

# **Book of Genesis Commentary**

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Contents

Introduction To The Old Testament ..... 1

Chapter 1 ..... 18

Chapter 2 ..... 40

Chapter 3 ..... 53

Chapter 4 ..... 69

Chapter 5 ..... 78

Chapter 6 ..... 82

Chapter 7 ..... 91

Chapter 8 ..... 95

Chapter 9 ..... 101

Chapter 10 ..... 108

Chapter 11 ..... 119

Chapter 12 ..... 130

Chapter 13 ..... 137

Chapter 14 ..... 140

Chapter 15 ..... 146

Chapter 16 ..... 161

Chapter 17 ..... 167

Chapter 18 ..... 174

Chapter 19 ..... 180

Chapter 20 ..... 188

Chapter 21 ..... 192

Chapter 22 ..... 198

Chapter 23 ..... 208

Chapter 24 ..... 212

Chapter 25 ..... 221

Chapter 26 ..... 229

Chapter 27 ..... 235

Chapter 28 ..... 242

Chapter 29 ..... 248

|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Chapter 30 ..... | 253 |
| Chapter 31 ..... | 260 |
| Chapter 32 ..... | 268 |
| Chapter 33 ..... | 274 |
| Chapter 34 ..... | 277 |
| Chapter 35 ..... | 280 |
| Chapter 36 ..... | 284 |
| Chapter 37 ..... | 288 |
| Chapter 38 ..... | 299 |
| Chapter 39 ..... | 303 |
| Chapter 40 ..... | 307 |
| Chapter 41 ..... | 310 |
| Chapter 42 ..... | 315 |
| Chapter 43 ..... | 320 |
| Chapter 44 ..... | 325 |
| Chapter 45 ..... | 328 |
| Chapter 46 ..... | 333 |
| Chapter 47 ..... | 340 |
| Chapter 48 ..... | 346 |
| Chapter 49 ..... | 351 |
| Chapter 50 ..... | 365 |

# Introduction To The Old Testament

## Why do we study The Old Testament ?

Some may imagine that as long as we live in the New Testament, we do not need the Old Testament, and this is a wrong perception, and here is some evidence.

1. The Old Testament was the Word of God which He revealed to His holy men to write it.
  - a) " All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3: 16)
  - b) "for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1: 21)
  - c) "My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; My tongue is the pen of a ready writer." (Psalm 45: 1). (The ready writer here is the Holy Spirit). As long as it is the revealed Word of God, we must study it and be satiated with it. How can we neglect what God has revealed?
2. As long as the Old Testament is God's Word, the New Testament complements the Old Testament. Both covenants are the holy book of God, as Christ said, I did not come to destroy but to fulfill (Matthew 5: 17)
3. Saint John the Theological says that " the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Revelation 19: 10). Also Paul the Apostle says " For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." (**Romans 10: 4**). Therefore, we see Jesus through the Old Testament's prophecies, teachings and rituals.
4. There are prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the end of days, such as those of Daniel and others (Daniel 8: 17). Accordingly, there are prophecies that have not yet been fulfilled. How can we neglect the study of those prophecies.
5. The New Testament cites the Old Testament in dozens of quoted verses, and the Lord Christ Himself cited some of them, so how can we separate the Old Testament from the New Testament?
6. It was said that we can extract the New Testament from the Old Testament and we can see in the New Testament the fulfillment of the Old Testament. The One who inspired the Old Testament is The One who inspired the New Testament.
7. The Old Testament is considered an explanation and interpretation of the New Testament.
  - a) How would we understand all the meanings of the Sacrifice of the Cross if we did not understand the meaning of sacrifices in the Old Testament?
  - b) The many wars in the Old Testament indicate and explain the reality of the spiritual wars that we are facing now. When we read about a war stirred by the enemies against God's people, we then understand it as the enemies being the devil and his soldiers, and God's people are ourselves, in

other words "the Church of Christ". There were wars in which God supported His people and wars that God fought on behalf of His people. But the main principle that we can draw from these wars; if I keep myself pure, God who is present with me will support me in my wars with the devil, so [Spiritual Striving](#) is a condition for God's help.

- c) The many names recorded in the Bible indicate that our names are written in the Book of Life.
- d) The many numbers mentioned indicate that God knows us one by one.

8. The Old Testament that is in the hands of the Jews is an evidence of the authenticity of the Bible, for the prophecies mentioned in it were fulfilled completely in the Person of Christ and in His Church, as it shows in the New Testament book which is in the hands of the Christians. Therefore, it was said that the Jews are the custodians of the Christian library. They preserved the Old Testament book with its prophecies until the time came to fulfill them. They preserved it without distortion and without understanding it, so it was a testament to the authenticity of the book.

9. The Old Testament was for man to know the Person of God. Before the fall, God used to speak directly to our parents, Adam and Eve. But sin has made a barrier between God and man, and made man weak, and cannot see God or else he will die " You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." (Exodus 33: 20). This is like someone who wants to stare at the sunlight, he will lose his sight. God wishes that we see his glory and rejoice in him. However, the capabilities of the human body due to sin prevent him from seeing God, lest he dies. After the fall, God began to speak to man through dreams and visions (Job 4: 12-21) after He had been talking to them directly. Then God spoke to people through the Bible. And from the Bible we get to know the nature of the Person of God.

- a) In the Old Testament, we see many wars and blood, and curses that afflicted people, so we see God's wrath on sin, and we understand the Holiness of God and His hatred of sin.
- b) We also see in the Old Testament God's Kindness, Love, Care, and His pursuit to save man. Also, we can see that there are human beings who were able to enjoy the Person of God and His companionship. In short, the Old Testament is a way for human beings to become acquainted with the Person of God after losing direct contact with Him as a result of sin. How can we neglect a way to get to know the Person of God?

10. The Old Testament was our tutor until Christ comes (Galatians 3: 24). For example, when a Jew desired the sin of fornication, but feared its punishment, which is stoning, he would suppress his lust. But the desire would exhaust him. On the other hand, for the Christian, grace is supporting him to defeat the sin within him (Romans 8: 3), and by this we know the merits of grace over us.

## **The Old Testament is a shadow of the New Testament**

1. There are explicit prophecies about Jesus Christ like " Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7: 14)
2. There are persons in the Old Testament that symbolize Christ (such as Isaac, Joseph, etc.).

3. There are events that symbolize the Story of Salvation (such as the Exodus of the people from Egypt and their entry into Canaan).
4. The Tabernacle symbolizes the redemptive work of Christ, and it will be explained in the Book of Exodus.

## **The Old Testament refers to Christ:**

### **I. Explicit Prophecies Referring to Christ and His Redemptive Work**

#### **1. Prophecies about the coming of Christ:**

" He (the seed of woman) shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." (Genesis 3: 15)

" The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together;" (Isaiah 40: 5)

" and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations" (Haggai 2: 7)

#### **2. Prophecies about the Time of His coming**

" The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people." (Genesis 49: 10).

Daniel's Prophecy about the seventy weeks (Daniel 9: 24-27)

#### **3. Christ will be Divine and Human**

" I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'" (Psalm 2: 7)

" The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." (Psalm 110: 1)

" Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting" (Micah 5: 2)

#### **4. Prophecies about the Genealogy of Christ**

From the first woman (Genesis 3: 15), from Abraham (Genesis 12: 3), from Isaac (Genesis 26: 4), from Jacob (Genesis 28: 14), from Judah (Genesis 49: 10), from Jesse (Isaiah 11: 1), and from David (Psalm 132: 11)

#### **5. Prophecies about being born from a virgin**

" Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7: 14)

#### **6. About where He will be born**

" But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting" (Micah 5: 2)

#### **7. About a messenger with the spirit and strength of Elijah precedes Him**

" Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the Lord of hosts." (Malachi 3:1)

" Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet. Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. (Malachi 4: 5)

#### **8. About proclaiming the good news in Galilee**

(Isaiah 9: 1-2)

#### **9. About Him being a Prophet**

" "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear," (Deuteronomy 18: 15)

#### **10. In proving His Teaching with great miracles**

(Isaiah 35: 5-6) + (Isaiah 42: 7) + (Isaiah 32: 2)

#### **11. About Entering Jerusalem Publicly**

(Zechariah 9:9)

#### **12. About being poor and insulted, and one of His disciples sells Him for thirty silver coins (the price of a servant) and buys with them a pottery field**

(Isaiah 53: 3) + (Psalm 41: 9) + (Psalm 55: 12&14) + (Zechariah 11: 12&13)

#### **13. About Him endures suffering and death for the sins of the world**

(Psalm 22: 16&17) + (Isaiah 50: 6) + (Isaiah 53: 5&8&12)

#### **14. About Him being mocked**

(Psalm 22: 7,8,12,13)

#### **15. About Him given vinegar to drink on the cross, and His garments divided and lots cast on His shirt**

(Psalm 69: 21) + (Psalm 22: 18)

**16. No Bone is broken of Him, but His side stabbed with a spear**

(Psalm 34: 20)

**17. Dies with sinners but buried with dignity**

(Isaiah 53: 9)

**18. Risen from the dead**

(Psalm 16: 9,10) + (Isaiah 53: 10) + (Psalm 61: 6)

**19. Rise in the third day and raises us with Him and the Holy Spirit descends after the Resurrection**

(Hosea 6: 1,2) + (Hosea 6: 3)

**20. Ascension to Heaven**

(Psalm 68: 18) + (Psalm 24: 3, 7-10) + (Psalm 47:5)

**21. Descending of the Holy Spirit**

(Joel 2: 28)

## II. Persons Symbolizing Christ

For every person symbolizing Christ, there are similarities on many points. But in this quick research, we will take the most important point of these similarities

|    |             |  |
|----|-------------|--|
| 1. | Adam        | Head of Creation   |
| 2. | Abel        | The righteous is killed by envy  |
| 3. | Noah        | Symbolized Christ the Head of the New Creation   |
| 4. | Melchizedek | Christ is King and Priest  |
| 5. | Isaac       | Heavenly Bridegroom and His bride go to Him in Heaven (Church is His Bride). He has one bride who does not die (Rebekeh's death was never mentioned in the Bible)          |
| 6. | Jacob       | The bridegroom, Who descends to His bride on earth, Takes two brides, a symbol of the gentiles and the Jews, out of whom Christ made his church (He made the two into one) |



|     |          |  |
|-----|----------|--|
| 7.  | Joseph   | The firstborn who gave us the inheritance of the firstborn, and in Christ we became the Church of Firstborn (Hebrews 12: 23) |
| 8.  | Moses    | Saviour and Redeemer from slavery to freedom (Pharaoh was a symbol of Satan).  |
| 9.  | Joshua   | Christ crosses with the people to the heavenly Canaan. Christ died and rose to carry us in Him to Heaven                     |
| 10. | Aaron    | Christ is the High Priest offering the sacrifice of Himself.   |
| 11. | Samson   | Christ's salvation was with astonishing power.   |
| 12. | David    | Christ the King, founder of the Heavenly Kingdom.  |
| 13. | Solomon  | The hypostasis of wisdom and the builder of the temple (His body is The Church).   |
| 14. | Hezekiah | Christ dies but He rises with the power of his divinity.   |

### **Events symbolizing the story of salvation / The Old Testament explains the Salvation and the Church**

#### 1. The story of the Exodus from Egypt

| <b>The Exodus</b>  | <b>The Story of Salvation</b>                           |
|--|---|
| Passover Lamb  | Crucified Christ  |
| The Brass Serpent (He who looks to it will be healed)                  | Crucified Christ (He who believes in Him will be saved) |
| The Firstborn Plague / Pharaoh's Army drown in the sea                 | Satan defeated  |
| Pharaoh himself did not drown (It's not mentioned that he was drowned) | Satan is not finished up till now                       |
| Amalek fights against the people                                       | Satan is still fighting the children of God             |
| Amalek is defeated (Moses prayer + Joshua's sword)                     | Satan is defeated by struggling (work) and prayer       |
| Crossing the Red Sea   | Baptism   |
| Manna  | Communion   |

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Water from the rock              | Descending of the Holy Spirit on the Church |
| The Tabernacle among the people  | Christ amidst His Church                    |
| People journeyed 40 years        | Our life on earth                           |
| Ongoing sacrifices               | Ongoing Liturgies (Eucharist)               |
| Crossing the Jordan              | Death                                       |
| Canaan                           | Heaven                                      |
| Moses                            | Christ the Saviour                          |
| Pharaoh makes the people slaves  | Satan makes man slave                       |
| Moses do not enter promised land | The Law cannot save us                      |
| Joshua enters the promised land  | Christ enters Heaven ahead of us            |

2. Offering Isaac as a sacrifice symbolizes the Story of Salvation; Isaac carries the wood as a symbol of Christ carrying His Cross, and Isaac's coming back alive is a symbol of the Resurrection of Christ.

3. Jacob's Ladder.

The Old Testament in its order explains the story of salvation and the Church

1. The first and second chapters of the Book of Genesis explain what God intended for the creation. God created man in the garden of Eden, the word **Eden** in Hebrew means joy, and **paradise** means a beautiful place that God kept creating and preparing for billions of years for the sake of Adam, whom he loves, to dwell in, and so that Adam may live a joyful life. We notice that the love of God for Adam and his sons is an eternal love (see the explanation of John 13: 1). God would have wished that this love between Him and Adam would continue, and Adam would remain in the paradise of joy forever. God's purpose will not fail and will be completed in the Heavenly Jerusalem, where God dwells with people (Revelation 21: 3).

2. Adam fell and the earth was cursed and the judgment came upon Adam to die ... But there was a Divine promise of salvation through a Child who would crush the head of the serpent, as God said, "The seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent." God's intention will not fall.

3. Eve thought that her eldest son "Cain" was the Saviour, but:

- a) God said that the son will be the seed of the woman and Cain is the seed of a man.
- b) We see in the fourth chapter the corruption of Cain, so how does this corrupt person save others, whoever handles the salvation of others must himself be righteous?

4. The fifth chapter shows that all the descendants of Adam died because their father Adam died and they were in his image. After Adam was alive in the image of God, by sin he lost this image and died, so that all his descendants died after him.

5. In chapter six, we see the corruption of all mankind ... How can salvation then be accomplished?!
6. The account of Noah's ark explains that the ancient humanity must die and a new man to be created. This is the fulfillment of the sacrament of Baptism (1 Peter 3: 20, 21). How can this be explained?
7. This was through the ark of Noah, when mankind had a new head, Noah, and God said that he was righteous (Genesis 6: 9), so he was an example of Christ the Saviour, the Righteous, coming to be the Head of the new creation.
8. Then comes the story of Abraham, who offered his son Isaac as sacrifice but Isaac returned alive (the death and resurrection of Christ). We see here God's joy in Abraham, his relationship with him, and his acceptance of Abraham's hospitality, not to eat, for God and the angels who were with him do not need food, but because God wants to dwell with people as long as they are saints like Abraham.
9. Then we find Isaac who has returned to his father's house, then his father sends his servant to bring a bride for his son = Christ in His Glory after His resurrection and ascension to the glory of His Father and the Holy Spirit is preparing for Him His bride (the Church) who will live eternally. The book did not mention the news of Rebekah's death. It was clear that the story of Isaac's marriage to Rebekah and that the revelation devoted this very long chapter to it (Genesis 24), that it is a symbol of the story of Christ's marriage to His Church (Rev 19: 7). No marriage story is mentioned so extensively in the Bible other than Isaac's marriage with Rebekah.
10. Then comes the story of Jacob, in which we see the son who leaves his father's house and goes to marry two brides, one of whom has poor eyesight (the Jews who did not understand the prophecies in their book and rejected Christ) and the other beautiful and beloved, for which Jacob tired a lot (incarnation, crucifixion and death) but died on the way as Jacob was on his way To the house of his father Isaac in Canaan (Genesis 31:18). The church that now dies in the flesh but will live eternally in the heavenly Canaan with her Bridegroom - and this bridegroom came to all men and made the two one (Ephesians 2: 13-22).
11. We find that this groom has given to his son Joseph an inheritance in the Promised Land, which was twice the share of any tribe (Joseph's share in the Promised Land was exchanged for two shares for his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, so Joseph would double the share of his brothers). This refers to Christ, whose bride the Church became the Church of the firstborn (Hebrews 12:23). We understand that the double for the firstborn refers to the Christian's share in the inheritance of heaven in exchange for the land inheritance for the Jew in the Old Testament. Note that the Jews were the firstborn son of God, and the church was the second son, but the Church became the firstborn as the Jews were rejected when they crucified Christ. This was explained in the rejection of all the firstborns of the Old Testament, so that the next son becomes the firstborn, and he is the one who receives the blessing. We saw this with Cain and Abel / Ishmael and Isaac / Esau and Jacob / Reuben and Joseph / and Perez and Zerah.
12. Then Jacob and his family go down to Egypt (70 souls = the number of the people of the world Genesis 10) an indication that because of sin (10 symbolize the commandments x 7 which is the complete number, therefore, the creation has broken all the commandments), the creation was subjected (all human beings, all creatures and the earth became cursed because of Adam's sin) to futility. (Romans 8:20), but on hope = This is what was explained by the insistence of all the fathers Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph to be buried in the Promised Land, believing that God will fulfill his promise to return them to Canaan, and this

is why Abraham bought the cave of Macphelah to bury Sarah his wife. This is the same as our belief now that we will get our share in the heavenly Canaan. We see the number 70 repeated again in the captivity of the people to Babylon, and here the number 70 indicates that the duration of our temporary life on earth with its pains, is a result of our sins, but we will return and as though Christ was ahead of us.

13. The people tasted the bitterness of slavery in Egypt, but God sincerely sends them a saviour, who is Moses, a symbol of Christ who frees us with his blood (the Passover lamb, and by which the firstborn survived) from the bondage of Satan (and his symbol here is Pharaoh). Once again, we see that the salvation of the righteous is a symbol that the Church has become the Church of the firstborn. As we have seen in the previous table, how the journey out of the land of slavery in Egypt and unto entering the earthly land of Canaan with Joshua is a complete explanation of the story of salvation that begins with the redemption of Christ (the Passover lamb) and then Baptism, meaning burial and death with Christ (as Moses crossed the Red Sea with the people 1 Corinthians 10: 1-4) and until crossing the Jordan River (the death of man at the end of his journey of alienation on earth) and entering the earthly Canaan as a symbol of our eternal entry into the Heavenly Canaan.

14. We see after the redemption with the Passover lamb and the exodus and freedom, God gives them the Ten Commandments, and asks them to make the Tabernacle to dwell in their midst, and this means that God longs that we obey the commandments so that he dwells in our midst. Obeying the commandment is a sign of man's love for God (John 14:23), and the signs of God's love for man are innumerable. That is why we saw God accept the hospitality of Abraham, the righteous who obeyed the commandment.

15. And the Tabernacle incorporated the Altar of Burnt Offering where blood sacrifices were offered by the people, such as the sacrifice of burnt offerings, so that God be pleased with them. Whoever sins offers a sacrifice for his sin, so God forgives him his sin. Thus, God accepts to continue dwelling in their midst.

16. The book of Leviticus is the book of holiness, it explains the details of sacrifices and offerings. These all explain the work of the cross. Holiness has two parts: - The first part is the redemption of Christ through His Incarnation and the Cross .... The second part is the role of a person's personal strive to be sanctified. Therefore, the Book of Leviticus is divided into two parts: - The first is the laws of sacrifices, and this was an indication of the work of Christ ..... The second is the role of man in purifying himself and his personal strive to be sanctified.

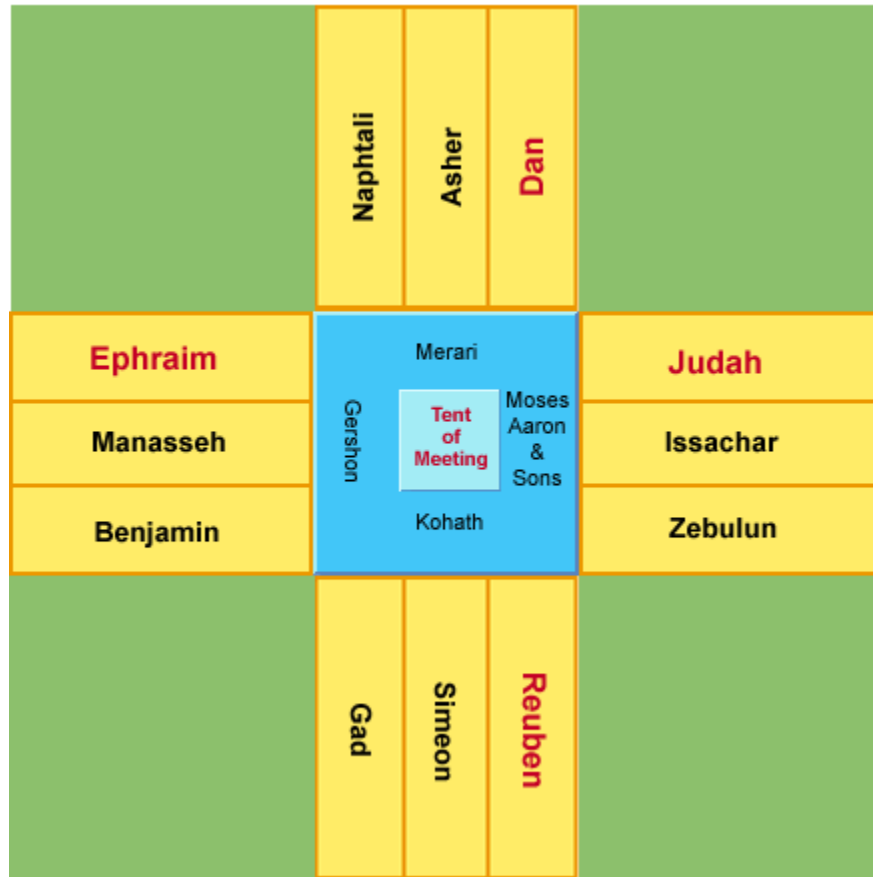
17. Then comes the Book of Numbers, and we see in it the people were lost in the wilderness for 40 years as a symbol of our journey of life on Earth, and we see in it God who loves His children and takes care of them during this journey as a father who cares about everything in His children's lives ... He supports them and disciplines them with painful plagues in order to fear sin, for sin is destructive. God does this with us now, so he disciplines us with some trials to help us save ourselves." For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." (Hebrews 12: 6)

18. And we see in the Book of Numbers God leading the people through the journey by a cloud, from their first departure from the Baptism of the Red Sea until they crossed the Jordan River, and this indicates the leadership of the Holy Spirit to the Church that passed through the Baptism until her entry into the Heavenly Canaan (we see this in the book of Acts of the Apostles).

19. And we see in the Book of Numbers that God is always in the midst of His people, so the glory of God dwells in the Tabernacle, the priests and the Levites in their tents in the form of a small cross around the

tent, and the twelve tribes in their tents around the tent in the form of a large cross. The cross was the secret of reconciliation between God and His people, and God's approval of his people in the Person of Christ. The drawing below illustrates this (Numbers 2).

**An illustration of the Tribes Placement around the Tabernacle, in which we see the distribution of the people in the form of Two Crosses**



20. And we see in the Book of Joshua that Joshua divided the Promised Land among the tribes, and there are tribes that received large portions and tribes that received small portions, a symbol of Jesus Christ, who will give each of us a portion in His glory according to his deeds: “for one star differs from another star in glory.” (1 Corinthians 15: 41)

21. The book of Judges shows the spread of sin and chaos, as there is no king in the country.

22. In the Historical Books, we find God gives them a great king, David, to establish a strong kingdom, symbolizing the kingdom of Christ, the son of David, that is, His church over which he reigns with the cross of His love. And we saw Solomon his son, whom God had given great wisdom, and he built the temple and God filled his kingdom with blessings, a symbol of Christ the Hypostasis of the Wisdom of God, the founder of the temple of His body, the Church, who is filling his church with every blessing.

23. Then we see the division of the kingdom into two kingdoms, Israel (10 tribes) and Judah (two tribes) as a symbol of the division of the Church after that.

24. The Poetic Books set an escalating approach to man’s relationship with God.

25. Job represents man's murmuring about God's judgments because of lack of understanding them, but they are in favour of his own salvation.

26. In Psalms we see a step forward when man resorts to praying to God in his troubles.

27. Proverbs: Here we see the results of prayer, as the one who prays with the Holy Spirit is filled with the spirit of wisdom. Prayer is the means for the fullness of the Holy Spirit (Luke 11: 13 + Ephesians 5: 18-21).

28. Ecclesiastes: The perfection of wisdom is that a person realizes the vanity of this world.

29. Song of Solomon: Here we reach the peak of maturity in a person's relationship with God in a loving relationship.

30. The books of the prophets are summarized in showing the state of corruption that people have reached, but we find them all prophesying about a coming Saviour, the Lord Jesus, as there is no solution to the problem of sin except through the Saviour Christ. The books of the prophets end with the prophecy of Malachi, in which the Prophet reveals that the Messiah the Saviour will come to the world twice: The first (Malachi 3: 1,2) where preceding His coming someone will prepare the way before him, who is John the Baptist. At this time He will come for salvation. The second (Malachi 4: 5,6) is preceded by one who prepares the way for Him, who is Elijah the Prophet, and this time He comes for judgment. **Amen, come, Lord Jesus.**

## An Introduction to Study the Old Testament

1. Israel, like all ancient nations, lived a primitive, tribal life that relied on wandering and grazing before it settled and transformed from tribes to nation. Even after Israel settled, they retained many tribal customs. And the tribes that usually depend on herding travel with their herds of sheep and goats in search of grass and water. So they used to live in tents, and the word tents as a place to live settled in their perception even after they built houses and cities to live in. When Jeroboam the son of Nebat led the ten tribes to separate from the Kingdom of Judah or the throne of King David, he said, "To your tents, O Israel !." (1 Kings 12: 16). That is, let us separate and separate our kingdom from the house of David. As a society of shepherds, their analogies were based on the reality of what they lived, so the most powerful thing among the shepherds is the horn, so the horn was taken as a sign of strength, "My [a]horn is exalted in the Lord" (1 Sam 2: 1), "My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the [b]horn of my salvation, my stronghold." (Psalm 18: 2). And God is likened to the Shepherd too (Psalm 23 + Ezekiel 34).

2. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and then the tribes lived these tribal lives, and the tribes were only clans. The life of tribes that are always searching for water includes one of the most important virtues, which is generosity is with guests who cannot find water or food. This is what we saw in the generosity of Abraham and Lot with their guests.

3. A tribe is a group of families who descended from one father and who live in solidarity and protect their members, so if someone is separated from his tribe, he had to resort to another tribe that protected him, and each tribe was named after the elder father (we see this in the tribes, for example the tribe of Judah

and we see it among the Arabs as well, so it is said Bani Ali, for example). This is what Abimelech meant when he said to his mother's relatives: "Remember that I am your own flesh and bone" (Judges 9:2).

4. A tribe may merge with another tribe and be named by its name as a result of intermarriage, and this is what we saw in the joining of the Calebites, the descendants of Kenaz to the tribe of Judah (Numbers 32: 12 + Joshua 14: 6), and the Kenites were strangers to Israel (Genesis 15: 19), then Caleb entered the tribe of Judah ( 1 Chronicles 2: 18 + Numbers 13: 6)

5. A tribe may weaken and be forced to enter into another tribe and dissolve in it, and this is what happened with the tribe of Simeon, which melted in the tribe of Judah (Joshua 19: 1-9) and Moses does not mention the tribe of Simeon in his blessing for the tribes (Deuteronomy 33) because Simeon, due to his weakness, melted in the tribe of Judah.

6. The tribe may be divided into clans, and each clan has a chief who is called the head of a thousand or they call them elders or chiefs (Judges 8: 8, 14 + Gen 36: 40-43 + Joshua 7: 14-18).

7. Each tribe has borders that are known, but conflicts permanently arise over the sources of water from wells, as Lot's shepherds quarrelled with Abraham's shepherds, and Abimelech's servants seized a well dug by Abraham's servants. Isaac faced the same problem (Genesis 13: 7 + 21: 25 + 26: 19-22).

8. In wars between tribes, the spoils are usually shared between the victors, and David legalized this principle. The largest share always went to the head of the tribe, then it went to the Levites, meaning to the Lord.

9. The tribe used to protect its guest. That's why Lot almost gave his two daughters to the people of Sodom in order to save his guests. The cities of refuge became a spiritual and symbolic expression of this concept, and for the Jews, the cities of refuge were a way to limit the use of revenge.

10. When a clan lives in a certain place for a while, it may give up its original name and call itself a name derived from the place in which it lived, so we hear about the tribe of the Gileadites (Judges 5: 17), and after Israel became a state, this method of naming spread.

11. The tent, which is the basis of the dwelling among the tribes, continued to express the places of residence even after they built houses and cities in which they live, and this analogy continued until they depicted death as loosening the tent pegs to leave (Job 4: 21 + Isaiah 38: 12 + 2 Corinthians 5: 1). And peace was described as a tent stretched out (Isaiah 33:20). And the large number of descendants was likened to the breadth of the tent (Is. 2:54).

12. When the Jews lived in homes, their luxury increased, and so as sin. From here we see the prophets' longing for a return to austerity and a return to the wilderness where the tent, asceticism and austerity (Hosea 2: 14-17 + Hosea 12: 9 + Isaiah 43: 19 + Jeremiah 35: 6-7). Thus we understand that this is a call to leave the world in order to have a correct relationship with God.

13. Inheritance used to be transferred to the older brother, he also used to collect everything in his hand, and he becomes the head of the family, that's why we find Laban playing the main role in the marriage of his sister Rebekah. The older brother also had a double portion of the inheritance (Deuteronomy 21: 17).

14. Due to polygamy, there could have been half-sisters to a brother (that is, with the same father but different mothers). The brother could marry his half-sister just as Ibrahim married Sarah. And Tamar asked



Amnon to ask their father (David) to marry her. For this reason, sometimes the relationship was attributed to the mother and not to the father, but this was in rare cases. However, the general form is the person's lineage is attributed to his father and not to his mother. However, we note the interest of the Bible in the lineage of each king of Judah to his mother as well as to his father.

15. There was a Hebrew obligation for a family member to redeem, protect, defend, and avenge another member of the same family. This is known to all tribes. However, according to the Hebrews, it takes a special status for them, for the redeemer was the closest person to the injured or captured individual, so if the Israelite is forced to sell himself as a slave to pay off a debt, then the redeemer must hasten to liberate his relative and pay off his debt. Even if he would pay off this debt by selling his own house or land so that the house or land of his relative does not fall into foreign hands. Boaz was the Saviour or the Redeemer for Ruth and Naomi, when the Redeemer closest to them gave up his role for them. Perhaps this is the reason why the book writer neglected the name of the First Redeemer, as he abandoned his role. The role of the Redeemer was to buy the field and to marry Ruth. And this redeemer's work is stipulated in (Leviticus 25: 49), which states that the uncle or the uncle's son may redeem him; or anyone who is near of kin to him in his family may redeem him. However, it was the right of the Saviour or the Redeemer to refuse, and he had to declare his refusal by taking off his shoes in front of the congregation (Deuteronomy 25: 9 + Ruth 4: 7-8). One of the duties of the redeemer is revenge. Of course, it is clear that this Redeemer is a symbol of our true Redeemer, i.e. Christ, to whom is the glory, and Who is closer to us than any relative.

16. There were some clans or villages that specialized in specific trades or occupations. The head of these craftsmen was called "a father." In Hebrew and Arabic, the word *Abi* means father. Perhaps this is an interpretation of what *Huram Abi* said (2 Chronicles 2: 13). He is the father of craftsmen and professionals who work in silver, gold and copper. Therefore, he calls him Hiram only in the Book of Kings (1 Kings 7: 13) and review (1 Chronicles 14: 4 + Nehemiah 11: 35 + 1 Chronicles 4: 21, 23)

17. We notice that polygamy was widespread in the Old Testament, which began with Lamech, a descendant of Cain. As for the children of Seth, they adhered to the one-wife principle, as is evident from the story of Noah, as both Noah and his children had one wife. Then the doctrine of polygamy spread (Jacob, for example). And the husband can also take a concubine. The concubine does not have the same status and rights as the wife. And the man would have marry his maidservant if his wife was barren. All this was for increasing birth. Children were the most important thing for them so that a man would have status and prestige (Psalm 127: 3-5). Therefore, the Jews did not understand the meaning of virginity, and the blessing of the Lord to a man meant increasing the number of his children. The Talmud limited the number of wives to four for the common man and eighteen for the king. Thus, Solomon was an anomaly. But polygamy was the source of disturbance in families, as happened with Abraham and then Jacob.

18. The woman used to live in her father's house in obedience to him, then she would go to her husband's house in obedience to him. The husband was and still is called *Baal*. The word *Baal* is Hebrew and means Lord (Exodus 21: 3). That is why they understood that the woman was a possession from the possessions of her husband. The husband used a dowry for his bride's father, and thus she would become his for the entire life. As for the concubine, he used to buy her at a price from her father and he could sell it after that. The dowry was transferred to the wife from her father in the event of his death or divorce, and perhaps this is what Leah and Rachel meant, that their father Laban sold them and consumed their money, meaning he did not give them their right to the dowry when they left his home permanently, as they would not see him again.

19. The Rabbis (teachers of the law) set the age of marriage at 12 years for a girl, 13 years for a boy, and because of the small age required for marriage, parents would choose partners for their children without consulting them, just as Abraham sent his servant to choose a wife for Isaac. However, Babylonian laws that governed the Rebekah family required that the elder brother (Laban in this case) consult his sister (Rebekah in this case) if the father was dead.

20. The crime of assaulting a virgin was required the one who committed the crime to marry her while providing a dowry in excess of the regular dowry. Also, the husband subsequently wouldn't have the right to divorce her (Exodus 22: 16,17 + Deuteronomy 22: 28,29).

21. They preferred to marry relatives (for example Isaac and Rebekah) and did not prefer marrying from other tribes or foreign women, however, this was permissible, and we find that Nehemiah was very strict in separating marriage from foreign women.

22. Marrying an aunt (mother's or father's sister) was permitted. Moses himself was the fruit of such a marriage. But he was forbidden after this (Leviticus 18: 12, 13 + Leviticus 20: 19). Likewise, marriage to two sisters was forbidden, as Jacob did (Leviticus 18: 18)

23. Often the marriage did not have religious rituals, but there was a Marriage Certificate and a Divorce Certificate (Deuteronomy 24: 1-3 + Jeremiah 3: 8). Indeed, we do not find in the Old Testament a reference to the Marriage Certificate, but it is inconceivable that there is a Book of Divorce and there is no Marriage Certificate. On the island of Philae, there was found a Jewish Marriage Contract that read: "I am her husband, and she is my wife forever."

24. The bride usually prepared by wearing a veil covering her face that she would only remove in the marital room. This explains why Rebekah put a veil on her face when she saw Isaac. In doing so, too, Laban deceived Jacob. On the other hand, the bridegroom wore a crown (Song of Solomon 3: 11 + Isaiah 61: 10) and refer also to (Song of Solomon 4: 1,3 + 6: 7) mentioning the veil of the bride. The bride was also surrounded by her friends from her departure from her house until the moment she arrived at the groom's house (Psalm 45: 14-15), and she wore the finest clothes and wore her jewels. The hymns were sung in praise of the bridegroom and the bride (Jeremiah 16: 9). Banquets and celebrations are held for a week (Genesis 29: 27 + Judges 14: 12).

25. There were two schools on the issue of permitting divorce, as it was stated in (Deuteronomy 24: 1) that a man may divorce his wife if she does not find favour in his eyes. And the second school completely tolerated it even permitting divorce if the woman could not cook well, or if the man liked another woman. The divorce takes place in front of two witnesses, and the man gives his wife a Divorce Certificate with which she can remarry. But we understand from (Malachi 2: 16) that God hates divorce. From the teaching of Christ we understand that God allowed them to divorce due to the hardness of their hearts. A declaration from God that he hates divorce that there was not a single case of divorce recorded in the Old Testament, see (Matthew 19: 7, 8).

26. The woman did not have the right to ask for divorce, so if a woman sent a Divorce Certificate to her husband, this was considered an impermissible act and against the Jewish law. Therefore, what the Lord Jesus said, "And if a woman divorces her husband .." was new to the concepts of the Jews. (Mark 10: 12).

27. A widow who did not bear male children was entitled to marry her husband's brother in order to have children. The first child is named after the deceased husband (Deuteronomy 25: 5-10). Review the story of the children of Judah with Tamar and the story of Ruth.

28. A man had the right to sell anything he owned, even his daughters, but he had no right to sell his wife, even if she is a foreigner that he had seized in the war (Deuteronomy 21: 10,14)

29. The law equalled the dignity of both the mother and the father (Deuteronomy 18: 21-21) + "Honour your father and your mother."

30. The many offspring were the most important element of the blessing (Ruth 4: 11-12) + (Genesis 24: 60 + Genesis 26: 4 + Genesis 15: 5 + Genesis 22: 17 + Psalm 127: 3-5). Therefore infertility was considered a curse or a test, so Samuel's mother felt ashamed that she had not had children. And the women would avoid this by adopting the children even from their maidservants.

31. The firstborn got the largest portion. However, this rule was not applied in the case of Isaac, who was younger than Ishmael, nor in the case of Jacob, who was younger than Esau. Solomon was the youngest son of David, and the reason is that God wanted to legislate that the chosen one from God is not necessarily the firstborn physically, for Israel is the firstborn son whose place the Church replaced by uniting with Christ the Chosen Firstborn.

32. The Hebrews used names that included the name of God "El", such as Samuel, or the name "Yahweh" such as Nathan Yahu, meaning Yahu has given, and that's when their relationship with God began. As for when their relationship with God declined, they were called by the names of other gods, such as Baal, so they called their sons Jerubbaal or Esh-Baal (Judges 7: 1 Chronicles 8: 33). After the exile, Aramaic names entered, and after the rule of Greek and the Romans, Greek and Roman names entered. One person was called by two names such as John Mark, Saul Paul. The change of names indicated the authority of the one who changed the name. Pharaoh changed the name of Joseph and Pharaoh changed the name of king Eliakim, and made him Jehoiakim. Nebuchadnezzar changed the name of Mattaniah to Zedekiah and also changed the names of Daniel and the Three Saintly Youth.

33. Circumcision was known in most places of the East, but circumcision for the Jews had a religious meaning, which is a covenant with Yahweh. And the book did not pronounce the word "uncircumcised" except for the Palestinians mostly because they were not circumcised. Often, circumcision was linked to marriage before it was a religious ritual, so the bridegroom is called the circumcised. The wife of Moses also said about Moses "a groom of blood" (Exodus 4: 24-26). With this logic, Jacob's children convinced the people of Shechem to be circumcised before their son married Dinah. The word "groom" in Hebrew and all its derivatives come from the Hebrew verb "circumcise". And the fact that circumcision precedes the law, it is clear that God gave it to Abraham as a sign of a covenant, and also review the words of Christ (John 7:22). The Jews considered that circumcision was prescribed by Moses.

34. Circumcision was the outward sign of entering into a covenant with God, since entering into a covenant always requires an external sign (Jeremiah 34: 18 + Genesis 15:9 + Genesis 31: 44).

35. As we said, the concept of circumcision is for a man to become a bridegroom and thus have offspring and children, and this is a sign of blessing (the abundance of sons). Hence, circumcision was a sign of a covenant with God because when a person enters into a covenant with God, God blesses him, and this is what we understand from (Genesis 1: 28) that God blessed Adam and Eve and said to them: Be fruitful,

multiply, and fill the earth, and in this sense we understand the text (Leviticus 23: 19, 24) For a tree whose fruit they do not eat, he calls it a uncircumcized tree, and he calls a tree that has fruit, a circumcised tree. With this concept we understand the meaning of a circumcised ear and a circumcised heart. In addition, circumcision involves cutting off a part of the body and leaving it to die, so that the rest of the body (meaning the person) will live in a covenant with God. This is a sign and symbol of baptism, which is death and life, where we rise from it as children of God.

36. Parents cared for teaching their children in addition to read, write, traditions and religious hymns, they also took care to teach them one of the crafts, which is often the father's craft. One of the educators said that he who does not teach his son a trade, will raise him to become a thief. So Paul learned to make tents. And because basically the father had the role of a teacher, the priest was considered as a teacher and a father, so Joseph was called the father of Pharaoh because he was his counsellor (Genesis 45: 8 + Judges 18: 19) from whom we see that they called the priest as their father.

37. Women usually did not go to school, and all they learned at home was to cook and wash, and the woman usually wore a veil. One of the social customs and traditions was that the woman did not speak to strangers, and for the man to refrain from speaking to women, that is why the disciples were amazed when they found Christ talking to a Samaritan woman, as she is a woman and also a Samaritan. Women were prevented from entering the temple beyond the hallway of women in which they were permitted to enter. Women were not permitted to attend the part of explaining the law and commandments taught by the scribes. Women were prohibited from teaching. In general, women were in a much lower degree than men, and the man used to pray, saying, Blessed is The One who did not create me a pagan, and Blessed is the One Who did not create me a woman, and Blessed is the one who did not create me a slave or an ignorant man. Therefore, Christ was beginning a new era for women, as he taught women and had a dialogue with them, and among them were some of his disciples (Luke 8: 1-3 + Mark 15:41 + Matthew 20:20). But at the same time Christ taught his disciples not to look lustfully at women, for he who looks lustfully commits adultery in his heart.

38. The Old Testament did not know the meaning of virginity, so it was incomprehensible. When Jephthah wanted to offer his daughter as a sacrifice, she said, "let me alone for two months, that I may go and wander on the mountains and bewail my virginity." Non-marriage was like infertility, indicates curse or lower state. (Luke 1: 25). Those who do not marry are not respected by the Jewish community. Therefore, we may understand the words of the prophets, "the virgin of Israel" (Amos 5: 2 + Lamentations 1: 15 + 2: 13) that it is a confirmation of Israel's misery and its end as the end of virgins without leaving children. The Rabbis said, "An unmarried man is not a man at all," so the case of Elijah was an anomaly among the Jewish prophets.

## Interpretation of Genesis

# Chapter 1

**(verse 1): In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**

**In the beginning**, denotes two meanings:

1. It refers to the time when God began creating things, that is when the hands of the clock of time began to rotate. God is primordial and eternal, not temporal. But creation is temporal, measured in time, so when the creation began, time began with it. In the beginning, means the first movement of creation and the beginning of time. God the Son says of Himself, "I am the First and the Last." This means the Primordial One who has no beginning and the Eternal One who has no end. The primordial and the eternal are two attributes of God that are said to be Everlasting. God the Son is the Creator of all things " All things were made through Him " (John 1: 3). When the Son Who is the Word began to create in time, He said of himself; " I am the beginning and the end." And God created all for the glory of His Name, so He was the beginning (Isaiah 43: 7). When the creation was distorted by sin, the Son was incarnated to restore the Divine purpose and glorify God, therefore the Son became the end.

## 2. In the beginning = Jesus Christ

We put before us these verses:

- " Then they said to Him, "Who are You?" And Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been saying to you I am from the beginning." (John 8: 25)
- " All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." (John1: 3)
- " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1: 1)
- " .. firstborn over all creation " (Colossians 1: 15).
- " And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." ( Colossians 1: 17)
- " That which was from the beginning .. " ( John 1: 1 + 1 John 2: 13, 14 )
- " ... He may have the preeminence" ( Colossians 1: 18)

- Hence, many Church Fathers saw that **"in the beginning"** = in the Son = in Christ Jesus.

- Thus the meaning is that in Christ Jesus, God created the heavens and the earth. Or in the Word of God, God created the heavens and the earth. We noticed that the Eternal Word became the beginning when creation began in time. And the verse (John 1: 1) reads: " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

## **Created :**

This proves that God created the world. These words are directed to the Jews who lived amid the pagan environment in Egypt and heard of many gods, thus they know that their One God is the Creator of the

heavens and the earth, so they do not worship these creatures (angels, sun, or fire ...). It also means that the world is created and not eternal, and this is scientifically proven now:

1. Law of Decay of Energy: The sun has dark spots, according to a law.
2. Radioactive Elements: They lose their radioactivity over time and then turn into lead.
3. The continuous change of the universe: If the world was eternal, the sun would have ended and all the radiating elements turned into lead, and the world would have taken a fixed and unchanging shape.

The word " **Create**" in Hebrew as well as in Arabic is Bara'a, which means finding something out of nothing. God created from nothing on the first day, then during the six days, He began to use what He had created to make everything out of it. He created out of nothingness which came in a singular form.

### **God:**

\* It came in the plural form as if it says: "In the beginning, the gods created the heavens and the earth. Gods in Hebrew is "Elohim". This is the plural form. Its singular is Al or Eel or Eloh, and the meaning must be veneration, reverence, and respect (Emmanuel = God is with us). This refers to the Holy Trinity who created:

The Father: The One Who wills, and He is the Person Who gives birth to the Son and the Holy Spirit proceeds from Him.

The Son: He is in the One from the beginning who makes all things and forms all things.

The Holy Spirit: Was hovering over the face of the water to give life (Verse 2)

\* Whenever the name of God is mentioned in the Old Testament, it is said "Elohim", and the verb or the adjective comes in the singular, as it was said here, "Elohim created (in singular form)". But when Elohim is said of the pagan gods, the plural verb refers to "they did."

### **The Heavens:**

Paul the Apostle mentioned that caught up to the third heaven. The three heavens are

1. First: The heaven of the birds where there is the layer of air
2. Second: The heaven of the planets. Both the first and the second heavens are material
3. Third: The spiritual heaven in which the Glory of God is revealed, where there is the dwelling of the angels and the inheritance of the saints, and where they dwell with God. This has two stages:
  - The first is called Paradise, and it is the place where the righteous wait now after they have left the earth.
  - The second we call it the Heaven of Heavens, where the throne of God is, the righteous will go to it after the second coming of Christ. The word Throne of God refers to His glory, which we will see (John 17:24).

4. The angels are in heaven, that is, they are elevated than people. And God is in the heavens of the heavens, which means that God is above the angels, humans, and all the creation. The word heaven in general refers to all that is high and exalted.

\* The first and the second heavens are material heavens that will pass away with the earth (more precisely their present image disappears. For the current image is cursed from the time God said to Adam, the earth is cursed because of you) and there will be a new heaven and a new earth. The curse will disappear, and the glory of God will shine on the righteous and on creation: see interpretation (Romans 8: 18-22). Of course, the third spiritual heaven will not pass away.

Why is the book silent about the creation of the heavens?

1. The words in the book are directed to humans, and they will not understand what is specific to the heavens. This is what Christ meant in his words with Nicodemus (John 3: 12).
2. Paul himself was unable to describe what is in heaven, so he said, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard," because the language of heaven is completely different from the language of people on earth.
3. We are now on earth seeing everything in it, but do we understand everything about the earth? Certainly not, so if we do not understand the earth on which we live, how will we understand what is in the heavenly places? Therefore, God did not tell us about heavenly things, and we will understand them when we reach them.

\* God created heaven before creating earth:

1. Heaven is mentioned before earth in this verse.
2. Refer to (Job 38: 1-7), we find that the angels (the morning stars) sang together when the earth was created.
3. The word Heaven here refers to the creation of the angels, then the planets in their paths.
4. God mentioned that He is the Creator of all creation - the heaven and all what is in it, the earth and what is in it - and after this verse, the Holy Bible is focused on the creation of the earth and God's dealings with man.

### **The Earth:**

\* All those who attack the Bible rely on this verse, saying - that the error here is scientifically clear because the planets were created before the earth ?! However, the intended meaning here is that God is the Creator of heaven and the earth. After this verse, the Bible talks to us about the earth and God's work to prepare it for human habitation. As for the heavens and its creation, and the creation and fall of angels, very little is mentioned about it. This is because we will not understand these heavens and heavenly creatures. All that God sought from this verse is that Henebu is the Creator of all creation.

As for those critics, they say that the meaning of the verse is that God created the heavens (heavenly bodies) and the earth at the same time. But any neutral reader would not have guessed this meaning.

The phrase Heavens and Earth appears many times throughout the Bible to reveal God's creation as a whole.

Notice that God is here talking to His people, who spent hundreds of years in a pagan atmosphere who have their pagan gods, and whom they considered as gods that can create. And here God begins by introducing Himself to His people who don't know Him.

1. God tells them that He is the Creator, but rather the Creator of everything in the universe
2. God tells them in this verse in the beginning that He is the Life-Giver to all the creation. This verse acts as the beginning of the Bible, in which God reveals His good nature that wills to give life to the creation, and this creation is covered with joy.
3. God tells them that this is His will to create and give life to human beings. And what human beings suffer from in terms of death and pain is out of their own work. God does not create death or pain.
4. God directs their eyes that there is life in the heavens, so they can focus on the other life. The earth is not everything and is not the goal of life, but rather it's heaven.

The word earth here indicates that it was in an embryonic state. The word used here includes the first letter and the last letter in Hebrew (what corresponds to the Alpha and the Omega) and this is what prompted scholars to say that the word here means that God created all the substances first, which He used in the six days of the creation of the world.

The phrase "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" has two meanings:

1. It is a brief-phrase declaring that God created the heavens and the earth, and the rest of the chapter explains the details.
2. This phrase indicates that God created the raw materials in an incomplete form, then the rest of the verses in the chapter explain how God used these raw materials (referred to here by the word earth) to make out of them our beautiful earth. This opinion is more probable. And the word earth here means the raw materials from which God will make the components of the earth

**(verse 2): The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.**

**The earth was without form, and void:**

Earth here is all that belongs to the material. This is called cytoplasm which is the non-formed raw material that is supposed to precede the current form of the universe, it can be called Chaos.

Without form and void is translated in Hebrew as tohu and bohu which means muddled, shapeless, and desolate. It is not suitable for life, vacant of any beauty, and covered in darkness. The Septuagint translation is "invisible and incomplete."

**and darkness was on the face of the deep**



The deep in Hebrew indicates depth and confusion. The word “deep” is used because everything was deeply immersed in water. And the darkness arose from the intensity of the heat of the earth at its beginning, causing the water to evaporate and forming fog and fumes that prevented light from the face of the earth.

### **And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.**

The words spirit and wind are the same in Hebrew and Greek. Among the customs of the Jewish language is that if they say the Spirit of God, then it means a great wind. So in Hebrew culture, when they add the name of God to anything, they mean it's huge: for example mountain of God means a huge mountain. Thus, the Jews understood the verse that there is a great wind that is the breath of the Lord to announce the beginning of creation (Psalm 33: 6 + Job 26: 13). This was also the analogy of Christ in John 3: 8 (The Lord likened the work of the Holy Spirit to the work of the wind when the Spirit fills us, He changes us without seeing Him, just as the wind moves things without seeing the wind itself).

We Christians understand this verse as the Holy Spirit was hovering over the waters to give life and to form a beautiful world. What connects both meanings is what happened on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended on the Church, there was a sound as of a rushing mighty wind (Acts 2: 2).

The term **“hovers”** was used in (Deuteronomy 32: 11 + Isaiah 31: 5 + Matthew 23: 37) and the meaning intended by this word is “embraces” = as if the Spirit is like a bird embracing its eggs to give it life through its self-warmth). And the Holy Spirit still descends on the waters of Baptism to sanctify it, so that He raises from the man who has been corrupted by sin and made of him a wasted and empty land, new heavens and a new earth.

Tertullian the scholar says that the first waters gave birth to life, so no one wonders if the waters in Baptism also can give life. The Holy Spirit thus embraces us and wants to work in us to make us light for the world, working in us the substance that has neither beauty nor holiness, to create in us what is good and holy. (See also Ezekiel 37).

**(verses 3-5): Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.**

### **First day**

**There are two opinions regarding the six days:**

First: They are real days of 24 hours each, and those who hold this opinion say that God is capable of everything.

Second: They are periods, we do not know the length of it, and they may have been thousands of millions of years, and this is most likely for the following reasons:

1. The days are not solar days, since the sun was not created until the third day.

2. The seventh day began and has not ended up till now. Indeed, with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. (1 Peter 3: 8)
3. In Genesis 2: 4 "the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens," In this verse the six days were combined into one day. Therefore, the word day here definitely does not mean the day known as 24 hours.
4. Even now, the day is not 24 hours at the two poles.
5. The Bible uses the word "day" with different meanings and in a broader sense than the 24 hours day.
  - a. It may mean no beginning .. You are My Son, Today I have begotten You (Psalm 2: 7 + Hebrews 1: 5). And it may mean that you are my son (has no beginning). Today I have begotten you (the birth chronologically from the Virgin).
  - b. By saying about God, " the Ancient of Days " (Daniel 7: 9), the book means that He is primordial.
  - c. Sometimes means eternity ... " day of the Lord" (Acts 2: 20).

Why was it said, "So **the evening and the morning were the first day**"?

(Note that before the creation of the sun there were no evening and morning in the sense we understand now).

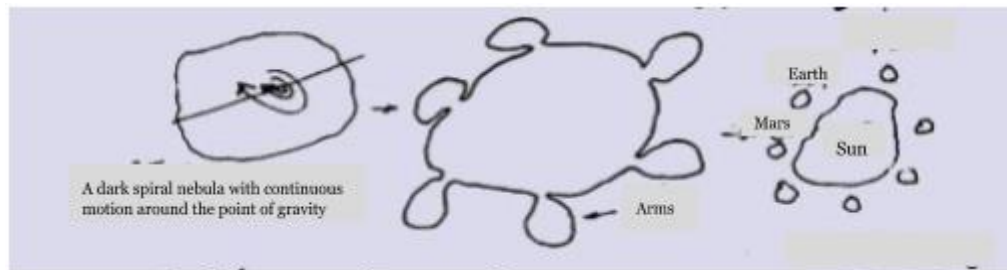
1. The expression **evening and morning** is a Jewish expression indicating a whole day. The day usually starts in the evening and then the morning follows. And this is what we do in the Orthodox Church; For instance, Wednesday begins at sunset on Tuesday and ends at the end of Wednesday morning, then Thursday begins at the sunset on Wednesday, and so on.
2. The evening is before work goes out to the light, and the morning is after work goes out.
3. On the first day, God created light, so it was after the creation of light "the morning" and before the creation of light "the evening" of the first day.
4. On the seventh day God rested, and God rested after the salvation that Christ had made, so before the coming of Christ the sun of righteousness was "the evening" of the seventh day, and then after the coming of Christ is "the morning".
5. Because the seventh day begins with the evening of the seventh day and then the morning of the seventh day. All days start with evening then morning.
6. The Jews used to call the evening "Gharb".
7. The eighth day represents Eternity after the second coming, where the light is eternal, and where our life continues forever in this light, but our life begins in the evening of this world and will continue in the morning of eternity. There, God separates between light (sons of light) and darkness (followers of Satan, the author of darkness). This eighth day is without end.

### **The creation of light:**

There is a theory called the "Nebula Theory". A nebula is an enormous mass of gas with a permeable density. And its gases are in the vortex. It contains all the constituents of energy and material. The material of the nebula is very light and in a state of complete rarefaction, but any atoms of this nebula

are constantly moving from a divergent position around a point of gravity in the center of the nebula, and as the movement continues, the nebula shrinks, gradually increasing its density towards the center, and thus the collision of the constituent atoms increases at great speeds, and this leads to an increase in the temperature of the nebula. As the temperature continues to rise, the radiation from the nebula becomes visible, and the lights begin to appear for the first time, but they appear faint and phosphorescent. This explains the appearance of light on the first day and the creation of the sun on the fourth day. On the first day, the sun did not take its current image but took this image on the fourth day. And in the heavens now there are huge numbers of those nebulae. Therefore, maybe the first source of light was the sunlight itself in its first nebula state or any other celestial nebula.

This nebula is always explosive and shrinking. As a result of this shrinkage, permeable vacuums were created, and the swirling movement of gases caused a tear, which led to the formation of what looked like arms emerging from its central part and with increased loosening, these arms separated densely away from the parent. And those separate parts formed the dark planets, but due to the movement, these planets remained in the circle of the orbit of the central part.



As the atoms continued to approach and collide, this led to a significant increase in temperature and led to nuclear reactions (as is the case with the sun now). Thus, all the planets were like the sun, but with days passing, the planets cooled down. For instance, the earth cooled before the sun because of its smaller size compared to the sun, and after many days the sun will also cool down and turn into a dark planet. The planetary cycle (Earth / Mars, etc.) was faster than the sun, as they reached their hot and the cold status faster than the sun due to their small size compared to the sun.

### **Interpretation of the Church Fathers for the appearance of light before the creation of the sun:**

1) How did the Fathers explain this previously: - Thomas of Aquinas (1225-1274) explained the light of the first day as the light of the sun, which had not taken its shape before the fourth day of creation. Chrysostom (344-407) interpreted it as the light of the sun that was bare of its picture on the first day and was conceived on the fourth day. But those who criticize the Bible say that the error is clear, as to how does God creates light on the first day, and then creates the sun on the fourth day. From where did the light come before the sun was created.

It's clear now ridicule of this question or the bad intention of the questioner, after discovering the size of the universe and the millions of galaxies and billions of suns and stars that illuminate each of them in their place. God created the way light existed in many places of the universe billions of years before the creation of our sun.

2) The beginning of the appearance of light on the earth: the earth was surrounded by dense clouds blocking the light from it, and when this fog began to clear, the light began to appear. There were areas with thick clouds that blocked the light, but the areas from which the fog cleared became luminous. This is the first meaning of separating light from the darkness. Also, the appearance of light began when the dust formed around the earth on which the rays were refracted and the light appeared. Here we stand before what Paul the Apostle said, "so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible." (Hebrews 11: 3).

3) And God separated the light from the darkness: When light shines, there is no darkness. In the beginning, there were illuminated areas and dark areas. Then God appointed the sun for this purpose after both the sun and the earth took their final image, and when the dense fog cleared, the air dust appeared on which the sun's rays get refracted and the light appears. With its rise, there will be light, and with its sunset, there will be darkness as a result of the rotation of the earth and the sun.

4) Spiritually as well, God separated between the angels who chose the light and Satan who chose the darkness and became the power of darkness (Luke 22:53). He expelled Satan from heaven and the angels remained.

5) Note that God is light and light is the nature of God. Then there is the light of the Creator, but there is also the created light which is different. Created light is what we see with our eyes, but God's light and glory are hidden from our eyes. However, in heaven, we will see the light of God, and we will not need the light created like the sun (Revelation 22: 5). God created the light or the luminous material before the creation of our sun by perhaps billions of years. Then he created our sun.

6) Before the creation of light there was darkness (they discovered in the nineties of the twentieth century that there is what is called dark matter, which represents 99.73% of the world. Whereas what scientists can see with their telescopes is only .27% of the universe, which is the bright part. (Refer to the interpretation of Job 38: 19). Therefore, until now most of the universe is still dark matter.

7) God's initial work was the creation of light so that we might see His work and glorify Him as His angels praise Him. Light is the firstborn of God's creatures. Because God is light (1 John 1: 5). And the Son (Christ) the Creator, who "by Him was everything" is the true light (John 1: 9), and He is the light of the world (John 8:12) .. On the contrary, Satan is the authority of darkness, whose deeds are at night when he steals and plunders. As for God, his deeds are in the light full of love, tenderness, and everything good and beautiful.

#### **And God said :**

Christ is the Word of God, His Strength, and His Hand, with Him He made everything (Psalm 33: 9), and the word "said" here does not mean that God spoke for someone to hear Him, but rather it means that He willed, so His word (the Second Hypostasis) carried out His will. Therefore, Christ the Word of God through Him was the light, as He is the true light. (See Colossians 1: 16, 17).

#### **And God saw the light, that it was good**

He did not say this about the darkness on earth. Rather, the darkness on earth arises from the absence of light, it is a deprivation of light, it is by the appearance of light, the darkness is revealed and known. But the darkness was made by God as a result of the rotation of the earth, and a person who is tired of working during the day needs the night to sleep and give his body a rest. In eternity, there is no fatigue, and there is no need for darkness at all. The fact that God finds something good is not only due to its shape and beauty, but because it is complete, useful, and appropriate. God created everything good, but due to the corruption of man, he corrupted the use of good creation. After Christ came to renew our fallen nature, as if He was to create it anew, we no longer see something evil in the world.

