh, but Isaac was a God-given child, typical of the God-given son in Matthew 1. When God gave Isaac, that was a manifestation that God had to become involved and help man in his redemption. If Ishmael had been the basis of man's redemption, man, by his own bootstraps could have saved himself. Sarah and Abraham could not have a child without God's help and that is intended to remind us that it is by God's help that redemption is made possible. If Ishmael had been the promised seed, then man, without any help from God, in his own way and his own methods, could have saved himself, but that is not possible and that is the reason God said, "cast him out."

The fact that, when he was cast out, we have God showing an interest in him, was God's way of saying, "you have been cast out, you are not to be the heir, but that does not mean God does not care for you." That was intended to show that, while he is not to be the seed line, it does not mean he has to be lost. He can still come in under the promise, not as the channel through which it will develop, but, by faith, like everybody else in that promise.

Genesis Twenty-Two

The Bible teaches that faith is essential to our salvation. Redemption is tied to the principle of faith. It runs all the way through from Abel's faith, in Genesis four, until the faith of the gospel which was given by the apostles, and that same faith is to characterize all of us that

are pleasing to the Lord. This is what Hebrews 11:6 means. We need to think about some of the characteristics of Abraham's faith to help us examine our own lives and see about the strength of our faith. In chapter 22, with Abraham offering Isaac, we have an example of faith at its best. Here are some things we need to see in his faith. (1) Abraham was devoted to doing the will of God. Look at what he is called upon to do; to take Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice. Hebrews 11:12 tells us it is by faith that Abraham did that. The prime object of our life will be to do what God wants us to do. (2) Faith involves trusting God under all circumstances. Look at the difficulties he faced. God had told him it was in Isaac that the promise would be realized. From a human standpoint, it seems you have a command and a promise clashing; if he obeys the command and puts Isaac to death what is going to happen to the promise? In the midst of all this, Abraham's faith trusted God to do what he said without his being able to understand how God will do it. He knew God could raise him from the dead, but he did not know if that was what God would do. This is an element of faith we need to work on developing; to trust God. This is the first element of faith that leads to our obedience. We should obey him because we trust him, not because we have to. The word, faith, means two things: trust and obedience. It takes that to constitute Bible faith. (3) Abraham shows us when faith trusts and obeys God, it is always justified. No man has ever trusted and obeyed God and been disappointed.

We have God's acknowledgment of Abraham and we learn from Abraham's offering Isaac that faith denotes one's loyalty to God as well as one's obedience. Consider two things that enable us to trust God as Abraham did. One, we must believe in God's ability to do what he said he would do. Look at Matthew 6:33. There you have the promise God made and that passage really says if we place the kingdom of God first, these blessings will be given to us and then, thrown in extra, will be the material blessings of life. [Two], we must believe in God's reliability (Hebrews 13:5-6). You have the promise, but the statement is an encouragement to faithfulness. That statement was made in the turmoil as the early Christians faced the struggle in separating from Judaism and the fall of the Jewish nation with all the pressure that would be applied on every side. In Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, Jesus had promised his disciples, if you are faithful unto the end, do not let all these pressures get to you, mislead and deceive you, not a hair of your head

shall perish. Could they believe that? In this instance he took care of them without a miracle. He gave the signs they were to follow and, when judgment was brought upon the Jewish nation, faithful Christians were not there and, just as he said, not a hair of their head should perish.

Look at Abraham's obedience. There was no reluctance, hesitation, questions, doubts. Abraham was able to do this because he had walked in fellowship with God from Genesis 12 to 22. He is able to do now what he could not have done earlier. One of the ways to face the more difficult trials of life is to walk in fellowship with God day by day and, as we walk in fellowship with him through the experiences of life, and come to know the reality of his promises, that helps us accept additional truth and new responsibilities no matter how difficult they may be. We never know how much our daily activities of faith can amount to. I had not been preaching too long when my father died. If somebody had asked me, "Could you make it if your father died?" I would have said, "No, I don't think so." What I did not realize was, the study of the Bible, the service of God and prayer day by day and the attempt to use those each day was preparing for that when it came. I can remember when I learned he had died, died suddenly, dropped dead in Anniston, shock! The first thing that came to my mind was a passage of scripture and that passage of scripture helped to face the immediate situation. When I was reading and studying the Bible and trying to learn and absorb that passage of scripture, it never dawned on me that one day this very passage of scripture will answer your need in a crisis, but that is what happened. Suppose I had been there in that situation and no scripture to come to mind, look at the difference. It is Romans 8:37-39. So, when you are encouraged to read the Bible, do not think that is wasted time because the passage you may read, memorize and absorb, may one day be the very thing that will be the means of enabling you to face a crisis you did not think you could go through, that will come to you unexpected. Since faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God, there is no way you can build your faith without the Bible and there is no way you can build your faith with the Bible unless you use the Bible you learn from day to day. As you study the Bible, take what you learn and use that in walking in fellowship with God, that faith matures and grows and that is what happened to Abraham.

Look at the simplicity of Abraham's faith; just take God at his word. The strength of his faith is shown in his not allowing his emotions to offset his faith. Here is the command to take this promised child and offer him as a sacrifice. The language used seems like it is intended to bring out the deep ties that bind. Think about an ordinary father and a child 18 years old and think about the emotions that search through the soul in just giving up the child. Then, think about not just giving up, but taking that very life, then think about the emotions that must have surged through the soul. His faith had strength to overcome the emotions and, in spite of the emotions and, perhaps, contrary to every emotion from a human standpoint, cause him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. Job said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15). That is faith that is strong. When everything had gone wrong and it looked like the whole world had crumbled, Job said, "I will trust God." That is faith at its best and we need to try to develop that kind of faith.

The source of his faith was God's word and that is always the source of our faith. We cannot develop faith apart from that and we are robbing ourselves of the strength of faith whenever we fail to study the Bible. If we could think about these classes, as we look at these things and learn truth, build and strengthen our faith, our coming will not be just coming to have a class or doing something the elders have arranged, it will be something to strengthen and help us and we will look forward to it because of the benefit we get out of it. Abraham was continually ready to accept new responsibilities. As we learn new truth and are responsive to new truth, our faith grows. Look how much truth Abraham had gained from Genesis 12 to Genesis 22. Whenever new revelation was made to him, Abraham was responsive to that new revelation. We rob ourselves of our faith growing if, while in this class, we learn something, and we walk out and just leave it behind.

Isaac, voluntarily, submitted himself to be offered as a sacrifice. In Ishmael and Isaac we have two attitudes. The attitude of Ishmael is the attitude of the flesh which denotes a service of bondage and fear. The attitude of Isaac is the attitude of faith and of the inward part of man. Paul makes this point in the contrast between the attitude of Isaac and the attitude of Ishmael (Galatians 4:28,29). This point is made in Romans 8:14,15. In verse 14 is sonship. In verse 15, is Ishmael, so described in Galatians 4:1-7. Here is the Jewish nation, living now in the

spirit Ishmael manifested in Genesis 21, and that is the reason Paul applied the allegory in Galatians 4 to the Jewish nation. Whenever I follow that kind of attitude, I am living in the spirit of the Jewish nation and Ishmael and that is not acceptable to God. Then note, "but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." That is the spirit of sonship; it has to do with an attitude of heart; the spirit in which one serves God. Look at Hebrews 12:18-21 and you see the contrast between the two. Here is the contrast under the law as indicated by Ishmael in Genesis 21. That is the attitude produced by the law. That is the attitude of Ishmael. That was the attitude the Jews had during the gospel period when Paul wrote the Galatian letter. That is the attitude of the man of one talent and that is really what the thought in the parable of the talents concerned. The man with one talent said, "I am afraid. Thou art a hard and austere man." That is the spirit and that was directed toward the Jews. That is the reason the parable ends by saying, "thy wicked servant. Take him and cast him into outer darkness." Fear produces that kind of reaction. Now note Hebrews 12:22-28. There are the two attitudes. Now, what is our attitude?

Questions

Read the Text:

1. "Sarah conceived and _____ him."
2. "For in _____ shall thy seed be called."
3. "And it came to pass after these things, that God did _____ Abraham."
4. "And Abraham called the name of that place _____: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be _____."
5. "And in thy seed shall all the _____ of the earth be _____; because thou has _____ my voice."

Research the Text:

1. Discuss Abraham's and Sarah's struggle to accept God's promises.
2. Discuss Ishmael's being cast out and the hope available for him.
3. Discuss three things we need to see in Abraham's faith.

Review the Text:

1. Discuss God's "visiting" Sarah.
2. Discuss the offering of Isaac and its relationship to the plan of salvation.
3. Discuss how learning the Bible now may help face future happenings.
4. Discuss the spirit of Ishmael and how it was manifest in the Jewish nation.

Lesson 2

Sarah's death and Isaac chooses a wife

Lesson Text: Genesis 23 & 24

Genesis Twenty Three

Sarah is the only woman we have the age of, in the Bible, at her death. The age is stated in view of the promise in Genesis 12 and to underscore the fact that Isaac's birth was miraculous. Think of all the years that passed from the time God made the promise until Isaac was born. This is the first recorded funeral in the Bible. We have seen what is taking place in connection with the promised seed and, out of this, has come the promise God made to redeem the world, the supernatural birth of Isaac and Abraham's offering Isaac. The covenant has unfolded and, it is in light of this unfolding, that we have the record of Sarah's death, then, there will be the record of Abraham's death. This is God's way of saying the answer to death is to be found in the covenant of redemption and the promise God made through Abraham.

As you think about the death of Sarah, first, you have the death of a believer and this is intended to show there is a difference in the death of a believer and other people because of the promise, the covenant and what God has done in redeeming man. Second, here is the death of a wife, one that had been a life-long companion of Abraham. Think of all the things that had transpired from the time Abraham left Ur of Chaldees and Sarah had been by his side. Think of all the things that had taken place as they journeyed, the long waiting of the promise of Isaac, the birth of Isaac and the offering of Isaac. Peter mentioned Sarah as an example and Sarah was a wife and mother different from any other wives or mothers that had been until this time. You have the death of a mother. There is not anything that affects home like the death of a mother. It has an impact that the death of a father, child or anyone else does not have and this is because of the nature of the home centering around the mother. She has a particular and peculiar place in a home and there is something that takes place that cannot be replaced in the death of a mother. My father died in 1941 and my mother lived until 1962. During all those years she kept a home place. She would not think about moving away from home and her reason, among others, was she said, "I want to have a place of my

own, I want to have a place so the children can come home.” Even though my father died, as close as I was to him, there was still that place to go, but there was a different situation when my mother died. A strange feeling, a loneliness, a difference, and I think it is because of the place a mother fills in a home. It is important that we recognize this place and wives and mothers should be honored.

There are some things concerning death in this chapter we ought to look at. With the entrance of sin into the world, there is death and it is inevitable as far as all of us are concerned. You think about Abraham being a man of faith, now he comes to face the death of his wife and companion, Sarah (23:1,2). We have the contract of Abraham buying this piece of land, the cave of Machpelah, from the sons of Heth in order that he might have a burying place. As Abraham faces death, there is the dignity of faith. Abraham came to mourn and weep. This is the first mention of tears in the Bible. There is a law of interpretation of the Bible that the first mention of a thing becomes significant. Here, you have a man who is the father of the faithful, the one to whom God made his promise, the one God entered into covenant with and, yet, you have him described as shedding tears, mourning. We learn from this that mourning and shedding of tears of a Christian is perfectly legitimate. It was not the mourning of murmuring against the providence of God or any such thing as that. It was the natural expression of love that had developed between these two. How could Abraham have lived through the years with Sarah, had her walk by his side sharing the trials, heartaches and joys of life together, having seen her become the mother of the hope of the world and their hearts not become entwined one with another? That being true, when they came to the severing of these ties that had been nurtured and warmed by God's promises, how could these ties be severed without the expression given here of Abraham? It would have been unnatural for Abraham to come to this place in life and not express his loss as is suggested here. We should learn that faith does not seek to set aside our natural affection. I am afraid we have reached the stage in our society where the shedding of tears is considered unmanly, something we ought not do and that it is a sign of weakness. This is one way God has of helping us to adjust to a situation. It helps us accept the grief and burden. Tears help to get it out, to keep it from being bottled up. Paul, in First Thessalonians four, did not tell them they are not to sorrow, but it is not the sorrow of the

world, it is a different kind of sorrow.

“Abraham stood up from before his dead” (22:3). There were duties and responsibilities, while his heart was lonely and grieved, and he did not close his eyes to the responsibilities that were his. The closeness of the relationship is described as “his dead (3), “my dead” (4) and “thy dead” (6). When death comes, for those left behind, life continues on. When Sarah died, Abraham's life was not over and so, Abraham accepted his responsibilities and went right on. In the eleventh chapter of John, when Lazarus died, Mary and Martha said to [Jesus], “if thou hadst been here it would have been different.” There is a lesson we all ought to learn. When death comes and you look back over things that are past, “if,” is not going to change the situation.

As we look at the death of Sarah, we see three principles upon which redemption is based. As you see Abraham stand beside Sarah's dead body, we see love sorrowing. The sorrow of his heart is a manifestation of his love. Love is the basic principle of redemption and here we see it in the life of Abraham. Not only do we see love sorrowing, we see faith working. Abraham rose up in the realization that this was not the end of life. Not only do you have love and faith combined, you have hope looking. When Abraham placed Sarah in that grave in the cave of Machpelah, he did not think that was the end. It left him looking toward the future, looking beyond, and it was his faith that caused him to do this. Paul said, “now abideth faith, hope and love but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13). In the father of the faithful, in the funeral of Sarah, there is the love that permeated his heart for God and for this companion that was a believer, that had walked by his side, the faith that had been active in his life and that produced the hope that caused him to look beyond and to wait. One of the reasons I know this is, when Sarah died, Abraham did not think about going back to Ur, he wanted to bury Sarah in the land of Canaan. The reason was, God had promised this land to Abraham's descendants and the covenant God made and the hope that was to be through Isaac, that would finally bring Christ into the world, that would bring about man's redemption, was tied to Abraham's descendants having this land. When we come to the end of Genesis, we will find Joseph died. Joseph, in dying, takes a promise and says, “the time will come when you leave this land. I want you to take my bones over and bury them in the land of Canaan.” You read in the last chapter of Joshua that there they

buried Joseph's bones. That is because of his faith and that faith gave him hope, but all of that is tied to God's promise and covenant. It is in that sense we need to think about this funeral and come to view our own.

Abraham's first and only actual possession in the land of Canaan was a grave. Faith lays hold of the despair of death and the grave and makes it a possession which holds in itself all the future. Have you ever thought about it when you walk to the silent city of the dead and place a body there? That grave holds the future of all the hope we ever had. Man's darkest hour, when thought about in the light of God's word, becomes his brightest hope. It is no wonder Paul penned the words of First Corinthians 15 where he discusses the resurrection. Abraham would not let them give him this place to bury Sarah; he bought it. Had not God said to Abraham, "I will give to you and your descendants the land of Canaan? What God had promised to give, Abraham would not allow another to give. We need to be careful in leaving the impression that the church is indebted to the world. The world has not one thing it can give the church. The church is what it is because God made, devised and built it. Out of the blood of his own son, it came into being and there is no way the church can ever be indebted to the world. It bothers me whenever brethren want to go out and find what the world does and the way it does it in order for the church to make the progress it needs to make. That is a mistake concerning the nature of the church itself.

One thing Abraham had learned, that all of us need to learn, is God's promises do not shrink, but get bigger and bigger. The promise God made to Abraham concerning this little piece of land over in Canaan never did shrink in Abraham's eye. Would I have felt, God promised me this land and yet here I am having to buy it, he has failed? Not Abraham! In Abraham's eyes it grew until this little piece of land had grown into an eternal inheritance. In Hebrews eleven, we read that Abraham looked for a city, not Canaan, which has foundations whose builder and maker is God. That promise God made in Genesis twelve concerning the land had grown until it reached beyond this world into that world above. That is always true of God's promises. There is something wrong when we allow the promises of God to become smaller and smaller.

Genesis Twenty-Four

When we come to chapter twenty four, we are moving toward Isaac becoming the central character. This chapter tells us about the selection of a wife and the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah. Read Genesis 12:1-3, then, look at Genesis 24:1. The real blessings that had come to Abraham were in connection with the spiritual blessings. The other blessings were secondary and incidental to the prime blessings mentioned in 12:3. The first verse of this chapter is intended to direct our minds back to chapter 12. Isaac was about 37 years of age when Sarah died, he is about forty when he marries, so Sarah has been dead about three years. Abraham had learned some things in the experiences he had. It seems there is no direct revelation to Abraham about what he is to do. It seems to me in this chapter, you have faith left to act on its own in harmony with principles already learned. Abraham uses his own judgment in carrying out the purpose and plan of God in order to obtain a wife for Isaac. In living the Christian life, the Bible sets forth the principles upon which our faith rests, but there come times when we have to make decisions of our own.

In this chapter, there are some things that help us see providence working, especially when it had to do with this promise. We need to be careful in equating providential direction in connection with something that had to do with this purpose and promise of God and providence in our individual life. The matter of Isaac obtaining a wife was related directly to the promise and covenant God made to Abraham and the ultimate realization of that promise in Christ in the New Testament. I do not believe my life is related to the purpose of God in that same way. That being the case, there is a difference between what we might call special providence and general providence. Notice verse 7 and mark this language, "He shall send his angel before thee." That language is characteristic of the special providence Abraham believed would operate in this event in bringing about the desired purpose and the obtaining of a wife for Isaac. The servant had said, "how am I going to know, how am I going to determine that?" This is Abraham's answer and the action of the servant is based upon this.

We have Abraham sending the servant to select a wife for Isaac. This is not a private matter, but is of public concern and has to do with the covenant God made with Abraham. The redemption of the world

becomes tied to this marriage; therefore, the special providence that is found here. Abraham realized it was important for Isaac to have a wife that could share in an understanding and appreciation of the promise God had made. Abraham's sending the servant to obtain a wife from among these people would indicate they have some recognition of that (31,60). That faith Abraham had developed is still manifest (4,5,7). When it comes time for Rebekah to make her decision, her decision is made upon the basis of faith also.

Notice the influence of Abraham's faith on his servant. (10-14). This gets back to this matter of providence. Here is the fulfillment of that angel that was to go before him. The servant prayed and I want you to note carefully the test he gave (15-17, 14). Here is the principle Jesus gave in the sermon on the mount of going the second mile. Why would he wonder at this point (18-21)? He does not know whether or not she belongs to the family of Abraham, that is yet to be established. Now, watch what is going to take place (22,23). He learns what he needs to know further, then note the attitude of this servant (26,27). Abraham had said, "He will send his angel before thee," and here is what is taking place. Can you not see that language does not indicate there was a natural angel, but the special providence that brought them together? Had the birth of Isaac been the end of it, there would have been no mercy or truth (27). The promise and covenant God made to Abraham would have stopped. The servant understands that, if it stopped, Abraham, all the way back and on following would be without God's mercy.

Laban is introduced here because we will have later reason to study some about Laban with Jacob. The servant goes back over the account of Abraham (35,36), then he tells the whole matter that has to do with the birth of Isaac and the promise God made to Abraham. This is the heart of the whole thing.

Questions

Read the Text:

1. "Sarah was _____; these were the years _____."
2. "Abraham buried Sarah his wife _____ Canaan."
3. "And Abraham was _____ all things."
4. "But thou shalt go _____ my son Isaac."
5. "And the damsel was very _____, and came up."

Research the Text:

1. What may be learned from the death of Sarah?
2. Why did Abraham **buy** the cave of Machpelah?
3. What three principles, upon which redemption is based, are seen in the death of Sarah?

Review the Text:

1. How is Providence seen in chapter twenty four?
2. Why did Abraham send the servant to his kindred for a wife for Isaac?
3. Discuss the influence of Abraham's faith on his servant.

Lesson 3

Abraham's Death

Lesson Text: Genesis 25

The Covenant with Abraham

We have the account of the death of Abraham. It would be well for us to review some things about his life and the covenant God made with him because this is the basis of the rest of the Bible. The scheme of redemption rests upon the covenant God made with Abraham. Abraham is one of the most prominent men mentioned in the Bible because of the covenant God made with him and the obedience of faith manifest in his life. Abraham was not a perfect man and the covenant God made with him was made in view of man's imperfections. Had man been able to live a perfect life, the law given through Moses would have been sufficient to save man, but God knew there would be no sinless, perfect people except the Christ, therefore, the covenant, placing the blessings in Abraham and the provisions that come through God's grace and the obedience of faith. Beginning in Genesis 12, you have Abraham on this end and, when you come to the New Testament, Christ is on the other end and this shows the relationship between the two.

The covenant God made with Abraham will be continually referred to. The story will pick up, when we come to Exodus, with the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage tied to the covenant God made with Abraham (Exodus 2:24). Isaiah 51:2 is made to Judah and Benjamin in anticipation of their being in Babylonian captivity, but it goes back to the covenant God made with Abraham. In 2 Chronicles 20:7, you have God's appealing to the covenant with Abraham. In 1 Kings 18:36, Elijah appealed to God's confirming him as a prophet based upon the covenant with Abraham. Moses' prayer for the nation, after they sinned, was based upon this covenant (Deuteronomy 9:27). Matthew begins his account of the background of the genealogy and birth of Christ by referring to Abraham and David (1:1), and Abraham and David are tied together. The reference to Abraham would be a reference to Genesis 12, 15, 17, 22. In 2 Samuel 7, God will enter into covenant with the house of David. These two summarized the covenant God made with Abraham and confirmed in David and Christ was of the lineage of David. Abraham, David and Christ unite the Old and the New

Testaments.

The Jews, in the New Testament, continually refer to Abraham as their father (Matthew 3). In Luke 16:22, Abraham's bosom, picturing the blessings that come through Abraham in this covenant, shows the full intent of the promise God made to Abraham; that its ultimate purpose was not national Israel nor the land of Canaan, but the spiritual Israel which comes to be the church in the New Testament. Jesus speaks of Zaccheus as a son of Abraham (Luke 19:4). In John eight, Jesus makes the distinction between those who are Abraham's seed by the flesh and those who are Abraham's children by faith. Those who were Abraham's seed by flesh thought that made them children of God, acceptable to God. In John 8:44, Jesus points out that, instead of having Abraham as their father, the devil was their father, showing that, while they were absolutely seed of Abraham by flesh, they were the children of the devil spiritually. Those who had the faith of Abraham were the children of Abraham. Paul makes the same distinction (Romans 9: 2, 11). In Romans 11, Paul asked the question, "hath God cast off his people?", then answered by saying, "God forbid." Who are God's people? The people of God from the time man sinned is the man of faith, from Abel all the way down. The biggest mistake made by the religious world is the failure to understand who are God's people. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and any others were blessed because of their faith. In Romans four, Paul talks about the righteousness which is of faith and talks about the faith of Abraham. Faith, through God's grace and the provisions God has made for us, makes it possible for one to be righteous. It has reference to that system that enables one, through the obedience of faith, to stand in relationship to God upon the basis of righteousness. It is not a meritorious righteousness and this is the reason it is spoken of as the righteousness which is of faith. It is important, in reading Romans and Galatians, to understand what he is talking about when he speaks of the righteousness which is by faith as contrasted with the righteousness which was by meritorious works, or by the law of Moses, or any other system that would demand perfection.

