

Sheepfold Gleanings

VAYEIRA - AND HE APPEARED

Genesis 18:1 to 22:24
2 Kings 4:1-23
Luke 17:26-37
Romans 4:13-25; 9:6-9
Hebrews 11:13-19

Continued from: Lech Lecha- Genesis 12:1 to 17:27

Genesis 18:1-3 “Yahweh appeared to Abraham while he was sitting and resting near the great trees of Mamre [*Hebron*] at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he ran from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground saying, ‘If I have found favor in your eyes, Yahweh, do not pass your servant by.’”

The stage was set for Yahweh’s visit with Abraham, who was found not working but sitting resting on this day, revealing that it may have been a Sabbath Day. He ran to greet the men when he recognized it was Yahweh who was approaching. Abraham was not afraid to stand before Yahweh, as he had been in His Presence before. (Genesis 12:7; 15:4; 17:1)

“The entrance to his tent” is mentioned twice here in scripture. As an actual dwelling place, it is symbolic of the tabernacle in the wilderness where Yahweh came to dwell in the midst of His people. The word ‘tent’ is also a Hebrew idiom meaning to walk in the teaching and instruction of Yahweh called *Torah*. Because Abraham was in the entrance (or under the covering of the entrance) of his Tent, Yahweh came and dwelt in his midst indicating that *the Day of the Lord* had come upon Abraham.

The Hebrew word *ahal* (Strong’s H168/TWOT 32a) is the root word for *tent* and also the symbolic names for Samaria and Jerusalem, (*Oholah!* ‘her tent’ and *Oholibah!* ‘my tent is in her’) which gives a hint of the future restoration of the House of Israel and the House of Judah becoming one in Yahweh’s hand (Ezekiel 23:4; Exodus 31:6; Genesis 36:2, 41).

Abraham offered hospitality to his traveling guests saying, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said." With the offer of hospitality accepted, Abraham quickly arranged for his wife and servants to attend to a meal to bless his guests. (Genesis 18:3-5).

Genesis 18:6-8 “So Abraham ran into the tent to Sarah and said, ‘Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make cakes.’ And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave it to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it.”

More symbolism comes to light with this passage when Abraham asked his wife Sarah, not a servant, to prepare a type of unleavened cake for their guests. Abraham instructed Sarah exactly how it was to be made, using three tenths of an ephah of fine flour. After kneading the dough, it was shaped into a cake called *challah*, pierced and baked over fire. (Strong's #H2471; Leviticus 2:4 and Numbers 28:20)

It is thought that the season of the visitation was at Passover during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as we see Abraham responding to the *Lamb of God* dwelling in the midst of these visitors. He humbly prepared a feast, bringing unleavened bread and a lamb called *the son* in Hebrew (Strong's H1241/1121) Abraham knew whom he was serving and he gave a fellowship offering (*shelamim/shalom*) to the Prince of Peace (*shalom*).

Genesis 18:8 “Abraham took *butter [curd] and milk [sour milk or cheese] and the calf* which he had prepared, and set it before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.”

After very careful preparations for the meal Abraham also laid butter, milk and meat together on the table before his heavenly visitors. Abraham knew how important this meal was and that everything was to be perfect for his guests. Dairy products and meat were served at the same meal and this was correct according to Torah, as the author of Torah – Yahweh - accepted his offering and ate the meal without correcting Abraham.

YHVH's Authoritative Word

Abraham, and Moses who followed him, are our examples of how Yahweh's principles are to be handled, taught and lived. The separation of dairy products from meat products was introduced thousands of years after Torah was given at Mount Sinai. Additional laws called *oral traditions* were instituted by teachers and were then added to Yahweh's laws. The leaders who created these extra laws called them *fences* and said that they were needed to protect Torah from being violated by man / and to protect man from violating Torah.

Man does not need to keep his distance from God's laws, nor protection from them. We are called to walk in Yahweh's principles, not to add manmade commandments - called legalism - that would encumber our walk. Yahweh is so pleased with a heart that desires to walk after Him that He gave His Spirit to guide and protect us; *nothing can take the place of this*.

