

19. Getting Acquainted With Our Living God

After God's living Word first made contact with Abram in the time covered by Genesis 12, the Lord began to fulfill the promises He made to protect and provide for him. In Abram's day, the world contained many beautiful things and marvelous sights. But like today, the world was also filled with brutality, injustice, wickedness and darkness. Amid the brutality and dangers of that day, God saw to it that His friend Abram prospered and that nothing was able to harm him and that he would have the time and opportunities to mature spiritually and be strengthened in his faith and character. And the Word of God led Abram into the land of Canaan and promised to give it to his descendants, even though it was already occupied and controlled by various Canaanite tribal clans that had no intention whatever of giving it up to anyone.

Later, famine forced him to take his family to Egypt. Now it seemed as if attaining Canaan would be utterly impossible. Nevertheless, God protected Abram and his wife Sarai from the predatory intentions of the Pharaoh. So Abram got to know the favor and protection of his living God. And so he learned progressively, to rely on God's protection, favor and provision as a way of life, regardless of passing circumstances.

His awesome trust in God became evident later, when his time in Egypt ended. Trouble arose between his herdsmen and those of his nephew Lot, over the use of wells and pastureland, Abram knew God's promises well enough to rest in the fact that no matter what men or the powers of Darkness might do or cause to happen in this world, nothing would contradict, countermand, or stop His God from taking care of him. So to keep peace, Abram invited Lot to pick whatever portion of the land he wanted, and, resting on God's reliability, he willingly took the land that was left. And when a group of local warlords invaded Lot's territory and took him, his family and possessions captive, Abram marshaled the men of his household, attacked the warlords, and the Lord enabled him to rout the enemies and rescue his kinsman Lot, and his entire household.

Then a mysterious figure named Melchisedech (King of Righteousness), who is identified in Genesis as a priest of Almighty God and king of Salem (Jerusalem) appeared on the scene and blessed Abram:

“Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of Heaven and Earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” (Genesis 14:19-20)

Was the appearance of this mysterious Melchisedech (King of Righteousness) who was a 'priest of God Most High', actually another appearance of God's living Word in human form? For some reason, Abraham gave a tithe of the spoils of his recent victory to him, but tithes were to be given to God, so obviously Melchisedech represented God in Abraham's eyes.

The Letter to the Hebrews does link Melchisedech and Messiah Yeshua. Both are kings and priests of God, but of an eternal, Heavenly order, with no beginning or end. They are not Levitical priests. And both are kings, ruling from Jerusalem, Melchisedech ruled the earthly Jerusalem of the past, and Yeshua will rule the Heavenly Jerusalem that is yet to come. So at least we can say that, in Melchisedech, Genesis gives a prophetic prefiguring or revelation, of Yeshua our Master, who is God's living Word, made flesh.

In Genesis 15, God's Word appeared to Abram in a vision, and drew him deeper into this awesome Covenant relationship He had created with him:

"...Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; your reward shall be very great." (Genesis 15:1)

So Abram begins to express the questions that have been churning in his heart for years. It has been a long time since God's Word first appeared and promised to make him into 'a great nation.' Abram was seventy five when all of this began. And now he and Sarai were much older and far beyond the natural child-begetting age. So from the beginning, God had promised something that to any human being would have been utterly impossible. Yet God told them it would happen. So Abram couldn't contain himself any longer. He blurted out his burning doubts and questions to the Lord:

"... 'O Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'Since You have given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir.'" (Genesis 15:2-3)

It was natural for him to assume that his trusted servant, Eliezer would have to be his heir because there was no way he and Sarai could beget a child. But God was teaching His friend a very important lesson that all disciples of God's living Word must grasp and absorb. This is the lesson:

What God intends to do through us is UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE to Us!

The doubts, fears and insecurities of Abram and Sarai were understandable. They were still getting to know the Word of their mysterious, incomprehensible God. There was nothing in their experience by which to compare Him. So at this point, they were following Him with baby steps...into the great unknown reaches of the Kingdom of Heaven. And the Lord patiently and in progressive stages, continued to reveal Himself to them:

"Then behold, the Word of the LORD came to him, saying, 'This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.' And He took him outside and said, 'Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. And He said to him, 'I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it.'

"He said, 'O Lord GOD, how may I know that I will possess it?'"