In Galatians three and four, Paul talks about Abraham's seed, particularly 3:26-29. Beginning in verse seven of Galatians three, Paul enters into a discussion of the contrast between the law which the Jews were trying to bind upon the Gentiles and the righteousness which

comes by faith and mentions that the gospel was preached to Abraham. Then, he talks about the importance of perfection if a man could be saved by the law. In verse 26, underscore the word, "all." That means anybody, and it does not have a thing in the world to do with one's racial descent, whether Jew or Gentile. "For you are all children of God by faith," not by flesh. "In Christ Jesus" is the location, not in Abraham. The Jews thought because they were Abraham's descendants, they were children of God and Abraham. "For as many," and that means anyone, "as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," and that is where righteousness is found (1 Corinthians 1; 2 Corinthians 5:21). "There is neither Jew nor Greek," all racial distinctions are eliminated. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Here is the spiritual seed of Abraham. The ones blessed of God from the time God made the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, were the spiritual seed, which was the man of faith, and the man of faith could be anybody, Jew or Gentile even in the Old Testament. Rahab became Abraham's spiritual seed by faith and James talked about that in the second chapter and uses Abraham on one end and Rahab, the harlot, on the other.

In Mark seven, we have the account of the Canaanitish woman. There is the Gentile, and in every instance in the New Testament where Jesus commended someone's faith, it was a Gentile. It is well to remember, when God said to Abraham, "I will bless them that bless thee," that opened the door, by faith, to anybody and that was enjoyed, to some degree, through the Old Testament.

Abraham's Life and Death

Hebrews 11:8-19 describe Abraham's life of faith. There is the obedience of faith (8). There is the patience of faith, waiting for God to fulfill his promise (9). There is the expectation of faith, waiting to receive what God has promised (10). There is the consecration of faith (17). If I am to be Abraham's spiritual seed, here are some things that must characterize my faith.

In James 2:21-23, we have the relationship of faith and works. There is a difference between the works that perfect faith and the works that are without faith. The works that perfect faith harmonize and appropriate grace. The works without faith are works of merit and

cannot save. When the Bible talks about saving faith, it always has in mind an obedient faith (Romans 1:5; 16:25-26). In Romans 4:16, Paul said, "it is by faith that it might be by grace." The works that perfect faith appropriate grace. This is the reason Ephesians 2:8 said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith." What kind of faith? A faith that is perfected, that is obedient. "Not of works." Of what kind of works? Works apart from faith. This distinction is fundamental because faith acts because it believes the merit is in the blood of Christ and to appropriate the merit in that blood. That is the reason one is baptized. Baptism is an act of faith. Being an act of faith, it perfects faith and, perfecting faith, it is not a work that is meritorious.

Abraham teaches us that life's greatest blessing is to be associated with God in relation to his purpose in blessing the world. No man who lived in the Old Testament blessed the world to a greater extent than Abraham because of his faith. We also learn from Abraham that the foundation of man's life is God's covenant and man's faith and obedience to that covenant. As far as we are concerned, that is the gospel of Christ, and it is only by faith that we can build our life upon the gospel of Christ. We learn also from Abraham that the secret of life is faith in God based on his word (Romans 10:17).

We read concerning the death of Abraham (Genesis 25:7,8). He lived 175 years. Note the phrase, "full of years." This does not have reference to the length of time Abraham lived. It is intended to say there is something about life that is above and beyond its length. "Full of years" equals being satisfied with the years of one's life, that life's mission has been fulfilled. When the world was going in the wrong direction, God needed some man who, by faith, would trust and obey and Abraham became that man. God promised him that through his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Isaac has been born and married, the promise of God is now moving on its way and Abraham comes to the end of that life full of years, satisfied. A world that was hopeless now has hope. A world that was facing ruin without God now can have the remedy provided for sin. While we cannot fit into the plan the same way Abraham did, we ought to be able to come to the end of life full of years, having lived a life of service to God and the world would be a better place because we lived. People will be blessed because of the influence of my life; sin has been opposed and righteousness has been defended and expanded in the world because I lived.

If I can come to the end of life's pathway and really know that the world is better because of my faith and obedience, why could I not come to the end of it full of years, satisfied with life? Paul makes the same point concerning his own life (2 Timothy 4:1-8).

Abraham was gathered to his people. That is not the same as to say he died. Abraham's people were in Mesopotamia and he is buried in Machpelah. It is not the same as being buried (Genesis 25:9). "His own people." Who were his people? In death, the dust returned back to dust. What was gathered? It was not something that was put in that cave in Machpelah. Abraham became a pilgrim and stranger, and "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). That is the place to which Abraham was gathered. This verse suggests that, over on the other side, the people we will be associating with are people who are of like faith and obedience unto God. Those who, by faith, have been made righteous in the plan God has given us. What about my life? If I should be gathered to my people today, would it be the righteous or the unrighteous? I am the one that will determine that because there is an affinity of character and life that determines the ones I will be associated with on the other side. Abraham was gathered to the people like him such as Abel and Noah. This passage teaches that, on the other side, men will be separated and that is what Jesus said in Matthew 25. Matthew was written to the Jewish people. The beatitudes emphasized the attitudes of heart which come from faith based on God's word.

Isaac, Jacob and Esau

Following the death of Abraham, we have some things concerning Isaac and, then, we will be studying Jacob and Esau. There are always questions that come up in relation to Jacob and Esau. When we come to study the life of Jacob, it is vital that we remember [what has been learned about the growth of Abraham's faith]. We will be studying the life of Jacob, along with other characters, from here until we get to the forty ninth chapter of Genesis and we will need to see the difference between Jacob, when we first meet him and he is buying the birthright from Esau, and the life of Jacob in Genesis 49. Because Jacob and Esau were twins, Esau was the oldest, and the promise comes through Jacob with all his weaknesses, we usually think about Jacob

being about as good as Esau. The difference between Jacob and Esau is the faith of Jacob and how that faith grew and how Jacob developed himself.

God purposed in Genesis 3:15, promised in Genesis 12 and that promised son has been born. It is time for Abraham to pass off the scene and God moves up another step in bringing about that purpose. We read that God blessed Isaac (Genesis 25:11). We have the generations of Ishmael and this is in keeping with what God said to Abraham in Genesis 16. We have the generations of Isaac and the account of Isaac and Rebekah and the fact they had no children (19-21). Here you have the test of faith for Isaac just as it was with Abraham. This shows his recognition of the covenant and promise God made to Abraham (21:12). If he had no son, that promise could not be fulfilled. In verse 23, it is important to remember that what is stated here is not some decree made by God that determined the issues in relation to Jacob and Esau, but this is a prophecy. To prophesy a thing is not to say that God was the cause of it. God prophesied Jesus would be crucified, but he was not the cause of Jesus being crucified, wicked men put him to death. This prophecy has not to do with just Jacob and Esau but it has to do with nations, their descendants (25:23). From Jacob will come Israelites, from Esau will come Edomites and they get that name from the event that occurred in this instance in connection with selling the birthright. Though they were brothers, the events that take place here portray what will develop later and the enmity between the Edomites and the Israelites.

We ought to read a few passages and learn what the birthright meant? Generally, the birthright went to the oldest son and [he] enjoyed privileges during the lifetime of his father and took precedence over his brother (Genesis 43:33). After the father died, the eldest son received a double share of the inheritance (Deuteronomy 21:17). He also became head and priest (Numbers 8:14-17). The firstborn could lose his privileges (Genesis 35:22; 49:3-4; I Chronicles 5:1). This firstborn enjoying the double portion, being the priest, passes into the New Testament underscoring the blessings we have in the gospel. Christ is called the firstborn, and it is through him we inherit. Listen to Hebrews 12:22,23; "Firstborn" is plural. A literal reading of that means "the church of the firstborn ones." Every Christian is a firstborn one denoting our spiritual heritage.

We are told Esau despised his birthright (Genesis 25:34). This denotes the character of Esau. While Jacob had all the weaknesses that characterize humanity and, when you read the story, it sounds like there is not a great deal of difference between him and Esau, there is this one saving feature about Jacob; he had an appreciation of the promise, the covenant and the spiritual things included in that. In Hebrews 12:16, Esau is called a profane man. "Profane" means outside the temple. When the temple was dedicated, it became sanctified, sacred and separate from the rest of the territory or the rest of the land. The plot of ground outside the temple was sometimes thought of as common ground, where everybody could walk. Inside the temple was sacred, sanctified ground and not just anybody could walk in that. The people that walk in there had to be people that were sanctified, redeemed and specified by God to be able to do so. The word, "profane," came to mean that which was purely earthly and common as opposed to that which was sacred. He trampled underfoot and counted as common sacred things. To lack reverence for and count sacred things as common, everyday affairs of life is to be guilty of profanity. God was not in the thoughts of Esau, personal gratification was what he was interested in. To him, God meant nothing. He was passionate, impatient, impulsive and sensual. Jacob recognized the value of the spiritual and appreciated the covenant God made with Abraham.

Esau teaches us some fundamental lessons. One, a test of character is often demonstrated by little things. Here is a man that was hungry. Would you think a man would sell his soul for a mess of pottage, a bowl of soup? That indicated the kind of man he was and shows he lacked any understanding and appreciation of the covenant God made and that the redemption of the world depended upon that. If God's promise had been dependent upon Esau, and Esau alone, he would have trampled that under his feet and destroyed it. Second, Esau stumbled in the same way Eve did when Eve saw that the tree was good for food. That was one of the things that enticed her to sin. Here is a man that, for one bowl of pottage, was willing to sell his soul, his birthright and the covenant of redemption. Third, the importance of putting God first. Esau was a man that was Godless.

On the other side, let us look at Jacob. There is the right principle, as far as Jacob is concerned, in the appreciation of the birthright and the privileges and responsibilities that went with it. We

need to remember, in connection with Jacob, that the manner in which he sought to obtain this was not right. We need to distinguish between his appreciation for it and the manner in which he tried to obtain it. His method of obtaining it was like Abraham's in the past. God had said to Rebekah that the elder should serve the younger, but that did not justify the method they used. When we study about Rebekah trying to help him get the blessings, we will find the same principle as that of Sarah recommending to Abraham that he take Hagar. God had said the promise would be channeled through Jacob and it was up to God to work that out. It was not necessary for Jacob to try to get it as Rebekah encouraged him to do. Jacob had to wait twenty years. That is God's way of telling him, "I don't need your help," and this is one of the things difficult for humanity to learn. Second, we learn the importance of waiting. We have already learned, with Abraham, the importance of the patience of faith and Jacob needs to learn that same lesson. How many of us can learn that faith must be patient, that when God promises, he uses his own time clock? We like things to happen in a hurry. Peter says a thousand years with the Lord are as a day and a day like a thousand years. That means his clock is not like ours. Jacob did not get the birthright until he acknowledged Esau as Lord (Genesis 32:4-5). Jacob did not get it until Esau abandoned it (Genesis 36:6).

Paul wrote, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Romans 9:13). This seems to be a strange statement and all kinds of difficulties have developed from it. Calvinists say that here you have an example of God's sovereignty and without any reason, before man was created, God determined that a certain number be elect and a certain number be non-elect and Jacob belongs to the elect and Esau to the non-elect. Thayer defines the word, "hate," as, "to love less, to postpone in love or esteem, to slight through oversight of circumstances, that Orientals, in accordance with their excitability are wont both to feel and to profess love and hate, where occidentals, with our cooler temperament, feel and express nothing more than interest in or disregard and indifference to a thing." I would like for us to read several passages that will be a divine commentary on this (Deuteronomy 21:15-17). This ought to help us understand some things about Jacob. Jacob had two wives, Rachel and Leah. Which one did he love? Which one did he hate? In what sense did he hate Leah? She had second place, not primary place. It has to do with the selection of one

in a primary place in relation to the channel of redemption. The promise was placed in Jacob. Whether or not Jacob would finally enjoy the blessings channeled through him depended upon his faith because no man is blessed of God apart from faith. When God selected Abraham, think of all the other people there may have been and yet, God selected Abraham. Is God arbitrary in his dealings and did God mistreat the rest of the world when he selected Abraham and placed the promise in him? Why, surely not. If God could select Abraham out of all the people that existed and place the channel of promise in Abraham without mistreating other people, why, in like manner, could God not select Jacob instead of Esau and make Jacob the channel of blessings instead of Esau without mistreating Esau (Genesis 25:23)? Here is a prophecy, and it is in reference to nations that this prophecy is made. Did God mistreat the rest of the nations of the earth when he placed the channel of redemption in the nation of Israel instead of some other nations? Other nations could profit by the blessings placed in Israel depending upon whether or not they accepted the God of Abraham (Genesis 12:3).

When we get to Genesis 49:10, we will find that God placed the channel of blessings in the tribe of Judah. When God selected Judah as the line through which this promise was to develop, did that mean he, in the sense in which we think about hate, hated the other eleven tribes? No. He loved them less just as he loved Esau and other nations less. These were selected while others were overlooked. In 2 Samuel 7, it is placed in the lineage of David. Does that mean God literally hated all the other families in Judah? No. It means God, for selective purposes, placed Judah primarily over the others, but that did not rob the rest of them of the blessings found in Judah. They could enjoy them, provided they manifest the proper faith and obedience (Psalms 5:5). God hates sin wherever it is found and it is in this sense that God hates (Psalms 31:6). David did not mean he hated the people, but he hated the thought in those who trust in lying vanities (Psalms 45:5-7). This is applied to Christ in Hebrews one. God loves righteousness and hates wickedness wherever it is found. While Jesus was on earth, Jesus was God in the flesh (John 1:14). Look at the attitude of Jesus toward people and you will be able to understand some things in connection with this (Proverbs 1:24-33, Hosea 9:15-17). Ephraim, in the Old Testament in most of the instances, has reference to the ten tribes. The

ten tribes belong to the nation of Israel. Look at the language used here. This shows God's attitude toward sin wherever it is found and, in this instance, it has reference to God hating the evil and the consequences that come from it (Malachi 1:2-5). He selected Jacob and the nation of Israel through which the blessing came and, in so doing, there were privileges they enjoyed that other nations did not enjoy. It has no reference to the fact that these privileges meant that other nations were cut off from redemption.

(Romans 3:1,2) Think of the privilege of having the oracles and being the instrument through which the oracles of God were committed to the world. The fact that the oracles of God were placed through the nation of Israel in no way meant other nations would be robbed of the blessings God placed in Abraham. Think about having the tabernacle and the presence and glory of God in that tabernacle. That was something they enjoyed that other nations did not enjoy to the same extent. When you get to Romans 9:13, we need to remember that it was God that planned, purposed and developed the scheme of redemption. He selected his own instruments and placed responsibilities upon those instruments. When Abraham wanted Ishmael to become the promised seed, God said, "No." Isaac was selected over Ishmael, Isaac was loved and Ishmael hated because it had to do with the selection through which the promise came and God selected his own instrument. When you come to Jacob and Esau, the same principle applies. Read Romans 11:29-34. Verse 29 means that God's purpose does not change, He knew what He was doing. When man sinned, what man did God turn to and say, "Now, I need a little advice about what to do. I want to try to undo what Satan has done; can you give me a little advice and a little counsel about how I can do this?" When you begin reading in Genesis 3, and when you read through Revelation twenty two, what man did God ever turn to and say "Now, give me some advice about how I ought to do this?" Verses 35, 36. God almighty worked out the scheme of redemption so that, when it reached its culmination and man could be redeemed, man would realize he had nothing to do with the purposing, planning, counsel, and development of it. He was simply the instrument by which it came and, as he stands and looks at it, he bows his head and thanks God for what is done. It is in this area that the statement is made, "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated." One was selected and the other passed over.

One other passage to further emphasize this is Ephesians 1:3,4. That passage goes back to Genesis 3:15-16, the seed of woman should bruise the serpent's head. It is only through Christ that one could be holy and blameless before God in love. Suppose Christ had never come! The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. How could any man have been holy and blameless before God in love? That would have been an impossibility, (note Ephesians 1:5). There is the purpose to redeem man through Christ and adopt people through Christ, but that is according to the pleasure of his own will (Ephesians 1:6). Christ becomes the beloved, and we are accepted in him because he is the beloved. In other words, we become the beloved in the beloved, we are loved of God in a way that others are not loved. Verse 9 goes back to what he meant when he said the seed of woman should bruise the serpent's head. Nobody ever thought about that indicating the virgin birth of Christ until Isaiah prophesied it (Isaiah 7:14-15). That shows he decided it, planned it, purposed it, (Verses 10,11). God worked it out according to the counsel of his own will. Who decided that Jacob would be the instrument through which the promise would come? God. Under ordinary circumstances men would have decided upon the basis of human wisdom. Human wisdom would have decided it on the basis of the firstborn. God did not do it that way.

Questions

Read the Text

1. "Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was _____."
2. "And Abraham gave all that he had unto _____."
3. "Abraham gave up the _____, and died in a _____, an old man, and _____; and was _____ unto _____."
4. "The elder shall _____ the younger."
5. "And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy _____."

Research the Text

1. Discuss how the covenant God made with Abraham is the basis of the Bible.
2. List and discuss three things from Hebrews 11:8-19 which should characterize our faith.
3. Discuss the relationship of faith and works.
4. Discuss the people of Abraham to whom he was gathered and what that means for us.

Review the Text

1. Explain and discuss "birthright."
2. Discuss how Esau was a "profane" person.
3. Discuss the phrase, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

Lesson 4

Isaac: His Life and Decisions

Lesson Text: Genesis 26-28

Genesis Twenty-Six

This is the only chapter that is given totally to the discussion of the life of Isaac. It seems strange to us that this is the case. The purpose, counsel and promise of God is moving on. We have some of the difficulties Isaac had. Wells that Abraham had dug had continued to be filled up. We have the account of Abraham coming in contact with the Egyptians, Philistines and so on, now, we find Isaac doing the same thing. It seems to me, as long as you have the promise in Abraham and Isaac as individuals, there is an intention for them to come into contact with the nations round about them in order to bring the light of God to them.

Genesis Twenty-Seven

Think about a fellow doing all Jacob did and, then, we see him as the channel through which the promise developed and we begin to wonder, how can God use anybody like that? There will be some development in Jacob before we get through studying Genesis, but as you see the account given in Genesis 27 of his deceiving Isaac, you are made to wonder why God said, in Genesis 25:23, he would be the one through whom the promise would develop. A failure to keep in mind where we are gives us our problem. In Genesis 3, we have the entrance of sin into the world and sin separated God and Adam because the nature of the case was that God's holiness was such that he could not stay in fellowship with man where sin was involved. Now, along with that, let us think about the situation following Adam's being cast out of the garden. Try to conceive of Adam trying to deserve or merit a return to God's fellowship and how he would have ever done it. Sin has interrupted that fellowship, and what could Adam have ever figured out or ever done on his own to have brought himself back into God's presence? The answer is nothing. Adam was helpless and hopeless, in, of and by himself in finding some way or doing something so he could

get back into direct fellowship with God. Since Adam could not conceive of any way, by merit, that he could bring himself to the situation where he deserved for God to take him back, it just leaves one other door, that is, for God to plan and offer a remedy so man can again be righteous and, thereby, be restored to fellowship. God devised the plan and that is what Genesis 3:15,16 is all about. It is stated there in seed form. When God said the seed of woman should bruise the serpent's head, that has been unfolding. When we see Abel offering the lamb, that is under consideration and in anticipation of it and the same thing with Abraham. God arranged the system by grace through faith that Adam could have fellowship with him and we have the illustration of it in Abel in Hebrews 11 or Genesis 4. The contrast is Cain. You move to the time of Noah, and God's grace and Noah's faith saved Noah from judgment (Genesis 6:8). In connection with Abraham, it is God's grace and Abraham's faith that saved him (Romans 4:1-8). This brings us to Romans 9:6-13. Here is the point in connection with God selecting Jacob. It was not that Jacob deserved it any more than Abraham or Adam. It is not until the coming of Christ that anyone has merit. Jesus, by his sinless perfection, perfect obedience merited the favor of God. When he died, the law did not put him to death because he had not violated the law. Since he upheld the law of God perfectly by his sinless life, God could extend mercy to those of us who have not, could not and did not.

Jacob needed God's grace and his faith in order for him to be saved just like Abel, Abraham, Isaac and we do. We begin to wonder how God could use somebody like this, but, if God used people in the development of redemption and through whom the promise developed, he had to use weak, frail, erring people. He did not have anybody else to use. You come down to the time of David. What kind of man was David? A murderer and adulterer. That is not to say God approved of his sin, he did not, and David repented of his sin. If God had depended upon somebody perfect in order for redemption to have developed before Christ came, it would have been a hopeless situation. This is the light in which we have to see the situation with Jacob. When God set about to redeem man, he purposed on his own and selected his own instruments. He had the right to do that. That is the reason he turned down Ishmael, and he had the same right to select Jacob instead of Esau as he did to select Isaac instead of Ishmael.

We must learn the difference between merit and conditions. Merit equals perfect works (Romans 3:27). If a man could live so as to deserve God's favor and blessings, he could boast about it. Upon what basis could a man demand God's blessings? If he is perfect. Since no one can demand it on that basis and Jacob was just like everybody else, that leaves one other way. James makes this same point (James 2:14-17). Works perfect faith and there is the difference in a work that perfects faith and a perfect work. Works that perfect faith is simply the obedience of faith as in Romans 1:5. Works of faith are conditions of salvation, not works that merit salvation and that is the difference (James 2:21). Romans 4:16 shows that faith and grace work together. This is the situation with Jacob. Jacob had to be saved by grace through faith. God did not approve his sin and the story will show that. Jacob spent the rest of his life suffering for his sins. Laban and his own sons deceived him. Isaac, by his own wisdom, was attempting to place the promise in Esau in spite of what God said in Genesis 25:23. That was an attempt of man by his own wisdom to force the purpose of God in this direction. When Rebekah heard Isaac planning this, she got Jacob off and said, "The purpose of God speaks unto thee ruin here and I am not going to sit by and watch the purpose of God ruin, we have to do something. Jacob, here is what we are going to do." Rebekah was just as guilty before God of trying to take the purpose of God and work it out according to her own plan and ways as Isaac was. Both of them were wrong. God does not need people to work out his purpose. This is fundamental to understanding the whole scheme of redemption. If you do not get this in mind, you never will understand what redemption is all about and how God's grace, by the obedience of man's faith, saves you.

When God started out and planned redemption, he had in mind what he was going to do and he did not need man to come along with his wisdom and try to patch it up and to say, "God's purpose is about to falter here and I am going to prop it up and keep it from going under." When wicked men tried, God overruled things to the development of his purpose. With that in mind, let us read some passages (Psalms 33:10). That is a divine commentary on what we have been reading in Genesis 27, (Psalm 33:11). The purpose of God in Genesis 3:15 moves right on in spite of the conniving of Isaac and Rebekah and the deceit of Jacob, (Psalms 33:13,14, 16-18). Psalm 2 Look how much better it

would have been for Rebekah, Jacob, Isaac and Esau to have put their trust in God and, when he said the purpose would go through Jacob, to let God handle that in his own way (Proverbs 19:21). Look at the devices in Isaac's, Esau's, Rebekah's, and Jacob's hearts, but when all of them got through, that still did not change God's purpose. God's counsel stood in spite of all their conniving (Isaiah 45:21-25; 46:9,10). When God said, the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15,16), there was not anything men could do to change that (Acts 2:23). In spite of wicked men doing what they did, God's purpose did not stop, God's purpose worked out just like he said. Do you think God approved the people that crucified Christ? He did not condone that. If God could overrule wicked men, when they put Christ to death, and his counsel came to pass without condoning what they did, why can we not read the account of Jacob and Rebekah doing what they did and understand God did not condone that (Acts 4:23-28)? In verse 25, we are back in Psalms 2. In this passage, you have the same thought (Hebrews 6:17). God's counsel is immutable, unchangeable (Romans 11:32-36). That is Jacob. Unbelief there has reference to sin. Who advised God how to save man? That is exactly what Isaac was trying to do when he wanted to place the promise in Esau. When Rebekah was trying to fix that up to keep Isaac from blessing Esau, she was telling God, "This is the way to do it." Neither of them was right. God worked out the entire scheme of redemption.