Books were written about these new added laws and later put into volumes, which today are referred to as the Babylonian Talmud. While the volumes of Talmud were intended to help man, they became hindrances as they heaped more 'laws' on top of the ones that were originally given by Yahweh. These extra 'laws' became very burdensome to the people and clouded the way to Yahweh's life. Because of this, it became harder and harder for the people to see Torah as it was no longer their primary focus. Torah 'paled' next to all those man-made added **traditions** for food, the Sabbath and other laws.

Yahweh admonishes us that His written word is not to be added to, nor is it to be subtracted from. (Deuteronomy 4:2; Revelation 22:18-19) There was only one authoritative Word given to man, the Word first handed to the people at Mount Sinai. Yahweh's teaching and instruction is seen in the Five books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, and is uplifted in the whole Old Testament/*Tanakh* and New Testament/*Brit Chadasha* (Genesis to Revelation) as the authoritative word of Yahweh. His Word leaves no room for man's commentary when presented as an *authoritative* oral torah. (For further information see study Shemini Atzeret at: www.sheepfoldgleanings.com)

2 Timothy 16-17 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

The Promise of a Son

Genesis 18:9-15

During the meal that Abraham served his guests Yahweh asked Abraham where Sarah was. Yahweh of course knew but asked the question to test Sarah's faith, as a prophecy was about to come forth and she needed to be on side with the Word imparted to her. Abraham mentioned that his wife was in the tent, a Hebraic idiom implying that Sarah was in Torah and kept Yahweh's principles. Yahweh then shared that at the same time next year Sarah would have a son.

Sarah heard the prophecy and laughed. This was different from Abraham's laugh in Genesis 17:17. Sarah's laugh was of unbelief because when Yahweh questioned Sarah, she lied as a result of the guilt she had incurred. Thirteen years earlier Sarah had acted out of impulse to produce her own child through Hagar and now God was exposing this. We too will act out of guilt and in our sinful nature when we step outside Yahweh truth and blessings for our lives. How much does unbelief stop the flow of blessings in our lives without repentance? It was not in Sarah's biological time clock, nor in or from their own interpretation, which resulted in Ishmael, but it was only in Yahweh's time and His faithfulness that she would have the fulfillment of the promise of a son. (Genesis 18: 9-15)

Yahweh - The Judge and Deliverer

Genesis 18:16-33 The time had come for Abraham's esteemed guests to leave. Yahweh confirmed the Covenant He had made with Abraham earlier then disclosed the mission that lay ahead of them; as well as that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were to be destroyed because their inhospitable sins had grown exceedingly grievous (Genesis 12:1-2; 15:17; 18:18-19).

The two messengers with Yahweh went on ahead and Abraham was left standing alone before Yahweh gripped with compassion and pleaded for the righteous in those cities. He chose his numbers very carefully, knowing the full meaning of what he was asking for.

- 🏰 Abraham beseeched Yahweh to preserve the city for the sake of **fifty**, a number representing jubilee and deliverance.

- ✿ He prayed a second time for **forty-five** which represented two numbers. **Forty** is associated with trial and deliverance, and **five**, in scripture, represents grace leading to and ending in revival and renewal.
- ✿ The third number Abraham implored was for **thirty**, which denotes a higher degree of perfection. Yeshua started His ministry at the age of thirty, as did Joseph and David. (Luke 3:23, Genesis 41:46; 2 Samuel 4:4)
- ✿ Abraham reached out again, asking for twenty righteous people. **Twenty** represents expectancy.
- ✿ Finally Abraham submitted his last plea before Yahweh asking for **ten**, the perfecting of Divine order.

Again Yahweh promised Abraham that He would not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, even if He found only ten righteous living there. (Genesis 18:24-33)

What would our response be upon hearing imminent destruction upon a city noted for its detestable living? Would we have the heart like Abraham to beseech Yahweh not to bring His judgment upon them but rather redeem and deliver them?

Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed

Genesis 19:1-29 The messengers arrived at Sodom in the evening and Lot was found by them sitting at the gateway to the corrupt city (outside Torah), not at his dwelling place (in Torah). Lot bowed down offering them lodging before they continued on their journey. After his pleading the messengers agreed to join him. We get a glimpse of Lot's life when we see it was *he* who prepared the guests meal (along with bread without yeast) not his wife. We do not see any mention of his wife or servants helping with the preparations like we did with Abraham. What a sad contrast this is from the cheerful *spirit of hospitality* found in Abraham that prevailed through his entire household.

When Lot and his guests prepared to bed down for the evening, men of all ages, from every part of Sodom surrounded the house demanding to have intimate contact with Lot's male guests. This seemed a normal practice in town. Lot did not address this outrageous behavior, but instead protected the visitors by offering the perverse hospitality of his two virgin daughters to this lawless invasion upon his home. The city men found this unsatisfactory and almost rioted to obtain access to the male guests. The heavenly messengers had to intervene by pulling Lot back into the house while striking the mob with blindness.

Lot had taken on the mentality of this region, as offering his daughters to these men seemed a viable solution to him. Exposing his daughters to the perverse element, instead of covering and protecting them, showed how morally corrupted Lot had become living in the city that he chose for himself and his family.

The heavenly guests urged Lot to gather those with him and leave Sodom as soon as possible. His sons-in-law, who were betrothed (called married in Hebrew) to his daughters, showed no respect for his cry that they join him and flee for their lives, thinking it merely a joke. With the coming of dawn, Lot had procrastinated to the point that the heavenly messengers grabbed him

and his wife along with their two virgin daughters and led them away from the city. They were told to flee further on their own toward the mountains, as the whole region was destined for destruction. Lot chose this critical moment to bargain with the messengers. His preference was to remain in the chaos and corruption of *civilization (Olam Hazeah)* rather than escape to the wilderness. Lot put his trust in man and material wealth (earthly nature) and not in the faithfulness of Yahweh's covenantal word for his safety as he feared the wilderness more than the destruction of the soul. The heavenly messengers allowed Lot and his family to flee to Zoar. Again Lot's choice was unwise.

At sunrise, upon Lot's arrival at Zoar, Yahweh rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah. While the whole region burned, Lot's wife looked back and she became a pillar of salt. Her heart longed for Sodom and the ways of life there, and for that Yahweh made her a memorial for all to see the depth of destruction in the heart of those who cleave to idolatry. How many of us have become brackish over issues Yahweh is dealing with in our lives by not being able to leave the past and move forward to a better place in Him? How many of us are hanging on to the old ways and even bargaining with Yahweh over past issues? How many of us have become immovable like a pillar of salt?

Early the next morning following the destruction, Abraham returned to where he last stood with Yahweh and saw the dense smoke rising from the land of Sodom. Those who have traveled to the Land of Israel today and seen where Sodom once stood will never forget the color of the mountains and the surrounding land that still reveals the scarring of intense heat that once came upon that place. It remains a stark witness of Yahweh's judgment.

Lot and His Daughters

In 2 Peter 2:7 we see scripture referring to Lot as a righteous man. On one hand he kept the ways of Yahweh by observing Feast Days, but on the other hand, we see him offering his daughters up to the men of the land. He stepped outside the guidelines for life and touched the realm of death, which led his family into poverty (Deuteronomy 28).

There may be consequences to decisions we make when we take matters into our own hands, controlling situations in our lives that may prevent what is Yahweh's best for us. We may have to live with lack and decrease in our lives as a result.

Fearing for their lives after they realized there would be no help for them after the destruction of Sodom, Lot and his two daughters left Zoar. They traveled to the mountains as Yahweh originally instructed and found shelter in a cave (Genesis 19:30-38).