### **God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.**

Here God teaches man to call things by their names and to distinguish them so that they do not fall under the prophetic woe " Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter" (Isaiah 5: 20). God separated the light from the darkness so that we accept light as sons of light and reject darkness so that we do not fall under the deadly night of ignorance. Separation of light from darkness indicates the separation of the angels from the demons after their fall and their becoming darkness. Also, it indicates the separation of the saints in Heaven while they are in Abraham's bosom from the wicked in Hades like a rich man where there is a great chasm between them.

The first work of God was the light, and the angels saw and glorified Him (Job 38: 7). Thus, at the beginning of the new creation, when Christ rose from the Holy Tomb, a light emanated from it that continues to emanate up till now on Bright Saturday because the Lord's Divine Light shone upon us. Thus, in Baptism, we are blessed with Divine Light, the light of His resurrection working in us, as the first Divine work in our life. That is why we call baptism "the Mystery of Enlightenment" where we are given the Spirit of distinguishing between light and darkness. (Ephesians 5: 8)

**(verses 6-8): Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." 7 Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.**

### **The Second Day :**

#### **The Firmament:**

The Hebrew word is "Raqi" which means anything expanded and extended (Isaiah 40: 22).

The word refers to an extended cover or a flat tent. The Latin word Firmamentum means "pillar" or "fixed foundation" (perhaps from the same source as the word firm, meaning firm and solid). The meaning of the word Firmament in Arabic = When it is said that a person has endurance, this means patience, strength, stamina, and steadfastness. In this way, the firmament becomes a sign of the layer of

air that can carry clouds over it without tearing. There is the firmament of the sky (Genesis 1:14), which is the blue dome that carries the planets (Google).



St. Basil interpreted the word "Firmament" that air is a body that is solid (in terms of density and intensity), so it can carry clouds over it. So the firmament is the atmosphere surrounding the earth. We see here that Moses did not take the ancient view that the air is a vacuum and nothingness. Moses does not repeat what he hears from people but from the Holy Spirit. So Firmament is the sky of birds, not the sky of planets. The way to achieve this was that the earth was in continuous boiling and steam, so it was surrounded by a dense steamy atmosphere. And in the period between the first and second days, in other words, the first and second period, the temperature began to drop, and consequently, the steam calmed down and the atmosphere became clear. As for naming the firmament as heaven, that is akin to giving the word to what is elevated and lofty.

### **How was the Firmament formed?**

The Earth's atmosphere was buried beneath its surface. It included its primary ores and volatile materials trapped in crystals or included in the composition of heavy particles in the first days of their formation .. All of these ores were liberated from volcanoes with ashes and lava, and freed from springs and fountains with their water, salts, and gases .. Thus, the Earth's atmosphere was formed after the clouds subsided and the gases came out.

### **The waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament**

Here he put the waters below before the waters above (maybe he put waters below first) because they are the origin and source of the above waters, and this firmament separates between the waters above which are the clouds, and the waters from below, which are the seas, and this carried a spiritual concept. When a person is enlightened (by the work of the light of baptism - the first day), he must carry within him the firmament that separates water from water, so that he accepts the above water of the Holy Spirit that grants life (John 4: 14) and he should be above the waters that are below, the salty seawater, from which whoever drinks thirsts more. When the believer becomes attached to the higher waters that are above in the heavens, he becomes heavenly and asks for things that are from above and exalted, so that he does not have an earthly thought but a heavenly one (Colossians 3: 1).

We note that he did not say here that it is good. Perhaps this is because the sky was not completely decorated with the stars and planets, or because the work of the second and third days was continuous,

as the waters gathered together on the third day, and when the work was completed, he said that it was good on the third day. There is an opinion that the Jews were looking at the air as a dwelling place for demons when God expelled them from heaven. The Apostle Paul confirmed this meaning and called Satan the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2: 2) as he stirs up the air, and the air, in turn, raises the sea (and the sea symbolizes the world). Thus, Satan raised everyone against Christ and they crucified him (see Matthew 14:24). In this sense, he did not say here that it is good, for the sky is the abode of Satan. Therefore, when Christ was hung on the cross, He fought them in their lair. That is why the Apostle Paul said, "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord " (1 Thessalonians 4: 17). If the demons are inhabiting the air, then the Lord has overcome them in their lair, and He will carry us in the same place as children of the inheritance, instead of being children of disobedience. The air also refers to the exit of the soul from the body during death, to be released into the air. Before Christ, when the soul departed from the body and found demons trapping it in the air, now it can meet the Lord in the air.

**(verses 9-13): Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.**

### **The Third Day**

**(verse 9): Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so.**

When the earth cooled, the earth's crust appeared, and when it cooled more, this led to the shrinking of the earth's crust and its cracking, and thus the streams arose, including the oceans, seas, rivers, and the whole sea community which is connected. As for the seas that are isolated now, they came as a result of various natural factors. We notice that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the land area is constituted of water so that the amount of evaporation is sufficient to form sufficient clouds to irrigate the earth and moisten its atmosphere.

**(verse 11): Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so.**

Here we find the creation of plants, where God did not create plants until after He created the requirements for their growth from the earth, adequate heat, and lights. The creation of plants is necessary for this period before the creation of animals and humans. The earth's atmosphere is now

saturated with carbon gases, and plants absorb these gases and give out oxygen instead of them, and thus the earth's atmosphere is purified. So as when God creates the animals, they find plants as food for them, and also they can find the pure atmosphere, so they can live. Modern science has proven that photosynthetic communities (plants that grow by light) appeared 850 million years ago.

L.Paul Knauth and Martin J. Kennedy "The Late Precambrian Greening of the Earth" Nature 460 (August 6, 2009) 728-32.

Moses arranged, by divine revelation, the order of the emergence of plant life (grass, then legumes, then trees), grass such as mosses, short grass, and legumes including grain plants (wheat/corn/beans....). These are assumptions on how the plants grew on the third day before the sun of the fourth day:

1. God is capable to grow plants without sun, for he is the Creator of all. Did he not create two eyes for the man born blind?
2. Plants may have taken advantage of the Earth's heat, and from nebulae lights, or from the sun itself before taking on its current form or rotation around the Earth.
3. It's probable that God was satisfied with grass to purify the atmosphere and gave the earth the possibility of germination on this day. Then the earth spawned legumes and trees in later days. We find in (Genesis 2: 8) that the Lord God planted a garden in which Adam would dwell, so perhaps it was at this stage that the plants began to take on their known form. The plants for the third day were something special to purify the atmosphere. They were plants unlike what we know today.
4. The logical interpretation, in a way the skeptics understand it, as mentioned in God's talk to Job: " "Or who shut in the sea with doors, When it burst forth and issued from the womb; 9 When I made the clouds its garment, And thick darkness its swaddling band; " (Job 38: 8-9). The sun was created from before, but the dense fog was the reason for the existence of darkness on the surface of the earth, in addition to the remnants of volcanoes and their dense dust. All of this was blocking the light of the sun from the earth, and what was reaching the earth from the sunlight was very little, and the sunlight began to increase when the fog began to dissolve since the light was present and because the earth is a separate part of the sun. But the light was not visible due to the fog and the remnants of the volcanoes. The emergence of plants began on the ground after the level of emergence of light reaching the ground was sufficient for germination. With the end of this fog, dust, and remnants of volcanoes, the sun appeared in its current form, and this is what we see in the next verse on the fourth day and it was expressed in the words of Scripture = Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens = and this to say let the sun appears in its light and its image that we know now after the fog and dust of volcanoes cleared. With the beginning of the fifth day, the fog had completely disappeared and the sky became clear and suitable for the creation of animals, which began their creation on the fifth day and continued on the sixth day.



The order that Moses declared in the creation, namely herbs/legumes/trees / aquatic animals/birds / terrestrial animals / human beings, is consistent with the arrangement established by modern life sciences.

Note that the third day was when the fruitful land appeared after it had been buried for two days underwater. The third day is the day of the resurrection of Christ.

And the ground refers to man (the sower went out to sow .. and some of the seeds fell on good land and bore fruit). And the fact that the earth is submerged under the seawater indicates that man can drown and die in the sins and desires of the world, and the repentance of man makes him stand with Christ, and he will have fruit. So as long as good earth is buried there is no use from it (the land here refers to our lives or our talents) (Matthew 13: 8 + 25:25) (see Genesis 27:27). Therefore, the germination of the earth is a sign of the resurrection of the body, as the earth produces life by the command of the Lord, so by His command, He restores life to our mortal body. This is by getting out of the waters of baptism as a new creation, for us to have a new life, which is Christ (Romans 6 + Philippians 1:21) to bear fruit through the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5: 22, 23).

**(verses 14-19): Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; 15 and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. 16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. 17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.**

#### **The Fourth Day:**

**(verse 14): Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years;**

#### **Lights**

In Hebrew, "Ma'orot", which means bearers of light or lighters, indicates the sun, the moon, and the stars. But for the word light in Hebrew as verse 3 is "ur", and it indicates simply radiation or light that may be caused by the lights of nebulae or any electromagnetic or chemical source, or it is the light of the sun, the mother nebula that will form the sun later. Or, as we have seen in the interpretation of the previous verse, this was an announcement of the appearance of the sun in its current form after the fog, remnants, and dust of the volcanoes had dissolved.

#### **Firmament of the heavens**

This is different from the firmament of the earth (verse 6), which separates water from water. The firmament of the sky is what carries the planets.

Until the fourth day, the light of the sun or the sun itself was in an unformed state, and the sun did not take its image yet. And this day was the day of the arrangement of the solar world, where the succession of night and day, are in it, in the way it is known to this day. The astronomy took its known form. How then can we attribute the preservation of planets in their orbits with this miracle to chance !! Truly, the heavens declare the glory of God.

There is a spiritual contemplation which is because the sun refers to Christ, the sun of righteousness that the Father offered us to transform our darkness into light. And the moon refers to the church that does not shine by itself, but Christ shines upon her so she can shine, and the stars are the saints, whether they are on earth or in heaven, each has his place in the heaven and shines.

### for signs

The sun has time to rise every morning and it rises and sets according to a well-known law, and when this law is broken, it is in a miraculous way or a sign, and this happened 3 times:

1. On the day of Christ's crucifixion, darkness occurred on the earth, and it was not a time of an eclipse.
2. By the prayer of Joshua, the sun stood still to let Joshua continue his war against his enemy (Joshua 10: 12).
3. The shadow on the sundial was brought backward as a sign to confirm that King Hezekiah will be healed (2 Kings 20: 11).

### Seasons:

The word in Hebrew includes the feasts and occasions that God commanded (Isaiah 66: 23). People have determined the seasons of cultivation and the migration of birds according to the time determined by the location of the sun and the seasons of the year (spring/winter..) All of this depends on the sun.

### Days and Years:

There is a solar calendar, a calendar based on the lunar cycle, and a calendar based on the planets (Al-Shari al-Yamania), which are for the Gregorian year, the Arabic year, and the Coptic year.

**(verse 16): Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also.**

### **The two great lights:**

That is, the sun shines in the morning and the moon shines at night. And as already mentioned in the interpretation of (verse 11), the sun and moon were created before, and this verse indicates that God here determines their work in timing, as the sun, earth, and moon took their final position. And when he mentioned the sun and the moon, he also added the stars, because God is the Creator of all the universe. The verb "made" in the Hebrew, indicates in its form, which appeared in the original Hebrew, that it was made earlier. Review (Romans 1:20) to see that the Apostle Paul finds that the creation

around us proves to those who contemplate in its system that there is a Creator behind this creation, and everyone who does not believe is without an excuse. The same concept was said by David the Prophet (Ps 19: 1-6).

Here are two pieces of evidence of the work of God the Creator \* 1 The Bible \* 2 Nature. Ancient Greek philosophers previously said that he who created the world with its laws and its beauty was a force they called "the greatest mind" and in Greek "logos." And the word logos was translated in (John 1) "The Word".

**(verses 20-3): Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens." 21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." 23 So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.**

#### **The Fifth Day:**

**(verse 20): Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens."**

#### **Let the waters abound with an abundance:**

Each fish lays thousands of eggs and thus the water overflows with fish. There are thousands of microscopic organisms in one drop of water. Just as aquatic creatures came out of the water, so the waters of baptism give birth to living creatures according to grace. The fish was a symbol of Christianity. The word "fish" in the Coptic "ixquc" is five letters, each letter is the beginning of a word from the sentence "Jesus Christ the Son of God our Savior." (Fish = i x q u c " Isus = Jesus / Christos = Christ / Theos = God / Eos = Son / Sauter = Savior).

And because fish live in water and do not die, the same as the Christian who lives in the world and does not die spiritually. And fish have fins that give them the ability to swim against the current of water, and thus the believer has the means of grace with which he lives against the current of evil in the world.

**(verse 21): So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.**

**Great sea creatures:** These are like dinosaurs, and scientists estimate that these huge dragons or dinosaurs began to appear at a time estimated at 200 - 251 million years, and the end of their appearance was about 65 million years. And it has multiple types. These huge creatures disappeared millions of years ago as a result of weather conditions, leaving behind the wealth of petroleum on which we live now.

According to its kind: Every animal and every bird, but every plant that comes out and gives birth to its own kind, and there is no evidence for the emergence of a new race from the day God created all these races.

**(verse 22): And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” 23 So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.**

Blessed them: Means that God gave them the strength to reproduce and bear fruit.

**(verse 24-31): Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind”; and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” 29 And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food”; and it was so. 31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.**

### **The Sixth Day:**

On the fifth day was the creation of the water creatures and the birds that fly in the air: the firmament of the heaven.

On the sixth day, God created the animals that live on the earth and He created man who lives on the earth. God created them after He prepared everything for the possibility of their lives.

**Cattle:** Tamed animals used by humans.

**Creeping thing:** Those that step on the ground (serpents/lizards/worms) or those who have short legs like rats.

**Beast:** These are the predatory beasts Some saints believe that these monsters did not carry the spirit of ferocity until after the fall of man. Dinosaurs were herbivores. Just as the earth produced thorns and thistles, also the nature of disobedience was reflected on some animals, where they became fierce and predatory. This explanation indicates the earth has become cursed because of Adam. On the other hand, St. Barsoum's blessings calmed the snake

Also, Daniel was with the lions in the den and they did not touch him, but when Darius the king cast off those who had plotted evil to Daniel, the lions returned to their wildness and devoured them (Daniel 6).

### **According to its kind:**

Darwin argued that the difference between humans and higher animals is a difference in degree, not in kind. But it is clear here that the difference is in both type and degree. For God created 3 distinct types of creation:

\* A vegetarian creation.

\* A creature that has animal life and has a soul which is called "Nabsh" in Hebrew. These creatures have a limited capacity of thinking, reasoning, and feeling, however, it has no spirit. It is clear that these animals are created to serve man and remain under his authority.

\* A creation that has a soul and a spirit which is man.

Here, it is distinguished that each creation has a different kind.

**(verse 26): Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."**

Finally, God crowned His earthly creation by creating man, and God did not create man first for two reasons:

1. So that man stays humble and does not think of himself as a partner of God in creation (Job 38: 4).
2. God created man after He prepared everything for him to live in a paradise that God planted for him. After creating the dwelling, the inhabitant is created. God did not create man as a creature among innumerable creatures, but we notice two basic differences:

### **1. Let Us make man:**

God did not say as usual let be a human being and there was a human being. This was the used expression in the previous creation: -

First: This refers to the Trinitarian counsel for the creation of man. The Holy Trinity enjoys working together joyfully for the sake of this beloved being, of whom He said, "And my delight was with the sons of men." (Proverbs 8: 31)

Second: The Holy Trinity participated in the creation of man, as we will see in (Genesis 2: 7).

Third: This indicates that man was created in the form of a triad, as he is a living rational being.

In general, the creation of man is the work of the Holy Trinity. The Father wills, the Son creates, and the Spirit gives life. Therefore, in the new creation through baptism, the Holy Trinity appeared (the Feast of

the Theophany), so the Son is in water and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, and the Father says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" declaring the Father's joy in the return of mankind to his bosom in His only Son by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

**2. According to Our kindness**

Notice that God did not say in my image, for God is Trinity in one. And God put His image in us as a sign of His possession of us, just as the king puts his image on coins. And man is the closest creation of God to the image of God, considering the huge difference between God and man, and this huge difference is what the word "our kindness" explains. However, this word was not said about Christ, for He is the express image of His person and the brightness of His glory and the form of his essence (Hebrews 1: 3). He is the One who said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father," therefore it was not said that Christ is like God, for He is God Himself. We are like God in the following:

**1. Man has a Trinitarian nature like God:** - God is a living rational being, and so man is a living rational being with maintaining a difference. God is the primordial always existing, He is the Creator, and He is self-existent, whose existence does not depend on anyone. And man is a creature that God gave him life out of His love. But man's life depends on God (this is in terms of self). And God, in His mind, created everything and preserves everything, for He is the Pantocrator, "in Him all things consist" (Colossians.1: 17). As for man, with his mind, he hardly understands some things from what God created. God gave him this ability to be able to live. (This is from the side of the mind). God with his Spirit gives life. As for a man he lives with his spirit, but he does not give life to anyone, rather when his soul is separated from his body, he dies (this is in terms of the spirit).

2. Man is like God in his attributes:

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| a. Freedom and choice | God has placed before him the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life and gave him the chance to choose between them. And what is meant by our kindness is that the freedom of God is absolute while the freedom of man is limited.                             |
| b. Holiness           | (See Ephesians 4: 24). In our kindness means that God is the absolutely Holiness, while man strives to be holy.   |
| c. Wisdom and Logic   | This was not found in any other creation. And our kindness means that God's wisdom is infinite while man's wisdom is limited.   |
| d. Dominion           | Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle .. (Genesis 1: 26). However, man's authority was limited (he has no authority over the planets, not even the rain ...), for he is not a god. This is a meaning of our kindness. |
| e. Knowledge          | Adam gave names to the animals (Genesis 2: 19) after God taught him their characteristics.  |

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| f. Love              | God's love is infinite, but man's love, no matter how is limited. This is the meaning of our kindness.   |
| g. Eternity          | (See Rom 5: 12) God created man to live forever, not to die. As for death, it entered as a temporary punishment. But God is primordial, and man has a beginning with his birth.  |
| h. God is unlimited  | God is infinite, and man is limited. But because man is in the image of God, only God who is not limited will satisfy him, but the limited world will not satisfy anyone. This is what Solomon the king tried, and he said that the world is in vanity, and he interpreted it as catching the wind, meaning no matter what you possessed, you possessed nothing (see Ecclesiastes). This is what Solomon tried, he was very rich, but he raised taxes on the people and exhausted them, and he had so many women but he was not satisfied with this as well. No increase in money or women satisfied him. God alone is the One who satisfies man (please see the introduction to chapter six of the Gospel of John to see the meaning of complete satiety). Only God will satisfy man. This is what we just taste here an initial deposit, but will be perfected in heaven where we fully understand the words of the Apostle Paul, "that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19). And God's infinity is likened to a circle, for it has no beginning and no end, and God has no beginning nor an end. And we say that the internal of the human being can only be satisfied by God, since he is created in the image of God. Therefore, we say that the human internally is also in the form of a circle that only a circle can fill in. |
| I. God is Primordial | Is man Primordial as well ?! Certainly not, man is not primordial, but let us hear what was said in (John 13: 1), "As for Jesus .... having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." The Bible's saying that Jesus had loved His own makes us wonder when did this love begin? If we say that God began his love for human beings when He created them, then we attribute to God that He is changeable as He did not love anyone before, then He began to love man after He created him .... God forbid. So this indicates God's primordial love for man. We were an idea and a clear image in the mind of God primordially, and when the fullness of time came and after God prepared the earth for us to walk on, even prepared for us everything we need to live joyfully, He created us. God loved us so He created us, and not He created us and then He loved us.   |

Note that it was not said in our image and example, for we are yes to the image of God in the attributes that we mentioned, but we are likened to him. God's attributes are absolute, but our attributes are

relative. God has absolute freedom, but man has freedom within a certain circle that he does not exceed, like as a player when receiving the ball, he is free to give it to any other player, but he is not free to hit other players. In Holiness, God's holiness is absolute, as he is transcendent and exalted above materialism and sins, while man is the one striving for holiness. Regarding authority, the authority of God is absolute, while the authority of man is limited. This is the meaning of our kindness.

Man became a representative of God, carrying his image, and he is in his likeness, so he has authority over all creatures, and he rules and controls in the name of God over all creation. But after sin, man lost this image and this resemblance, so he lost his authority over animals ... and others, but we hear about saints that had this authority over animals when this image returned to them (Anba Barsoum Al-Arian).

God created man in his image to accept his Creator as his friend, responding to him not on the level of humiliation and weakness, but on the level of freedom, love, and friendship. And to be the heir of God with Christ and a partner with him in eternal glory, he runs after him to join him, not to destroy him. God's existence is not based on wasting human life and dignity. Rather, God descended to us to raise us to Him. He became man to raise mankind to him and to make us partakers of the divine nature.

Those who are in the image of God now have authority over their desires, they will have the same likeness of our Lord's glory.. (See Galatians 4: 19, 1 John 3: 2)

**(verse 27): So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them**

#### **Male and female He created them**

Eve did not exist yet. But note that he did not say their creation (as 2 people), but rather their creation (in multi plural). This is considering what will be, for Eve was in Adam and the children were in Adam. And so is the Church in Christ. The word created them here refers to the whole human race. It refers to the blessing of the sacrament of marriage and the unity in which God created the world. Everyone is from the same one (Adam) so love was supposed to reign, but sin destroyed the image of unity. That is why Christ came, to restore the image of unity (John 17:21). The Church is one with Christ, as it is His body.

**(verse 28): Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."**

#### **Blessed them :**

Here it is a spiritual blessing and a physical blessing for marriage to increase their number and fill the earth, therefore everyone who thinks that Adam's fall is that he had a relationship with Eve is mistaken, as does a blessing come out of sin? And God said to them to bear fruit before they fall. Therefore, the husband's relationship with his wife is a gift, not a sin. But before the fall, procreation was achieved not as the fruit of lust, but as part of the glory of marriage established by God. God created Adam and Eve to procreate even if they did not fall into disobedience. But lust came as a fruit of sin and disobedience.



**(verses 29-30): And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so.**

Man was created as a vegetarian who does not eat meat. And God permitted him to eat meat after the Flood because man by his sin his nature was corrupted, and he became brutal. Note how the Romans were amused and had fun with the sight of human blood and wild animals preying on people, and up till now, some eat human flesh. This brutal nature of humans is reflected in some animals. For humans not to prey on each other, God permitted them to eat animal flesh after.

But when there is a saint in a place, we notice that the animals change their wildness and become tamed. This is what happened with Daniel in the lions' den and with Saint Barsoum the Arian and the serpent.

**(verse 31): Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.**

#### Very good:

Not because all the creation was completed, but rather because man, the object of God's pleasure, was created.

So, God created man in his image ... and blessed them ... Fill the earth and subdue it and prevail.

Man is like a coin printed on it the image of the king of the country, and man has printed on him the image of God and God is love. That is why the Lord Jesus Christ said, "Love your enemies." Whoever has a heart filled with love for all including his enemies becomes a currency that can be traded in heaven (i.e., he enters the kingdom and is saved), and whoever does not know love becomes out of the Kingdom (fake coin) (1 John 3: 10-16 + 4: 7-10). And while we live in the world, we strive in prayer, fasting, etc., to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and whoever is filled with the Holy Spirit will be filled with love (Romans 5: 5 + Galatians 5:22). In the end, he who overcomes in his struggle and is filled with love becomes an acceptable currency in heaven, that is, he will be saved. Certainly, whoever has the image of the king printed on him belongs to God "I am my beloved's, And his desire is for me". We were created in the image of God to be capable of love and friendship with God "And my delight was with the sons of men" Sin has become a reason for losing contact with God, so God sent us prophets who are the closest to Him, and they can convey to man the will of God and God's love and friendship with man.

There is a verse that expresses the human longing for the incarnation of Christ, to restore that direct contact with God, and for the soul to enter into this love relationship with Christ: " Oh, that you were like my brother, Who nursed at my mother's breasts! If I should find you outside, I would kiss you; I would not be despised" (Song of Solomon 8: 1). This love relationship is a pleasure for the soul and a pleasure for God.

Whoever is in the image of God, God will bless him: and He blessed them. There are two types of blessing:

**1. Fill the earth:**

Numerous numbers and this is for animals (verse 22) and for humans (verse 28).

**2. Have dominion (verses 26, 28).**

And this is for humans only. Dominion is a blessing for man only. But for whom? For whoever is in the image of God.

Therefore, we understand implicitly that he who is in the image of God has authority over his desires, and over sin in general, and the more we move away from the image of God, we lose this blessing ... but you should rule over it (Genesis 4: 7).

**How do we get the image of God?**

1. Baptism

2. Through the work of the Holy Spirit who renews us day by day to become in the image of God (Romans 6: 5, 14 + Galatians 4: 19 + Colossians 3: 10).

## Chapter 2

In Chapter one we saw the relationship between God and the universe in general. In the second chapter, we find relationship between the loving God and man in particular. It is a Chapter of beautiful relationships:

1. The beginning of man (human race) and his relationship with God.
2. God's rest is in the rest of man (see Isaiah 65: 17-19 + Isaiah 63: 8).
3. Man's relationship with the earth (God plants a garden for the sake of man).
4. Man works with pleasure and joy in the garden. God created man to rejoice (Eden is a Hebrew word means joy). God is a partner of man at work, so we find that God has planted a garden in which Adam may live, and Adam works to preserve this garden.
5. The relationship of man to animals (Adam has authority over everything) = giving names.
6. The relationship of marriage (God establishes the sacrament of marriage). Here we find the relationship of love that binds human beings.
7. Behind this we find the loving God who created all this creation for the sake of man.
8. But there is a commandment for Adam, so that he may have the right to enjoy all this. In exchange for freedom there is a commandment.

**(verse 1): Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.**

**Were finished:** The meaning is that after the sixth day, God is no longer creating new kinds. Rather, He creates from the same kinds that He created before, while preserving His creation. This is the meaning of "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working." (John 5:17). He preserves the creation so that it's not destroyed and maintains the planets in their orbits.

**The host:** The host in Hebrew is Saba, and the plural of Saba is Sabaoth, which means masses or army . And the pagans understood it on the planets that they worshiped. And the Jews said that God is not only the Lord of the planets, but the Lord of the angels, people and all of creation. All the creations are like soldiers under His command. They said that God is therefore called Lord of Sabaoth, meaning Lord of hosts. The word host can be used for the angels and the people of God who are on earth, also on the spheres of heaven and its planets (2 Chronicles 18: 18 + Isaiah 45: 12 + Psalms 33: 6). The first refers to the army of angels, the second refers to the bodies of heaven and the forces of the earth, and the third refers to all creatures.

The meaning of the verse is that God created everything according to its kind, system, and arrangement. The invisible heavens with their angels, the visible heavens with their stars, and the earth and everything

on it with all its decorations. But why was it named hosts ?! The planets in their wonderful system are like an organized army. They are numerous like an army, but each planet knows its place and is under the leadership that controls it and controls its movements. God is the ruler of all, and the Church was called Awesome as army with banners (Song of Solomon 6: 4).

**(verses 2-3): And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.**

God completed His creation on the sixth day and saw that it was very good. The similarity is amazing. On the sixth day and in the sixth hour, God completed the redemption of mankind, saying, on the cross, "It is finished." For by the cross, reconciliation with God was accomplished, and with the resurrection, we took life (Romans 5:10). By the sacrament of the baptism that took its power from the cross, we were re-created, and we have life of Christ to be saved by it.

The meaning of God rested on the seventh day, is that God rejoices and is pleased with the human being, who is the subject of His love. When man has fallen and his nature was corrupted, God renewed him spiritually and opened the door of heaven for him during the seventh day (which began after Adam fell into sin, and ends with the second coming of Christ, so Adam fell on the sixth day And at the sixth hour), during the seventh day (in the middle of the seventh day) was the redemption by which God finished all His works for man. God rested because He offered mankind the way to heaven. The real comfort of man is that he discovers that he is not only dust, so that all his attention is towards the world, but rather he is a spiritual creature who does not rest except in God and with God, therefore he must understand that he spends a brief period on earth and after that he completes his eternal life in heaven in the bosom of God. In order for God to imprint these concepts in man, we see God asking man not to work on the Sabbath day, but rather to allocate it to God and worship. This is the meaning of His words, **and God blessed and sanctified the seventh day** = so the word sanctified it means it became dedicated and devoted to God, we ought to have no work in it except contact with God and praising and serving Him. Man, as a body, must work, and this is what God requested of Adam and left him six days to work. In order that man does not forget that he belongs to heaven and not to the earth, and because man as a soul will not rest except in God, God asked man to sanctify a day for God. Our relationship with God in prayer and praise makes us feel that we belong to heaven and not earth.

#### **He rested:**

In Hebrew, the word does not mean ceasing to work, but rather respite, stability, and contentment, because God is neither gets tired nor ill. See (Psalm 104: 31 + Zephaniah 3: 17) to see God rejoicing in His works. What tires God is our sins (Isaiah 43: 24 + Malachi 2: 17). And man would have remained at rest if hadn't sinned. " Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea." (Isaiah 48: 18). But sin and death that followed it was a passing thing, and after that the rest will return. Therefore, a person lives for the duration of his life on earth, working and suffering and exhausting (symbolically the life span of 6 days)

and after the six days, man goes to paradise until he relaxes. The rest of God became in our union with the risen Christ, and the rest of man is in the risen Christ, so the church replaced Saturday with Sunday, the Day of Resurrection. And this day became a relief for the body from the fatigue and the concerns of the world, so that the soul could relax in its relationship with God. **The rest of God** = the comfort of those who rest in God.

**(verse 4): This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,**

**This is the history:** In Hebrew, the word is "Toledot", meaning Generations. The process of new creation is considered to be the production of races and is similar to the processes of childbirth.

**The Lord God:** Because the first chapter was talking about God's relationship with the world and that He is the mighty Creator, the scripture used the word "Elohim" = God in the sense of the one who has power and omnipotence. But this chapter which talks about a loving God who is everything to man and made everything for the sake of the man He loves, mentions God in the name YHWH the Elohim, which means the Lord God. This is the first time the book uses the word YHWH. The name YHWH is from the Hebrew verb "Hwa" or "Hya" meaning "be" so "YHWH" means "The Being." God defined to Moses the meaning by saying: "I AM the one who I AM": I am who I am, which means that God is the Being of existence by Himself and does not depend on anyone for his existence. He is primordial and eternal, He who was and who is now and forever. Why did the book use this name in this chapter? Because God wants to reveal to the people whom He loves that He is their everything, He declares Himself to those who believe in Him by grace and love, and He is the one who in Him there is fulfilment of all human needs.

YHWH = I AM .. I am everything for my beloved ones. That is why we see the name of the Lord coming here in this chapter of God's love for Adam. The word God refers to the supremacy of God over all the creation, but the word YHWH (the Lord) refers to the relationship of God with His own, that is, the man whom He loved and created everything for him.

"For He is our life of us all, the salvation of us all, the hope of us all, the healing of us all, and the resurrection of us all" (The Prayer for the Gospel).

The Jews did not use the name Jehovah because they feared the name, so they used instead the word "Adonai", meaning Lord or Master, and in Greek Kirius κύριος. The Fathers believe that the commandment to keep the Sabbath, which in Hebrew means "rest", is a symbol of abiding in Christ as He is the comfort of the Father, in Him He finds his pleasure toward us, and our comfort, as we enter in Him into the bosom of the Father. As if Christ Himself is our true Sabbath. This is the secret of God's significance in keeping the commandment of the Sabbath and making it a main line in the plan of salvation for His people. Whoever breaks it will break the divine covenant and deprive himself of his membership in the body of Christ which is the Church.

## The Lord God

We notice in the first chapter the book says in the beginning God created ..

In chapter two, the "Lord God" is repeated.

God, in the sense of a master, is the master of all creation and founder of the creation from nothingness, and He reigns over all that he created.

The second chapter which is the chapter of friendship between God and man, and in which God rejoices in man "Rejoicing in His inhabited world, And my delight was with the sons of men." (Proverb 8: 31), God presents Himself in the name of the Lord God, for He is the God of Adam, that is, his creator and master, but he is also his Lord. What is the meaning of this word Lord? It is in its origin, YHWH (Exodus 3: 15), but the Jews, fearing the name of YHWH, started to not use it, but instead used the word the Lord, and began to replace every word of YHWH with the word Lord in the Bible out of fear of God and His name. (As most Egyptians do not mention the names of their wives).

What is the meaning of the word YHWH? I AM The Being .. on one hand, it means that God is the Self-existent, and not created by anyone. He was, He is, and He will be forever. On the other hand, He is everything for us, so He is appropriate to fill the points placed in I AM ... anything, as we say in the prayer for the Gospel, "You are the life of us all, the salvation of us all, the hope of us all ...". We notice in the Bible that the word "God" is used when talking about God's relationship with the world as a whole, but the word "Lord" is used about God's relationship with His own people.

Thus, Christ used to say of Himself, "I AM He - I AM". [I AM the Good Shepherd - I AM the door of the sheep (John 10: 7, 11) .. He said to the Jews, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things" + "for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (John 8:24 28) + And when He said to the soldiers in the garden of Gethsemane, "I AM He" they fell to the ground,". I AM reveals His divinity (John 18:6). Thus we understand that when the book says the Lord God, the intended person is the Son of God the Word.

Examples: Compare (Genesis 16: 7) when the angel of the Lord found (Hagar) with (Genesis 21: 17) and the angel of God called Hagar out of heaven. For He is the angel of the Lord when he commanded her to return to Abraham where Abraham is the people of God, and He is the angel of God when he commanded her not to Return.

(Compare Genesis 6: 13) And God said to Noah, "the end of all flesh" ... Here God is the master of creation who orders its destruction. With (Genesis 7: 1) And the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark .. Here Noah is the property of the Lord and whom the Lord protects from destruction, he is for the Lord and the Lord is his.

**(verse 5): before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground;**

This is a repetition of the third day, and it does not mean that God began creating plants at this time, because now the earth was complete. This verse was mentioned here to indicate that God created the plants for Adam, His beloved, to have as his food. He created plants from the land that was in ruined and empty. This verse is a revision of the third day which is in line with the idea of chapter 2 that God has prepared everything for man.

**(verse 6): but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.**

This verse explains how rain is created, as it is God's gift to man as well. The origin of rain is water that has evaporated from the ground and formed fog (clouds) and condensed in the upper layers of the atmosphere until it rains (see Job 36: 27). Now the Lord had prepared seeds and rain for Adam. He asked him to work to cultivate the land = till the ground (verse 5). So we find that there is a partnership in work between God and man. This is what the Church calls work (struggling) and grace. And in our lives now, we find Christ the Sower, who planted in us His life. And the Holy Spirit, the rain, quenches us and confirms the life of Christ in us. But we, as partners in work with God, have to work so that the seed will grow and that the life of Christ be confirmed in us.

What do we do to confirm the life of Christ in us?

1. Passive Work (struggling): the crucifixion of the flesh with its passions with desires (Galatians 2:20 + Galatians 5:24).
2. Active Work (struggling): \* Like prayer, for with prayers praise, we become filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5: 17-21). \* Fasting with which we overcome Satan (Matthew 17:21).

**(verse 7): And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. Life in God's Garden**

**Man:**

His body is from the dust of the earth. The word Adam means red, and the origin of the word is "Adamia", means red dust. However, he is not only dust, but there is a soul in him.

**and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life:**

This is the spirit, so Adam is made from dust to know the reality of his weakness without the grace of God, and from the breath of God, to know his value before God, and to give his spirit the victory over his body and its desires. And the word breathed, means that God deposited in Adam the quality of life, so this breath of life is the spirit (Job 32: 8).

Reflection: In verse 5 we see that Adam had to work in order to have fruit. There must also be seeds, and these have been created by God in the third day, and there must be rain that God will make fall from heaven. Adam is from the soil of the earth, so we find Adam participates with God in work, and

God participates with Adam in work so that there is fruit. And spiritually, by referring to the parable of Jesus Christ “the sower and the seeds” (Matthew 13: 2-23), the meaning would be:

\* The ground in the parable is man (Adam is from dust).

\* The seed is the word of God (the seeds were created on the third day, Christ rose on the third day, and the seed that was sown in us by the baptism is the life of Christ). As Saint Peter said: “ having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,” (1 Pet 1:23).

\* The rain is the Holy Spirit that God gives to man from heaven to renew our nature and reveal the life of Jesus in us. But let us note the importance of man’s work alongside the grace of God, and this is what our church refers to as work (struggle) and grace.

From this verse and from Genesis 1:26 we see the work of the Holy Trinity: -

**Then God said**, “Let Us make man in Our image = The Father wants to create.

**And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground** = The Son makes man. All things were made through Him (John 1: 3)

**and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life** = the Holy Spirit gives life to the body.

Likewise, it was the second creation in Christ.

**God wants everyone to be saved** .... = The Father desires all men to be saved (1 Timothy 2: 4)

**The Son in the water establishes the sacrament of baptism** = and with it we die from the old creation and rise in a new creation.

**The Holy Spirit descends upon the body of Christ** = so His work is to abide us in Christ, so that we may live.

The same idea is found in the next chapter, refer to the explanation (Genesis 3: 8), and there is a pictorial explanation of the work of the Trinity in creation, which you can find in (Ezekiel 37).

**(verse 8): The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.**

Here we see God's love and His excellent fatherhood, His care and love for mankind, as He **implants a garden** in which man can live. And it is to **the east**, because Moses was writing this in Sinai and the garden of Eden was at the Euphrates.

The word **Eden** means joy or delight. Thus, God created Adam to live in joy. Every Christian now looks to **the East**, as if waiting for Christ the sun of righteousness in His second coming with joy and lives on this



hope that he will move from the world of sadness and misery to the world of eternal joy. But the meaning of the existence of a paradise by the name of Eden, means that Adam used to live in joy. But this was because he was living in love with God. Since Adam was in the image of God, and God is love, he loved God, and so was his delight in God. The source of true joy comes of love. That is why God asked His people to love him: ““Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” (Deuteronomy 6: 4, 5). Why does God ask us to love Him? Because God knows that love for God is the way to joy just as Adam was in the garden, and with love we return to the garden of joy (Deuteronomy 6: 4, 5).

**(verse 9): And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**

**pleasant to the sight and good for food :**

Christ's mouth is most sweet, Yes, he is altogether lovely. (Song of Solomon 5: 16). So do we look to Christ to be satiated or we look to the world to be satiated.

**The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden:**

Refers to Christ who whoever believes in Him will have eternal life (John 3: 15; see Proverbs 3: 18). Wisdom is a tree of life for those who hold it, and Christ is the hypostasis of wisdom (the Logos) (see Revelation 2: 7 +22: 2 + John 6: 54). In the heavenly Jerusalem we do not find except a tree of life, we do not hear that there is a tree of knowledge of good and evil, because there is no evil but eternal life.

**The tree of the knowledge of good and evil:**

The dilemma is not in knowing good and evil, for God wants us to distinguish between them and choose good and reject evil. But what is meant is that he who eats from this tree will know good and evil in the sense that he knows good when he loses it and knows evil by experiencing it. Knowledge in itself is a gift and a blessing, but if it turns to the experience of evil, it becomes a cause of perdition. It is this knowledge that carries disobedience within it (Hebrews 5: 14). God wanted Adam not to experience evil because he was still weak.

Adam was weak on the day he was created, the sixth day. That is why God prevented him from tasting evil so that he would not admire it while he was still weak and consequently die. Why did God create him weak? God created him free, and he gave him the right to choose between uniting with Him (by eating from the tree of life) or separating from Him (by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil). We find that God does not force anyone to choose him. If Adam chose to eat from the tree of life, he would have been abided in the Son and became perfect, rejecting sin. Therefore we say that the number 6 represents Adam in his human weakness, but if he had chosen the tree of life, he would have united with the one God. With this, we understand why the number 7 represents perfection because a weak man in Christ becomes perfect.

Number 6 represents the weak man + 1 representing the Son, the tree of life = 7 the perfect man.

**The Tree of Life** was among the trees in the garden that Adam was allowed to eat from, and if he did, he would have lived forever. What is meant by this is that Adam was offered to freely choose between uniting with God and thus living forever, or beginning to consider his talents, riches, beauty, and power by separating himself from God, rather than through his unity with God. Separation from God equals death. This was the fall of Satan, that he felt his potential when he was one of the Cherubim angels, and he was separated from God, died and perished. Here, God explains to Adam not to eat from this tree, the tree of separation from God, as Satan did and consequently perished. Note that Satan's sin stemmed from within him and without being tempted by anyone. "You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you." (Ezekiel 28: 15). God, in his love for Adam, warns him not to fall. God knows that Satan will try to seduce Adam to fall like him. And God created Adam free and not compelled. Among the reasons that God did not offer a sacrifice to Satan, was that sin originated from within him, but for Adam, he was deceived by Satan. When Adam fell, he became sinful "in sin my mother conceived me" (Psalm 51: 5 + Romans 7:17). Death entered into Adam and all of his descendants, for each of us is a part of Adam. But because Adam's sin came from outside, God gave Adam a second chance by the salvation of Christ. Also, because Adam has a weak body and he is hesitant, he falls today and then regrets and repents. But Satan was an angel, and the angels have a different nature, so they do not hesitate to make their decisions. When Satan takes his decision, he does not return back or regret his decision. The Bible expressed this by saying about the Cherubim, who are among the angels: "Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet .. The creatures did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward." (Ezekiel 1: 7, 9). When pride entered the angel of Satan - and he began being proud on the rest of the angels (Isaiah 14:13), then equated himself with God (Isaiah 14:14) - it was said that God had given him the choice between repenting or continuing his disobedience, so he decided to continue and did not back down until now. Rather, a third of the angels followed him and became demons of darkness (Revelation 12: 4). As for the rest of the angels, they decided to submit to God out of love, so they continued as angels of light. The angels and demons did not and will not change their decision, therefore, why would God offer a redemption to the demons when they will not benefit from it because they will not change their decision. We understand from ( Revelation 2: 7 ) that the tree of life that Adam was supposed to eat from means union with the Son, so Adam would have eternal life, since the Son has life in Himself ( John 5:26 ). By this we understand that the tree of knowledge of good and evil is the opposite of the tree of life. Whoever eats of it will die. Thus, it means separation from the Son, and this does not happen except through sin, as there is no communion of light with darkness. Adam had the freedom to choose, and when he chose separation rather than unity, he died because he chose to separate from the Son, and the Son is life. From God's wonderful love, He came and was incarnated to unite with man again and give us his body to eat, so we can live forever.

**(verse 10): Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads.**

Just as we find a **river** in Eden, we also find a river in the Heavenly Jerusalem (Revelation 22: 1). We have previously seen a tree of life in the Heavenly Jerusalem, as well as here in Eden. And if the tree of life is Christ, then the river is a sign of the Holy Spirit who overflows on our land, transforming our wilderness into a garden that rejoices the heart of God (John 7:38). **And the river that is parted and became four heads**, indicates the outpouring of the Spirit upon the church everywhere (Number 4 is the number of generality, meaning it is for every person who wants) (Psalm 46:4). Therefore, man in his relationship with God, becomes the new Garden of Eden through the Holy Spirit. Thus, the Garden of Eden refers to the church or the human soul which Christ dwells in and it is filled with the Holy Spirit and lives in joy.

**The parted river** = reminds us of the Holy Spirit who descended upon the disciples as tongues of fire divided over each one of them, which means that each of them is given by the Spirit a grace and talent, as much as the work required of him. And so, with each of us, the Holy Spirit gives His gifts as needed.

**(verses 11-14): The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good. Bdelium and the onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.**

Each of the names of the four rivers, or the four branches, refers to a work of the Holy Spirit with man.

**Pishon:** means current or overflowing, and others translate it as an increase or a growth. It surrounds the lands of **Havilah** and Havilah means fatigue or pain. Thus, Spirit overflows to save us from fatigue, for He is the comforter.

**Gihon:** means savior or rescuer, who surrounds the land of Cush (black). The meaning is that the Holy Spirit saves us from the authority of darkness. And the spirit gives more grace against the authority of darkness (James 4: 6).

**Hiddekel:** It is the Tigris River, and the word means fast, and it flows east of Assyria. Assyria is a people who are resistant to God and the people of God. The meaning is that God is quick in His response, and His work of grace is swift, so that all the resistances and challenges are subject to the people of God.

**Euphrates:** means abundant and has fresh water. How sweet and beautiful is the revelation of God in love.

So the Holy Spirit overflows on man in abundance and gives him the sweetness of tasting God's love. He saves him from his troubles and pain, for he is the comforter and saves him from the power of darkness, for He is the one who convicts us of sin and he who supports us in our wars with our enemies.

**where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good. Bdelium and the onyx stone are there:** Once again, we return to the Heavenly Jerusalem, and we find that it is pure gold (Revelation 21: 18), its streets are pure gold (Revelation 21:21), and its foundations are of precious stones (Revelation 21: 19),

and we will compare it with the garden of Eden. Because Eden is still on the earth, so there was gold in it and there was onyx stone in it, but in heaven, all of it is gold and its foundations are precious stones. Adam was created in paradise (the garden) as an earthly person, but the breath of the Spirit in him and his fellowship with God gave him a heavenly life. Gold symbolizes the heavenly things, but if it actually moves to heaven, it will become completely heavenly. And the **Bdellium** is a type of glue (myrrh flows from its trees) and it is suitable as medicine and incense and it may be a rare gemstone. In Hebrew = the word means pearl. **Onyx stone** is a gemstone. The children of God are precious stones in God's eyes, and the Bdellium here refers to their relationship with God, their prayers, or their constant connection with God. His children are like pearls before his eyes.

We note the similarities and comparison between Eden and Heavenly Jerusalem (the Beginning and the end of the Bible).

Geographically: His saying "River" often means the meeting of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and the four branches are the Tigris and Euphrates and two branches of them, and they may have ceased to exist. And Havilah is the northeastern part of the Arabs land. Havilah was one of the sons of Cush. Gold was found in the mountains on the east of the Black Sea. And the land of Cush is most probably the land of Elam, which was known for a long time as "Cacho," and the Babylonian plain was called "Adenu." There are many branches of the two great rivers, perhaps among them Gihon and Phishon, and perhaps they are two branches that ceased to exist. The location of paradise (the garden) is either in southern Iraq or in Armenia. In general, this land is fertile land and a land of rivers.

**(verse 15): Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.**

Here we find Adam a partner of God in work. The Garden of Eden was planted by God, and here is Adam tending and keeping it. Man was created to work and God Himself works. We, as new creation in Christ Jesus, are created for good works (Ephesians 2: 10). God did not create man and gave him a mind and wisdom to only sleep, eat and drink. God sanctified work.

**(verse 16-17): And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."**

These verses are considered the condition for continuing this life with the beautiful fellowship with God. Here we find the commandment which is:

1. Declaration of the freedom of the human will. With freedom, there is a commandment.
2. The condition of continuity in this type of life.

And here we find the result of not obeying the commandment .. **You shall surely die**: Man was not created to die but rather to live, but " I plucked for myself the decree of death ... the Gregorian Liturgy."

This is not a punishment as much as it is a consequence that God warns Adam about .. That separation from him = death. Hence, we see that the commandment is not deprivation, but rather is the way to enjoy joy and holiness with God. As for death, it is the natural fruit of sin. And out of God's love for man, He did not curse man because of sin, but He cursed the earth and cursed the serpent.

(Adam was in paradise (garden) like a weak person in a sterile room, the physician gave him a commandment, that if he got out of it, microbes would attack him and he would get sick and die. And the person went out and got sick, so God gave the Ten Commandments as advice just as the doctor gives advice to the patient so that he can prolong his life as much as possible).

**(verses 18-20): And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." 19 Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.**

**In verse 18:** We see God making a decision to make a certain helper to Adam, meaning that God made a decision to create Eve from Adam's side.

The natural course of the verses was for verse 21 to come next (**And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs ... etc.**) immediately after verse 18. What caused verses 19 and 20 to enter in between them?

Here we see how God deals with man as a friend. God created man free, and God does not impose anything on man against his will. That is God here brought the animals and explained to Adam the nature of every animal, and after Adam understood the nature of the animal and studied it fully, he gave it a name. [As we say in Arabic (bear) because this animal is large and heavy, and when it walks it bounces on the ground .. and so on. During the explanation, Adam would discover that all animals are male and female, and thus asks God, why are they male and female? So God's answer is that the female, O Adam, is: 1- "To be a helper for him." 2- To multiply.

Adam would ask why am I then alone without a female? And God would say to him, "Do you want a female?" And Adam would reply, after God convinced him, "Yes, I want .. Here God's decision in verse 18 turned into a request from Adam to God." God does not impose something on me until he persuades me, and turn this thing to be a request for me. This is what Jeremiah said. "O Lord, You induced me, and I was persuaded; You are stronger than I, and have prevailed.." (Jeremiah 20: 7:20). Rather, the verse: "The Holy Spirit convicts of sin ... (John 16: 8) In other translations we find it." The Holy Spirit persuades me of a sin .. The Holy Spirit persuades man, talks with him and insists on him to leave a sin for his own benefit.

Verse 18: We see that God wants man to live a social life, in which there is mutual love, a loving family, and a cooperative society in complementarity. For example: The person has ear, eye, hand, and feet .. each has his function in the one body.

And the words helper comparable to him = reveals the concept of marital life, where she is comparable to him, so that none of them gets proud over the other.

Verses 19, 20: Why did Adam call the animals by their names:

This gives him a feeling of mastery over them.

He gave the name after studying and understanding the nature of the animal and what work it could do or what service it could be used in. So, it is a kind of study and knowledge.

This was a training from God to Adam to think and talk.

When he studied the animals, he found them male and female, and there was no one among them who was comparable to him, so he longed to have a helper for himself.

Notice that God gave names to the sun, moon, day and night, for He has authority over all of these and He left the authority over animals and birds to Adam. He is God who placed some of His honor on Adam. Unfortunately, man lost this dignity after his fall, and this is called moral death.

**(verse 21-24): And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. 23 And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and bejoined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**

Eve was made from Adam's rib, and the rib is next to the heart and under the arm, so that he surrounds her with his love and protect her with his arm. She is not from his head, so she doesn't boast over him, or from his feet, so he tramples her. Observe the way of God, because God took from Adam a rib, so he deprived him of something, that is, one of his ribs, but what was given to him after that... He was given a helper comparable to him. Same as whatever God deprives us of, it is compensated with multiplied blessings.

**bejoined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh:** This verse includes the foundation of the sacrament of marriage, the saying **one flesh** = is an indication of the physical relationship between a man and his wife for the purpose of procreation. This is how the Apostle Paul understood this verse. (See 1 Corinthians 6: 15, 16).

**Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman** = He did not say that God created Eve, but he said He made the rib into a woman. If God created Eve, it would be a new creation other than Adam. But God took her from within Adam and made Eve from part of him.

This story is an analogy to the story of Christ with His Bride the Church.

| Adam and Eve  | Christ and the Church  |
|---|--|
| The Lord caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept.   | Christ died on the cross (His death was like sleeping).                  |
| God opened Adam's side to take a rib.                         | The side of Christ was opened with a spear to bring blood and water out. |
| God made the rib into a woman                                 | The Holy Spirit builds the church with blood benefits.                   |
| Eve is Adam's body (one body)                                 | The Church is the Body of Christ (and Christ is the Head)                |
| This is bone from my bones .. flesh from my flesh.            | Eph 5: 30  |
| The man leaves his father and mother and bejoined to his wife | Christ left His heavenly glory and His Jewish nation to be join us.      |

When Christ died on the cross and was stabbed in his side, blood and water came out, and the Church's mysteries overflowed from Christ's side. Christ left his father in the sense that "who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. (Philippians 2: 6-7). Leaving His mother means that He left the Jewish community from which He was born according to the flesh to be joined to the Church that He gathered from all nations.

**and He brought her to the man:** This is the institution of the sacrament of marriage.

**(verse 25): And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.**

**They were both naked:** the weather was neither cold nor hot, for it is paradise, but neither the heat nor the cold had power over them. And the factors of nature have no authority over them. In heaven, there is neither heat nor cold.

**and were not ashamed:** In another translation, "they knew no shame", they are physically naked, but spiritually covered, so they found nothing shameful. Because what shames a person is not his body, but the corruption in him because of sin. "He who does not know sin will not know shame." This is the situation of young children.

## Chapter 3

### Introduction from "Adam and Eve" book by His Holiness Pope Shenouda:

#### Adam and Eve's sin is compound:

1. It is a sin of disobedience and transgression: God warned them, and they disobeyed. Thus, it is not a sin of ignorance.
2. It is a sin of corrupt fellowship: A dialogue between Eve and the serpent. Eve continues the conversation while the serpent was questioning the words of God in a way of discredit.
3. It is a sin of doubt and lack of love: Doubting the truthfulness of God's words, as well as suspicion of His love (John 14:21).
4. It is a sin of submission: Submission to evil against the word of God, where Eve submitted to the serpent and Adam submitted to Eve.
5. It is a sin of weak faith: Eve accepted the words of the serpent more than the words of God. The serpent said, "You will not surely die."
6. It is a sin of disdain and not fearing God: Because they reached out and ate.
7. It is a sin of lust: The tree was pleasant to the eyes. The look to the tree became imbued with desire.
8. It is a sin of pride: They wanted to become like God; it is the same fall of Satan (Isaiah 14:14).
9. It is a sin of destructive knowledge: The knowledge of evil and experiencing it, "he who increases knowledge increases sorrow."
10. It is a sin of seeking knowledge from someone other than God: God should have been the only teacher and guide.
11. They kept the command logically but not by deed.
12. Lack of satisfaction: They had all the trees in the garden in front of them, but they were not satisfied.

#### And the sins after the fall are:

13. Stumbling others: - Eve gave her man as well.
14. Not admitting nor regretting mistakes: Everyone was justifying his position without admission of guilt or self-condemnation.
15. Trying to justify oneself and placing the blame on others.
16. Blaming others is a sign of lack of love. Adam correlates the reason for his sin to God and Eve.
17. The lack of decency in conversation: "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree."
18. Loss of innocence: Shame entered their lives, and they knew that they were naked. And there became lawful and forbidden. Good and bad, what should and should not. The knowledge of evil has distorted man's mind.
19. Desire for knowledge from means other than God arose after God was the only teacher.
20. Covering sin with fig leaves: The heart became corrupted, but it is an attempt to cover up outwardly, and there is no benefit to covering except with the blood of Christ.



21. Running away from God: Adam and Eve hiding from God (like someone who flees from prayer when he sins).
22. Ignorance of God and His power: They thought in their ignorance that God does not see them when they hide.

In this chapter, we observe the news of man's fall and death as a consequence of it. Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin .. (Romans 5: 12)

The reason for the fall is that the Devil (enemy of good) envied man, so he wanted to bring him down to death, so he used the serpent to deceive man. The devil may have taken the form of a serpent, for he can even take the form of an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11: 14). Or that Satan used the serpent. It is clear from the verse (2 Corinthians 11: 15) that Satan's servants change their forms to deceive the simple. This happens in our life when a corrupted friend calls us to sin. So, the serpent is Satan and review (Revelation 12: 9). Satan, then, may use God's good creation as a means to destroy man.

**(verses 1-2): Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;**

**The serpent was more cunning:**

The serpent turns, twists and deceives, and so is the devil .. And what did the serpent say, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

**Indeed said:** She wants to say that God is unjust because He commanded this, and you should not obey Him.

And her saying **from every tree of the garden**: This is a lie. She inserted the lie amid the truthful sayings. God actually spoke to Adam and Eve and gave them a commandment, and the commandment was to eat from all the trees of the garden, but only one tree is forbidden from them. The lie here is that she claimed that God prevented them from eating from all the trees of the garden to turn the woman against God. Just as Christ said about Satan, he is a liar and the father of the liar, and his goal of lying and deception is the destruction of mankind, so he was a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44). Observe the devil's way as he introduces a small lie into the midst of honest words.

**Partial honesty + Partial deceit = More deception**

If a person accepts this bait and enters into a dialogue with the devil, the devil begins to increase the lie. Eve should have been silent and did not proceed in this dialogue with the serpent; "But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife." (2 Timothy 2: 23). As long as she discovered that there was a lie as part of the speech, she should have stopped and not surrendered herself to those who

conspire against her. But she casted her pearls before the swine (Matthew 7: 6), so the swine trampled them, and they turned and tore her in pieces. Satan does not enter our lives with force, but we are the ones who accept his delusions and allow him to penetrate our depths. We are the ones who hand him over the leadership of our will, so he controls the heart, thought and senses. Thus, we fall under his bitter bondage.

**(verse 3): but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' "**

**God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' "**

His saying **nor shall you touch it**: It is an increment in the speech that gives God the extremism image (an exaggeration in speech).

**Lest you die**: It is questioning in doubt the decision of God who said, "You shall surely die." The woman followed the serpent in underestimating God's word and undervaluing it: This is the fruit of the wicked association, so we should not sit in the seat of the scornful. The woman here began to respond to the deception by showing God in the severe and hard positions and questioning his decisions. Accordingly, she allowed the serpent to hold more skepticism.

**Satan's continuous method with man:**

1. Doubting the love of God, claiming that the commandment is difficult: If a person agrees, he starts complaining and grumbling.
2. Convincing and facilitates the path of sin for a person's mind (2 Corinthians 11: 3).
3. Addressing lust and raising the need for it: Then pushing the surrendered person to fall.
4. Abandoning people to death and despair.

**(verses 4-5): Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."**

**" You will not surely die .. your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."**

Satan can only make false promises. "You will not die ... Your eyes will be opened .. You will be like God" But God does not only make promises, but He is the one who created everything for me. Satan did not give me anything but lies. Even the knowledge that the devil claims that a person will obtain is an evil knowledge and experience, from which man can only gain grief, "And he who increases knowledge increases sorrow" (Ecclesiastes 1: 18).

Notice the pride of man who wants to be like God. And his poor judgment to view Satan as more reliable than God, even though God showed his goodwill by His actions, although it was more appropriate for man to realize the enemy from his words, which contradicted God's sayings. Indeed, as St. Augustine

said: The leader (who is God) offers us His commandment for life, and the destroyer (the devil) proposes a plot to destroy us, by depicting that God's commandment implies depriving us of pleasures and deceives us by portraying that these pleasures are the path of joy and it is our right. But these pleasures only bring us sorrow. What rejoices Satan's heart is seeing us as children of God in sadness, losing our joy.

**(verse 6): So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.**

Eve was attacked with lust (see 1 John 2: 15-17 and see James 1: 14-16).

**Body or stomach lust:** In her eyes, she saw the tree good for food.

**Eye lust:** the tree = pleasant to the eyes

**Lust for self-exaltation and greed:** = You will be like God.

Those were the same sins with which Christ was tempted:

**Stomach lust:** command that these stones become bread (Matthew 4: 3).

**Eye Lust:** All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me. (Matthew 4: 9).

**Self-Exalted Living:** If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down.

Christ succeeded in what Adam and Eve failed, as Christ responded to Satan with God's sayings without distorting them, but Eve perverted the word of God and fell.

**she took of its fruit and ate:**

Satan cannot and does not have the authority except to tempt. He has no power to put the fruit in the woman's mouth. But she did, "I plucked for myself the decree of death."

**She also gave to her husband with her:** Eve lost her original message as a helper and became a snare for her man and a destroyer of his life.