Genesis Twenty-Eight

We have Jacob leaving home. Jacob lived 147 years and his life is divided into three periods. The first period covers 75 years to the present time. The next period will cover 20 years and will take him from Bethel and bring him back on his way to Peniel. Then, there would be 52 years from that time until his death. In connection with the events that take place in the chapter, Jacob begins the development of the potential that was in him. He had an appreciation for spiritual things and he appreciated the blessings. We have the last mention of Isaac, though he lived about 40 years following the account given here. We have Jacob's ladder, then, we have the revelation God made to Jacob and, for the first time in the Bible, we come across the phrase, "the house of God," and this becomes significant. It is used from here until

you come to the New Testament, and the house of God becomes the church of the living God. Then, there was the memorial Jacob set up and the vow Jacob took.

Rebekah makes the suggestion that [Isaac] send Jacob away to get a wife. She does not tell him all that is involved. This is sufficient for Isaac to, again, show the appreciation of the promise God had made and the importance of Jacob finding a wife, not among the people of Canaan. He sends him to Laban and Laban is a good match for Rebekah. They are good brother and sister. He can just about match Rebekah in all of her deceiving in connection with Isaac. He can work just about that well with Jacob. The purpose God made in Genesis 3:15-16 comes to the promise in Genesis 12, then to Isaac (Genesis 21:12) and now it is passing from Isaac to Jacob. The rest of Genesis will be taken up with Jacob and his family until we come to the end of Genesis and Jacob's family has grown into some 75 people which becomes the nucleus of the nation. This nucleus will go into Egypt and there will grow into a nation.

There are some high points you need to get into your mind and keep them there. In Genesis 3:15-16, God purposed to redeem man. In Genesis 6, sin brings judgment and the grace of God, in the obedience of faith, is the only way to avoid it. In Genesis 10,11, you have the development of civil government and the background of all the nations of the earth. In contrast with that, God places the promise in Abraham, and it will be through Abraham that there will become a different people that will grow into a nation and it is in this nation that the light of God is to be made manifest through the period of the Old Testament and through which Christ is to come and by which redemption is to be developed.

It is interesting to stop and think about leaving home. There comes the time, in the lives of most of us, when it is necessary for us to leave home. The prodigal son leaves home because he was not happy at home and it was tragic. Joseph left home because his brothers sold him. Jacob left home because of the actions and evil he had become involved in, along with his mother's encouragement, in trying to deceive Isaac. It is always a solemn time when you come to think about leaving home. How sad it is to leave home like Jacob did.

We have the account of Esau's marriage, and this shows he had no real appreciation of spiritual values. You can also see that Esau

never really repented even after he sold his birthright. Rebekah heard Esau talking about killing him. It does not sound like very good repentance, does it? What kind of attitude does a fellow have that said, "I appreciate my father and I do not want to upset him, but, if it was not for him, I would kill him?" This shows the attitude Esau had all the way through. Esau's wrong attitude in no way would justify either Rebekah or Jacob for following the course of deceit as they did.

It is well to point out the problems that develop in the home when you have the differences such as here. Look at the maneuvering that is going on. Here is Isaac and, I think, the fact Isaac lived 40 years after he tried to bless Esau is an indication that Isaac was trying to force the purpose of God through Esau. He was not near as dead as he thought he was. After Esau sold the birthright, what right then did he have to come along and want to beg back and get the blessing? Though Jacob did wrong in deceiving, why did Esau have any right to blame Jacob? He sold his birthright. A man that did not have anymore appreciation for the birthright than a mess of pottage and to make a deal and a bargain and then blame the fellow for taking him up on his bargain, is not doing very well. He is not thinking too straight. There is Rebekah and look at the partiality. Here is one on one side pulling for Jacob and Isaac on the other side pulling for Esau. How, in the midst of all this competition among parents, can you expect a great deal to come from the children? When Rebekah came to Jacob and said, "Now let us take this thing up," and Jacob said, "That would be wrong," he knew it was wrong. Jacob said, "If I do that instead of being blessed, I am liable to be cursed." His mother said, "Let the curse be on me." Think about that kind of influence on children. We can learn the lesson of the importance of not being partial among children. Most of us have to wait until we are too old to go back and rear our children to understand some things about the importance of how we ought to have brought them up, but we need to remember that parents cannot show partiality. That will always have a bad reaction. The other children will resent it, and it will always create problems. One of the things that makes it difficult in rearing children is that no two are alike. To think you are going to have two children that are alike and that you have to deal with them exactly alike is to misunderstand. Even if they were twins, they are not going to be alike. Jacob and Esau are twins, look how different they were. Instead of Esau renouncing all wrong, he attempted to

render partial obedience, that is, try to do something he thought would be helpful as far as his father was concerned.

We have Esau's marriage and you can understand how Esau lacked an appreciation of the promise God made to Abraham that had been placed in Isaac. In connection with Esau, look at verse 6. Esau had already married people of Canaan, and God had forbidden that. Instead of appreciating the things that are spiritual, he turns aside and finds a wife of the daughters of Ishmael. In Genesis 17-21, we have learned that God announced that Ishmael was not to be the line through which the seed was to come. When Abraham wanted a wife for Isaac, he sent among their own people. So, if [Esau] had learned anything, and surely he should have some knowledge of these events that had taken place in the past, then he would have known better than to select someone of the line of Ishmael. The verse says, "when Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away." What he saw was seeing without seeing. He saw that Isaac had sent Jacob away to get a wife from someone that was not among the Canaanites, but he still did not see what the real significance of it was. He decided, I will get somebody that does not belong to the Canaanites, therefore, the daughter of Ishmael. He may have thought, since Ishmael was the son of Abraham, this would even make it better, but, if that is what he thought, he was still seeing without seeing. This is a problem we have. Isaiah talks about that and Jesus refers to it in Matthew 13. Paul talks about the Jews the same way and quotes from Isaiah (Acts 28). The reason people see and do not see is because they lack an appreciation of spiritual things.

We come to Jacob's dream and this story helps us see something about Jacob that shows there is a spiritual appreciation that Jacob has that Esau did not have. The redeeming feature about Jacob was this spiritual appreciation, and the redeeming feature of anybody is to have an appreciation of spiritual things. God cannot do anything for anybody that does not have or develop an appreciation for things that are spiritual. When we allow our appreciation of spiritual things to be trampled over and destroyed, we are allowing to be destroyed the only foundation upon which God can work. Every man who allows the things of life to so effect his spiritual values until he can have no appreciation for the Bible, for spiritual values, is allowing his only hope of redemption to be destroyed. I think that is part of what is involved in the parable of the sower. The seed was sown in the heart, but those hearts, some of

them, had allowed the things of the world to so trample them until there was no appreciation for it. When we allow ourselves to get in that position, then we are destroying the one thing about us that enables God to offer us redemption.

As we begin the study of Jacob, he begins to learn some lessons. Jacob said, "I have learned from experience," and experience is a good teacher. Sometimes, it is a hard teacher, but we can learn some things from experience that we will not accept any other way. Sometimes, we do not even learn from experience. The seeds he has been sowing are now going to begin to be harvested.

Read Genesis 28:10-22. Here is an interesting and one of the most touching stories we have studied so far. Jesus referred to this in the first chapter of John in connection with Nathaniel. You have to appreciate the story to understand what Jesus said to Nathaniel. Where was Nathaniel when the Lord saw him? Sitting under a fig tree. Now, without an appreciation of this, you might not realize that Nathaniel sitting under a fig tree is indicative of meditation and thought. He is not just out there in a shade. Here is a man contemplating, thinking and, evidently, his mind was on the purpose and promise of God as it had been made known in the Old Testament. Jesus, when he saw Nathaniel sitting under that fig tree, described him as a man in whom there is no guile. A good reading of that would be, he saw a man in whom there was no Jacob. That is the significance of it. He did not see in Nathaniel any Jacob, that is, deceit, guile. Here is the background of this situation and the fact that Jesus refers to this event shows that Nathaniel was not like Jacob had been.

Jacob has traveled and is alone. Jacob being alone this night and Nathaniel sitting out under that fig tree may have some significance too. Try to visualize and place yourself in Jacob's shoes. Under the encouragement of his mother, they had been trying to force God's purpose and promise and look how it turned out; running, having to leave home and out here by himself. How dim that purpose must have looked to him and it is in this context that God appears to him to help him understand. You see what you got yourself into Jacob by trying to take it into your hands? Look how dark it looked! God repeats the promise he made to Abraham and said, "Now, I will take care of you. Let me handle the thing." Jacob, still, is not ready to learn all of this, but that is what God is trying to tell him. "You let me handle it from here on

out. This is the kind of fix you get yourself in.” He had no son and look how hopeless that looked. If you look at Jacob in this same context, you will see it is only through faith in God that there can be any means of this being fulfilled.

Questions

Read the Text

1. “Abraham _____ my voice, and _____ my charge, my _____, my _____, and my _____.”
2. “Esau . . . took to wife _____ . . . and _____ . . . Which were a _____ of _____ unto Isaac, and to Rebekah.”
3. “The voice is _____ voice, but the _____ are the hands of Esau.”
4. “He took away my _____; and, behold, now he hath taken away my _____.”
5. “Thou shalt not take a wife of the _____.”
6. “This is none other but the _____ of _____, and this is the _____ of _____.”

Research the Text

1. Discuss the importance of Abraham and Isaac coming into contact with other nations.
2. Discuss how Jacob could be the channel of blessing with all his sins.
3. Discuss works that perfect faith.
4. Discuss how some tried to help God in ways that were not right.
5. How does Esau’s marriage show he had no appreciation of spiritual values?

Review the Text

1. It is not until when that one has merit?
2. What did Abel, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and we need in order to be saved?
3. Discuss some lessons that may be learned from leaving home.
4. Discuss how partiality shown to children in a home can be devastating.
5. Relate Genesis 28:10-22 to John 1.

Lesson 5

Jacob: The Promise Continues

Genesis: 29-31

Genesis Twenty-Nine and Thirty

Jacob, on his way to Laban, the time he stays there and leaves, will cover a period of 20 years. The purpose, in the events we are studying, has to do with Jacob as the promise has passed to him and the development of this purpose working out in his life and bringing him back to the land of Canaan. From that, events will begin to take place that will cause him to go into Egypt as Genesis ends.

It is interesting to read an inspired comment about events of the Bible. I want to read some comments of a prophet about Jacob. The lessons are applied to the nation later, but it goes back to the time of Jacob. There are comments that help us understand some of the things that take place in the life of Jacob in connection with his relationship with Laban (Hosea 12:1,2). We need to think about some of the events that transpired in buying the birthright from Esau and deceiving Isaac (Hosea 12:3,4). That is when he came to Bethel and the vision he had of the ladder reaching from earth to heaven (Hosea 12:5,6). Think about that in light of some of the actions of Jacob. You can see impatience in trying to press the purpose and promise of God as Isaac tried to press it through Esau and Rebekah and Jacob tried to work it in their own way so Jacob would receive it rather than Esau. When he gets to Laban, we will find some of the same characteristics (Hosea 12:7). Jacob was a good trader (Hosea 12:8-14). Ephraim stands for the ten tribes that pulled off under Jeroboam. The application of some of the actions of Jacob and the difficulties he found himself in is directed toward Ephraim because they are following the course of life that is going to bring the consequences.

Let's look at Genesis 28:13-15. Here is a promise made by the Lord that he would take care of Jacob, yet, you read, in his coming to Laban, the deceit, independence and refusal to accept what the Lord said in faith and leave it up to the Lord. In the home of Abraham and Sarah, there was no question as to who the promised seed would be. That would be Isaac. Ishmael was placed aside (Genesis 21). You come

to Isaac and you have a different situation; there is Esau and Jacob. There is not the same unity in the home of Isaac as there was in Abraham's. God intended to settle the matter when he said, "the elder shall serve the younger" (25:23). Neither of them was willing to accept that. When Jacob left home, the struggle had gone on in the home between Isaac and Rebekah over the matter of Esau and Jacob. Isaac was able to stay at home and Abraham sent and obtained a wife for Isaac because there was not all this conniving (Genesis 24). Abraham did not want Isaac to leave the land, yet Jacob finds it necessary to leave home. Think about Jacob leaving home under circumstances like this. Jacob is not likely to get homesick very quick because he is leaving behind some problems and the threat of Esau.

The promise was that he would have the land of Canaan (Genesis 28). The longer he stays with Laban, the greater the danger that he will develop and grow up outside the land of Canaan and not come back. Some of the events that are working between Laban and Jacob helped to send him back, and it takes time to get back to where he ought to be. When he gets back to where he ought to be, he comes back where Isaac is. Jacob recognized there had been a change in Laban since he had been getting the better end of the deal (31:2). In all these events, there is a weakness in the faith of Jacob in his refusal to leave things in the hand of God. The fact that Esau was Isaac's favorite and Jacob was Rebekah's favorite had a bearing on the development of the character of Jacob even after he left home. Home life has its influence upon the building of character and, even after the blessing was pronounced upon Jacob, this would not undo the damage that had been done. When he begins to run into the craftiness of Laban, Jacob has had some pretty good training, and the influence would contribute to his doing the same thing when he began to be involved with Laban. When Jacob went to Laban, having received the promise of God (Genesis 28), would it not have been better for him to have gone to Laban and said that the promise of God had now been conferred upon him and that he is the heir through which that promise is to be developed and confronted Laban in that kind of faith? That would have been honorable and upright.

Look at the difference between Jacob seeking a wife among the kindred and Isaac. Look at the faith that was manifest, the prayer of the servant, faith in God to work out the fulfillment of the promise and for

Isaac to have the right kind of wife. You do not see any of that with Jacob. Where do you find Jacob praying like the servant did? Jacob takes things into his own hands. One of the characteristics of humanity is the difficulty of our being willing to believe what God says and let God, then, work out things in his way. We have the tendency to become impatient as they did. He had God's promise at Bethel and, if he had followed the path of this directive in the faith he should have, we believe things would have worked out in a much better way.

In Genesis 29:20 we see that there were some redeeming qualities about Jacob. One was his appreciation of spiritual things. Here is another redeeming quality; a love that is as strong as life itself. Genesis 48:7 shows that his love for Rachel was as strong as you would have ever found. As Jacob nears the end of his life, looks back over it and talks to Joseph, the son of Rachel, there wells up within his heart that love that caused him to serve seven years and for it to seem but a few days. Love makes service easy and that is the way we need to learn to serve God.

Look at the problems he runs into when he gets to Laban's house. (1) He is deceived about Rachel. He is given Leah instead of Rachel. (2) There is a double marriage, polygamy. (3) His wages. Jacob said Laban changed his wages ten times. Suppose there had not been the deceit on the part of giving Leah instead of Rachel. Look at the problem that would have been eliminated in his own home as a result of having the two wives and the jealousy that existed between Leah and Rachel. It seems this is still the custom in some of the Arab countries. Rachel and Jacob are cousins and the same principle prevails in some Arab nations that cousins marry. When you get back to this, here again comes the problem of Esau. Esau, being the eldest according to the customs of that day, should have been the one that married Leah, but, instead of that, he married the Canaanites and later the daughter of Ishmael. Laban deceived Jacob. When Jacob said, "I will work seven years for Rachel," that would have been the time for Laban to say, "Alright, but you will have to marry Leah first." Jacob might have had second thoughts. Jacob is now learning some things and the discipline of life is taking place in his life as a result of some of the things that have developed in the past. Jacob's past has developed as a result of his failure to walk by faith.

Though God tolerated the situation as far as Leah and Jacob was

concerned and also with their handmaids, which is a custom of that time, it was a matter of toleration and not according to the original law of marriage. Any departure from the original law of marriage is fatal to the purity and peace of the home. Look at the problems that were created in Jacob's home as a result of having two wives, Leah and Rachel, and their handmaids. The influence of home training and association have a deep and lasting effect. In the home, there needs to be developed the principles of honor, love, and appreciation so that may be carried with people out into life. The first place people learn how to react and interact with other people is the home, and the person that has difficulty interacting properly within the framework of a home will have that same problem and, perhaps, to a greater degree when he gets away from home. When you find somebody that is unable to fit in society in the proper way and manner as far as the relationship with other people is concerned, most of the time this traces back to problems that developed at home. We also learn it is important that people that profess to love God not be afraid to manifest their faith before the world. Look how much better it would have been if Jacob had faith strong enough to act honorably and uprightly, according to the principle God could honor, in the presence of Laban.

Genesis Thirty-One

The principles of the Bible are consistent. We learn in the beginning that, with the entrance of sin into the world, faith becomes the principle by which redemption takes place. As we study the various characters and events, there is a continual unfolding until we come to the New Testament and find full revelation of redemption in Christ and preached beginning at Pentecost. In Abel, we have the worship of faith. In Noah, the obedience of faith. In Abraham, the righteousness of faith. In Isaac, the humility of faith. In Jacob, the victory of faith and how faith overcomes one's self.

As we study about the events of Jacob in connection with Laban, there are some things we ought to remember in relationship to both of them. James 4:10 would be a good passage to think about, and this was the problem Jacob had in the failure to humble himself that he might be exalted. Jacob's problem was trying to take things into his

own hands. When we are thinking about Jacob, it is so easy for us to ignore some things about Laban. As we have problems such as Jacob did, we can also have problems such as Laban had.

Jacob tells Leah and Rachel that he is going to have to leave Laban because of two things: the way Laban treated him and the promise God made to him and God's telling him to go back to the land of Canaan. Here are [Laban's] own daughters talking about the manner in which they had been treated (31:14). After Laban learns that Jacob has left, he sets out to try to overtake him. Considering all that has taken place and the way he treated Jacob, listen to what Laban says in verse 27. Can you visualize Laban, after the way he had treated Jacob, having a feast and sending him away full? That would be a little difficult to conceive. (31:29) is an indication of why Laban did not go any further than he did after he caught up with Jacob. Jacob tells him why he left as he did (31:31). How could he trust Laban after he had deceived him as much as he had (31:38-42)? This chapter continues with their understanding in their separation and the setting up the stone between them.

Lessons we ought to learn from Laban. First, Laban is the type of man that is willing to use other people for his own selfish purposes. That is what he did with Jacob. We need to be careful that we do not think about using other people. It violates the principle of the scripture whenever we do that. Then, we learn that Laban appreciated the good that was in Jacob, but not because of God himself. Laban was interested in Jacob because he saw God blessed Jacob and the result was Laban profited from God blessing Jacob. Laban was the kind of person that wanted to serve God as a first cousin or an in-law, rather than a son. As long as he could profit by God blessing Jacob, he was glad to have all those blessings, but he did not want to be a servant of God. He just wanted to be close enough to Jacob so he could reach out and receive some of the benefits of the blessings Jacob received. There are a number of places in the Bible where people want blessings that come from the result of Christianity, but they want others to be the basis of those blessings. Sometimes, there is a husband that is glad if his wife or children are Christians and serve God, but he is interested in other things. That is a man like Laban. We need to watch and not be interested in religion simply because we think it may profit us. Here is a man, and his wife will be a better wife because she is a Christian, but he

does not want to pay the price of being a Christian, and that is like [Laban]. He is profiting from the benefit of religion in a person. That man might read the story of Laban and Jacob and never think, I am like Laban, but that is the case. The freedom we enjoy in this country is a direct result of the past history of people who were devoted, in principle, to the God of the Bible. They may have been in error concerning their interpretation of it, but they had an appreciation for the Bible and the God of the Bible. That is the reason this nation was founded. The freedom everybody has enjoyed has resulted from that, and there are many people today that fail to recognize that fact. Often we see qualities in other people that will benefit us, but we are not willing to pay the price ourselves in order that we might be able to have those same qualities.

Also, you see a distinction between Laban and Esau. Esau was a man who was interested in the things of this world; a mess of pottage, material things. He lacked an appreciation of spiritual values in any way and that is the reason he sold his birthright. Laban was not like that. Laban could see the difference in God's servants and others. Laban could see Jacob was a man serving God and there was something about that. Here are some things Jacob enjoys and receives because he serves God. Esau did not see that. As far as Esau was concerned, it did not make any difference about who served God and who did not.

QUESTIONS

Read the Text

1. "And Jacob served _____ years for Rachel; and they _____ her."

Research the Text

1. Discuss Hosea 12 and how it related to Jacob.

Review the Text

1. Discuss the problems which arise from violating God's marriage plan.

Lesson 6

Jacob: A New Name

Text: Genesis 32-36

Genesis Thirty-Two

When Jacob left home, dreamed the dream, saw the ladder, heard the promise God made to take care of him and that he would see that he would come back to the land of Canaan, Jacob made a vow. When Jacob, through the insistence of [Rebekah] deceived Isaac and obtained the blessing, Jacob was trying to take things into his own hands and, in so doing, was not willing to let God give him the blessing as he intended. When we come to this part of the study, we find Jacob, in returning, instead of coming back to Esau and saying, "Now, this is mine," admitting that Esau is his lord. Jacob is thinking about meeting Esau and, in spite of the promise God made to him that everything is going to be well, Jacob is still trying to arrange things, take them into his own hands and handle them in his own way, without believing the promise of God. Why is he using language like that if he thinks the promise is his? He acknowledged Esau as his lord, having all the rights of the elder brother (32:3,4). God wanted Jacob to learn that he gave him that blessing. He did not earn, merit, or get it by his own wisdom and in his own way. He gets that blessing in God's way, God's time and according to the conditions God sets forth. The reason for this is redemption is based upon the wisdom of God in the manner and upon the conditions prescribed by God. Man could not change the plan God conceived in order that men might be redeemed and, whenever men attempted to adjust that according to their own wisdom or force it in a certain direction, God has always rejected that. God intends to be glorified in the redemption of man and if man, by his own wisdom, can take the plan of God and detour it down a certain road, that enables man to be glorified rather than God. That is the reason the emphasis is given in the Bible to man accepting the plan of God just as God gave it and on the conditions God intended. This lesson has been hard for men to learn.

Here is the attitude he comes back with (32:5). The messengers go and the report is not made of their contacting Esau, evidently they

did, but any conversation that took place between them, nothing is said concerning this to Jacob. Jacob has difficulty believing that God will be successful in getting him back (32:7-10). Jacob has to learn there would come the time in his life when he is helpless and the only place he has to turn to is God. We have Jacob beginning to recognize this problem and his need of God. You have him praying and yet, at the same time, sort of doubting the good of his prayer. Do we ever do that? He recognized how much he was returning with and he realized that it was through God's blessings that he had obtained this. If the promise is his and the purpose belongs to Jacob, what is he upset about? Why is he afraid (32:7)? All of this is intended to show that all the deceit and cunning used by Jacob in order to try to obtain the blessing has been in vain. It will only come when he understands how it is to come. He is beginning to think about what God had promised (32:9). Jacob is now beginning to realize that all of his efforts had not accomplished what he intended and that he must turn to God (32:10-12).