Growing up, Lot's daughters may not have had many role models for a proper order in family life other than what they saw in Sodom. They seemed to lack Torah instruction, the principles of Yahweh, which would have given them hope in a Redeemer, Savior. Now, in this mountainous wilderness, they saw no hope or covering for their futures and decide to take matters into their own hands. The older daughter led the younger one by convincing her that their father was their only hope to preserve future generations. Together they caused their father's drunkenness on two

separate occasions and without his knowledge lay with him to acquire children. Acts of incest may have been common in the region of Sodom however acts of incest carry a curse.

In time, the older daughter had a son she named Moab, Hebrew for “from father.” His descendants became the Moabites. The younger sister also had a son she called Ben-Ammi, “son of my people.” He was the father of the Ammonites.

History records that from Ruth, a Moabitess, came the lineage of King David and through Na’amah, the Ammonitess wife of King Solomon, came a son called Rehoboam. (1 Kings 14:21-31) Through this initial tragedy of Lot’s daughters, Yeshua the Messiah descended from both these two women.

Abraham Dwells in the Negev

Genesis 20 Abraham moved his camp south to Gerar in the region of the Negev and he again had Sarah pose as his ‘sister’ out of fear for his safety. This left Sarah without a protective male covering and exposed her to the lust of Abimelech, the King of Gerar. The King sent for Sarah and took her into his household. During this time, Yahweh became Sarah’s protective covering from intimate relations with Abimelech. She was beautiful at sixty-five in Pharaoh’s courts, but now at ninety years old, she far outshone the other women of the land. Beauty also relates to wisdom in Torah.

Yahweh was not pleased with Abraham’s insecurity that left Sarah exposed to the lust of the eye from King Abimelech. The timing of the promised son to Abraham and Sarah within a year’s period would be fulfilled, thus Sarah could not be in the arms of another man.

Through a dream, Yahweh directed Abimelech to release Sarah. "Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours." (Genesis 20:7).

Abraham was quickly cleared and restored as he relayed the motives behind his intentions to the king. The king responded by allowing Abraham to stay in the land and blessed them with many gifts. (Genesis 20:1-18)

The Birth of Isaac

When Abraham was ninety-nine years old, thirteen years after receiving Yahweh’s Covenant, he was given the *sign* of that promise, circumcision. At this same time Abram and Sarai also received the new names: Abraham and Sarah. The Hebrew letter ‘**hei**’ was inserted into both Abra**H**am and Sara**H**’s names. The letter ‘**hei**’ refers to the breath of Yahweh or the Spirit of Yahweh, which brings life into dead or dry bones. This is called *nefesh chaya* in Hebrew. Before walking in obedience to Yahweh’s ways (Torah), their bodies were dry and lifeless. Abraham and Sarah were not able to reproduce and were barren. Once they walked in obedience to Yahweh their bodies produced life and multiplied. As Yahweh had promised, on Passover a year earlier, the Breath of Life in Sarah’s *dead* body produced *life*, a child they named Isaac, *he laughs*, was born to parents well past child bearing years - “their bodies as good as dead.”

(Hebrews 11:11-12) The breath and voice of Yahweh is Yeshua. He is the *Tree of Life* through which the way the truth and the life are found. (Genesis 12:1-3; 17:5; 21:2; John 14:6)

Today, those who are in Messiah are of Abraham's seed (DNA) as we have been grafted into the Israel the olive tree, whose root is Yeshua. (Galatians 3:29) By faith in Yeshua, believers walk in covenantal ways of Abraham and are considered to have 'crossed over,' from death to life; from eating from the *Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil* (sinful nature held in the *Olam Hazeh*), to eating from the *Tree of Life* (fruit of the Spirit – *Olam Haba*).

This is the prophecy of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37:1-14. It talks of people from the *whole* House of Israel (all twelve tribes) who choose to come back to God's ways (Torah) and to honor the covenant given Abraham through Messiah's sacrifice.

Romans 4:13-25 "For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law [*Mosaic Covenant*], but through the righteousness of faith [*Abrahamic Covenant – salvation in Yeshua*]. For if those who are of the law [*Torah without Yeshua*] are heirs, faith [*Abrahamic Covenant*] is made void and the promise [*Abrahamic Covenant*] made of no effect, because the law [*Torah without the Spirit of Yeshua*] brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression [*the sin of dishonor*]."