**(verse 7): Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves [b]coverings.**

**and they sewed fig leaves together:**

### **Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked**

This means that through sin, man realizes that he has entered into a state of corruption that shows in the body's uncontrollable passions and desires. Thus, man enters into a new knowledge, which is the experience of evil combined with his life and ultimately corrupts his body. He gets acquainted with his body, which has become uncontrollably aggressive in evil. They became naked, as they lost the grace that kept them from the shame of the body's nakedness. And they tried to cover, but they found nothing except fig leaves. Sewing fig leaves indicates man's effort, which does not conceal, as it is not sufficient without Christ's grace. They lost the garment of virtue, innocence, glory, and joy and became in need of dignity and even of logical judgment. They tried to hide from God, who can see everything after Adam was a model of wisdom and authority.

**Fig leaves** indicated self-righteousness, and every effort I take to justify my mistakes is a fig leaf.

When God created Adam, he loved God because he was created in God's image, and God is love. And because there was mutual love between Adam and God, Adam lived in the garden of joy (Eden = joy). When Eve was created, both of them continued to look towards God and loved God, so they continued in the state of joy; that is, they continued in Paradise.

When they fell, they looked at each other, and they became preoccupied with their bodies and forgot to look at God. Rather, they hid from God and were no longer seeing him; therefore, love diminished, and they lost their joy, which is the meaning of being expelled from Paradise. So sadness entered the world. When they lost their joy, the love of God began to cool in their hearts, as they no longer saw him. Consequently, they shifted the love energy that was inside them to caring for their bodies. They replaced joy with sensual pleasure. Until now, this is the devil's deception that joy is sensual pleasure. But there is a vast difference between God's gift and the gift of the flesh. 1) Sensual pleasure is momentary seconds, followed by sadness, while joy is permanent. 2) Joy conquers any external pain, "and your joy no one will take from you" (John 16:22). Can sensual pleasures give joy to a person threatened with death?

Therefore, the Apostle Paul, who says that marriage is honourable (Hebrews 13: 4) + (1 Corinthians 7: 2-4), asks in the following verse, to abstain for a period that the spouses can spend in fasting and prayer (1 Corinthians 5: 7). It is clear that this request is to all believers, so they would be free to devote themselves to God, shifting the energy of love within them to God, so that they would taste real joy instead of sensual pleasure.

After Salvation, God corrected the situation, so the love of God has poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us (Romans 5: 5). Thus, the fruits of the Holy Spirit became love, joy ... Therefore, one of the fruits of salvation was the restoration of the paradise state. That is why the Apostle asked us to be filled with the Spirit to be happy, instead of wine, i.e. earthly pleasures. Paul explained how to attain this fullness in the following verses (Ephesians 5: 18-21).

**(verse 8): And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.**

Man met God's love with disobedience. And God met man's disobedience with love so that man would return to him.

**sound of the Lord:** The sound does not walk, but we hear here that the voice of God was walking. So, this is the Word of God, the only begotten Son who came with the initiative of love to rescue the fallen man and raise him (Hebrews 2: 16).

**walking:** The Hebrew word indicates that he was walking with pleasure, for this is God's joy to save man through His Son.

**in the cool of the day:** the word **cool** in its original Hebrew language means wind or tempest. So, In other translations of the Bible this sentence came **"at the blowing of the day's wind"**: The words wind and spirit are the same in Hebrew. The meaning is that the Holy Spirit is the One who gives us the knowledge of Christ the Word, the light of the world: **the day's wind:** "He (the Holy Spirit) will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you" (John 16: 14). Therefore, in your light, O Lord, we see light and notice that God did not wait for man to come to Him apologizing for his sins. Rather, He approached him with love, attracting him to recognize his sins and confess them.

Here we see the first work of the Holy Trinity, for the salvation of man. The Father sends His sound (His Word) and His Spirit to Adam to preach to him the salvation to come, so he may not despair. For how miserable is a desperate person without hope? This is what we saw on the day of Christ's baptism in Jordan. Therefore, we hear here about joy in the word walking = This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

**(verse 9): Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"**

**Where are you?**

This does not mean that God is asking about his location but about his condition. For he has become lost and missed fellowship with God. God asked Adam to encourage him to confess as he did with the Samaritan woman. He did not ask the serpent, as there is no mercy for Satan because he will not repent. Here is the voice of God searching for His lost sheep. This is God's question to every sinner, which means, "Why did you become far from me?" Adam used to seek to meet God, but now he is hiding! If every sinner realizes where he is from God after he left his bosom and that he was in a dump by turning away from God, he would return immediately. Nevertheless, from God's love, He wants to enter into a dialogue with man to reveal to him that his sin made him unworthy of being in the knowledge of God, and that by sin, he has become hidden from the divine light. "He does not know God in a friendship and fellowship with him. "

**(verses 10-11): So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." 11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"**

It is clear that Adam understood God's question that it is not a question about his location but his condition, "Why is he hiding." It is clear that fear and panic entered due to sin, as darkness is incapable of seeing the light (1 John 4: 17,18).

Adam's hiding from God is equivalent to Jonah's escape from God, and both are ignorance, as sin blinds the mind. When a man seeks knowledge through experience of evil, his eyes are darkened, so he hides from the face of the Lord and turn away from the pure knowledge of God (Jeremiah 2: 27). Man can no longer see the Lord, not because the Lord is terrifying and frightening. Rather, because man in his wickedness has lost God's inner image that draws him with love towards his Creator, the lover of mankind. God became for him fearful and judge of sinners. The fault is man who has lost the purity of his nature, which is the reason for our fear of death now. Rather, God, out of His love, hid from man, as Adam could no longer tolerate the light of God, and thus, man would not die.

**(verses 12-13): Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." 13 And the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."**

God's intent was for man to admit his sin, but this did not happen. Instead, man justified himself and blamed others. Perhaps Eve's response was better than Adam's, as she admitted that she was deceived. But it was shameful that Adam, who is the head of the woman, hides behind a woman who was supposed to obey him and learn from him. We note that God did not enter into a dialogue with the serpent (Satan), as he has no hope for salvation .. Unfortunately, this is still the habit of man, like many, when they mention their sins, state that God is the cause.

**(verse 14-15): So the Lord God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."**

#### **The Curse of the serpent:**

1. This curse was directed towards the devil; in fact, he is the one who became hated by all people.
2. The curse is directed at the serpent, which was a tool used by Satan to stumble others. God thus explains that the punishment for those who stumble others is great. God uses the serpent as an explanation, just as Christ cursed the fig tree.

3. God punished the serpent because it was the sin's tool, same as the body is the tool of sin. It must be punished with the soul on the day of judgment. We find this idea also in the punishment of an ox who pushes a person and kills him, so the ox had to be killed (Exodus 21: 28-29).

4. There is a possibility that before the curse, the serpent had legs to walk on and raise itself from the ground. But what is important now is that the serpent slithers on its belly and licks the dirt or gets its food contaminated with it. Thus, every person who accepts to be an instrument of the evil enemy becomes like a serpent, strives on his belly, loving the earthly, has no feet to lift him from the dust, nor wings to promote him over what is earthly temporal and mortal. He becomes loving to fill his stomach with dust. And as he fills himself with dust, he becomes dust; that is, he becomes food for the serpent. I wish we had the wings of the Holy Spirit to lift us from the earthly to the heavenly.

5. After the fall, Satan, who was beautiful, became unpleasant. Eating dirt is a symbol of meanness.

6. Enmity became permanent between Satan (the serpent) and man. The serpent always bites a person in his foot, and the person kills the serpent by striking its head. Note that the human being and the serpent had agreed on evil, and the result was hatred and a rupture between them, so hatred and estrangement accompany sin.

#### **The Blessing inside the curse:**

"You, O my Master, have turned for me the punishment into salvation... The Gregorian Liturgy"

Within the words with which God cursed the serpent, we find many blessings for man.

1. The seed of the woman: He is the Christ .. It is a prophecy of the incarnation of Christ. He did not say man's seed, but the woman's seed as He was born from the Virgin without human seed. When Saint Luke returned the lineage of Christ to Adam, he wanted to show that Christ who crushed the head of a serpent has a human body from Adam's descendants. And all the ancient fathers were waiting for a Messiah. Even the Samaritan woman inherited this belief (John 4). Also found in Egypt an image of the god "Howe" crushing the head of a snake.

2. Crush His Heels: This refers to Christ's suffering and pain that afflicted His human nature. Satan enraged everyone against Christ; he even convinced Peter, His disciple, to deny him. The Jews tried to kill him repeatedly. Then he persuaded the Jews to persecute and crucify Christ.

3. Bruise your head: See (Romans 16: 20 + Luke 10: 17-20). Christ, with his cross, crushed the devil (Colossians 2: 14-15).

+ So we find in the same words a curse for Satan and blessings for man. It was the same as the cloud's pillar, which was light at night towards the Israelites, and a cloud towards the Egyptians to astray them, making them blind (Exodus 14: 20).

+ Notice that crushing the head of the devil indicates his tricks, thoughts, and malice.

+ In these verses, we find the first promise of salvation.

+ The serpent is still crushing everyone who accepts to descend from the heavenly life.

**(verse 16): To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."**

#### **Disciplining the woman:**

1. Notice that the hardships of a woman in childbirth are more than any other creation.
2. God put marriage so that the man is the head of the woman overflowing her with his love, and she submits to him with love, but it seems in these words that it is a kind of leadership and submission to lead the woman to humility and repentance.
3. **Your desire shall be for your husband:** because of her constant feeling of weakness and need for protection. Note that the woman's longing for a man pushed her to overcome childbirth fears and its pain so as not to refuse marriage. Also, the fact that a man prevailed over her gave that the house one head.

#### **Blessing is within the punishment**

1. We saw previously that the punishment resulted in one head for the family. And the continuity of life by offspring.
2. Your desire shall be for your husband: The husband refers to Christ, and the woman refers to the church, and she longs for him.
3. And he shall rule over you: By love and by His cross. She longs for his coming through the ages.
4. In pain you shall bring forth children: (Galatians 4: 19). The church and its servants suffer so that a believer is born, and they rejoice after this believer repents; their suffering is their strife with him and their prayers for his repentance.

**(verses 17-19): Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it. All the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. 19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread. Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return."**

#### **Disciplining the man**



1. **The curse of the ground** means that it will no longer be generous in producing but has become rough and does not give except with fatigue.

2. **In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread** indicates that work is no longer a pleasure, but rather fatigue.

3. **Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you:** where its penalty will be fire (Hebrews 6: 8). And thorns indicate that Adam used to find stinging pain in his work. Diseases and sorrows are thorns and thistles.

4. **Eat the herb of the field:** The grass was the food of animals and became man's food. This is what happened with Nebuchadnezzar, then he raised his eyes to heaven. This punishment indicates that God wants us to raise our eyes to heaven and know that this earth is neither our place nor our rest, but full of fatigue, thorns and thistles, and it is cursed, so we do not long to live in it forever.

5. **And to dust you shall return:** It is the punishment of death. As for those who longed for heaven and lived in heavenly places, they will hear the voice, "You lived in heavenly places, to heaven you will return." This is the work of the Grace of Christ.

6. Paul the Apostle says, "thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" (Rom 5:12). This means that Paul showed that the entry of death into man was due to sin, although this was not God's intention from the beginning. God created man to live forever. Note that Paul's words apply only to men in this verse = **death spread to all men**, and therefore we understand that the rest of creation was subject to death. Plants die, and animals die. And from the remains of huge ancient animals buried in the earth, petroleum comes out. God created these animals on the fifth day of creation. Death existed to become a method for the human being to live, as he depends on petroleum. As if God was preparing the means by which we live and move now millions of years ago. Death was also a means of warning and illustration to Adam to understand the result of sin.

### **Blessings within the punishment**

The curse of the earth, pains, and hardships that man suffers from, is there to push him to long for salvation from the tiresome of this world so that he goes to rest. Rather, death itself became a way of deliverance from this body and its desires (Romans 7:24), and heaven became a desire (Philippians 1:23). Instead, the short life became a blessing so that a person would not depend on his longevity and live - in sin, but rather be always ready.

### **What did Christ carry instead of us?**

Christ accepted all the marks of sin on our behalf and bore all that Adam had to endure (Romans 5: 12-20)

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 1. The Curse | Christ accepted the curse "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" and he became a curse for us (Galatians 3: 13 + Hebrews 5: 7) |
| 2. The Pain  | A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53: 3,4)  |

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 3. The Thorns        | He carried this on His Head   |
| 4. The Death         | He tasted it for us (Hebrews 2: 9)  |
| 5. The Nakedness     | Christ was hung naked on the cross  |
| 6. The pain of Birth | He labors to bring forth believers "He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied" (Isaiah 53: 11) |
| 7. The Submission    | He became obedient to the point of death , even submitted to the law (Galatians 4: 4 + Philippians 2: 8)  |
| 8. The Sweat         | His sweat came like great drops of blood in Gethsemane (Luke 22: 44)                                      |
| 9. The Sorrow        | He became a man of sorrows (Isaiah 53: 3)   |

**(verse 20): And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.**

### **The mother of all living:**

As we have seen, God filled the verses of punishments with the blessings of salvation, and Adam understood the promises contained in these words. Adam's naming of his wife Eve (from the word life) is a seal of approval of God's promises. Same as God changed the name Abram to Abraham as a seal of promise. He previously called her a woman, and now he calls her Eve in the hope of God's promise of a Savior who will bring life to him. And from his offspring will come a Savior who will crush the head of the serpent. Adam understood and knew God's sayings that Eve would become the mother of the Living Christ who gives life to all. In Adam, we see the father of all humanity, and in Eve we see the mother of all humanity. Therefore, through them, we fell together under the same discipline, until the second Adam came to give life to the believers, and the second Eve became the Church, the mother of all Christians.

**(verse 21): Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.**

The tunics of skin came from sacrifices

In the sacrifices, Adam saw an innocent animal dying, for him to be clothed, and he understood the significance of the sacrifice; that there is an innocent dying so that he could be covered. Accordingly, in tunics of skin, God explains how to live. Death entered as a result of sin, but God explains that sin can be passed on to an innocent animal who will die instead of the sinner. Thus, the sinner who was condemned to death can return to life again. In this way, he also explains how Eve being the mother of all living and not the mother of every dead. But it was the Virgin Mary who became the new Eve or the new woman, the mother of the living body that is the Church. This means, "When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home." (John 19: 26, 27). We have become children of the Virgin Mary in the person of Saint John.

And here we see how God cares about their clothes. And if we find someone proud of his clothes, we should think that he is proud of his nakedness and sin because he would not need to wear or cover with clothes if there was no sin.

We notice that God and Adam shared the sacrifice, because God got the meat as a burnt offering, and Adam got the skin to wear it. And Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice of burnt sacrifice to the Father, and clothed us with a cloak of righteousness, and covered us, and covered our sins as a sin offering.

**Question: Who offered the sacrifice?**

There is a lamb slaughtered, so who slaughtered it - God or Adam?

Indeed God will not extend His hand to a knife to slaughter the lamb, flay it, and make shirts from its skin to give to Adam and Eve and cover them. The logic is that Adam was the one who did that with the guidance of God. However, this was not mentioned. Instead, all that was said: **"Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them."** From this, we understand that the one who offered the sacrifice is the Lord God. It was previously explained that the Lord God is the Son of the Word. Why did the book not say that the Lord God offered the sacrifice? This verse indicates that the sacrifice that indeed covers is the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Christ is the one who offered himself, "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." (John 10:18). That is why we hear here that the Lord God made shirts for Adam, so He who made and the One who covered is Christ the Son, by offering Himself as a sacrifice on the cross. But if we understood that Adam was the one who slaughtered the lamb, then this is because human beings are children of Adam who crucified Christ. Once again, we see that Christ became one of Adam's children. He came to offer Himself a sacrifice to cover Adam and his sons. And that was by the hands of the children of Adam just as Adam slaughtered the lamb and offered it as a sacrifice, but the One who covered them is the Son of God, the Lord God.

**(verse 22): Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"**

**man has become like one of Us:** This may be considered an ironic method, so has the knowledge that man desired became like the knowledge of God? God, in His holiness, knows the evil and hates it. As for man, due to his weakness, he became aware of evil and coveted it, and this is what Adam bequeathed to humanity. And the fact that man became as one of the Trinity is considered a prophecy about the incarnation of Christ, the second hypostasis, for He is the one who was incarnated and **became one of us.**

**Man cannot live by himself forever. That is why God established a way for him to live, which is the tree of life. Now that man has been punished with death, he must be deprived of the tree of life, but there is a blessing within every punishment. Adam had to die to get rid of the sinful body. Death**

became a cure because it put an end to evils. God does not want a person to live in a body distorted by sin.

**(verse 23): therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.**

#### **Man sent out of the garden of Eden:**

1. God thus declares his dissatisfaction with Adam's behaviour.
2. There are mercies reserved for a person after his death.
3. He will compare his condition outside the garden with his condition in it, and thus he will repent and long for God. This is what happened with the prodigal son.
4. If he offered repentance, he will hear the voice, "You will be with me in Paradise."

**(verse 24): So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.**

#### **The Cherubim preventing man:**

Because there was a state of lack of peace between heaven and earth, since man was in a state of rebellion against God. Likewise, there was a cherubim on the veil of the Holy of Holies, and the cherubim became a witness to the execution of the punishment. The veil was a symbol of God's concealment from man because of sin. Until Christ came, riding on the cherub, and tearing the veil of the temple, and reconciliation took place between the earthly and the heavenly. Rather, joy became in heaven with one sinful return and repentance.

This cherub became a witness of the love of God, who does not want man to live in a body distorted by sin, but rather he must first die with this body to obtain the glorified body after that and live forever in glory. The cherubim is a witness to the mercies of God, with whose blood, man will regain his glory and eternal life. This is the meaning of the presence of the cherubim to guard the tree of life:

1. The Tree of Life: Whoever eats of it will live forever. God does not want us to live forever in this distorted image that has lost the image of God, the image of glory, because of sin. To compare, when Moses saw a small part of the glory of God, his face shone; what then was the condition of Adam, who was speaking to God? What became the human condition after God withheld from him.
2. The tree of life is Christ; he who eats of Him will live forever (John 6: 48-58 + Revelation 2: 7).
3. Does Christ need cherubim to prevent anyone from getting close to him? !!

4. Rather, the cherubim were a witness of God's mercy and love, who does not want us to live in this distorted form.

5. We find the cherubim above the ark of the covenant, looking at the blood of the sacrifice on the cover of the ark of the covenant. Blood declares God's forgiveness to the people so that the people do not perish. Therefore, the cover was called the Seat of Mercy in the Septuagint. They are witnesses of God's mercy for his people.

Just as the cherubim were witnesses of God's love and that God does not want us to live in this body in which sin dwelt and deformed it, and that God waits for us to complete the redemption for us and put on us the glorified bodies. Thus the cherubim is a witness to the word of God and his promise that Christ, the seed of the woman, will come to crush the head of the serpent. And the sword in the angel's hand is the fiery word of God, meaning God's promises = a sword's flame. (Hebrews 4: 12).

### **Which turned every way**

It shows God's word and His promises to all creation and to every tongue that the Savior is coming. Is not he the cherubim with the four faces (Ezekiel 1: 5-7 + Revelation 4: 8-10)? We see these promises and their fulfillment in the four Gospels, and the symbols of the Gospels, as the Church teaches us, are the same as the faces of the cherubim. And the sword is turning every way, as it declares God's mercy and promises to the pious to enter the heavenly glories, and it states at the same time the justice of God, and this is a warning to those who walk in evil will perish.

**Turned every way** = the sword has two edges:

1. The first edge: A promise to the righteous that they can eat from the Tree of Life and live forever if they obey the Word of God.
2. The second edge: A notification and a warning to the wicked that they will not eat of the tree and live forever if they are stubborn and do not obey the word of God.

**to guard the way to the tree of life** = From the preceding, we understand the meaning of this phrase. These cherubim stand before the world as a witness to the mercies of God, the truthfulness of His word and His promises concerning the return of the expelled man. In the same sense, we find that the beloved John saw around the throne in Heaven a rainbow like an emerald, **a rainbow** = God does not want to destroy mankind. **Emerald green** = a sign of life. Accordingly, the meaning is that God announces and shows his promises to all the world that he wants life for human beings, and he will do so and the cherub is a witness to these promises.

### **So He drove out the man**

Geographically, Eden is in the land of Iraq, as we have seen before. What is the meaning of expelling Adam from Paradise?

Paradise was called the Garden of Eden, meaning joy. Thus, we understand that Adam continued in the land of Iraq, but he no longer experienced the joy. Because of sin, he could no longer see or perceive God, so he hid from God. Love began to diminish, and joy diminished. Therefore, he searched for sensual pleasure instead of joy.

This is the meaning of knowing that they were naked, but there is a vast difference between pleasure and joy. This is what Christ restored to us by His salvation, "Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you." (John 16:22), and Christ sent us "the Holy Spirit who was given to us." (Romans 5: 5). One of the fruits of the Spirit is love, whose natural result is joy (Galatians 5:22) With this we restored the original Paradise state.

In this chapter, we saw Adam's sin, and this sin is the sin that humans inherit in the name of inherited sin, which is rebellion and disobedience. Adam had before him all the trees of Paradise, but he chose the only forbidden tree. And he introduced to the human dictionary (every forbidden is desired). And man's desire has become to obtain what he does not have, and this is what Solomon the Wise said, "Stolen water is sweet, And bread eaten in secret is pleasant" (Proverbs 9:17). And sin is defined simply by a person who searches for what he wants and not what God wants. Linguistically, the word sin in its original Greek language means he who mistakes the goal and loses the reward. Spiritually he who insists on his sin without repentance loses the reward that is salvation and is deprived of seeing the glory of God (Romans 3:23). When he sinned, Adam lost being in Paradise with all its joys and beauty, and he no longer saw God, thus losing the glory and splendour of his first creation ... etc.

**The meaning of the expulsion of man** = he no longer sees God. He lost the image of glory since his glory is the reflection of God's glory on him / He lost eternal life and died / He lost the state of joy .. etc.  
Review in the introduction to Genesis the results of sin.

### **Man's sin is that he wanted to become like God - what does this mean?**

Example: A great king took a wife for him from the people's daughters and dressed her in kings' clothes, and she sat next to him. So the ministers and leaders prostrated before her. She said to the king, "I am the same as you" = "my status is the same as your status." This is the mistake. The king raised and honoured her. He made her wear royal clothes like him, and she received all the respect. It is from His love for her that he made all this. Why is the feeling of greatness by separating from him ?!

This is what man did. God created him in His image, and he was in a beautiful paradise, and he lived with joy, and God was his partner in his work. God wants him great, but in Him and not away from him.

Unity with God gives us infinite possibilities. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13). As for separation from God, it means falling into a limited space. And everything that has limits equals death. Like a beautiful flower, who felt its beauty and said to the branch - I can live

alone - I have my beauty - what will the branch's response be? You will die if you separate yourself from me. Where will you get the nutrients for life?

**Examples of who is in Christ:** Paul the Apostle, in Christ he had endless capabilities- He continues to work even up till now and everywhere through what he wrote in the Bible. Also, Gideon triumphed with a small number over great numbers.

**Examples of who is not in Christ:** Who is the most powerful person in the world? There was no one like Samson. But what is the benefit of Samson's superpowers in front of today's guns? What does the intelligence of any person do to the problem of death?

Spiritual intelligence, then, is ascribing everything we succeed in it to God, who will continue to be the infinite source of every Blessing in our life. And spiritual stupidity is to ascribe success to our abilities, so we fall into a limited space.

## Chapter 4

After Adam and Eve fell, their offspring carried the microbe of sin, which was most strongly evident in the first crime in which Cain killed his brother Abel. We saw the results of sin: envy, hatred, murder, etc.

**Verse 1: Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the Lord."**

**Now Adam knew Eve his wife:**

This is the refined biblical expression of marital intercourse. Adam was supposed to associate with his wife before the fall to have sons, but without lust.

**I have acquired a man from the Lord:**

It can be translated (I acquired a man who is the Lord) or (with the help of the Lord). This means that Eve imagined that her son was the Savior, or she ascribed the creation to God, as He is the Creator of all. And so we have to ascribe every success to God.

**Verse 2: Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.**

**Abel:**

His name means unstable or fading like steam. This name might have been given to him by Eve after his brother Cain killed him, as she said that he passed quickly as the smoke disappears. She may also have so named him after realizing that every person is destined to disappear according to the judgment of the Lord. We notice that the names were often given to people, not when they were young, as the number of people was insignificant, and they did not need names to distinguish them (we will notice that in Cain's children's names). The reason could also be that Eve imagined that Cain was the Savior whom God had sent, while everything else is worthless to Him (Philippians 3: 8).

Abel was a shepherd of sheep, and so was David, and Christ was the Good Shepherd. We note here that the name of Abel appeared before Cain.

**Now Abel .. but Cain ..**

Here, the concept of the spiritual and physical birthright appears. Cain is the firstborn physically, but due to his evil, he lost the firstborn right. Therefore, Abel came before him in the order. (like Reuben, Esau, and others. Reuben lost the birthright, and it became to Joseph the pure, who obtained the double firstborn share in the inheritance. And so it was with Esau and Jacob).

Thus Christ was the firstborn among many brothers. The firstborn of mankind physically. Cain was a symbol of the first Adam, the firstborn of mankind physically. He lost his birthright to show the true Abel who is Christ, the second Adam and the true firstborn of mankind. The expression "Second Adam is not



accurate, as there will be no third or fourth Adam, but we ought to say "Last Adam" as it was said by Paul the Apostle (1 Corinthians 15:45).

Cain also symbolizes the Jews who bore the birthright of knowledge of God. Still, they denied the faith in the Savior and stained their council by shedding the innocent's blood. Abel represented the Church of the New Testament that included all nations. She occupied the spiritual birthright and counted as the Church of the firstborn (Hebrews 12: 23) through her attachment or union with the Lord the Firstborn.

We note that Abel's work was caring for the sheep. This refers to the person who manages and leads his body's energies to appease God (sheep are offered as sacrifices with which they please God). As for Cain's work, it was cultivating the land. It may refer to who directed his care for the times. Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (Isaiah 22: 13 + 1 Corinthians 15:32). We notice that they did not eat meat in the beginning and before the Flood, but rather the fruits of the earth. Accordingly, we understand that Abel used to herd the sheep in order to offer burnt offerings as God had taught them and with the blood of the sacrifice, they drew near to God "and without shedding blood there is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). The word sacrifice (verse 3) comes from someone who approaches God through a sacrifice.

**(Verse 3-5): And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. 4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, 5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.**

#### **Why did God accept Abel's sacrifice and not Cain's?**

1. Perhaps the phrase "**And in the process of time**": means that Cain was slacking in his offering or maybe practicing without love. Perhaps, when Cain offered his sacrifice, he did not offer the most precious of what he had, but from the fruits of the earth. Unlike Abel who presented from the firstborn of his sheep and from their fat. He gave his best.

2. Most importantly, God taught Adam what the acceptable sacrifice is, the blood sacrifice that is a symbol of the sacrifice of Christ, by which he reconciled us with the Father. So why would he infringe and become unacceptable to God ?!

3. Cain's offering was from the fruits of the earth, and this is incapable of reconciling God with man. Here, we ask, how did Abel know the offering that pleases the Father? Through tradition. Adam knew the idea of sacrifice that covered him and taught his children.

4. Cain offered the fruits of the earth, and the earth is cursed. Generally, the earth refers to the body, the fruits of the flesh, and the flesh's works (see the parable of the sower), adultery, fornication ... (Galatians 5: 19-21). Here are Cain's fruits of, that is, the fruit of his sweat and labour in a cursed land. It symbolizes the deeds of self-righteousness, which are similar to fig leaf. In comparison, Abel offered a sacrifice to declare that he was a sinner and there is no way to reconcile with God except through the sacrifice of a third person. This shows Abel's faith. "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain"

(Hebrews 11: 4). Faith that Christ is the true sacrifice. All the works of the flesh without Christ are of no value and become unacceptable.

5. Cain's works were evil, and Abel's were righteous (Hebrews 11: 4, 1 John 3:12). Christ said Abel the Righteous.

6. How did Cain know that Abel's offering was accepted?

Often a fire descended from heaven, as it did (Leviticus 10: 2, 1 Kings 18: 38-40).

**and his countenance fell:** His face turned and frowned out of shame and anger. Sin makes the person lose his peace and breaks him to live in rage and distress. Also, his face falls to the dust instead of rising to heaven.

**(Verse 6): So the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?"**

God did not leave Cain in a fury and fail but came to him with love, conversing and talking to him, saying,

**Why are you angry** = Why did you get upset? that is, there is no reason for your anger other than your evil action. Then he begins to explain to him the first law of repentance, "Return to me, I will return to you" in the next verse.

**(Verse 7): If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."**

**If you do well, will you not be accepted?:** If you do well, will you not be accepted again. So why do you give in to rage?

**And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."**

If you do not return from your sinful way (i.e. your envy, anger, and hatred), then there is a greater sin, which is lying at the door (and "lying") is used with beasts, so sin is a beast. This is similar to your opponent, the devil ... as a lion). As a result of human weakness, lust and longing for sin occur, but man has ruled it. Man is the owner of sovereignty and will, but if he accepted sin, sin would prevail over him. If sin infiltrates a person, it enslaves him, and he bows before it in a spirit of slavery. He descends from bad to worse, as if he is dropping on a hill, and the worst sin is always lying at the door. Here envy was at the door, and when it entered Cain's heart, anger and hatred lay at the door, and when anger and hatred entered, murdering lay at the door. Therefore, God warned him not to give up. Otherwise, the worst would appear.

We notice that the word "sin" and the word "sacrifice of sin" is the same word. Thus the verse can be read: "sacrifice of sin lies at the door. And its desire for you (Abel desires for you or he longs for you), and you will rule over it (Cain as the first-born son was to bless the younger) = This is God's mercy; He is the

Savior of every sinner. He does not leave the sinner to despair; even if he has fallen in sin, there is a sin offering that he can benefit from.

And if Cain had accepted to offer repentance, his spiritual birthright and his ruling over his younger brother would have returned to him. Also, Abel would have longed for him as an older brother able to give him the blessing. God composed the verse in this way to prevent Cain from envying Abel. God declared here that his acceptance of Abel's sacrifice does not mean that Cain is deprived of his birthright. (This principle was applied by the Bible when it called on Christians to submit to their superiors.)

His saying **at the door** reminds us of what Jesus said: "I stand at the door and knock ..." and reminds us that the sinner used to offer a sacrifice for his sin at the door of the Tent of Meeting (Leviticus 4: 4). Christ stands at the door of my heart knocking and calling for repentance. I just have to accept this invitation and go to the Church (the Tabernacle of Meeting), confessing my sin, so that my sin will be transferred to Christ the true sacrifice.

**(Verse 8): Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.**

**Now Cain talked with Abel his brother:** Some Scripture copies add: "Let us go out into the field." Therefore Cain spoke to his brother with false love to go out with him to the field as they used to every day, same as what Judas did with Christ, but this time Cain had evil intention to kill him. This addition may have been added by one of the scribes for further explanation. We notice that Adam's sin, no matter how minor, has opened the door for evil sins (hatred and murder). This is a practical demonstration of the struggle between the serpent and the human, and between the soul and the body. We also understand the meaning of the Original Sin; we inherited internal rebellion against the commandments of God, in other words we began to search and implement what we want, not caring about what God wants. Accordingly, we lost the goal, and the reward, which is the "Glory of God" = "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Abel became the first martyr in this conflict, and Cain was the first persecutor of the people of God under the guidance of the serpent.

**( Verses 9-10): Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" 10 And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground.**

Cain thought that he had killed his brother and relaxed, but God's question to him was to reveal the wounds and to expose them to heal. Just as God asked Adam when he made a mistake, "Where are you," God's question to Cain was: **Where is Abel your brother?** We see God here pushing him to confess and repent. Unfortunately, Cain's response was **I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?**; a reply that is discourteous to God and untruthful at the same time. Sins escalate from envy to anger to murder to a lie

to God to arrogance and recklessness in responding to God. We find God here confirming to Cain that he is the God of Abel, who will not forget him.

**The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground:** Cain hid his brother's body, but he could not silence the voice of the soul crying out to God, as the blood refers to the soul, being a sign of life. It is comforting that the first man who died went to heaven because he was a saint and righteous. God keeps for Himself the firstborn, and Abel's death was the opening of the other world for those who die. We see that the cries of every martyr of truth remain echoing beyond the limits of space and time (Revelation 6: 10), and those cries require revenge. However, Abel was a symbol of Christ, as the blood of Christ shed by his Jewish brothers (symbolized by Cain) also cried out, but He asked for intercession, forgiveness and covering. Thus, it speaks better things than that of Abel. (Hebrews 12: 24).

**(Verses 11-12): So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth."**

**you are cursed from the earth:** It is interpreted in what follows, When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. Man in his low state as a sinner can only understand materialities. Here, God explains His anger to him in this way, meaning that he will lose financially. Symbolically, the earth refers to the body taken from it, which, by sin, has become a wilderness that does not provide spiritual fruit. Rather, the soul followed the body and lost its inner peace. **A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth:** The soul that submits to the earthly body which has become wilderness, lives in it without rest or peace, but in a state of wandering and fear. His saying **fugitive** may indicate that in his quest to find a fruitful land, he will not find and continue to search and not find. **Vagabond** may mean running away from your conscience and your fear.

Cain was the first person to be cursed, and his curse was from the earth. Man had authority over the earth, but after this curse, he no longer had this authority. Because he defiled the earth, it gave him little of its fruits. The curse came from the ground on which the blood of Abel had flowed. Since the blood of Abel symbolized the Blood of Christ, therefore, whoever benefits from the Blood of Christ will have a cause of blessing, salvation, and life "the aroma of life leading to life."

On the contrary, whoever insists on his sin will have the Blood of Christ as a cause of curse and death, "the aroma of death leading to death." That's why the Apostle Paul said, "Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10: 29). Because Cain was cursed, his sons were called sons of men (Genesis 6: 2). In contrast, Seth's sons were called "sons of God."

**(Verses 13-15): And Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear! 14 Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me." 15 And the Lord**

**said to him, "Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.**

There are several possibilities for Cain's response to God:

1. Perhaps this is the beginning of repentance, a feeling of wrongdoing, and an admission of guilt. That is why God protected him from death to give him a chance to repent again. This is God's long-suffering.
2. It is a state of unnecessary despair from the mercy of God. God is in dialogue with him to attract him to repentance.
3. It is a state of feeling of regret, not as a hatred for sin, but for fear of earthly punishment.
4. Whether this or that, we find God the Merciful is the One who begins the dialogue with Cain with love. Perhaps he will repent.

**My punishment is greater than I can bear:** Greater than could be forgiven (State of unnecessary despair)

**I shall be hidden from Your face:** He will hide from his shame, or in his ignorance; he thought that he could hide from God just as his father Adam did.

**anyone who finds me will kill me:** Adam may have fathered other children whom the book did not mention, and Cain thought one of them would kill him in revenge for Abel. Or he is scared of an animal would kill him, because he has lost his authority over creation. Or he is afraid of nothing, just an illusion (this is a case of psychological disease, that may be Schizophrenia), and this is what the Scripture described, "There is no peace," says the Lord, "for the wicked." It is because he came out of the protection of God He lived in terror; whoever splits away from God, the whole creation stands against him.

**Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold:** Perhaps Cain murdered without hearing from God that murdering is forbidden. But, now God is enacting legislation to prevent murdering. Whoever kills even for revenge, God will take complete revenge on him: **seven times**. The soul belongs to God, and He owns the revenge. Note that the Civil Code was not established yet. Nobody has the right to kill without God's permission.

**And the Lord set a mark on Cain:** So that everyone who finds him does not kill him, this is a sign of love from God to lead him to repentance. This sign may have been a sign in Cain so that no one would kill him. It is a sign that everyone sees so that he does not kill him to live under the curse and wrath of God, and he becomes a sign of God's wrath against sin. Also, it may be a sign (like the rainbow) that when Cain sees it, he trusts that God will protect him from any evil. Same as we take refuge in the sign of the cross as sinners, to find in this sign peace, security, reconciliation with God, and life.

**(Verse 16): Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.**

**Cain went out from the presence of the Lord:** He did not benefit from all the declarations of the love of God, but rather separated from Him and no longer talked to Him. He also separated from Adam and his altar, and no longer prayed with them. He no longer feared the Lord nor kept his commandments, laws and rituals of worship. Cain, the murderer, was united with the serpent's offspring, the symbol of the devil, who was murderer of people from the beginning (John 8:44). The exit of Cain from the presence of the Lord resembles the exit of the soul from the bosom of her Lord, the source of her peace.

**dwelt in the land of Nod:** Nod means either wandering or upset. This is the result of separation from God. And this is what happened with the Jews (their symbol is Cain) when they crucified Christ, their Lord; accordingly, they were lost or scattered all around.

**(Verse 17): And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son—Enoch.**

Cain's wife is his sister, and God allowed this in the beginning to establish offspring. Enoch is the third son from Adam from Cain's side, and has roughly the same name as Enoch, who was the seventh from Adam from Seth's generations. Cain's children and grandchildren increased significantly, so he built a city in the name of his son. It is normal for him to build a city, but for its inhabitants to live in fear of God, and God will guard it: Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the Lord guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain" (Psalm: 127: 1)

1. It's recorded that Cain built a city, while Abel, as a traveller, did not build anything. "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come." (Hebrews 13: 14)
2. He built this city to protect himself from the wandering that he brought to himself and to protect himself from the decisions and disciplines of God. He is still afraid that someone may kill him.

**(Verses 18-24): To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad begot Mehujael, and Mehujael begot Methushael, and Methushael begot Lamech. 19 Then Lamech took for himself two wives: the name of one was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah. 20 And Adah bore Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. 21 His brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and flute. 22 And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah. 23 Then Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; Wives of Lamech, listen to my speech! For I have killed a man for wounding me, Even a young man for hurting me. 24 If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold."**

|          |                      |
|----------|----------------------|
| Irada    | Means a city or colt |
| Enoch    | Means Education      |
| Mehujael | Struck by God        |
| Lamech   | Strong               |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Adah       | Beauty or adornment. In Hebrew indicates the lust of the eyes. In Assyrian means darkness       |
| Zilah      | Shadow in Hebrew and shadow of night in Assyrian  |
| Naamah     | Beauty  |
| Jabal      | Traveler wandering the desert   |
| Jubal      | Plays on musical instruments  |
| Tubal-Cain | Tubal means copper. But Tubal Cain = A copper maker (Cain here means a maker and not acquired). |

**There are some remarks on these verses:**

1. We see in these names and trades: "Beauty and strength, making iron and copper. This does not involve sin, but we never heard that a member of this family had a relationship with God. Therefore Beauty without having a relationship with God becomes lust, pleasure and worship of the world. Also, strength without God becomes pride, selfishness and ego. The world without God becomes corruption, and its end is nothingness and emptiness.

2. We notice that some of the names encompass the name of God. Still, it is outward religiosity (like the Jews). We never hear, for example, that this family had altars or worshiped, or any saints came out of it.

3. Names are related to people's trades, so names were most likely released after a person grew up and became a professional in a specific trade.

4. Lamech means strong (he feels strong, and people apprehend that he is strong). He had two wives in the sense of beauty or adornment, which indicates the eye's lust. He thinks that in his power, he can obtain everything his eyes desire. The second is related to the meaning of a shadow. When he is preoccupied with the beauty of the world and its power, he wasn't occupied with the truth (the heavenly matters) but with its shade (i.e. the earthly matters). Therefore, the Assyrian meanings of the names complement this meaning, that he lived in darkness and the shadows of the night.

5. Arad means (a city or colt). Whoever thinks that he is building a city to take shelter from the wrath of God, probably has an animal's dark thought. The result is that he gives birth to Mehujael, that is, struck by God.

6. Lamech, by having two wives, was like the heretics who divided the Church (He did not have one Eve).

7. Tubal Cain, a bronze maker, made swords and gave them to his Father Lamech. Lamech was proud of his strength and that with these weapons, he became invulnerable that no one could kill. Rather, he avenges whoever inflicts any insult on him; he avenges the minor harm he inflicts him with something great.

**Song or Poem to Lamech (Genesis 4: 23-24)**

This is the first piece of poetry in Hebrew literature called "The Song of the Sword to Lamech," in which we detect the sense of pride, self-esteem and confidence in human strength and violence. And what it means is that Lamech killed a man when he wounded him.

**For I have killed a man for wounding me, Even a young man for hurting me:** Means he killed a young man merely because he wounded him or hurt his pride. **Hurting** : Means breaking something or causing any harm to his dignity. It often refers to his pride and great power in front of them. He does this in his defence; that is why he is considered innocent if he kills a person. And if God avenges Cain seven times, he takes revenge for the Lamech seventy-seven. The number 77 is a complete number indicating severe revenge. Also, if someone wants to harm him, Lamech will take vengeance on him. This song represents the arrogance, vanity and self-esteem that a person has reached. This vanity is an abuse of God's patience.

There is another interpretation for this song. Lamech was very old and had poor eyesight and was led by his grandson. While hunting, his arrow struck Cain by mistake after his grandson indicated to him to hunt, and Lamech accidentally killed Cain. When the grandson screamed announcing that Cain had been killed, Lamech struck the boy and killed him (he killed a man (Cain) and the boy (the grandson)). And at that time he realized that he must and will take revenge on him (who kills Lamech) 77 times.

But the most realistic is that it is a hymn of arrogance and pride.

In these verses, we see a number of the sins of the Cain family:

1. Multiple marriages.
2. Showing off strength.
3. Weapons, worldly power and might.
4. Adoption of beauty, lust, and the joy of this world.
5. Complete parting from God and separation from Him.

**(Verses 25-26): And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, "For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed." 26 And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the Lord.**

God did not leave Eve disappointed because of her loss of both Cain and Abel. Instead, he gave her Seth = the meaning of his name "Compensate", as it is a compensation of Abel. It also means appointed: God appointed him as the head of a sacred generation. The status of Seth in place of Abel carries the meaning of the extension of the life of Abel, that is, the resurrection of Christ, about whom it was said "He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days," (Isaiah 53: 10). This we have seen in the prolonged days of King Hezekiah. Seth gave birth to his son Enosh, meaning a weak and fragile person, but God uses weak vessels to praise and glorify Him. **Then men began to call on the name of the Lord:** Therefore the children of Seth were called children of God. In exchange for the children of the people (children of Cain).



## Chapter 5

(Verses 1-32): This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created. 3 And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. 4 After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters. 5 So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died. 6 Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot Enosh. 7 After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters. 8 So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died. 9 Enosh lived ninety years, and begot Cainan. 10 After he begot Cainan, Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and had sons and daughters. 11 So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died. 12 Cainan lived seventy years, and begot Mahalalel. 13 After he begot Mahalalel, Cainan lived eight hundred and forty years, and had sons and daughters. 14 So all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died. 15 Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and begot Jared. 16 After he begot Jared, Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years, and had sons and daughters. 17 So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died. 18 Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and begot Enoch. 19 After he begot Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years, and had sons and daughters. 20 So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died. 21 Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. 22 After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. 23 So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. 24 And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him. 25 Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and begot Lamech. 26 After he begot Lamech, Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had sons and daughters. 27 So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died. 28 Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son. 29 And he called his name Noah, saying, "This one will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord has cursed." 30 After he begot Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years, and had sons and daughters. 31 So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died. 32 And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

| Name       | Age at Son's Birth | Age at Death | Birth year in World's History | Death Year in World's History |
|------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Adam       | 130                | 930          | 1                             | 930                           |
| Seth       | 105                | 912          | 130                           | 1042                          |
| Enosh      | 90                 | 905          | 235                           | 1140                          |
| Cainan     | 70                 | 910          | 325                           | 1235                          |
| Mahalalel  | 65                 | 895          | 395                           | 1290                          |
| Jared      | 162                | 962          | 460                           | 1422                          |
| Enoch      | 65                 | 365          | 622                           | 987                           |
| Methuselah | 187                | 969          | 687                           | 1656                          |

|        |     |     |      |      |
|--------|-----|-----|------|------|
| Lamech | 182 | 777 | 784  | 1651 |
| Noah   | 500 | 950 | 1056 | 2006 |

The years in this table are calculated based on the names given in the Bible. There is a possibility that there are other names that the book did not mention.

**Notes on this list:**

1. Some have claimed that some fossils prove the existence of human bones that are more than a million years old. At the same time, what is clear from this table is that the age of humans on Earth does not exceed 6000-7000 years. The response to this claim is by mathematical calculation; the current population cannot be more than the outcome of 6000 years on Earth. Assuming that each family gives birth to about three children, and deducting a high percentage of deaths due to natural mortality, natural disasters and wars .. Accordingly, if humankind started one million years ago by one person, then a double thousand of the land area would not be sufficient for their current census. The bones of mammals may have borne the shape of a human being though without the breath of life from God’s mouth.

2. The repeated tone in these verses is **"and he died"**, as it is a chapter that confirms the verse; "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12). The one exception is Enoch, who was written about him **"walked with God."**

**This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God:**

3. Verse 1: **the genealogy of Adam:** it is the word Toledot **in the likeness of God:** in eternity and authority .. etc. (**3 And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth**) Verse 3: **In his own likeness after his image:** that is, on the likeness of Adam and not in the likeness of God, the deprived of something cannot provide it. Therefore, through sin, Adam lost the image of God and all its benefits, and thus Seth was weak in the likeness of Adam. He was fallen, inheritor of sin and sentenced to death. Therefore, we find the repeated tone here like a refrain for a sad song, **"And He died"**, as a result of all the children are in the shape of their father, Adam.

4. There may have been other births that have not been mentioned in the book, so this table is an estimate and not definitive. But what it meant is to track the genealogy of Christ and not to calculate historical dates.

5. He did not mention Abel because he was martyred and became heavenly (his voice did not stop, "and through it he being dead still speaks.") (Hebrews 11: 4). He who is heavenly shall not be counted among the earthly men. Also, the list disregarded the descendants of Cain, for he was sentenced to death, and whoever is condemned to death is not counted among the people of God.

6. Replicating sentences with the same meaning for each person indicates God's pleasure in mentioning the list of His children in detail. Unlike Cain's descendants, whose list was incorporated in a few verses (Chapter 4).

7. Their ages are mentioned in detail. Longevity is a gift from God.

8. The longest-lived in the list is Methuselah, 969 years, but he also died. No matter how long he lived, his end is death.

9. Name's Meanings:

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Enosh      | Fragile and temporary, but the blessing and strength is from God  |
| Cainan     | When we realize our weakness and the fact that our strength is in God, God will acquire us. Cainan: acquiring |
| Mahalalel  | God is glory and enlightenment. God gives enlightenment to those who acquire Him.                             |
| Jared      | Descend. Humility is one of the characteristics of God's people.  |
| Enoch      | Teaching and refinement. One of the attributes of God's people is that they accept to learn from God          |
| Methuselah | Armed man. God's people must strive up to blood.  |
| Lamech     | Strong. But not by himself like Cain, rather he is strong in God.   |
| Noah       | Consolation and comfort of God.   |

There is an opinion that the meaning of Methuselah is died and exported. Meaning that death will be exported, as he died in the same year of the flood. This is why his father Enoch gave him this name as a prophecy that death would come to the whole world with his death.

#### 10. Enoch :

His name is very close to Enoch, the descendant of Cain, who built the first city on Earth and called it by his name "Enoch." But in Hebrew the two names differ. This city was destroyed in the flood. It is as though God, by taking Enoch (Seth's descendant), indicates that those who have no remaining city on Earth, but rather they have the divine attribute remain with Him. Also, Enoch, the seventh from Adam (From Seth's descendants) corresponds to Lamech, the seventh, from Adam (From Cain's descendants). Lamech married two wives whose names mean darkness and shadow of death. He showed aggression. Also, Lamech, the descendant of Seth, gave birth to Noah, a sign of spiritual peace and rest in the Lord. The Apostle Paul says about Enoch that he pleased God (Hebrews 11: 5). There is contemplation that the remaining descendants of Seth, who are saints, represent the current Church whose members are dying in the hope of the resurrection. As for Enoch, he represents the members of the Church that will not see death at the coming of our Lord Jesus, but rather rise with him on the clouds.

+ What the Bible mentioned about Enoch confirms that the secret of a person's happiness is not in how long he stays on earth, but rather in his transition to the presence of the Lord to live with him face to face.

Compare Enoch Cain, who established a city on earth, and Enoch Seth, who did not have anything on earth, but went to heaven. The earthly city of Enoch sank in the flood, and Enoch himself was perished.

Enoch represents man's restoration to his initial paradise state by transferring from the corrupted Earth to the Holiness of God. Enoch's transfer is a practical prophecy of eternal life. Enoch has a prophecy recorded by tradition and confirmed in the New Testament about the judgment of the wicked. (Jude 14, 15)

Enoch represents the heart that unites with God and becomes the object of His pleasure. Therefore, spiritual death cannot find a place in it.

**Walked with God:** He put God before him carrying out all his commandments and laws, feeling that God's eyes were upon him, so he refrained from doing evil. He searched for the Glory of God. He walked with God in his joys and sorrows. And because he walked with God and did not follow the world in his life, he did not resemble others in their death. The story of Enoch attracts souls to repentance.

## **11. Noah**

His father called him Noah, which means comfort and consolation because he was hoping that he would be the awaited Messiah. The name was a prophecy because Christ is a descendant of Noah, and in Christ, we will rest from all our labour on Earth, there in heaven. And after the flood, Noah became a sign of the world's coming to rest following the regeneration that took place with the flood.

These are the meanings of the names:

**Shem:** A name, fame and glory. He was Christ's grandfather. Therefore, the Bible mentioned his name first, and he received the spiritual firstborn.

**Ham:** Black, and he was the grandfather of the Africans.

**Japheth:** Widespread or expansive, and he was the grandfather of the Asians and Europeans.

## Chapter 6

The result of sin was the corruption of the human race. This was exhibited in the relationship between the sons of God with the daughters of men, which meant the relationship between the sons of Seth with the daughters of Cain. It is understood from this that corruption has raged on the Earth even among the children of God, until God declared His anger at corruption and stated that the punishment for sin is death. God sent the Flood, and the Flood was a symbol of:

**1. Baptism:** God could have sent an angel to kill the sinners, same as when He sent an angel to the Assyrian army and killed 185,000 in one night, or as an angel killed the firstborn of Egypt. But the Flood was a sign of the renewal by Baptism. Some died in the Flood, and others were saved in the ark. This was a symbol because there is burial and resurrection with Christ in Baptism (Romans 6: 4 + 1 Peter 3: 20, 21).

**2. The Church:** He who is inside the Church is saved. That is why we see Churches built in the form of an ark in the architectural rite. Also, note that as currents and waves surrounded the ark, so do trials and sufferings surround the Church; nevertheless, the Church will not sink like the ark, for the gates of Hades will not prevail against it (Matthew 16: 18). It's also noticed that the ark included all the races, a symbol of the Church that included Jews and nations from all over the world. (Shem, Ham, and Japheth are the fathers of all the races on Earth.)

**3. Christ:** The Church is the body of Christ. Those who are in Christ will be saved and will dwell in peace. Note that Christ endured judgment, storms, and the depths of the waters of death, for us to be saved, on the condition that we abide in him (Psalm 42: 7 + 69: 2 + John 15: 4). When we are in Christ, we are in peace, no matter how intense the storms are. This is what happened with Jonah (a symbol of the death of Christ), who was surrounded by waves in the depths (Jonah 3: 2-5). Wood generally symbolizes the cross, and thus the wood of the ark is a symbol of the Cross of Christ. The wood was of Gopher, and some said that the word Gopher is of the same origin as the word atonement, so by the cross of Christ, atonement and life were given to us. Also, the dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, just as the dove always returns to its home, so the Holy Spirit restores God's children to abide in Christ after they are separated from Him by sin. As for the raven that went to the carcass and did not return to the ark, symbolizes the sinner who abandons Christ and the Church and goes where sin and impurity. The ark had a door through which everyone who survived the Flood entered, and Christ is the door. The ark had a window (the used word is a small and narrow window), and we now in the flesh live in Christ and have a window looking from it to Heaven. Noah used to watch Heaven and pray through the window. We also, during our prayers, the Holy Spirit shows us part of the Glories of Heaven, so we rejoice in it, and our longing increases (Ezekiel 40: 16 + Song of Solomon 2: 9 + 1 Corinthians 2: 10).

We notice that with the Flood, the justice of God manifested and declared that death was the punishment for sin. But God's mercy showed in those who were saved. And now God is giving us an opportunity to show His mercy.

We also notice that God was concerned with their food and drink, as He prepared everything and always remember all our needs.

The rainbow appeared as a sign of life, and the Cross became a sign of life appearing in the clouds and darkness of this world. There is no more substantial proof than the Cross that God wants life for humans.

Other nations have passed on the story of the Flood. We find the Flood story in most ancient civilizations, but it is distorted and attributed by pagan nations to their gods.

The flood story indicates that God, in His mercies, allows some painful matters but brings out life from them, brings out sweetness from the strong, from the Flood renewed life, and from the cross life for all mankind. Also, He brings from the death of the body, a salvation from the old body in preparation for the glorious body.

(Verse 1): **Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them,**

**multiply:** These are the fruits of the blessing to Adam and Eve in (Genesis 1: 28: 1).

(Verse 2): **that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.**

**the sons of God:** In Hebrew, "the children of the gods," and in the Septuagint, "the angels" or Angelos, which does not mean the heavenly angels, as these do not marry (Matthew 22:30). But the word angels means messengers, and an angel is a messenger. God created Adam and his children as messengers to bear witness to him on earth. He created them for good deeds and to be His ambassadors. These are definitely the children of Seth, who was not cursed but rather blessed in the person of his father whom God blessed.

God created man to glorify him "Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him" (Isaiah 43: 7). Also, the Lord Jesus asked for this: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5: 6)

**What does it mean that man is created to glorify God by his works?** The sun shines around us because there is a layer of air surrounding the earth. The air particles reflect the sunlight; therefore, the light appears. Accordingly, if we go outside the atmosphere, we find a state of complete darkness, and we see the sun as a red disk, but there is a state of total darkness as there is no air on which the sun's light reflects, and its light appears. Likewise, God created people to declare the greatness of God's creation and to proclaim His glory and His greatness. And note the words of the Psalm, "Praise God in His

sanctuary" (Psalm 150: 1), and we sing it in our translation in the Church, "Praise God in all His saints." This means that when we see God's work that turns ordinary human beings into shining saints (Moses the Black), we praise God for His great work in them. Note that Christianity had spread during the days of martyrdom, as non-believers entered the faith and were martyred, seeing that Christians confessed their love for God and went to martyrdom with joy.

**the daughters of men:** Those are Cain's daughters. The children of Cain are no longer children of God after God said to Cain, "So now you are cursed" (Genesis 4: 11). As for the descendants of Seth, they are the offspring of Adam, whom God blessed. Therefore the descendants of Adam, and among them the descendants of Seth, are the blessed children of God. The blessing of God to Adam included the children of Adam. As for the curse of Cain, it included the children of Cain, and they became children of men.

**saw:** Instead of being occupied with serving God, God's sons, or His messengers and servants, they instead were drawn to a preoccupation with physical beauty. The blessed righteous people mingled with the cursed wicked, and they became distraught and corrupted. Thus, became the need for a general renewal (the Flood).

**of all whom they chose:** They observed how to satisfy their lusts without considering the spirituality of the women. They became under one yoke with the unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6: 14,15), and the citizens of the heavenly city became corrupted.

(Verse 3): **And the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."**

**shall not strive:** It means struggle or endeavour, and in Hebrew, the word may mean prevail/ work with/ dwell/ manage.

Meaning of the Holy Spirit strives and struggles within man: The Holy Spirit convicts (persuades / disciplines / condemns) (John 16: 8), and the Holy Spirit also helps (Romans 8:26). All this work is to help a person attain salvation. This work is internal to those who still have a sense of the voice of the Holy Spirit. But there are others whose hearts have hardened, and they no longer hear His voice nor even want His help. These have become complete darkness; they do not listen to the voice of the Spirit inside them. All their devices that should receive the signals and the voice of the Holy Spirit are disrupted. So why would the Holy Spirit remain dwelling in them ?! These are ones of whom the Lord Christ said: "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him" (John 14: 17). What does God do with these people? Nothing other than throwing fear within them, as God did in the flood, and in Sodom and Gomorrah, perhaps they would turn back and repent.

In the New Testament, after the descending of the Holy Spirit upon us in the Sacrament of Confirmation following Baptism, he who resists and grieves the work of the Holy Spirit will become unworthy of the work of the Holy Spirit in him, and the Holy Spirit will be removed from him. Therefore we pray with David, "do not take Your Holy Spirit from me." Hence when man deviated in his way, God forbade him

from the dwelling of the Holy Spirit, until Christ came and completed the salvation and sent us the Holy Spirit to dwell in us again. This is the interpretation of the "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit," that when a person attains this state, he will no longer repent since the Holy Spirit is removed from him. God deprived those people of the Holy Spirit because of their corruption and their provocation to Him with these marriages and doing evil. The Holy Spirit was still working with them through Noah's preaching, for example (2 Peter 2: 5). And when they have resisted and opposed the Spirit, the Spirit did not continue His work, but God leaves this resisting man (Hosea 4: 17). This is what happened with Saul the king (1 Sam 16: 14). Note that whoever the Holy Spirit does not work in him, comes to rapid destruction. The word **My Spirit** may mean the work of the Holy Spirit who gives life to a person's soul, which is the breath of life from God. The meaning of God's rule to shorten people's life because the Spirit works in man for a certain period that God determines.

**forever:** The duration of the Spirit's presence and its work in man shortens. The meaning is that the Holy Spirit no longer dwells in man always to support and lead him. The Holy Spirit dwelt in people before sin and led them, but they rejected Him. This decision by God was because "there is no communion has light with darkness." Also, we saw in (Genesis 2: 7) that the Holy Spirit is the One who gives life to man, and humans lived hundreds of years. God decided that the breath of the Holy Spirit that gives life to man should not last more than 120 years until he restrains the sins and evil of people.

**forever:** That is the duration of the presence and work of the Spirit in man.

**for he is indeed flesh:**

In the Septuagint "he is flesh". With his lustful, bodily behaviour has become a body without a soul. He has become animal-like, so he should not live for long.

**one hundred and twenty years:** Justice calls the "you shall surely die," and mercy calls, "let it alone this year also." Therefore, the 120 years is the opportunity that God gives the sinner to repent, and the entire period of his life has become a maximum of 120 years. Some said that it is the time that God gave the world in the days of Noah to offer repentance, as Noah was building the ark for 120 years before them and was preaching that the Flood would destroy the world because of sin.

**How do we calculate the period of building the ark?** From (Genesis 5: 32), Noah was 500 years old, and from (Genesis 7: 6) his age was 600 at the time of the Flood, and thus the period of building the ark would be 100 years. It was said that it is 120 years on the basis that the maximum period God gives as a lifetime for a person is 120 years. At the same time, it is considered an opportunity for warning and repentance, so building the ark caught the attention of these sinners, and they asked Noah, and Noah was warning them. Thus, the period of building the ark ranges from 100 to 120 years.

(Verse 4): **There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.**



**giants:** In Hebrew origin (the fallen ones), they were children of God and became children of people, and in the Septuagint translates as "those born from the earth." The natural result of lustful marriage is children becoming tyrants. If the father does not choose according to spiritualities, but according to his desires, children will imitate the worst individual and be lovers of temporal dignity.

**renown:** That is, they have a reputation and fame since ancient generations.

**who were of old:** Pride is an ancient sin. An example of these mighty men is Lamech Cain. In this verse, there is a summary of the sins that caused the Flood: 1) The lust that led to the perversion and corruption of the children of God. 2) Worshiping power and vainglory, searching for a worldly reputation, and forgetting about eternal life.

(Verse 5): **Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**

**continually:** In Hebrew origin, every day, and always without conscience. God does not tolerate this evil.

(Verse 6): **And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.**

The terms **the Lord was sorry** and **He was grieved in His heart:** These are expressions directed to humans to understand. But God is definitely not emotional, so He regrets his making, for He neither regrets nor changes (1 Samuel 15: 29, Numbers 23: 19 + James 1: 17 + Malachi 3: 6). God's grief and sorrow are a judgment where punishment befalls on sin.