He appeals to God to deliver him (32:11,12). He is moving in the direction of learning some lessons he needs to learn. Look at some things in connection with this prayer and we can learn a few things about prayer. First, he appeals to the covenant. In verse nine, he calls attention to the promise God made to Abraham, to Isaac, and then to him and, then, he claims this promise for himself. One of the things we need to remember in praying is the covenant God has made and the promises that are found in that covenant. We need to fill our minds and hearts with the promises that are in the Bible and the covenant God has made with us and, then, plead those promises in our behalf. Second, Jacob confesses his unworthiness. We ought never to pray unless we recognize our unworthiness. We, like Jacob, are unworthy of the least of God's mercies. It is difficult for us to realize that. One of the things we need to do to help us avoid developing the idea of self righteousness, that God owes us something, is to constantly remind ourselves that we are unworthy of anything. We have not earned or merited it. God does not owe us anything. Everything we receive from God comes purely through his bounty and grace. There is not a thing we have that we deserve. Romans 3:23 says, "we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God." That ought to humble us to realize all we enjoy and, yet, not one thing can I lay before God and say, "This is mine because you had to give it to me, I deserve it." Third, Jacob

recognized his helplessness (32:11). It is difficult for us to realize our helplessness until we find ourselves backed in a corner, sometimes, like Jacob was. When it comes to the vital matters of life that is where we are. Think about being separated from God because of sin. Without God's help, what are you going to do to get back? What could you do? Not a thing! The barrier set up between a man and his God would never be broken down if it was left up to man to do something about it by himself. That is how helpless we are. When Adam was put out of the Garden of Eden, the cherubim put to guard the tree of life, suppose God had just stayed back of those cherubim and in the garden and left Adam to himself. Can you imagine Adam on the outside trying to figure out and work out some way that I can get back and hold the hand of God? What could he have done? Nothing! We are in the same shape. God had to do something for Adam to have any hope of there being a restored relationship. This is one of the things Jacob needed to learn and, as he wrestled with the angel, this is one of the prime points in that lesson. Fourth, Jacob places his confidence in the word of God (32:12). Do you ever get on your knees and pray and say, "Lord, thou hast said," and remind the Lord what he said and promised to his people? That is what Jacob did. That is the way to pray. We are encouraged to do that. If there is anything that would move the hand of God, it seems to me, would be to call attention to this is what thou hast said and plead that promise and that confidence in his faithfulness.

Jacob arranges for the servants, wives, children and everything to be divided up as he prepares to go to meet Esau. He, further, attempts to try to appease Esau (32:13). First, he sent him a message and announced that he recognized that Esau was lord. Now, he is going to try to work it further. He begins to deliver presents (32:17,18). Think about all the maneuvering Jacob has been through, and now he is trying to figure out every way in the world he can to keep Esau from killing him. Arrangements are made for all of these to approach Esau with this plan in mind (32:20). The word, "appease," is the word that comes to be translated, "covering" or "atonement." Jacob is trying to make an atonement to Esau for the deception. Though it is not the same word, the idea was indicated in 20:16. This comes to be the principle involved in a man's restored relationship with God. The Bible talks about the man whose sins are covered (Psalms 32; Romans 4).

As you look back at the life of Jacob, one of the problems Jacob

had was being able to overcome self. This is the problem all of us face and is the problem redemption deals with (Matthew 16:24). This is the lesson Jacob had to learn and the story of his life is the difficulty he had in learning that the way you serve God is by overcoming and denying self. The Bible teaches that the greatest conquest in life is the conquest of self (Proverbs 16:32). How in the world am I going to be able to handle myself? He was not willing to go about it in the right way. I do not know of any character study in the Bible that sets forth this struggle in a detailed way and pictures it any more than the life of Jacob. Here you have a real life story. I never read the story of Jacob without realizing how human it is and, because it is human, I can see myself in Jacob.

This is a lesson we need to learn to be able to live successfully even apart from Christianity. Many of the emotional problems we have come from the inability to deal with this. There are some that would say the way to handle self is to suppress it, but even psychologists have learned that is not the way to do it. If you suppress steam in a boiler and it just keeps building up, it will finally blow up and the same thing is true whenever we attempt to overcome self by suppression. Then, the secret of overcoming self is not by expression. Some say the real way to overcome self is just to express yourself. You do not let things build up in you, the thing to do is to just let yourself go and the influence of that in our present society is that everybody ought to do whatever he wants. Neither one of these is correct and we see both of them set forth in Jacob. The secret of overcoming self is stated in the New Testament (Galatians 2:20). There is the only remedy for being able to handle the problem Jacob had and this comes through our obedience to the gospel (2 Corinthians 5:17). That is what takes place when one becomes a Christian; there is a new life, not that same old life. Romans six talks about that old man being crucified and being raised in newness of life. There is a new man, and Ephesians 2 talks about a new man. This is what it takes to handle self. Think about Paul as an example. Think of the kind of man Saul of Tarsus was as compared with the man Paul the apostle was and the difference is Christ in his life.

Look at Jacob before he conquered self. (1) He is ready to take advantage of other people's weaknesses. Esau's weakness became Jacob's opportunity (Genesis 25:31-32). He took advantage of Isaac's aging infirmity (27:18-19). You have the heartless and unprincipled

conduct toward his father. He had no regard either for his age or his infirmity and, even when Isaac began to question Jacob, Jacob still insisted he was Esau. (2) Jacob was selfish. This is manifest in dealing with Esau and Isaac. (3) Jacob could not trust God to give him what he promised. God had promised him the birthright, but Jacob was self sufficient, thought he would get it in his own way and did not need God's help, and he was scheming.

Let us see some things about how he conquered himself. In chapter 28, we read about his dream, the vision he had. I realize we do not have visions like that today, but there is a principle in it. This vision was a revelation of the will of God to Jacob. A person, in order to overcome self, must have a vision for his soul; a vision of spiritual things and better things. Jacob saw a vision of heaven and earth. If one is to overcome self, he must have a vision of heaven as well as earth. He must have a knowledge, appreciation and understanding of heaven as well as earth. The person whose vision is tied to material things will never be able to overcome self. The vision Jacob had in Genesis 28 is just the beginning. Many times people think about what they would like to be and then stop, but Jacob did not stop. Jacob made a resolution and a decision, and this is essential if one is to overcome self. Having made that decision, Jacob sealed that decision by building a memorial and that is exactly what takes place when one sets about to overcome self. He has that memorial and that takes place in baptism. Here is something visible, that is intended to seal the dying to self (Romans 6:1-6).

We come to Jacob wrestling with the angel and, again, Jacob is alone. While the others were asleep, Jacob was walking up and down the side of the stream and was wrapped in his thoughts. Here comes before him all the past, and you can recognize some of the things that must have gone through his mind. Here you have a picture of Jacob and God alone. If one is ever to be able to overcome self, there must be some time when a person is alone where they can think about and examine themselves purely in the light of God and their relationship to God, not as the world sees them and not as other people think about them, but as they really are. We are moved away from self-interest. So many other things that influence the thinking of other people are laid aside. Have you ever noticed the difference in the things we say and do in the midst of a crowd, and when you get alone with your thoughts? In

the deceiving of Isaac, encouragement from his mother was a contributing factor that braced him up and propped him up, but, now, his mother is not here. It is just Jacob in the darkness of the night alone with his God, and things do not look the same.

This is the only account of any such thing in the Bible. It seems strange that here is a man wrestling with an angel, and what is the significance of that? How in the world could a man stand a chance wrestling with an angel? Jacob wrestled all night (32:24,25). I think this is intended to indicate the struggle Jacob had in being willing to give up and realize his own helplessness. He just would not let go. In order for him to learn his helpless situation, the angel touched his thigh and, then, he saw the situation he was in. It teaches all of us the lesson of how difficult it is for us to learn how helpless our situation is. We have the tendency to be willing to let God help us if he will help us in our way and part of the way. We are like children. You have a child growing up and you want to help them and they say, "I know how to do it." That is the way we are when it comes to the matter of our redemption. God set out the manner in which it is to be done, and we have the tendency to say, "I know how to do it," and it keeps us from listening to God. Jacob had difficulty learning the lesson that the way you enjoy God's blessings is to realize your own helplessness. When a person gets ready to obey the gospel of Christ, he needs to see he is indeed helpless and his obedience to the gospel is a means of his appealing to God in order that God might bless him.

Genesis Thirty–Three to Thirty-Five

Jacob and Esau are reunited. Jacob settles in Shalem, a city of Shechem. Jacob is not back to Bethel and there is a lesson to be learned in his failure to go back to Bethel. Shechem is too near the edge of Canaan. The consequences of living too near the world has its impact on Jacob's family.

Chapter Thirty Four is a sad chapter. Sin is rampant in Jacob's family. Dinah's association with the daughters of the land becomes her downfall and the shame of her family. The Bible hides no sin, but notice the restraint that is used to describe the ugly sin. The sin is made repulsive, but gutter language is avoided. It seems Jacob selected this site because of its favorable position for his flocks. His spiritual position

was not first in consideration. This is always a sad commentary on one who professes to believe in God. When material things are given primary consideration, it always leads to deterioration of spiritual life. The word rendered, "defiled," means desecrated and is used later to describe the defilement or desecration of the temple (Psalm 79:1). To dishonor womanhood and the desecration of the holy of holies are regarded with the same feeling and described by the same word.

Read Jacob's vow (Genesis 28:20). Bethel was only thirty miles from Shechem. Jacob has been in Canaan ten years. God has blessed Jacob and kept his promise, but Jacob has yet to fulfill his vow. After returning Bethel, God reaffirms the covenant and confirms his new name, Israel. Jacob set up an altar and offered a drink offering. This is the first mention of a drink offering. From Bethel, Jacob comes back to Hebron where his home was.

Genesis Thirty-Six

The phrase, "these are the generations of," introduces each new branch until you come to the study of Jacob. It is the sign which marks the successive stages and the unfolding of redemption until, finally, it issues forth in only one, Christ. This phrase is found in Genesis 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10,27; 25:12,19; 36:1; 37:2.

The descendants of Esau seemed to have multiplied faster than the sons of promise. The relationship between the two lines is revealed in the statement, "Esau is Edom" (36:1,8,19,31,43). This draws attention to the origin of the people who, for centuries, were the enemies of Israel. The book of Obadiah deals with the problem created with Edom and the attitude of the Edomites toward the Israelites. Jacob escaped, personally, from the anger of Esau, but the harvest resulting from his deceit was reaped by his descendants. The harvest is a reminder of the greatness of life. The deeds done today are not ended.

Remember the description of Esau as a profane man. The tendency of man to live only for this life is one of the gravest problems all of us face. As we come across characters such as Esau, it should be a warning of the importance of cultivating spiritual attitudes and dispositions so we may not be caught up in living only for the things that have to do with time.

Questions

Read the Text

1. "And Jacob went on his way, and the _____ met him."
2. "Then Jacob was greatly _____ and _____: and he divided . . . bands."
3. "I am not worthy of the _____ of all the _____, and of all the _____, which thou has shewed unto they _____ . . ."
4. "Afterward I will see his _____; peradventure he will accept of me."
5. "Thy name shall be called no more _____, but _____ . . ."
6. "I have seen thy _____, as though I had seen the face of _____, and thou was pleased with me."
7. "Shechem . . . _____ her, and _____ with her, and _____ her."
8. "And God said unto Jacob, Arise and go up to _____, and dwell there."

Research the Text

1. Discuss how Jacob tried to take the plan of God into his own hands.
2. Explain how Jacob tried to appease Esau.
3. How did Jacob try to reconcile with Esau?
4. Discuss how one may properly control self.
5. What may be learned from Jacob's prayer?

Review the Text

1. Discuss why neither suppression nor expression will work in controlling self.
2. Contrast Jacob before conquering self and after conquering self.
3. Discuss Jacob's wrestling with the angel and the lessons learned there from.
4. Discuss the word, "defiled," and how it is used in other places in the Bible.
5. Discuss the importance of Jacob's coming back to Bethel.
6. Review the history of the Edomites and Israelites.

Lesson 7

Joseph Sold into Slavery: Judah's Sin

Lesson Text: Genesis 37-38

Genesis Thirty-Seven

Joseph introduces us to the final section of Genesis. Joseph will be the leading character, but there is still discussion of Jacob and the other sons. We need to understand why Joseph is introduced at this stage of Genesis. Joseph becomes the link that explains how the nation of Israel, from just a few people, grew to be a nation. Beginning with Exodus, we have the development of the Jewish nation which had a peculiar place in the nations of the earth for 1500 years, and the question is, how do you explain that? How does a people, small in number, have such tremendous impact upon the whole world? The answer is found in Genesis and the section we are now studying. The events placed herein are not events of detailed things that took place over this period of time, but of selected material with a specific purpose to enable us to understand some things we will be studying later. When you begin Exodus, Jacob's descendants are living in one of the most fertile parts of Egypt. How did these people come to end up living in such a fertile part of Egypt? Joseph becomes the key. Without Joseph and his position in Egypt, there is no way Jacob and his family could have ended up in Goshen. You see how the providence of God watches over the purpose announced in Genesis 3:15 and the promise God made to Abraham in Genesis 12.

You have a contrast between Joseph and his brothers. Joseph was younger than all except one. They were born in Haran while Jacob was involved with all the difficulties with Laban and this may account, to some degree, for the difference between Joseph's character and manner of thinking and these other brothers. When Jacob comes to Peniel, he begins to develop in his life and, perhaps Joseph is under this part of the influence of Jacob. Jacob's partiality to Joseph is explained by saying he was a child of his old age, plus Joseph was the firstborn of Rachel and you remember how Jacob loved Rachel. You can understand, from a human standpoint, how Jacob would have a special feeling as far as Joseph was concerned, yet that created some of the

problems that developed.

We have the development that takes place in connection with Joseph's dream and the brothers selling Joseph. To show you how things continue to develop in connection with their selling, read 37:25. An interesting comment is made in one of the minor prophets about this event, and this will help you understand how significant some of these things are and the manner in which God looked at them. Amos 6:6. Here are his brothers selling him, but they were not grieved over what they were doing. Here is the nation of Israel who has drifted, in manner of life, where they are living about like Joseph's brothers and they are not grieved over the affliction of Joseph, that is, they were not disturbed over what was taking place within the nation of Israel. Look at what is taking place in the church today; the danger of apostasy. Are we disturbed or are we like Joseph's brothers? We sit down to eat and forget about what is taking place in the church of the Lord and, whenever we do, we drift into the spirit of Joseph's brothers. We may read the story of Joseph and say, "Oh, I would not do that." Would we do like some of the descendants who saw the nation drift away from its mooring and purpose, who sat down to eat and drink without being grieved over the condition that was taking place?

There is an interesting comment made in Genesis 42:21, which is a further comment upon what took place when they sold him. This is when they find themselves facing some of the problems after they had to go to Egypt because of the famine. Chapter 37 does not tell about Joseph appealing to and begging them not to treat him that way. They made up their minds they were going to destroy and get rid of him and, then, they decide to put him in a pit and end up selling him. First, they think about killing him. That would be a terrible thing and then circumstances develop and they say, "Look, things are just working out so fine. Instead of having to kill him, we can get rid of him and still save his life, let us sell him." You could look at that and say, "This indicates what we are doing is alright." We need to learn that circumstances alone are not evidence of the providence of God working in connection with that which is evil. Principles must be considered in matters where circumstances develop as we have here. If circumstances are wrong in themselves, there is no coincidence that will make them right. You cannot look at what took place in connection with Joseph's brothers selling him and make what they did right. To try to make that right

because providence operated in a certain area is to misread the whole thing. That would put God on the side of wrong and have God a contributor to wrong.

Consider some things about providence. Sin may hinder God's plan, but it can never defeat it. Because of that, we may misread providence and interpret it in the wrong way. Sin is never necessary in the operation of providence. It is impossible for good to come out of evil (Romans 3:8; Matthew 7:17,18). God may overrule and good may come in spite of evil. Think about what happened with Adam sinning in the garden of Eden. Think about all the heartache that has developed from Adam's sin. In spite of that, God set up the scheme of redemption, but, even with the scheme of redemption, think of the multiplied souls that would be lost eternally just because sin entered into the world.

We see the danger of envy (Acts 7:9; Psalms 37:1,2; 73:3). A part of the difficulty people have always had is measuring life by material things. Life is not made up of just the material things (Matthew 6:19,20; 1 Corinthians 13:13). These are the things that really count. For envy, they delivered Christ (Matthew 27:18). Paul calls attention to the danger of this sin (Romans 13:13; 1 Timothy 6:4; Galatians 5:21). James talks about the serious nature of this sin (James 3:15). Envy is a root sin. It does not end with itself. Envy is the cause of most of the sins we commit against our brethren. We have the consequence of envy described in Proverbs 14:30. What could Joseph do in the presence of the envy of his brothers (Proverbs 27:4)? Chapter 42:21 indicates he begged for his life. Here is a solution to the matter (Psalm 37:3-5). (1) "Trust in the Lord." The way to not be envious of wicked people is to believe, if I serve the Lord, God will take care of me. (2) "Do good." (3) "Delight thyself also in the Lord." Instead of delighting in material things, delight in spiritual values. (4) "Commit thy way unto the Lord." Had I not rather have the Lord take care of my life and leave it in his hands than try to take it in my own? Joseph is an example of all these things. He was not envious of his brothers and, in spite of all they did, he just trusted in the Lord, committed his way to the Lord, delighted in things that are spiritual, and God gave him the desires of his heart. Think about what a young man Joseph was; princely in character. There is not a single blot recorded against the life of Joseph.

After they brought back the coat of Joseph, Jacob thought Joseph was dead (Genesis 37:35). There are some things we need to

think about in connection with his faith. First, the statement Jacob made was honest. He could see nothing before him except sorrow. That was the mood he had developed. Jacob was wrong. God's people do not need to develop that kind of attitude. Regardless of what may happen in life, we do not come to the place where we say, "There is no comfort for me," and we refuse to be comforted. Let me show you that Jacob was wrong. (1) He did not go down to his grave in sorrow. (2) The son he was mourning as dead was alive. (3) Joseph brought joy to his father before he died. We may say, "We ought not blame Jacob, he could not see all of this." From a physical standpoint, that is right, but this is where faith comes in. Faith is not foresight, faith is confidence in God, which means however dark the way may be, God never leads us always in the darkness, but leads us to the light. Faith says, "It may be dark today, but because I believe God and because God is God and the promises he has made and his faithfulness, it will not always be dark." Second, sorrow is not wrong, but God's people cannot refuse to be comforted in sorrow. In First Thessalonians four, Paul said, "I would not have you ignorant brethren concerning them which are asleep that you sorrow not as others which have no hope." He does not say, not sorrow, but there is a difference. The ties that bind us together mean there would be sorrow. The man of faith does not judge any one event as the whole. The man of faith counts on God and, because he counts on God, he believes that, in spite of the sorrow, darkness, and difficulties, there will be a better day. We are seeing the door that is opening up and the steps that are beginning to take place that will bring Jacob's family into Egypt where they will have the opportunity to grow into a nation.

Genesis Thirty-Eight

There are some ugly sins involving the one who would be the head of the tribe to which Jesus would belong, Judah (Hebrews 7). When you think about all the sins of Judah, and when the covenant passed from Judah to the family of David, think of the sins of David, how grievous they were, we are apt to ask the question, "How could all of this be?" There is no way God can encourage and condone sin. Why did God inspire Moses to record the sordid sins of chapter 38? Why would a book like the Bible that emphasizes spiritual values and man's

spiritual needs, put such ugly sins as in this chapter?

What happens in chapter 38 is not given in chronological order. The events of chapter 38 will cover a period of about 22 years from the time Joseph was sold until Jacob went into Egypt. These events are setting forth some things in relation to their moving into Egypt. There are some things we need to remember in connection with the matter of incest in relation to Tamar. Genesis 3:15 says the seed of woman should bruise the serpent's head and, in Genesis 12:3, God said to Abraham, "in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." That becomes the background of those who are looking for the promised Messiah that is to come through the seed of Abraham. Judah's oldest son being killed by God gives us the key to understanding the actions of Tamar. Judah failed to keep his promise to give the youngest son to Tamar in order that she might have the seed. Judah becomes the one through whom the line develops.

There are some things we need to remember in relationship to Jacob's family going into Egypt. Joseph was the individual by whom this took place. The famine that developed was the occasion. The promise and purpose of God was the cause. Chapter 38 shows the need for their being transported out of Canaan at this time into Egypt. Judah married a Canaanite. Abraham did not want Isaac to marry a Canaanite. Esau married a Canaanite and we saw, in chapter 36, the direction in which Esau went. Now, Judah, one of the sons of Jacob and the one through whom the promise would develop, is marrying a Canaanite. This brings about the need for getting them out of Canaan. If Jacob's family remained in the land of Canaan and intermarried with the Canaanites, Judah's sons tell the story of the direction that would take place. We are told that Judah's first son was so wicked God killed him. What about the second son? Same thing! Here is the promise God has made to Abraham that from him would come a seed. We have seen the importance of faith and righteousness in relation to Abraham. That promise moves on and here is the family of Jacob in the land of Canaan. Judah moves out among the Canaanites and this leads to him marrying a Canaanite (38:1). There was the moral danger that surrounded Jacob and his family and thus the need of moving away from here. Since God promised Abraham the land of Canaan and, now, Jacob, the one through whom the promise is to develop is in the land of Canaan, why didn't they stay there? Here is part of the answer. The moral climate

and atmosphere of Canaan was such that they would be led to intermarry and there was idolatry among the Canaanites (Genesis 15:16,17). In order for God to take that land away from them and give it to the descendants of Abraham and Jacob, it is necessary to allow sin to develop and become ripe and the nation become corrupt so they could be judged. The judgment of God would be involved in sending Joshua in to take the land.

Noah, right after the flood, got drunk. We saw Abraham involved in lying twice about his wife, having a misconception about Abimelech and thinking the fear of God was not in his heart. Isaac tried to force the purpose of God through Esau instead of allowing it to develop through Jacob. We saw the problems Jacob had. We come to Judah, the one through whom the promise will develop, and see the sad, corrupt life of Judah and wonder, how in the world can there be any hope for anybody such as this? There are four women in the genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1. Of the four, three of them are Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba. Tamar, guilty of incest, Rahab, the harlot and Bathsheba, the adulteress. Ruth is the other woman, and she is a Gentile. Why would the lineage of Christ come through such as this? Part of the answer is to show the sinfulness of sin and that God's grace is intended to redeem sinful men. It is not to encourage that kind of life because nowhere will you find any approval or encouragement from the Bible of that kind of life. When we fail to remember this, we develop the spirit of the Pharisees who had a perverted idea of righteousness and developed the sense of self-righteousness. They did not feel they needed God's mercy or grace. That is the reason they did not like Christ to associate with sinners and this is the reason Jesus said he came into the world to seek and to save the lost. This is the reason Jesus said the whole have no need of a physician, it is a sick man that needs a doctor. The Pharisees did not think they were sick. If we are not careful, we will have difficulty balancing the idea of not encouraging the sin, on the one side and, on the other side, of realizing the gospel is intended for sinful people. There is the indication that Judah was penitent of his sin, that he did not commit it anymore. That is to show that, while the Bible pictures sin as it is, it gives no encouragement to sin.

This chapter shows us the essential nature of separating from sin. Jacob's descendants will be separated from the corrupt influence. Instead of living in Canaan, they moved into Egypt. The situation will be

such in Egypt that they will not become intermingled with the Egyptians because they will be put in the land of Goshen. The nature of their vocation was such that the Egyptians did not want to have anything to do with it. This is the reason the story of Joseph becomes an important link. If they had gone into Egypt in some other way, they would have become intermingled with the Egyptians and they would not have been any better off than if they had stayed in the land of Canaan. When we come to study the deliverance of the nation from Egyptian bondage, we will learn that every plague in Egypt was directed toward a particular god of Egypt.

Judah left his brethren and is drifting toward intermarriage with the Canaanites. Something has to be done to stop him and God takes drastic action. He killed his first son, then the second son. This shows the need for separation, but in order for that separation to enable them to live apart from the Egyptians, it had to develop according to a plan. This is where Joseph comes in. Had not Joseph been in his place in the kingdom, having the power with Pharaoh, when Jacob and his family came into Egypt, there would have been no way they could have gone over into Goshen, separated from the Egyptians.