"Therefore it is of faith [*Abrahamic Covenant*] that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to ***all the seed, not only to those who are of the law [Jew/Judah], but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham [Ephraim/Israel/the Gentiles/people from the Nations], who is the father of us all.*** As it is written, 'I have made you a father of many nations.' He is our father in the presence of Him whom he believed – the God who gives life to the dead [*those outside His teaching and instruction - Torah*] and calls those things which do not exist [*Olam Haba*] as though they did [*Olam Haba*]; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." (Genesis 17:5)

"And not being weak in faith, he [*Abraham*] did not consider his own body, already dead [*since he was about a hundred years old*], nor the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore 'it was accounted to him for righteousness.' Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Yeshua our Savior from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification." (Genesis 15: 5)

Isaac – The Son of the Promise

Genesis 21:4 After his birth, Isaac was circumcised on the eighth day in accordance with the teaching, instruction and covenant given to Abraham thirteen years earlier. It is believed to have been the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Joy and laughter surrounded Isaac as he grew and was weaned. On the chronological chart we see that Noah's son Shem and his great

grandson Eber were still alive at this time. Could they have been at these great feasts of celebration, as well as having a part to play in Isaac's education and learning of Torah?

During the celebration of Isaac being old enough to study Torah, Sarah noticed Ishmael mocking and challenging him. She knew that his dishonor toward Isaac was not to be tolerated so she demanded that Ishmael and her servant Hagar leave. There was only one son of *the Covenant of Promise* and that son was Isaac.

Romans 9:6-9 "For not everyone from Israel is Israel; indeed, not all the descendants are seed of Abraham, rather, 'What is to be called your seed will be in Isaac.' In other words, it is not the physical children who are children of Yahweh, but the children of *the promise* who are considered seed. For this is what *the promise* said, 'At the set time, I will come; and *Sarah* will have a son.'" (2 Chronicles 20:7, Psalm 105:6; Genesis 21:12; 18:14; Galatians 4:21-31)

Yahweh did not abandon Ishmael and Hagar, but cared for them. Ishmael lived in the desert as an archer and married an Egyptian woman.

Treaty at Beersheba

Genesis 21:22-34

Abimelech, King of Gerar, and the commander of his forces approached Abraham, saying, "Yahweh is with you in everything you do." The king then asked Abraham to set up a treaty with him and his descendants after him. Abraham agreed.

Later Abraham discovered Abimelech's servants had seized his well. Abraham again set up a treaty between them and had seven ewe lambs set aside from his flock to offer Abimelech for the well. In accepting the sheep, Abimelech agreed that the well was Abraham's. With this Abraham planted a tamarisk tree and called the well *Beersheba*, the Well of Seven with extended meaning of the "Well of the Oath."

Abraham's Faith: Part Two

Genesis 22 Abraham and Isaac

"Yahweh tested Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then He said, 'Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the *land of Moriah*, and offer him there as a burnt offering on *one of the mountains* of which I shall tell you.'

"Now faith is the *substance* [*physical*] of things hoped for, the *evidence* of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1). To look at faith as already taken hold of our future means we must walk in a *heavenly nature/kingdom* (*Olam Haba*). To understand on a heavenly realm through the spirit made the difference for Abraham. If he were told to give up his only son while still operating in the earthly realm it would have been extremely difficult to obey. This is the time in Abraham's life that we see him choose not to enter the trappings of the earthly nature (*Olam Hazeh*) but to trust what Yahweh saw for Isaac and himself in the future Heavenly realm (*Olam Haba*) and to walk freely after the Spirit of Yahweh. At this time in his life we see he had developed a

relationship and intimacy in the *Tree of Life - Yeshua*. This final test was for Abraham's sake to prove himself faithful to the purpose and vision Yahweh had prophesied over him long ago.