“So He said to him, ‘Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.’ (In other words: ‘Prepare what is needed for Me to cut a blood covenant’.) Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds. The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.

“Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror and great darkness fell upon him. God said to Abram, ‘Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age. Then in the fourth generation they will return here (to Canaan), for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete.’

“It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, ‘To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite.’” (Genesis 15:4-19 Amplification and emphasis added.)

Abram wanted to know for sure that it would be as God had said. In that ancient Mid Eastern cultural matrix, the only way to know that promises would be fulfilled was by the absolute guarantee and assurance of a blood covenant oath sealed in blood. And that is what God took upon Himself to give to Abram. Through the Covenant He reveals more of His perfect nature in human terms, terms we humans can understand, relate to, and properly interpret. Other portions of Scripture allude to the fact that God initiated the Blood Covenant Pattern and had revealed it to others even before the time of Abram:

*“For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. But **like Adam they have transgressed the Covenant**; there they (Israelites) have dealt treacherously against Me.” (Hosea 6:6-7 Emphasis added.)*

“Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, ‘Now behold, I Myself do establish My Covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that comes out of the ark, even every beast of the earth.’” (Genesis 9:8-10 Emphasis added.)

“Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; the LORD of hosts is His name: ‘If this fixed order departs from before Me,’ declares the LORD, ‘then the offspring of Israel also will cease from being a nation before Me forever.’” (Jeremiah 31:35-36)

In the above Jeremiah text, God backed up His covenant with Abram and his descendants by comparing it with the covenant He has apparently had made with His own Creation. So blood covenant is a pattern God uses to reveal Himself and His perfect, changeless, all-sufficient nature

to human beings. And with Abram in attendance, God cut a unilateral Blood Covenant. In other words He entered into the covenant with Himself, and sealed it by the life-blood of sacrificial substitutes that prefigured His living Word, the crucified Lamb of God who would one day come to institute a New Covenant with Abram's descendants that He guaranteed was going to be perfectly completed and fulfilled. So God brought Abraham into His Covenant, and through him, he brought in everyone else that, like Abraham, would believe God and rest and trust in His perfect nature and eternal faithfulness to His Covenant promises.

God made the Covenant with Himself. It was made between the Father and the Son – God's living Word. So the Perfect Fulfillment God's nature required was the responsibility of God alone. Abram and his future descendants were brought into it, but they did not actively participate in creating it. They only observed what was being done and God made them to be the beneficiaries of it. God took all of the Covenant responsibilities upon Himself. So it is up to Him to see to its perfect fulfillment. That's why we can be sure that the promises will be kept and the covenant fulfilled to perfection. God...thanks to His perfect nature and character...is the Guarantor and Fulfiller of His Eternal Covenant. And our inclusion and union with God Himself is our Guarantee of His Covenant's perfect, eternal Fulfillment.

Centuries later, the same living Word of God that made this Covenant that included Abraham, became flesh and appeared as Yeshua, the Messiah of Israel. And eight days after His birth, according to the requirements of God's Torah commandments which He Himself had given to Abraham's descendants from atop Mt. Sinai, God's living Word made flesh, was circumcised into the very Covenant He had revealed made in Genesis and entered into, as our Representative, on Abraham's behalf:

“And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus (Yeshua), the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.” (Luke 2:21 Emphasis added.)

And notice the significance of what took place in Exodus between God and the nation of Israel. Since Yeshua, the living Word of God is a Representative for God and for Man in Abraham's Covenant...and as Yeshua of Nazareth had also been circumcised in His Humanity into that same Covenant...as the Passover Lamb and Kinsman Redeemer and Messiah of Israel, He was also present and able to represent us all at Sinai, when God sent Him to say to Israel, through Moses:

“Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.” (Exodus 19:5-6 Emphasis added.)

To validate and fulfill the Covenant made with Creation and the inclusion of Abraham and Moses and the nation of Israel into His Covenant, God sent His Word in the fullness of time, to become the Seed of Abraham and to be circumcised into the Covenant as Israel's Messiah. Then He insured and guaranteed, by the shedding of His own Blood and the sacrifice of His own

human life on the Cross that everything God had promised to Abraham, through Him, would be fulfilled to perfection, according to God's perfect standards, in the fullness of God's timing.