(Verse 7): **So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."**

This was expected after the Holy Spirit was grieved by people's insistence on sin (verse 3)

**I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth:** As a writer erases a few lines of writing when he finds an error that distorts the page

**both man and beast:** These were created for the sake of man, so they will die with him

**for I am sorry that I have made them:** God's heart does not change towards us, but that happens through our change and our separation from Him by accepting the corruption that is opposed to God. The reverse of this verse and with the same concept (Zechariah 1: 3): "Return to me ... I will return to you" (1 John 1: 9).

( Verses 8-9): **But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah Pleases God 9 This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.**

God does not neglect a single person who walks in righteousness amid an evil generation. Noah's righteousness was due to his faith (Hebrews 11: 7), and this was evident in that he believed the words of God and built the ark.

**in his generations:** This reveals that man's righteousness and perfection are not perfect. Rather, Noah was righteous in comparison to the corruption of his generation.

(Verse 10): **And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.**

(Verses 11-12): **The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.**

The corruption of the Earth is due to the corruption of man, who distorted the irrational creatures. In these verses, the word "earth" appeared in Hebrew as "Ard," while before that, it was mentioned "Adama." This may indicate that the land that the Flood covered was not the whole globe but the land in which man lived up to this date and corrupted it with his sin.

**The earth also was corrupt :** It does not mean corruption of the material of the earth, but the corruption of the people who live on it.

(Verse 13): **And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.**

**And God said to Noah:** This phrase reveals God's friendship and love for the righteous man, for he reveals to him His wisdom and His secrets (Psalm 25: 14 + Genesis 18: 17). And the meaning of the verse, I did not want to destroy people, but they made the judgment that brings their end, "I brought upon myself the sentence of death."

(Verse 14): **Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch.**

**Make yourself an ark:**

The ark is a symbol of the Cross that bore Christ for us. He carried in Him the Church, which is his sacred body. The old world (the old man) needed to perish in the waters of Baptism for the new world and the

new man to rise, who will be in the image of his Creator, carrying the newness of life or the resurrected life in Christ Jesus. The Hebrew word used for the ark was a coffin or a chest, so it is a ship like a coffin made to float and not to move in the water.

**of gopherwood:** Perhaps it is Cypress or Eucalyptus, both of which do not tick.

**cover it inside and outside with pitch:**

Pitch abounds in Assyria (Iraq), where the ark was built. The coating of the ark with pitch symbolizes its protection from the outer environment (protecting the Church from the currents and attacks of the world). Note that God could have easily hidden Noah and his family from the place of the Flood, but God let him work and strive to build the ark and paint it with pitch. However, God shut the door on him with his grace (Genesis 7: 16, the Lord shut him in). Furthermore, let us note that the ark was like a submarine in the midst of these waters. It was impossible with these days' technology that Noah's ark could bear the water unless God had shut him in it with His Hand to complete the shortage of man's struggle with his grace. This is what the Bible revealed in (Gen 7:16).

(Verse 15): **And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.**

The dimensions of the ark are 300 x 50 x 30 cubits (length x width x height).

300 = 3 x 100: This resembles the flock of Christ (100) who believe in the Trinity (3), and rose from the death of sin with Christ. Number 3 refers to the resurrection, as Christ rose from the dead on the third day.

50 = The Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost. And in the jubilee (every 50 years), slaves are set free. They were freed from the bondage of sin.

30 = It is the age at which Joseph stood before Pharaoh and Jesus began serving. It is the age of maturity when priests begin their priestly service.

Therefore the dimensions of the ark refer to the Church, the flock of Christ who believes in the Trinity, who was raised with Christ on the third day (from the death of sin), and in whom the Holy Spirit dwells. It is a church with a priestly service, and her people offer sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving. She was freed from the slavery of Satan and also a Church of mature people.

(Verse 16): **You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks.**

**window for the ark:** Through which we view the heavenly matters as far as our physical capabilities allow. **the door of the ark in its side:** The door refers to Christ, "I AM the door." And the fact that the

door is in the ark, and the ark refers to Christ; therefore, this refers to the wound on Christ's side with the spear. The sacraments by which the believer joins the Church membership overflow from His side. And through Him, those who come can enter. From the wound on the side of Christ came blood and water (1 John 5: 8).

Linguistically, a window is a gap in the wall through which light and air enter.

**You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks:** When the believer enters the body of Christ as a beginner, he is in lower decks and gradually ascends until he reaches the highest level. Therefore this refers to three degrees of spiritual growth. Same as the lampstand in the Tabernacle had three steps (almond blossoms, ornamental knobs, and flowers), and the temple that Ezekiel saw was made of three levels. All of this refers to the same concept. Noah probably lived in the upper level. Noah, a word that means rest and comfort. Whenever we ascend to the heavenly places that Christ brought to us on Earth, we draw closer to comfort and rest (Matthew 11: 28). [He bowed the heavens also, and came down (Psalm 18: 9)].

(Verses 17-22): **And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. 18 But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19 And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. 20 Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive. 21 And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather it to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them." 22 Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.**

Saint Peter noticed that the number of those who were saved in the ark was eight. And the number 8 refers to eternal life, so the days of this world are seven. Therefore the task of the flood was the renewal of the world, in the sense of establishing a church that has a heavenly nature while enjoying the resurrected life in Christ Jesus (who rose on Sunday at the beginning of the new week) (see 1 Peter 3: 20). Also, note that Saint Peter focuses on this concept (2 Peter 2: 5). Noah was also the eighth, which means that he entered the ark after his family entered.

But by interpreting the meaning of the numbers, Noah symbolizes Jesus Christ (Jesus = 888), and in Jesus, we obtain salvation and eternal life after the universal resurrection. As Noah preached to those who were in prison (1 Peter 3: 19,20) Christ came and preached in the world. Peter's stating "prison" indicates that the sinful world was sentenced to death as if they were imprisoned in prison awaiting death (execution). Still, Noah was preaching to them; God gave them 120 years of opportunity, and whoever feels remorse in his heart and repents escapes from the death sentence, same as what Christ did. Noah was preaching in the Spirit of Christ. He resembled Christ, who preached to save people from the flood of God's wrath. He was also similar to Christ in starting a new life.

Let us note that the same water that destroyed the wicked was the same that raised the ark. For all the sufferings that God allows for humanity, are a cause for our benefit. It is for believers an aroma of life leading to life, and for sinners, it is an aroma of death leading to death.

**How did the sinners view Noah?** Certainly, they mocked him when he entered the ark and thought that he condemned himself to death.

**How did Noah view sinners?** He saw and believed that they were surely going to die because of their sins. For he believed the words of God concerning the coming flood, which would end the life of all human beings outside the ark.

- Therefore, the ark is a practical application of the verse; "the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."
- The ark, which is like a prison or coffin, becomes a paradise because of God's presence in it (the Three Sainly Youth walking with similar to the Son of the God).

**Our status today in light of the story of the flood:**

1 . Whoever believes in the words of God that this world will end and there will be the judgment of sinners, he will allow himself to enter the ark, that is, he will abide in Christ inside the Church (the body of Christ), and carry out his commandments, crucifying himself for the sins of this world. Such man will be in comfort and peace amid the tribulations of this world (Noah means rest and comfort).

2. Whoever does not want to believe that this world will end, followed by a judgment for sinners, will give himself the freedom to continue in his sins without fear. Such will be destroyed by the flood, i.e. the wrath of God, on Judgment Day.

## Chapter 7

(Verse 1): **Then the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.**

**Then the Lord said:** God is YHWH. And notice His work in this verse is an act of love and care, so the Holy Spirit uses the word Lord, but when He spoke about the destroying flood, He uses the word "God".

**Come into:** Equal to "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden" ... and similar to "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink."

**and all your household:** Similar to "For the promise is to you and to your children." What is important is that everyone is in Christ, the world is crucified to them, and they are crucified to the world. If someone loved the world afterwards, he would perish.

**righteous:** How beautiful it is for God to testify to his children. God not only testifies but also arranges everything for his children. God is concerned with defining the type of wood and the ark's dimensions, coating it with pitch and providing food for His children .... Some believe that Noah continued warning the wicked for 120 years, as he was building the ark before their eyes to confirm the sincerity of God's warnings. Those who assume this rely on the verse. (Genesis 6: 3) See also the interpretation of verse 6. But people certainly ridiculed Noah as he built an ark to escape from the delusion as they had imagined.

(Verse 2): **You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female;**

**clean animal:** Note that the Law of Moses was not there yet to specify pure and impure animals. Therefore, this verse proves that the traditions that our church practices are correct. Adam received this law verbally from God and handed it over to his children until it reached Noah. We noticed that he was ordered to take seven of the pure animals because he would eat from them and also offer sacrifices.

(Verse 3): **also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth.**

**all the earth:** Some scholars believed that an ark of this size could not carry all the animals and birds of the world. And they state that the Flood was local, as it wiped out the entire human race except for Noah and his family and all the animals of the region in which there were humans. As for the distant continents, animal life continued and was not affected. They confirm this by what was written about the authority of Joseph that all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain (Genesis 41: 57), which meant the countries around Egypt. And in (Luke 1: 2), all the world should be registered, which meant all the countries subject to Roman Empire. This is a correct opinion. The correctness of this opinion is confirmed by the saying of Saint Peter the Apostle, "and did not spare the ancient world, but saved

Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;" (2 Pet 2: 5). If the Flood was only upon the world of the ungodly, then what is the benefit of drowning the whole world? The Flood was a tool of punishment and not a change to a previous divine decision to set an end to the sea that does not go beyond, "When I fixed My limit for it, ... When I said, 'This far you may come, but no farther'" (Job 38: 10-11). We note that (verse 23) of this chapter, "So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. ..." The word "ground" here came in the Hebrew meaning of agricultural land. There is no cultivated land except where there is someone to cultivate it. Thus the word came in (Genesis 6: 7 + 8: 8,13).

At the time of the flood, human life was confined around the lands of Iraq, where human life arose around the rivers in Eden, which are the Euphrates, Hiddekel, Pishon and Gihon. Man did not extend habitation to all parts of the world until the confusion of languages while building the Tower of Babel.

(Verse 4): **For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made."**

**seven more days:** This is the period that Noah took to enter the animals into the ark

**forty days:** It is the same period that Christ, Moses, and Elijah fasted. This period may indicate that it is a period of contempt and humiliation before God to provide His goodness. Also, it was the period of warning for Nineveh, and the period of 120 years is 3 x 40 years. It is a period of warning of repentance so that the Flood will not destroy them. While the people of Nineveh took advantage of the opportunity for forty days and repented, the people failed in the days of Noah and perished. It is a period or an opportunity that God gives, followed by either goodness or punishment. Therefore, it refers to the period of our life on Earth, and we have to hide in the ark to survive.

(Verse 5): **And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him.**

(Verse 6): **Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth.**

Compare with the verse (Genesis 5: 32). It was written that Noah was 500 years old, and in this verse, it is written that he was 600 years old when he entered the ark. Therefore, the construction period of the ark ranges between 100-120 years.

(Verse 7-8): **So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. 8 Of clean animals, of animals that are unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth,**

(Verse 9): **two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah.**

Noah moved towards the ark and took seven days to symbolize the church that opens her doors of hope to every person every day of the week. Note that Noah and his children had only one wife.

(Verse 10): **And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth.**

Scientifically the Flood is explained as the subsidence of the earth's crust to below sea level. Then, in a reverse movement, the land rises, and the waters recede and flee to the seas. Some said that the earth opened and groundwater had come out of it. The occurrence of the Flood was proven geologically, as layers of Alluvium silt were found and above which, there were layers of stones. They estimated the date of flood to be around 3200-3400 BC, which is the same period specified according to the Hebrew calendar.

(Verse 11): **In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.**

**all the fountains of the great deep were broken up:** Therefore the flood was not the result of rain only, but the earth became like a group of fountains and springs pouring out water without ceasing.

( Verses 12-15): **And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights. 13 On the very same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark— 14 they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every sort. 15 And they went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which is the breath of life.**

(Verse 16): **So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in.**

**and the Lord shut him in:** On the one hand, to protect them from the flood. On the other hand, they are like the virgins, as the wise ones entered and the door was closed. Now God has shut the door, and even



if one of the wicked wanted to enter, God who shut down would prevent him from entering. He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens". And after the time of our life is over, the door is shut. (Revelation 3: 7). God opened the door of paradise for us with the key of His Cross so we could enter with Him and in Him and enjoy the fellowship of His glories. He would eternally close us with Him so that the evil enemy would not escape to us. This phrase is an example of our Church's faith in the subject of struggling and grace. Was technology available in the days of Noah to allow the construction of an ark that resists water from above and below as if it were a submarine? God left Noah to strive to build as much as possible, which is Striving (this is equal to five loaves of bread and two fish). Then the Lord shut him in with his grace (this is equal to feeding thousands).

(Verses 17-24): **Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. 18 The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, and the ark moved about on the surface of the waters. 19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. 20 The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. 21 And all flesh died that moved on [c]the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. 22 All in whose nostrils was the breath [d]of the spirit of life, all that was on the dry land, died. 23 So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. 24 And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.**

## Chapter 8

(Verse 1): **Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided.**

### **Then God remembered:**

This means that God decided to take Noah out of the ark and overflow His mercies upon him; thus, the church prays "remember O Lord ... " .. and the people respond, "Lord, have mercy." The intent is: We do not deserve, but, O Lord, bestow your mercy on us, for we are confident that this is your will towards your children. God does not forget in the first place to remember, but the meaning is that God saw that this is the appropriate time (the fullness of time, according to the expression of Paul the Apostle) to make a decision. The decision here was Noah leaving the ark.

### **And God made a wind to pass over the earth:**

As He caused a wind to split the sea in the days of Moses (Exodus 14: 21)

The words "wind" and "spirit" are the same in Hebrew. These waters where people drowned and died. God sent the wind to calm the waters and to bring those in the ark to life. As if causing them to be born again from the water surrounding the ark, and from the wind sent by the Lord. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the Baptism within. When we go inside the water, we join Christ in His death. This is the work of the Holy Spirit of God through Baptism. By going in the water, we join Christ in his death. Then, when we came out of the water, we share with Christ His life. He is the one who renews our creation, convicts us and helps us. He turns us away from the death of sin. In the Flood situation, He emerged Noah from the ark with a new life of water and Spirit. Thus Baptism gives us to be born as a new creation of water and Spirit.

(Verse 2): **The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.**

This is the work of the Spirit that removes the death penalty from us.

(Verse 3): **And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased.**

**the waters receded:** This may confirm the theory that the earth descended, so the seawater overflowed it, then the earth returned and ascended to its previous level, and then the water returned.

(Verse 4): **Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.**

### **the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat:**

Note that the beginning of the new life was on a mountain, in other words, a higher heavenly life, and this is what Baptism gives. The word Ararat means a high place, and this mountain is in Armenia.

(Verse 5): **And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.**

**In the tenth month, on the first day of the month:** Better translated: "And on the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains appeared."

The number 10 is repeated twice in this verse, in conjunction with the appearance of the tops of the mountains. The number 10 refers to the commandments that, if followed, the tops of the mountains of virtues would appear in our lives, but rather Christ himself would manifest in us.

(Verses 6-12): **So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. 7 Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth. 8 He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground. 9 But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself. 10 And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. 11 Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. 12 So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.**

**The ark** refers to the Church where there are saints (the dove) and sinners (the raven), and the raven resembles sin, as it sets off to where the stinking carcass is and then returns back to the ark standing outside of it. **which kept going to and fro:** The raven did not enter the ark but kept going to and fro until **the waters had receded from the face of the ground.** Noah did not reach out to bring the raven in as he did with the dove. As for the dove that proclaims peace (the olive branch), it returned and was brought in by Noah. The dove does not eat the stinking carcass but rather eats the plants. Therefore, it has returned, as there is no place for the dove in the carcass, but rather it returns to announce peace.

In Baptism, the devil (symbolized by the raven) is expelled and the Holy Spirit declares peace. Notice that the dove has returned with an olive branch, where we get olive oil from it, and this refers to the confirmation oil with which the Holy Spirit dwells in the Baptized. Also, the dove returned with fruit, same as the Spirit has fruit (Galatians 5: 22). The dove may refer to the soul of the believer who seeks Christ, so the Bible calls it "my dove" (Song of Solomon 2: 14). This soul of the believer does not find its place amid the carcass like ravens but returns to Noah (who symbolizes Christ) to find rest in his hands.

As we know, the dove always returns to its home, so the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove on the day of Christ's Baptism, for this is the work of the Spirit in us (we are the body of Christ), to always bring us back to Christ to abide in Him. Note that when the dove came back, he extended his hand to let her in.

The dove came out of the ark three times:

**The First time: the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot.** This refers to the soul that is kindled by the Holy Spirit and cannot live amid carcasses. She is attracted and drawn in her exile towards the ark where she finds the hand of Christ stretched out to carry her to His Bosom = (The Spirit brings us back to Christ and Christ accepts us).

**The second time:** She returned to announce peace and the emergence of a new life. Therefore, the olive branch refers to the peace that occurred between God and people. This is because the olive tree is always green, representing the man who is filled with lasting peace despite the world's storms. Also, oil floats on the water's surface, representing the currents of the temptations of this world. The believer floats above these trials and temptations of the world.

**The third time:** It went out and **did not return again to him anymore**, indicating the start of the entire procession to the new land. This state marks the departure of the soul into eternity after a life filled with peace and fruits.

**Reflection: These stages represent the stages of growth of the sinner:**

\* (The hesitant raven) = The sinful man, in the beginning, hesitates between the world and the Church. He does not settle in the Church as one of God's people, but he lives in appearances.

\* (The returning dove) = This person began to settle inside the Church.

\* (The dove comes with an olive branch) = This person has begun to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

\* (The dove comes out and does not return) = After being full, this person goes out to serve for his love of Christ.

**Question: Why didn't the raven enter the ark despite the open door in front of him?**

The raven was pleased with the presence of carcasses. But, at the same time, the water filled the earth, so he could not find a place for his foot. That's why he had to return to the ark. At the same time, he does not want to be locked inside the ark; for there is a carcass outside that he loves. He used to go to the carcass and return to the ark without entering, returning only to find a place to stand. When he finally found a stable place for his feet outside, he did not return. Because this is what he wants - the carcass. Therefore, Noah did not extend his hand to him as he did with the dove, same as Christ does not force anyone to accept Him and live with Him in His Church.

(Verse 13): **And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and indeed the surface of the ground was dry.**

We see Noah starting his new life in his seventh century after he had completed six centuries (600 years). We notice that Adam, the head of the first creation, began his life on earth after the fall on the seventh day of creation (the seventh day began with the fall of Adam and will end with the second coming). God created the world in 6 days, followed by the seventh day when God rested on the seventh day. The meaning is that God rested when He completed the redemption in the middle of the seventh day. Just as the first creation began to live on the earth on the seventh day, so the new creation began to live on the new earth in the seventh century of Noah's life.

**And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year:** There was a new life, and the new head of this life was Noah. Therefore, the calendar became based on the age of Noah as the head of the new creation. Note what was written, "And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth. In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened" (Genesis 7: 10-11). The calendar began with the birth of Noah, who is the new head of the new creation. Same as the Lord asked the people of Israel to have Passover on the first month of the year, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Exodus 12: 2). So this has become the civil year for the Jews, and there is also a religious year whose first month is the month in which they offer the Passover. If we understand that the Passover symbolizes the cross by which salvation has become, then we have become a new creation. We perceive that it is a message to us, the people of Christ, that after the redemption of Christ, we began a new life in which the past died, and we should be "behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17).

This is what happened with Christ, the Head of the New Creation, as there became the Gregorian calendar that begins with the year in which Christ was born.

**and Noah removed the covering of the ark:** As the head of the new creation, Noah removed the covering to see the new earth where the new creation would live. The new earth that God renewed and purified with His mercy so that the new creation (Noah and his children) may live in it, which God also had mercy on and saved and preserved through the ark. In Christ, the cover was removed, and we could see the mystery of the beautiful divine love that appeared in the incarnation and salvation of Christ. In the Second Coming, the Lord will remove all the cover to meet with him face-to-face, as St. Paul the Apostle said, "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known." (1 Corinthians 13: 12).

(Verses 14-19): **And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried. 15 Then God spoke to Noah, saying, 16 "Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. 17 Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you: birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the**

**earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” 18 So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. 19 Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, and whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark. God’s Covenant with Creation**

(Verse 20): **Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.**

Just as Adam's life on earth began with a sacrifice, so does the new life of Noah began with a sacrifice. The first thing Noah did after going out to the flood-washed land was to set up an altar. As if the Church cannot offer the Lord's sacrifice (the Eucharist) except after enjoying the Baptism. That is also why the Bible announced the building of an altar to the Lord for the first time.

(Verse 21): **And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in His heart, “I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.**

**the Lord smelled a soothing aroma:** God saw these sacrifices as a symbol of His Son, the real sacrifice with which our new life began with God. Therefore, what Noah did was a symbol of the sacrificial work of Christ for his Church, and Noah's Altar became a symbol of the cross, which became a reason to remove the curse from the earth. Therefore, we hear here that God smelled a soothing aroma.

**I will never again curse the ground:** I will not kill every living thing as before. This does not prevent God from striking with limited strikes for the sake of discipline, but God will not return to a general strike that includes the whole earth. **The Lord said in His heart:** A metaphor for God's intention and determination to do something. The decision of God not to curse the earth again came after the sacrifice. The altar was mentioned in the previous verse. This indicates that the cross symbolized by the altar carried the curse on our behalf (refer to the article (The cross is a curse that turns into a blessing) at the end of the interpretation of the third chapter of the Galatians).

**the Lord smelled a soothing aroma:** When God created man, He wanted to exchange love with him. God is love, and God created man in his image, that is, full of love. The sign of God's love for mankind, revealed in the paradise that God created for him, which is full of beauty and joy. It was assumed that the sign of a man's love for God was obedience. Man obeys God by trusting God's love for him.

And when Adam transgressed the commandment and doubted the love of God, God's heart was sad for two reasons:

\* The death of his beloved man.

\* Adam's disobedience to him was evidence of a lack of trust in God's love of God.

Christ came to fix both obstacles:

\* The salvation is offered, and man lives (Romans 5: 10).

\* Obedience was presented to God the Father by the head of the Church's Body: "obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2: 8).

At the end of days, when the body of Christ is completed by the entrance of the last ones of the saved, Christ, the Church's head, will offer submission to the Father. "Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." (1 Corinthians 15:28).

The saying **the Lord smelled a soothing aroma** means that God rejoiced in the obedience of Christ and His acceptance of the cross. And review (Leviticus 1) to see that the sacrifice of the burnt offering symbolized the obedience of Christ. Burnt offering, a sweet aroma to the Lord.

But was it conceivable that Christ would reject the cross, while His will for the salvation of man is the same as the will of the Father?! of course not. Let us hear Christ saying, "But for this purpose I came to this hour." (John 12:27). Rather, Christ was rushing to meet those who came to arrest him.

The joy of the Father and His smelling the sweet aroma refers to us as the children of God, as we become considered perfect and obedient in Christ (Colossians 1: 28 + Ephesians 1: 4). This is equal to the saying of the Father on the Day of Baptism, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." With the Baptism that Christ established on the day of his Baptism, we became children of God."

Therefore, **the Lord smelled a soothing aroma**, because he saw in Noah's offering the return of His children to His bosom whole and obedient in Christ. Thus, the image that God wanted from the beginning will return, which is exchanging love with man, overflowing man with His love, joys and glory, and man exchanging Him with love, trust and submission.

(Verse 22): **"While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease."**

That is, as long as the earth persists, all the laws and phenomena of nature remain in place. They work to serve man, and God will preserve the world despite its deviations (Matthew 5: 45). God will continue to discipline, trying to attract every soul to benefit from His blood that has flowed. But he who refuses will perish.

## Chapter 9

### Table of the story of Noah and the Flood, which took about a year

1. The command to enter the ark was issued (Genesis 7: 1).
2. After seven days, the Flood commenced (Genesis 7: 10) on 17/02/600 (of the age of Noah).
3. The duration of the rainfall and the bursting of the springs of the Flood for 40 days (Genesis 7: 12).
4. Water increases on the earth for 150 days, including the 40 days of rain. (Genesis 7: 24).
5. The decrease of water until the emergence of the tops of the mountains (Genesis 8: 5) on 01/10/600.
6. Sending the raven after 40 days (Gen 8: 6,7).
7. Sending the dove for the first time after seven days.
8. Sending the dove for the second time.
9. Sending the dove for the third time.
10. Removing the covering of the ark on 01/01/601.
11. The earth dried up, and Noah exited the ark on 27/02/601.

After Noah exited and offered a sacrifice, God smelled the soothing aroma. He blessed Noah and his sons and offered them a law to submit to, a covenant that binds them with Him, and a sign that supports them in the days of their exile.

(Verse 1): **So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.**

**So God blessed Noah and his sons:** As new heads of creation, Noah became the new head of creation, a symbol of Christ, the head of the new creation. From Noah's children branched all the peoples of the world. The words of blessing are similar to those addressed to Adam and Eve.

(Verses 2-7): **And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. 3 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. 4 But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5 Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. 6 “Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man. 7 And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it.”**



## Noah's Law:

This law corresponds to the commandment that God gave to Adam and Eve.

1. **the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth:** God gives to man authority over creatures and makes them fear him. We saw this with many saints (Daniel, St. Barsoum Al-Arian).

2. **Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you:** Before this, humans fed on herbs of the field after the fall (Genesis 3:18). Now God allowed them to eat the meat of animals, birds and fish. Why?

\* The fall of man changed his character to a cruel nature, as we saw Cain killing his brother Abel.

\* Man's cruelty was reflected on animals, so some animals became wild, some birds became wild, and so the fish.

\* Some saints' presence altered the wild nature of the beasts (Daniel with the lions, and St. Barsoum Al-Arian with the serpent).

\* Out of God's love for man, He left some pet animals for his benefit (some for use and some for food).

\* God allowed some animals to get wild to show the human being his brutal character, which was reflected on the animals, for him to learn.

\* For the sake that man does not turn into cannibalism that eats his brother, God allowed him to eat animal meat. However, still, we see some tribes eating human flesh.

\* The earth may have weakened as a result of the curse and produced weaker plants.

\* The reason may be in the weakness of the human body, which has become in need of more vital food.

\* To prepare the way for accepting the Mosaic Law that the priest should eat from some of the sacrifices. He ate from the sin offering to declare the forgiveness of the sin of the one who offered the sacrifice and to announce God's acceptance to him. The sacrifice declares the reconciliation of God with man (as for the pagans, they think that the sacrifice is to calm the anger of their gods.) The order of the priest eating part of the flesh of the Sin Offering was a sign of Christ who bore our sins in His body. The sinner comes with the sin offering and holds its horns, confessing his sins, as if he passed his sins to the sacrifice. Then the sacrifice is slaughtered and offered on the altar (The cross). When the priest eats a part, it is a sign that the sin of the sinner has been forgiven, evidenced by the fact that the priest accepted to eat of the meat of the sacrifice. The sacrifice that was burned was a carrier of the sin of the sinner who offered the sacrifice. The sacrifice and the priest here are a symbol of Christ who sacrificed Himself carrying our sins with His cross.

3. **But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood:** God allowed eating meat, but he warns against eating it with its blood. Blood equals life, life belongs to God, but the flesh is given to man. God kept the mystery that man cannot drink of the blood until he revealed this hidden secret in the blood of Christ, which is given as atonement for us. We drink it so we can live with it. As for drinking animal

blood, it gives humans cruelty that God rejects. God does not want a strange life to enter us, but for us to have the life of Christ. The pagans drank from the blood of sacrifices to be blessed by their idols.

4. **for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning:** God is the one who takes revenge on man's murderer, and He alone is can repay for the blood. Therefore, killing and suicide are prohibited. God alone determines a person's life. This may be done by law as follows.

5. **from the hand of every beast I will require it:** If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then the ox shall surely be stoned (Exodus 21: 28)

6. **Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed:** This is the first civil law that God enacted; whoever kills gets killed. Here killing of the murderer is with God's permission (See point 4). We find that God is the one who holds the killer accountable, whether the killer was a human or an animal. But we find that God gave from his authority and wisdom to human judges to judge the killer to death. That is why the Bible says on the tongue of David regarding the judges' authority: "God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the gods(the council of judges) .. I said, "You are gods. And all of you are children of the Most High.", (Psalm 82). Revise the interpretation of this psalm. Notice the words of the psalm, "He judges among the gods." This means that the judges rule according to the divine law; in other words, God is the one who judges through the judges' mouth because he is the maker of the law. We never heard that any of the kings of Israel had formed up a constitution, but all the kings ruled according to God's law. All the kings of the world set laws according to what they perceive; as for the kings of Israel, they do not have this right, for God is the true king of Israel. And the Jewish king applies God's statutes as stated in the law.

**And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it:** God's desire is life and regeneration of the earth, and blessings for man.

(Verses 8-17): **Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: 9 "And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, 10 and with every living creature that is with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. 11 Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." 12 And God said: "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. 14 It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; 15 and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." 17 And God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth." Noah and His Sons**

## **Renewal of the Covenant and Promise**

The rainbow is a natural phenomenon that occurs from the refraction of sunlight on raindrops after it rains. It probably used to appear before the Flood, but God used it as a sign of love, and let us note:

As a rainbow is bound to appear after raining as long as the sun and rain are present, so God will never break His promise that a general flood will not occur again.

The rainbow appeared around the Throne (Revelation 4: 3 + 10: 1), and this is a sign that God wants life for us and wants to announce from heaven that he is confirming His promise and has not forgotten that He is giving us eternal life. Note the first verse in the Bible: "In the beginning God created ... giving life" and the end of the Book of Revelation, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus .. it is hope in this promised life.

God will not repeat the Flood. The Flood is a symbol of Baptism, and Baptism is not repeated.

### **The Rainbow reminds us of the following:**

- \* The punishment of sin is death. (A declaration of God's Justice and Holiness).
- \* The abundance of God's mercies on us, shown in His prolonged longsuffering. He wants us to live.
- \* The good example of Noah, who became a blessing to the whole world.
- \* Therefore, he who imitates Noah will benefit from the mercies of God and will be saved from His anger and justice, which demand the death of the sinner.
- \* The rainbow is the seal of the covenant (the covenant between God and Noah).
- \* The sun sheds its light on the raindrops, revealing these multiple colours. Christ, the sun of righteousness, sends His light on the drops of water = the Holy Spirit who reveals the glory of Christ (John 16: 13,14). And the colours are many to declare the benevolence and the many gifts of God. We also understand that the Holy Spirit provides and distributes His gifts to the church to be complete so that Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, appears in this church (the white colour of light). The colours in the rainbow reveal the diversity of gifts within the Church meant to complement the Church. This is what the apostle Paul meant when he said: "the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4) = that is, if every person in the Church uses his gift faithfully granted to him by the Holy Spirit, Christ will appear amidst this Church.
  - The Holy Spirit, symbolized by water droplets, analyzes sunlight into seven colours.
  - The Holy Spirit distributes gifts to everyone in the Church.
  - If a device can collect the seven colours of the spectrum, a white light appears. This is what happens on television, for example.
  - If everyone faithfully performed their role (the Holy Spirit will show Christ in this Church).

**I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant:** God does not forget his promises, but He reassures us. The rainbow is a declaration of God's mercy to Noah and us. We see it, and rest assured. And when we pray and say, "O Lord, remember such-and-such..." we do not remind God, for God does not forget. Rather, we declare our confidence in God's promises so that we can rest assured. This covenant declares God's love and glory. The glory and mediation of Christ, is a sign of love that God introduced when he established a covenant with Noah after the Flood. God remains as the lover of mankind, offering us all love through His covenant with us. And God, in His love, is proud of the covenant, so he says, "My covenant ... my rainbow." Therefore the rainbow is a sign of the covenant between heaven and earth, and notice that it extends from heaven to earth.

(Verses 18-24): **Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. 19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated. 20 And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. 21 Then he drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. 23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness. 24 So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him.**

#### **Noah and his nakedness:**

Verse 18: **Ham was the father of Canaan** = Canaan was mentioned here, as it is the leading cause of the following events, for Moses and the people to understand why God punishes the Canaanites and why the Jews can take their land. This was because of the sin of Canaan and the curse of "his father Noah to him." Then the people are warned not to imitate the sins of the Canaanites, lest they be like them in their end. Another reason is that Ham was the father of Canaan, and as a father, certainly, he knew how his son Canaan should respect him and accordingly he should respect his father Noah, which did not happen.

Is Noah's curse to Canaan considered the reason for the corruption of the Canaanites, the descendants of Canaan? of course not. Rather, it is a prophecy of what will happen and also an announcement of their punishment. Noah announced this so that God's people would know why God would punish the Canaanites with their hands and know their punishment if they did the same things as them. But if the Canaanite would return to God through repentance, God would definitely accept him and heal him. This is what happened with the Canaanite (Matthew 15: 21-28).

Verse 20: **And Noah began to be a farmer:** The word "began" is because Noah worked as a carpenter for 120 years. Some interpreted the difference between Noah as a farmer and Cain as tiller of the ground by; tiller of the ground refers to one who puts all his capacities in temporal matters. But the farmer refers to Christ who came to plant his vine anew. The earth, in this case, refers to the Church or the Body that the Holy Spirit waters.

Verse 21: Most Probably, Noah got drunk after drinking wine without perceiving that this wine would result in nudity, mockery, and a person's loss of dignity. Regularly, we pray, saying, Forgive us our sins that we have done knowingly and those we have done unknowingly. Another explanation is because Noah was perfect in his generations, i.e. relative perfection. He also had his falls. And here we find the wine that made this saint naked, despite being saved from the Flood waters when he remained covered for more than 600 years. Sin is an intoxicating wine that exposes the soul, while the Lord Christ is the glorious clothing that covers the soul from its eternal scandal. Note that the cause of Noah's sin was the same like Adam ... the belly that enlarged, and then the organs would revolt. St. Jerome presumed that this story is a symbol of the work of Christ, He drank the cup of pain on the cross, and for our sake, he was naked on the cross, and the wicked (Ham and Canaan) mocked him while the nations believed in him (Shem and Japheth). "if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me;" Matthew 26: 39). Ham laughed as the Jews laughed and mocked Christ. And the nations covered His pain with their faith.

Verse 22: He who reveals the nakedness of others, in other words, exposes their sins, is cursed.

Verse 23: He who conceals the nakedness of others, God covers him. (the example of St. Macarius), Noah's sons did this according to the natural law.

Verse 24: **his younger son**: The word son in Hebrew is also used for grandson. Therefore, the younger son may refer to Canaan. The explanation is that Ham saw his father Noah in this situation and mocked him and Canaan joined him, or that Canaan entered with Ham, his father, and they both shared in mockery.

(Verses 25-27): **Then he said: "Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brethren." 26 And he said: "Blessed be the Lord, The God of Shem, And may Canaan be his servant. 27 May God enlarge Japheth, And may he dwell in the tents of Shem; And may Canaan be his servant."**

Noah's Prophecy

#### **Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants:**

Cursed and servant of servants means the lowest slave. His enslavement to his two brothers took place first by the Jews enslaving the descendants of Shem, the Canaanites, and then the enslavement of the Greeks and the Romans, the descendants of Japheth to them. Noah did not curse Ham because God had already blessed him, so he would not curse those whom God blessed (Numbers 23: 18, 19, 20). But the curse of Canaan was a cause of anguish and pain for his father, Ham. And Noah's prophecy was fulfilled because the Canaanite people were in a state of impurity and deviation of pagan abominations, which were the worst. It was said about them: There was nothing like them mixing bloodshed (human victims) with immorality to honour their gods. It was said: The Canaanite religion destroyed the best of human feelings (sacrificing their children), and they were famous for their superstitions and immorality, and none of the virtues prevailed among them. They went down to the lowest images of slaves, and they became cursed by their idolatry.

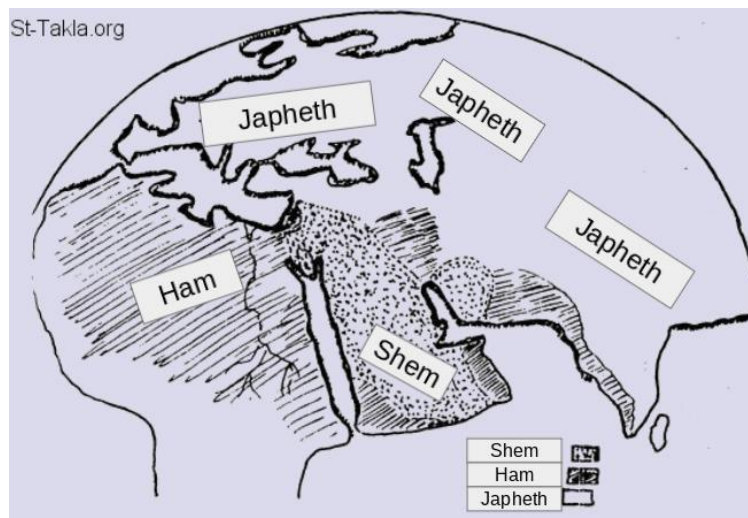
**Blessed be the Lord, The God of Shem:** He blessed the Lord for the sake of Shem and the seed of Shem, for from Shem Christ came, also from Shem came Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, the fathers of Christ in the flesh. So, Noah's Prophecy was fulfilled by the birth of Christ. And the name Shem = Exalted or lofty, so what name is more exalted than Christ, whose fragrance revealed everywhere? The Prophecy also means, let the descendants of Shem be blessed, so that they bless the Lord his God, and from the seed of Shem, God's people came who were entrusted with the worship of God, his knowledge, his law, his commandments, and his temple. Therefore, note that Noah used "Lord," i.e., YHWH, when he spoke of Shem = **Blessed be the Lord, The God of Shem**. As for Japheth, he said, "**May God enlarge Japheth**" The book uses the Lord for those who belong to the Lord. As for the name of God, it is used for the whole world, He is the God of the whole world, responsible for the whole world, and He will judge the entire world. Shem is the father of Christ in the body.

Japheth = Means expansion or filling. Noah's Prophecy about him is that God will open for him so that his dwellings will expand. This happened with Japheth, who filled Europe and most of Asia, then the Americas and Australia.

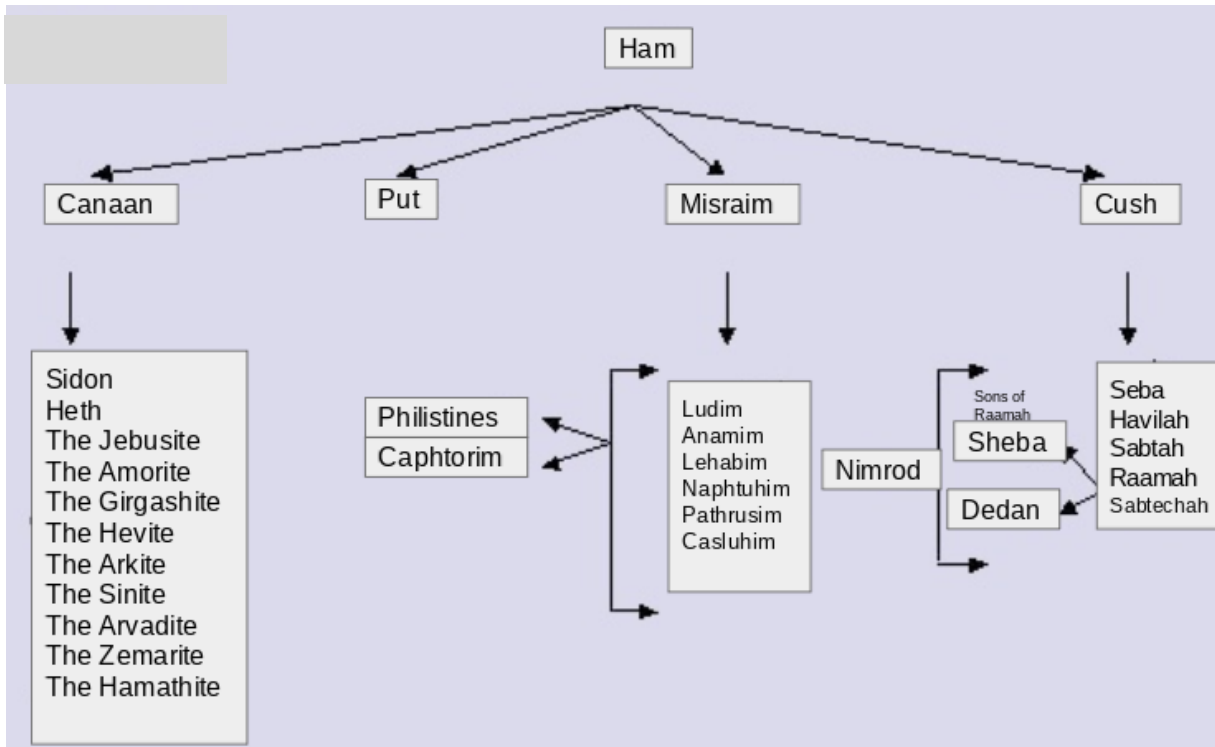
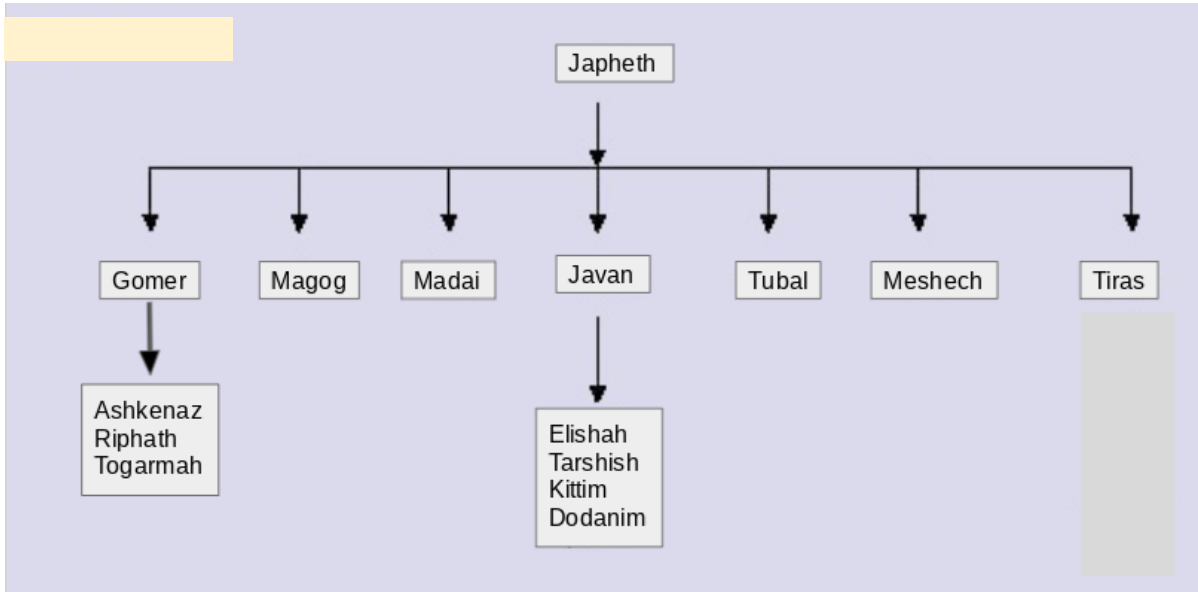
**And may he dwell in the tents of Shem:** The dwellings of Shem, i.e., the Church of Christ, were expanded to receive the Gentiles, i.e. Japheth, and in the Church, the descendants of Japheth and Shem were united. The Prophecy may mean that the Europeans occupied the country of Shem for a while.

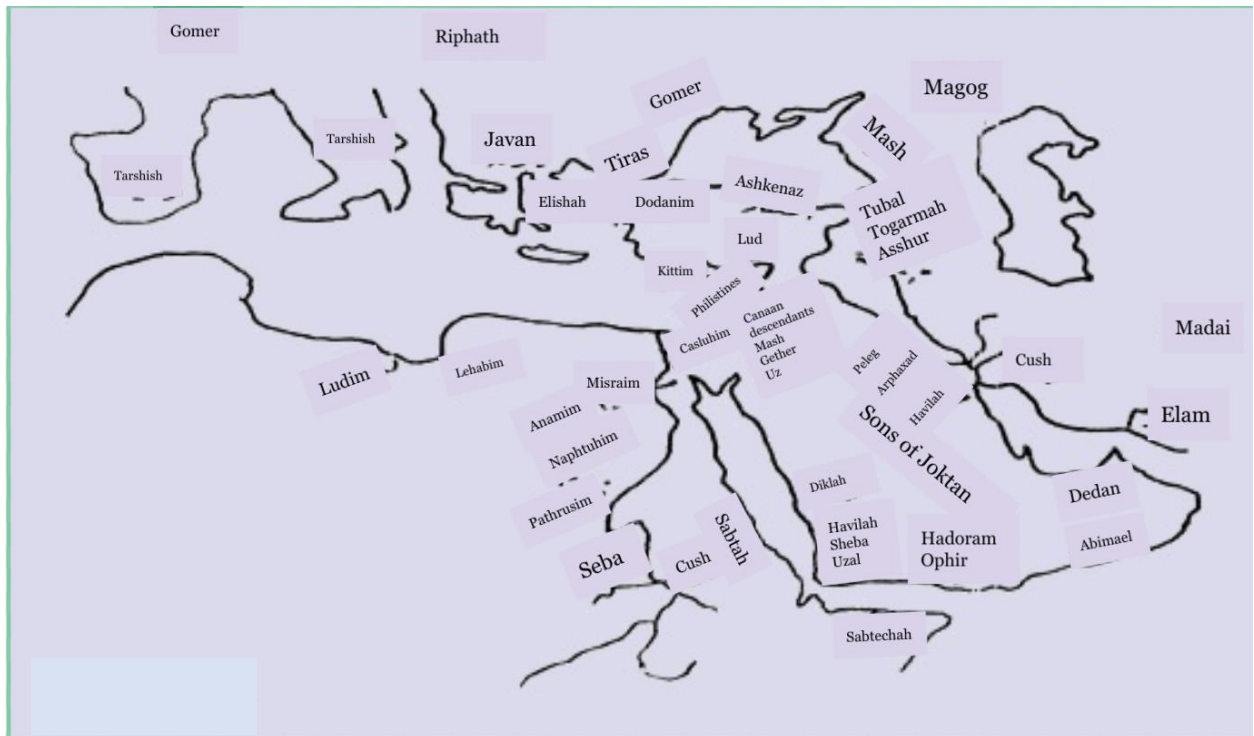
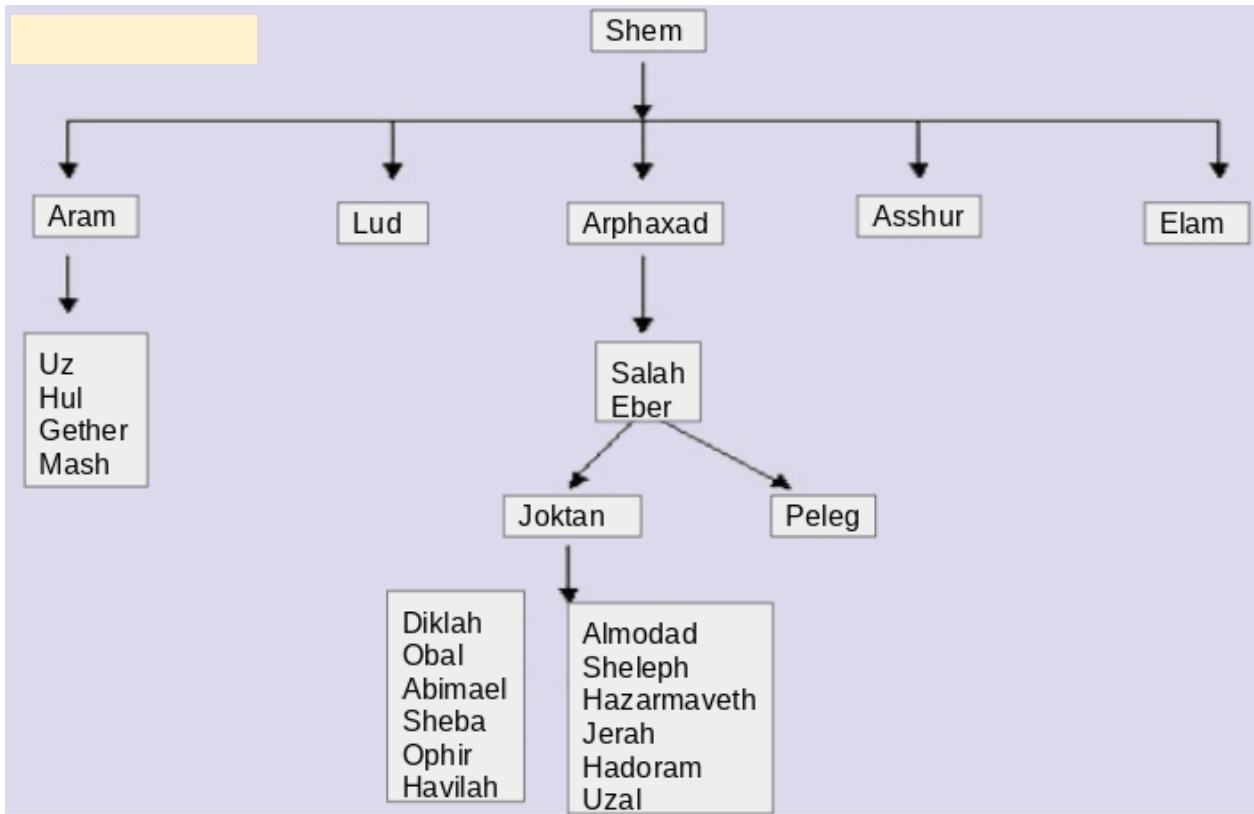
(Verses 28-29): **And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. 29 So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died.**

After sin, man descended to the level of animals and ate grass (Genesis 3:18). And the blessing of Noah indicated the giving of life rather than death.



# Chapter 10







(Verse 1): **Now this is the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And sons were born to them after the flood.**

Nimrod could have been a grandson or a son to Cush. He was mentioned singly for his importance.

It is also understood from the Chapter that Philistine and Caphtorim are descendants of Pathrusim and Casluhim only, and most probably, they are descendants of Casluhim only.

This chapter is called the List of Ancient Nations, and it shows God, who destroyed the world, is rebuilding it again. He is the One to root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant (Jeremiah 1: 10). The peoples were divided by the names of Noah's children and their children. We find that the list began with Japheth, whether because he is the oldest or the farthest from the people of Israel, he is the least influential to their lives. Then comes the descendants of Ham, whose children are the greatest enemies of God's people. And then comes the seed of Shem, who brought forth Israel, who begins it briefly here and elaborates on the explanation afterwards. God renewed the creation with the Flood, but it quickly deviated to evil again. However, God did not use destruction or complete annihilation again but rather used local disciplines (the fire of Sodom and Gomorrah / epidemics / wars / famines...) to push people to repentance. This is the same as what happens after baptism, as we get a new person, but we go back and sin, yet we restore the image of the new person by repentance, and God may use disciplines until the person repents. (See Hebrews 12: 6).

Scientists state that this record is unparalleled to any other in indicating the origin and birth of nations, and archaeological discoveries validate it. But this book does not aim to show the genesis of nations, but rather:

It wanted to provide us with a preface to the history of the people from whom Christ came, who is the Savior of all people.

In it, it appears that God is the Maker and Creator of all peoples and nations, and He is responsible for their salvation.

(Verses 2-5): **The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. 3 The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. 4 The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. 5 From these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.**

**Sons of Japheth:**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| Gomer | Gomer's descendants inhabited the north. Some came to Asia from the regions of the Transcaucasia and settled in Cappadocia. Their descendants occupied northern Europe and Britain, Denmark, and it is said Russia. (Some groups were displaced to Denmark and Russia.) |
|-------|---|

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Magog    | Hebrew word that means the land of Gog. The two names were linked together and became a symbol of resistance to the Christian faith (Revelation 20: 7-9). And among them are Tatars and Scythians, located between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea.                        |
| Madai    | From his descendants was the Mede Empire, which later united with Persia. Their country was known by Medi or Medea, and they lived south and southwest of the Caspian Sea. It is now part of Iran.   |
| Javan    | He is the father of the Greeks. And the word Javan in the Bible means Greece (Zechariah 9: 13).  |
| Tubal    | They inhabited the southeast of the Black Sea.   |
| Meshech  | They lived near the springs of the Tigris and Euphrates, then moved to the vicinity of the Black Sea and the Caspian Seas.   |
| Tiras    | From his descendants came the Tarsian people and inhabited the islands and coasts of the Aegean Sea. Then the revelation was restricted to the descendants of two of Japheth's sons, Gomer and Javan, because they were the most important and popular of them.              |
| Ashkenaz | They inhabited east of the Black Sea in Armenia. And the Black Sea was called the Ashkenazi Sea.   |
| Riphath  | There are two opinions about their location: 1) East of Jordan; 2) The northernmost point of the ancient world.  |
| Togarmah | They inhabited Armenia in southwest Asia.  |
| Elishah  | They inhabited Greece and Cyprus.  |
| Tarshish | They inhabited Italy and Spain. The beginning of Tarshish was in Cilicia, where Tarsus was and where Paul was born.  |
| Kittim   | The western coast of Palestine and some islands in the Mediterranean, such as Cyprus. Its name was Kittim, but this name extended to Greece and Italy. The Jews called the peoples coming from the Mediterranean as being from Kittim, referred to this here as the gentiles |
| Dodanim  | It is likely they were the inhabitants of Rhodes and some of their descendants emigrated to Greece.  |

(Verses 6-20): **The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. 7 The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. 8 Cush**

begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord." 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11 From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, 12 and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city). 13 Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, 14 Pathrusim, and Casluhim (from whom came the Philistines and Caphtorim). 15 Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and Heth; 16 the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; 17 the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; 18 the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed. 19 And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. 20 These were the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands and in their nations.

### Ham's Sons

The word Ham means hot, burning, or black, and the god of the sun was called Hamo because of the heat of the sun. In this sense, they were black in the sense of stricken or burnt by sunshine, and they inhabited Africa and some parts of Asia.

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Cush      | It means black in Hebrew, and he has five children Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raahma, and Sabtechah.   |
| Seba      | Some of them lived in southern Arabia, and some of them crossed into Africa via Bogaz Bab al-Mandab, and they resided on the shores of the Mediterranean, and the people of Ethiopia (Abyssinia) were formed from those. |
| Havilah   | They lived in northern Arabia near the Gulf of Ajam and reached Yemen.   |
| Sabtah    | They lived in Hadramout in the Arab countries, and some of them lived in Abyssinia   |
| Raamah    | With his two sons, Sheba and Dedan, they lived south of the Gulf of Ajam and then traveled to the southwest from Arabia  |
| Sabtechah | They lived in southern Arabia, and some of them traveled to Africa.  |
| Sheba     | Raamah's son, and he moved to Abyssinia.   |
| Dedan     | Settled in the Arab countries.   |

Thus, we see the sons of Cush either dwelt in Arabia or moved to Abyssinia. Therefore, we find in the Bible two places called Cush; the first of which is at Elam in the area south of the Tigris and Euphrates (Genesis 2: 13) and the second is Abyssinia, and this is more famous. And Cush Africa means Abyssinia and Nubia in the south of Egypt.

Ham's descendants, in general, showed peoples and nations with resistance to God's work and His people in the Old Testament. Therefore, the Old Testament came to announce the divine punishment on these peoples, as they bear symbols of evil, for Cush refers to the darkness of ignorance and blackness of sin (Jeremiah 13: 23).

Egypt referred to the love of the world that enslaves the soul (the people desired Egypt's food and forgot their slavery).

Canaan referred to satanic work and curse (Zechariah 14: 21).

### **Nimrod**

His name means mighty, rebel, strong and fierce. This is an example of how Ham's descendants confronted God. On the contrary, we see how Shem's descendants were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

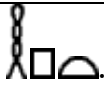
He was powerful and famous as a mighty hunter. Statues of him were found in the ruins of Nineveh, holding a lion under his left arm. He is the one who established the ruling family in Babylon, Shanar and Akkad. He was probably the same person who is Gilgamesh of Akkadian or Babylonian.

**the mighty hunter before the Lord:** The addition "before the Lord" means that he was great. This may also mean, which is clear from his name, that he took the stand of rebellion against God when his power developed. The beginning of pagan worship is attributed to Nimrod. Babylon has become in the Bible a symbol of resistance to God, pride and spiritual adultery; it is even called "the mother of the adulterers," and it became a name for the kingdom of the antichrist and the group of wicked ones.

It is surprising how when a person feels his power, he challenges God instead of thanking him for His gifts (See Revelation 14: 8, 16: 9, 17: 1-5).

The kingdom of Nimrod was in the land of Shinar, which means "two rivers," perhaps because of its location between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. It is the plain area in the country of Babylon. This kingdom contained four major cities at that time: -

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Babel  | It could mean God's Door "Bab El," but it had another meaning: the confusion of tongues. When Moses wrote, he used the well-known names of his time. |
| Erech  | It was east of the Euphrates.  |
| Accad  | The Accadian kingdom was established from it. It was a powerful kingdom, and it was located west of the Tigris.                                      |
| Calneh | East of the Euphrates  |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Nimrod     | He could have been the sixth son of Cush or one of his grandsons; he was singly mentioned for his importance. He became famous for his tyranny until he became a model when people state: as Nimrod, a mighty hunter. <b>From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh:</b> Assyria is one of Shem's sons, and it is not applicable to mention him among the sons of Ham. Therefore, the meaning of the verse can be explained by the word "went to," which can translate in Hebrew as "went out" to the land of Assyria = And what is meant is that Nimrod was not satisfied with his land and went out like a mighty man to conquer other cities in the land of Assyria. He built Nineveh on the eastern bank of the Tigris, which later became the capital of Assyria. He also built Rehoboth Ir, which means a big city, and it may be a suburb of Nineveh or another city that borders it. He built Calah twenty miles south of Nineveh. And Resen between Nineveh and Calah. Nineveh was the great city mentioned in Jonah 1: 2. Nineveh the great city contains Nineveh and Rehoboth Ir, Calah and Resen. |
| Mizraim    | In Hebrew מִצְרַיִם in double. Some thought that it was called this because of Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt, or because the Nile River divides it into an eastern and western bank. Or it was called Misr (Egypt) after Mizraim, where he and his children lived and extended to neighbouring countries. And the ancient name of Egypt is Kimi or khemi, meaning the land of Ham. And it was called so for the blackness of its soil or its attribution to Ham.   |
| Ludim      | Lud or the Ludians came from him, and they were different from the Lud people, who were the descendants of Shem, and they settled towards Libya.   |
| Anamim     | They mostly inhabited west of the Nile, in southern Egypt.   |
| Lehabim    | Probably they are the Libyans (the Lubim tribe), who originated in Egypt and migrated to Libya.  |
| Naphtuhim  | Residents of Middle Egypt near Memphis, the center of the god Ptah    |
| Pathrusim  | They lived in Pathrus, in Upper Egypt. The word "Pathrus" means the land of the South (its capital, Tiba).   |
| Casluhim   | Means fortified. His descendants resided in Xiones, in a mountainous area on the border between Egypt and Palestine.   |
| Philistine | Descendant of Casluhim and because of their proximity to Palestine, they immigrated to it. Philistine is the origin of the word Palestine, which means foreigner or immigrant.   |

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Caphtorim      | Probably descendant of Casluhim as well. They inhabited Caphtur and they lived in Captur. Most likely in the city called Capet Hor in the Egyptian Delta. They probably immigrated to the island of Crete, named after them, and then immigrated from there to Palestine. Thus, the immigrants of the descendants of Casluhim (Philistine and Caphturim) gathered in Palestine to form the Palestinian people. |
| Canaan         | The younger son of Ham, the Canaanite tribes came from his descendants. Canaan lived on the low coast of Palestine, and in some cases the name Canaan is given to all the peoples in the region of Palestine.  |
| Sidon          | Inhabited Sidon (Sida)   |
| Heth           | Sons of Heth descended from him (Genesis 23: 20) and from them is Uriah the Hittite. They expanded and included the lands of the northern Palestine, and even extended to the Euphrates.   |
| The Jebusite   | The ancient name of Jerusalem before David conquered it.   |
| The Amorite    | They inhabited the mountains west of the Dead Sea, south of Jerusalem  |
| The Girgashite | East Sea of Galilee.   |
| the Hivite     | Northeast of Palestine and Lebanon   |
| the Arkite     | In Lebanon   |
| the Sinite     | Lebanon  |
| the Arvadite   | They are nomadic people.   |
| the Zemarite   | They dwelt in Phoenicia.   |
| the Hamathite  | They lived in Hama, Syria  |

(Verse 19): **And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha**

Focused on determining the land of the Canaanites because Israel will inherit this land. These are the boundaries that Moses specified for them afterwards when they approached the land of Canaan. All the Canaanite tribes gathered in this place so that it would be easy for the people of God to strike them and possess their land. This was with God's wisdom to discipline them for the evils that they were famous for.