In order to walk in His faithfulness Abraham took dominion over his earthly nature. He overcame his lack of self-confidence, and rose above this "nakedness" (earthly nature *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil – Olam Haze*). He chose to walk after the heavenly nature (*Olam Haba*) that was freely offered him as a gift from the *Tree of Life*. Thus far, Abraham had ten testings in his walk with Yahweh but this test would be the one that would bring Abraham into agreement and unity with the Creator of the Universe; *echad/one* with Him.

After many trials, Abraham was able to take hold of his inheritance and walk in it, but it was only attainable through trust and *faith (walking in obedience to the principles)* and by no other means. Faith, obedience and honoring Yahweh's word delivered Abraham. He pierced the veil and stepped through into the *Olam Haba – Heavenly realm – the future yet unseen*.

Sanctification is choosing to leave the earthly sinful nature (*Olam Haze*) and walk after the heavenly nature that has been appropriated for us through the Covenant. Righteousness is like it; leaving the earthly to embrace the heavenly kingdom (*Olam Haba*). Holiness is also there. Holiness, righteousness, sanctification and faith - they are all one and the same. **Without holiness (righteousness, sanctification and faith) we will not see Yahweh** (Revelation 3:17-18).

- ✚ A believer enters a life of salvation in Yeshua through the *Abrahamic* Covenant.
- ✚ Following that is the *Mosaic* covenant, the instruction booklet of how to walk fruitfully in the *Abrahamic* Covenant. It teaches about righteousness, sanctification and holiness, preparing the Bride of Yeshua to walk a priestly life of obedience to enter her future (which she carries the seed that is yet to become the physical manifestation).
- ✚ Without obedience (faith) in pursuing the principles of the *Mosaic* Covenant, the Believer/Bride cannot enter into the next Covenant – the *Davidic* Covenant - where she stands in the power and authority of the Priesthood.

The *Davidic* Covenant can only be entered into in conjunction with obedience to the lessons learned in the *Mosaic* covenant. The *Davidic* Covenant is the door by which believers enter into His Kingdom. Yahweh establishes each of His Covenants by fulfilling the one preceding it. No covenant can be bypassed nor can they be rearranged as Yahweh Himself established their order. (Amos 9:11; Matthew 25:1-12; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6).

Hebrews 12:12-17 "Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. *Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord*: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright."

Revelation 3:17-22 "Because you [*believers*] say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked - I counsel you [*believers*] to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white

garments [*priestly/bridal garments*], that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness [*cause by walking outside Yahweh's principles*] may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore [*believers*] be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door [*Davidic covenant*] and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him [*believer*] who overcomes [*his sinful nature*] I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame [*the realm of sin and death on your behalf*] and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

If we do not have holiness, righteousness and sanctification, *we do not have faith*. Faith is far more than what we have been taught in our churches; it is the very essence of who we are in Yeshua as it is only attainable if we choose to walk after Yeshua and leave all bitterness, corruption and immorality behind. If we are still active in these issues we do not operate in faith...it is impossible.

Hebrews 11:6 "But without *faith* it is impossible to please Him."

The Promised Seed - Isaac

John 12:24-25 "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life."

Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went toward *the place* of which Yahweh had told him. On the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw *the place* in the distance. And Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and *we* will come back to you.'

"So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, 'My father!' And he said, 'Here I am, my son.' Then he said, 'Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' And Abraham said, 'My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.' So the two of them went together. Then they came to *the place* of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son." (Genesis 22:6-9)

At one hundred and thirty-seven years old, Abraham was guided by Yahweh to take the long awaited, promised son, Isaac, now thirty-seven years old, to offer him as an *olah* (praise offering) to Yahweh as a living sacrifice. Abraham had many trials before, but this trial would test his faith in Yahweh thoroughly.