In cutting this Covenant, God used the typical pattern and ritual common in the ancient Middle East and throughout the Hebrew, Semitic cultural matrix of the Bible. The ritual dramatized, in graphic life-or-death terms, how God bound Himself (by the perfect integrity and faithfulness of His nature) to fulfill the promises He makes. Those who make blood covenants stake their lives and those of their families, and their fortunes and futures as a guarantee that they will fulfill their promises. So whenever a blood covenant is formally cut and finalized, everyone who witnesses it is assured that those who are 'cutting' it will fulfill it because of the death sentence and curses those entering into it call down upon themselves if they ever violate their word. And this is what God wanted us to know. His nature is perfect and changeless. So when He makes a Blood Covenant with us, we can 'take it to the bank'...knowing with absolute certitude that God will back up and fulfill His Blood-sealed Word...to Perfection. And that is why it is absurd to even imagine that there would be any need for any other god besides Him.

What Does God Reveal Through His Covenants?

"For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, 'I WILL SURELY BLESS YOU AND I WILL SURELY MULTIPLY YOU.' And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." (Hebrews 6:13-20)

It's obvious that our poor, fallen, broken human nature can't be trusted. That is why when men do business and make agreements they must enter into binding covenants or contracts that have legal penalties built into them in the event that we default. Unless we insert penalties, the fallen world system cannot function or transact its business properly. These self-imposed binding agreements and 'safety fences' are necessary for all human beings.

But for God, who is perfect in nature, character, integrity and motive, blood covenants are not legal restraints and artificial prods to make sure He 'stays on the straight and narrow' and is motivated to remain faithful to His Word. For Him, the Eternal Covenant is an instrument of self-revelation. When **HE** makes a covenant, He is revealing His perfect, infinitely reliable Nature and absolute Credibility. He embeds His promises within a blood covenant matrix to let us know that with Him we are totally safe and can rest in endless, airtight, outrageous confidence. He wants us to know that when He speaks His living Word, the Word will surely do and fulfill everything He is sent to do:

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to

the eater; so will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:10-11)

So the letter to the Hebrews states that because of the perfection of God’s nature, and the absolute authority of His Word over all of Creation, it is impossible for God to lie or violate or hide or twist the truth in any way in these two areas:

- 1) When He speaks and gives His living and written Word.
- 2) When He makes promises and guarantees their fulfillment by cutting a Blood Covenant.

When these two signs are given, we can rest assured with absolutely sure, airtight, outrageous confidence, that God will back what He has decreed to be true, and fulfill to perfection whatever He promised to do for someone by the shedding of His Word’s covenant blood.

Utter Perfection deserves our unshakable trust and confidence

This is what every disciple in training must learn and absorb and incorporate into his or her life – the utter Perfection of our God and how deserving He is of our airtight, unshakable trust and confidence, no matter what may or may not happen in this world of time and space. God’s Word, by which He fulfills His Covenants, is the most solid and secure guarantee possible. God’s Nature insures its fulfillment...regardless of any created circumstance or event that may take place on Earth. There is nothing more sure, secure and worthy of our trust in the entire universe, than our Master, the living Word of the living God and the shedding of His utterly authoritative Blood!

Like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had to learn this progressively; and so must all other disciples begin to grow and be trained and equipped to know this absolutely. Knowledge of our Master and full assurance of His infinite Perfection is absolutely essential for us. The knowledge that our God is Perfect and eternally Trustworthy must be deeply hard-wired and programmed into our minds and burned into our hearts and hard-wired into our brains *before* it is time for us to enter The Arena of Testimony and contend with the powers of Darkness. In that Arena we will have to testify despite the bitter opposition and traps of our demonic enemies and the unbelieving, decapitated humans that serve them. They will do whatever they can to get us to deny or separate ourselves from our Source. If they cut us away from Him, they succeed in killing us. So they will do their best to oppose our efforts to serve our Master and obey His commands and establish His Kingdom on Earth. That’s why we must be firmly rooted in advance with absolute conviction even before the battle starts and we are put to the test.

Once it begins, God has promised that He will prove Himself to be genuine and His Truth will be demonstrated to us, in us, and through us. God must be shown to be absolutely real, true and trustworthy through our faith in His Word. So to equip us, God gives us the gift of the indwelling Presence and Power of His awesome Holy Spirit...so that all of the denials and contradictions that the world, the flesh and the devil bring against us will be blown away and God’s enemies silenced, once and for all.