(Verse 21): **And children were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder.**

**the father of all the children of Eber:** Eber is the great-grandson of Sam. His name is derived from the word meaning crossed over, and he was the grandfather of the Hebrews. Shem is attributed here to his most significant grandchildren, Eber, from whom came Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and from his descendants, Christ came in the flesh. The blessing was passed from Noah to Shem to Eber, as was the curse from Canaan to his family. Also, from the descendants of Eber are the Arabs and the Arameans. Probably, Eber was the righteous and upright man of his time, and he passed on his righteousness to his children. For his goodness, when the tongues were confused, the Hebrew continued his language and the language of his family. In contrast, the others' tongues became confused (this interpretation is from the Hebrew tradition).

**the brother of Japheth:**

Mentioning that Sam is the brother of Japheth is a sign of the brethren of the Gentiles with the Jews in the Church of Christ.

(Verses 22-30): **The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. 23 The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. 24 Arphaxad begot Salah, and Salah begot Eber. 25 To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. 26 Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, 27 Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, 28 Obal, Abimael, Sheba, 29 Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan. 30 And their dwelling place was from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the mountain of the east.**

### Sons of Shem

His five children inhabited the land stretching from Elam in western Asia to the eastern Mediterranean. From his descendants came the Jews, the Arameans, the Assyrians and the Arabs. The languages of these nations are called Semitic.

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Elam     | Of his descendants are the Elamites and the Persians, and their countries extended beyond the Tigris, east of the kingdom of Babylon, south of Assyria and Media, and north of the Persian Gulf, and it is now part of Iran. |
| Asshur   | Father of the Assyrians. His country is located on the upper part of the Tigris River.   |
| Arphaxad | Ancestor of the Jaktanian Arab tribes. He could be the ancestor of the Chaldeans (priests and wise men of Babylon). They inhabited the southern region of Mesopotamia.   |
| Lud      | The grandfather of the Ludians (other than the Ludians who are the descendants of Mizraim). They lived in the Lydia region South of Asia Minor.  |

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Aram    | There are several small countries with the name Aram, including Aram between the two rivers, Aram Damascus ... Aram is ancient Syria. The Aramaic language is the ancient Syrian. The sons of Aram and Arphaxhad are mentioned here only primarily because of their importance.  |
| Uz      | It is the land of Job (Job 1: 1), located south of the Syrian desert, between Syria and Edom.  |
| Hul     | Jordan Valley  |
| Gether  | Adjacent to Hul  |
| Mash    | Probably in Syria, and has Mount Masous.   |
| Peleg   | <p>Moses focused on the offspring of Arphaxad, who gave birth to Salah and Shalah begot Eber, and Eber gave birth to Peleg, from whom Abraham, the father of God's people, came. He was called Peleg because, in his days, the land was divided. The meaning of the word Peleg is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A stream of water, and it may have indicated the division of water springs and shepherding lands, as Peleg resided at the Euphrates and Joktan went to the Arab countries.</li> <li>2. The word Peleg may mean division, or it may refer to the division of the land between Peleg and Joktan. Or refers to the division of the world due to confusion of tongues. This was the interpretation of Saint Augustine that the word Peleg refers to multilingualism. In his days, more than one language began to appear on the Earth after everyone spoke what was later called Hebrew. (This interpretation is according to the Jewish tradition).</li> </ol> |
| Elam    | From his descendants are the Elamites and Persians, and their country extends beyond the Tigris to the east of the Kingdom of Babylon, southern Assyria, Madea, and the north of the Persian Gulf, which is now part of Iran.  |
| Joktan  | The Arabs call him Qahtan, and he had 13 sons who lived in the Arabian Peninsula, and among his children was <b>Sheba</b> = he lived in the southwest of the Arabian Peninsula, and among them was the Queen of Sheba who was called the Queen of South (Currently Yemen). The capital of Yemen was called "Sheba".  |
| Ophir   | It may be southern Arabia. Some of them immigrated to Africa, and their land is famous for gold.   |
| Havilah | Southern Arabia, which is different from Havilah son of Kush, who was in the north.  |



(Verses 31-32): **These were the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations. 32 These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.**

## Chapter 11

Chronologically Chapter 10 should be after Chapter 11. However, the methodology adopted by the Revelation was that he began on the tenth to explain how Noah and his sons spread throughout the whole earth. Next, in Chapter 11, he explained the reason, which is the confusion of tongues.

**We find in this Chapter two different subjects:**

| First Subject   | Second Subject   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Man's quest to Escape from God.</li> <li>▪ This was illustrated in Babylon by building a tower.</li> <li>▪ These people are called sons of people.</li> <li>▪ These people have their paramount interest in the earth and their longing to have a name in it.</li> <li>▪ They did not set up a house or an altar to the Lord, but they built fortified cities for themselves.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ God's call to man.</li> <li>▪ This was illustrated God calling Abram to leave his land.</li> <li>▪ Abram and his descendants can be called sons of God.</li> <li>▪ These people are yearning for heaven while they are on a continuous journey to the Heavenly Canaan (Genesis 12: 9:), for they are in a constant estrangement.</li> <li>▪ Abram never left his tent (exile) or the altar, so he did not have a city remaining here (Hebrews 11: 10).</li> </ul> |

For these reasons, Babylon became a symbol of materialism and disobedience to God from Genesis until the Book of Revelation, and this is what God wanted to destroy. Instead of leaning on God's chest, we see the Babylon people who relied on themselves and wanted to set up a tower for themselves made by their hands. This results from the cruelty of the sinners' hearts; they develop "Spiritual Blindness." In the time of distress, instead of fleeing to God, they flee from God.

(Verse 1): **Now the whole earth had one language and one speech.**

**one speech:** Some think that this language was Hebrew, and they confirm that since the first names such as Adam, Eve, and Eden are Hebrew words. After the confusion of the tongues, this language remained as Eber's language, and this was a reward for him for his holiness (Saint Augustine's interpretation). Hebrew continued as the language of the Jews until the exile, and then it turned to Aramaic after mixing with the Babylonians.

Others argue that it was Chaldean (Syriac), and their reason is that all Eastern languages are derived from one source and that Hebrew is only a branch of this language. In general, it is difficult to define this one language before confusion.

But we see on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended, that they spoke different languages and understood each other. For example, the Egyptians or the Persians heard some of the

apostles speaking in their own language and understood them. So we understand that the Holy Spirit, the spirit of love, is able to put in us a common language by which we can understand each other, which is the language of love that knows no division The language of thanksgiving and praise to God. This is the language that we will speak in heaven, for it is the language of all the heavenly people. We understand that the confusion of tongues occurred to expose the internal confusion.

(Verse 2): **And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.**

**as they journeyed:** Probably to search for pastures for livestock. Or to extend to the rest of the places to build them.

**from the east:** After the Flood, the ark settled on Mount Ararat and mentioning the east indicates either that after the Flood, they had turned towards the west first and then turned east towards **the land of Shinar:** The land of Shinar is the Tigris and Euphrates plain. Or that part of them turned east and they were the ones who tried to build the tower because Mount Ararat is north of the land of Shinar. Or because the land of Shinar in general is called the East (Numbers 23: 7), as it is East of the Promised Land.

(Verse 3): **Then they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar.**

**Then they said to one another:** Here we see wicked people supporting each other, so do we do this as children of God? Also, here we observe the beginning of urbanization. Because the plain of Shinar lacks the presence of stone, they used bricks burnt with fire after drying them in the sun. This currently occurs in Egypt to manufacture red bricks. **asphalt:** A type of mineral bitumen, when frozen, called pitch. And it abounds in the Euphrates region.

**for mortar:**

Clay was used to make the mortar between the stone pieces. And now red bricks are used instead.

Let us note that those who built a city for themselves to remain on the earth used mud and asphalt. As for those who lived in a tent like Abram, let us hear what God has prepared for those like him (Isaiah 54: 11-12 + Revelation 21: 9)

(Verse 4): **And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."**

**What is the purpose of building the tower and the city?**

1. Some said so that they could flee from the Flood if God tries to destroy them because of their sins. But if this is true, they would have built the tower over the mountain. Generally, it is a possibility.

2. **whose top is in the heavens:** This sentence implies a tone of defiance of God, reaching Heaven, i.e., to reach God. Reaching Heaven is through holiness, not through high towers. Some said they set it up to worship the stars of Heaven and wanted it to rise to the highest place to please their gods and draw close to them (the beginning of pagan worship).

3. **make a name for ourselves:** They wanted this magnificent building to be a witness of their greatness, for everyone to talk solemnly about them and to give them supremacy over the world. And some said that they wrote their names on the stones of the tower. It is a sign of temporal glory. They are arrogant people of themselves.

4. **lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth:**

God had commanded them to spread out to fill all the earth, but they tried to base themselves in Babylon, founding a great kingdom often led by Nimrod, contrary to God's opinion. And it was said about the Canaanites that they had great cities fortified to heaven (Deuteronomy 1: 28). The evil was not in that they wanted to establish a city or build a tall tower, but in their hearts that were in a position of defiance of God and a rejection of his counsel. They did not trust His protection and His promises, even though God would be a wall of fire to protect his children. (Zechariah 2: 5). And in their distance from God, they wanted to prove themselves and establish a name for themselves. And suppose the Canaanites built great cities fortified to the sky. In that case, we can imagine that these Babylonians were not satisfied with building one tower but wanted to build many high towers. If they returned to God with love, they would find in Him their heavenly city and their true fortress, and they would attain a name in heaven and not only on earth.

(Verse 5): **But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.**

**the Lord came down:** God is everywhere, and the saying came down cannot be understood literally, but the meaning is:

1. He came down, indicating the extent of their low intellect, so God came down, means that he would humble Himself to see their inferior work.

2. It is a descent, God cares about the details of human life even their disobedience.

3. Afterwards, the Lord descended and incarnated to save and raise the level of descending human beings.

4. The saying comes down, means that he will do something extraordinary on earth to make His presence tangible.

**to see:** In the same sense, this does not mean to know something new that he did not know, for he is not ignorant of anything. It is also in the sense that He will make these proud people understand that God knows what they are doing and how they think about challenging God, and God will spoil their plans. God speaks to us in our language as far as we understand and tolerate.

**sons of men:** They are the sons of Adam and not the sons of God. They resemble Adam, their father, in his disobedience. They are in the shape of their father, and they will die, so why are they looking for a name on earth, and why do they defy God while they are weak?

(Verses 6-8): **And the Lord said, “Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. 7 Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.” 8 So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.**

God could easily have punished them with death, but this is not God's way. God does not punish now in this life but rather disciplines and stops the spread of evil not to affect God's plan for mankind. We find God here disciplining them by confusing their tongues and scattering them on the earth, and let us note:

1. They were scared that they would be dispersed, so they built a tower that unites them as a gathering point and to act as the center of a powerful kingdom, but God scattered them.
2. God's disciplines show His justice and mercy combined:
  - a. God confused their tongues so that they would not agree to do evil. By standing against each other and not being united, we understand how the earth helped the woman (Revelation 12: 16)
  - b. Confusion of tongues led to their spread over the whole earth and its development accordingly.

(Verse 9): **Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.**

**Therefore its name is called Babel:** The name Babel means the Gate of God. God is here using the name Babylon referring to the confusion of the tongues. There are multiple meanings for some of the names, including this Babylon. Thus, Nabal's wife did the same with David, when she changed the concept of her husband's name, Nabal, as the word Nabal means either musical instrument or fool. This indicates God's dissatisfaction with Babylon's people, and He does not want Babylon's name to be attributed to him.

(Verses 10-26): **This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood. 11 After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years, and begot sons**

**and daughters. 12 Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Salah. 13 After he begot Salah, Arphaxad lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. 14 Salah lived thirty years, and begot Eber. 15 After he begot Eber, Salah lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters. 16 Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot Peleg. 17 After he begot Peleg, Eber lived four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters. 18 Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Reu. 19 After he begot Reu, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters. 20 Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Serug. 21 After he begot Serug, Reu lived two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters. 22 Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor. 23 After he begot Nahor, Serug lived two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters. 24 Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot Terah. 25 After he begot Terah, Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters. 26 Now Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.**

This list indicates that just as from the descendants of Ham, came those who built Babylon, which is a symbol of the earthly city. So from the descendants of Shem, came those who built the city of God. And here it starts from Shem to reach Abraham, and we note:

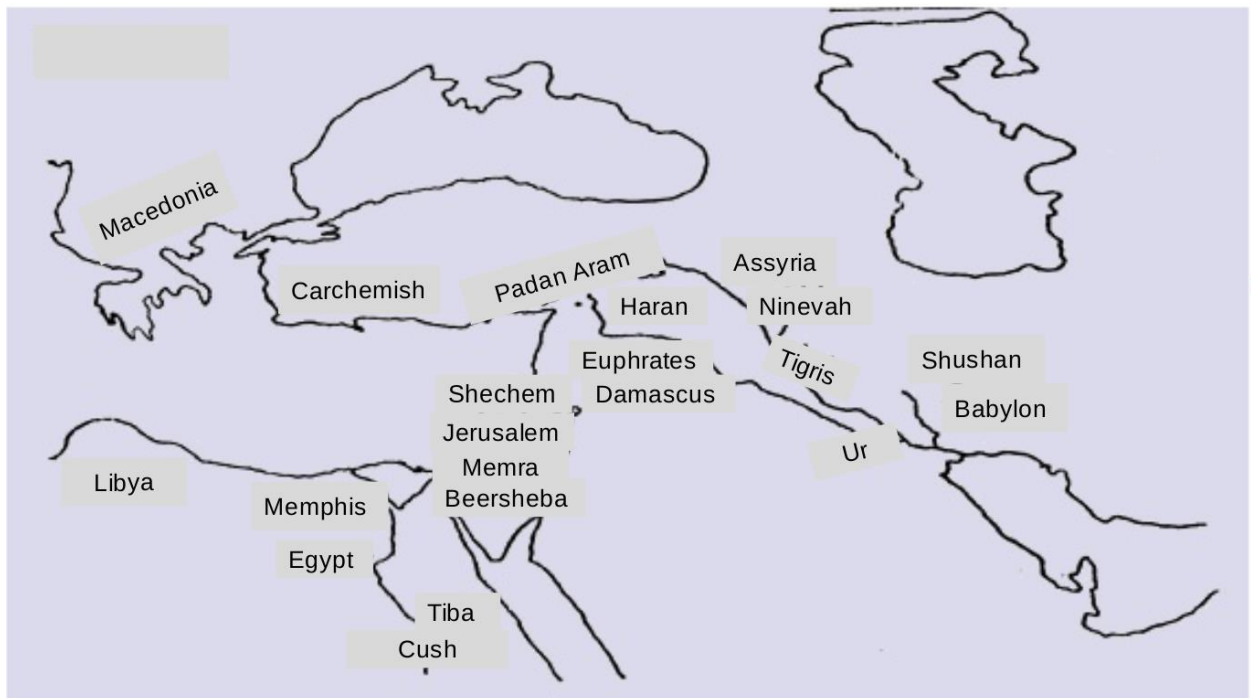
1. In this list, we do not hear the tone "And died," as in the fifth chapter as Christ will come from this seed. This list is called by God for a promise of life.
2. Among them those who worshiped the idols. (Joshua 24: 2,3 + Acts 7: 1,2). God called Abraham to leave his country and his relatives and not imitate his father in idolatry. However, the revelation does not mention idol worship for them here.
3. The ages of this list are small relative to Chapter "5" list. But what matters if the ages here are less, but there is a promise of life in Heaven?
4. Every father handed down his son a promise and hope to inherit.

**(Verse 27-32): This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot. 28 And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. 29 Then Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah. 30 But Sarai was barren; she had no child. 31 And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. 32 So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.**

Haran gave birth to a son, Lot, and two daughters, Milcah and Iscah. Nahor, Haran's brother, married Milcah, Haran's daughter, which means he married his brother's daughter. And these people remained in Ur, and Isaac and Jacob married wives from this family. Note that Terah went out with Abram, Sarai,

and Lot from Ur, then stopped in Haran and died. Many left Ur (sin) but remained in Haran and did not reach Canaan.

God called Abraham to leave Ur to the land that God had chosen for him to live in, as though God was planning to establish a people from which the Messiah would come. God chose Abraham and isolated him from the paganism of Ur to be the father of this people. This is what Stephen the martyr and deacon said; " The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said to him, 'Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.' Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell." (Acts 7: 2-4). Abraham left Haran after the death of his father Terah, based on a second call from God to him; " Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you." (Genesis 12: 1)



### The Life of Abraham:

The first fathers, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, and Job ... are called "The Patriarchs." Each of them was the head and priest of his family, where he offered sacrifices to God. This was before the establishment of the Levitical priesthood.

The Patriarchs era began as a preliminary way for God to enter with humanity in successive covenants that ended with God's covenant with man in Christ Jesus through the pure blood on the cross.

The work began with the call of Abraham as the father of all. Through this call, all humanity - the people of circumcision and uncircumcision - took the promise of blessing. So by his faith, he was justified while he was still in uncircumcision (Romans 4). He took circumcision as a seal of this faith, so Abraham carried biological parenthood for the circumcised people and spiritual fatherhood for those who walk with his faith.

### **The Journey of Abraham's Life**

1. Abraham lived with his father Terah and his brothers in Ur of the Chaldeans, where he married Sarah.
2. He received the first call to leave while he was in Ur, and this was announced by Stephen (Acts 2: 7).
3. He left Ur with his father Terah, his wife, and his nephew Lot, and they lived in Haran for 15 years.
4. After the death of his father Terah, he received the second invitation to go to Canaan. God repeats his invitations to his servants, with love, kindness, generosity, and even insistence " You induced me, and I was persuaded" (Jeremiah 20: 7). Abraham left Haran at the age of "75".
5. It seems that he made his way to Canaan through Damascus, where he took Eliezer his great servant.
6. He stayed first in Shechem (Genesis 12: 6), then went to Bethel (Genesis 12: 8), then south.
7. When there was famine, he traveled to Egypt and said about Sarah that she was his sister for the fear of Pharaoh.
8. He returned to the south in Palestine (Genesis 13:1), then went to Bethel (Genesis 13:3).
9. Abraham parted from Lot and went to the Mamre in Hebron, and Lot went to Sodom. Abraham lived in Mamre between 15-25 years and entered into covenants with the Amorite kings. He defeated Kederlomer and his allies to save Lot. On his return, Melchizedek blessed him.
10. He moved from Mamre to the South, and there Abimelech, the king of Gerar, took his wife, Sarah.
11. God tested Abraham and asked him to offer his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice on Mount Moriah.
12. Abraham traveled afterwards to Beersheba.
13. Sarah's death and her burial in the Cave of Machpelah.
14. After her death, Abraham asked his servant to go to his family to take a wife for his son Isaac.
15. He married Keturah and had 6 children from her.
16. Abraham died when he was 175 years old and was buried in the Cave of the Macphelah.

### **Quick Notes on Abraham's life:**

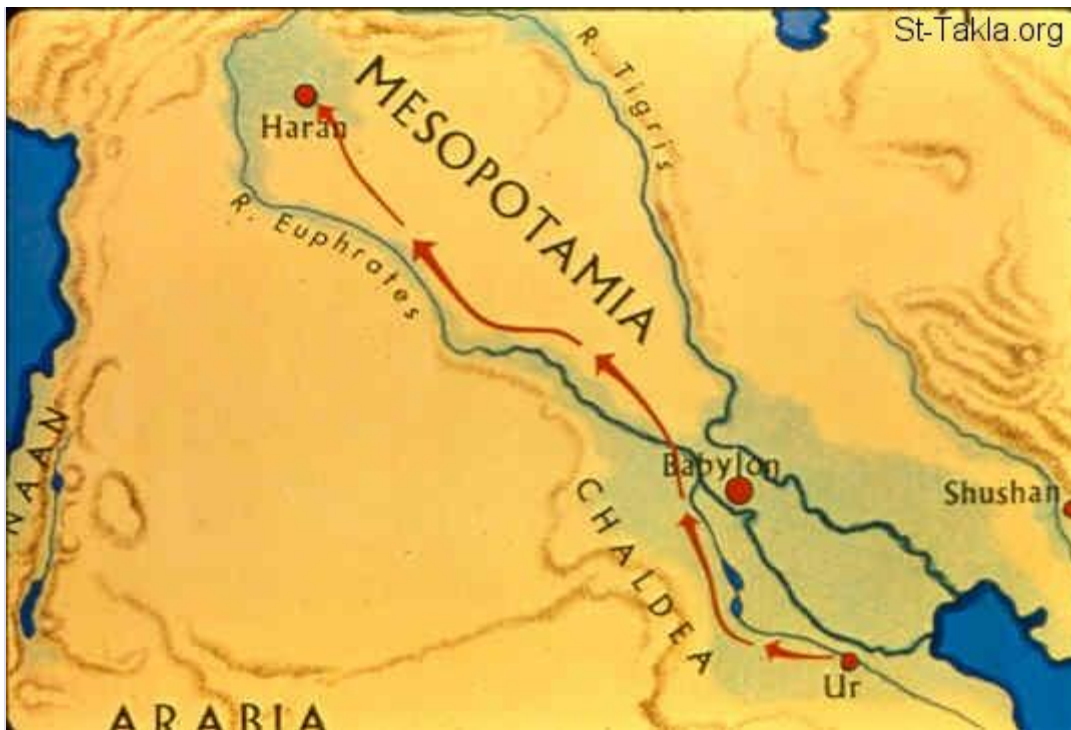


1. God's call to Abraham to leave Ur and then leave Haran is God's call to every soul to withdraw from the places of evil. The people of Ur, descendants of Ham, used to worship idols. And God's call to Abraham was to leave his family and his clan to a land he did not know to live as a stranger living in a tent.
2. He was estranged from his family and his clan, but he was never estranged from God. Wherever he dwelt, he has set up an altar. That is why in Abraham's life always appeared the tent and the altar = estrangement from the world and fellowship with God.
3. Faith was evident in his life, so he became the father of all believers, and all religions believed in his holiness, and in him all believers met. When God called him, he went out after God, not knowing where. And when God asked him to offer his son as a sacrifice, he presented him without discussion.
4. God's call to separate from evil is always present in the Bible. See (2 Corinthians 6: 17 + Revelation 18: 4 + Genesis 19: 17). And for the love of Christ to enter someone, he must leave something for Him. The Samaritan woman left her jar, and the Disciples left their nets but rather left their whole profession. And Matthew left the place of collection, and Abraham left his home, his clan, and his country.
5. God followed a wondrous approach with Abraham, as it strips him of everything so that his connection with God increases and his love increases. He started with his father Terah, then the land of Haran, and beforehand He took him out of Ur itself, then separated him from Hagar and Ishmael (the symbol of carnal love). Terah was also a symbol of obstruction, as he delayed Abraham in Haran for 15 years away from Canaan. He isolated him from the safety of the city of Ur, as it was a center of pagan worship. Then he separated him from Sarah and asked him to offer Isaac. Here, Abraham rose in his love to the level of which Christ said, "He who loves father or mother .... more than Me is not worthy of Me." The meaning is that natural human emotions should not be an obstacle to God's love.
6. Abraham's faith and life are exceptional examples in the Bible. It is a practical belief that God supports him (Heb 11: 8,9). He lived as a stranger, waiting for the heavenly city and dwelling here in tents. Rather, he believed that God could raise Isaac from the dead after he offers him as a sacrifice because God promised him to have descendants from Isaac. He is a man of faith and a man of obedience to God and has the spirit of worship that sets up an altar everywhere, estranging the world with his evil. He is an example of humility (bow to Sons of Heth, asking them to buy the cave of Machpelah). Also, for courage, as he fights five kings to save Lot. He is also an example of self-chastity as he did not accept any remuneration for going to war and saving the people of Sodom, and an example of generosity as he hosts strangers whom he does not know. He is a friend of God who intercedes for the people of Sodom, and God does not even hide anything from him.
7. Because of all these virtues in Abraham's life, God abounded His promises and blessings to Abraham and his descendants. These promises concentrated in:
  - a. He will be a blessing, and through him, the nations will be blessed: Christ will come from him.
  - b. Promises of plentiful offspring: a symbol of the growth of the Church (Jews and Gentiles).

c. Promises of inheriting the earth: Symbol of the New Earth and the Kingdom of Heaven.

### God's Promises to Abraham

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. (Genesis 12: 2-3)   | He was in Haran, and aged 75.                                   |
| 2. (Genesis 12: 7)     | After he left Haran according to God's command                  |
| 3. (Genesis 13: 14-17) | After Lot left him, God promised him to inherit the whole earth |
| 4. (Genesis 15: 4-18)  | After the Battle of Chedorlaomer                                |
| 5. (Genesis 17: 5)     | God changed his name to Abraham                                 |
| 6. (Genesis 22: 17-18) | After offering Isaac as a sacrifice.                            |



However, we notice that God's promises are not always immediately fulfilled. God's first promise to Abraham was when he was 75 years old, and it wasn't fulfilled until Abraham had descendants from Sarah when he was 100 years old. God does not hasten like people, but there is a date for fulfilling God's promises, which is always the appropriate date. This is called "the fullness of the time" (Galatians 4: 4).

7. Despite Abraham's wonderful qualities, he had severe mistakes such as:

- a. Going to Egypt without consulting God when the famine occurred. God who sustained Elijah was able to sustain him, but he hastened and searched for human solutions, and surprisingly, he did not set up an altar for God in the land of Egypt.
- b. His lying and declaring that Sarah is his sister (she is his sister from his father but not from his mother). However, concealing part of the facts to deceive others is a lie, and the result was that Pharaoh took her.
- c. He accepted Pharaoh's gifts in exchange for his wife. He took shelter behind his wife and even gained financially from that.
- d. He repeated the same mistake with Abimelech, the king of Gerar. In the story of Abimelech, Abraham even confessed that it was a plan he had agreed upon with Sarah so that no one would kill him because of her beauty. Also, we see Abraham unjustly judging the people of Gerar by not having a fear of God and the question, "Why did you go there then?"
- e. When God delayed the fulfillment of His promise concerning the offspring, Abraham hastened and married Hagar, the act that caused family problems and bitterness for everyone. And after Sarah was calling him, Lord, she began to quarrel with him and tell him that he wronged her, and family happiness turned into quarrels.

**Question: Why does God reveal the weaknesses of his men in the Bible**

1. For our comfort, when we read in the Bible about the holy men of God, we find them, humans, like us, having their weaknesses, shortcomings, and failures, so we do not think that they are from a dough other than us or of a different nature from us. (Noah got drunk and naked, and Abraham sinned).

Therefore:

- a. We do not despair if we sinned but rather have hope that we will rise and repent and that God will accept us.

- b. We have hope in a holy life like them and have spiritual longings for holiness.

2. When we find that "They have all turned aside ... " (Romans 3: 12), we know that the entire human race has fallen and needs aid from God, so we know that we all need the blood and grace of Christ.

3. God did not choose perfect people to serve him, but rather ordinary people who had their strengths and weaknesses, but he persuaded them to abandon their negatives to walk the path of perfection. Same with us, despite our weaknesses, God has set for each of us work and service that we have to work faithfully to complete. We should not listen to the counsel of the enemy to leave our service because we are not worthy, but rather we ought to respond to the work of the Holy Spirit who guides us to repent so that our service would succeed.

4. God intervenes to protect His children in their lives, even without them asking Him, even if their problems were due to their own mistakes. God saved Sarah twice from the hands of Pharaoh and Abimelech. Rather, we see God seeking friendship with humans and revealing His secrets to them, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing" (Genesis 18:17). Wondrous is God in His humility and love.

5. Illustrated by the story of Sarah and Hagar, the mistake of polygamy and the mistake of conducting human solutions. Human solutions may achieve results quickly, but their problems are numerous. When Sarah failed to give birth to a son for 83 years, Hagar did in a year. But the scale of the difficulties created was daunting.

### **The Tent and The Altar:**

These are two signs that Abraham adhered to wherever he went. The tent means his feeling of estrangement in this world because he desired a better, that is, a heavenly country (Hebrews 11: 16), and the altar is an indication of the relationship with God and the worship of God.

Let us note that a tent without an altar is nothing more than a psychological "disease" and isolation from society. Feeling alienated and isolated from society without having a life of prayer and a close relationship with God will turn to be strange and painful for the soul. The true believer isolates himself from the world's wickedness and sins because he discovered the pleasure of the secret relationship with God. Therefore, we see Abraham's life as a series of visions and divine consolations due to his worship (the altar) beside his estrangement sense (the tent).

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad." (John 8: 56): Abraham saw God after he offered Isaac as a sacrifice (Genesis 22: 14). Often in this vision, Abraham understood the meaning of offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice, and he understood the meaning of the salvation that would be accomplished by Christ ... so he was glad and rejoiced.

## Chapter 12

After the flood, humanity dealt with God as an adversary rather than a loving friend. God searched for a man who deserves to be the father of the people of God from whom Christ comes. He found Abram and called him to leave his people so that humanity would begin a new relationship with God. Abram means honourable father or high father, and when God changed his name, He called him Abraham, which means father to a large crowd, so he is the father of fathers and the father of all believers. And he is the father of the nation whom he will entrust with the salvation that's going to happen.

Ur, which was Abraham's country, was the capital of the Chaldeans and was a center of idolatry. Abraham lived there with his father, Terah (in southern Babylon). It was on the Persian Gulf coast in the days of Abraham, and then part of the Gulf was filled in by silt, and it is now inland. And when it was on the Gulf, it was a coastal commercial center, and there was a vast spread of wealth and abominations, and it was famous for its god "Nanar," the God of the moon, whose worship was recognized for its bitter abominations. Also, Haran was the center of the worship of the moon god. Therefore, we find that Abraham did not receive any announcements during his time in these evil places.

And there was no one in the middle of the whole region, but rather in the world at that time who worshiped God with truth, except Abram, who remained a witness to God and drew to him his wife Sarai and Lot, his nephew.

When God saw the faithfulness of Abram, he called him out of Ur, so he obeyed and went out with Terah (his father), Lot, and Sarai. But Terah delayed him for a long time in Haran.

After the death of Terah, God repeated the call to Abram. We find the Book of Genesis tells us about this call that happened in Haran, while Stephen revealed God's call to Abraham in Ur (Acts 7: 2). Abram's answer to God expresses his firm belief that God can bring out life from death. This faith is evident in his life. This is the faith that every sinner needs.

1. Leaving his well-known country to a wilderness and an unknown place at the age of (75). He did not ask how God would support him in the wilderness when he was at such an old age. A barren wilderness means death, but he believed God could revive him in this desert and this wilderness.

2. His belief that God is able to revive Sarah's dead womb.

3. His belief that God can raise Isaac and that he will have descendants from him even if he presented him as a burnt offering (Hebrews 11: 19)

4. The family of Abraham was undoubtedly a believing family. Still, some pagan customs sneaked into them from the pagan neighbours, so we find Laban afterwards having his gods (the pagan statues that he believes in their blessing). He worships God, but there is no objection to the presence of these statues as well. And God, by calling him to Abraham, was protecting his descendants from the infiltration of these acts of worship. Abraham influenced those around him and attracted them to worship God, and some of them took a step further, like Terah, who went out with him, but did not

complete the road. And some of them took a more significant step than Terah. Like Lot, who left Haran with Abraham but then fell in the love of the world and chose the earthly share. These were having Abraham's faith as their driving force to go out, not their own faith. These all fell in the middle of the way. We see Terah fell and died in Haran. As for Lot, whose love of the world was in his heart, he fell in Sodom (where are we?)

In (Isaiah 51: 1-2) " Look to the rock from which you were hewn, And to the hole of the pit from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who bore you". And the rock here is the faith of Abraham, who believed that the dead womb of Sarah (the pit) can give life.

(Verse 1): **Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you.**

It is not easy for a person to hold God and the earth simultaneously. This divine call is directed to every human soul to proceed from the world's love and the self-love (the ego) and the love of old habits and sins. It is a call for estrangement from the world where we can apply the verse " the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." Thus, the soul meets God and lives with him in his embrace. " Consider and incline your ear; Forget your own people also, and your father's house" (Psalm 45)

**your country:** The vast circle in which you live including all the land of the Chaldeans. **From your family:** The smaller circle: the tribe to which you belong. **from your father's house:** It is the smallest circle. Whoever separates from this, separates from everything. **To a land that I will show you:** God promised Abraham a better land, but He did not specify it, and Abram had not seen it. But he believed God believed by faith. So can we believe that if we leave our sins, we will inherit the better heavens? Faith does not deceive, but our senses deceive us. By faith, God opens our eyes to the invisible matters, and we enjoy the knowledge of God, so we become more convinced to leave the world; therefore, our insight progress, and we move from faith to greater faith.

(Verses 2-3): **I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."**

With every call or commandment, there is a promise that God makes (2 Corinthians 6: 17,18 + Revelation 2, 3) to whom will overcome. If God deprives a person of something, he will compensate him many folds. God forbade Abram from his family and his clan, and here he promises him **I will make you a great nation**. He left Ur the Great on that day, and God made a promise to him and **will bless you And make your name great**. And where is the current greatness of Ur that Abraham left, compared to the greatness of Abraham in all the world and all ages? He left the riches of Ur and God promised him **you shall be a blessing**. He blesses those around him and blesses the place he is in. He left Ur, so God gave him all Canaan. He was separated from his family and he became a father for all the believers. He lost

the protection of Ur with its high walls, God became a wall of fire around him. **will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you.** And then we reach the greatest blessing that Abraham received **And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed:** This is the promise of salvation that Christ will come from his descendants. That is why he said, and all the peoples of the earth shall be blessed in you. This promise that Christ is coming from his seed was why in you (not through you) the families of the earth shall be blessed. A person who gives up something for the sake of God will not live deprived. Rather he receives a lot. God does not accept to be owing to a person, but He gives to all liberally and without reproach. And this last blessing indicates that whoever gives up something God gives him to take to on behalf of the people's account. He is receiving a promise that Christ will come from his offspring. And whoever offers true repentance enjoys the manifestation of Christ in him, and he will be a blessing to many. This the meaning of "You are the salt of the earth .. you are the light of the world". The promise to Abraham that he will be a great nation was fulfilled in the Israeli nation and the inheritance of Canaan. And the promise of blessing to all the world was fulfilled in Abraham, as he became the father of all believers who follow his steps and believe in God.

(Verses 4-5): **So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5 Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan.**

Let's not be like Terah who left Ur but did not continue the way to Heavenly Canaan, and let's not have a Terah who would delay us in our walk.

(Verse 6): **Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land.**

**the terebinth tree of Moreh:** It means the teacher's tree, and it may have taken its name from a religious teacher, i.e. teacher who was sitting under it. And it is also said that it means the fortune-telling tree.

**Shechem:** It is Nablus, 65 kilometers from Jerusalem, and it was the first country Abraham reached in the land of Canaan.

**And the Canaanites were then in the land:** Historically, this sentence indicates that at this time the Canaanites had prevailed over the whole earth. Or that Moses said this in a spirit of faith before the people entered Canaan and based on God's promise that this land is for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He says this as if he sees the land in the hands of the people of God. As if with this phrase, he wants to say God promised Abraham the land, but the land is still in the hands of the Canaanites, with the hope that God's people will take it. Spiritually, this refers to the resistance that God's children find in the church resembled by Canaan. Therefore, repentance and returning to the

church does not mean that the devil's resistance will end. Accordingly, the sentence can be read; And the devil was fighting the children of God at that time. The Church which lives in the heavenly places is still living on earth and thus the devil is wrestling her (Ephesians 6: 12). The arrival of Abraham to Canaan does not mean the destruction of the Canaanites immediately, but there were some wars, but God was appearing to him and comforting him (verse 7). As for us, God gives us victory and triumph over Satan, and He gives us peace, joy and patience over these wars.

(Verse 7): **Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.**

This is the first time where it is mentioned that God appeared to humans and it is one of the appearances of Christ before the incarnation. And in this place Abram set up an altar to the Lord, and the place was sanctified by offering a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God for his safe arrival.

(Verse 8): **And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.**

Notice that he repeatedly built an altar to the Lord wherever he went. And here, in his new location, we find him building an altar. The altar never left him.

**Bethel:** This is the first mention of Bethel in the Bible, as before it was called Luz, where Jacob saw the dream of the ladder stretching on the ground with its head touching the heaven to earth. " And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously." (Genesis 28: 19). So why did Moses call the place Bethel and not Luz if its name was Luz when Abram went to it? There are two opinions:

1. When Moses wrote the Book of Genesis, the name of the place had become Bethel hundreds of years back, and the revelation adopted the name that Jacob gave to this place. This is the likely opinion.
2. The second possibility is that Moses wrote the name of the place Luz. When Ezra compiled the Bible after returning from exile, he changed the name to Bethel as the name Luz became unknown during the days of Ezra, and the common and used name became Bethel.

(Verse 9): **So Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South.**

**going on still:** During our exile in this world, we must be on a continuous journey towards the heavenly Canaan. Neither the troubles of the world nor the temptations of the world should hinder us.



(Verse 10): **Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land.**

This is the first famine mentioned in the Bible, and certainly, the cause is the evil of the inhabitants of the land. Famines were repeated in the land of Canaan, and the treatment was to go to Egypt, where the River Nile is. And so did Abraham without consulting the Lord, who was able to support him, as he did with Elijah. This mistake represents the mistake of the one who repents but soon relies on the human arm and asks for human help rather than divine help.

There was no altar built by Abram in Egypt, as he was searching for the satiety of the stomach. This is our problem when we look for external comfort rather than inner peace obtained through meeting with the Lord at the altar of prayer and thanksgiving.

Despite Abraham's mistake, the land of Egypt was blessed by his visit, just as it was blessed afterwards by his grandson Jacob, and then by the greatest of all Jesus. However, there is a difference between the descent of Abraham and the descent of Jacob to Egypt. Jacob went to Egypt with the guidance of God.

**for the famine was severe in the land:**

Famine affects the earth, but God's children have special treatment. The book did not say that Abraham was hungry, nor his hunger was severe, as mentioned about the Egyptians (Genesis 47: 20). The flesh may starve, but there will be peace in the soul (Psalm 37: 25). God never abandons His children but rather He gives them Heavenly Life and Eternal Satisfaction.



(Verses 11-13): **And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, “Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance. 12 Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, ‘This is his wife’; and they will kill me, but they will let you live. 13 Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you.”**

This is Abram's major flaw. Concealing part of the truth (that she is his wife) is considered a lie even if she is his sister from his father and not from his mother. This is deception, lies and weakness of faith. Deception is a type of temptation in which a person falls to solve a problem quickly and then brings upon himself many issues. And the beginning of the fall was the weakness of faith that made him go down to Egypt. This extended to a weak faith that God can protect him and his wife. Sin is followed by other sins. The result is that he was deprived of his wife.

( Verses 14-20): **So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she was very beautiful. 15 The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh’s house. 16 He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels. 17 But the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife. 18 And Pharaoh called Abram and said, “What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? 19 Why did you say, ‘She is my sister’? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way.” 20 So Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.**

The odd matter is that what Abram could not declare about Sarai, that she is his wife, was revealed by God to Pharaoh to return her to him without touching her, and he even gained wealth and dignity. God, in His love, does not hold man accountable according to his weaknesses. It is understood from the words that God struck Pharaoh with plagues that we do not know, that convinced Pharaoh that God was angry as he tried to harm Sarai. Perhaps Sarai explained to Pharaoh that she was Abram's wife and asked him not to touch her, and maybe Pharaoh tried, so God struck him. The important thing is that God in His love did not want Abram to live in torment of conscience all his life if Pharaoh touched Sarai, his wife. That is why the Lord preserved her from the hands of Pharaoh, and even returned to Abram riches and dignity (Psalm 103: 10, 11). God brings sweetness from the strong. Abram was someone that feared and loved the Lord, so he enjoyed the mercies that are above the earth. (Psalm 105: 15). And Pharaoh’s reproach to Abram is similar to the sailors reproach to the Prophet Jonah, and it is a pity.

There is a similarity between what happened to Abraham and what happened to his descendants afterwards:

1. Both of them (Abraham and Jacob's descendants) went to Egypt because of the famine.
2. In both cases, there were strikes against Pharaoh and his household.

3. Both of them returned with gifts. (God allowed this to let them realize His love and mercy.)

In verses 19, 20: We find that Pharaoh and his men brought Abram out. And here, the Lord did not appear to him, which means that the Lord spoke to him in a language that suits him at this time. When Abraham had simple faith, the Lord spoke to him. But when he sought refuge with Pharaoh to feed him, God let Pharaoh talk to him. These are God's dealings with us. When Balaam became ignorant, he let his donkey talk to him. And while the wise men were interested in the stars, he let a star tell them about the birth of Christ.

## Chapter 13

(Verse 1): **Then Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the South.**

**to the South:** That is, south of the land of Palestine. The going up of Abraham from the land of Egypt resembles the rise of every sinner who has fallen but not surrendered (Micah 7: 8). And we always return back with many blessings.

(Verses 2-5): **Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. 3 And he went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, 4 to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the Lord. 5 Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents.**

**as far as Bethel:** God brought him back to the place where he was in the beginning and God does not rest except by this.

His return to Bethel:

1. Brings back previous loving memories with God, which is very helpful.
2. Perhaps he returned to Bethel to thank God for the safe return of himself and Sarah.
3. He returned to his previous altar

**very rich:** He came out of the experience very rich and prosperous. Thus the children of God do not stop progressing in their continuous growth and entering into spiritual richness, even if they are exposed to weaknesses or falls. And the fact that Abraham was very rich gives hope to every rich person. Heaven will not be closed to the rich if they do not rely on their money and if their money does not cause them pride. Or that the love of their money entered their hearts and confused their thoughts.

The difference between Abram and Lot is that Abram had **gold and silver** = where gold refers to the heavenly matters or the heavenly life, and silver refers to the word of God. It was as if Abram was living a heavenly life, enjoying the word of God and the commandment, as a secret of inner richness. His true wealth was inside him, not outside. As for Lot, he represents the religious person who has a theoretical knowledge of God and accompanies those in the church, but his heart is in the world (flocks, herds and tents). What exhibits both hearts (Abraham and Lot) are trials (fire that tests straw or gold). This is what we will see next.

(Verses 6-13): **Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. 7 And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites**

then dwelt in the land. 8 So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. 9 Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left." 10 And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. 11 Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. 12 Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. 13 But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord.

The trial that revealed their hearts was the quarrel that occurred between their shepherds, so what did each of them choose?

Lot chose what exalted and delighted himself, and he did not care that his neighbours are wicked: **But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord.** As for Abraham, who left everything, he let Lot choose for himself, relying on God, who will choose for him. His share was the inner peace of his heart, but in fact, he possessed in his descendants all the earth (Matthew 5:40). Lot accompanied Abraham on the journey out of Ur with a closed heart; he carried inside him the world's love. But from outside, he seemed to be a companion to a man of faith. Abram's call to Lot was for the sake of maintaining peace between them. It seems that Lot did not disapprove of his men's quarrel but rather supported and encouraged them. When choosing, Lot was supposed to let Abram, the elder and the strongest in faith, to choose first. But Abraham politely and humbly and with self denying asked Lot to choose. Lot did not want to lose the opportunity, so he chose the best land. This experience revealed the heart of Abram, the alienated from the world, and the materialistic heart of Lot. And all Sodom and Gomorrah were burned, and Lot's wife died and his two daughters were defiled. This is the outcome of the world's love, but we cannot deny that there were good aspects in Lot (2 Peter 2: 6-8). And the monuments have indeed proven the fertility of the land of Sodom in the days of Abraham. Strangely, its inhabitants were so evil, for when a person enjoys a lot, he becomes attracted to evil. That is why our church increases its fasts.

**The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land:** With the same concept as before. The question was whether this disagreement between the brothers was appropriate in front of these inhabitants. The question is for each of us. Is it right for us to quarrel with our brothers, and demons rejoice over us?

**for we are brethren:** Abram's eye was on God, but Lot was closed to his selfishness.

**as you go toward Zoar:** Also came as Suan in some translations which was in Egypt on the banks of the Nile. If so, this means that the land is as good as the land of Egypt. And if it was Zoar, it is a town several kilometers away from Sodom, which Lot went to before the fire. Then the meaning would be that he owned the land between Sodom and Zoar.

(Verses 14-17): **And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; 15 for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. 16 And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. 17 Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."**

Here we find God's blessing to Abram, who gave up his right to choose, so God gave him the whole land. He left a part and took all. Whoever chooses for himself among the wicked loses everything. Trials increase the strength and blessing of the believers, and reveal and expose the deeds of the hypocrites. Looking at the four directions may be a sign of the cross by which Christ, who came from the descendants of Abram, will rule over all peoples.

**Arise, walk in the land:** Refers to Christ's resurrection. Also, refers to his people who work without slack but always walk towards heaven.

**I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth:** God said this to him during the day, but when He was speaking to him in the evening, he would say like the stars of the heaven (Genesis 15: 5). In general, Abraham is the father of all believers, Jews and gentiles. The Jews are referred to as the stars of the sky (they were before Christ the Sun of Righteousness came). And Abraham is also a father to the believers in Christ from among the nations. Here they are referred to as sand of the sea, which can be seen in the sunlight.

(Verse 18): **Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the Lord.**

**terebinth trees of Mamre:** Mamre was an Amorite man, whom Abram was a guest at him, and then united with him afterwards.

**and built an altar there to the Lord:** As if he was saying to the Lord, You are my portion, even if my relatives leave me " And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You". For in God, he owns everything.

At the oaks of Mamre, he met with God and hosted him with the two angels. He lived in communion with God. His life was a continuous journey towards deeper communion with God. As for Lot, his journey was to Sodom, where there is ruin and loss of everything.

## Chapter 14

The people of Sodom were evil, and their end was fire, but God does not strike directly without warning, so we find in this chapter two warnings directed to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

1. Their subjection to Chedorlaomer for 12 years in which they paid tribute to him.
2. They did not understand that this pain was due to sin, so they should repent, but instead, they thought humanly and rebelled against the Chedorlaomer, so he fought them back and took them captive, and among the captives was Lot.
3. And Abram interfered, forgetting Lot's previous actions, saved him, returned everything to Sodom and Gomorrah, and did not accept to take anything in return. But these wicked ones still did not repent.

(Verses 1-7): **And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, 2 that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). 3 All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). 4 Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. 5 In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, 6 and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is by the wilderness. 7 Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon Tamar.**

Lot inhabited the area of Sodom, which was subject at that time to Chedorlaomer, king of Elam (Persia), and they were paying him tribute. And this king was known for his tyranny and power, as he controlled all the kingdoms of the south. He also brought under his authority all the countries of the Jordan Valley. (This was part of Noah's prophecy of Canaan's submission to Shem.

**Shinar:** It is between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

**Ellasar:** on the Euphrates.

And the kings of Mesopotamia had subjected the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar to tribute for 12 years. The name of the king of Zoar was not mentioned either for his minor status or for the loathing of his sin. And when the country felt humiliated, the five kings (Sodom and Gomorrah...etc.) revolted against the kings of Mesopotamia so that they would not pay the tribute. So, Chedorlaomer launched a second chastisement attack against the rebels, and three kings allied with him. These four kings swept the region.

The path of the invaders was **Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim .. the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon Tamar** (5-7). They struck them all before coming to Sodom and Gomorrah. This was an elaborate

military plan, for they struck the small peoples who would support and assist the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. Thus, they lost their aides and were left alone for the last stage of the war

**the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea):** This has many interpretations:

1. A chain of chalk rocks extending south of the plain of Jericho, and it is called Sid, and its plural in Hebrew is Siddim, so what is meant is the whole of the Jordanian circle.
2. Some saw that the Salt Sea swallowed Sodom after its burning, so the place was called the valley of Siddim.
3. Some saw that it means the tigers of the nebula: the valley of holes and canyons, which is a low plain in the area of Lot's Sea (Dead Sea) in which there are many wells of the slime or asphalt.

The war between the four kings of Babylon against the five kings of Canaan has a spiritual contemplation. Number (5) is the number of the senses and number (4) is the number of the world. The world, with all its temptations and sins, attacks our five senses, which are subject to the temptations of the world. And how can we win = Abraham + 318 of his men. Abraham represents faith and 318 may represent the men in the Council of Nicaea, that is, the steadfastness on the faith that was once handed down by the fathers, and it may refer, as we shall see, to the cross, the sign of Jesus Christ.

Verse 4: **served Chedorlaomer:** that is they paid tribute to him for 12 years.

(Verses 8-12): **And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim 9 against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. 10 Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains. 11 Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. 12 They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.**

**asphalt pits:** Asphalt is the mineral tar, and it is still present in this area.

**some fell there:** The kings of Sodom and Gomorrah depended on these pits as a natural protection for them, protecting them from the enemies' attack, but they fell into them. They fell in what they thought was protecting them, and this is the case of every sinner. Perhaps the meaning is that the kings fell into the asphalt pits and were rescued then, or that their army men fell there and perished. Or that the battle took place in these inappropriate places and was the reason for their defeat. In verse (12) emphasis is placed on the fact that Lot, who chose for himself, lost everything in this war, but rather lost himself, as he himself went captive. He lost everything he fought over. In these verses, we find that the kings of Mesopotamia, after striking the small peoples who supported the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, turned to the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah to strike them.



(Verse 13): **Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram.**

As a someone who knew Lot's relationship with Abram escaped, he came and told Abram.

**the Hebrew:** It may mean that he is the son of a crossing person, or because he crossed the Euphrates and came to Canaan. But the revelation mentioned that it is Hebrew, intending to remind us that Abram, the stranger in tents, was the one who rescued Lot, the resident of Sodom. It is clear that Abram had a covenant with Mamre, Eshcol and Aner, the Amorite brothers, and they helped him.

(Verse 14): **Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.**

It is the courage and bravery of Abram to fight to save Lot. And it is divine wisdom that teaches us to discern when to forgive and when to fight to defend. Abram forfeited his rights in his dispute with Lot, but he fought for him because his passionate heart could not bear that he was at ease and others were in pain. We note that Lot, who asked for what was for himself, lost everything. And he was subjected to the wars of the enemies because, by his own free will, he came out of the protection of God. He refused to go with Abram and chose the evil places to live in. Therefore, he had to be exposed to the wars and uncertainties of the world. And St. Clement of Alexandria believes that the number 318 in Greek is written like this TIH, and he sees that the letter T is similar to the sign of the cross, and the letter I is from IOC, meaning son, and the letter H is from Ιησοῦς meaning Jesus. Therefore, the meaning would be that it is a symbol of the sign of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that is, the cross (It is the sign of he saved). Certainly, Abraham's men and his allies were few in number, but God is the One who works and gives wisdom to Abraham. Same as what happened with Gideon afterwards. We never heard of any loss in Abraham's men.

(Verse 15): **He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.**

**He divided his forces:** He divided his forces into several armies in order to attack them in several ways, and this is what Gideon did as well (Gideon's army was 300 men as well).

(Verse 16): **So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.**

Abram, who lived as a sojourner, was the one who saved Lot. Thus, the children of God who live as sojourners can support the weak souls immersed in the world.

Remark: St. Peter said in (2 Peter 2: 6-8) that Lot was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked. Therefore, he had to leave this place sacrificing material wealth to save his life. Lot went to this place pursuing material possessions solemnly, so he could not preach or testify to the truth, and when he finally did, he was joking in the eyes of the people of Sodom (Genesis 19). That's why the angel told him "Escape for your life", he had to do this previously but he didn't

(verse 17): **And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him.**

**Valley of Shaveh:** Valley of the plain.

**the King's Valley:** Some said that the kings of Judah used to train their armies in this place. Thus, it is a recent addition that puts the modern name of the place. Others said that the name is due to the incident of the kings meeting with Abram to thank him for saving them.

(verses 18-20): **Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. 19 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.**

**Melchizedek:**

The story of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek is a mystery to the Jews who can't find an explanation for it and said it's hard to explain (Hebrews 5: 11). For how would Abraham, the father of the patriarchs, who had the Levitical priesthood in his loins, offers tithes to a strange man. And why did this man suddenly appear in the book and suddenly disappear, and no one knows his father, mother, or lineage? And Why did he not offer a blood sacrifice, as was the custom of that time? The Jews said as an attempt of interpretation that Melchizedek was Shem, the son of Noah ?!! But what changed his name and what brought him to Canaan!! There are many questions that the Jews cannot find an answer for. The apostle Paul revealed the secret in the Epistle to the Hebrews and said that Melchizedek is a symbol of Christ. Here we find the word "priest" and the word "God Most High" for the first time in the Bible. Christ is the Most High who will offer himself as a sacrifice as a priest, and he was a king and a son of David.

**the priest:** When He says **the**, this is an indication that there is only one priesthood, which is the priesthood of Christ, symbolized by Melchizedek's Priesthood.

1. Melchizedek means King of Righteousness (Romans 3: 24). This is from the name's aspect.
2. King of Salem means King of Peace (John 16: 33). This is from work's aspect (Probably Salem is Jerusalem).

3. He was a king and a priest at the same time, which cannot happen with the Jews, for the kings are from one tribe and the priests are from another tribe. For David is from the tribe of Judah and Priests are from the tribe of Levi.
4. He brought out bread and wine. Thus Christ offers His body and blood in the same form in the Eucharist.
5. We know nothing about his father and mother, and nothing is mentioned about his kingdom's beginning nor end. A reference to the Lord Christ, who is without a physical father and without a mother in terms of divinity, without beginning of days, eternal.
6. Jesus Christ came as a priest on the order of Melchizedek. It is as if the Levitical priesthood had ended in order for a new priesthood to be established that would offer bread and wine.
7. There is no priestly hierarchy of Melchizedek. He did not receive his priesthood from anyone, like Jesus Christ, God appointed him as a priest when He swore (Psalm 110)
8. Abraham, from whose loins the Levitical priesthood will collect tithes, offered tithes to Melchizedek, so who is this who accepts tithes from Abraham except God himself or someone who symbolizes him?

**Rabbis' Interpretation of Melchizedek:**

The Jews wondered at the person of Melchizedek and how he blessed Abraham, the father of the fathers. More surprising, which the Jewish Rabbis could not explain, is what is mentioned in Psalm 110 "The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

They said it was Shem, the son of Noah. They also said that God gave Adam the rite of the priesthood that pleases God, which is the offering of bread and wine. And Adam handed this over to his son Seth, until it reached Shem, son of Noah, who is Melchizedek. They also said that Melchizedek delivered it to Abraham. Then it got to Moses, where Moses intended to apply this worship to the Jewish people, but the sin of the people in the golden calf incident made God say, they do not deserve this law, but they must offer blood sacrifices, and the offering of the blood sacrifices had to continue until the coming of the Messiah who will bring back the ritual of Bread and Wine.

**It is clear that:**

1. The theory is wrong because God gave Adam the ritual of the blood sacrifice and even covered him with its skin. Rather, when Cain offered from the fruits of the earth, God rejected his offering.
2. Who said that Melchizedek is Shem ?!
3. God allowed this interpretation so the Jews may acknowledge the idea of the Sacrifice of bread and wine, which is the Eucharist offered by Christ.

(Verse 21): **Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself.”**

Abram had the right to take the goods as a reward for his labour in freeing everyone.

( Verse 22): **But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth,**

Note how Abraham repeated what he learned from Melchizedek " **God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth**". We, too, must imitate the saints. Raising the hand means declaring an oath.

(Verse 23): **that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich’ —**

**a thread:** This is for women, as the thread is what they tie their hair with. **sandal strap:** This is for men and it means he does not want any earthly reward (neither from the men nor from the women whom he saved). He forsook the earthly reward awaiting the heavenly reward. Rather, in his abandoning the reward, he exceeded the demands of the law, which were later outlined and gave him the right to take the reward.

(Verse 24): **except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.”**

He left his own right but asked for the right of the men who went to the war with him. He does not bind others to his same spiritual level. Rather, with his wisdom, he gained their friendship. This is a clear picture of spiritual and intellectual maturity.

## Chapter 15

(Verse 1): **After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.”**

**Do not be afraid:** He is threatened by war with Chedorlaomer and his men as a kind of revenge for their defeat. He also lives among strange people. He left his family in Ur and Haran, and even his nephew Lot and his men left him. At the same time, he doesn't have sons who may help him. But we see that God, who chose this place for him to live in, tells him why are you afraid, while I am the one who protects you.

**I am your shield:** And this is God's way that if He allows one of His children to be alone, He makes him feel his presence until he is at ease. This is what God did when Jacob left his father's and mother's house and walked alone in the desert; the vision of the ladder reaching to heaven appeared to him.

**shield:** It is the guard that protects the chest during battle. The meaning is that God is the one who defends and protects him.

**your exceedingly great reward:** The above was about God's protection, but that's not all. Rather there is another reward from God for Abram. He left his family and left the comfort and safety of Ur and Haran. Therefore, God rewards him with what humans cannot give, that his descendants will be like the stars of heaven, and his descendants will bless the nations. The promised offspring is not only Isaac, but Christ, in whom all nations are blessed.

Note the saying **After these things:** As if what Abram enjoyed from the Lord's words and promises to him came as a result of his faith decisions. He left Ur and Haran and fulfilled the word of God with faith and because he exposed himself to danger to save Lot. For us, the more we strive in our relationship with God and obey Him, the closer God will come to us.

(Verse 2): **But Abram said, “Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?”**

When Abram felt God nearing him, Abram spoke boldly and confidently to God, saying **what will You give me, seeing I go childless:** I am on the path of the whole earth, that is, I will die without an heir bearing my name. **the heir of my house:** Archaeology proved that a slave would inherit his master if the master did not bear children. **Eliezer of Damascus:** He may have become his slave on his way from Haran to Canaan, when he passed through Damascus. The meaning of Abram's words here is that I have grown up, so even if God rewards me with material rewards, what can I profit from them, and my days are near, and I have no heir, all that you will give me will go to Eliezer.

(Verse 3): **Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!”**

**one born in my house:** This means the owner of my house or my servant, and because of his humility and love he calls him born in my house, i.e. in the status of a son.

(Verses 4-5): **And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." 5 Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."**

Abraham's life was a continuous series of encounters with God and constant enjoyment of promises because of his living and practical faith and his obedience to God in everything.

**and count the stars:** Therefore, this vision was at night, and when God told him, "I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth" (Genesis 13: 16), this was in the light of day, when he was seeing the dust.

(Verse 6): **And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.**

**And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness:**

By nature it seemed impossible to fulfill this promise. Here we hear for the first time the word "believed". (Hebrews 4: 2 + Romans 4: 3 + Galatians 3: 6 + James 2: 23). And we became children of Abraham by faith. He opened for us the way of righteousness through faith. On the other hand, the Lord said about the Jews that they are the sons of the devil because they do his desire (John 8: 44)

(Verse 7): **Then He said to him, "I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."**

God did not take him out of Ur to leave him in the desert, but prepared Canaan for him to inherit. From this verse Stephen understood that God appeared to Abraham while he was still in Ur (Acts 7: 2) although in (Genesis 12: 1), we see the first conversation between God and Abraham was in Haran.