How many of us would be able to walk in Abraham's obedience, especially if we had an only son as Abraham did? Yet, this is what Yahweh was asking of him. The test for us is whether or not we truly believe in the *faithfulness* of Yahweh? Do we believe in His covenant over us? And

do we believe He will fulfill His destiny in us? Trusting the most precious blessing in our lives to Yahweh would test us to the very core. If we believe in His promises, faith will have us look at those promises seeing ourselves in those promises before they are a reality or when there is no earthly reality before us. The truth is in what Yahweh says. Our job is to keep our eyes on the promises above and not on things below. “Now faith is the *substance* [*physical*] of things hoped for, the *evidence* of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1).

To give up his child up totally was the test that Abraham was facing. Yahweh was saying in essence “*Do you love Me Abraham?*” It is in total submission to Yahweh that we have LIFE. In our death to self, is our life.

Both Abraham and Isaac had to totally submit to Yahweh. Abraham, after walking with Yahweh these many years through many trials of faith, was now able to offer up his only son. Isaac, at his age, was old enough to resist his father. He too submitted to the wisdom and respect he had for his father by allowing him, to bind him and place him on the altar in agreement to Yahweh’s word. They were of one heart and mind. By *faith* they both approached the altar and in a way, they both placed themselves on it. To have a walk as close as Abraham and Isaac did with the Living God meant that they knew there was life even in death.

“Then the Angel of Yahweh called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: ‘By Myself I have sworn, says Yahweh, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only *son* --blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.’” (Genesis 22:15-17)

This story is foreshadowing the Lamb of God, Yeshua The Messiah, the only Son of the Father, who submitted Himself as a living sacrifice completely and willingly on “the altar”/cross in obedience to His Father. Yeshua, also being in His thirties, rode a donkey to the *same place* as Abraham and Isaac; and carried his own wood up the mountain, *the same place/mountain* that Abraham was to sacrifice his son on. That *same place* was *one of the mountains in the land of Moriah* called the Mount of Olives.

The substitute ram whose head was caught in a thicket, took the place of Isaac, and was a prophetic picture of Yeshua having His head crowned with thorns before his sacrifice. It was Yeshua who took away the sins of the people once and for all. He is the eternal lamb sacrifice who died as our substitution for the death that we deserved for our sins. He rose to life on the third day and will not return again until He comes for His Bride.

After this, Isaac did not return with his father after the sacrifice. We do not see Isaac in scripture again until his bride approaches. Had Isaac gone to prepare a place for her as the Messiah has gone to prepare a place for His Bride?

Romans 4:9 to 5:2

“For we say that *faith* was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. And he received the sign of circumcision, *a seal of the righteousness of the faith* which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are

uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the *faith* which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.

“For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the *righteousness of faith*. For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression.

“Therefore it is of *faith* that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the *faith of Abraham*, who is the father of us all (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed -- God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

“Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Yeshua Ha Mashiach from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

“Therefore, having been justified by *faith*, we have peace with God through our Yeshua Ha Mashiach, through whom also we have access by *faith* into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Hebrews 11:8-19 By Faith, Abraham...

“By *faith* Abraham *obeyed* when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By *faith* he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is Yahweh. By *faith* Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him *faithful* who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude -- innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

“These all died in *faith*, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore Yahweh is not ashamed to be called their Elohim, for He has prepared a city for them.

“By *faith* Abraham, when Yahweh tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though Yahweh had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.”

James 2:20 - 3:1 “But do you want to know, O foolish man, that *faith* without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that *faith* was working together with his works, and by works *faith* was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by *faith* only. Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so *faith* without works is dead also.”

To be continued...



Shabbat Shalom
Julie Parker

Since its inception in 2003, *Sheepfold Gleanings* has been written under the pen name of *Carl and Julie Parker*. It will now be published under the authors name *Julie Parker*, with her husband Carl's continued support and covering.

Note: We are in the process of publishing the studies in soft spiral study format and soft bond format for prison ministry (an eBook format is coming!). **Genesis** is the first book in a five part series: **Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers and Deuteronomy**. Each book is part of the yearly Torah cycle starting in Genesis and is designed to be used each year for study purposes. To pre order please contact the information below.

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