Questions

Read the Text

1. "Now Israel loved _____ more than all his children."
2. "And they _____ him yet more for his _____, and for his _____."
3. "And they said one to another, Behold, this _____ cometh."
4. "When Judah saw her, he thought her to be an _____."

Research the Text

1. Explain how Amos 6 and Genesis 37 are related?
2. Discuss providence as it is revealed in Genesis 37.

Review the Text

1. Discuss the need for Jacob's family moving from Canaan.
2. Discuss Matthew 1 in relation to the sinfulness of those recorded there.

Lesson 8

Joseph: In Potiphar's House and In the Place

Lesson Text: 39-40

Genesis Thirty-Nine

Chapter 39 picks up the story of chapter 37. Joseph has been brought to Egypt and bought by Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh. Back of what is taking place is the purpose and promise of God (39:2-5,21,23). Joseph understood that. This helps us think Joseph had some knowledge of the meaning of the dreams or Jacob helped him understand something of the meaning of the dreams, because of the faithfulness of Joseph in what he is going through. Joseph understood he was serving God in some capacity (50:20). Think about what Joseph went through in this chapter, yet, in all the things said, both good and bad, there is the statement that "the Lord was with Joseph." That is the most important thing.

With Joseph going into Egypt, the knowledge of God will be introduced to Egypt. With the knowledge of God being brought into Egypt, the Egyptians will have an opportunity to come within the framework of the promise God made to Abraham. Before judgment was brought upon the nation of Egypt, the knowledge of God was introduced into Egypt, and they resisted that. When God made the promise to Abraham, he was interested in everybody else and this became the means of God passing on that knowledge to other people. When he blessed Joseph, it is said that "his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand." He is introduced to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. When the time comes and Pharaoh refused to let them go and they continued in their idolatrous practices, then God can judge them justly because of their wickedness and having resisted and rejected the influence of the knowledge of God that had been introduced to them.

As we look at Joseph in Egypt, we will see Joseph's prosperity, Joseph's peril and temptation, the persistence of temptation, prison and Joseph freed. The prosperity of Joseph came because the Lord blessed him. The peril of temptation becomes the test of character. Look at the

difference between the character of Joseph in this chapter and the character of Judah in the previous chapter. What a contrast! In altogether different circumstances. Joseph was able to face temptation because of loyalty. (1) He was loyal to his master. He said to Potiphar's wife, "Your master placed me over everything he has and my loyalty to him is such that I will not betray him." (2) He was loyal to God. Joseph was practicing his religion in Egypt. He let people know that the God he served was the God of Abraham. He said, "I cannot do this and sin against God," and this indicates Joseph had an understanding, he had knowledge, his religion was not directed purely by emotion. That knowledge affected his will which produced a determination and it is out of that kind of life that one is able to resist temptation. Having the knowledge of truth and right, a knowledge that moves, motivates and strengthens the will, enables one to say, "No." The person lacking in knowledge will lack in conviction and the person lacking in conviction will lack in strength of will to say, "No." The only way there can be faith is by personal knowledge of the Bible and the truth that produces conviction in the heart.

Many things could have affected Joseph in this situation. (1) He has been sold by his brothers. He could have said, "What is the use? I have tried to serve God and here I am in this situation, a slave, of what value is it?" It would have been easy for him to give up. In the midst of situations like that, when we are confronted, where it is easy for us to give up, temptation can really catch us off guard. (2) He could have become bitter and said, "I am totally innocent of all this." (3) He could have succumbed to the temptation in thinking this will be a way of promotion. "Why should I give up all that I have?" Look at the opportunity for promotion. All of these became avenues of temptation and yet, Joseph was able to resist them because he knew he was a servant of God and to sin was to sin against God. I am not sure we realize or are always conscious enough of the fact that every sin we commit is, first of all, a sin against God (2 Samuel 12:13). That is the greatest part of sin.

I would like to call attention to the slander directed toward Joseph by Potiphar's wife. Sometimes the statement is made, "where there is smoke there is fire." That is not always the case. Think of the rumor that must have gone throughout the court of Pharaoh or, at least, Potiphar's office and those who were in relationship to him

become links in a chain that work into greater things. I suspect we do not give enough attention to little things. Joseph's conviction did not stand in the way of his promotion. Joseph was ready to let them know that only God could interpret dreams. Sometimes, we get the idea that, if we stand up for Christian principles, the people in the world will not respect us and it will hinder us. As a general rule, people in the world that are not Christians, that are business men, realize that a genuine Christian makes a better employee. He is one who can be trusted, that will be loyal, that will work, do what he is supposed to do.

Dreams got Joseph into trouble. He told his brother and daddy about his dreams and that is a part of the reason he is where he is. You would think that a man that had been dreaming and his dreams got him into trouble, when somebody mentions dreams he would say, "I don't want anything to do with dreams. I have had enough to do with dreams. Let's just forget about it." Not Joseph, because Joseph had an understanding that the hand of God was involved in this matter as far as his own dreams were concerned. Evidently, he understood these dreams meant something in relation to God's promise and purpose. We note also the faithfulness of Joseph in the interpretation of the dreams. It seems from the record that the butler told him his dream, and the baker did not. He just stayed back and waited to see. Joseph interpreted the dream of the butler and said, "You are going to be restored back to your place in three days." The baker, having heard Joseph interpret the butler's dream, said, "I will tell you mine now." Joseph said, "Here is the interpretation of yours. You will be hanged in three days." He could have said, "I believe I had rather just not talk about your dream," but he did not. This shows the faithfulness of Joseph, not only in telling the butler what was good, but also, in telling the baker what was going to happen to him.

There is the human element in this story (40:13-15). This is the only time we read that Joseph said a word about what had taken place. He thought, no doubt, the result of the butler being restored, being back in the place of honor in Pharaoh's house, that just a word from him would be able to get Joseph out of prison. Then, another human trait intervened. He forgot (23). How human that is. Joseph stayed in prison two years, maybe, because of the forgetfulness of the butler. It may have been that he would not have been let out, but it is two years later, as we learn from the next chapter, before events begin to unfold. It

Genesis Forty

Joseph is in prison with a butler and a baker. We are not told why the butler and baker were placed in prison. Here are some things that are taking place in connection with Pharaoh's house at the time Joseph is in prison. Here are events that are common and ordinary that take place according to the times in which people live, yet these events become stepping stones and means by which Joseph will become next to Pharaoh himself and be placed in a position to save Egypt, Jacob and the rest of his brothers and for Jacob's descendants to grow into a nation. Psalm 105 tells some things about Joseph being in prison that are not stated here. Joseph has served well in prison and has won the confidence of the captain of the guard, and these men are placed under Joseph or Joseph is serving them (40:4). They have a dream. The butler dreamed about having some grapes and pressing these grapes out in a cup and giving them to Pharaoh. The baker had a dream about some things that were prepared in a basket and birds feeding out of the basket. I called attention, with the dream of Jacob, that there will be a transition made from the manner in which God directed the affairs and made himself known to men beginning with Jacob. Up until then, dreams are not used, at least particularly, in relationship to the patriarchs that preceded Jacob. Beginning with Jacob's dream of the ladder, these will begin to develop and we have Joseph's dream and, now, the dreams of the butler and baker. This opens the door for Joseph to interpret.

The Egyptians placed a great deal of emphasis upon dreams. The thing they place a great deal of emphasis upon becomes the avenue God uses as a means of introducing himself into Egypt as the true and living God and, at the same time, of enabling Joseph to reach the place where he is needed in Egypt to serve God and help Jacob's descendants grow into a nation. Notice a little thing (40: 6). Why notice anything about that? That indicates the careful person and the attitude of heart Joseph had. He asked the question, "Wherefore look ye so sadly to day?" They mentioned, "We dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it." Joseph is careful to explain that he cannot interpret a dream (40:8). This opens the door for him to introduce God to these people. You see the faithfulness of Joseph even in little things. As you read to chapter 50, you will see over and over again how little things

become links in a chain that work into greater things. I suspect we do not give enough attention to little things. Joseph's conviction did not stand in the way of his promotion. Joseph was ready to let them know that only God could interpret dreams. Sometimes, we get the idea that, if we stand up for Christian principles, the people in the world will not respect us and it will hinder us. As a general rule, people in the world that are not Christians, that are business men, realize that a genuine Christian makes a better employee. He is one who can be trusted, that will be loyal, that will work, do what he is supposed to do.

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may have been that the forgetfulness of the butler was better. The timing may not have been ready as far as Joseph's return to the place of power to reach the place second to Pharaoh to accomplish the things he had in mind.

There are some things in connection with faith that we need to look at in this chapter. First, you see two elements: work and trust. Joseph did what he could, where he was, as best he could because he trusted God. That is the way we ought to serve. In all of this, we do not read of a single complaint or of Joseph murmuring. That is a wonderful characteristic to develop. It comes from trusting God. Second, Joseph's faith was watching. He saw the countenance of the butler and baker and you have to be watchful to see and to recognize such things as that. Third, there is faith's request. Joseph said, "Now remember me when you are restored." Fourth, there is the patience of faith and we have seen this over and over again as we studied some of these characters. Where there has been impatience, faith has always weakened and men have gotten into trouble, but where there has been the patience of faith, it has always been blessed. Joseph stayed in prison two years before an opportunity developed for him to get out. There were lessons, no doubt, that he learned during that period of time that helped to prepare him for the work he was to do. Fifth, Joseph's faith accepted disappointments and faith can accept disappointments because it trusts God and believes that all will be well. To hold to the promise of God is to believe that the disappointments of life will not always be victorious, but there will come a better day, a brighter day.

There is the forgetfulness of the butler. He had no malice toward Joseph. He was not trying to do him harm. He did not forget him because he said, "Here is a man I do not want to have anything to do with." It is a human trait. You would think a man that had been in prison and another man had interpreted his dream and told him how it was going to come out would always remember people in prison, but not the butler. You would think those of us who have lived in sin and have learned the truth of the gospel would always remember what it is like to live in sin, but we do not. Good intentions and promises are no good until they are carried out. Out of the many things we have done this week is there something we forgot? What did we plan, promise and, yet time slipped and we failed to do it? Suppose it had been the

other way, that Joseph had been the butler, and the butler had been in Joseph's place and interpreted the dream and the butler had said to Joseph, "Remember me," what do you think Joseph would have done? Many times we fail to realize what may come as a result of our forgetting something.

On the other side of that, there is a contrast. Let us go back and begin in Genesis 3:15. God made a promise and said to Adam and Eve, "because you sinned, I am not going to forget you. The seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Time rolled on and the world became wicked until, finally, only eight people could be found that served God, but God remembered his promise and saved Noah and his family. Time passed and the world became wicked again and a rebellion against God built a tower trying to reach to heaven in opposition to God's announced purpose that they were to scatter throughout the earth. Then, God called Abraham and made a promise and said, "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." We watched the wanderings of Abraham into Egypt and back and in relationship to Abimelech. We have seen the difficulties he had in relation to Lot, the promise that Ishmael was not to be the son, but one that Sarah would be the mother of, and then, the birth of Isaac. The direction in which Esau and his family went, the problem with Jacob, Jacob going into Haran and with Laban and all the problems that multiplied, and the hope of the world depending upon Jacob as the channel. We have seen him as he has come back into the land and God said to Abraham, in Genesis 15, that "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. Your seed will go into Egypt to stay four hundred years and then, I will bring them up and judge that nation," without announcing what nation that would be. We are seeing this as it develops. God's promise is not like that of a man, he does not forget.

Questions

Read the Text

1. “And Joseph was brought down to _____; and _____, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the _____, an Egyptian, _____ . . . thither.”

Research the Text

1. Discuss the problem of slander and how a Christian should handle it.

Review the Text

1. Discuss faith as exemplified by Joseph in Chapter 40.

Lesson 9

Joseph: Pharaoh's Dream & His Brothers Come

Lesson Text: Genesis 41-42

Genesis Forty-One

At the end of two years, Pharaoh dreamed. We discussed the butler forgetting the request of Joseph. We can see timing was important. Suppose he had mentioned Joseph to him when he returned. It is possible Pharaoh would have been susceptible to taking him out of prison, yet it is possible he might not have. Because of a need for Pharaoh himself, having had two dreams and being unable to get any explanation, it opened the door for Joseph and became the stepping stone for his promotion and placing him in a position in Egypt so the purpose and promise of God could be accomplished. Joseph has been in prison for at least two years, maybe three. This becomes a test of faith, fidelity and loyalty. The intensity of a trial or difficulty that is short does not test us nearly so much as some trial that lasts for a period of time. One of the ways Satan has of affecting us is by the duration of time and, facing some difficulty, we become weary in well doing (Galatians 6:9).

There is the mention of the river and this is the Nile. The Nile was an important factor in the fertility and abundance of the harvest in Egypt. In Exodus, concerning the plagues, we will learn the Egyptians worshiped the river.

We have the dream. First, he saw the seven fat cattle and seven lean cattle and the seven lean ate the seven fat. Do you see anything strange about this dream? Anything unusual in the nature of it? Cattle do not usually eat cattle. If it said, there were seven fat cattle and seven lean lions and the seven lean lions ate the seven fat cattle, we might understand something about it. There was the abundance of the harvest of the years and then the lean years. We are told this was done in order that it might be established (41:32). This is one of the ways God used to impress upon the people that Joseph's God and the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was indeed the true and living God and superior to any idolatrous god worshiped in Egypt.

This is but another reminder that God's ways are not man's

ways. The way God selects leads a man to accept it simply because of his faith in God, not because human wisdom can explain it. These wise men or magicians represented the wisdom of Egypt, and they had no explanation. When we accept it upon the basis that this is what God planned and this is God's way, then it does away with human pride and glory and contributes glory to God.

Verse 8 talks about the magicians. I believe this is the first mention of this in the Bible. In Genesis 3, when Eve looked at the tree, she said, "It is desired to make one wise." I think that is intended to show the danger of man trying, by his own wisdom, to get himself into a position where he can live without God. Eve was trying to become independent of God. Study the line of Cain and there is no recognition of God and they lived by their own wisdom. The line of Seth lived by faith which is based on the revelation of God. When they intermarry (Genesis 6), the world becomes so wicked there is the flood. Following the flood, we have the building of the tower of Babel and the separation of nations. In Egypt with these magicians, we have a picture of man, apart from God and by his own wisdom, trying to handle matters. These magicians, sorcerers and astrologers all attempted to peer into the future, but God has so arranged it with man that the invisible world around us can be understood and appreciated only by divine revelation. Remember the line of the nations (Genesis 10, 11) with the confusion of tongues. Then, we have the calling and separation of Abraham with God placing revelation channeling through Abraham. Abraham goes into Egypt and God makes himself known in Egypt. Things have grown and here is a sample of the nation apart from revelation and their attempt to try to peer into the things that are unknown. With that in mind, it is important for us to see Joseph going into Egypt, having the divine revelation and being one that can interpret and make known dreams, that can peer into the future. This is involved in bringing the knowledge of God into Egypt and to introduce the knowledge of God to the world at that time.

Joseph has been humiliated by being placed in prison while he was innocent, now we will see him exalted. He goes from prison to the next place to the king. The principle the Bible teaches is, the way up is the way down. This is one of life's most difficult lessons. The man that humbles himself, God will exalt. That took place in the case of Christ (Philippians 2). All that takes place in the life of Joseph results from the

influence of God in his life (Genesis 39:9; 40:8; 41:16,32,51). We need to see God in relation to more things in life. Joseph allowed God to influence his life and, out of that influence, developed the character that we have described in this section of Genesis. Some of the statements he makes indicate his faith in God. Joseph wanted Pharaoh to understand that what was going to happen was under the oversight and supervision of God (41:25,28,38). This was God's way of making himself known to the Egyptians, particularly to Pharaoh at this time, and to all around them. Don't you know that had an impact upon Pharaoh! I am not sure how much knowledge Pharaoh may have had concerning the matter of Joseph's inspiration, but he recognized that the God of Abraham was indeed the one that was making known to Joseph the interpretation of the dream. Joseph's steward, evidently, has come to have some knowledge and understanding of it (43:23). This would indicate that Joseph had made known to him what is taking place or he had come to some knowledge that the God Joseph served was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, showing to some degree the influence of God in Egypt. This will help to prepare the way for the judgment that will take place later on Egypt.

Joseph is promoted (41:39,40). This places Joseph above all the magicians and wise men in Egypt. We are living in a day and age when, because of the inventions of men, we are being led to believe that man can handle any problem, that he knows everything. It has been real interesting to me how disappointed some scientists have been because the exploration of the moon and Mars did not turn out like they thought it would. They were just so sure that, when they got to the moon, they would have the last straw that established evolution and, lo and behold, when they got up there, that is not the way it turned out. The same thing is true about Mars. God has ways of confusing the wisdom of man (1 Corinthians 1:23-28). I think it would be good if those scientists could read those passages. The men in Egypt were just dumbfounded by the dreams. Joseph could explain it because God revealed it to him and it was in view of the things God was going to do. I never read verse 43, but what I think about Philippians 2; about the humiliation and exaltation of Christ and it says that every tongue shall confess and every knee shall bow.

Joseph married an Egyptian. The sons of God married the daughters of men and we have the problem that developed and the

flood (Genesis 6). Abraham sends to get a wife for Isaac, Esau marries the Canaanites, Judah married a Canaanite and, now, we have Joseph marrying an Egyptian. Joseph, marrying, becomes a naturalized citizen of Egypt, being placed in the position he is in. This becomes a step in getting them into the land where they will be separated from the Egyptians and in the richest part of the land. We have the birth of Joseph's two sons. With the birth of Manasseh, Joseph said, "For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house." All that has happened to Joseph is not such to cause him to become bitter. He accepts it in the right spirit and way. The second son is called, Ephraim, "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."

We have the introduction to the seven years of plenty and then, the seven years of the famine as Joseph said. We are told that in all the land of Egypt there was bread. Then, there came the famine in Egypt and the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. "Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do." Joseph's interpreting the dreams would become known by the people throughout all the land (46). He would have to make himself known as a representative of Pharaoh in making preparations in the time of plenty. Thus, the knowledge of Joseph is spread throughout all Egypt. There is not any wonder that the language is used, later on, concerning a Pharaoh that brought the people into bondage, "there arose a Pharaoh that knew not Joseph." We could visualize the knowledge of Joseph being scattered throughout all the land of Egypt and, in so doing, that he is an instrument of the true and living God. We think about God making himself known by direct revelation through the law that was given, but God was making himself known to the Egyptians in Joseph interpreting the dreams. That was a revelation of the God of Abraham being the only true and living God. The fact that his servant could do what the magicians in Egypt could not do.

The famine is going throughout all the earth (Genesis 41:56,57). This knowledge concerning Joseph is made known, and God is introduced to people in this way.

Genesis Forty-Two

The famine begins to affect the land of Canaan. In the time of

famine, Abraham went into Egypt (Genesis 12). We are going to see a change that will take place in Joseph's brothers, particularly, in Judah. "And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt" (42:3). Where is the other brother? Who was the youngest? Benjamin was the full brother of Joseph, the only full brother he had. "But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren." Why did not Jacob send Benjamin? That Benjamin was the son of Rachel and because of Jacob's unusual love for Rachel, I think is a part of the reason. The famine develops and they have to leave the land of Canaan and Joseph is the governor they come to (6). They were doing the very thing Joseph's dreams had portrayed, and one of the things for which they despised him. It needs to be kept in mind, in connection with the action of Joseph, that this is done to bring about penitence on the part of his brothers and to test them. Joseph saw his brethren and knew them. How do you explain the fact that Joseph knew his brothers and they did not know who Joseph was? They would not have changed as much as he had. The last time they saw Joseph, they had sold him as a slave and they would not dream about him going from slavery to the second place in the kingdom of Egypt. Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them (9). Joseph accuses them of being spies. His purpose in doing this is to see what they are going to say.

Joseph recognizes them and questions concerning Jacob. With Joseph questioning and giving some tests to his brothers, we are able to see how repentance is brought about and the need of repentance (13). Notice, he does not tell what happened to the one, he just says that he is not. Some of the events are Joseph testing his brothers to see what kind of change has been made (16-18). He put them in ward and let them study that three days. "I fear God" helps the brothers be reminded of the fact that Joseph believes in and serves God. In a way, this is Joseph's method of preaching to his brothers to try to bring them to penitence. We see the tenderness of the heart of Joseph (21-24). They start on their way back home and find their money in the sack (28). This is the first time they make reference to God. They are allowed to return home, by Simeon staying, and they are to bring Benjamin back.

There are things we need to think about in connection with sin, guilt, penitence, and forgiveness. Genesis is intended to set forth the principles in relation to sin; how it works, how it affects us inwardly and

outwardly and how sin is to be dealt with. Time does not blot out sin. Think about the years that had gone by since they sold Joseph and you would think, with all these years gone by, that would be the end of it. That is not the case. As soon as they run into trouble, the very first thing that comes to their mind is, look what we have done. This is because of our sin. This is the result of the way we treated Joseph. The only way to get rid of wrong doing is in the proper way. A purpose of the Bible is to help people understand what is wrong, to help them correct the wrongs and to get rid of the consequence that comes from having done wrong. The fact they are in Egypt may bring back memories of their wrong doing in selling Joseph because the people [who bought Joseph] were headed to Egypt.

The one that was a dreamer has now become their brother and he is a child (21,22). That was not one of the ways they talked about him previously. In connection with this, we see Joseph's love for his brothers and we learn some things about love. (1) Joseph, because of his love, was concerned about his brothers. Instead of Joseph thinking about the manner in which he had been treated, he was concerned about their welfare. He was interested in the correction of the wrongs in their lives in relation to the purpose and promise of God. Love is concerned, above everything else, about a person's spiritual welfare because this has to do with people's destiny. (2) Love is longsuffering (1 Corinthians 13:4). Look how longsuffering the love of Joseph was in connection with his brothers. (3) Love is forgiving.

I want to talk about the matter of conscience. In the King James translation, the word is not even found in the Old Testament. I do not believe that is by accident. It is certainly not because people in the Old Testament did not have a conscience because, in our lesson today, we have an example of conscience working. We know also from Romans 2:14,15 that people did have a conscience because it talks about the conscience of the Gentiles during this period of time. Conscience is one thing we cannot hide from. The word, conscience, means a knowing with oneself that which is right based on revelation. Conscience means a knowing together, a person with God based upon revelation. God, by his word, enables us to understand his mind and what is right and we know whether or not that is the way we followed. There will never be any peace of mind and heart until one learns the function of conscience and how the Bible is related to conscience. The scheme of redemption

is intended to deal with the problems we have with conscience and enable us to have peace of mind. Look at the problem of Joseph's brothers because of a guilty conscience (Genesis 42:21,28). A guilty conscience brings about fear, and that is an important factor in bringing about repentance. If a man's conscience allowed him to do wrong and be at peace, then the opportunity of disturbing, converting and correcting would be gone. God made us so there is a knowing with ourselves that keeps us from being at ease and at peace when we are wrong. We ought to be glad it is that way. If, when we have done wrong, there was not something to upset us, then we could go on in that course of life and be lost eternally, in peace of mind, while we have been wrong all the time. Therefore, our conscience performs an effective service unless we mistreat and abuse it.