(Verse 8): **And he said, "Lord God, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"**

**how shall I know that I will inherit it?:** It is a question that bears no doubt, as God has already declared his faith before (verse 6). He didn't ask in unbelief that he will inherit. Rather, he was asking for a sign to know the way by which what he believed would be fulfilled, or that the meaning of the question was how this would happen. And this is what Virgin Mary did. She asked about the means by which she would give birth while she did not know a man, so the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you". And because Abraham's question was about the inheritance of Canaan, and Canaan refers to

the heavenly Canaan, God's answer came bearing the aspects of Christ's sacrifice and his new covenant by which Abraham's children, by faith, have access to heavenly Canaan. This sign has come to reveal to us the mystery of the Church emerging from the loins of Abram. God promised him descendants like the stars of heaven, and now he reveals to him about these descendants, who will become a holy church for the Lord and will include the people of circumcision (the Jews) and the nations. Thus, we can understand the previous verses with a new understanding:

**This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir** (Verses 4, 5)

**to give you this land to inherit it** (Verse 7)

Compare with " Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. (Psalms 2:8) + ".. that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints," (Ephesians 1: 18). Therefore, the believers are Christ's inheritance. The inheritance is the inheritance of the earthly Canaan, and Isaac, Abram's descendant in the flesh, will inherit it. This is how Abram understood the words of God. But the broader meaning is that the Messiah, who came out of Abram's loins, is the one who inherits, and the believers in Him from all over the world, Jews and Gentiles who have the same faith as Abram (Abraham). This inheritance of the believers in Christ will be with him in the Heavenly Canaan.

Abram's question "**shall I know that I will inherit it?**" meant for Abram in what way I would inherit while I am weak and alone before all these peoples? God did not respond to him directly but gave him a promise by the style of that time, splitting an animal and walking between the two parts of the animal. This meant it is sufficient Abram that I promised and entered into a covenant with you. But in a symbolic sense, Abram's question was, how will this be done? That is, how, O Lord, will you inherit this world that is rebellious against you from those who worship idols...etc.? And the meaning of the answer would be .. By the sacrifice that will be offered on the cross. And then, years later, we see God explaining the sacrifice of Christ by asking to offer the beloved son of Abraham, i.e. Isaac, as a sacrifice, but he comes back alive. Salvation does not occur with animal sacrifices but with the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Animal sacrifices in the Old Testament were a symbol. Thus, this chapter (Genesis 15) and what happened in it became a symbol of the chapter (Genesis 22) of Isaac offered as a sacrifice.

After the sacrifice was offered, God's words to Abram meant that you would not inherit immediately, but after your offspring spend a period of slavery.

(Verses 9-10): **So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.**

Cut animals is a method of covenant and entering into a treaty within the ancient tribes, where the two parties to the treaty split an animal and walk in the middle as a sign of a covenant and agreement, in the sense that God would cut me like this if I violated the covenant.

Here, Abram cut the animals into two halves and placed each part against the other. As for the birds, he did not cut them, but rather put each bird towards the other (the turtledove and the young pigeon). [Note that the covenant between God and man (the New Testament) was through the sacrifice of Christ]. Therefore, this vision revealed:

1. The mystery of the Crucified Christ.
2. The mystery of the Church that emerged from Abram's loins.

**These animals had several interpretations:**

1) **These sacrifices refer to the Sacrifice of the Cross:** (Revise interpretation of the Book of Leviticus). One type of sacrifice was not enough to explain the sacrifice of the cross. For Sin has caused God's Heart to grieve: a) The death of his beloved man b) Disobedience of man, which means distrust of God, who told him, "in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." The variety of sacrifices was to address both problems. There were burnt offerings that referred to the obedience of Christ, who obeyed to the point of death, even the death of the cross. The sin and trespass offerings symbolized the death of Christ for our sins, so we were forgiven and we got eternal life. We can say that the heifer represents the burnt offering, the goat represents the sin offering, and the ram represents the trespass offering. The birds represent the church that carries the cross with her Christ. The turtledove represents the church isolated from the evils of the world (Refer to Song of Solomon 2: 12) but she is a praising church. The turtledove bird loves solitude and does not like crowding, and has a sad cooing voice, perhaps referring to the cry of repentance that the Book of Song of Solomon says " Turn your eyes away from me, For they have overcome me (Song of Solomon 6: 5). The pigeon resembles the Church which is filled with the Holy Spirit that comforts her in the midst of her pain and confirms her in Christ: First in Baptism, Then He will convict her if she gets separated from Christ because of sin. And also by giving her help to establish herself in Christ (John 16: 8-11 + Romans 8: 26).

As for the number 3 (the cut animals were three years old) refers to Christ who truly died on the cross, but He rose on the third day and raised His church with him. Compare this with what Saint John the Theologian saw about how Christ looked in his vision "stood a Lamb as though it had been slain" (Revelation 5: 6). And The Apostle Paul says; " Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh" (Hebrews 10: 19-20). Christ is the Living Sacrifice = Christ had the two features, life and death, and he has preserved both: He died by Adam's nature and raised with an eternal life.

2) The animals and birds used were from the clean birds and animals that were permitted to be offered as sacrifices according to the Levitical laws which were given later. If we understand that all the sacrifices refer to Christ, it can be understood that the multiplicity of sacrifices indicates the multiplicity of aspects of the sacrifice of Christ. **The heifer:** refers to the Burnt Offering, and the Burnt Offering



refers to the obedience that God wanted to see in mankind. And when we disobeyed Him as human beings, Christ sent the perfect man who obeyed unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, we are considered complete in Him (Colossians 1: 28), because he came as a patient obedient servant. Christ obeyed unto death with all submission. He even gave us His body as food (sacrificed the fatted calf for the prodigal son). Christ gathers us in Him to be members of His One Body, and with this body He offers submission and obedience to God (1 Corinthians 15: 28). **The Goat:** refers to the sinner { the goats on the left. (Matthew 25: 33)}, Christ became to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. He became a sin offering on the cross to take away our sin. **The Ram:** It was used in the Trespass Offering. Christ became a Trespassing Offering for our sake in order to take away our iniquities (The sin offering speaks of the original sin that we inherited from Adam - the trespass offering speaks of the sins we commit because of our fallen nature that we inherited from our father Adam. And Christ, through his cross, removed from us both the original sin that we inherited from Adam, as well as our sins that we commit daily). As for the birds (the turtledove and the pigeon) they point out that He is heavenly and came from above to redeem mankind. **The Turtledove** refers to solitude and sorrow, nothing was greater than the love or sorrow of Christ "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death". It also refers to purity, as some species only have one partner for mating. **The Pigeon:** refers to the descending of the Holy Spirit on Christ's Body in the day of the Baptism for the sake of the church. The Holy Spirit was first poured on Christ, the Head of the church, and then on the church, His body (Psalm 133).

3) Also the sacrifices refer to the believers: some of them walk in the Spirit and others walk in the flesh. The age of animals is 3 years, an indication of the believers of the Holy Trinity and their raising with Christ. The animals refer to the fleshly and the birds refer to the spiritual. The splitting of animals indicates that the carnals are always divided. As for the spiritual, they are not divided, for they have one heart, one soul, and one love. **The Turtledove** represents isolation from the evil world, for it does not return to the place in which it grew up, and does not adapt to the difficult climate. The pigeon represents the filling of the Holy Spirit that establishes the Church in Christ. The pigeon always returns to its home, and the Holy Spirit brings us back to Christ if we move away (Hebrews 3: 6). The carnals are divided amongst themselves, and are bounded by the heavy restraints of sin, while the spirituals are lifted to the heights, with the various wings of virtue as with two wings.

4) Paul the Apostle says " For if we have been united together **in the likeness of His death**, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection," (Romans 6: 5). His saying **in the likeness of His death** refers to that Christ died a real death in which His human soul was separated from His body. As for us, through baptism, our souls are not separated from our bodies, but the one who dies in us is our old man, that is our corrupted desires. Whoever strives to preserve his old man in a state of death (putting him to death), shows the life of Christ. (2 Corinthians 4: 10-11 + Galatians 5: 24). And the fact that Abram split the slaughtered animals and not the birds, this may have been an indication that the way Christ died was different from the way we die. And the fact that Abram split the slaughtered animals and not the birds, this may have been an indication that the way Christ died was different from the way we die. Christ died a real death on the cross, in which his soul was separated from his body. As for us, baptism only puts to death the old man in us, without dying a real death through the separation of the

soul from the body. And grace helps the one who lives the life of dying (which means to stand as a dead person in front of sin) in keeping the old man in a state of death. (Note that the cut sacrifices refer to Christ's sacrifice on the cross. As for the sacrificed birds without cut, they refer to the church that crucify the flesh with its passions and desires (Galatians 5: 24) and present your bodies a living sacrifice .. (Romans 12: 1).

5) The church's acceptance of the crucifixion with her Messiah was indicated in the prophecy of Jacob to his son Judah " Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion (lionesse in the right translation), who shall rouse him? (Genesis 49: 9).

These views state that the sacrifices refer to: The crucified and the resurrected Christ, and the church that crucifies the flesh with its passions and desires, also refers to the reply to Abram's question on "how he shall inherit" were the reply is; by the crucified Christ and by the suffering and striving church that lives the life of death as a way to the glory.

The inheritance:

- Abram and his descendants will inherit earthly Canaan
- Christ will inherit His church, and His church will inherit heavenly Canaan.

(Verse 11): **And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.**

**the vultures:** represent the unclean spirits of the air that seek their own through the divisions of the fleshly ones. And Abram refers to the vigilant spiritual soul that cannot prevent the vultures from circling around, but he can prevent them from staying with him or snatching something from his possessions. This was confirmed by the church fathers that the living believer cannot prevent the war of sins from attacking him, but when sin finds an alert person, it cannot enter him or infiltrate his mind or heart.

Abram asked for a sign, God asked him to cut the sacrifices, then Abram's waited for the sign, but it did not appear but rather the vultures attacked the sacrifices (the sacrifices represent the believer as a spiritual living sacrifice) and Abram was driving them away all the day. This represents the war that Satan, the prince of the power of the air, perform against the Church all days. This also indicates that we must watch over our spiritual sacrifices and wait for God's revelations, and we have to wait patiently and it will surely come. However, we must wait vigilantly for the fulfillment of God's promises. These vultures may also refer to anti-Israel peoples such as Babylon, Assyria, and others. Let us note that there must be wars of the enemy of good against the people of God and no one is crowned unless he competes according to the rules (2 Timothy 2: 5 + Ephesians 6: 12). The believer remains in his striving and offering himself as a living sacrifice for his whole life, and he will also remain in an intellectual war from Satan, but he must resist it in the name of Christ throughout the day.

(Verse 12): **Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him.**

God allowed a deep sleep to fall upon Abram same as the deep sleep that fell on Adam. God closed the doors of the body to give the soul an opportunity to contemplate on spiritual matters. **and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him:** This refers to:

1. He saw the fruit of sin in man's life, how it enslaves and corrupts him. He heard that his descendants would be enslaved for 400 years. It is a painful picture of the soul that falls under sin and becomes enslaved and humiliated by the tyrannical Pharaoh. It also refers to the price that Christ will pay for our salvation, and refers to the great tribulation at the end of days because of sin (Matthew 24: 21).

2. What happened with Abram here refers to the salvational work of Christ. As in the fullness of time, before sunset, a slumber fell on the Lord, as He gave up His soul on the cross declaring the bitterness of sin that brought us down to Hades and to slavery for a time.

3. Horror arises from the hiding of the face of the Lord because of sin, and this is what Abram's offspring will experience for a while. This is a symbol to what happened to human race " For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;" (Romans 8: 20)

(Verse 13): **Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.**

**they will afflict them four hundred years:**

It is mentioned in the Book of Exodus (Exodus 12: 40) that the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. Often, Egypt refers to exile and slavery. In a symbolic sense, the period of 430 years is from God's call to Abram to leave from Ur until the people's exodus from the land of Egypt. And the period of 400 years is from the start of Ishmael's persecution to Isaac until the people's exit from the land of Egypt, so he said here, they will humiliate them, while setting the period to 400 years. As for the people's stay in Egypt, their duration was about 210 years, and the periods are calculated as follows:

1. The period from God's call to Abram while he was in Mesopotamia in Ur to his exit from Haran was 5-15 years, let's say it was 5 years.

2. The period from leaving Haran and entering Canaan to the birth of Isaac is 25 years, because he left Haran when he was 75 years old, and Isaac was born when he was 100 years old. (Genesis 12: 4 + 21: 5).

3. From the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob, 60 years (Genesis 25: 26)

4. From the birth of Jacob until his entry into the land of Egypt with his sons 130 years (Genesis 47: 9)

Thus, the period of sojourn in Canaan will be:  $5+25+60+130=220$  years.

The period of staying in Egypt becomes:  $430-220 = 210$

And when he said that the period of their sojourn in Egypt is 400 years, it is to call the part to the whole, considering that the period of their stay in Egypt was the most important part in the history of their sojourning, or because the period of their stay in Egypt represented their slavery.

The period of the presence of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in Canaan is a period of sojourn, as the period of inheritance had not yet come, meaning they still did not own the land yet, during this time, they were sojourners in tents (Hebrews 11: 9). In this sense, the Septuagint translation mentioned that the period of their stay in Egypt and Canaan was 430 years, The Septuagint added Canaan to Egypt as an explanatory footnote. This is what Paul the Apostle understood " And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect." (Galatians 3: 17). He considered that the 430 years began with God's promise to Abram, and until the people left Egypt and obtained the law. Let us note what God says: **your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs: (Canaan and Egypt). and will serve them:** This happened in Egypt. God did not reveal the name of Egypt for these reasons:

1. The sojourning included Egypt and Canaan in the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
2. So that Jacob and his sons would not decline going to Egypt.
3. The spiritual descendants of Abraham are us, the Christians who have the same faith as our father Abraham (Romans 4: 16, 17) and we are currently sojourners in the world. Before Christ, we were enslaved by Satan until Christ freed us with his cross. Therefore, we understand that the subject of the estrangement of Abraham's children is much more comprehensive than the estrangement of Abraham's descendants in Egypt and Canaan.

The Sequence of Verses:

(Verses 4-7): God gives Abraham a promise that his physical descendants will inherit Canaan = And Christ is from the seed of Abraham in the flesh will inherit the church which is from the Jews from the seed of Abraham in the flesh who believe in Christ. Also, the Gentiles who are children of Abraham by faith. And the Church which is the inheritance of Christ, and its share is the heavenly Canaan.

(Verse 8): Abraham asking how his descendants will inherit earthly Canaan. And God answers by how Christ will inherit the believers from the sons of Abraham the Heavenly Canaan.

(Verses 9-10): God enters into a covenant with Abraham that what He told him will be fulfilled. And He reveals to him the mystery of the Cross sacrifice, and the Church carrying her cross after her Christ as the way of inheriting Canaan.

(Verse 11): Satan will not cease resisting the church and we must resist him for our lifetime.

(Verse 12): The deep sleep that fell on Abraham was a sign to Christ's death on the cross. Christ's death on the cross was the beginning of the reconciliation between God and man (Romans 5: 10). This reconciliation that occurred was the entrance of the church, the descendants of Abraham, to the heavenly Canaan.

(Verse 13): However, there will be a period for the people to spend in slavery (400 years) before they inherit the land, and it is a symbol of the time we now spend on earth in our struggle against the wars of Satan until we inherit Heavenly Canaan.

(Verse 14): **And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.**

There is a plan that God allowed for salvation, we were enslaved and fell under pain and distress as a result of sin. The sojourning of the people (400 years) resembles our estrangement in this world. This is how we were before Christ in slavery. As Ishmael persecuted Isaac, and the Egyptians persecuted God's people to the extent that they were killing their children (a symbol to Satan's work who was a murderer from the beginning). Same as how the Church must fall into tribulations that reach its peak at the end of the world, passing through the ages of martyrdom. And God allowed and even arranged that through sufferings, we would be purified, cleaned, and prepared for glory. He subjected the creation to futility (Romans 8: 20) for disciplining. Revise the interpretation of (1 Corinthians 5: 5). And when we suffers with Him, we may also be glorified together. (Romans 8: 17) + (Luke 24: 26).

**And also the nation whom they serve I will judge:** This is what happened during the ten plagues against Pharaoh and his men, then with the split of the sea and the drowning of his soldiers. This is a symbol of Satan's judgment in the lake of fire (Revelation 19: 20). This judgement began with the cross.

**afterward they shall come out with great possessions:** The people came out of Egypt with many possessions. And the Lord Jesus, who is lying on the cross, as He descends to Hell, carries us on His shoulders and brings us out as with great possessions, carrying His riches and granting us the riches of the Spirit, so that when the sunset of the world comes at the end of the ages, the salvation of our bodies is proclaimed. And as He promised sit with Him on His throne (Revelation 3: 21) and our lowly image is changed to the image of His glorified body (Philippians 3: 21).

We can say that the period of 400 years equals  $4 \times 100$ . The number 4 is the number of generality, and the number 100 refers to the flock of Christ. Thus, the period of slavery and affliction **and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years** (verse 13) is the period of subjection to futility for the sake of disciplining all the flock of Christ. This disciplining is essential because of the original sin that we inherited which is the rebellion against God's commandments. For whom the Lord loves He chastens (Hebrews 12: 4-11). God allows us to be chastised to guarantee for us a heavenly inheritance. And because the number 400 here refers to a time, the meaning is that here on earth we are in a time of discipline and preparation.

(Verse 15): **Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age.**

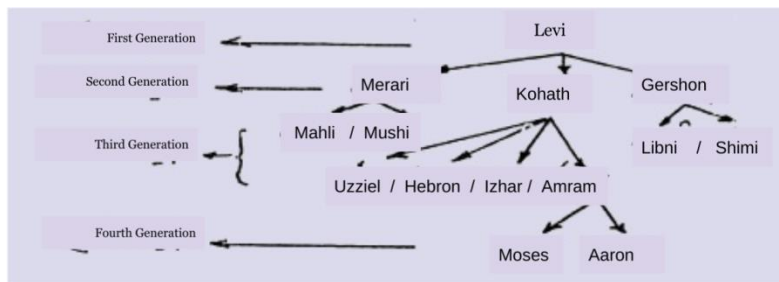
This indicates the immortality of the soul, where the soul of Abram meets with the souls of his fathers, because the body of Abraham was buried in Canaan in the Cave of Machpelah, while his fathers were

buried in the lands of Mesopotamia. The meaning is that, O Abraham, before the great day of the Lord, in which the children of God are glorified with abundant possessions, that is, joy and eternal glory (the heavenly inheritance), there is a period of rest for the souls in Paradise in which you rest with your fathers.

(Verse 16): **But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."**

**in the fourth generation:** Perhaps what is meant is 4 x 100: 400 years, so each generation is 100 years. But this verse probably defines the generations that lived in Egypt and they were three generation, and the fourth generation exited Egypt. Levite (First generation) entered, and Moses (Fourth generation) exited.

Exodus 6: 16-20



**for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete:**

The Amorites are the most famous of the Canaanites and the most evil of them. God will leave them this specific period without punishment:

- A) Perhaps His long patience will lead them to repentance.
- B) So that their sins are witness against them.
- C) God prolongs his patience and gives many opportunities to repent, but for a time that He determines, and after that the plagues will come (Revelation 2: 21, 22) " And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast ...".
- D) We see here God's justice and his method of punishment. We notice in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah that God did not destroy the two cities until after Lot and his family left. And according to his promise, if there were ten righteous people, he would not destroy the two cities. He also saved Noah and his family before the flood. Here, he does not punish the people of Canaan until their sin is complete, and after he gave them opportunities to repent and prolonged his patience on them for many years. The fact that God allowed the Jews to conquer them was because of their sins, and that was when their cup was filled. Note that Sodom and Gomorrah were more corrupt, so God did not give them much time, and their cup had filled up faster, and they became ready for ruin, and their sin was

complete, so God burned them. And God uses one nation to discipline another, and God, for example, uses the peoples neighbouring Israel to discipline Israel.

### **Why was the punishment of Canaan by the hands of Israel?**

1. As a lesson to the people of Israel that this is the outcome of sins, so they should be fearful of replicating them. When they committed the same sins, their punishment was similar to that of the people of Canaan.
2. This was a symbol of the victory of the God's children (the Church) in the person of Christ (Joshua).

(Verse 17): **And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.**

### **smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces:**

the smoking oven refers to the mysteries surrounding the events of salvation in the Old Testament, and for Abraham, it points out that it is not easy to understand the meaning of the vision or the events that God announced to him. The smoke rising from the burnt offering refers to Christ the Savior who offered Himself as a burnt sacrifice on our behalf. It also refers to the suffering of the people in their bondage in Egypt and to the suffering of the Church. As Christ suffered, his Church will suffer. And yet, many do not understand why they suffer, where this pain is for the salvation of their souls, and this is another meaning for smoke.

The **burning torch** declares the presence of God and His leading to His people, for He was to them as a pillar of fire leading them through the wilderness of this world (As He lead Israel in the wilderness of Sinai). And now He leads us with His Holy Word and with His Holy Spirit who came upon His disciples like tongues of fire. St. Paul the Apostle says " For our God is a consuming fire." (Hebrews 12: 29). God appeared to Moses in the burning bush as fire. Also, " will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst" (Zechariah 2: 5 + Zechariah 12: 6). Therefore, this torch indicates the Divine Salvation in the midst of hardships, and as the Church suffers with him, so she is glorified with him. And we shine as a shining lamp after the end of this world, amid the darkness and smoke of judgment (Isaiah 62: 1). It was the custom in the treaties of this kind that the two parties pass between the sacrifices. However, we find that Abram was not invited to pass between the pieces, so it was not pledged by him, but the torch alone pass between the sacrifices declaring that God alone is taking the covenant to accomplish His work completely through the cross of His son. His son who offered the sacrifice (the cut animals) and He is the Heavenly (the turtledove and the pigeon) and He is the light of the world (the burning torch) and His pain was horrifying as a burnt sacrifice (the smoke). Abram and the believers of his descendants don't have except to drive the vultures away and strive to decline evil thoughts. Let us note that the fiery Holy Spirit that we obtained gives us help and enlightenment. And if God tells us that there are sufferings, let us remember that according to His promise, we must be patient, and we will come out of the world with great possessions. This is the meaning of the burning torch passing between

the pieces. Let us give thanks to the Lord for this promise and this love, with which He prepares us for the heavenly inheritance.

(Verse 18): **On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—**

**from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates:** This actually happened in the days of Solomon, whose kingdom extended from the borders of Egypt to the lands at the Euphrates, But when he broke his promise and married foreign women and burned incense to their idols, God divided his kingdom. About the River of Egypt, it is said that there was a branch of the Nile that passed near Suez and to the east of Al-Arish, and he meant by the Plain of Al-Arish the Nile Valley.

In those verses in the Book of Isaiah (Isaiah 19: 23-25) A picture of the strong faith that God is preparing in this region at the end of days so that the believers will witness to the whole world the falsehood of the Antichrist: Strong faith \* for God's people in Egypt \* In Assyria \* Rather in the midst of Israel when the Jews believe in Christ as the Saviour. These three peoples will have a role that is a blessing to the world, for they will announce to the world the truth of the Antichrist, who will mislead the world (Please look to the interpretation of Isaiah 19)

(Verses 19-21): **the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, 20 the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21 the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”**

The covenant between God and Abram had two complementary aspects:

1. Abraham's children enjoyed the earth: Christ's people enjoyed the inheritance of heaven.
2. Expelling the Gentile Nations from the Land: Satan's Judgment and Expulsion for His Evil.

The other nations were identified as ten nations:

1. The number 10 refers to the commandments and these nations were addicted to breaking the Ten Commandments.
2. Some Fathers said that it refers to the great sins [Gluttony, fornication, love of money, anger, grief, spiritual indifference, showmanship, pride, idolatry, and blasphemy]. These are the sins of the peoples whom God expelled before them.
3. When God determines the peoples they expel when they enter the land, God determines for them the land that they take, so that they do not fight other peoples.
4. The land identified by God falls between two fertile rivers, the Nile and the Euphrates, meaning that God's gifts are all bountiful, and the river refers to the goodness and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This is



why we see a river in the heavenly Jerusalem (Revelation 22: 1) and there was a river in Eden (Genesis 2: 10).

### **Claiming that God promised the Jews that they would have the land from the Nile to the Euphrates**

The Jews are based on the promise mentioned here in the verse (Genesis 18:15) and say that God gave them a promise that the land from the Euphrates River in Iraq to the Nile River in Egypt is theirs. This is not true. We have several comments on it, because the Jews, as usual, deceive the simple and uneducated.

1. The promise never said from the Nile River... but from the River of Egypt. This river, which is meant here, is a small seasonal river in the plain of Al-Arish, which is filled with plain water and rain, and you find it on many maps as a separator of the borders between Egypt and Israel. The Nile River is mentioned by his name 10 times in the Bible. The distance between the Nile River and the River of Egypt is approximately 280 km. In Hebrew, the word Nile is different from the word river.

2. Note that God on the mouth of Joshua specified for them their southern border as being at the Valley of Egypt " From there it passed toward Azmon and went out to the Brook of Egypt; and the border ended at the sea. This shall be your southern border." (Joshua 15: 4) And God determined for them their northern border at the entrance to Hamath (Numbers 34: 8). God never mentioned the Syrian Hama within the promised land, that is, their borders that God set for them are the borders of Egypt in the south and Syria in the north. And God never said Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, or Lebanon (God did not say that the Phoenicians were among the peoples they seized) within the Promised Land. And God prevented them from approaching or taking Moab " 'Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession," (Deuteronomy 2: 9), nor Ammon (Currently Oman) " for I will not give you any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession" (Deuteronomy 2: 19), nor Edom " Do not meddle with them, for I will not give you any of their land , no, not so much as one footstep," (Deuteronomy 2: 5). God is the one who gives the people their lands and preserves it if they obey His commandments. Therefore, God did not give to them the Jordan (which includes Moab, sons of Ammon, and Edom) as a promised land. Moab, Ammonites, and Edom were subject to Israel for some time, but this was a temporary situation. The borders of the Promised Land to the east became the borders of Moab, Ammonites, and Edom. Their western border is the Great Sea: the Mediterranean " As for the western border, you shall have the Great Sea for a border; this shall be your western border." (Numbers 34: 6).

3. The great river; the Euphrates River meant is the part that passes through Syria, not Iraq. The Euphrates River starts from the heights of Anatolia in Turkey and a large part of it passes through the territory of Turkey and then descends to Syria and passes after Syria to Iraq to unite with the Tigris River and both flow into the Arabian Gulf or the so-called Persian Gulf. The length of the Euphrates River is 2940 km. Therefore, it is not applicable to say about the Euphrates, the great river, if the meaning of the River of Egypt is the Nile River. The Nile River is 6650 km long. So by comparison, the meant river by saying the river of Egypt is the small seasonal river located on the borders of Egypt.

4. In the Battle of Carchemish between Nebuchadnezzar and Necho, King of Egypt, it was said that "Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish by the Euphrates" (2 Chronicles 35: 20). Necho was going to fight Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish in the north. Josiah meaninglessly entered to fight Necho. The important thing is that the book said that he ascended to the Euphrates in the north and did not go to the Euphrates in Iraq in the east. Accordingly, we understand that the meant river Euphrates in God's promise to Abraham was the river located in Syria.

5. They were actually in Egypt for more than 200 years, and they were in Iraq during the days of captivity in the Promised Land, so why would the Lord expel them from Egypt and Iraq if Egypt and Iraq were a promised land for them? Note what God said to Abraham in (verse 13) " Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years". God acknowledged that they would be strangers in Egypt, and God did not say that it was a promised land for them but that they would be strangers in it. The same was said in the psalm " By the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down, yea, we wept When we remembered Zion. We hung our harps Upon the willows in the midst of it. For there those who carried us away captive asked of us a song, And those who plundered us requested mirth, Saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!" How shall we sing the Lord's song In a foreign land? (Psalm 137: 1-4). Thus, the Psalmist knows they are in a foreign land in Iraq, and it is not their Promised Land.

6. This kingdom was really achieved in the days of Solomon " So Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life." (1 Kings 4: 21). Thus, this prophecy was actually fulfilled. Note that in (Joshua 21: 43, 44) that the Lord gave them the land and comforted them within the land that He promised them and did not mention that He gave them Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq or Palestine. God's promise was fulfilled without their entry into all these nations.

7. In the verses (Genesis 15: 19, 20) Neither the Egyptians, nor the Syrians, nor the Iraqis, nor the Phoenicians (Lebanon), nor the Palestinians were mentioned among the peoples to whom the Jews would subjugate. Rather, he mentioned the Canaanites only who God punished for their heinous sins.

8. The verse (Genesis 15: 18) has a beautiful spiritual application that goes with (Isaiah 19: 23-25) which is that in the last days there will be strong faith for the Christians of Egypt and Syria as well as the Jews in Israel who will believe in Christ at the end of days. These strong believers have an important role to play, which is to reveal the deception of the beast (the Antichrist) to the whole world (See interpretation of Isaiah 19). These strong believers are the children of Abraham by faith. Their faith is similar to that of Abraham, whether they are of Jewish origin (the Jews who believe) or of Gentile origin. For after believing in Christ, we do not say a Jew and a Gentile, but a Christian who believes in Christ. This is the meaning of what's written that Abraham's descendants will inherit this land from the Euphrates to the River of Egypt.

9) Why did he say River of Egypt instead of the Nile River? The mention of the name Egypt meant Egypt, so he did not say the Nile River. The children of Abraham who have a strong faith similar to Abraham's will be found in Egypt / Assyria (Syria and northern Iraq) / and Israel. And God is preparing those people

to bear witness to Him in the days of the Antichrist. In this verse of blessing, he mentions Egypt, Assyria, and Israel as separate peoples, but united by faith in Christ.

10) Note: There are hundreds of thousands of Jews in Israel there who believed in Christ, and who came from America and Europe to be baptized in the Jordan River and call themselves Messianic Jews.

Note that God did not give them the land of Palestine, Egypt, or Iraq. But the deception of the Jews is that they use these verses, saying that God gave them a promise of a land stretching from the Nile to the Euphrates. As a summary again, the River Egypt means the branch that was located east of Al-Arish. The Euphrates River means the Euphrates in Syria. And this promise was fulfilled in the days of Solomon.

## Chapter 16

In the previous chapter, we heard " And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness." (Genesis 15:6), and we read in (Hebrews 6: 15) " And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise." However, we see in this chapter the contrary of patience. We see haste and human solutions. The result of anxiety and lack of faith was that Sarai walked with purely human thinking outside the circle of faith. Anxiety hinders faith. It was accustomed for the wife to give her maidservant to her husband to give him offspring. The offspring was counted for her because both her maidservant and the offspring belong to the Mistress. Thus, Sarai hastened to act, and she had an Egyptian maidservant, Hagar, who was probably from the gifts that Pharaoh gave to Abram. The human solution was a mistake, as it consisted of polygamy, which resulted in bitterness and loss. Hagar proved that she was not loyal to her Mistress and insulted her when she became pregnant from Abram. Note that Satan may use our closest people for our temptation, so Sarai was used for the temptation of Abram and Eve for Adam's temptation.

(Verse 1): **Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.**

**Hagar:** It means desertion or escaping, and probably Abram is the one who gave her the name, and the name also means a stranger, for she was alien to Abraham's life and faith. It represents the strange thought that enters the human being and causes annoyance and bitterness.

**2 So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.**

St. John Chrysostom views that Sarai thought that not having children was because of her husband, so she handed him over to test the matter, and when she saw that her maidservant conceived, she became distressed. Generally, what Sarai did represents the self-reliance of man, who plans for himself without referring to God and seeking His advice.

Paul the apostle says " Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves." (Romans 14: 22). But this only applies to everything that is right in the eyes of the Lord. In the case of Hagar, this was a kind of haste, and it was a human ploy. Why? Because God had promised Abraham to make him a great nation (Genesis 12: 2) And God told him that he would give him all the land for him and his descendants, who would be like the dust of the earth (Genesis 13: 14-16), and The Lord assured him that his heir will come from his body, and his descendants will be like the stars of the heaven (Genesis 15: 3-6). In all these promises, God did not refer from near or far to Hagar or others, and it is understood that the promises speak about Sarah, his wife. Therefore, any other solution through another woman is a human solution. If Hagar was a solution from God, He would have indicated it to Abraham. There is

another important question - Since Abraham was in a close friendship with God, why didn't he seek His opinion?!

(Verses 3-4): **Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. 4 So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes.**

Hagar's despise of Sarai may have been displayed by her refusal to serve her mistress or her belief that she is the beloved lady of Abram and God who gave her that. Perhaps she laughed at Sarai when she saw that Sarai still had hope of having children. And let us note that when the wicked get privileges, they become arrogant and despise others. And God used human mistake to explain something important which is; Sarai here represents the Gentile Church (the New Testament), which was previously barren, not begetting children of God, and Hagar refers to the Jews who begot slaves by rejecting sonship to God in Christ Jesus. And in the fullness of time, Sarai gave birth to Isaac, and later many sons of God. Sarai gave birth to her son, not according to nature, as she was barren, but according to the promise of God, and he came to a blessed son. As for Hagar, she bore him according to nature, and accordingly, he became a slave (Galatians 4: 21-31). The barren Sarai represented the nations who were unable to offer children to God. This is why God allowed Sarai to remain barren, to become a symbol of dead humanity, that God brings to her life from death.

(Verse 5): **Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The Lord judge between you and me."**

**My wrong be upon you .. The Lord judge between you and me.** These are the consequences of human solutions. After Sarai used to call Abraham, "My lord," she is accusing him of injustice. The family lost their peace.

(Verse 6): **So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please." And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence.**

Perhaps Sarai overburdened Hagar with work, or disciplined her harshly, so she fled. It seems that Abram was treating her as a wife and was protecting her. However, when Sarai was unsettled, he left her to her mistress, who humiliated her. St. Augustine comments on Abraham's position that marrying Hagar and handing her over to Sarai at her request proves that he did this not out of passion but was implementing his wife's advice to obtain offspring.

(Verse 7): **Now the Angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.**

Perhaps she was heading to Egypt, her original home, so she went down to the wilderness of Paran, where the angel of the Lord met her at a spring of water (perhaps the springs of Moses), and the Shur way is a caravan route in the wilderness.

(Verses 8-10): **And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai." 9 The Angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand." 10 Then the Angel of the Lord said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude."**

This shows God's plan for every sinner.

Hagar's Pride: Hagar's sin was pride, where she insulted her mistress.

God permitted that she comes to the wilderness: God allows a (wilderness) trial that the sinner may go through so that he tastes the bitterness of sin.

The angel of the Lord meets her in the wilderness: From the mercies of the Lord is that he does not leave the sinner alone, but appears to him and has mercy on him.

The angel's calling her **Sarai's maid**: The angel said to her, Sarai's maid to let her leave her pride. Here, the angel of the Lord says, when she returns to the house of Abraham, she will become God's own. The Lord is the name that the Bible uses in the relationship of God to his own. The name of God is used in God's relationship with all creation, and Abraham and his house are now God's own.

The angel said to her **where have you come from, and where are you going?**: Why did you leave the house of holiness and now you are in the wilderness?

The angel told her **Return to your mistress**: He ordered her to return to the house of holiness, same as the prodigal son returned.

The angel met her **by a spring of water**: Our first encounter with Christ is usually in the Baptism.

Hagar bore a son while she is in the house of Abram: In the house of God, after our baptism and our repentance, we shall bear fruit.

Christ descended to us in our barren wilderness to meet us at the waters of baptism, and to bring us back from heading to Egypt, that is, the love of the world to the heavenly Canaan. We were expelled from Canaan, meaning Paradise, because of our sins, where we became bitter and isolated in the wilderness of this world. However, God did not leave us but returned us back through the renewal of Baptism. Indeed, Hagar had sons, but Sarah exceeded her in the number of her children for the symbol

to be completed. For the Gentiles Church had many children who entered from all nations of the world, and they were free.

Verse 10: **Then the Angel of the Lord said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude."**

This sentence shows that the Angel of the Lord is Christ.

(Verse 11): **And the Angel of the Lord said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the Lord has heard your affliction."**

**Ishmael:** God heard. Declaring that God heard the voice of her humiliation and saved her.

(Verse 12): **He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."**

**a wild man:** The origin of the word is "a human being like the wild donkey." The wild donkey or zebra is known for its strength and tendency to freedom and roaming in the desert. However, it is difficult to tame and subdue it, and the zebra among the Arabs is considered one of the elite animals. (Job 39: 5-8). This description is the best description of the Bedouin Arabs, and it became a symbol of their free life. And Ismail is the father of the Arabs.

**His hand shall be against every man:** The Bedouins tend to invade those around them, and wars usually take place between their tribes. They also consider the spoils resulting from invasions as permitted profit.

**And every man's hand against him:** Note that the penalty is of the same type of the sin.

**And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren:** In other words, the Arab peoples who descended from Ishmael will have their own independent entity, as independent peoples before the rest of the peoples who descended from Abraham, that is, they are not subject to any of them.

(Verse 13): **Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?"**

**You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees:** That is the God of vision. The meaning is that God, who saw her hardship, appeared to her, and now she sees Him. Or You are God who has consented to be seen. Also, He can be seen, and I can see Him. The phrase in Hebrew means "Am I still alive and still seeing after I saw God." This is in line with the words of Manoah, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God!" (Judges 13:22), and then the words of Manoah's wife.

**Have I also here seen Him who sees me:** I saw the back or the nape of the one who saw me. God appears to mankind not in full glory but appears to each according to his ability to bear. It was written about Moses " And the Lord said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen." (Exodus 33: 21-23). Here we see that God's name El is a name known to Abraham family.

(Verse 14): **Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; observe, it is between Kadesh and Bered.**

**Beer Lahai Roi:** The well of the Living One who sees me. This means that God saw the hardship and sorrow of Hagar and her son because His eyes were upon them. He did not leave them and revived them by guiding them to the well. He even gave Hagar promises of blessings to her son. This is what Hagar realized that God had His eye on them and did not leave them in their distress, and expressed that by naming the well **Beer Lahai Roi**

This is God's promise to His people when He gave the land that he said about " a land for which the Lord your God cares; the eyes of the Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year." (Deuteronomy 11: 12). If the eyes of the Lord are on the land that He will give them and bless the rains to sprout abundantly for them, then the eyes of the Lord will also be upon His people. And the eyes of the Lord will be upon us from the beginning of the year to its end for our whole life.

(Verse 15): **So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.**

**Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael:** Perhaps Abram had named him Ishmael after hearing the story of God's meeting with Hagar, or Abram might have mistakenly imagined that this was the promised son and that God heard him and gave him this son, whom the blessing will be from his descendants. This often happens with us when we mistakenly think that our will is the voice of God, and we get deceived when we are confined within ourselves.

(Verse 16): **Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.**

**Abram was eighty-six years old:** And he was 100 years old when he bore Isaac.

Notes:

1. Hagar understood that the angel who appeared to her was the Lord (YHWH), so she said, and so Moses confirmed (verse 13).



2. Sarah symbolizes the Church (Grace) and Hagar symbolizes the Law, and her return to the house of Abram means that the Law must come into the house of God and her children will become children of the law (Ishmael) until the fullness of time comes and Isaac (Christ) is born.

## Chapter 17

At the beginning of man's creation, and before the fall, covenants between God and man were established based on love without any visible sign of the covenant; man was in the image of God, responding with love to his Creator. After the fall, man needed to feel the presence and love of God. For the essence of the covenant is in the presence of God because the essence of salvation is our return to union with God. When the world was renewed by the flood, God gave the rainbow as a sign of covenant with Noah. And now we see when God entered into a covenant with Abram; He gave the sign of circumcision as a fixed sign in the body of every male. The sign of circumcision is a sign with blood, as it is a shadow of a greater covenant that Christ will present in his body for eternal reconciliation. Blood is the form of the New Testament.

\* The penalty of sin is death. Therefore, every person should have died. But God announced a solution by which humans become God's people in the Old Testament. The solution is circumcision, in which a part of the human body dies, and by this, they belong to God's people and live. Circumcision is a blood covenant in which blood is shed. It is the cutting off of a part of the human body so that this part will die, a declaration of cutting off the old life so that the person may rise in a new life as a child of God. Circumcision was a symbol of baptism, which is death and life, death with Christ, and resurrection with Christ. A person goes down in baptism to put to death his old man with Christ and comes out alive. He goes down and is condemned to death to come out alive. The power of baptism is gained from the cross.

\* Just as the rainbow existed before the Flood, and God took it as a sign of His will for man to live. Thus, circumcision was known among some peoples, and God took it as a sign of a covenant between Him and His people.

\* God changes the names of Abram and Sarai to Abraham and Sarah in (Genesis 17: 5) Changing the name of Abraham and Sarah after the circumcision is a sign of a covenant between God and the one who will be born of them, who is Isaac, who is the son of the promise who will be the father of Christ. And just as Isaac came out alive from a dead repository, so Christ will be born alive from a repository that cannot bear children, a virgin untouched by a man. It is a promise of life out of death. This promise is by which we whom we are dead in sin, live. We become children of promise, we become alive after death by baptism, and this is by the cross of Christ.

God will bless Ishmael " And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. 21 But My covenant I will establish with Isaac," the promise son. Therefore, the covenant was made before changing the names and before the birth of Isaac, as the promise is not in Isaac himself, but rather who will be from his descendants.

Paul the apostle says that circumcision is a seal of the righteousness of the faith (Romans 4: 11). So how was Abraham justified? He was justified by faith (Genesis 15: 6). What is Abraham's type of faith ? A faith that God can bring life out of death. We saw that in Abraham's life several times: 1) Leaving Ur and

heading to the unknown following God. 2) Leaving the choice to Lot to choose the good land and being satisfied with the weak land trusting that God will provide. 3) His faith that God can give him a son from Sarah's dead repository. 4) Offers his son as a sacrifice trusting that God is able to raise him up (Hebrews 11: 19).

What is circumcision? Life coming out of death. For who enters in a covenant with God, and becomes from His people, will live eternally. And this is in exchange for something trivial (the foreskin) of the human body, which the person cuts and leaves to die. That is why circumcision is a symbol of baptism, so what is baptism? It is the death of the old man and eternal life which is Christ's life (Romans 6). And whoever lives dead to sin shall live forever. And who is he who accepts to live dead from the pleasures of the world? It is him who has faith in this eternal life.

And who does not accept circumcision shall be cut off from his people (verse 14). What does this mean? Whoever does not accept circumcision, symbolizes the one who refuses to abandon the sins of this world, or who does not believe in eternal life, for which he would abandon his sinful lusts and pleasures which are trivial as the foreskin.

(Verse 1): **When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless.**

**Almighty God:** In its origin, "He who has all the sufficiency, who pours out all the blessings on you richly and continuously." Almighty means omnipotent or has the capability to do everything. It also refers to the Greek word , the Pantocrator, which means the one who controls everything.

**be blameless:** This saying is due to the faith weakness which showed in his descent to Egypt and his marriage to Hagar.

**walk before Me:** Walking with God was the virtue that was attributed to Enoch and then to Noah.

(Verse 2): **And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly."**

**I will make My covenant between Me and you:** The narrative of God with man is a story of continuous and renewed covenants during which God declares His love for man and longs for man to accept this love and exchange it with love and obedience.

(Verse 3): **Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying:**

(Verses 4-5): **"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations.**

Changing the name from Abram to Abraham, which means father of a crowd, refers to the renewal of humanity.

| Old Testament  | Refers to | New Testament   |
|--|-----------|---|
| Circumcision   |           | Baptism   |
| Promise is about descendants (Promise is related to offspring)                     |           | Baptism is new birth  |
| Changing names   |           | Renewing humanity by Baptism  |
| Blood is shed  |           | Striving against sin to bloodshed (Hebrews 12: 4). And offering oneself up to blood like martyrs. The Church carries her cross as her bridegroom. |
| For men only, the man is the head of the woman and the woman is sacred in the man. |           | Because the blood of Christ was shed for His church, who is His bride.  |
| Circumcision was on the eighth day   |           | The number 8 refers to eternal life   |

The church usually changes the names of the priest or the monk during ordinations for the same concept, so he feels that he is now living a new life. The fact that Abraham became the father of a multitude means that he became the father of all (Jews and gentiles). How beautiful is that when a person unites with God, he comes out of himself to care for others.

(Verse 6): **I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.**

(Verse 7): **And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.**

**everlasting covenant:** For his children by the flesh, it is by circumcision, and for his children by faith, it is by baptism.

(Verse 8): **Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."**

**an everlasting possession:** The person who is circumcised in the heart inherits the heaven (heavenly Canaan) as an eternal inheritance.

And circumcision of the heart refers to cutting off the sins that the heart loves. Here we find a heavenly knife that cuts through the foreskin of unclean sin. And circumcision of the ear means that a person closes his ears in front of false slander, lies, anger and immoral songs. And circumcision of the hands, i.e. abstaining from stealing and killing. And the circumcision of the feet means that they do not haste to evil. And the circumcision of the eyes, means abstaining from lustful looks and looks that envies others, ... etc.

| Circumcision  | Baptism  |
|---|--|
| The death of a part of the body and thus the circumcised becomes from God's people. Therefore, circumcision encompasses life and death. | It is death with Christ and resurrection with Christ, and thus we become children of God. Therefore, it is life and death.   |
| The foreskin that is cut dies and remains in death. And circumcision is painful and includes shedding of blood.                         | The baptized has to continue in the life of putting the world's sin in death. Abandoning sins needs striving and resistance to blood (Hebrews 12: 4)   |
| He who rejects circumcision is cut from his people  | There is no salvation for he who rejects baptism (John 3: 3 + Mark 16: 16)   |
| Cutting the foreskin requires a knife   | Cutting the sin from the heart requires spiritual knife, with the aid of the Holy Spirit (Grace) "circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit" (Romans 2: 29 + Romans 8: 13). And he who does this lives. |

(Verse 9): **And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.**

(Verse 10): **This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised;**

God did not require female circumcision as it is harmful, but male circumcision is healthy

(Verse 11): **and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.**

**foreskins:** It is the part that is cut off, and it is an insignificant part, so every sin is of no significance.

(Verse 12): **He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant.**

**He who is eight days old:** The number 7 refers to our earthly life (7 days of the week), and the eighth day means entering beyond our earthly life, for the eighth day of creation is eternity. Circumcision is a crossing over to eternal life by taking off the love of the world.

**bought with money:** Means slaves. The circumcision of slaves was a symbol of the faith of the gentiles.

(Verse 13): **He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.**

(Verse 14): **And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”**

**that person shall be cut off:** They are separated and are not considered believers, and they do not have any of the rights of the people, and they do not get defended. (Definitely this is for adults, as young children are circumcised when they are eight days old).

(Verse 15): **Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name.**

**Sarai:** My princess. But now when she became the mother of the believers, she is called **Sarah:** Princess. So she is no longer specific to Abraham, but to all believers. Sarah symbolizes the Virgin Mary in her motherhood and that she gave birth to a son against nature. Sarah gave birth from a dead repository and Virgin Mary gave birth without human seed.

(Verse 16): **And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.”**

(Verse 17): **Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”**

**laughed:** Both Abraham and Sarah laughed when they heard that they were going to have a son when they were old and because God had testified to Abraham's faith (Genesis 15: 6), we understand that his laugh is a sign of joy, not a sign of doubt (Psalm 126: 1,2), It is a sign of amazement at God's gifts that he will bear a son in these circumstances. His laughter does not mean his lack of faith but rather his great astonishment at God's work with him. The evidence of his faith is that he **fell on his face** that is he bowed and worshiped to offer thanks to God (Romans 4: 18-20 + Matthew 3: 9 + Isaiah 51: 1).

(Verse 18): **And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"**

**Oh, that Ishmael might live before You:** This phrase can have several meanings.

1. O Lord, I am satisfied with Ishmael, whom you have given me, and I do not ask for more. Keep him to live in your obedience.
2. If you are to give me another son than Ishmael, do not deprive Ishmael of your blessings.

(Verse 19): **Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.**

He who inherits is the son of the promise to whom God has given life from death. Isaac means laughter, as both Abraham and Sarah laughed when they heard.

(Verse 20): **And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.**

Ishmael got earthly blessings, but the promise and inheritance belong to Isaac, who was born not according to the body, but according to the spirit, through renewal by the grace of God in baptism.

#### **Note the similarity between**

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| the Jews, the descendants of Jacob. | * and the Arabs, the descendants of Ishmael.           |
| 12 Tribes.                          | * 12 Princes (This was fulfilled in Genesis 25: 12-16) |
| They have the sign of circumcision. | * They have the sign of circumcision.                  |

(both of them learned it from Abraham).

(Verse 21): **But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year."**

(Verse 22): **Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.**

**God went up:** God was visibly speaking to him. This ascent is evidence that the one he was talking to was not an ordinary person. Thus Christ ascended before his disciples.

(Verse 23): **So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him.**

**So Abraham took:** Note the immediate execution of Abraham, and compare it with Moses' postponement of the circumcision of his son and God's wrath for it.

(Verses 24-25): **Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.**

(Verse 26): **That very same day Abraham was circumcised, and his son Ishmael;**

**same day Abraham was circumcised:**

Ibrahim, who was 99 years old, was not ashamed to be circumcised, where he is the great and respected elder to be circumcised. But Abraham did not care, as he had no alternative but to obey, lovingly and without quarrelling. Thus, every repentant must obey God without discussion and cut off from his heart all love for sin. Note that circumcision is an internal sign that people do not see from outside, and so is repentance.

(Verse 27): **and all the men of his house, born in the house or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.**

**a foreigner:** Note that whoever clings to God's becomes one of them, lives like them, accepts their faith, so he lives eternally.



## Chapter 18

(Verse 1-2): **Then the Lord appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. 2 So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground,**

The unique friendship between God and Abraham is shown here in God's visit to Abraham with two angels. This is one of Christ's appearances in the Old Testament. It is a visit that revealed a lot of God's love and dealings.

**and bowed himself to the ground:** It is a prostration in honour of the guest, not a prostration to God, for Abraham did not know first that he was God (Hebrews 13: 2). This type of prostration is that the Church offers to her fathers, patriarchs and bishops. Indeed, after that, Abraham prostrated himself to the sons of Heth (Genesis 23: 12). Therefore, where is the objection to what the Church is doing? And the scene of Abraham's reception of Christ explains to every soul that imitates Abraham and enters with God in a friendship of love, and that sits at the door of the tent (estrangement from the world). This soul hosts the Lord of Heaven and His angels. " Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." (John 14: 23). " Behold, I stand at the door 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." (Revelation 3: 20). And the entry of Christ, the first and prominent person of the three, into Abraham's tent symbolizes His incarnation.

**the terebinth trees of Mamre:** Mamre means vision or insight " Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God". And Paul gives a lesson from this incident that by entertaining strangers, Abraham hosted angels, and he did not know. He ran to receive them: Here Abraham addresses the three and has not yet distinguished one of them from the rest.

(Verse 3): **and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant.**

**My Lord:** When he approached them, he recognized the distinct person, Christ, and directed his words to Him.

(Verses 4-5): **Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. 5 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."**

Abraham thought they were travelling, so he asked to wash their feet and to have something to eat. And washing feet was an oriental custom (There were no shoes, but open sandals, so the heat of the sand hurt the body) so walking in the heat hurts. Washing the feet cools and refreshes the whole body, in addition to cleaning the legs from dust

**refresh your hearts:** This is with food to be strengthened physically after a long journey.

(Verses 6-8): **So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make cakes." 7 And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave it to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it. 8 So he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate.**

Abraham was very generous he said a **morsel of bread**, what was the morsel of bread that he gave them? **three measures of fine meal** (best flour) made **cakes** (He baked on preheated stones). It is a precious bread + **a tender and good calf + butter and milk**. And he stood serving the guests while they ate.

**and he stood by them under the tree as they ate:** Abraham had young men, but from his generosity he was the one serving the strangers. Note the repetition of the words (hurried / quickly / ran).

What was Abraham's offering?

A) Fine meal (flour) refers to Christ in its purity (white) and He lived crushed by sorrows.

B) Three measures refers to the Trinity for in Christ dwelled all the fullness of the Godhead "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2: 9). Therefore, the number 3 also referred to the resurrection, for death couldn't prevail over Christ since all the fullness of the Godhead dwelled in him bodily.

C) A good slaughtered calf. This refers to the slain Christ who gave us His body to eat " the fatted calf" (Luke 15: 23). The Church always gathers around the Holy Table, for God does not stay with us unless Christ is amidst us.

Let us stand with Abraham under the tree of the cross, serving others in humility and joy as we are serving the Lord in them.

(Verse 9): **Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the tent."**

**Where is Sarah your wife:** God did not accept to be in debt. Abraham honoured Him, and thus He is returning the favour to Abraham by blessing his wife. It was not of the oriental custom to ask about the wife by her name, but the Lord wanted to declare that He was not an ordinary person, for how would He know the name of Sarah?

(Verse 10): **And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.)**

**the time of life:** In (Genesis 17: 21) " But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year." The Lord had previously specified that Sarah would give birth in the

next year, that is, after a year. Here, this time is called the time of life, as it gives life to Sarah's dead repository.

**which was behind him:** referring to the door of the tent. And who was behind him except the speaker? She initially thought of Him to be an ordinary person who is complimenting her husband. But the saying **which was behind him** is intended to indicate that the speaker is a divine person who knows the secrets. He knew that she laughed while standing behind the door, not seeing her. This was written as a prophecy about Christ " His delight is in the fear of the Lord, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;" (Isaiah 11: 3).

Note that this promise of life, which is the fruit of the womb, comes after circumcision. And circumcision is a symbol of Baptism by which we become children of God " For to me, to live is Christ" (Philippians 1: 21). For there is no fruit unless there is life in the branch, but the dead branch does not bear fruit. (John 15: 1-5)

(Verse 11): **Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing.**

This verse proves that the birth of Isaac is equivalent to raising life from death.

(Verse 12): **Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"**

**Sarah laughed:**

Maybe she laughed out of joy or astonishment. That is why the son was named " Isaac", which means laughter, So that Abraham and Sarah remember God's work with them, whenever they call him by his name, and they glorify God.

**my lord being old also:** This word caught the attention of the Apostle Peter (1 Peter 3: 6).

(Verses 13-14): **And the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?' 14 Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."**

(Verse 15): **But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!" Abraham Intercedes for Sodom**

Sarah's denial means that she began to realize that the speaker is a divine person since he knew what was in her heart, so she was afraid.

(Verse 16): **Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way.**

The feast that Abraham made was not sufficient, so he walked with them to guide them on the way and offer them farewell.

(Verse 17): **And the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing,**

**hide from Abraham what I am doing:** This is a question to confirm that God does not want to hide anything from Abraham. It is an affirmation question such as "Can thistles produce grapes?"

(Verse 18): **since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?**

**a great and mighty nation:** His children by faith from Jews and Christians.

(Verse 19): **For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."**

**he may command his children:** The father has to teach his sons. It is clear that God's promise is conditional on their keeping His commandments. The Lord was going to explain to Abraham that he would destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sins. This is the lesson that God wanted Abraham to advise his children, and then this lesson reaches all of Abraham's children. And through the children of Abraham to the whole world - that sin brings death and destruction.

(Verse 20): **And the Lord said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave,**

**against Sodom and Gomorrah:** Because of the offensiveness of their sins, the sins began to cry out for revenge. Or that the polluted land became screaming from the corruption of its people, as happened in the case of Abel's blood crying to God.

(Verse 21): **I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."**

**I will go down now and see:** This indicates the complete justice of God, for He does not punish until conducting a complete examination. He is the one who later came down to be crucified and take away our sins, as he took the form of a slave.

God does not need to come down to know what is happening; for He is present everywhere in the world and in all creation, but even also in Hades. " If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there." (Psalm 139: 8). But rather, this is an expression in human language that God uses to talk with us. This expression indicates that God in His holiness cannot accept their defiled and abject behaviours, so He condescend to examine such abject matters (the offensive sins of Sodom) and to pass judgment against those sinners. (Revise interpretation of Revelation 4: 1-3). To express that the Bible said that God said **I will go down now and see.**

His saying **and if not, I will know** indicates the fair examination after which his judgment was rendered, thus, the verse is fulfilled " That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge." (Psalm 51).

(Verse 22): **Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the Lord.**

**but Abraham still stood before the Lord:** The Lord had told him what he intended to do, and this was to motivate Abraham to pray and intercede, as He did with Moses afterwards.

Sodom and Gomorrah are two cities near the Dead Sea, and Lot resided in one of them. Sodom means burning, and Gomorrah means flood. For sin causes burning and drowning. Perhaps as a result of the fire, they drowned. And probably the location of Sodom and Gomorrah is presently under the Dead Sea. This is why the excessive salinity of this sea caused the impossibility of life in it.

(Verse 23): **And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"**

When Abraham heard about the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, he did not talk to God about his future son, nor about God's promises. Rather, he cared, prayed, and interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah. It is a vivid image of mature love in which man is preoccupied with the salvation of his brothers. Thus, the souls of the saints are not concerned with what is for themselves, but for what is for others.

(Verses 24-33): **Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it? 25 Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" 26 So the Lord said, "If I find in Sodom fifty**

righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes." 27 Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: 28 Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?" So He said, "If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it." 29 And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?" So He said, "I will not do it for the sake of forty." 30 Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?" So He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there." 31 And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?" So He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty." 32 Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten." 33 So the Lord went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

We note in these verses:

1. Abraham's humility before God "**I who am but dust and ashes**" This is how we should be standing before God.
2. His intercession and prayers on behalf of the others. He was not occupied by himself and his own personal problems.
3. If there were ten righteous people in Sodom, it would have survived, which indicates the blessing of the presence of saints around. This is the meaning of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ; you are the salt of the earth.
4. Abraham's prayer stopped at ten righteous people and he did not proceed. Perhaps he was convinced that these people deserve the punishment since there are not even ten righteous. And probably what prompted him to pray and intercede is the Holy Spirit, who teaches us how to pray and who puts words in our mouth (Hosea 14: 2). And the Holy Spirit is the one who convinced Abraham to cease because they do not deserve it. However, God accepted Abraham's prayer and intercession and saved Lot, his wife, and his two daughters. Rather, it was for Abraham's sake that the two angels allowed Lot to take out his in-laws with him. However, his in-laws did not take advantage of this opportunity.
5. **So the Lord went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham:** God is present as long as Abraham prays and intercedes. That is why Paul the Apostle says " pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5: 17).

## Chapter 19

God has various ways to draw souls to heaven, and each method is appropriate to each person's condition. In the previous chapter, we see God in loving fellowship with Abraham, attracting him to the heavenly matters. In this chapter, we see a reverse image; warning of judgment, ruin and fire to draw Lot out of the evil circle.

The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was homosexuality, and it is called in Arabic a word in relation to Lot, which is wrong as Lot is innocent of this crime, so why would it be attributed to him. But in English, Sodomy is named after Sodom and Gomorrah, and this is a correct name.

(Verse 1): **Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.**

**the gate of Sodom:** It was the noble, the dignitaries, and the judges who sat at the city's gate. This indicates the greatness of status and the richness that Lot attained. Here we find Lot, who was raised in Abraham's house, doing what Abraham did in terms of hospitality to strangers.

(Verse 2): **And he said, "Here now, my lords, please turn in to your servant's house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way." And they said, "No, but we will spend the night in the open square.**

**No, but we will spend the night in the open square.":** The stranger would sleep in the open square if he couldn't find another place (Judges 19: 15, 20). This was a rejection from them toward Lot and his house, so they preferred to sleep in the open square. We find in (2 Peter 2: 8) that St. Peter calls Lot "righteous man", as he is considered righteous compared to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. However, his righteousness is minor compared to the righteousness of Abraham. Lot's obvious mistake was his choice to live in this wicked place. Even after discovering its wickedness, he did not leave it.