While the showdown is raging there can be no doubt left in us concerning God's Truth, Reality and Glory. His Perfection must be forever established within us. If it is, then by the time the battle ends and the dust settles, we will be shown to have resisted, and stood our ground and overcome Satan, Sin and Death – not by our might, or our wiles or devices; but by the Authority of God's Word and the Power of His Holy Spirit, in whose Perfection we perpetually place our airtight trust!

Airtight promises require airtight proof. For such proof to be effectively given...we must be trained, equipped and prepared with this sure knowledge and fortified by the unshakable expectant faith that only absolute certitude can provide for us. We must know in advance that although everything God requires of us is humanly impossible, He Himself is with us and in us at all times to do whatever He has promised...to us...in us...and through us, when the time to do it arrives! If we're not grounded, equipped and trained to cooperate with Him in this airtight assurance, we won't be combat-ready. And in that case, disaster will befall us.

Our father Abraham learned this, as did Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses, before the first word of the Scriptures was written down. They knew it before there were any Jews, or an Israel or a temple, or synagogues or Christianity or denominational theologies and systems. They had to know and interact with God's living Word in a way that proved, each time they were put to an acid test or trial by fire, that their faith in God and His living Word was airtight, combat-ready, and worthy of His Name. Theirs was a living, personal faith-empowered relationship with God, and not merely an indirect religious association with the idea of God, through membership in some man-made organization.

“By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as an alien in the Land of Promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

“By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE.” (Hebrews 11:8-12)

This was the secret and unbeatable advantage of our Master when He lived and operated as one of us on the earth. When He operated as the Son of Man, and was representing us in the flesh, He was limited to living as one of us. He did not operate as the eternal living Word of God during that time. He had to operate as a true human being in every sense of the term, except for Sin. He had to endure the same weaknesses, limitations and temptations that are common to us all. He experienced, hunger, weakness, weariness, pain, suffering, discouragement and unbelievable temptations, just like the rest of us.

But because He had the fullness of the Holy Spirit...He was able to do to perfection, what God requires of all human beings. And thankfully, He was our Covenant Representative. In our Sin-blasted twistedness and debility, we could not fulfill God's perfect standards of Righteousness in our own strength. But in Him and through Him, we have already done it perfectly. As long as He is our Head, His 'track record' is also ours. If He is our true Head and Source of Life and Provision...His Life and Nature and Perfect Performance and Righteousness can be transmitted into us and credited to us. We receive the credit and reward for the Perfection of what He is and what He has done in our name. He, as our human Representative, through His faith...knew the Eternal Word and the Fullness of the Perfection of the Father that the Eternal Word contains within Himself. He was able to rest and trust in His Father...with the airtight, perfect faith He had shared with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Now He, in His Humanity, was able to draw from God's Eternal Word and the Father with whom He was and is, one...and draw from His Eternal Perfection exactly what He and His disciples needed on Earth in space and time, at any moment. He trusted God in our name and met the requirements God places on us all. And so when He believed and trusted to that perfect degree...so did those of us that can rest and trust in Him, now:

*"When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep. And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, 'Save us, Lord; we are perishing!' He *said to them, 'Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?' Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. The men were amazed, and said, 'What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?'" (Matthew 8:23-27 Emphasis added.)*

At that time, His disciples were in training. He was demonstrating what the true faith and obedience God requires of us truly is and what it looks like. And they would learn their lessons well. In time, they would 'get the hang' of being His image and likeness...what it would mean to have the risen Lord continue to live and work on Earth...by the Holy Spirit...through their yielded, crucified flesh:

"Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth hour, the hour of prayer. And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he began asking to receive alms. But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, 'Look at us!' And he began to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, 'I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!' And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened. With a leap he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God." (Acts 3:1-8)

Beloved...this is how close our Master intends to be to us...and how close He is training us to be to Him. He wants to be one with us; and for us to be one with Him to such an extent, that we will operate as one working unit at all times. It took time for Peter, John and the other apostles to learn to draw from His Perfect Faith, just as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob Joseph and Moses had to

struggle to do it. But they did finally learn; and so can we. It will take lots of practice. We will have to learn progressively how to believe, trust, abide and rest with and in and from the One that always abides with us and in us and will never leave nor fail nor forsake us. So let's begin.