Let us look at some things the Bible says about conscience. In 1 Corinthians 8:7, Paul talks about a weak conscience. What makes a conscience weak? Insufficient knowledge of the Bible produces a weak conscience. Part of the price we pay for a lack of proper Bible knowledge is a conscience that is upset when it ought not be. In that same passage, Paul said a man may have a weak conscience and then, eating meat to an idol, his conscience is defiled, that is, become dirty, guilty. That is what sin does. A man may have a defiled conscience, without being guilty of sin, if he does not understand what the Bible teaches in the area of matters of indifference (Romans 14). We must always distinguish between matters of faith, matters of indifference and matters of judgment and, unless we distinguish in these areas, we will have problems. In 2 Timothy 1:3, Paul said he had a pure conscience. A pure conscience is one that is sincere, not mixed with false attitudes and free from everything that is false. In order for us to have right kind of conscience, we must have one that is pure. It has to be free from false teaching. In Hebrews 10:22, we have the mention of an evil conscience and an evil conscience is one that is living under the impact and effect of sin. That is what is happening to Joseph's brothers. In 1 Timothy 4:2, Paul mentions a seared conscience. A person can continue to do wrong, when he knows it is wrong, until he gets to where he thinks it is not wrong. A seared conscience is just like, if you burn a place on your finger, it loses sensation. Suppose you begin gradually missing attendance of the assemblies. You stay away deliberately. The first time you do that, your conscience will bother you. Then, you come

back and the next time you miss twice. It will still bother you, but you do that for a while and miss more and more and, after a while, you will get to where missing just does not bother you. That is the way to sear your conscience.

How do you obtain the right kind [of conscience]? The contrast between Judaism and Christianity is set forth in Hebrews 9:13,14. The ceremonialism in Judaism purified the flesh and made it possible for a man to approach God in worship. It did not purify the heart. The next chapter tells us there is a remembrance of sin again every year (10:1-4). The blood of Christ is intended to purge or cleanse the conscience (9:14). If it were not for that, there would not be anyway anybody could ever have peace of mind. Our imperfections would turn us into miserable human beings or everyone of us would sear our conscience until, finally, we destroy our conscience. God, in his goodness and mercy has arranged the system that enables us to admit our mistakes, get rid of them, let them be in the past and have peace of mind. This is what Jesus had in mind (John 14:27). The gospel of Christ is the only thing that can do that, therefore, the blood of Christ is intended as a means and as an atonement for purging our conscience. Joseph's brothers needed something to help them handle the problems they were having and be able to get rid of them. We read 1 Peter 3:21 and "putting away of the filth of the flesh" is what we read in Hebrews 9:13. That is talking about the Judaistic system where all that was applied at that time was that which purified the flesh. The parenthesis of 1 Peter 3:21 shows baptism is not like that Judaistic system. In my judgment, the Revised Standard Version comes nearer giving the truth of what the passage has in mind for it says, "the seeking after a good conscience." Here is a man living under sin. He wants to get out from under the guilt of that conscience. How is he going to do it? Through faith, penitence and confession. He is now ready to have his conscience purged by the blood of Christ and cleansed when he is baptized. Being baptized, he is seeking to get a conscience that is freed from sin. It is unfortunate that people have been misled to believe they can have a conscience that is cleared, cleansed and purged by the blood of Christ at faith only. That is not true! That is the reason 1 Peter 3:21 reads like it does. The waters transported Noah from one world to another and, likewise, baptism transports one from the kingdom of the Devil into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Colossians 1:13) and, therefore, you have a good conscience.

In Hebrews 13:18, you have a reference to a good conscience. The word, good, comes from a Greek word which means, beautiful, excellent, one that is worthy of praise.

So often in life, we look at the events of today instead of taking the long look (42:36). We think it is against us when, in reality, it may be for us. The thing Jacob said was against him, in reality, was for him. Joseph going into Egypt was for Jacob. Simeon staying in Egypt was one way they would go back. They left Simeon in Egypt, but they did not take Benjamin on back down there. The brothers still had some things to learn along with Jacob. They wait until they run out of food and it is under pressure that they go back. It is only because of starvation. They do not have anywhere else to turn.

Joseph, being in Egypt and the matter of bread is a solemn reminder that man's greatest need is simple things. There are staples of life. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." Sometimes, we have to come to the end our way, like they did, before we realize what we need more than anything else are spiritual things. We just do not live by material things. We have to get to the place where we learn that these do not satisfy and we have needs that are not fulfilled by material things. In our present society, in many instances, we have tried to provide and satisfy our young people with material things and they have not satisfied. They needed love, spiritual direction and guidance and life is empty without them. There is something on the inside of man that material things will not touch. They come to the place where they have to have bread. There is only one place to get bread and, according to God's arrangement and direction, that is in Egypt. In the same way, God arranged for us to have bread and in only one place and that is in Christ. I think this is what Jesus had in mind in Matthew 4:4. The words that proceed out of the mouth of God deal with man's deeper, fundamental needs. The directions, content and provisions made in that word enable man to live. To attempt to live without the Bible is to live a life that is empty, disturbed, confused, anxious, useless and lacking in substance and meaning. To live by the Bible is to live the only life that is worth living, that has meaning, purpose, direction. This is one of the reasons the Bible talks about the purpose of God (Ephesians 3:10-11). Every life that becomes tied to the purpose of God, obedient to the gospel and living according to his word is a life with purpose.

Questions

Read the Text

1. "It is not in me: _____ shall give Pharaoh an answer of _____."
2. "And Joseph saw his brethren, and he _____ them"

Research the Text

1. Discuss how God's ways are not man's way.
2. Discuss how the way up is the way down.

Review the Text

1. How many of Joseph's brethren went to Egypt to buy bread?

Lesson 10

Joseph: Benjamin Comes and Joseph Reveals Himself

Lesson Text: 43-45

Genesis Forty-Three

The famine will continue and there will be the need for them to go back [to Egypt] and Jacob tries to get them to go without Benjamin. Judah insists that would not be worthwhile because Joseph said, "Come without Benjamin and there will be no corn." Jacob is disturbed because they let the man in Egypt know they had a brother (43:6). Because of the seriousness of the famine, Jacob agrees to let them go. Judah agrees to be surety for Benjamin (9) and Jacob arranges for them to take some things including the money they had received (11,12). The fact the brothers told Jacob the straight of the matter concerning the money shows the change taking place in them. They returned to Egypt with Benjamin. Joseph prepared to eat with them and the brothers are afraid (16-18). They explain about the money to the steward (19-22). This shows they are trying to do right. The answer of the steward (23) shows Joseph is making known his faith in Egypt and that his God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. With Joseph bringing the knowledge of God into Egypt, when the Egyptians spurn that knowledge and there arises a king that does not know Joseph, God is in a position to judge Egypt.

The brothers bring the present to Joseph and bow to him. This fulfills the dreams Joseph had concerning their bowing to him (26). Joseph inquires of his father's welfare and his brothers tell him Jacob is well (27,28). Joseph sees Benjamin and Benjamin is described as "his mother's son" (29). This emphasizes the love Jacob had for Rachel. The use of the name of God is Joseph trying to impress upon his brothers the importance of God in their lives. Joseph is overcome with emotion and has to leave (30,31). The language here shows the tenderness of character and heart Joseph had maintained in spite of all the difficulties. This indicates the influence of God in his life. When we pass through difficulties, it is easy to become hardened.

The Egyptians are removed from the brothers in eating (32) and this is a step in the separation of Jacob's family when they come to Egypt. We have Joseph testing his brothers to see what kind of change they have made (33,34). He gives Benjamin five times as much as the rest. Remember how they felt toward Joseph because of the coat Jacob gave him? Benjamin is a son of the same mother, how do they feel about him? How do they treat him? When they see him get special treatment, how will they react?

They are involved in the ordinary affairs of life, yet what they are doing is testing their faith. We are prone to think of the worship services as connected with faith, but, when we leave, not see that how we live our lives is also connected with faith. The Bible sets forth principles that are to govern us in our work and in relation to others just as it does in relation to worship.

Genesis Forty-Four

As they returned home, they found a silver cup in Benjamin's sack and this becomes another test as to their penitence. This cup is described as being used to divine (44:5). Does this mean Joseph really used it for this? If I had to speculate, I would say this is that to which the Egyptians attributed Joseph's ability to interpret dreams because that is what they would use to try to do such. I doubt Joseph was involved in such because God had revealed things to him. Read chapter 37 and compare the attitude of the brothers about Joseph with what you are going to see now. When they are overtaken, they plead their innocence (7-9). Look at the difference in their attitude. The steward agreed to their suggestion (10). When the cup is found in Benjamin's sack, they all return to the city (12,13). Joseph asked them what they had done (15). Judah, again, refers to their sin (16). Joseph makes known his intention to keep Benjamin as a servant and let the others go free (17). We have the intercession of Judah and see the change that has taken place (18-34). This is one of the finest appeals, filled with pathos and emotion, that will be found anywhere in the Old Testament.

Notice some things about repentance. (1) In these tests, Joseph is looking for the fruit of repentance (Matthew 3:8). There is something that issues forth from the life that is penitent. Repentance made the difference in the attitude seen now compared with that of chapter 37.

(2) In order for there to be penitence, there must be consciousness of sin. We have seen the fear and the memories that keep coming up until, finally, there is the recognition of the grievous sin of which they have been guilty. One of the reasons our penitence is no deeper than it is, is because we do not think deeply about sin. We think of it lightly and, because we think of it lightly, we repent hurriedly and it does not last long. It is only when we see sin in its true light that there will be the kind of penitence there needs to be. (3) Repentance not only changes our mind about sin, it changes our attitudes. Read the appeal of Judah and think about the attitudes expressed. There is care and concern. To go back without Benjamin and hurt his father is more than Judah can bear. How different that is from chapter 37! Think about the prodigal (Luke 15). Look at the attitudes he expressed when he came back. Pride is gone and humility is seen. (4) There is a change of conduct that issues from repentance. Our attitudes affect our conduct. Penitence prepares the soil in which Christianity and attitudes are planted and here is a good example of it.

Genesis Forty-Five

Joseph makes himself known to his brothers, then we have their going back and telling Jacob that Joseph is alive. When we began our study of the Bible with the entrance of sin (Genesis 3), we saw how the scheme of redemption was set up with the emphasis, in Genesis 4, that man worships God through faith and atonement. All the way through, we have seen the vital nature of faith. All the difficulties of the trials that have happened, as far as Joseph is concerned, are accepted in the spirit of faith. Joseph had some dreams and realized these dreams indicated his place in the purpose of God in relation to man's redemption. One of the things we can learn from Joseph is that the man of faith comes to the understanding of life, sooner or later, provided he holds on to his loyalty to God in the midst of all kinds of circumstances, tests and trials of life. We have seen the danger of trying to determine the important issues of life without taking the long look.

Note three things about Joseph's faith set forth in chapter 45. Joseph looks back over the past and points out that, in spite of all the things he has been through, there was the overruling providence of God

and, tied to the overruling providence of God, was God's purpose, God's plan. Joseph understood these things were happening for the benefit of mankind in general and the development of the scheme of redemption as it had to do with the promise God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as Israel. (1) The Christian looks up in faith and believes in God regardless of how dark the day may be. That is what we have seen about Joseph. Look at some of the things he has been through: sold by his brothers, making progress in Egypt only to be lied on and cast into prison, stayed there two years, when he had interpreted the dream for a man and said, "Remember me," and the man did not do it, Yet, through all of this, Joseph never lost his faith in God. You know there were some dark days, and it is not possible for us to live in a world that is affected by so many things without there being dark days. Whenever these days come, we need to remember, like Joseph did, that our faith in God is to be maintained. We are not to give up our faith. (2) The man of faith looks on in assurance that the divine purpose will be realized in spite of the difficulties. That is what Joseph believed. This is one of the things we need to watch carefully as we study the Old Testament as a means of encouraging our own faith. There is no way God can be God, the maker and ruler of the universe and be defeated in his purpose and plan. That means, regardless of how dark it may be, what the difficulties may seem to be, when I accept the purpose of God as the ultimate aim of life, there is no way I am going to loose. (3) The day comes when faith looks back and understands some of the strange circumstances through which it has been. Look at Joseph as he looks back over his life. His brothers are upset when he makes himself known and, in view of the fact Joseph is next to Pharaoh, concerned about what he is going to do to them. Joseph looks back over it all and says, "I know what you meant, but I know what God had in mind." There are times in our lives when we have difficulty understanding just why, but, if we will maintain our faith in God, there will come the time when faith can look back and understand some things we could not understand while it was happening.

We are living in a time when the home is disintegrating. We have seen, from the beginning of our study, that the home is a basic unit of society. It is the oldest institution known to man, has its origin with God, and we have the account of the institution of it in the second chapter of Genesis. We have seen how the break up of the home,

because of a disregard for God, brought about the judgment of the flood (Genesis 6). We have seen Abraham's concern about the marriage of Isaac because of the important religious principles (Genesis 24). When Judah married a woman of Canaan, this begins setting forth the importance of their getting out of Canaan. When they get into Egypt, they will go into Goshen and there be separated from the Egyptians. Joseph married an Egyptian, but there was an overriding purpose in connection with this.

As you look at the account of Joseph making himself known unto his brothers, there are some things that are set forth as principles that are fundamental to a stable home life (45:1-15). This is one of the finest accounts of the character of Joseph. As we read this account, we look at some things in relation to the home.

Joseph's mind goes back through the years that have been and the memories of home while he was there for seventeen years. Home ought to be a place of pleasant memories. It is unfortunate whenever home life is such that the thought of it gives pain rather than joy and satisfaction. Think about how much better off this world would be if, when people thought about home, there would be precious memories that would flood the soul of lessons learned and associations there. I fear that, in the haste and hurry in which we are living today, our homes become like a hotel and the associations formed there do not produce the memories that ought to follow one through life and become a treasured thing and make an imprint upon character. Those who had the opportunity of living in homes that were God-fearing, where there were the proper kind of associations, even after the mother and father are gone, [have] memories that follow one through life and even help to make decisions. We need to learn to live a little bit slower and see that our homes are not just a place to eat and sleep.

The importance of privacy (45:1). Joseph realized, here is a family and, as a family, they needed privacy. There were thoughts, memories, problems, relationships that were involved that the world had no right to see. Home ought to be a place where children and parents can talk about the most intimate problems of life. Home is not what it ought to be whenever people have to turn somewhere else to be able to talk about their problems. Parents need to encourage their children that, regardless of what your problem may be and whether or not I may be able to approve of what you have done, one thing I want

you to know is you can come talk to me and I will understand. Not only will I understand your problem, I will listen and try to help. Parents need to realize the importance of trying to establish a home where privacy will be respected.

Home should be a place of tenderness (45:2). Home needs to be a place where the emotions can be developed, where affections can be encouraged and where tenderness is appreciated. One of the inherent characteristics of humanity is the desire to be loved and appreciated. Many of the problems that developed with people developed because they felt they were unappreciated and unloved. I suspect that some of the problems of crime that we are confronted with today, have developed because young people grew up in homes where they knew they were not appreciated, where they were not loved. Child abuse, wife abuse and even husband abuse is a shocking thing for people that are supposed to be civilized.

Home must be a place of forgiveness. The association of people in homes tends to make their imperfections more glaring. Most of the time, when boys and girls are courting, they think each other is perfect and each of them tries to encourage the other one to believe that. They marry and learn that what they have been led to believe is far from being true, that there are not any perfect people. The success of marriage turns upon learning how to deal with imperfections. You do not have any problem dealing with the good characteristics of other people. The problem comes in being able to handle the spots and, in order to be able to do that, forgiveness is necessary. Peter said to the Lord one time, "If I forgive my brother seven times that takes care of it, doesn't it?" Jesus said, "that does not. Seven times seven," which means there is no end to it and that is true as far as people in the home are concerned. Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph," and, in so doing, he is making known to his brothers that the past is put into the past. He has seen their penitence, their change in attitudes and forgiveness is involved in that.

Home is a place where conscience needs to be developed (45:3). Conscience is an important thing, and it is something we need to learn to deal with in relationship to forgiveness. To be forgiven and yet, not forgive oneself, is to live in turmoil. Look at the situation of Joseph's brothers. "His brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence." You would think they would be overjoyed, but, no.

They think, though Joseph has revealed himself to them, he is going to hold something against them.

Home ought to be a place of understanding (45:4). Home needs to be a place where we come to understand some things about life and one another. We ought to be able to understand the weaknesses and frailties of one another and help one another. The home that lacks understanding in relationship to the weaknesses of one another will always have difficulty in adjusting to some of the problems that arise.

Home ought to be a place where we can see the hand and providence of God (45:5). I do not believe we can point out in detail the providence of God as it is pointed out here in relation to Joseph's life. Joseph was guided by inspiration and this enabled him to look back and point out some of the things that are taking place. We need to develop the attitude of heart and mind that the Bible teaches the providence of God. I know that miracles do not take place today, but, evidently, the providence of God can operate aside from miracles. When we come to the study of Esther, we will see how God's providence operated and there is not a single miracle in the book. One of the reasons there is not a single miracle in Esther is to show that the providence of God and the miraculous do not come in the same category.

Home ought to be a place of service (45:7). Joseph thought about his life as being one of serving his family. If home is to be a place of success, it is to be a place of service. Jesus said, "he that humbleth himself will be exalted. He that would be greatest among you, let him become the servant of all." That is a general principle, but it applies as surely at home as it does anywhere else. We should think about home, not as a place to be served, but as a place where we can serve.

Home is a place where we learn respect (45:9). In spite of all the honors Joseph had obtained, Jacob was still his father. That is respect. One of the unfortunate things in our present society is we have lost respect for authority in general. Children need to respect their parents and parents need to respect children. We fail to give consideration to the fact that people are individuals and there is a dignity that belongs to every life. They need to be dealt with in a way that indicates respect. The child that does not learn to respect his parents will not respect other people. This is a place where children really learn respect when parents have respect for God, listen to his word and are interested in doing what the Bible teaches.

Home is a place of great rewards. Perhaps, there is not any more difficult work than being a parent or a good son or daughter, but there is not anything that will bring richer rewards than trying to build a home upon the proper basis and to practice the principles set forth in the Bible. Think about all the struggles and the heartaches Jacob had been through. You would think this is enough to destroy. Then, you begin to see the struggles, heartaches and difficulties in adjusting one to another, how these have been worked out in spite of the tremendous problems and mistakes made. When the famine comes and here is the problem they are all facing together, look at the rich rewards that come out of all of these. Read the latter part of chapter 44 and listen to Judah's plea and appeal for his father. Think about the rewards Jacob was reaping when he had a son that, through the struggles, toil and mistakes of life, had come to the place where he could make a plea like he did. That is enough to make a father say, "All I paid and all the trouble I have been through is rewarded a thousand times." When you see Joseph, as next to Pharaoh with all the progress he had made, think about what a reward that was to Jacob. See the family as they become knit together in spite of all they have been through and seventy souls come into Egypt and from this will develop a nation that will become the hope of the world. In spite of all the heartaches, trials, concern and care that parents have, to be able to instill in your children some principles of faith, fidelity, loyalty, interest in things that are right, brings rewards that are beyond anything that will ever cost.

Home is a place of care for parents (45:11). Look at Joseph's concern for Jacob. Jacob is an aged man, but Joseph said, "I will see that you are taken care of," That is what he does. Children need to do all they can to care for their parents.

They come back to Canaan to Jacob. Joseph's brothers had made Jacob believe Joseph was dead and he had lived through these years believing that, yet that was false all the time. When the truth was told, this preconceived idea made it difficult for him to believe the truth (45:26). People hear things that are false and are made to believe that it is true so that, whenever you really confront them with the truth, they are like Jacob. They have preconceived ideas and they say, "That just cannot be true." There have been people brought up with denominational ideas that are not in the Bible. When you sit down with your Bible and begin to read and study with them, tell them what the

Bible says, their idea is, that just cannot be that way. They finally convinced him (45:28).

QUESTIONS

Read the Text

1. "If thou wilt send our ____ with us, we will go down and buy thee ____."
2. "Benjamin's mess was _____ times so much as any of _____."
3. "And he searched . . . and the cup was found in _____ sack."
4. "For how shall I go up to my father, and the ____ be not with me?"
5. "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am _____ . . . presence."
6. "And God sent me before you to _____ you a posterity in the earth, and to _____ your _____ by a great deliverance."
7. "And thou shalt dwell in the land of _____ . . . And there will I _____ thee . . . poverty."
8. "And he fell upon his brother _____ neck, and wept; and _____ wept upon his neck."
9. "See that ye _____ not our by the way."
10. "And Israel said, _____; Joseph my son is yet ____: I will ____ and ____ him before I ____."

Research the Text

1. Before the brothers return to Egypt, what shows the change taking place in them?
2. For what does the brothers being separated from the Egyptians in eating set the stage?
3. Discuss divination as it related to Joseph.
4. List and discuss four things about repentance seen in Chapter 44.
5. Discuss Judah's intercession for Benjamin to Joseph.

Review the Text

1. List and discuss three things about Joseph's faith seen in Chapter 45.
2. Discuss the lessons learned about the home in Chapter 45 and how they apply today.

Lesson 11

Joseph: Jacob comes to Egypt and Settles in Goshen

Lesson Text: Genesis 46-48

Genesis Forty-Six

Jacob came to Beersheba, offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac, and God appears to Jacob in the night and tells him to go into Egypt (46:1-4). God had promised Abraham that from him would come a seed or a nation and that he would give to them the land of Canaan. He warned Isaac not to go into Egypt, but Jacob is being led to go into Egypt. Jacob would come up again out of Egypt, but whenever he did, he would not be alive. God gave Jacob the assurance he would be with them in Egypt and they would return to the land. When Jacob went into Egypt, his faith rested in God. He knew nothing of the details, but he is willing to leave that in the hands of God.

Joseph becomes a link in the chain of the development of the promise and purpose of God, but the fact that preparations are being made for Jacob to go into Egypt with his family and there have the opportunity to grow into a nation, makes it clear that it is Jacob through whom the promise has been channeled. The reason Jacob is brought back into the scene here is because the promise comes from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob, not Joseph. We will learn before we get through Genesis that, instead of going to Joseph, it goes to Judah. It is important to remember the characters we are studying and see the particular niche they fit into. More is said about Joseph than any of the characters in Genesis because he became a link that made the transition from Canaan into Egypt that allowed them to grow into a nation.

The events we are studying now go beyond the matter of food and famine. This is a step in the transformation of seventy people into a nation and Egypt is a place for this to take place. By going into Egypt, they would have room to grow without any hindrance. They go into the land of Goshen, the best part of the land around the Nile, richest as far as their pasture is concerned. This enables them to develop into a pastoral people, and this is one of the advantages of going into Egypt.

Second, it enabled them to be separated from all other people without intermingling with them. If they had stayed in Canaan and begun to grow and develop, it is likely the war-like people there would have made it difficult for them to have the land. God did not intend for them to get the land that way. He wanted them to receive the land as a gift because this is the principle involved in redemption. When we get to Joshua, we will learn that is exactly how they got the city of Jericho. It is conditional through the obedience of faith. Third, taking them into Egypt and allowing them to grow into a nation enabled them to come into contact with the civilization and government of Egypt. When we get to Exodus, we will see how another character becomes a link in the chain in relationship to Egypt and that is Moses. He will pick up where Joseph left off and receive the training that will enable him to take over and lead them.

We have listed the names of the ones that went into Egypt, and we are told there were seventy of them (46:8-27). Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years. Jacob was 130 when he went into Egypt, and 147 when he died. He lived in Egypt long enough to see his descendants grow and prosper, but not long enough to see the trials they had to face.

We have the meeting of Joseph and Jacob, and this is one of the emotional scenes described (46:28-30). Try to imagine having been separated, Jacob having thought Joseph was dead, Joseph's concern about his father and all these years he had not seen him and, now, to be able to meet on an occasion like this with Joseph next to Pharaoh as far as Egypt was concerned.