Here is a comparison between Abraham and Lot:

| Abraham  | Lot  |
|--|--|
| 1. He hosts the Lord and two angels in the unity of love and friendship. | 1. The two angels could hardly save him from the devastation of a city he chose. |

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|---|--|
| <p>2. He met them during the day (for he lives in light)</p> <p>3. Abraham hosted the Lord and two angels.</p> <p>4. They accepted Abraham's invitation immediately, "They said, "Do as you have said"".</p> <p>5. Abraham's feast included the mystery of the Trinity and the Resurrection, the mystery of Christ, the Crucified, and the Resurrected, as his eyes are open.</p> <p>6. Abraham's meeting with them ended with a blessing for him and Sarah.</p> <p>7. Abraham stands as an intercessor for others.</p> <p>8. God chose for Abraham the land.</p> <p>9. Abraham's heart was on the tent and the altar.</p> <p>10. He remained free in God's love.</p> | <p>2. Lot met them in the evening.</p> <p>3. Only the two angels went to Lot.</p> <p>4. They refused to enter initially but later agreed after Lot's insistence. They preferred to sleep in the open square.</p> <p>5. Lot's feat was ordinary</p> <p>6. The meeting with them ended with barely surviving the destruction</p> <p>7. Lot pleads to live in Zoar and not in the mountain.</p> <p>8. Lot chose for himself and left the good company.</p> <p>9. Lot searched for grass and pasture (selects material).</p> <p>10. He lost his courage and personal freedom.</p> <p>11. He lost everything that he chose.</p> |
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|  |  |
|--|--|
| 11. He saved Lot by his intercession and even inherited the whole earth. |  |
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Note that Lot's insistence that the two men stay with him was to protect them from the evil of the people of Sodom, which he knew.

(Verse 3): **But he insisted strongly; so they turned in to him and entered his house. Then he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.**

(Verse 4): **Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house.**

Note the corruption of the whole people **both old and young**. All became unclean.

(Verse 5): **And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally."**

**know them carnally:** It is the polite language of the Bible for sexual interaction.

(Verses 6-7): **So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, 7 and said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly!**

(Verse 8): **See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof."**

Lot is trying to fix the situation but in a corrupt way, or maybe he said this to shame them.

(Verse 9): **And they said, "Stand back!" Then they said, "This one came in to stay here, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them." So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door.**

**and he keeps acting as a judge:** These evildoers could not stand that Lot prevented them from sexually assaulting the two men, so they said, "Does this stranger control us?". Rather, they threatened to do more evil to him. And perhaps they were upset by his saying in (verse 7) **do not do so wickedly**, so they said: Does this stranger judge that our deeds are wicked?

(Verse 10): **But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door.**

Lot tried to protect his guests, so he offered to take out his two daughters, but the strangers protected him with his family instead.

(Verse 11): **And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary trying to find the door.**

**And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness:** The word used for blindness refers to an intense light that shines, which causes a person to lose his vision. There is a kind of incompatibility of sight with the mind, and a person loses his way (This is the case of sinners; they have eyes, but they do not see (Acts 28: 26). They thought they were seeing the door of the house, but they sought something else. (Revised King James Version 2 Kings 6: 18) where the same word was used. Or it could mean that they were surrounded by darkness that made them flounder.

**Note the sequence of God's punishments to sinners to warn them before the great plague.**

1. Falling under the tribute and their submission to Chedorlaomer for 12 years.
2. War and captivity of the souls and possessions.
3. The plague of blindness.
4. Lot's Preaching, but they considered him joking and no one escaped.

(Verse 12): **Then the men said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city—take them out of this place!"**

**Have you anyone else here?:** Because of Abraham's intercession, the two angels were ready to rescue Lot's relatives.

(Verse 13): **For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it."**

(Verse 14): **So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, "Get up, get out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city!" But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.**

**sons-in-law, who had married his daughters:** He previously said that his daughters did not know a man, so these in-laws are either in a state of betrothal to the girls, or Lot had other married daughters who perished with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

**he seemed to be joking:** Preaching is not valid if it is not supported by the person's behaviour. As for the people of Sodom, we find that whoever is used to joking, when the time comes for seriousness, we see him joking. They could have been saved, but in every generation, the wicked see God's warnings in-jokes and jest, so they underestimate them.

(Verse 15): **When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city."**

**Arise:** It is an invitation from heaven to rise with the risen Christ at dawn.

(Verse 16): **And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city.**

Strangely, the two angels draw Lot and his family out of the city, for they cling to worldly matters to the last breath. Lot was clinging to the place and his wealth and did not want to leave it.

(Verses 17-22): **So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed." 18 Then Lot said to them, "Please, no, my lords! 19 Indeed now, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtake me and I die. 20 See now, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one; please let me escape there (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live." 21 And he said to him, "See, I have favored you concerning this thing also, in that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken. 22 Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there." Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.**

The two angels asked Lot to flee to the mountain, but he chose to go to the city of Zoar!! It is strange that God chooses for a person a safe place, but he rejects and chooses for himself. So did Lot see that his choice was better? And it was surprising that after he refused to go up to the mountain, he later went to the mountain (verse 30). Was Lot tired, unable to go up the mountain? Would someone drawn by two angels get tired? Did Lot fear that he would not be able to reach the mountain before destruction occurred? This was replied to, as the angel told him that he could not do anything unless Lot escapes and survives. (verse 22). Or was he greedy to possess Zoar, so he says, **it not a little one? and my soul shall live:** It is small, so I may take it as an inheritance to live in a place after what I lost in Sodom. Zoar was the smallest city in the district. This is the case of many who God calls to go up the holy mountain,

but they are satisfied with Zoar, i.e., with an earthly material share, no matter how big it is, it is trivial compared to the heavens.

(Verse 23): **The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar.**

(Verses 24-25): **Then the Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens. 25 So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.**

God, in His mercy, did not rain on Sodom and Gomorrah before Lot entered Zoar. He is keen on Lot as a righteous person. "A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench"

**Then the Lord rained ... from the Lord:** This is similar to "The Lord said to my Lord". The meaning is that the Son rained from the Father (the Father wants and the Son does). The ruin of Sodom and Gomorrah was probably caused by a volcano that blew lava, for the nature of the region is sulphur, and the interior of the earth contains muffled, compressed, flammable gases. It was launched by an earthquake, then ignited and fell to the ground in the form of flaming rain. Perhaps there were lightning strikes from the sky igniting the many wells of lava. What is essential is that the wrath of God somehow burned cities because of their evil.

Thus, whoever follows his lust will be burned by a strange fire (Jude 7). What happened in Sodom and Gomorrah is a model of eternal fire.

**all the plain:** It often refers to their drowning in the Dead Sea, the Salt Sea.

(Verse 26): **But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.**

God transformed her with His power into a pillar of salt. Or she suffocated from sulfur and smoke, then salt covered her body, and it became her grave. Or liquid lava rained down on it and froze on it and it became a pillar of salt. Or liquid lava rained down on her and froze and thus she became a pillar of salt. Why did this happen? She looked at Sodom, lusting after its sins. That is why the Lord Christ said "Remember Lot's wife." (Luke 17: 32). She desired worldly matters and sins while she was going up the mountain, but we have to forget those things which are behind and reach forward to those things which are ahead. And salt in the Bible indicates incorruption, so when it is said that the covenant is a covenant of salt, this means that it is eternal. And Lot's wife became a witness to the results of sin, an eternal testimony.

(Verses 27-28) **And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord. 28 Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace.**

Abraham had known God's decision regarding Sodom, and he went to look sadly at their fate. He looked and did not turn into a Pillar of salt as there is a difference in looking. Abraham does not desire sin, but laments sinners.

(Verse 29): **And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt.**

This verse proves the power of Abraham's intercession and notice that Abraham did not intercede for Lot and his family only, but for all. But God saved every smoking flax. Let us note those invited to escape:

1. Lot's in-laws: These underestimated the warning, and Lot was as a joker in their eyes. These perished as they refused.
2. Lot's wife: She represents those in the church with a physical presence, but their hearts are kindled with the love of the world. This one perished.
3. Lot's two daughters: they went out, but their hearts were not pure. They went out for fear of death and not from a desire to cease fellowship with the wicked. They had an image of godliness, and within them was full of wickedness.
4. Lot: hesitant, the two angels grabbed him to draw him out, slow, arguing about God's words, refusing to go up the mountain and going to Zoar (An example of one who rejects full sanctification).

#### **Indeed a smoking flax He will not quench**

(Verses 30-38): **Then Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave. 31 Now the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is no man on the earth to come in to us as is the custom of all the earth. 32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." 33 So they made their father drink wine that night. And the firstborn went in and lay with her father, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. 34 It happened on the next day that the firstborn said to the younger, "Indeed I lay with my father last night; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." 35 Then they made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. 36 Thus**

**both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. 37 The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. 38 And the younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the people of Ammon to this day.**

We find Lot here went up the mountain which he rejected initially. If he had gone initially, he would have gone in faith, love and obedience to God as a son, but now he goes in fear as a slave. This chapter that concludes the story of Lot is painful, for it clarifies that Lot's two daughters absorbed a lot of the evil of Sodom and Gomorrah. Some gave them an excuse that they imagined the ruin of the whole world after the fire, so they wanted to keep the offspring, or they wanted to keep the holy lineage, thinking that Abraham had died (Christ will come from their descendants). However, it is a wicked rejected human solution. And what they did was a wicked sin, and their two sons were heads of two evil peoples; **Moab** (son of the father, that is related to the mother's father) and Ben-Ammi (The son of my people, that is who is of my own nation). And Moab became a large nation and then merged with the Ammonites in the Arab peoples.

## Chapter 20

(Verses 1-2) **And Abraham journeyed from there to the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar. 2 Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.**

We do not know why Abraham went to Gerar, and some said that he was affected by what happened in Sodom and Gomorrah when he saw them burning, or he was looking for another pasture when his livestock increased, or perhaps a new famine occurred, and he left the oaks of Mamre to Gerar. Here we find a moment of weakness in the faith of the father of faith. In it, Ibrahim's view changed, so instead of looking to heaven in faith, he looked at the people of Gerar and saw them as evil, so he was afraid of them, and he repeated the first deception he did with Pharaoh after about 20 years. But there is a question, how would the king of Gerar look at Sarah, who is now approaching ninety years old!! Was she still beautiful? The answer is that God, who gave her offspring against nature, changed her nature. Rather, she was nursing Isaac. He gave her vitality that endures childbirth, nursing, and raising a child, as He is the one who renewed her youth like an eagle. In the same sense, we understand how Abraham, who was surprised that a hundred-year-old would have children, continued to have children after he married Keturah at the age of 140 years, and he had 6 children from her, so God's gifts are permanent and he does not return them.

**Abimelech:** Probably this does not mean a name but a title, as Pharaoh in Egypt was the king of Egypt. Abimelech means my father is a king. He was a pagan, but he had good and beautiful qualities. Notice his conversation with God, with Abraham, and with Sarah. We wonder how Abraham judged that the fear of God is not in this place (verse 11). The city of Gerar is on the southern side of the Palestine border, 9 km from Gaza, and was inhabited by Palestinians.

(Verses 3-5): **But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife." 4 But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also? 5 Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she, even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this."**

Note that God was speaking to Abimelech, and Abimelech is conversing with God, while Abimelech was not among God's people. God was dealing with all peoples and did not limit himself to the descendants of Abraham only. But because the Bible is the book of God's relations with his chosen\* people from the Jews, the book was limited to God's relations with this people. But God had dealings with all creation. We note the angel of the Lord appeared twice to Hagar, and was speaking to her, guiding her, and taking care of her (Genesis 16: 7 + 21: 17). Rather, Melchizedek was a symbol of Jesus, the Lord of glory (Revise the introduction of the Book of Job).

\*Chosen: Means chosen to have Christ from their descendants.

(Verse 6): **And God said to him in a dream, “Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her.**

**For I also withheld you:** Perhaps God made him sick so that he would not touch Sarah. And perhaps Abimelech grumbled at the time because of the disease that befell him. But this disease was for his good, because if he was healthy and touched her, God would have killed him.

(Verse 7): **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.”**

**for he is a prophet:** Prophet in Greek is Prophitis προφήτης : Pro προ (Prior) + Phitis φήτης (Speak) The meaning is that he talks about things before they happen in the future. In Hebrew, the word prophet is like Arabic (Nabi), but it means one who prays, beseeches, and intercedes. And because among those who pray and supplicate to God, some ascend to the relationship of passion, love, and friendship of God to whom God says " Shall I hide from my servant what I am doing". God reveals to them His thoughts about the present and the future. Therefore, the word prophet has become to mean one who speaks, preaches and teaches about God, and it also means one who reveals the future. The meaning that Paul the apostle in (1 Corinthians 14: 3) referred to who speaks about the thoughts of God, announces them and teaches them. This was also the meaning to Moses and Aaron ,for Aaron had the tongue with which he announced the thoughts of God that would come to Moses. This verse is actual proof of the subject of intercession, as we find God honoring Abraham in the eyes of the Palestinians. Was God unable to bless Abimelech without Abraham's prayer? Absolutely not, but God wanted to honor Abraham, who honored Him. (1 Samuel 2: 30)

(Verse 8): **So Abimelech rose early in the morning, called all his servants, and told all these things in their hearing; and the men were very much afraid.**

Abimelech's men were pagans, but their hearts were ready to accept God's word.

(Verse 9): **And Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? How have I offended you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me that ought not to be done.”**



God allowed Abimelech to rebuke and blame Abraham. **What have you done to us?** That is, what did you do to me, for I did not hurt you until you deceived me and brought on me divine wrath. If you told the truth, this would not have happened.

(Verse 10): **Then Abimelech said to Abraham, "What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?"**

**What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?:** What evil did you see in us that you did that to us?

(Verses 11-13): **And Abraham said, "Because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will kill me on account of my wife. 12 But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. 13 And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said to her, 'This is your kindness that you should do for me: in every place, wherever we go, say of me, "He is my brother." ' "**

The strange thing is that Abraham's response did not include an admission of fault but rather an accusation of the people of Gerar of evil without justification. So, He fell into the sin of blame and haste to judge others, although they proved to be good. Abraham's words made clear that what he did was a former agreement with Sarah, and they had implemented this plan before with Pharaoh.

**when God caused me to wander:** That is, when God took me out from Ur and then from Haran, and I did not know where I was going.

(Verses 14-16): **Then Abimelech took sheep, oxen, and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham; and he restored Sarah his wife to him. 15 And Abimelech said, "See, my land is before you; dwell where it pleases you." 16 Then to Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; indeed this vindicates you before all who are with you and before everybody." Thus she was rebuked.**

Abimelech's generosity to Abraham was incredible, not only in gifts but also in declaring his love and appreciation for him. He responded to hurt with practical love.

**I have given your brother:** It is a rebuke filled with love because she said to Abimelech that he is my brother, reproving her by saying, your brother.

**indeed this vindicates you:** This means that the gift indicates that Abimelech did not touch Sarah, so Abraham's acceptance of the gift means this, proof of Sarah's chastity. It is a tribute to honor and appreciation for her and her husband in front of people. What is meant is the vindication of Sarah in the eyes of all those around her, and that Abimelech did not touch her.

Thus the translation of the Jerusalem Bible came **as an eye cover for you** = to keep Sarah away from all eyes that look at her in doubt, and become innocent in their eyes

(Verses 17-18): **So Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore children; 18 for the Lord had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.**

It seems that Abraham prayed for Abimelech and his concubines after a while when they learned of their barrenness. Marriage is supposed to be an eye cover, so neither of the two parties looks for lust (Job 31: 1)

## Chapter 21

(Verses 1-2): **And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.**

This son is the fruit of the Lord's visitation to Sarah and His promises to her and her husband. He is the son of a promise, and we have to strive and not seek the fruits, but in faith, we strive for the whole life. God will give us in the right time, and those who wait for God will never be disappointed.

(Verse 3): **And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him—whom Sarah bore to him—Isaac.**

God is the One who called him before he was born, and Abraham implemented God's command.

(Verses 4-5): Then **Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5 Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.**

(Verse 6): **And Sarah said, "God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me."**

Everyone will rejoice for me and be surprised by God's gift to an old woman whose womb was as dead as a rock (Isaiah 51: 1, 2). Isaac was not a son by nature, but by a divine promise, God brought life out of death. This is Sarah's joy with Isaac, the promised son. Thus, the Father rejoiced at our return to his bosom as sons in his Son, Jesus Christ, the Son of Promise. The Father cried out from heaven on the day of Baptism; " This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We were dead and in Christ we became alive and sons. Thus, the heaven rejoices in every sinner who repents and lives. The sinner is considered dead, and by repentance he becomes alive " your brother was dead and is alive again" (Luke 15: 32)

(Verse 7): **She also said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have borne him a son in his old age."**

**Who would have said to Abraham:** That is, this did not come to anyone's thoughts, so that he would say to Abraham.

(Verse 8): **So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.**

In the Jews, the weaning was at three years old (at this age, Samuel went to the temple). The Bible did not mention that Abraham made a great feast on the day of Isaac's birth. For the true joy of the believer is in his growth in the path of faith and repentance. And all spiritual growth of our inner man.

(Verse 9): **And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing.**

**scoffing:** Mocking and sarcasm. The commentators see that this incident is the beginning of the 400 years in which Abraham's descendants were persecuted. The persecution began by the son of the Egyptian woman to Isaac and ended with the Egyptians persecuting the people, the descendants of Isaac. That is why the Bible said **son of Hagar the Egyptian** instead of Ishmael. Perhaps it was the great feast that Abraham hosted that annoyed Hagar and Ishmael, as it is for the arrival of a new heir to Abraham. Paul the apostle is the one who revealed that this scoffing was a persecution. Thus, the persecution of Christianity by the Jews was at its outset, as Ishmael symbolizes the Jews and Isaac symbolizes the Church. And the inheritance that the Church is waiting for is spiritual. It is not inherited by a physical heir but by a spiritual heir. And the spiritual man was born with a promise, and according to faith, so he inherited the faith from his father. And he is the son of the free Sarah, so he inherited her freedom. Thus is the Church born of baptism from above (represented by Isaac).

As for the fleshly person, he is the son of the flesh, lust and weakness of faith. So he inherited from his father weakness of faith, and from his mother slavery, he was a violent man, with beastly instincts, living according to the flesh (represented by Ishmael).

(Verse 10): **Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac."**

Sarah's words were in the spirit of prophecy, so God approved of them. The Church of the Old Testament had to hide for the Church of the New Testament to appear, which is why God allowed him to leave. The Old Testament Church are the Jews who adhered to the letter of the law and its formalities, so they lived on the level of the flesh, not the spirit. As for the Church of the New Testament, the fruit of divine grace, which gave her the right to inherit.

(Verse 11): **And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son.**

**the matter was very displeasing:** How much Abraham suffered when he expelled his son Ishmael, but this was the result of the fruits of human solutions that were against God's plan. Likewise, for every sin

that we were used to or loved, when the time comes that we want to abandon it, we will be like one who offers a sacrifice in which he cut off this beloved part.

(Verse 12): **But God said to Abraham, “Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called.**

God accepted expelling the bondwoman and the boy, as a symbol of the disappearance of the Old Testament Church in front of the Church of Christ. When God agreed to expel Ishmael and his mother, He was the One who would support them.

(Verse 13): **Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed.”**

But God will not forget Ishmael for Abraham's sake and because he is His creation and He is responsible for him.

(Verse 14): **So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting it on her shoulder, he gave it and the boy to Hagar, and sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba.**

Some accuse Abraham of cruelty in expelling Hagar and Ishmael, but he also offered Isaac to be sacrificed. In both cases, he did this because they were God's orders. And God who supported Ishmael in the wilderness is the one who redeemed Isaac. God allowed that to offer a symbol. It was the custom for a traveller to be provided with enough water in a skin to support him till he reaches the nearest well, and for sure, Abraham guided them on the way to the closest well, but they lost their way. The boy was then 16-17 years old.

(Verse 15): **And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy under one of the shrubs.**

Because of the activity and the increase in perspiration, the young man needs more water than the elderly, so Ishmael's strength fell before his mother, and his fatigue appeared before her. While the child Isaac was enjoying his parents' love ceaselessly, Hagar's son drank from the bag made of the skin of dead animals. It could only quench him for a little while, but he would remain in a state of thirst and exhaustion, and he was very close to death. It is a picture that reveals the difference between the spirit of the Biblical life and the carnal thoughts stemming from the literalness of the law. And so is everyone who leaves the house of God (symbolized by the house of Abraham). But God provided water and saved Hagar and her son, for He is the father of all. But like the Jews who have temporal assets, but nothing like the bosom of the Father.

(Verse 16): **Then she went and sat down across from him at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, "Let me not see the death of the boy." So she sat opposite him, and lifted her voice and wept.**

The distance between the mother and the boy was measured according to what the boy was known for as being an archer (verse 20), meaning a hunter.

(Verse 17): **And God heard the voice of the lad. Then the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, "What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is.**

**God heard the voice of the lad:** While Hagar was the one who raised her voice and cried (verse 16), however, God knows our needs without us speaking or crying.

**Then the angel of God called:** Previously in (Genesis 16: 7), it was written the angel of the Lord as YHWH. She is now outside the circle of the Lord's people, and this is with God's permission. God's people are Abraham's household. And God is declaring to her that He is the God of the whole world. However, the name "YHWH" is for His people only.

(Verse 18): **Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation."**

**Arise, lift up:** Arise means strengthen yourself. And his saying " **lift up the lad** " means raise your son's assurance.

(Verse 19): **Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink.**

The well was next to them, but they did not see it until God guided them, and without it, they would have been diminished. And so the Jews now, if they cry out to God, He will open their eyes and guide them to believe in Christ.

(Verses 20-21): **So God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. 21 He dwelt in the Wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.**

(Verses 22-27): **And it came to pass at that time that Abimelech and Phichol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, "God is with you in all that you do. 23 Now therefore, swear to me by God that you will not deal falsely with me, with my offspring, or with my posterity; but that**

**according to the kindness that I have done to you, you will do to me and to the land in which you have dwelt.” 24 And Abraham said, “I will swear.” 25 Then Abraham rebuked Abimelech because of a well of water which Abimelech’s servants had seized. 26 And Abimelech said, “I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, nor had I heard of it until today.” 27 So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a covenant.**

Abimelech, the king of Gerar, honoured Abraham so much and allowed him to stay in his land. But when he saw him increasingly magnified, he realized that God is the secret of his greatness and success, so he was afraid of him. That is why he came with the chief of his army, Phichol, to make a covenant with him so that Abraham would not betray him or his descendants. And most likely, the reason for the visit was that Abraham had decreased his friendship in a way that Abimelech felt, so he came to search for the cause. Abraham's anger was due to the well of water that Abimelech's servants had seized, and wells in these areas are the means of life. Note that God shows success and prosperity to His servants amid the world by exhibiting that He is with them and supports them.

**(Verses 28-31): And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. 29 Then Abimelech asked Abraham, “What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs which you have set by themselves?” 30 And he said, “You will take these seven ewe lambs from my hand, that they may be my witness that I have dug this well.” 31 Therefore he called that place Beersheba, because the two of them swore an oath there.**

The word seven in Hebrew is Shevah and its origin is Savah which means to be satiated and filled. Because on the sixth day God completed the creation of the world, And on the seventh day He rested, for everything had been created right and perfect, and nothing could be added to what God had created. The word "oath" or "vow" was derived from the same origin, for they used to vow seven ewes or seven sheep, so the well was called Beersheba, which is the well of vow or oath, Because they pledged an oath about it, and seven sheep were used in the oath. The meaning of the seven sheep is the completeness of the oath or the completeness of the links between them (Genesis 21: 28-31). Therefore, we find the same word used as the number seven and used as an oath or vow. And in (verse 29) it became clear that Abimelech did not understand this Hebrew custom.

**(Verse 32): Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba. So Abimelech rose with Phichol, the commander of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines.**

**(Verse 33): Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there called on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God.**

**Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba:** To confirm his ownership of the well, he planted these trees, and the tamarisk is like a cypress as it grows and rises in hot countries and used shading and

setting up tents under it. Spiritually, the well refers to the church that is overflowing with the Holy Spirit that Christ bestows, and Abraham's insistence to obtain the well must be the insistence of the believer to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And because it is Beersheba, it refers to the seven Sacraments through which the Holy Spirit works. And planting trees around it refers to the planting of believers who gather around the waters of the Holy Spirit.

**and there called on the name of the Lord:** This place became sacred through the prayers of our father Abraham.

**the Everlasting God:**

God is always present, eternal, uncreated, and the Hebrew original indicates that He is invisible.

(Verse 34): **And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines many days.**



## Chapter 22

If there was nothing in the life of Abraham and Isaac except this incident in which Abraham offers his son as a sacrifice, and his son Isaac not rejecting or resisting while being capable as a young man, they would both be the greatest saints of all time. This story indicates the greatness of Abraham's faith, who believed that God is all his sufficiency, even when deprived of all sources of consolation, for Ishmael, his son, was expelled, and he will offer his son Isaac with his own hands. And as much as the test was more challenging, Abraham and Isaac, his son, were honoured. So they represented a living picture of God's redeeming work through the sacrifice of the cross and the announcement of the resurrection of Christ.

And the church prays on Covenant Thursday the fraction of the sacrifice of Isaac when she celebrates the offering of Christ as a sacrifice.

(Verse 1): **Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."**

**Now it came to pass after these things:** as if God did not allow the frightful test until after He had given him a promise concerning Isaac. The promise was fulfilled, and also, God gave him awe and fear before kings. God strengthened his faith before testing him (Romans 4: 20). For God will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able (1 Corinthians 10: 13). Certainly, God accompanied him and strengthened him through it " but with the temptation will also make the way of escape", And this happens in a hidden way.

**God tested Abraham:** The Hebrew word for tested means to examine or prove. The meaning is that God created this experience for him, in order to show his greatness before the generations, the greatness of his faith that does not shake. And God wanted at the same time to show Abraham the meaning of salvation. A man like Abraham got everything he could wish for; sons, land, and reverence. Certainly, he was thinking about the way of salvation after death, and hence God asked him this request. And Abraham in this allegory was a symbol of the Father who will present His Son. Abraham himself experienced the bitterness of pain, declaring the feelings of the Father, who offered His Son as a ransom for Adam's children whom he loved. During the experience, Abraham had a clear vision of the way of salvation and understood in advance how Christ would rise from the dead, giving life to Abraham and his children, so Abraham rejoiced " Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad." (John 8: 56). Through faith and bitterness, he set out with his son towards the altar, and returned from the temptation, rejoicing in Isaac, the risen from the dead, a symbol of Christ, and his faith was strengthened even more. God explained the way of salvation, where God used Abraham and Isaac, the mighty men who are suited for this task. And let us note that the bigger the test, the bigger the size of the gift. However, God knows who can endure the trial and tests him. Therefore, the meaning of God testing Abraham does not mean that God is waiting for Abraham's result on the test. For He surely

knows, not only that, but God revealed the result of the test in advance in (Genesis 15: 6) " And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness". But the test here is for more declarations and to show the righteousness of Abraham to the world. And the Apostle Paul explained how was Abraham's faith in this matter (Hebrews 11: 17-19). Having accepted and believed God's promise that in Isaac, he would possess offspring. Therefore, he believed that even if he offered him as a sacrifice, God would raise him again. Accordingly, we ought not to be anxious if God tests us with a difficult trial, for God only tests the strong to give them more revelations. Therefore, this announcement or test was for Abraham, the strong and not for the weaker Lot.

And this is what happened, Abraham went through a difficult test, and the result was that he saw God, faith has turned into sight (verse 14).

(Verse 2): **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."**

God does not allow human sacrifices, and the Law and the Commandments have completely prohibited that. The pagans offered their firstborns as sacrifices to their gods, for they were desperate, requiring to appease their bloodthirsty gods. As for God, the lover of mankind, He wanted to declare that He does not want the death of a human being but that He will sacrifice Himself on behalf of humans to give them life.

**your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love:** These words are designed to apply to Christ, the only begotten Son and the Beloved (Ephesians 1: 6)

**the land of Moriah:** Some believe that it is where the temple was built, and sacrifices were offered. Others believe that it is the place where Christ was crucified (2 Chronicles 3: 1) The important thing is that the two places are adjacent to each other. And the word Moriah means (the Lord sees or prepares), where the Lord prepared the ram of the burnt offering. And Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." (Verse 8). The place is probably named after the incident. Most likely, Mount Moriah means all the mountains of Jerusalem, which is far from Beersheba, where Abraham lived 42 miles (3 days of travel). And now we understand why God spoke to Abraham in this place to offer his son as a sacrifice. From this time until the return of Isaac alive, Isaac was in the rule of the dead. Just as Christ spent 3 days in the tomb and then rose again.

**on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you:** The mountains refer to the heavens and the firmness. The heavenly Christ will be incarnated and steadfastly offer himself as a sacrifice on behalf of mankind. " Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9: 51). Only those who have a heavenly mind will understand the work of Christ. This is the meaning of leaving the boys with the donkey down the mountain (verse 5).

(Verse 3): **So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.**

**rose early in the morning:** Without slackening and before Sarah wakes up and knows, as she would stop him. And without arguing or doubting God's promises. Abraham was amazing in his obedience and Isaac was amazing in his surrender. This means love.

**and he split the wood:** In order to go to the place ready, and there would be nothing to hinder him from fulfilling the command of the Lord, and so that he does not weaken when he reaches the place. The wood refers to the wood of the cross of Christ.

God was revealing the secret of the cross in various ways, but many people's eyes were blinded. Let's see the advantages of Abraham's faith:

1. God will raise from the dead.
2. Without hesitation and no questions of how and why.
3. Quick and early, and did not consult neither flesh nor blood.
4. Practical faith which works and not just words.

Therefore, he experienced God, saw Him, saw His day, and returned from this experience with joy. There is no trial without joy.

(Verse 4): **Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.**

**Then on the third day:** The third day refers to the resurrection, as if Isaac remained with Christ in the tomb for these three days, and on the third day he came back alive. The story of the three days is repeated in the Bible to explain the same idea, and there are some examples:

1. He asked the children of Israel to offer sacrifices over the course of 3 days journey, as the sacrifice is not accepted outside the circle of resurrection.
2. After 3 days walk they found water.
3. The journey with the Ark of the Covenant was 3 days.

(Revise Exodus 5: 3 + 15: 22 + Numbers 10: 33 + Exodus 19: 11 + Joshua 1: 11 + 2 Kings 20: 5). And the book did not tell us why Abraham dwelt in Gerar beside Abimelech, and perhaps now we know the reason !! In order that Abraham and Isaac would be at a distance of 3 days from Mount Moriah in Jerusalem and complete the symbol. But amid the trial, between the pressures of pain, and when there were many worries, Abraham's soul was filled with consolation, and his inner insight was opened. So he saw the mystery of the Crucified then Risen from the dead and rejoiced when he saw the day of the Lord

(John 8: 56). As for us, it is certain that if we are patient with any trial, the result will be good. The greater the pain of the experience, the greater God's announcements and consolation, and the greater the expected glory (Romans 8: 17, 18 + James 1: 2). Note that God did not allow such trial to Lot, as Lot put himself in that bad situation where he is not ready for Divine Announcements.

(Verse 5): **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."**

Abraham prevented his servants from accompanying him because they would surely hinder him and prevent him from killing his son. Accordingly, shall we leave under the hill the thoughts and concerns that hinder us from worship? As for the two servants that Abraham left under the hill with the donkey, they refer to the Jewish people, who could not climb and reach the place of sacrifice, because they did not want to believe. They saw Christ and the Cross, but they did not realize the secret nor the power of the Resurrection, and they did not rejoice as Abraham did. He who is associated with the earthly thought does not realize the heavenly matters. And review the story of Christ entering Jerusalem, riding on a donkey and a colt; the donkey that many rode, refers to the Jewish nation, as God had led them hundreds of years. As for the colt that no one has ridden before, it refers to the nations who were not led by God before, but lived in satanic idolatry. But after believing in Christ, the believers become a horse that Christ rides " and he went out conquering and to conquer" (Revelation 6: 2) + (Song of Solomon 1: 9). And the fact that Abraham left the young men with the donkey at the bottom of the mountain, indicates that the Jews did not raise their minds to the heavenly level and did not understand the mystery of redemption.

**the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you:** This shows Abraham's belief in the return of his son alive.

(Verse 6): **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.**

Isaac was a young man, and some estimated his age to be 25 years, so Abraham laid the wood on him as a symbol of Christ carrying the wood of his cross " And the government will be upon His shoulder" (Isaiah 9: 5, 6).

**and the two of them went together:** Abraham offered his only son through exalted love, and Isaac offered himself in complete obedience, and the sacrifice was counted for both. Thus, the sacrifice of Christ is the sacrifice of the Father, who offered his son a ransom for us, and it is the sacrifice of the Son who obeyed unto death, even the death of the cross (John 3: 16 + Romans 8: 32 + Philippians 2: 8).

Therefore **went together** indicates the Father and the Son set out to the cross to offer the sacrifice of the cross. The Son is in the Father, and the Father is in the Son.

(Verse 7): **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?"**

Isaac's question to his father Abraham was perhaps the hardest part of trial. But this question is an educational question for all of us

**Look, the fire:** The Holy Spirit who helps and God who accepts

**the wood:** The commandments upon which we crucify our desires and our passions.

**but where is the lamb for a burnt offering:** So do we accept to be living sacrifices? (Romans 12: 1) and we offer ourselves as burnt offering?

(Verse 8): **And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.**

**God will provide for Himself the lamb:** In Old KJV " God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering". The word For was added in NKJV. And the meaning is that God will arrange himself the lamb for the burnt offering. Abraham said this response in the spirit of prophecy by which he saw God's plan of salvation, and that it is not man-made, but it is a divine work that only He sees.

(Verse 9): **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.**

This is a picture of Christ bound and fixed on the cross but with nails.

**and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar:** We understand that Abraham is a symbol of the Father in this story. Thus the meaning of the verse becomes that the Father is the Omnipotent who wanted to crucify the Son to offer redemption, not the envy of the Jews or the evil of the Romans. We will see in (verse 13) that it was Christ's strong love for mankind that bound him to the cross. We also see the strong love of the Father in what Paul the Apostle said " He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8: 32). His saying he did not spare indicates that the pain of the Father was equal to the pain of the Son. And all these pains were in love for man and for the sake of his salvation.

(Verse 10): **And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.**

(Verse 11): **But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am."**

**the Angel of the Lord:** YHWH, the maker of salvation

(Verse 12): **And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."**

**Do not lay your hand on the lad:**

This is the economy of salvation, and it is the same as what Christ said to those who came to arrest Him " let these go their way," (John 18: 8). For when Jesus said I AM HE, He mean I AM YHWH

**for now I know:**

Did God not know before that? Surely He knew for there is nothing is hidden from him and he examines the heart and the mind. But now Abraham's amazing faith has been revealed to the whole world and even to himself. We note when St. Paul discussed the verse " believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.", he focused on Abraham's faith. And when James discussed it, he focused on Abraham's works (Romans : 1-5 + James 2: 20-23). And there is no disagreement, for Paul was revealing the hidden side in the heart of Abraham, and Jacob was talking about the works that appear before the world. Abraham was justified by his faith before God, and by his deed before people. Abraham's deeds showed that his hidden faith was a living faith and not a dead faith. This faith, which only God could see, has now appeared before people, even before Abraham himself.

(Verse 13): **Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son.**

**caught in a thicket by its horns:** The ram's horns are the sign of his strength. And here he is caught in his horns as a reference to Christ who humbled himself by his own will and authority (John 10: 17, 18). Christ confiscated His power or gave it up until He was crucified. More precisely, the horns of the ram, which indicate strength, are a symbol of the power of love that bound Christ to us until he surrendered himself to the cross as a ransom for us (the thicket is a tree and it symbolizes the cross). No one can bound Christ . For when Christ told the soldiers that I AM HE, they fell to the ground (John 18: 5-6). Christ's strong love for us made Him fully strive for the cross. It was what tied him to the Cross before they hung Him on the Cross, and note Christ's longing to the Cross " Who would set briers and thorns Against Me ... " (Isaiah 27: 2-5). This is what David, the prophet said " This is the day the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I pray, O Lord; O Lord, I pray, send now prosperity. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We have blessed you from the house of the Lord. God is the Lord, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You." (Psalm 118: 24-28).

The horns here refer to the power of the blood of Christ's sacrifice on the altar of the Cross. Meaning: Rejoice everyone who believes in Christ and clings to Him.

**thicket** is a tree. The meaning is that Christ was bound on the cross. And the mystery of Christ's sacrifice can be seen in both Isaac and the ram together. The ram represents Christ's actual death and Isaac represents Christ in carrying the cross and then in his resurrection. Let us also note that the ram redeemed Isaac (the son of the free woman), and Christ redeemed His free church, which He freed.

(Verse 14): **And Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided."**

In Arabic Bible, Abraham called the place "YHWH YARA": which mean The Lord sees. As from the fruits of the painful experience, Abraham experienced the Lord and saw Him. This is how God appeared to Abraham in the place of sacrifice, since in Him the reconciliation between God and man was completed. And thus we had the right to see Him as His children. He sees a solution to all our problems, and that is why we rely on him, and this became an example for us.

**In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided:** That is, God is in His exalt and transcendence in Heaven, referred to as the mountain, He sees the weariness of human beings and their difficult matters and saves them. And that was through that He was incarnated and became visible. And His pain became touchable, and on the mountain he was crucified. **Visible:** means that he took a body as St. John the apostle says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life" (1 John 1: 1). Rather, we saw his love spoken while he was hanging on the cross for us. And the sentence **The-Lord-Will-Provide** became a prophecy about the incarnation (Isaiah 53: 5).

Notice that the more we strive to live in the heavenly places expressed by the mountain, the clearer the vision of the Lord will be (Matthew 5: 8).

**Comparison between Isaac and Christ:**

| Isaac   | Christ   |
|---|--|
| Miraculous birth from Sarah's dead repository.  | Miraculous birth of the Virgin without human seed.                                   |
| Beloved only son to his parents   | The only-begotten Son, the beloved of the loving Father.                             |
| Carried the wood and walked for three days  | Carried the cross and was buried for three days.                                     |
| Isaac's amazing obedience = its interpretation of his love for his father and his trust in him. | Obedience of Christ unto death even the death of the cross, for He loves the Father. |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Abraham took with him two boys and a donkey to Jerusalem (Moriah). | Christ entered Jerusalem on a donkey brought by the disciples. |
| Isaac returned alive.  | Christ is risen from the dead                                  |

**The-Lord-Will-Provide:** Probably here, God showed Abraham the way of salvation, and its resemblance with the redemption of Christ, so he rejoiced. This is what Christ indicated when He said " Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad" (John 8: 56). Note that Abraham mentioned here the name YHWH, as the name YHWH is connected to salvation. The Saviour is the Incarnate Son. Abraham has known God by the name "El Shaddai" which means the Almighty God (Genesis 17: 1) who is nothing hard for Him" (Genesis 18: 14), even Hagar knew the name El as well (Genesis 16: 13). Therefore, Abraham made the name El known to all his household. But here, on the subject of the salvation that he saw and joy, he used the name of YHWH the Saviour. This is what Moses said afterwards (revise the interpretation of Exodus 3: 15). For The Lord announced to Moses that he would deliver his people from the bondage of Pharaoh. God said to Moses YHWH - This is MY NAME eternally .. So we see that Abraham uses the name YHWH on the occasion of God's announcement to him of the Savior and the Redeemer's coming. The Lord also told Moses that His name, by which He will be known forever, is YHWH, and this was associated with the story of the people's salvation from slavery to Pharaoh. The name YHWH was used twice to express salvation: \* Here with Abraham \* And with Moses in the story of the exodus. The two events, the redemption by the ram, and the salvation from Pharaoh, are a symbol of salvation through the cross. So we know the Son as YHWH the Savior.

(Verses 15-18): **Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, 16 and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— 17 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. 18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."**

Here Abraham enjoys renewing the promise in a way that exceeded the previous times. He did not withhold his son from God, so he deserved God to reveal to him what is to come.

1. The speech was confirmed by an oath: **By Myself I have sworn** to demonstrate its importance and to confirm its occurrence
2. He promised blessings: **blessing I will bless you.**
3. Multiplying descendants: And we have heard before that the descendants of Abraham will be like the stars of heaven, and once again we have heard that they are like the dust of the earth. This was due to the fact that the first vision was in the evening, so He said the stars of the heaven, and the second vision was in the morning, so he said it was like the dust of the earth. Here he combined the two, and perhaps



this indicated that Abraham's descendants would be among the Jews (stars of heaven) who were in the night of the world before Christ shines who is the Sun of Righteousness appeared. He will also be the father of the Christian Church (the sand on the seashore) who are now in the light of Christ.

4. Victory and triumph over demons and enemies: **and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.**

5. The promise of the incarnation of Christ and being from his descendants: **In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed**, for Christ is the greatest blessing of the world.

6. Because this vision belonged to the people of the New Testament, the voice was from heaven: **Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven.** Before that the sound was from the earth, it was not mentioned that it was from heaven.

7. For these reasons Abraham returned with joy

(Verse 19): **So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.**

**and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba: Beersheba** {It is divided to **Beer** (which means well) and **sheba** (the name of the well)}The well indicates baptism, and circumcision indicates baptism. Abraham was circumcised before, so what is the meaning of **dwelt at Beersheba?**

Beersheba has become a sign of covenant and a pledge (Genesis 21: 28-33) and the well refers to the water of Baptism. Now that Abraham rejoiced to see the day of Christ, that is, the way of salvation, which is the death and the resurrection of Christ.

We see that God is with this symbol: That Abraham dwelt at Beersheba = It refers to the way the children of Abraham were saved by faith, through baptism. The meaning becomes that God gives a promise that through baptism, which is death and resurrection with Christ, the children of Abraham by faith will become children of God, and by which we are saved " He who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16: 16). And thus we understand the meaning of " Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba" (Genesis 21: 33). So the tamarisk, that is, the trees, is a symbol of the children of Abraham with faith, who came out of baptism, about whom David the Prophet said " He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper (Psalm 1: 3). These children of Abraham drink from the well of living water, that is, they are filled with the Holy Spirit and rejoice in His fruits (Galatians 5: 22-23). Compare this with the trees that grew in (Ezekiel 47: 12). The believer who walks in God's commandments is like a tree planted by the rivers of water (Psalm 1: 3).

This is about God's promise, but a person must live dead for the sins of the world and not quench the Spirit (this is called putting old man to death) To enjoy the resurrected life with Christ (the newness of life or the new life).

Perhaps the boys going to Beersheba with Abraham and Isaac at the end (the rest that will believe) refers to the return of the Jews to faith in Christ, who previously could not see the mystery of his sacrifice. And in the last days, they will go to the waters of baptism and accept whom they have previously denied

(Verses 20-24): **Now it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, saying, "Indeed Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor: 21 Huz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, 22 Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel." 23 And Bethuel begot Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. 24 His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Thahash, and Maachah.**

The news of Abraham's family came to Abraham, perhaps through commercial caravans. Perhaps this news is what encouraged Abraham to ask for a wife for his son from his family. This news reveals the relationship of Rebekah to her husband Isaac as Rebekah is related to Isaac by body. Thus, the Church became Christ's bride, and there is a bodily relationship between Christ and the Church, as he is the firstborn among many brothers. It was said about the relatives of Christ, "His mother and His brothers, for He became to have a bodily kinship with humans."

## Chapter 23

After Abraham took the promise of life and blessing in the previous chapter, we find here the news of death. This indicates that even if Christ died on our behalf and rose to bear our punishment, we must die as a crossing over to the afterlife. And the news of the relatives of Rebekah between the two chapters indicates the continuation of life through the children after the death of the fathers until the Day of Resurrection comes when everyone will rise. This is expressed in the words of the revelation; "Then Abraham stood up from before his dead" (Verse 3) after he mourned and cried. Abraham's very high spiritual stature did not prevent the appearance of human emotions and feelings, for Christ himself wept before the tomb of Lazarus, but his saying he stood up indicates his belief in the resurrection. However, we are here on this earth in a period of weeping and a world of grief that is softened by faith in the resurrection.

(Verse 1): **Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah.**

Sarah is the only woman whose age the Bible mentions, as she is the mother of the Hebrews. The mention of the number may indicate that the period of the Hebrew people as a people of God is a specific period, that has a beginning and an end. The beginning was with Abraham's call, and the end was with the coming of Christ and His founding of the church, His body. Afterward, the Jews who believe in Christ continue as the people of Christ (i.e. the Church). Whoever rejects Christ will no longer be from God's people. (Revise the interpretation of Romans 11).

(Verse 2): **So Sarah died in Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.**

Probably Abraham used to move between several centers because of his abundant possessions between Hebron and Beersheba.

**and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah:** It means that he used to travel in his work and heard and came to lament her.

(Verse 3): **Then Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying,**

The word Heth means fear and terror. This is the state of the earth before the redemption of Christ.

(Verse 4): **"I am a foreigner and a visitor among you. Give me property for a burial place among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight."**

**I am a foreigner and a visitor:** Despite all his possessions and fame before the people of Heth to the extent that they treated him as chief among them (verse 6), however, he lived in humility as a stranger, feeling that he does not belong to this world but to Him who is in heaven. Certainly, his fellowship with God is what gave him honour in front of these people.

**Give me property for a burial:** Abraham did not think about burying his wife Sarah next to his ancestors. If by faith he went out with Sarah from Ur, He remained walking with this faith until his last breath. He who owned nothing in the land of Canaan owned a burial place (Acts 7: 5), while Nimrod and Cain owned cities. This indicates the spirit of estrangement of Abraham. However, we notice:

1. Abraham's insistence on buying the land, and this particular land that God promised him that he and his descendants would own (Genesis 15: 7), It is a confirmation of his belief that God will give it to him according to his promise. Abraham wants to take it from the hand of God and not as a gift from the sons of Heth.
2. The land that God gave him for free, he only takes after paying the price. This indicates that God gave us free gifts and an inheritance for heaven with His grace, but we must strive until we inherit (the price).
3. He bought the land with silver. The land refers to the inheritance of heaven. And the silver refers to the redemption by which we received the inheritance.
4. God promised him the land, but he only owned a burial place. Paul the apostle explained this saying that it is a land of estrangement and he was waiting for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11:10) which is the inheritance of heaven.

(Verse 5): **And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him,**

(Verse 6): **“Hear us, my lord: You are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead.”**

**You are a mighty prince among us:** That is a great chief. Note the love and honour that the sons of Heth had for Abraham.

(Verse 7): **Then Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, the sons of Heth.**

The bowing down of Abraham here is a prostration of honour, not of worship: this is how we bow down to the Pope and the bishops.

(Verses 8-9): **And he spoke with them, saying, “If it is your wish that I bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and meet with Ephron the son of Zohar for me, 9 that he may give me the cave of Machpelah**

**which he has, which is at the end of his field. Let him give it to me at the full price, as property for a burial place among you.”**

Here we find Abraham's insistence on paying, and not taking advantage of the love of the Hethites. It is clear that Abraham knew the name of the owner of the land that he wanted to buy, but he had never seen him before.

(Verse 10): **Now Ephron dwelt among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the presence of the sons of Heth, all who entered at the gate of his city, saying,**

Notables and great men used to sitting at the gate of the city where problems were solved.

(Verse 11): **“No, my lord, hear me: I give you the field and the cave that is in it; I give it to you in the presence of the sons of my people. I give it to you. Bury your dead!”**

(Verse 12): **Then Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land;**

Prostration here is a prostration of gratitude to them for their kindness.

(Verse 13): **and he spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, “If you will give it, please hear me. I will give you money for the field; take it from me and I will bury my dead there.”**

Here Abraham discovered that Ephron was sitting in the midst of them, and he said to him: **If you will give it** That **is, if you are Ephron, the owner of the cave and field**. The sentence may mean if you want to give me the cave and you can give it to me for free, as I am sure of your generosity, but kindly allow me to pay its price. The dialogue followed here is a pleasant oriental method of trading, where the buyer asks "how much" and the seller responds "for free" or "free for you," and the buyer responds, "you can do this and more, but I want to pay." And by faith, Abraham does not want to take the land for free from the hand of Ephron, as he is waiting to take it from the hand of God at the time that God determines. He is waiting patiently for the fulfillment of God's promise and does not seem to be accepting from people something God promised to give him.

(Verse 14): **And Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him,**

(Verses 15-16): **“My lord, listen to me; the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver. What is that between you and me? So bury your dead.” 16 And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham**

**weighed out the silver for Ephron which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, currency of the merchants.**

400 shekels of silver was a lot for the land, but for Abraham, it was nothing as it is the token of his inheritance. He did not acquire anything from the earth except where he buries his body in. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah were buried in this cave, and now the mosque of Hebron and its courtyard are built over it. And Jacob bought another tomb in Shechem (Joshua 24: 32) where Joseph and others were buried. Probably some of the fathers of the tribes were buried there (Acts 7: 16). It is said that Joseph's bones were then moved to the Cave of Machpelah.

**currency of the merchants:** This looks like a stamp now. Same as when gold and silver are stamped to show that they are not fake.

(Verses 17-20): **So the field of Ephron which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave which was in it, and all the trees that were in the field, which were within all the surrounding borders, were deeded 18 to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city. 19 And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. 20 So the field and the cave that is in it were deeded to Abraham by the sons of Heth as property for a burial place.**

## Chapter 24

(Verse 1): **Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.**

**There is a general line evident in the story of Abraham's life that explains the story of salvation:**

1. Choosing Abraham to be the father of the people from whom Christ will come and preparing him with his call to leave his land, this includes (Chapters 12-17).
2. The Promise of Offspring from Sarah (Chapter 18), which is not an ordinary offspring, but the son of a promise, a symbol of Christ, the Son of Promise. This is because all the believers in Christ are sons of promise where Baptism shifted them from death to life. We also find the announcement of the punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah, a declaration of the destruction of evil and the judgment of the enemy of good.
3. Execution of judgment on the wicked (Chapter 19).
4. Birth of Isaac, symbol of Christ (Chapter 21).
5. Offering Isaac as a sacrifice and returning alive in a declaration of carrying the cross (Chapter 22).
6. The death of Sarah (Chapter 23) and Sarah represents the Jewish Church, which should have died and its role ended before Christ betrothed to Himself His church.
7. (Chapter 24) announces the betrothment of Christ and His union with his church. And sending Abraham's oldest of the house to bring Rebekah as a wife to Isaac from the city of Nahor in Haran refers to the work of the Holy Spirit who drew the nations out of their evil land (their worshipping of idols) to bring them to the true Isaac, our Lord Jesus Christ, a bride to be comforted by, in place of his mother Sarah = in place of the Jewish nation which rejected and crucified Him. Let us note that if the Revelation had singled out an entire lengthy chapter to tell us the story of choosing a wife for Isaac and not telling us how Abraham chose his wife, for example, indicates the concern of the Holy Spirit not in the history of the marriage of Isaac, but rather in being a symbol of what happened between Christ and His church. We note that it was politically better for Abraham to let his son marry one of the daughters of the chiefs of the tribes around him to ensure security among them. Still, he insisted on making him marry from his family, which worshiped God. Unfortunately, a kind of idolatry had crept into this family, such as optimism of the Teraphim, which they believed had intercession or mediation with God. Unfortunately, a kind of idolatry had crept into this family, such as optimism of the teraphim, which they believed had intercession or mediation with God. However, Abraham's extended family was not as bad as the people of Canaan, who were in the way of ruin. And if we understand that the oldest of Abraham's house symbolizes the Holy Spirit, then we know why his name was not mentioned here, while Abraham mentioned it before in (Genesis 15: 2) by Eliezer of Damascus. Why was he not mentioned here? To

understand this, we have to go to (John 16: 13-15) For the Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself, but rather He testifies to Christ to glorify Him. And so should all Christ's servants be " They do not speak about themselves, but rather their concern is to bear witness to Christ".

(Verse 2): **So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, "Please, put your hand under my thigh,**

We note here that there are consultations between Abraham and the oldest of his house, and there is an oath and stress that Isaac marries Rebekah, while Rebekah does not know about this yet. This shows God's care for our salvation and that there are consultations within the Holy Trinity regarding man without man knowing or even being asked. God gives us, loves us, and cares for us without even asking. This is the will of the Father that we become a bride to his Son. The Holy did this, starting with the incarnation of Christ until the Seven Sacraments. This what we read in the verse " Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord God and His Spirit Have sent Me." (Isaiah 48: 16). Here we see the commissioning of the Son by the Father and the Holy Spirit. And that the Son will be sent to redeem man. Eternal consultations within the Trinity counselling circle to determine the role of each hypostasis for human salvation, which man does not know about.

**put your hand under my thigh:**

It is the style of making an oath, which means that he puts his hand under the sign of the covenant with God, and it is circumcision as the Bible testifies to his words as a sign of the New Testament. The meaning is just as God does not change His nature and that God does not change His covenant nor His promises. Therefore, whoever makes an oath by this method is bound by these promises or will lose God's blessings. This method of swearing also indicates that he swears by the incarnate from his offspring, as the word thigh is translated also as "body" the source of the offspring (Genesis 46: 26). It is as if Abraham, in the spirit of prophecy and the declarations that were announced to him, understood that the Messiah would come from his descendants.

(Verse 3): **and I will make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell;**

Abraham did not care that his son would marry someone who had a political position or who is beautiful. Instead, when he went out of Ur to depart from idolatry, he did not want his son to marry someone who may attract him to sin.

(Verse 4): **but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac."**



(Verse 5): **And the servant said to him, “Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?”**

We note here the concern of the oldest of the house in the agreement detail, for which he is making oath, because of the importance of the oath.

**Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?:** That is Ur or Haran

(Verse 6): **But Abraham said to him, “Beware that you do not take my son back there.**

Abraham refused his servant's offer because he was afraid that Isaac would return to Ur and would prefer to stay there. Abraham understood that God's will is that Abraham and his descendants leave Ur and live in the land of Canaan, and he knew that they will inherit Canaan not in the present time, but in the future after 400 years. It was the custom of the great people to send messengers to betroth for their children. However, this is more of a symbol of sending the Holy Spirit to the Church, to betroth and prepare her for her Bridegroom, the Christ.

(Verse 7): **The Lord God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, ‘To your descendants I give this land,’ He will send His angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there.**

**He will send His angel before you:** He reassures his servant that this task will be outlined and supported by God. In general, whoever purposes in his heart to perform the will of God finds that God helps and guides him.

(Verses 8-9): **And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be released from this oath; only do not take my son back there.” 9 So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.**

(Verse 10): **Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and departed, for all his master’s goods were in his hand. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor.**

**city of Nahor:** Probably when Abraham moved to Canaan after the death of his father, Terah, Nahor came to this place to inherit their property (The property of Terah his father, Terah is the father of Abraham and Nahor).

**all his master's goods:** The servant refers to the Holy Spirit that gives to all liberally and without reproach. He gives fruits and gifts. He came to bring us a bride to Jesus, our Heavenly Bridegroom, to be with Him.

Eternally He carries us through His help in carrying out the commandments (The ten commandments = ten camels. The Holy Spirit, who here grants us peace, joy, and self-satisfaction, offers this as a pledge (earnest) to enjoy the eternal good. Here we partially enjoy the pledge(earnest) not the full eternal good gifts for the full is " "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." (1 Corinthians 2: 9). What we shall take is eternity, the praises of angels, deliverance from death, freedom from sin, the inheritance of the great kingdom, righteousness and sanctification, and deliverance from present evil. And what we get now is nothing but a deposit that pulls our hearts to heaven, so we long to get more.

(Verse 11): **And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water.**

**by a well of water:** Refers to the Baptism water from which we are born of water and Spirit (symbolized her by Abraham's servant). And again Isaac met Rebekah at the well of water (verse 62). For Christ does not find the Church, nor does the Church finds Christ except through the Sacrament of Baptism (In this sacrament, the Holy Spirit unites us with Christ).

**at evening time:** Evening of this world and waiting for the coming of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness.

(Verse 12): **Then he said, "O Lord God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham.**

The servant learned from his master Abraham, and now he begins his mission by praying to God to help him. And after the mission (verse 48) he offered thanks to God for making his way prosperous. (Verse 26) shows with every success, he offers thanks to Lord.

(Verse 13): **Behold, here I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water.**

(Verse 14): **Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink'—let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master."**

This spiritual person put an excellent sign to show the girl's humility and willingness to serve. He did not put a sign on her being beautiful or rich, but rather meek and having a spirit of service.

(Verses 15-21): **And it happened, before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder. 16 Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. 17 And the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher." 18 So she said, "Drink, my lord." Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink. 19 And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." 20 Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels. 21 And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.**

He asked for a spiritual sign, so God gave him what he asked for, and also the girl was beautiful and from the family of Abraham. Indeed, God makes our ways easy, and He is the one who guides, leads, and gives more than we ask or think.

**the trough:** It is the place where water is placed for livestock. So she had to move between the well and the trough several times in order to water all the camels. And Eliezer was contemplating on how God in His love answered his prayer.

(Verse 22): **So it was, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels of gold,**

**half a shekel:** This is the dowry that Isaac paid to betroth Rebekah. What did Christ offer us? He offered His blood as atonement to betroth us. And the Jew used to pay ½ shekel of silver as atonement, which will be discussed in the Book of Exodus. Importantly, 1/2 Shekel refers to the atonement by the Blood of Christ. It was gold as Christ is Heavenly. The nose ring which was put on the nose symbolizes the sanctification of the senses.

\* For a clearer picture, please study the subject of 1/2 Shekel in the Book of Exodus Chapter 30. Also, in the meaning of numbers in the introduction of the tabernacle in the Book of Exodus.

**and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels:** The number 10 refers to the commandments, and the bracelets on the hands are a symbol of sanctifying the works according to the Ten Commandments. This is the bride's duty to be characterized by a heavenly nature (gold) so that her senses and her actions are sanctified to deserve to be a bride of Christ. Trained senses is the work of the Holy Spirit. We see a beautiful picture of giving gifts to Rebekah in (Ephesians 4: 8) " When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men".

(Verses 23-30): **and said, “Whose daughter are you? Tell me, please, is there room in your father’s house for us to lodge?” 24 So she said to him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah’s son, whom she bore to Nahor.” 25 Moreover she said to him, “We have both straw and feed enough, and room to lodge.” 26 Then the man bowed down his head and worshiped the Lord. 27 And he said, “Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master’s brethren.” 28 So the young woman ran and told her mother’s household these things. 29 Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban, and Laban ran out to the man by the well. 30 So it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister’s wrists, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah, saying, “Thus the man spoke to me,” that he went to the man. And there he stood by the camels at the well.**

(Verse 31): **And he said, “Come in, O blessed of the Lord! Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels.”**

We see Laban has the same polite manner as his sister Rebekah.

(Verse 32): **Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and provided straw and feed for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him.**

(Verse 33): **Food was set before him to eat, but he said, “I will not eat until I have told about my errand.” And he said, “Speak on.”**

As he entered the house, he did not want compliments to distract him from his mission and message, for he has a clear goal. This is why Christ said to His disciples to greet no one along the road and to not go from house to house. (Luke 10: 4, 7).

(Verse 34): **So he said, “I am Abraham’s servant.**

The servant here testifies to the greatness of his master, and this is what the Holy Spirit does, that he testifies to Christ. He testifies about His glory, greatness, and love to draw us to Him, and tells us how the Father gave everything to the Son (John 16: 13-15).

(Verse 35): **The Lord has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys.**

(Verse 36): **And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and to him he has given all that he has.**

Abraham gave all his riches to Isaac his son, and the Father gave all that He had to the Son (John 16: 13-15).