Genesis Forty-Seven

They were settled in Goshen and separated from Egypt. Jacob knew the purpose of God that this is not to be the final resting place for him or his descendants. When Jacob comes into Egypt, there is an interesting thing in connection with him blessing Pharaoh (47:7-10). They looked at their life as a pilgrimage. They did not believe their living upon this earth was all there was to it. They believed there was something beyond this life. This is the way we need to look at life. It is easy for us to become so interested in and satisfied with the things of this earth that we forget that life is a pilgrimage. We need to live each

day in the realization that we are going somewhere, that this world is not our home. With the materialism of our day, it is easy for us to forget about that and live as though we are going to be here forever. Notice, he says, "the years of the life of my father" and "the days of their pilgrimage." Jacob, blessing Pharaoh, in my judgment, is intended to suggest that, when God placed the blessing in Abraham (Genesis 12:3), that there is the light being brought into Egypt and the blessings of Abraham are being extended and offered to them through the medium of Jacob.

We have Jacob's appeal to Joseph not to bury him in the land (47:29-31). There is the recognition, on the part of Jacob, of the promise God made and that Egypt was not the end. When we read about the death of Jacob, about him being gathered to his people, this took place in Egypt, and it has no reference to his body, but showing his spirit went to be with his people. This is a manifestation of the faith of Jacob.

The people of Egypt, through Jacob and Joseph, had the opportunity to have some knowledge of the God of Abraham.

Genesis Forty-Eight

We have an expression of the faith of Jacob (48:21). He realized he was a channel through which the promise to Abraham had been directed, but, when he came to the end of life and that promise had not reached its consummation, that promise would continue on. These words of assurance on the part of Jacob have come through the patience and persistence of his faith. If you look at the life of Jacob through the struggles he had in trying to gain a faith that would reach a place where it brought rest to the restlessness in Jacob, it is expressed in this verse. When Jacob came to the end of his life, it was not with the feeling that he was someone who was indispensable as far as God's purpose was concerned. He realized he was but a link in the unfolding and development of God's purpose and plan. Think of all the years in which things have unfolded and how redemption has come down, and there have been the individuals that have been the channel through which this promise has developed until the consummation in Christ. You go from Jacob to Joseph, and Joseph has made the preparation for them in Egypt, but Joseph dies. Then, there is Moses and Moses passed

off the scene and there is Joshua. Joshua comes to the end of his pilgrimage and we have the Judges. Samuel becomes the transition from the Judges to the Kings. There is the development of the kings until you come from Saul to David and all the way down. For me to get the idea that the Lord's work is going to stop because I die is to misunderstand the whole teaching of the Bible.

Jacob adopted Joseph's sons. Joseph was in Egypt and married an Egyptian and these sons were born in Egypt, but Jacob selects these and says they will be in my family and will be counted just as Reuben and Simeon. We have introduced the principle of adoption. It had been practiced through Genesis, but it is not made as prominent elsewhere as here. God's selecting Abel instead of Cain was adoption. According to the natural order of things, Cain, the oldest, would have received the prominence. When Cain killed Abel, Seth was selected in his place. We have the same thing in relation to Noah's sons; Shem the youngest. The same thing is true in connection with Abraham and Terah's sons; Haran was oldest. The same thing is true of Isaac and Ishmael and Jacob and Esau. Whenever Jacob started to lay his hands on the head of Ephraim and Manasseh, when he crossed his hands with his right hand going on the youngest, Joseph said, "No, that is not the way." Jacob said, "Yes, this is the way it is going to be." The principle of adoption does not follow the line of natural things or of fleshly succession because the Bible and redemption have to do with the spiritual part of man. If they had understood this when they developed into a nation, they would not have placed the emphasis upon the flesh. They thought because they were Abraham's descendants by flesh, that took care of everything. The principle of adoption is introduced to the man to whom God gave the name Israel. When you get to the New Testament and find the Pharisees saying, "We be Abraham's seed," what does that mean? What is that worth? When Jacob introduced the principle of adoption, setting aside the order of that which would have been natural and fleshly, we have the reminder that is not God's method of selection and acceptance. That is what Jesus said in John 8 and that is what Paul says in Romans 8 and Galatians 4; that it is by adoption that we become children of God.

When you come to the end of Jacob's life, look at the spiritual principles that are now implied, indicated and imbibed in his life. These principles are just as basic to Christianity and the New Testament today

as anything can be. With Jacob, we come to the end of the Patriarchal dispensation and are ready to make the transition from the Patriarchal dispensation to the Jewish age. His faith looks upward to God (Genesis 48:21). God still lives and, because God lives, his purpose and promise will continue. As his faith looked upward, his hope looked forward. There is love that looks outward, and this is expressed by Jacob in connection with the things he has to say about Joseph and his sons and, particularly, in relation to Judah. Jacob, no doubt, lacks some understanding of it, but what we see in Genesis are the principles upon which redemption rests, and these principles find their ultimate consummation and fullness in the gospel. As we think about Jacob and the end of the Patriarchal dispensation, the qualities that produced spirituality are faith, hope and love and that is what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13:13. Here are the three pillars upon which a spiritual life must be built. Those same pillars were recognized by Jacob, and it is well to keep this in mind because the problem that developed with the Jewish nation was the thinking that God's purpose consummated in them as a people, not because of their faith or their obedience, but because they were Abraham's fleshly seed.

These spiritual principles of redemption in Genesis lay the groundwork for the arguments that are made in the epistles in relationship to the problem of the Jews that jumps all the way back over the Jewish age to the Patriarchal age and picks up the foundation upon which Christianity and the gospel rests. They had misunderstood their mission, the nature of God and man and the nature of religion. We need to try to get an overall picture because there are statements in the New Testament that are misleading unless you understand what we are talking about. When we come to the New Testament, we will come across the phraseology, "before the world began." That is not talking about before the creation of the physical universe. We are going back to the Patriarchal age, dealing with this false idea the Jews had that redemption consummated in them as a Jewish people and as a fleshly nation. In arguing against that, Paul goes back and shows that God's purpose and promise originated in the Patriarchal age and what characterized the Patriarchal age was the obedience of faith, spiritual principles, not fleshly characteristics. As you look back over the list I have given; Cain and Abel, Abraham and Haran, Ishmael and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, it is the matter of faith, not the matter of flesh. God,

through the process of the spiritual principle of faith, selected those who were his instruments. The Jews began to think their flesh made them superior, different, better, and that it did not matter how they were on the inside, their hearts did not have anything to do with it, that righteousness had to do with fleshly descent not inward attitudes, faith and obedience.

Paul said, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2). When did man first have a need for life eternal, before creation or after he sinned? When did God make a promise, before creation or did he make it in Genesis 3 and 12 after creation? Surely, he made it in Genesis 3 and 12. He purposed it in Genesis 3 and promised it in Genesis 12. If you want to take the seed of woman as a promise in Genesis 3:15, he promised it in Genesis 3:15. The reason I am trying to call attention to spiritual characteristics that have to do with the Patriarchal age is to help us be able to see, when we begin to study the development of the Jewish nation, the problems and misunderstanding they had which led to their failure to appreciate their mission.

Verse 16 is the first time we find the word, "redeemed," in the Bible. As you come to the close of the Patriarchal age, Jacob has some knowledge that man's chief problem is the need of redemption from all evil. Look at Psalms 34:21-22. "Evil" is used in the sense of the man that hates righteousness and the consequence is that they shall be desolate. God redeems. The manner of redemption is through the obedience of faith. That is what "trust" indicates. You have the contrast between the evil and those that are redeemed. Before we get to the end of Genesis, we see there has been unfolding God's plan to untangle man in the bondage of sin in which he had gotten caught up and, involved in that, will be the principles we have been looking at and we can see it has to do with redemption.

Jacob's name is going to be named on them. Two passages go back to this as a background (Amos 9:12; Acts 15:17). Jacob's name was changed to Israel and the last two letters of that word in Hebrew mean God. To call the name of Israel upon people was to use the name of God. Every time they spoke of themselves as being of Israel or Israelites, the word, itself, would include the name of God. We find in Acts 11 that the name, Christian, was a God-given name. It was given when the Gentiles were called out, and that is what Acts 15:17 has

reference to. Every time we use the word, Christian, we are using the name of Christ.

Questions

Read the Text

1. "I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into _____."
2. "I will go down with thee into ____; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and _____ shall put his hand upon thine _____."
3. "All the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were _____ and _____."
4. "And Joseph brought in _____ his father, and set him before ____; and Jacob _____ Pharaoh."
5. "And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt _____ years."
6. "Bury me not, I pray thee in _____."
7. "Thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh . . . are mine; As _____ and _____, they shall be mine."
8. "And Israel stretched out his _____ hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the _____, and his _____ hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands _____; for Manasseh was the _____."

Research the Text

1. Who told Jacob to go into Egypt?
2. What is the significance of Jacob's being re-introduced in Chapter 46?
3. What is the significance of Israel's being in Goshen?
4. Discuss looking at life as a pilgrimage.
5. What does Jacob's being gathered to his fathers mean?

Review the Text

1. Discuss how God's plan of redemption passes from individual to individual until you get to Christ.
2. Discuss Jacob's adoption of Joseph's sons.
3. What will happen to God's purpose and promise when Jacob dies?
4. What three qualities produced spirituality in the Patriarchal dispensation? How does this apply to us today?
5. Discuss the meaning and importance of "redeemed."

Lesson 12

Jacob's Death

Lesson Text: Genesis 49

Genesis Forty-Nine

We have Jacob, by inspiration, pointing to the future of these tribes (49:1). This is the first occasion for the phrase, "in the last days," to be used in the Bible. The language used by Jacob is intended to show that God never had any purpose for the Jewish nation to be a permanent nation of people in relation to his covenant, purpose and promise. If you look at some of the passages, as this unfolds through the Old Testament, you can realize this (Deuteronomy 4:30; Isaiah 2:1-4; Daniel 2:28). This dream of Nebuchadnezzar had reference to the Babylonians, [the Medo-Persians], the Grecians, then the Romans and, in chapter 9, we see the connection to further prophecies. In Mark 1:15, Jesus says, "The time is fulfilled," and it is in Daniel that we have these time prophecies (2,9). 1 Corinthians 10:11; Hebrews 1:2; 9:26. The word, world, is, ages. In Ephesians 1:10, you have a further statement. It is significant that, in the close of the Patriarchal age, even before the beginning of the Jewish age, we find the phraseology, "the latter days," which points to the consummation of the Jewish age and the beginning of the church, an indication that God never intended for the Jewish nation to become a permanent factor in relationship to the scheme of redemption.

One of the major misunderstandings of people today has to do with the Jews. Many claim God made an unconditional covenant with them that involved the land of Canaan. When Christ came into the world, he came to establish a kingdom in the land. One of the arguments they make is that the word, church, is not mentioned in the Old Testament, that what you have in the Old Testament is the kingdom, and Jesus came to set up that kingdom, but the Jews rejected him and made it impossible. Thus, God changed his plan, changed his mind and, changing his plan and mind, the church became a substitute. We are now living, not in the kingdom age, but in the church age, and the church age will last until Christ returns the second time. At that time, he will establish the kingdom he came to set up the first time. That is

accepted by multitudes of people today. Hal Lindsey wrote the book, The Late Great Planet Earth, which insists the Judaistic system will be restored and the temple will be rebuilt. This whole thing gets back to a misunderstanding of what is involved in redemption, and it fails to take into consideration that the promise God made to Abraham in Genesis 12 says, "I will make of thee a nation," that he would give to them the land of Canaan (7). Verse three becomes the heart of the promise God made and the church grows out of that promise. That is spiritual, not physical. It is not material, it has to do with the inward part of man and it has to do with man's redemption from sin. It does not have to do with man's physical existence in this world. This is what causes the confusion and the reason there is so much ado about what is taking place in the Middle East today.

When you look at what characterizes the Patriarchal age in Genesis, you see the emphasis on the things that are spiritual and that have to do with redemption. In Genesis 22, the thing that took place there signified to Abraham what is involved in redemption. Jesus said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56). The name Abraham gave to that place was, Jehovah-jireh, God will provide, and Abraham understood the significance of it. We read in Hebrews 11 that they looked for something beyond the land. They looked for "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (11:10). They were not looking for the physical city of Jerusalem, they were looking for another kind of city. As we continue our study, we will see that even those that constituted the nation were not blessed just because they were Abraham's flesh. That will develop as we study Exodus and Numbers.

Jacob begins to bless and this is prophetic insight. Many of [these prophecies] will be fulfilled, not in the ultimate, but initially, in their going into the land of Canaan. It begins with the firstborn, Reuben (49:3,4). Reuben is described as being as unstable as water. There are some characteristics of water that are related to the idea of instability. (1) No impression upon it is permanent. If you take a jar of water, stick your finger in that water and make a hole, as long as you hold your finger in that water, there will be a hole. As soon as you take your finger out, it is gone. No permanent impression is made. The idea of Reuben being unstable as water indicates, as far as his character is concerned, the difficulty of making lasting impressions. We need to

develop the attitude of mind that enables us to hold characteristics that are for good. (2) Water is easily impressed. You can take a stick or something and make an impression upon water. Sometimes, people are like that. They do not take the time to weigh things, measure things and consider things. Jesus, in the parable of the sower, gave an example of that (Matthew 13:20,21). One of the difficult things is to be able to properly balance thinking and emotion. We need both of them. Intellect, without any kind of emotion, is a cold, calculating thing and it loses its power. It can become hard, harsh and cruel, even though it may have facts. God did not make us simply as an intellectual being, we have emotions as well as intellect. On the other hand, when emotions take over and decisions are made on the spur of the moment or in the midst of emotional excitement, they do not last because they were not thought through, they were not considered. We read that the Bereans searched the scriptures daily to see whether or not the things were so. They took the scriptures, read, measured, thought. (3) Water runs in the direction of least resistance. Water does not run uphill. Sometimes, we allow our lives to go in the direction of the least resistance, but character cannot be built by going in the direction where there is the least resistance. We have to learn to be able to go against resistance and to go up the hill. We need to learn to develop our lives so that we do not drift (Hebrews 2:1). It is easy to allow the tide to carry us the way people in general are going. Young people face peer pressure. The phrase, "every one else is doing it," has the tendency to push people in that direction, and it will with people like Reuben, unstable as water and who go in the direction of least resistance. (4) Water is retained by outward pressure. (5) Water conforms to whatever type of container it is placed in. People that are unstable tend to conform their lives according to the group they are in. We have seen, in the study of the life of Joseph, how different Joseph was from that. When sold into Egypt, Joseph did not conform his life to the people that surrounded him. When Daniel was carried into Babylonian captivity (Daniel 1), he was not like Reuben, unstable as water. He did not conform to those round about him. When it violated the law of God for him to eat things unclean, things the law forbade, Daniel said, "I do not do that." When all around him there were those that did not pray and they insisted that Daniel conform to that kind of living, Daniel, because of the conviction of his heart, refused to conform to what the society around him was like

and prayed as usual. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to conform to the society around them. While the whole nation bowed down before an image, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said, "We do not conform to that." They said, "There is a fiery furnace if you do not." They said, "Get your fire going, we just do not conform to that, that is not the way we live." We do well to learn the danger of allowing our lives to be like Reuben, unstable as water. When that takes place, instead of going against the tide, developing in character and growing in Christian principles, we go the other way.

Simeon and Levi are described as instruments of cruelty (49:5-7). The problem, from the beginning, has been the difficulty of man submitting himself to the will of God. Eve was directed by her own desires and will rather than the will of God, so was Adam. When you get to the New Testament, you will find the denial of self and the placing of God's will uppermost in one's life is the aim of serving God (Matthew 16:24). Jesus said, "nevertheless not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42). It describes the nature of their anger, that it was fierce and their wrath was cruel. We need to learn that even in our zeal for that which is right, we must not be controlled by anger (Ephesians 4:26,27). They allowed their zeal against the wrong done to their sister to cause them to do wrong themselves. They, in their zeal, thought they were condemning the evil that had been committed, yet the manner in which they did it, the cruelty that was involved, was contrary to the very nature of that which is right. We need to learn, in opposing sin, to distinguish between the sin and the sinner. We need to learn not to love the sin, and we also need to learn not to hate the person that is guilty of sin. Hate the sin and love the person. One of the things difficult to learn is, even defending that which is right, to do it in the right spirit and attitude. A good illustration of this is to look at the difference between Saul of Tarsus and Paul the apostle. Paul, as a Jew defending Judaism, was guilty of persecuting. There was cruelty involved. He held the clothes as Stephen was stoned, persecuting Christians, driving them out of Jerusalem, following them all the way to Damascus to bind them and place them in prison. When he became a Christian, he defended the truth with all the courage and strength with which he ever defended Judaism, but look at the attitude and spirit in which he did it. In the defense of the truth, there was always the spirit of kindness and concern, even about his enemies (Romans 10:1). Jacob

disassociated himself with what they were guilty of doing (Genesis 49:6).

We come to Judah (49:8-12). I suspect that, "His hands will be in the neck of his enemies," has a part of its fulfillment in connection with the reign of David and the success of David when he expanded the border of the kingdom as set forth in Genesis 15:18-21. Also, it goes back to the purpose announced in Genesis 3:15,16, denoting the victory. Then, the recognition of the other tribes of the preeminence of Judah. There are some things we need to look at in this connection to help us avoid the misunderstanding of the Jews in relation to their mission and their being the descendants of Abraham. In misunderstanding the nature of their mission, they followed a certain philosophy of life that, just because they were Abraham's descendants, God would bless them in spite of everything. That idea has come to be accepted by people today. The promise came to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob. Jacob had twelve sons and from him would be the twelve tribes, the whole nation, but the promise is placed in Judah. If that covenant God made with Abraham had as its ultimate aim the setting up of an earthly kingdom, with the Jews a special people in relation to that, then it seems strange that one tribe would be selected above the others through which that promise would be channeled. One of the things intended in this prophesy of Jacob is to offset the idea that, just because they were Abraham's descendants, they would be blessed of God apart from any other conditions. The covenant, the promise, was channeled through Judah. If the Jews today are God's special people, as people think, how can they establish that fact? There is not a single Jew today that can establish his tribal lineage. When the temple was destroyed, in AD 70, the records and the lineage were put to an end. Second, since this promise of the Messiah was to come through Judah, if he has not already come, there will never be any way of identifying him because, since no Jew today can identify his tribal lineage, if the Messiah ever comes through the tribe of Judah, nobody can know it. [Third], the fact the promise is placed in Judah, does not eliminate the other tribes from enjoying the blessing or the promise God placed in Abraham because that promise was a promise to be enjoyed by faith. Any individual of any tribe, including Judah, to enjoy that privilege had to enjoy it upon the basis of faith, not just because they were Abraham's descendants. As we study Exodus - Joshua, we will see this is the case. After the

coming of Christ, the Messiah, the tribe of Judah lost its identity and there can never be any way of identifying unless he is the one.

Verse ten is a prophecy concerning Christ. We have here the announcement that the tribe of Judah will always continue until that law giver, Shiloh, the Messiah, comes. When we get to the time of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, the kingdom divided, but it left Benjamin in Judah. More than a hundred and fifty years later, Benjamin and Judah went into Babylonian captivity. Suppose the tribe of Judah never returned from Babylonian captivity, what is going to happen to the promise? Some of the things that take place in connection with the return become vital. When it comes time for the return, there is the king by the name of Cyrus who is ready to see that the remnant returns to the land, that the temple is rebuilt and that things continue on until Christ, the Messiah comes. The tribe of Judah remaining until Christ comes will have fulfilled its mission in providing the Messiah or the promised seed and, that being done, the tribe of Judah will cease to exist literally and physically. The preeminence that was in Judah will now be in Christ and that will be spiritual, not fleshly. You can see the significance of all the records concerning the lineage being done away with when the temple was destroyed.

It said, "a law giver." Psalm 60:7 points to the place of Judah, and it points especially to Christ who was of the tribe of Judah and is Shiloh. He became the lawgiver. In Deuteronomy 18:18-22, Moses points out that God would raise up from among his brethren one like unto him and said that everyone should hearken unto him. Peter quotes this in Acts 3:22. The great commission is given (Matthew 28:18,19), showing that he is the lawgiver. In Hebrews 7, Paul says that with the change of the priesthood there is of necessity a change of the law, so Christ, becoming high priest, also became the lawgiver (Matthew 17:5). Genesis 49:8 points to the coming of Christ and the fact that he is the one that gives the law or the gospel by which men ought to live.

Then, the phrase, "unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Christ is to be the very center and heart of the gospel. He is the center of the Bible in prophecy, in type and shadow and so on (John 12:32). Another rendering of the passage is, "unto him shall the obedience of the people be," underscoring the nature of the obedience. There was Abel's faith in atonement in worship (Genesis 4). There was

Noah and the relationship of the obedience of faith to favor or grace. There was Abraham and the righteousness which is by faith (Genesis 15:6). There is Abraham offering Isaac, and there is the faith in vicarious suffering or substitution where the ram was substituted for Isaac. In Jacob, we have seen the struggle of faith, and in Joseph the victory of faith. All of these emphasized the importance of faith. Before the period of Judaism begins or the nation develops, there is the recognition on the part of Jacob that the obedience that is acceptable unto God is the obedience of faith. One of the things that developed in connection with the Jewish nation was, they rendered ceremonial obedience, outward (Matthew 23). Here is the statement to underscore the obedience of faith and that is what the New Testament teaches (Romans 1:5; 16:25,26). The obedience of faith is individual, not national nor racial.

It is easy for us to allow our services to become ceremonial. This may be a part of what is involved in Paul's discussion of the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 10. It seems to me, the problem in the church at Corinth developed from Judaizing teachers (2 Corinthians 11:11-15,23). The corrupt life, the extreme case of fornication (1 Corinthians 5, a case of incest), Paul mentions that, not because that is all the immorality that was in the church at Corinth, but in view of the fact that here was a case of fornication that even the Gentile world would not have been guilty of. In 2 Corinthians 12:21, Paul mentioned there were many in the church at Corinth that were guilty of the sin of fornication. The problem was, under the influence of false teaching, they thought they could associate in idolatrous worship; eating meat and fornication. If you study 1 Corinthians 10 in that light, it seems likely this false teacher had tried to lead the people at Corinth to believe that, as long as you take the Lord's Supper, in a ceremonial way, like the Jews had kept their ceremonies under the Old Testament and then, lived like they wanted to, then, you can observe the Lord's Supper and, being ceremonially acceptable to God through that means, go right down to the temple and participate in idolatrous worship regardless of what is taking place. It seems to me, this is the context in which he introduces the matter of having the communion of the blood of Christ at the Lord's table and being partakers with demons in idolatrous worship. What we do in worship, unless it becomes an expression of our faith in praising God, is nothing but a ceremony. One of the reasons Christianity has the limited number of avenues of worship is, the greater the number of

ceremonies, the greater the danger and tendency of allowing it to become outward and simply a ceremonial affair, without any obedience of faith. Much of the religion of today is based upon either paganism or Judaistic worship.

Look at the word, "people." In the Hebrew, that word is plural, it is, "peoples." Since the obedience of faith is something that is individual, not racial, it is open to anybody. The Messiah that was to come was to be a lawgiver. If, as the Jews thought, that Messiah was to come and reinstate the reign of David, reestablish a throne of David and reign according to David, then that would have been under the law of Moses. He would not have been a lawgiver. They already had that law. This shows, by anticipation, that the law the Jews would receive from mount Sinai was not intended to be a permanent and lasting law (Romans 8:3; 1 Corinthians 9; Galatians 6). The law of Christ is called, "the perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25), and, "the royal law" (James 2:10-12). Furthermore, verse 18, shows that Jacob is looking forward to something future. He realizes Genesis 3 involves man's spiritual redemption and that the faith of Abraham is the faith that enables one to be righteous before God (Genesis 15:6).

We have the first mention of the word, shepherd, in the Bible (49:24). Anytime you come across a word that is mentioned for the first time, it is worthy of stopping and thinking about. You have tied together here the word, shepherd, and the stone of Israel. I want to call attention to the stone and look at the significance in it. Genesis 28:17,18 is the first mention of "the house of God" in the Bible. When you turn to 1 Timothy 3:15, we find, "the house of God which is the church of the living God." There is not any doubt but what the house of God here becomes the basis upon which that language is used in 1 Timothy 3. This was the night Jacob was running away from home. He spent the night and had a stone for a pillow. You have a tying together of a stone and the house of God in this passage. We come to Jacob, in Genesis 49, and he mentions a shepherd and a stone. Look at some passages (Deuteronomy 32:4,15,18,30,31,37; 2 Samuel 22:2,3,32,47; 23:3; Psalms 61:2; 118:22; Isaiah 8:11-14; 28:16; 32:1,2; Daniel 2:34-35). I suspect the background of Matthew 7:24 goes back to all these passages. Matthew 16:13-18; 21:42; Acts 4:11,12; Romans 9:33; 1 Peter 2:4-10. We have seen, in tracing this through the Old Testament, that this rock comes to stand as a symbol for God and, when we move to

Daniel 2, it comes to stand as a symbol of God's setting up the kingdom. This is the picture of the kingdom as in Isaiah 28:16 and Matthew 16. You look at Acts 4 and see the rejection of the Jews and Peter's statement referring back to the prophecy that pointed to their rejection of Christ. You come to Romans 9, where Paul is discussing the matter of the Jews and he shows they had fulfilled the prophecy of the Old Testament. In chapters 9-11, he shows there was a remnant of the Jews that believed the gospel. In 1 Peter 2, there is the rejection of Christ by the Jews. That the Jews rejected him did not mean he was not all he claimed to be. Then, he shows that Christians are lively stones in this temple that is a spiritual house, not physical and temporal. Here is the fulfillment of what Jacob had reference to.

Genesis 49, and the inspired statements made by Jacob, is intended to show the purpose God had in mind as far as the nation was concerned and to set the tone and the nature of the kingdom of the Messiah that is promised to come through Judah, that it would be spiritual in nature.

Questions

Read the Text

1. "Gather yourselves .. . hearken unto _____, your father."
2. "The _____ shall not depart from _____, nor a _____ from between his feet, until _____ come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."
3. "There they buried _____ and _____ his wife; there they buried _____ and _____ his wife; and there I buried _____."

Research the Text

1. Discuss whether God intended Israel to be a permanent nation.
2. Discuss the prophecies of Jacob concerning each of his sons.
3. Discuss and refute Premillennialism.

Review the Text

1. Discuss how anyone could be a partaker of the promise to Abraham.
2. Discuss "unstable as water."
3. Discuss Judah in relation to the coming of Christ.

Lesson 13

Joseph's Death

Lesson Text: Genesis 50

Genesis Fifty

We have the death and burial of Jacob. The days of mourning, forty days, would have to do with Egyptian practices. Here is the father of a man that is second unto Pharaoh. We have Joseph's brothers being afraid that Joseph would take advantage of them now that his father was dead. Joseph had given all evidence that he had forgiven his brothers, yet they were still suspicious of him. They were afraid to trust him. Look at the problem that was created when they had to struggle in their mind about what their relationship and situation was with Joseph. They thought Joseph did not do anything to them because of his feeling for his father, not that he had just forgiven them. They misread Joseph's action. In order for us to have any peace of mind as Christians, it is necessary for us to understand what the Bible teaches about forgiveness and to trust God's word that that is true. In Hebrews 8, God says, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." When one complied with the conditions set forth in the gospel to obtain the forgiveness of sins, God said, "I do not ever remember that anymore, that will never come to my mind again." We must trust that statement from God. If you begin to wonder if that was really forgiven, that indicates a lack of trust in God, and you will have the same problem Joseph's brothers had. They were disturbed, frustrated. What is going to happen now?

We have Joseph's death (50:22-26). This is about 54 years later. Think about what Joseph has to say in connection with his death. We know the ability of the Egyptians as far as embalming is concerned in view of the bodies found in the pyramids. Look at Joseph's faith in this connection. The faith that had been expressed by Jacob is now expressed by Joseph. Jacob's faith looked backward toward the land of Canaan and the past, but Joseph's faith looked forward. Though Joseph had lived in Egypt all of these years, Egypt had been unable to dim his faith in the promise God made. One of the reasons Egypt had been unable to dim his faith in God's promise was that his heart was in the

land of Canaan because that is where God's promise had been made as far as the descendants of Jacob were concerned (Genesis 12:2). This is the way we keep the world from overcoming us. When our treasures are in heaven, the world in which we live will not be able to dim our faith in the promise God has made nor to influence us.

They embalmed the body of Joseph and placed it in a coffin. Think about all the years that body would be in a coffin. Perhaps, two hundred years will go by before they leave Egypt and begin their journey toward the land of Canaan. Through all these years, here is a coffin. That is a strange thing. You would think that would be depressing. They wandered 40 years in the wilderness and there was his coffin going with them. There are some lessons to be learned from that coffin. (1) That coffin was a solemn reminder of the mortality of man. Joseph had attained the second place to Pharaoh, but, in spite of all of that, he died. We need to remember that. Sometimes, we live as though we are not mortal. Our aims, ambitions and attitudes seem to be such that we think we are going to live eternally in this world. That is not true. (2) That coffin was a sign of hope. Joseph said, "I am going to die, but God will visit you. The land in which you are is not to be your final dwelling place therefore, there is hope." When we see a coffin, the same thing can be an expression of hope for us even more than it was for Joseph's people. When we see a coffin today, there is the empty grave our Lord left as a symbol of hope, that this is not the end of it. We have God's promise that there are things beyond. (3) It was a solemn reminder to every Israelite that Egypt was not their home. There is another place that was to be their home, the land of Canaan. A coffin ought to be a solemn reminder to us that this world is not our home. Our home is elsewhere, above and beyond, it is just not here. We are simply strangers and pilgrims here. (4) That coffin was a reminder of the importance of the patience of faith. Think about the years they spent in Egypt and the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness and lugging this coffin about. Through all of that, it was a reminder of the importance of the patience of faith. Regardless of the trials and difficulties in this life, there is the importance of our faith being patient in view of the promise God has made to us. (5) That coffin was a pledge of their possession. God had promised them the land of Canaan based upon their faith and obedience to the word of God. The generation that left Egypt did not get it because, when they got into the

wilderness, their faith turned to unbelief. Joshua and Caleb did plus the generation of people under 20 years. A coffin is also a pledge of our possession of every promise God has made to us. No promise, based upon God's word, will ever fail to the one that believes and obeys God's word. Joshua 24:32 tells about Joseph's bones being buried in Canaan.

Genesis begins with life and ends with death. Here is a book that began with creation and life of all kinds and with the crown of all creation, man, made in the image and likeness of God, and the last verse of that book tells us of a coffin. Since we have been reading about Joseph's farewell words, I jotted down the following places where we have the final words of some men in the Old Testament and this will make a valuable study. We have Isaac (Genesis 27), Jacob (Genesis 49), Joseph (Genesis 50), Moses (Deuteronomy 29-33), Joshua (Joshua 24), Samuel (1 Samuel 12), David (2 Samuel 23), Simeon (Luke 2), Paul (2 Timothy 4) and Peter (2 Peter 1:12-14). When you have time, sit down and read the last words of these men. It will build your faith and help you to see that the one who lives with his life based upon the word of God, with his faith tied to God and his future in the promises of God, can look at death, itself, in hope and faith.

Genesis: A Review

Genesis closes with Joseph in Egypt. There are three things to think about in connection with Joseph going down into Egypt. (1) It was a place of preservation [of] Jacob and his family. (2) It was a place of education. (3) It was a place of preparation.

Genesis is an introduction to redemption. This is the reason we have the limited amount said concerning the matter of creation. The Bible was never intended to be, primarily, a scientific book. That is not to say science knows anything that contradicts what we read in Genesis 1 and 2, but it is to say the prime emphasis in the Bible has to do with man and his redemption. Science, with all it knows, has to agree with what is said in Genesis, and anything science offers that does not agree with what is said there is because science does not know what it is talking about.

There is a simplicity that characterizes Genesis, the whole Bible for that matter, because the Bible is intended for the average person. Read the account of creation in Genesis 1, and it would be impossible

for man to improve upon the simplicity of the statement. It is a mistake to try to change the Bible from the simplicity that is in it. There is a great deal of difference between simplicity and emptiness. When I use the term, simplicity, about the Bible, I am not talking about something empty. When a man reads Genesis 1, it is stated in simple terms the average person can read and understand, but when you begin to probe its depths, there is enough for one to spend a lifetime studying. We are living in a day and age when a great amount of emphasis is given to intellectual and academic learning, and there is the danger of our trying to take the Bible, a book of redemption, and place it in the framework of man's academic wisdom and intellectual learning. Whenever that happens, we destroy the simplicity in the Bible and attempt to improve upon what God has done. That is the reason 1Corinthians 1 talks about the wisdom of the world and that the world by its wisdom knew not God. Man has to come with an honest heart, in recognition of his ignorance of the things the Bible deals with and, in that attitude, listen to what God has to say. Until a man is ready to do that, he is not ready to read and understand the word of God.

[In] Genesis we have the seeds of redemption which bloom in the New Testament. We will be watching, as we study the Old Testament, these seeds as they are planted and cultivated. Jesus gave a parable concerning the planting of the seed and said, "First there is the planting of the seed, then the stalk, the blade and then the full grown ear."

Genesis gives us some fundamental proofs about God. Genesis sets forth God as Creator, ruler, sovereign and preserver. Genesis enables us to understand something about the nature of God and the means by which he works. Genesis shows the priority and importance of spiritual things and that God is a spiritual being.

Genesis tells the truth about man. Genesis helps us understand something concerning the nature and being of man. If we did not have Genesis, we would be lost to know the origin of man. We would be like philosophers, biologists and others who are trying to find out something about man's origin. We would be floundering in the dark, jumping here and there and holding on to a guess and finding out that guess will not work. Genesis shows that man belongs to two worlds; the physical world in which we live and a spiritual world. Man is a physical being and a spiritual being made in the likeness and image of God, therefore, man

is above the animal world. Only as he prizes, develops and recognizes the priority of these spiritual qualities, will he remain above the animal level. When man decides he does not have a soul and spirit, that there is no God, he begins to move downward and lives like animals live. Because man has these spiritual qualities, man has certain responsibilities, and Genesis enables us to gather this in the very beginning. Man was created, placed in the garden and given responsibilities. The reason he was given responsibilities is because there are qualities that enabled God to place within man directions and authority to control his creation. Whenever man fails to recognize his responsibilities, beginning with his responsibility to God, his world becomes chaos and confusion.

Genesis enables us to know something about sin. I am not sure the Bible tells us the origin of sin, but it shows us the effect and entrance in relation to man. We can see sin as it affects man; how it created the problem of guilt, affected his fellowship with God and others, as Cain and Abel (Genesis 4) and through the line of Cain and the line of Seth (Genesis 4,5). By sin, man cast his allegiance with Satan. As a result of doubting God's word, refusing to believe in the goodness of God and unwilling to trust God, he turned in disobedience to God and the result was his separation. Genesis also shows that, while man, by his own decision and under the influence of Satan, was led into sin, there is hope for him. In the chapter where we read about the announcement and description of man's sin, we also read about his hope; the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head. This announcement has to do with the hope of man getting out from under the load and bondage of sin.

Genesis gives us the truth about the unity of the race. All men descended from Adam, and there was a unity that characterized humanity. We see how that unity was affected as a result of sin, the division of the races and the origin of the nations. We are able to understand something about why the nations are divided, why some nations are here and others there and why we do not talk alike (Genesis 10, 11). Genesis 10 and 11 enable us to understand some things about civil government because we have the origin of it stated, in principle, in Genesis 9:6. Then, the development of the pagan nations with the calling of Abraham and the preparation for the nation of Israel as a light in that darkened and pagan world. Civil government is set up because

of that.

Genesis enables us to know the truth about life. It enables us to understand something about individual life, family life and social life. You can see how each individual is responsible and there is the development of individual life, the importance of family life and how family life affects the social world in which we live. You have individual life in Adam and Eve and the worship, individually, of Cain and Abel. Then, the breakdown of the home (Genesis 6) and the judgment of the flood because it had a social impact.

Genesis introduces us to the principle of the providence of God. I do not pretend to know all about the providence of God, other than, what the Bible has to say. It teaches that God overrules for the accomplishment of his own purpose. When you see the entrance of sin (Genesis 3), you would think all things must come to an end, but, as you study Genesis and see the providence of God as it operates, particularly in the latter chapters in relationship to Joseph, how, in spite of the wickedness of his brothers, it turned out, as Joseph said, for their good, survival and salvation. This is but another way of stating the fact that God controls the world. Genesis will help us see and the study of the entire Old Testament will help us understand that God will have the last say. Regardless of what men may do, the efforts they may make to try to defeat God's purpose, there is no way they will succeed. They will only destroy themselves. There will be a remnant of people that will believe and follow that which God reveals in his word.

Genesis emphasizes the truth about redemption. Principles are found in Genesis in relationship to this. One, Genesis underscores the need of redemption. With the entrance of sin into the world, what could man do? Cast out of the garden, separated from God, where can he turn? How can the damage done to man, as far as his own guilt and conscience is concerned, his fellowship with God, be repaired? We have come across none in Genesis that did not need it. This is to give the background of Romans 3:23,10-13. Unless a man is conscious of the need of redemption, he is not going to be interested in redemption. One of the ways to be impressed about the need is to study Genesis. What has taken place in Genesis 3, the affairs and actions of men, is intended to remind us of the need of redemption. In view of the affluence in which we live, the general tendency of man, in the midst of prosperity, is to forget about their need of God and, therefore, their

need of spiritual things and redemption (Deuteronomy 6). Why think about their souls when they have so many things to enjoy? In spite of that, there is an emptiness that gnaws at them on the inside and they go from pillar to post trying to find something that will satisfy. Second, Genesis shows the purpose of redemption (Genesis 3:15,16). Third, Genesis sets forth the promise of redemption (Genesis 12). Many of the problems that developed through the Old Testament developed because of a failure of the Jewish people to understand the meaning of that promise. They thought it suggested their superiority in relation to other nations round about them and this created all kinds of problems for them and it is still creating problems in our present society.

Genesis gives us the truth about man's destiny. It sets forth the essential nature and importance of faith. It is important that we grasp what Genesis teaches in this connection, for most people agree that salvation is by faith. The real question is not, is salvation by faith, but what does that mean? What does it cover? By looking at some of the things in Genesis, we will be able to see that.

Genesis helps us understand there are three essentials for acceptable worship to God. There must be sacrifice, priesthood, and a designated place of sacrifice or worship. They were not allowed to worship just anyway, anytime and anywhere. When God appeared unto Jacob (Genesis 28), Jacob was surprised. It was an unusual thing, out of the ordinary. The reason, no doubt, was that he understood there is a designated place of meeting. In Genesis 4, when Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, he did not leave his omnipresence, because God knew what was taking place with Cain and all his descendants, but he left that designated place of worship. When we study Exodus, the tabernacle becomes the designated place of meeting. Exodus will close with God's glory filling the tabernacle. Leviticus will begin by God speaking from the tabernacle, God's designated place of meeting. There will be the selection of Aaron as a high priest and the Levitical priesthood, which we will have in Leviticus in detail. In Leviticus, there will be the sacrifices and, in Exodus, we will have the sacrifice of the Passover lamb.

Let me review some things about faith in Genesis. I think it is a part of the heart of the teaching of the Bible about redemption. Because of what is set forth in Genesis about faith in relation to redemption, many of the problems in the New Testament epistles that

deal with the misunderstanding of the Jewish conception of God and worship, jump all the way back, over Exodus with the beginning of the nation and the giving of the law, to Genesis. The reason is, these principles in Genesis, were intended to [keep] the Jews from making the mistake they did. You have Abraham, the individual, and, from him, the nation develops. They have to be able to handle Abraham, the manner by which God entered into covenant with Abraham and the manner in which Abraham was acceptable unto God. In so doing, they cut themselves off from their own claims of self-righteousness through the law.

One of the characteristics of man is he needs something to worship. The question is not, will man worship, the question is what? Whenever a man says, "I am not going to worship anything," he may mean, I am not going to worship God, but when he says he is not going to worship anything, he is mistaken. Man will worship something. It may be himself, money, pleasure, but man cannot live apart from worship (Romans 1). That being the case, the Bible, recognizing this fundamental need of man, shows us the essentials of worship. The essential of the worship is faith, which depends upon revelation, through atonement (Genesis 4). Cain worshiped just like Abel did, that is, there was that inherent desire to worship, but there was not an acknowledgment of the need of God or the fact that he was a sinner. His worship was rejected, and the worship of Abel was accepted. Man is bound by God's revelation whenever he worships him through the atonement designated by God. In the Patriarchal age, it was animal sacrifice and, in the Jewish age, the same way under specific regulations that were set up.

Genesis gives us Enoch as one that walked with God by faith. Man worships God by faith and he walks with God by faith. In the midst of a corrupt world in which Enoch lived, and, perhaps, the days of Enoch were the beginning of the downfall that occurs in Genesis 6, he was a man who walked by faith, that is, he lived according to the principles set forth by God.

In Noah, there is the obedience of faith. Noah found favor in the sight of God (Genesis 6:8). Genesis 6:22 said, "Thus did Noah according to all that God commanded him, even so did he." Noah was not saved because he deserved it, because he earned it, Noah was saved through the obedience of faith. He listened to what God said, his

faith acted (Hebrews 11:7), and it led him to build the ark to the saving of his house. All acceptable service to God must be the obedience of faith.

We begin the study of Abraham in Genesis 12. In Genesis 15:6, you have the additional feature stated about Abraham's faith. We learn that men not only worship God by faith, walk by faith and obey through faith, but men are righteous before God by faith and that means through the system God set up. In Romans 4:16, Paul says, "It is by faith that it might be by grace." The obedience of faith enables one to be saved by God's grace. One is righteous, not because he earned it or undid the sin he has been guilty of, but, through the provisions made by God, his sins are forgiven (Romans 4:7). The blessed man is the man that is righteous. How does he become righteous? Through the obedience of faith. Genesis 15:6 is a background of Romans 4 and James 2.

In Isaac, we have the submission of faith. When Abraham went to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, there is no complaint. At the time, Isaac was perhaps 17 or 18 years old. There is no resistance when the altar was built. Abraham prepares everything and puts Isaac on the altar. Faith does not lead to partial obedience, but total submission to what God said. That is one of the differences between meritorious works and the works of faith by which one is acceptable to God (Romans 10). We submit to God's way, listen to what he says, walk by his teaching and appropriate his blessings in the way he sets forth in his word.

Jacob shows the development, the growth, the struggle of faith. Faith is not something that is perfected when one obeys the gospel. We watched the life of Jacob from the very beginning, when he tried to take things into his own hands and manipulate God in order to obtain the blessings, until, finally, he comes to Egypt and, there, is at rest in the realization that Joseph is alive and Joseph takes care of him. In that faith that has grown and matured, he says, "I die, but God lives. This is not the end of it." That is how faith grows. He had to follow the will of God, learn things many times the hard way, back up and start over. He had to come back to Hebron in order for that faith to mature. There come times in our lives when we have problems, difficulties, and even, sometimes, doubts plague us. Let us not decide it is all over and not worthwhile. Let us learn from Jacob that faith must develop, it must grow. [Growth] comes through holding on to God and using the

experiences of life to strengthen faith based upon the study of the word of God, living in close harmony with God's will, seeking to know more about the Bible. Paul, in writing to the Thessalonians, talked about their faith growing exceedingly.

Questions

Read the Text

1. "And Joseph commanded his servants the _____ to _____ his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel."
2. "The Egyptians mourned for him _____ and _____ days."
3. "And . . . Joseph's brethren . . . said, Joseph will peradventure ____ us"
4. "But as for you, ye thought _____ against me: but God meant it unto _____, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to _____ much people alive."
5. "Now therefore _____ ye not: I will _____ you, and your little ones."
6. "And Joseph lived an _____ and _____ years."
7. "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I _____: and God will surely _____ you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to _____, to _____, and to _____."
8. "So Joseph _____ . . . and they _____ him, and he was put in a _____ in Egypt."

Research the Text

1. What three things are to be remembered in connection with Joseph in Egypt?
2. Why is the Bible not to be placed within the framework of man's academic wisdom and intellectual learning?
3. Discuss what Genesis tells about man.

Review the Text

1. How does Genesis involve God's providence?
2. What are the three essentials for acceptable worship to God?
3. What was the Jewish misconception about the nation?

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Editor's Page

Please, allow me to begin by saying Thank You, on behalf of Brother's Inc. Brother's Inc. was formed to make available Franklin Camp's material. Franklin Camp was a sincere, faithful, and scholarly Gospel Preacher. His material is some of the finest anyone could ever study. His insight to the word of God is truly amazing. It is with great pride and with tremendous respect for his work that we are making available this material. We have gone to great strides to maintain the very words of Bro. Camp. These books are not verbatim from the material he gave in his classes at Adamsville, but they are as close as we can get them. We wanted this material to be his, not our interpretation of his material. The CD's of Bro. Camp's material is available for anyone who might want a word for word account of what Bro. Camp said. We recommend this for teachers. It might give you a clearer understanding of the points he emphasized. The proceeds from this material are set aside for the **Franklin Camp Scholarship Fund**.

This material is made possible because of the support and work of many. We would be amiss if we did not say **Thank You**, to the McGee family for their generous contribution. Karen has been very generous in honor of her mother Christine. To each editor, who is giving countless hours to this project, **Thank You**. To the Board of Brother's, who have launched out on faith and a willingness to make available good, sound material to our brotherhood, **Thank you**.

Robert R. Taylor, Jr. said of Bro. Camp:

"His name is a standing synonym for Christian humility, Bible scholarship, loyalty to truth, opposition to all error and dedicated discipleship".

There is always a great need for good material. This material will help supply that need. May the glory be to God! May the benefits be eternal!

Editor in Chief

Ronnie Hayes

Time Table for Books to be Published

2011

2012

2013

1st Quarter

Genesis
Colossians

Exodus
Mark

Lev.
Luke

2nd Quarter

Joshua
Matthew

Judges/Ruth
John

1 Samuel
Acts

3rd Quarter

Daniel
1 & 2 Thess.

Prov-Ecc1-Song
1 Cor.

2 Samuel
Romans

4th Quarter

Job
Ephesians

Post Exilic Books:
vol. 1 Ezra, Ester, Neh.
vol. 2 – Haggai, Zech, Mal,
2 Cor.

Psalms
Revelation

2014

2015

1st Quarter

Numbers
Galatians

Isaiah
Hebrews

2nd Quarter

Kgs./Chron. – vol. 1
Philippians/Philemon

Jer./Lam.
James

3rd Quarter

Kgs./Chron. – vol. 2
1 Timothy

Ezekiel
1&2 Peter

4th Quarter

Deut.
2 Timothy/Titus

Minor Prophets:
vol. 1 – Joel, Jonah, Amos, Obadiah
vol. 2 – Hosea, Micah, Nahum, Zeph., Hab.
1-3 John/Jude