(Verses 37-49): **Now my master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell; 38 but you shall go to my father's house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.' 39 And I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not follow me.' 40 But he said to me, 'The Lord, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house. 41 You will be clear from this oath when you arrive among my family; for if they will not give her to you, then you will be released from my oath.' 42 "And this day I came to the well and said, 'O Lord God of my master Abraham, if You will now prosper the way in which I go, 43 behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw water, and I say to her, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink," 44 and she says to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,"—let her be the woman whom the Lord has appointed for my master's son.' 45 "But before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down to the well and drew water. And I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' 46 And she made haste and let her pitcher down from her shoulder, and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels a drink also.' So I drank, and she gave the camels a drink also. 47 Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter are you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him.' So I put the nose ring on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists. 48 And I bowed my head and worshiped the Lord, and blessed the Lord God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the way of truth to take the daughter of my master's brother for his son. 49 Now if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. And if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."**

(Verse 50): **Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing comes from the Lord; we cannot speak to you either bad or good.**

The Lord who arranged the whole thing persuaded Laban and then Rebekah to accept. Everyone realized that the order came from the Lord.

(Verses 51-54): **Here is Rebekah before you; take her and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the Lord has spoken." 52 And it came to pass, when Abraham's servant heard their words, that he worshiped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth. 53 Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave precious things to her brother**

**and to her mother. 54 And he and the men who were with him ate and drank and stayed all night. Then they arose in the morning, and he said, "Send me away to my master."**

(Verse 55): **But her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us a few days, at least ten; after that she may go."**

**a few days, at least ten:** They used to divide the month into three sections, each of ten days, so they meant that let her spend the remaining days of the first ten days with us, or to spend the next full ten days.

(Verses 56-57): **And he said to them, "Do not hinder me, since the Lord has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master." 57 So they said, "We will call the young woman and ask her personally."**

(Verse 58): **Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go."**

We see here freedom of choice, for marriage should not forced on a girl. As a bride of Christ, we are not obliged to follow Him. However, when Rebekah heard of Isaac's glory, she said, "I will go", and we should do the same.

(Verses 59-60): **So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. 60 And they blessed Rebekah and said to her: "Our sister, may you become The mother of thousands of ten thousands; And may your descendants possess The gates of those who hate them."**

(Verse 61): **Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.**

Probably throughout the journey the servant was telling Rebekah about Isaac to inflame her longing for him this is the work of the Holy Spirit). Just as Rebekah left her father's house, so did the church, left her pagan world and followed Christ.

(Verses 62-63): **Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South. 63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were coming.**

It was a custom among the Jews to go out to meditate and pray at sunset. And as Isaac went out in the evening. This is how Christ went out in the evening to His cross to die on it. And as Isaac met Rebekah at the well of water, Christ gave us the water of baptism, which gained its strength and effectiveness from the cross of Christ. In baptism we die and rise with him and united by him. Thus, we become His bride, as Rebekah is a symbol of the Church. And because Rebekah is the symbol of the church, the Bible did not mention Rebekah's death, as the church is alive and will not die. What was mentioned in (Genesis 49: 31) about the burial of Rebekah in the Cave of Machpelah is a sign of death in the body, for we did not know when or where or how did Rebekah die. This is an indication that the Church of Christ, his bride, is one and only Church.

**Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi:** Isaac came through the way of Beer Lahai Roi, which refers to the way through Baptism, as Baptism is the way that Christ meet with His bride, the Church. Also "the way" refers to the Cross which gave to the Baptism the strength and effectiveness. The meaning becomes that Christ met his church in baptism after completing the redemption with His cross, which is the way for baptism. So Baptism becomes the way of union between Christ the bridegroom and the church His bride.

**And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening:** Isaac is a symbol of Christ who offered himself as a sacrifice on the cross in the evening, to redeem His bride and is now waiting for her to reach heaven.

**and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were coming:** Christ the bridegroom is waiting with joy and longing in heaven for the arrival of His church in this procession to glorify her with Him.

He was at well and came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi and sat down waiting = meditate. And Rebekah came and he received her with joy. Symbolically, this symbolizes Christ, the Bridegroom, who prepared baptism for us to be united with him, as Rebekah was united with Isaac. Christ prepared baptism through His baptism in the Jordan, and by His death and resurrection (Refer to interpretation of Romans 6). And Christ, who went to prepare a place for us, is now waiting for us in Heaven

Note that the phrase "Isaac came from " has no meaning in the context except that the well is a symbol of baptism that Christ completed its founding with all that he did on earth after his incarnation to unite with him his one and only Church, his bride. That is why Isaac is a symbol of Christ in Heaven now, and Isaac did not marry except one bride who is Rebekah. As for Jacob, he refers to Christ who came to earth in order to make the two into one (Ephesians 2: 14), but rather He made heaven and earth one (Ephesians 1: 10). And the two are:

- The Jews symbolized by Leah with her weak eyesight, as the Jews did not understand the prophecies of their own Book.

- The gentiles symbolized by the beloved Rachel, for the gentiles easily accepted Christ.

Christ made both of them into One Church. And now He is waiting for the day that she comes to him in heaven to see His Glory. Also, note that the servant guided Rebekah to her bridegroom = The Holy Spirit

is a continuous companion to Heaven until we meet our Bridegroom. Christ completed His Salvation and sent His Holy Spirit to continue the work by abiding us in Christ.

**Beer Lahai Roi** = A living (one) my seer. Our Groom has His eye on us while we are on earth and until we reach Him in heaven. Compare with what the Lord said " ; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice" (John 16: 22)

(Verse 64): **Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel;**

We cannot meet Christ if we do not humble ourselves and go down, for He has Humbled Himself. We only meet Him with humility.

(Verse 65): **for she had said to the servant, "Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It is my master." So she took a veil and covered herself.**

Rebekah's question about Isaac is our question about Christ, and the Holy Spirit tells us about Him (John 16: 13-15). The eastern custom was that the bride puts a veil in front of her groom until she marries him as a sign of submission to him.

**Christ is the Bridegroom of the Church = Isaac is the Bridegroom of Rebekah.**

It is clear from the length of this chapter and the repetition of words that what is important is not the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah, but rather its importance is due to its being a sign and symbol of Christ's connection with His church. And by this repetition, we glimpse the joy of the Heavenly Father about the return of His children to His bosom " This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased". We also note that it is not customary to send someone to bring a bride while staying in his place. But this is a sign of Christ who is in heaven awaiting His church.

(Verses 66-67): **And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. 67 Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.**

**So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death:** Symbolically, Sarah refers to the Jewish nation. And Rebekah refers to the Church of the New Testament with whom Christ was comforted (symbolized by Isaac) after his mother's death (the Church of the Old Testament who crucified Him, and thus died by separating herself from God).

## Chapter 25



(Verse 1): **Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah.**

Many commentators say that Abraham married Keturah during Sarah's life because they found it difficult for Abraham to have children when he was over 140 years old. He even said about himself "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old?" (Genesis 17: 17). Paul confirmed this in (Romans 4: 19) that his body was already dead. But with Abraham's love for Sarah, it is impossible for Abraham to have married Keturah in her lifetime. And the Bible saying **Abraham again** which means that he married her after Sarah's death. However, we can understand that God's gift to Abraham and Sarah was continuous, so Sarah kept her youth, and she was beautiful in her ninety years, and Abraham was still able to have children because God gave them both vitality and renewed like an eagle their youth. Symbolically, Sarah, who represents the Jewish Church should have died first, then Abraham would marry, and we discover that he can have offspring. For Abraham is the father of the church, and the church is a mother of children who never grow old. There is an opinion that the children of Abraham from Keturah refer to the Gentiles who entered the faith after the death of the Jewish Church. And others say that the children of Keturah represent heretics in the Church or everyone who does not have a sound faith, and I think that this is the most likely opinion, because the children of Keturah were dismissed by Abraham from Isaac, who took everything that Abraham have, while Abraham gave them only gifts. And the most important fact, is that the gentiles received same inheritance as Isaac, the son of Abraham, as they became sons of Abraham by faith. Accordingly, it is not appropriate to say about the gentiles that they are children of Keturah, but rather the children of Abraham according to the promise and not according to the flesh, they are children of Abraham by faith. They are children of a promise given inheritance like Isaac.

(Verse 2): **And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.**

(Verse 3): **Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim.**

**Sheba and Dedan:** They are sons of Jokshan, and we see the same names in (Genesis 10: 7) as the sons of Raamah the son of Cush. Probably, Sheba and Dedan are the names of the areas inhabited by the first sons of Cush, and then taken over by the sons of Jokshan, the son of Abraham. What supports this is that the names of Asshuraim and Letushim are plural, which indicates that the names are the names of tribes or places and not individuals.

(Verse 4): **And the sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.**

(Verse 5): **And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac.**

Isaac received everything, declaring that Christ's people will receive all the spiritual inheritance.

(Verse 6): **But Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines which Abraham had; and while he was still living he sent them eastward, away from Isaac his son, to the country of the east.**

**sons of the concubines:** meant the sons of Hagar and Keturah.

(Verse 7): **This is the sum of the years of Abraham's life which he lived: one hundred and seventy-five years.**

(Verse 8): **Then Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people.**

**full of years:** He lived many years and was at comfort with God despite his estrangement.

**was gathered to his people:** Meaning his soul, as his body was in the Machpelah, which was far away from the bodies of his family in Ur and Haran. For God is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For He is not the God of the dead but of the living (Luke 20: 37-38)

(Verse 9): **And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite,**

Ishmael dwelt in Paran, near Lahi Roi, where Isaac dwelt.

(Verse 10): **the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth. There Abraham was buried, and Sarah his wife.**

(Verse 11): **And it came to pass, after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac dwelt at Beer Lahai Roi.**

**God blessed his son Isaac:** Therefore, the blessing that Abraham obtained did not die with his death, but continued to Isaac

**And Isaac dwelt at Beer Lahai Roi:**

Beer Lahai Roi means a living (one) my seer. For God's eye was on Isaac, protecting and blessing him for His love for him.

(Verses 12-18): **Now this is the genealogy of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham. 13 And these were the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, 14 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, 15 Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. 16 These were the sons of Ishmael and these were their names, by their towns and their settlements, twelve princes according to their nations. 17 These were the years of the life of Ishmael: one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. 18 (They dwelt from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt as you go toward Assyria.) He died in the presence of all his brethren.**

Here we see that God's promise to Abraham for the blessing of his children has been fulfilled. God blessed Isaac and Ishmael, and Ishmael had 12 chiefs fulfilling God's promise in (Genesis 17: 20). The Bible mentions the descendants of Ishmael first for these reasons:

1. To finish with it and then devote to the descendants of Isaac and Jacob, of whom Christ came in the flesh.
2. God does not forget His children whom He created. He is concerned with everyone, except that the focus in the Bible is on Christ.
3. We see Ishmael and his descendants, chiefs and princes. The worldly, fleshly man obtains his privileges quickly.
4. Bible begins with Ishmael and then proceeds to Isaac because first the fleshly, then the spiritual (1 Corinthians 15: 46).

**Nebajoth:** He is the founder of the Nabataean kingdom, their capital was Sela and was named Petra after that

**Kedar:** It means capable or black leather because their tents were black (Song of Solomon 1: 5) and they are one of the most popular Arab tribes.

**their settlements:** They were defended in hard-to-reach mountain caves.

**according to their generations:** In order of their ages.

**from Havilah as far as Shur:** They dwelt in the way between Egypt and Assyria.

**as you go toward Assyria:** That is, on the well-known road to Assyria

**died in the presence of all his brethren:** That is, east of the land of Palestine, also that he lived prosperous, strong, and separated from his brothers, the descendants of Isaac. (Genesis 16: 12)

(Verse 19): **This is the genealogy of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham begot Isaac.**

(Verse 20): **Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian.**

**the Syrian of Padan Aram:** As he dwelt in Padan Aram at Haran.

(Verse 21): **Now Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived.**

Many of the saints were barren, such as Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Anna, the mother of Samuel, the wife of Manoah, the mother of Samson, Elizabeth, the mother of St. Macarius the Great, the mother of St. Mina...etc. And here appears the power of prayer.

(Verse 22): **But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If all is well, why am I like this?" So she went to inquire of the Lord.**

**If all is well, why am I like this:** Their struggle was violent, and in some translations they wrestled, and this was the cause of great pain for Rebekah. The meaning of what she said " If I conceived with Isaac's prayer and God's answer, why am I in such pain?, or what is the reason for this pregnancy if it will lead to my death and the death of the children."

**So she went to inquire of the Lord :** Abraham was present and his altar was there, and Abraham and Isaac taught her to pray at the altar

(Verse 23): **And the Lord said to her: "Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger."**

Here is the Lord's answer to Rebekah's prayer. This is a prophecy that each of them will become a people and a nation.

**And the older shall serve the younger:** Prophecy that Jacob or Israel would reign over Esau. Some Church fathers see the struggle between Jacob and Esau since they were in the womb, and which continued after that between them and their descendants, as a picture of the continuous struggle between evil and good within the Church. Or as the struggle between the descendant of woman and the descendant of the serpent. This struggle will continue as long as man is in the flesh. That is why Christ said " I did not come to bring peace but a sword." (Matthew 10: 34), or send fire (Luke 12: 49). However, fire is the holy war against the devil, which results in the inner peace that surpasses all understanding, and this is better than a false peace with the devil or with the world. Esau symbolizes those who love

earthly possessions and seek after all that is worldly, while Jacob symbolizes those who seek spirituality. And in this prophecy we see Jacob, the spiritual prevailing over the Esau, the fleshly, and the reason is that Jacob enjoys and even seeks spiritual blessings. For all his longings are spiritual, so he obtained the birthright of the soul and enjoyed the blessing, and the prophets and finally Christ in the body came out of his loins. This phrase refers to the Church, which, by virtue of history, is the youngest, as it came to know God at the end of times, but it became the strongest spiritually and usurped the first-fruits of the spirit. How does the elder (Jews) serve the younger (church)? They kept the law and the prophecies and all the books for the Church.

(Verse 24): **So when her days were fulfilled for her to give birth, indeed there were twins in her womb.**

(Verses 25-26): **And the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau. 26 Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.**

**Esau:** Means hairy or coarse.

**Jacob:** stalking = because he was holding his brother's heel. And he kept chasing him all his life to steal from him the birthright and blessing. It appears that Jacob was either actually holding his brother's heel or was born directly behind him (although there is usually a time span of around one hour between the birth of twins) so he seemed to be holding his heel.

**red:** In Hebrew, Edmoni and after eating lentils, the name was confirmed on him. And his lusts were confirmed when he sold his birthright for red lentils, and he was called Edom.

These two children bear a symbol of a physical human being (Because hair sprouts naturally from the body, as Esau was, it is a sign of the lusts that emanate from the body). Excessive hair is a sign of attachment to the body and that the bodily person loves bodily things and lives for them. Edom was a bloodthirsty hunter and this also proves the idea of the name Edom. This idea is confirmed by Esau's wild thought " I will kill my brother". All of this stems from the feelings of anger that come from within the human being (same as the hair that sprouts from within), they are feelings of hatred, anger, and lust for revenge that stem from within. Rather, Esau's bloodshed referred to the enemy of good, who was a murderer from the beginning (John 8: 44). As for Jacob, he symbolizes the spiritual man who pursues all for the sake of acquiring eternity, He is a wrestler and fighter for spirituality.

(Verse 27): **So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents.**

Esau was a man of the wilderness who loved hunting, holding a sword in his hand, and not appreciating spiritual meanings. And Isaac loved Esau because of the hunting that he brought him. As for Jacob, he was a mild man, which meant meek and loving, so his mother, Rebekah, loved him, and he was a shepherd, so he was calm.

**dwelling in tents:** He lived in the spirit of estrangement, hoping in God like his forefathers. Certainly, Esau lived in tents like everyone else, but when the Bible mentions that Jacob used to live in tents, wants to refer to the spirit of estrangement in him.

(Verse 28): **And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.**

**he ate of his game:** Means Isaac ate from the hunting of Esau.

(Verses 29-34): **Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. 30 And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom. 31 But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day." 32 And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?" 33 Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.**

Here we find the story of the lentil meal, which is the worst most famous meal after the meal of Adam and Eve. Esau appears here as a fleshly man, recklessly selling his birthright to his brother for a plate of lentils. The blessings of the birthright included:

1. He acts on behalf of his father in his absence and takes the leadership after his father's death.
2. He serves the priesthood and offers sacrifices on behalf of the family in the absence of his father and after his death.
3. He takes a double portion of the inheritance, that is, double his brothers (Deuteronomy 21: 17) (This point was the cause of Esau's unhappiness after that).
4. He was considered dedicated to God until the law of Leviticus came (Exodus 22: 29 + Numbers 3: 12)
5. It was understood that Christ will come from the firstborn (if he is worthy). However, many of the firstborn have lost this blessing because of their sin (Cain/ Esau/ Reuben).

God allowed the story of the sale of the birthright to be written in order to understand why God chose Jacob and left Esau. (Revise Romans 8: 29) " For whom He foreknew, He also predestined". God knew Jacob's love, so He chose him. And we see in this story that Jacob believed, knew and understood the blessings of the birthright, so he sought after it, but chose the wrong human means. His longings were spiritual and holy, but his means were human and wrong. As for Esau, he is like a reckless person who

neglects spiritual blessings and eternal glories. That is why it was said **then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way** = That is, all he cared about was eating and drinking " Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die". He did all this recklessly for the birthright and its meanings. The fault is not in the lentil dish, but in excessive lust and recklessness. This does not mean that Jacob did not sinned when he took advantage of the hunger of Esau, his brothers to buy the birthright. For us, how many times have we abandoned God's promises for the sake of temporary pleasure that will soon pass away. If we enjoy the birthright through our union with God in His Firstborn Son, I wish we would not underestimate it for any physical pleasure. The spiritual man is confident in the fading of the present life, and he seeks eternal life with faith (2 Peter 3: 10-14). As for the carnal man, he is concerned only with the present, despising the matters of God, and a meal of lentils is more important to him than eternity.

**And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die:** It is clear from this sentence either his ignorance, recklessness, or lack of faith. If it is known that the Messiah will come from the firstborn, how can he die without having a son?

Esau's disdain of Christ to come from him, is like the Jewish people who despised Christ and crucified him.

#### **Edom - Esau - Seir**

These are three synonyms that refer to Esau:

**Seir:** Hebrew name meaning "so hairy." It is the name of the Horite prince, whose name was given to the mountainous regions in which he and his descendants lived (Genesis 36: 5-8 + 20-30). And this Seir founded a family that ruled this region (around 1700 B.C) Until Esau captured it, and he did to the Horites what the Children of Israel did to the Canaanites (Deuteronomy 2: 12). Thus, Seir and Mount Seir became synonymous with Edom (Genesis 36: 30 + 2 Chronicles 20: 10). Mount Seir is the Edom mountain range, located east of the Dead Sea, south of the Arnon River, and even close to the Gulf of Aqaba. We heard the name Seir for the first time when Chedorlaomer and the kings who are with him attacked them, and this was what prompted the king of Sodom and the king of Gomorrah to go out to fight Chedorlaomer (Genesis 14: 1-16), The kings of Sodom and Gomorrah were defeated and taken captive with Lot, until Abram the Hebrew (Abraham after that) rescued them.

**Esau:** Hebrew name meaning "hairy". He was so named because when he was born he was all red like a hairy garment all over (Genesis 25: 25).

**Edom:** A word referring to the color red, the color of Esau's skin. The word was confirmed on him after the famous lentil meal.

## Chapter 26

A famine occurred in the land, same as what happened in the days of Abraham. But Isaac asks the Lord, and as the Lord says, he does not go down to Egypt, but sojourns in Gerar. Isaac was brought up in a faith environment and had a strong faith, so why would the Lord test him with this famine? Here we see that God allows temptations to confirm and grow the person's faith, when he endures temptation. Here we see Isaac's cultivation grows hundredfolds. His faith had definitely increased and confirmed when he saw the hand of God during distress. And those around him saw God's blessing on him, rather everyone around him respected him, and they feared and fretted him because they saw the power of God who protects him.

(Verse 1): **There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines, in Gerar.**

**There was a famine in the land:** Famine fell on the land, not on Isaac. For God provides for His children.

(Verses 2-4): **Then the Lord appeared to him and said: "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. 3 Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. 4 And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed;**

When Abraham went to Egypt without consulting God, he almost lost his wife. It is certain that Isaac fell under the same temptation, but he asked God and obeyed Him, so he received promises of blessing, then many blessings. There is no objection to trials, but there is a blessing with obedience and patience. As Isaac heard the voice of God and did not come down, he heard the renewal of the covenant with him

**Then the Lord appeared to him:** If we hear the voice of God, we enjoy His manifestation in us. And compare with Abraham when he went down to Egypt without consulting God, so he received a reproach from Pharaoh (Genesis 12: 18-19).

**and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed:**

This is a prophecy that Christ will come from his descendant, for Christ alone is the One in whom all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

(Verses 5-6): **because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." 6 So Isaac dwelt in Gerar.**



God blesses Isaac for Abraham who died and this is evidence of intercession. Note that God blesses Isaac for his father, who died in the flesh but is alive with God, Why do we not intercede with the Virgin, the saints, and the angels?

(Verse 7): **And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, "She is my sister"; for he was afraid to say, "She is my wife," because he thought, "lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she is beautiful to behold."**

Truly, there is no perfect human being, for here is Isaac repeating the same mistake of his father Abraham. And the Holy Bible does not refrain from mentioning the mistakes of the saints, so that we do not despair, because they are human beings like us "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours" (James 5: 17). Here we see Isaac afraid of the people of Gerar and thus lies.

(Verse 8): **Now it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through a window, and saw, and there was Isaac, showing endearment to Rebekah his wife.**

**Abimelech** : Probably, he is not the same king who was a contemporary of Abraham. Abimelech is a title for the kings of Gerar, not a name.

(Verse 9-11): **Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Quite obviously she is your wife; so how could you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "Because I said, 'Lest I die on account of her.'" 10 And Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might soon have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us." 11 So Abimelech charged all his people, saying, "He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."**

As the Bible shows the mistakes of the saints, it shows as well the good deeds of the pagans. Here we find Abimelech an honest person who fears the Lord, so we must not despise a person because of his religion, for God is the one who sees the secrets of the hearts. From Abimelech's sayings, we know that Isaac's fears of the people of Gerar were unjustified.

(Verse 12): **Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and the Lord blessed him.**

**Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold:** The Bedouins are usually not interested in agriculture, but Isaac was interested in cultivating the land. Despite the mistake of Isaac, God did not withhold his blessing from him, rather he reaped hundredfold. The number hundred refers to:

1. God's blessing.
2. Bedouins are not interested in agriculture.
3. It is a time of famine, therefore the land would not yield fruit, but it is the blessing of the Lord, "as in the days of Moses there was darkness over all Egypt and light over God's people."

(Verse 13): **The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous;**

(Verse 14): **for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. So the Philistines envied him.**

This blessing in agriculture with the abundance of livestock is the reason for the envy of the Philistines for Isaac. Here we see in this struggle and envy, the struggle of the world with God's children. God gave Isaac hundredfold to feel His presence with him, so that he does not despair in this struggle. God often gives us material gifts to feel His presence in our lives, and this acts as a confirmation for us in our spiritual struggles, and confirms that He is able to grant us victory over the enemy of good, as He has blessed us materially. This gives reassurance to the children of God, so that they are not afraid during their struggle "Fear not, for I am with you".

(Verse 15): **Now the Philistines had stopped up all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and they had filled them with earth.**

The war began by the Philistines filling of the wells of Isaac. The war here is because of the water. If we understand that the water refers to the Holy Spirit, therefore, We understand that the enemy of good is trying to deprive us of this blessing so that we do not bear fruit. How can he deprive us? By putting temptations in front of us, so we will sin. He knows that sin causes the Holy Spirit to grieve and be quenched (Ephesians 4: 30 + 1 Thessalonians 5: 19).

(Verses 16-17): **And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we." 17 Then Isaac departed from there and pitched his tent in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.**

(Verses 18-22): **And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. He called them by the names which his father had called them. 19 Also Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there. 20 But the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." So he called the name of the well Esek, because they quarreled with him. 21 Then they**

**dug another well, and they quarreled over that one also. So he called its name Sitnah. 22 And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, because he said, "For now the Lord has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."**

Isaac preferred to leave the place of conflict after they expelled him, but he began to dig wells of water, i.e. strive, to obtain water, and this is equal to " stir up the gift of God which is in you" (2 Timothy 1: 6). But does the enemy of good let things go in peace? Certainly not !! **But the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen** and this was repeated. Isaac meekly endured all persecution and left the place of evil as a symbol of Christ's persecution all the days of his life on earth. Filling wells in the wilderness is the best way to expel a person from his place. There is no life without water. For the report, these wells were from the right of Isaac according to the treaty between his father, Abraham and Abimelech. However, the ongoing conflict between the world who cannot see God's grace in His children teasing them, trying to destroy what God has done. We note that God sometimes leaves the people to condemn them as human beings, but He opens another door to success and strength for His children. Thus, when they quarreled over a well and took it, God gave Isaac another well. **he called the name of the well Esek = means quarrel. So he called its name Sitnah = means conflict. So he called its name Rehoboth = Means wide space.** Because Isaac felt that God gave him blessings in abundance and without conflict. And this is the third well, and the number (3) refers to the Resurrection as if the Holy Spirit gives His fruits with breadth and extent based on the Resurrection and believing in the mystery of the Trinity. And let us note that the war with the enemy of good will continue until we go to eternal rest (the broad) without conflict with the hope of the resurrection.

(Verses 23-25): **Then he went up from there to Beersheba. 24 And the Lord appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake." 25 So he built an altar there and called on the name of the Lord, and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.**

After Isaac got water, we see here a series of events that have spiritual meanings :

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>1. Then he went up from there</b>   | Leaving the place of evil (represents the believer's repentance).  |
| <b>2. to Beersheba</b>                 | The well of water refers to baptism and refers to the work of the Holy Spirit in the baptized.                             |
| <b>3. And the Lord appeared to him</b> | Baptism and then repentance in the life of the Christian give enlightenment: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they ..." |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>4. for I am with you. I will bless you</b> | God is with us, so how can we be afraid? He blesses us, and let us not be troubled. He also support us in this war. |
| <b>5. So he built an altar there</b>          | Continuous worship and prayers, but rather the offering of man himself as a living sacrifice.                       |
| <b>6. he pitched his tent</b>                 | The feeling of estrangement, longing and passion for the heavens  |
| <b>7. dug a well</b>                          | Kindling God's gift with constant strife in our lives, even unto blood against sin.                                 |

(Verses 26-33): **Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath, one of his friends, and Phichol the commander of his army. 27 And Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?" 28 But they said, "We have certainly seen that the Lord is with you. So we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, between you and us; and let us make a covenant with you, 29 that you will do us no harm, since we have not touched you, and since we have done nothing to you but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the Lord.' "** 30 So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. 31 Then they arose early in the morning and swore an oath with one another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. 32 It came to pass the same day that Isaac's servants came and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water." 33 So he called it Shebah. Therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

In these verses, we see fulfillment of God's promise " When a man's ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." (Proverbs 16: 7). When the people of the region saw the success of Isaac, they envied him and were afraid of him and expelled him. But when they saw God's work with him, they called him, blessed of the Lord, and asked to make a covenant with him, for God gives grace to His children in the eyes of everyone (Compare with Exodus 1: 12). We note that Isaac met their initiative with love and forgiveness. We also note that Abimelech used the name YHWH (verse 28) or The Lord, which meant that he learned from Isaac. Abimelech did not use the names of his gods:

- 1) Honouring Isaac.
- 2) Feeling the power of YHWH, which was manifested in His blessings to His servant Isaac.

**So he called it Shebah:** Abraham previously called it Beersheba, and here Isaac seems to confirm this by naming it Sheba. Sheba means satiation. This coincided with the day of the alliance and the treaty with Abimelech, and the name was confirmed. What Isaac did in the name was that he added a letter so that the meaning became abundance, contentment and fullness (this is the meaning of Sheba). As for the name Beersheba: it means oath, promise, or filled, this is a confirmation of Abraham's naming.

(Verses 34-35): **When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. 35 And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.**

Esau was not wise in his behavior, as he became married two idolatries that spoiled his relationship with his parents, and deprived him and his descendants of peace. He first sold his birthright and then married pagans, according to his desires and against the thought of God. Therefore, he disappeared from the plan of salvation, which is the focus of the Bible. He defiled his descendants with these pagans.

## Chapter 27

(Verses 1-4): **Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, "My son." And he answered him, "Here I am." 2 Then he said, "Behold now, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. 3 Now therefore, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. 4 And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die."**

**when Isaac was old:** Many people estimate that he was 117 years old at the time, but he lived to be 180 years old (Genesis 35: 28). We see Isaac here wanting to give the birthright to his firstborn Esau, despite:

1. The prophecy for Rebekah is for Jacob (Genesis 25: 23).
2. Esau recklessly sold him his birthright, and then married pagans. Isaac was probably driven by human emotions, for Esau is the firstborn, a hunter, and Isaac loves to eat his game.

The inhabitants of the wilderness like to eat from their hunting, not from their herds, to retain their flocks, and because the wild deer and deer taste better. Isaac's mistake in choosing Esau for the blessing was because it was against the prophecy and because of Esau's wrong actions, for how can he give the blessing to this reckless man? But Isaac, because of a hunted meal, would have violated the prophecy, as Esau sold his birthright for a lentil stew.

**And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you:** This means that Isaac will rejoice that his son hunts for him and feeds him to show his love as a son of his father. Or is it a ritual that was prevalent (ritual eating and drinking) with the ceremony of giving the blessing in which Isaac feels that he is doing a divine religious act by giving the blessing to his son. And as Isaac blessed Jacob, so Jacob blessed his children.

(Verses 5-10): **Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring it. 6 So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, "Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, 7 'Bring me game and make savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the Lord before my death.' 8 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to what I command you. 9 Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make savory food from them for your father, such as he loves. 10 Then you shall take it to your father, that he may eat it, and that he may bless you before his death."**

Rebekah remembered God's promise, and it was better to remind Isaac of it, but she preferred to resort to human methods and plans. Rebekah remembered God's promise, and it was better to remind Isaac of it, but she preferred to resort to human methods and human plans. But we saw Jacob blessing Ephraim against Joseph's will, who wanted it for Manasseh the firstborn, and in a straightforward way, which is

crossing his hands, and there were no difficulties. He also blessed to Judah, but not Reuben. In general, God was able to intervene at the last moment, but Rebekah erred in her ploy, and Isaac erred in his intention to bless Esau, and Jacob erred in accepting the plan. However, everyone paid the price, for Rebekah was deprived of her beloved son, and Jacob's whole life was bitter, and Esau wept in tears but in vain, and Isaac trembled greatly when he realized his mistake and was also deprived of his son Jacob. This is the fruit of human solutions. However the fathers saw symbols in this story.

1. Isaac's call for Esau to bless him after Isaac became old: God's call to the Jews to believe in Christ at the end of the age, after He blessed the church since the day of Pentecost.
2. Rebekah's invitation to Jacob, the younger son to receive the blessing: The work of the Holy Spirit with the Church (Gentiles).
3. Rebekah dressed Jacob in Esau's clothes: The New Testament Church acquired the title of God's people instead of the Jews.
4. Jacob puts on the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and body: Christ bears our sins, as the goats refer to sin.

(Verses 11-12): **And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, "Look, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth-skinned man. 12 Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring a curse on myself and not a blessing."**

Jacob here does not refuse because he hates deception and rejects it, but because he feared that his matter would be exposed, and thus the blessing turns into a curse from his father, and he would be exposed to the wrath of Esau.

(Verses 13-17): **But his mother said to him, "Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get them for me." 14 And he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. 15 Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. 16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. 17 Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.**

We return again to the fathers who saw in the sacrifice that Jacob offered to his father while he was wearing Esau's clothes (Probably, these were the priestly garments that he used while performing his priestly duty). Here the fathers saw Jacob playing the role of Christ, who, as a high priest, offered Himself as a sacrifice before the Father. Jacob here represents Christ, who put on our body, beautified us, and our clothes, and bore our sins. The fathers also saw that Jacob's departure to his uncle Laban is the departure of faith to the nations after the Jews resisted him (represented by Esau)

(Verses 18-25): **So he went to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" 19 Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me." 20 But Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the Lord your God brought it to me." 21 Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not." 22 So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." 23 And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. 24 Then he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" He said, "I am." 25 He said, "Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's game, so that my soul may bless you." So he brought it near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank.**

How did Jacob dare to say all these lies **"I am Esau your firstborn", "Because the Lord your God brought it to me.", "I am."** It is a boldness that he paid dearly for in his life. Indeed Isaac had poor eyesight and he was old, but he doubted Jacob because of what he said **"Because the Lord your God brought it to me.",** as this is not Esau's style of speech, but Jacob's style. The voice of the twins may be similar, but there is a difference that Isaac may have recognized. Or the reason for doubt may be the speed by which the food was prepared.

**The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau:**

This is the image of Christ who put on our body. His voice is the voice of the only begotten Son, but His hands are our hands as He carried our nature in Him.

(Verse 26): **Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near now and kiss me, my son."**

(Verse 27): **And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: "Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed.**

**the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed:**

Esau's clothes smelled sweet. There is a custom for the Orientals - especially those who play the role of priest of the family like Esau - to put their clothes in boxes with flowers and basil. And the fields of Palestine are fragrant because of the many fragrant flowers and trees that are planted in them. When God blesses a person, he must smell good "For we are to God the fragrance of Christ" (2 Corinthians 2: 15). In order for God to bless us, we must wear the clothes of our firstborn brother Christ " But put on the Lord Jesus Christ **(Romans 13: 14),** that to have His same sweet-smelling qualities (love, meekness, ... etc.)



(Verses 28-29): **Therefore may God give you Of the dew of heaven, Of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and wine. 29 Let peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, And let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, And blessed be those who bless you!"**

**Therefore may God give you:** He did not say The Lord (YHWH) because God gives to everyone, not just his people.

**the dew of heaven:** Means plenty of rain.

**fatness of the earth:** Good quality of his land.

**plenty of grain and wine:** Means plenty of fruit. That is, God transforms his desert lands into a fertile paradise. He gives him wheat, which means satiety, and wine, which means joy.

**And nations bow down to you:** Ruling over those around him. This happened in the days of David and lasted for a long time.

**let your mother's sons bow down to you:** Means dominion over those around him. And David imposed his kingdom on them and this continued until the days of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat, where they were liberated in his days until the time of the Maccabees, when John Hyrcanus subjected them to the Jews once and for all and they became a Jews. Israel was never subjected to Edom. These blessings did not just involve temporal blessings that the Jews obtained in the land of Palestine, for Jacob and his descendants migrated to Egypt because of the famine and were enslaved there. And they lived for long periods in wars, captivity and subjection to nations such as Babylon, Persians and Greece. Rather, these blessings refer to the spiritual blessings that were fulfilled with the coming of Christ, where the spiritual Jacob enjoyed the blessings of the Church, and the Church became the field with a sweet smell. The Holy Spirit (the dew of heaven) descended upon her, and the Church nourished with the body and blood (grain and wine), and Christ became the head of the Church = **Be master over your brethren, And nations bow down to you.** Christ became God and King over all, and the rulers and kings of the earth worshiped Him. As for the soul, when it is filled with the dew of heaven (the Holy Spirit), when it sanctifies itself, it becomes fruitful and turns into fertile land. It becomes satisfied with the wheat (the heavenly bridegroom descending from heaven) and rejoices in the wine, that is, the overflow of inner spiritual joy. Such a soul has authority and dominion. Isaac's prophecy to his son Jacob indicated that the Messiah would come from the descendants of Jacob who belonged to him **dew of heaven, Of the fatness of the earth** For through Christ the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Church, symbolized here by **dew of heaven** As for **fatness of the earth** refers to satiation in the person of Christ, for there is no satiation except in Christ

**plenty of grain and wine:** Grain and wine are a sign of the body and blood of Christ to give life to the Church in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

The prophecy of **Be master over your brethren, And nations bow down to you** refers to the world's faith in Christ and worshiping Him. **brethren**= refers to those who believe in Him from the Jews, and **nations** = refers to those who believe from the gentiles.

As for Esau, he was deprived of all this, for Christ would not come from his descendants **of both**.

(Verses 30-32): **Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. 31 He also had made savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that your soul may bless me." 32 And his father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" So he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau."**

(Verse 33): **Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, "Who? Where is the one who hunted game and brought it to me? I ate all of it before you came, and I have blessed him—and indeed he shall be blessed."**

**trembled exceedingly**: Because he knew that his intention to bless Esau was against God's will, and realized that what happened was allowed by God, so he did not blame Rebekah or Jacob, so he said **and indeed he shall be blessed** for this is the will of God. That is why Paul said that he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears (Hebrews 12: 17).

(Verses 34-37): **When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me—me also, O my father!" 35 But he said, "Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing." 36 And Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!" And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" 37 Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?"**

Esau was deprived of the blessing because of his profane (Hebrews 12: 16). His cries and grief were due to the material loss (the firstborn's share of the inheritance) and not by any spiritual feeling, which was evident by his saying **"Have you not reserved a blessing for me?"**. How does Christ come from both of their offspring?

(Verse 38): **And Esau said to his father, "Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!" And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.**

(Verse 39): **Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: “Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, And of the dew of heaven from above.**

**your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth; And of the dew of heaven from above**

In Jerusalem Bible this verse "**Far from the riches of the earth and he dew of the heaven above, your home will be**". And this is the same in Arabic translation. Both translations mean that Isaac gave Esau desert to live in, as he is not inclined to plow and plant, depriving Esau from the **fatness of the earth** and of **the dew of heaven**. The Jerusalem Bible and Arabic translations to the verse agree with the Church fathers sayings who said that this refers to the fact that there is not satiety except in Christ son of Jacob. The Holy Spirit only comes upon those who are descendants of Jacob father of Christ, that is, the Church. And everyone who turns away from God is neither sated by the Holy Spirit, nor fruitful, but like one in the wilderness.

(Verse 40): **By your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; And it shall come to pass, when you become restless, That you shall break his yoke from your neck.”**

**By your sword you shall live:**

He lives by his sword as he is a hunter, but this also means a life without peace and prevailed by wars.

**when you become restless, That you shall break his yoke from your neck:** In general, Edom submitted to Israel, but they were liberated from them during the days of King Joram and Ahaz, so they broke the yoke for a while.

(Verses 41-46): **So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, “The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob.” 42 And the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, “Surely your brother Esau comforts himself concerning you by intending to kill you. 43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: arise, flee to my brother Laban in Haran. 44 And stay with him a few days, until your brother’s fury turns away, 45 until your brother’s anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day?” 46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, “I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?”**

Esau intended to kill Jacob after his father's death, so Rebekah plotted a plan for Jacob's escape, for she could not confront Isaac with what Esau intended to do, or else Isaac would blame her for her action. So she managed to complain about Esau's wives so that Isaac would send his son to Laban to marry from his family. Her plan was **flee to my brother Laban in Haran And stay with him a few days**. But his stay

lasted for decades, while his mother was deprived of him. And there Jacob's life was made bitter by the deceit of his uncle Laban, as he deceived his father.

## Chapter 28

God's care for his children appeared clearly and repeatedly, especially in the life of Jacob. God does not leave His children and abandon them if mistakes occur from them, but rather He disciplines them with hardships that He allows until He removes the evil from them. And Jacob, despite his weaknesses and cunning, longed for blessing, with his eyes on heaven and God. God does not leave whoever is like him but rather draws him and takes care of him despite his sins (Genesis 48: 15). And God continues to allow some pain until he is complete. It seems that Jacob was physically weak and not as strong as Esau. Therefore, he resorted to smartness, cunning and deception to solve his problems. That is, he depended on his deceit and cleverness. We see God has allowed him to suffer until he abandons these ways and casts all his hope and dependence on God.

Jacob's journey to his uncle Laban and his marriage to his beloved Rachel represents the incarnation of Christ and His coming to us in the land of our exile to take us as His bride. As for Isaac's marriage to Rebekah, he represents Christ in His heavens, who sent to us to ascend us to him in his heavens. However, we find Jacob took Rachel to Canaan, but she died on the way in the hope of the Resurrection. And this is what is happening with us now. We die waiting for the Resurrection. As for Rebekah, who represents the Church in heaven and will be alive forever, her death is not mentioned.

(Verse 1): **Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan.**

Previously, Isaac blessed Jacob by a lie, but now he is blessing him after recognizing that the subject was from the Lord.

(Verses 2-3): **Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. 3 "May God Almighty bless you, And make you fruitful and multiply you, That you may be an assembly of peoples;**

**assembly of peoples:** This means a chosen group for religious purposes. It was translated in Greek as "church" and became a name for the people of Israel " means a chosen group for religious purposes. It was translated in Greek as "church." It became a name for the people of Israel " assembly of Israel" (Leviticus 16: 17).

(Verse 4): **And give you the blessing of Abraham, To you and your descendants with you, That you may inherit the land In which you are a stranger, Which God gave to Abraham."**

**inherit the land In which you are a stranger:**

Isaac's faith appears in believing that his descendants would inherit the Promised Land, and this faith also was for Rebekah when she told Jacob to remain in Paddan Aram for a few days. (Genesis 27: 44-45)

(Verse 5): **So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.**

**Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau:** Jacob was considered the firstborn and his name was mentioned first.

(Verses 6-9): **Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram to take himself a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan," 7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Padan Aram. 8 Also Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac. 9 So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.**

Esau was trying to appease his father and mother with this marriage.

(Verses 10-15): **Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. 12 Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: "I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. 14 Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. 15 Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you."**

This vision was for Jacob, who was spoiled by his mother, fleeing from the face of Esau, deprived of his home and the affection of his parents, walking in the wilderness alone, with his head on a stone to sleep amid his fears. This vision was an encouragement to him and a declaration from God that He would not leave him alone, but rather He is his protection, and His angels will surround him. Heaven is not closed to him despite his mistake. Jacob did not enjoy such a vision in his house, as consolations are given according to the intense of the trials. Revised interpretation of (2 Corinthians 1: 3-10).

God allowed Jacob to be chastised for his cunning, but He "with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." (1 Corinthians 10: 13) = And this consoling vision was the way of escape, that is, comfort, so that the fire of temptation would not burn him. The Bible says, "For so the Lord said to me, "I will take My rest, And I will look from My dwelling place Like clear heat in sunshine, Like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest." (Isaiah 18: 4). We see God saying about Himself that He is the clear heat until the harvest (This is about the trials that God allows so that we can be made complete and spiritually matured). At the same time, He is like a cloud of dew in the heat, Which reduces the heat of trials and cools them so that the crop does not burn (This is about the divine comforts that God gives to those who suffer from temptation, so that they do not despair and fail. This is what happened with this vision)

### **The meaning of the vision:**

1. This vision refers to the incarnation of Christ, who though His incarnation reconciled the heavenly and the earthly, and this is the meaning of the angels ascending and descending. With this reconciliation, the angels became with us, filling our churches and participating with us. Christ also opened heaven for mankind to have place there (John 1: 51), rather making became able to live heaven on earth "He bowed the heavens also" (Psalm 18: 9 + Philippians 3: 20). In the Liturgy of St. Gregory, the priest says about the angels present in the Church " who have established the rising of choir of the incorporeal among men". This is about the angels present in the churches and the angels who protect God's children. Note his saying **and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it:** The fact that he mentions that the angels are ascending before he mentions that they are descending, this was to give Jacob reassurance that the angels are surrounding him now, and he is not alone, but they are protecting him. The angels have completed their mission to protect him, and they are **ascending** again to heaven, and other angels will come **descending** afterwards if need to be protecting him from any harm. God raises Jacob's view towards the heavens and directs his eyes that he is in the protection of the angels and not alone after he left his parents and his home. Likewise, God is always with us, always guarding us with His angels and His acts of care, even if we do not see them with our eyes. Didn't God's angel meet Hagar the two times she left Abraham's house?
2. After the Lord reconciled the heavenly with the earthly, the heavens opened on earth, and the Church became filled with angels. And the saints, after their departure, ascended to heaven. And the souls of the departed saints became carried by the angels to heaven, as the angels carried the soul of Lazarus {Revise the parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16)}.
3. The Lord, the Son of God, is standing at the top of the ladder as the head of angels and the Church. "that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him." (Ephesians 1: 10).
4. Jacob refers to Christ, who was sent by his father Isaac (the Father) to take for himself a bride (the Church), leaving the daughters of the region (the Jews). And Jacob married two sisters, Leah, who refers to the Jewish Church, and Rachel, who refers to the Christ's Church, to make them one Church. when

the Jews rejected Christ, the preaching turned to the Gentiles, and this was indicated to him by Isaac's words to Jacob **"You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan,"** (Verse 1 of the same chapter). The Jews, by crucifying Christ, were rejected until they believe in Christ, and this is what Saint Paul the Apostle said in (Acts 13: 46), and whoever believes will join the One Church. Therefore, Jacob in this vision refers to God's people in both the Old and New Testaments. He refers to God's people, both Jews and Gentiles, as the husband of the two churches and the father of all their descendants.

5. The fact that we see Jacob sleeping on the stone is a sign of the Church leaning on her Groom, Christ. The Church is sleeping, i.e. resting in peace and contentment, and Her Groom is at the head of the ladder. He is the ruler of all, who arranges for His people the economy of salvation. Rather He manages all aspects of their lives (Christ is the head of the entire Church, Jews and Gentiles, and He is the head of the heavenly and the earthly).

6. The ladder refers to the economy of salvation in the fullness of time. The fullness of time required: A) The presence of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is unparalleled in holiness and who deserves to carry Christ in her womb with His body united by His divinity, for Christ took His body from her womb. B) And refers to the cross, but to all the economy by which the redemption took place. There must have been the high priest and the evil priests who would unjustly judge Christ. C) And there had to be the holy disciples who would spread the gospel, and so the traitorous disciple Judas had to be found as well. D) There should also be Pilate, the trembling Roman governor, who is scared of the Jews' threats to accuse him of being a traitor to Caesar, so he sentences Christ to crucifixion, while he is confident of his innocence. Crucifixion was a Roman punishment, which Christ wanted to lift the curse on us. This was the role of Pilate, the Roman governor, to condemn Christ to the crucifixion. (Revise the explanation for this in the article "The Cross is a Curse that Turns into a Blessing" at the end of the third chapter of Galatians). E) It was necessary to explain the meaning of salvation, which was explained in the Old Testament rituals of sacrifices and purifications. Rather, the Old Testament, with all its events, explained the meanings of the expressions and words that we use in the New Testament. F) It was necessary to fulfill the prophecies that prophesy about the salvation of Christ to understand that the plan of redemption is primordial. F) A single language needed to spread throughout the world in which the Bible was written for people to understand it. This is what Alexander the Great did, who spread the Greek language throughout the world. H) The Roman state made the whole world one state and paved the roads, so the movement of disciples and apostles became easy to spread the gospel. I) **because the sun had set:** This phrase specifies the time of the vision and thus refers to the date of the events of the incarnation. So if we understand that the vision of the ladder refers to the salvation, by which peace took place between the heavenly and the earthly, the meaning is that the events of the incarnation and redemption began at the end of the night of the seventh day of creation. This is so that Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, appears incarnated from the Virgin Mary and begins the day of the seventh day of creation.

7. This vision appeared to Jacob before he took Rachel as a wife. For the cross came first, then Christ offered his blood as a dowry for his bride. In this vision, God's promises to Jacob were appropriate for Jacob's present and future (the Church).



8. The stone under Jacob's head refers to Christ as a stone upon which the Church is built after Becoming the Head Cornerstone. He is the stone that was cut out without hands (Daniel 2: 34), which refers to the Son of God after His incarnation. **And behold, the Lord stood above it** = Being the heavenly Pantocrator who manages our salvation. He is the heavenly who stands above the top of the ladder, and he is the stone under Jacob's head. The stone is Christ who incarnated and descended to earth to establish the Church on it, as the Lord said to Nicodemus " No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven." (John 3: 13). Christ was in His body on earth, and He is in heaven overseeing and managing the world and our salvation, for He is the Pantocrator.

9. Note the Bible saying **he took one of the stones of that place**: This indicates that Christ became one of us. The stone that Jacob took to sleep on had the same shape as the rest of the stones in the area. Thus Christ took a body that resembled our bodies in everything except sin. This is what the Apostle Paul said " Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. 17 Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2: 14-17). This is said about the animal sacrifices; " if the one who sins is the anointed priest, .... must offer YHWH a **young bull**, an unblemished animal **from the herd**" (Leviticus 4: 3 - Jerusalem Bible), and it is the same in the Arabic version. The translator of the kjv removed (from the herd) because he found that it is natural for the bull to be from the herd. But the importance of this is that Christ is of our kind. And "If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally by doing something against any of the commandments of the Lord in anything which ought not to be done, and is guilty, 28 or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, then he shall bring as his **offering a kid of the goats**, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed." (Leviticus 4: 27-28). What is meant is that the sacrifice, that is, Christ, is from our same human race for the redemption of our human race to take place.

10. The ladder refers to the economy of salvation through the cross. And the ladder is used for ascending and descending. The saints, when they carry their cross, rise to the heavens. And the wicked, in their denial of the crucified Christ, descend into the abyss. And the angels ascending and descending indicate the care of the heavens towards us. And the counsels of God in heaven are carried out here on earth, where Christ is at the top of the ladder; for He is above all and the ruler of all, who supports us and raises us to Him.

(Verse 16): **Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."**

**the Lord is in this place**: Perhaps Jacob thought God could not meet him except at the family altar.

(Verse 17): **And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"**

Do we feel this reverence while we are in the Church or the Altar or while we are praying? for the house of God is the Church.

(Verses 18-22): **Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. 19 And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously. 20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, 21 so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God. 22 And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."**

Here we see proof of the importance of tradition in the Church, for how would Jacob know to pour oil on the pillar to sanctify the place to be House of God? How would he have understood the concept of tithes? Unless God has handed this over to the fathers beginning with Adam and up to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Following, we received the Law of Moses to confirm this Oral Law (Tradition) handed to the fathers orally. And setting up a pillar in this place to be a witness to this vision.

**Luz and Bethel:** (Joshua 16: 1, 2). Luz was close to Bethel, which means that Jacob, during this vision, was staying in a place near Luz. Then the place was called Bethel, then Bethel and Luz became one place after the area expanded, and the name of the whole place became Bethel.

## Chapter 29

(Verse 1): **So Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the East.**

**So Jacob went on his journey:** It means hurrying on the road after the vision set in him its power and tranquillity.

**the land of the people of the East:** Probably it means the land inhabited by those coming from the East, that is, the family of our father, Abraham. Abraham and his family came from Ur and lived in Haran (Syria) (Genesis 11: 31). Ur is in Iraq, east of Haran. It was said about Abraham's family that they are the sons of the East, that is, those who came from the East.

(Verse 2): **And he looked, and saw a well in the field; and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone was on the well's mouth.**

It seems that the well belonged to Laban, and the shepherds were waiting for Rachel to come to water their flocks. Or they do not raise the stone until everyone is gathered so that the well does not get polluted with dirt.

**In this chapter, we see Jacob as a symbol of the Lord Christ, and Rachel as a symbol of the Church:**

1. Jacob went to her to acquire her a wife, and Christ came to his church to acquire her as a bride.
2. He came to the field that is to the world to meet her there.
3. The well refers to Baptism, and this well had a stone on it that Jacob had removed. Baptism is sonship of God, and by the incarnation of Christ, the Baptism was opened so that we might become children of God. Baptism is the work of the Holy Spirit, and the well refers to all the works of the Holy Spirit, which was poured out on the church by the work of Christ.
4. **three flocks of sheep lying by it:** Waiting for the coming of Jacob and Rachel, they are all those who came before the incarnation, and maybe three to symbolize: 1) The fathers who were before the Mosaic Law (Abel.. Joseph) and these represent the natural law; 2) Men of the Mosaic Law with its symbols; 3) The Prophets. All of those were waiting in hope for the coming of Christ. God at various times and in various ways spoke (Hebrews 1: 1, 2). He spoke to them with visions, the law, and prophecies, and when the fullness of time came, Christ came and sent the Holy Spirit. And rolling the stone may refer to the angel who rolled the stone to announce the resurrection of Christ.
5. **Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative** : It is Christ's declaration of his kinship with us through his incarnation. And His redemption and reconciliation that He made between His Heavenly Father and us. Laban said, "**you are my bone and my flesh** " (Ephesians 5: 30).

6. **rolled the stone**: It also refers to lifting the stone of shadows and symbols and proclaims the perfection of truth. It also indicates that Christ, by His death, trampled death and gave us resurrection and life.

7. **Jacob kissed Rachel**: A declaration of his love, and this is what Christ did, declaring His love through His cross.

8. When he revealed himself to her, she brought him into her father's house, and he dwelled with them: A sign of the church's communion with Christ all the days of our sojourn, until He may bring us to His heavens. And Jacob's presence as a guest in his uncle's house for a while indicates that Christ was as a heavenly guest on earth to acquire His bride.

9. **Leah**: Means weary, probably because of her eye sickness, and Rachel means a sheep. And Leah here refers to the Jews who had a blind eye, as they did not see Him as a saviour and rejected him—as for Christ accepted them for a while to obtain his church (She is the sheep, and He is the Shephard). She is the one with solid and beautiful eyes who knew and loved him and chose him because he loved her first. In general, Christ was the cornerstone that linked the two peoples (Ephesians 2: 20). Note that the Messiah came from the tribe of Judah, the son of Leah. He is a descendant of the Jews (their symbol is Leah) in the flesh.

10. Of Jacob's love for Rachel, it was said, " they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her." And it was said about Christ, " Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." And it was said about the saints, " and they did not love their lives to the death." (Revelation 12: 11). And the apostle Paul said, " Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?". Therefore, it is mutual love.

(Verses 3-13): **Now all the flocks would be gathered there; and they would roll the stone from the well's mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the well's mouth. 4 And Jacob said to them, "My brethren, where are you from?" And they said, "We are from Haran." 5 Then he said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" And they said, "We know him." 6 So he said to them, "Is he well?" And they said, "He is well. And look, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep." 7 Then he said, "Look, it is still high day; it is not time for the cattle to be gathered together. Water the sheep, and go and feed them." 8 But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and they have rolled the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep." 9 Now while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. 10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. 12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative and that he was Rebekah's son. So she ran and told her father. 13 Then it came to pass, when Laban heard the**

**report about Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. So he told Laban all these things.**

(Verse 14): **And Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him for a month.**

**And he stayed with him for a month:** It was the custom to host a guest for a maximum of a month. After that, he becomes one of the family, shares their lives, including working with them and getting paid for his work (verse 15).

(Verses 15-22): **Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what should your wages be?" 16 Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah's eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance. 18 Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter." 19 And Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me." 20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her. 21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her." 22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast.**

(Verse 23): **Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her.**

The deception was not complicated, for the bride getting married wears a red veil. And as Jacob deceived his father Isaac, so did Laban, his uncle. And later, his children deceived him in the matter of Joseph. He was tormented in his life. **in the evening:** The people of Israel became the bride of Christ on the evening of the seventh day. The light of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, shone after salvation when He took the Church as his bride on the morning of the seventh day. And Jacob's union with Leah before Rachel was a deception from Laban, but it has a symbolic meaning that Jesus' association with the children of Israel was first. The Children of Israel were the firstborn son of God (Exodus 4: 22). Then Christ was united with His beloved Church, as Jacob was united with Rachel after he was tied with Leah. And the Jews lost their birthright to the Church (Hebrews 12: 23). Same as many others lost their birthright (Ishmael / Esau / Reuben / and was lost from Adam to belong to Christ)

(Verses 24-26): **And Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. 25 So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Was**

**it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me?" 26 And Laban said, "It must not be done so in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.**

(Verse 27): **Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years."**

It was customary for the groom to celebrate his bride for a week (same as the honeymoon)

(Verses 28-29): **Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also. 29 And Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid.**

(Verses 30-31): **Then Jacob also went in to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban still another seven years. 31 When the Lord saw that Leah was unloved, He opened her womb; but Rachel was barren.**

The word **unloved** in its origin means that she is loved less. From the two verses, it is clear that God who allowed her eyes to be delicate, compensated her with many sons. Leah, with her many sons, refers to the Jews who were fertile, while Rachel the barren refers to the Gentiles who were in a state of barrenness and then became fruitful.

(Verses 32-35): **So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben; for she said, "The Lord has surely looked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me." 33 Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the Lord has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon. 34 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi. 35 And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now I will praise the Lord." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she stopped bearing.**

When Leah felt she was hated, she resorted to God, which became apparent in naming her children, so she attributed them all to God. She called her **firstborn Reuben** = The son of a vision, meaning God saw my humiliation and gave me a son so that my husband would love me. She called the second **Simeon** = God heard me when I was hated, as Simeon means a listener. She called the third **Levi** = Which means connected with me, and she meant now my husband would be connected to me. She called the fourth **Judah** = Confesses or praises, for she thanks God for his gift. And Leah, who represents the Jews, gave birth to the firstborn, so they are for God the older brother, as they were earlier than the Christians in knowing God. But the birthright was withdrawn from them, and they only had the physical birthright only by time. As for the spiritual birthright, it became for the Christian people. And from Leah came Levi,

meaning the priesthood, the priesthood of the Old Testament, and from Leah came Judah, the father of Christ in the flesh. And the Bible says, **Then she stopped bearing**. Therefore, this was the role of the Jewish people to have Christ come from them, and after that, they have no role in the plan of salvation except to believe in Christ. It may indicate that by rejecting the Lord Christ, they stopped having spiritual procreation. However, we find that Leah returned and gave birth to Issachar and Zebulun, which may signify that the Jews will accept the Christian faith in the last days.

### **Isaac and Jacob**

If Jacob referred to Christ, who came down to earth to take two brides (Jews and Gentiles), and Rachel's death on the way indicates our death in the body on our way to heaven. As for Isaac refers to Christ who is now in heaven, and His one bride (Rebekah) goes to Him, where the Holy Spirit brings her to Him, and she is only one, as the bride of Christ. She will be alive in heaven forever in eternal life, so the news of her death is not mentioned.

## Chapter 30

Jacob was living a quiet life in his father's house until he fell into the sin of deception and fraud, so his life became bitter, and we see here a picture of the conflicts in Jacob's life. He escaped from the conflict with his brother Esau. Still, his uncle Laban deceived him and gave him Leah instead of Rachel, so he was forced to marry both, and as a result of the polygamy, conflicts arose between them, and Jacob's house was no longer peaceful. There was even a conflict with his uncle, Laban, because of his wages.

(Verse 1): **Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"**

**or else I die:** That is, without children, I would be considered dead, or I die of heartbreak. This is a state of despair that must have saddened the heart of Jacob, the man of prayer. She complains and rebels, but she does not pray.

(Verse 2): **And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"**

**Am I in the place of God:** That is, why do you complain to me? Go to God and learn to pray and complain to Him.

(Verses 3-13): **So she said, "Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I also may have children by her." 4 Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her. 5 And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. 6 Then Rachel said, "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan. 7 And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. 8 Then Rachel said, "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali. 9 When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife. 10 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. 11 Then Leah said, "A troop comes!" So she called his name Gad. 12 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. 13 Then Leah said, "I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed." So she called his name Asher.**

The conflicts between the two sisters entered another competition area; each of them gave Jacob her maid to give birth for her. From Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, Jacob got Dan meaning to condemn or judge, and Rachel means by this name that God judged and did her justice, and thus he gave her a son, because the maid's son was counted for her mistress, as the maidservant and all that she owned belonged to her mistress. And the second son, Naphtali: Expanded, meaning God gave her to expand and prevail when



the sons increased. Then Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, gave birth to Gad, meaning a hardliner, by which she meant that in her struggle with her sister, God has strengthened and granted her success. Then she gave birth to another, and she said, "God made me happy." so she named him Asher = means cheerful or blessed, as Leah became cheerful.

**With great wrestlings:** this means huge wrestlings. In Hebrew, when they add the name of God to something, it means that it is very large and huge. For example, the army of God means a huge army, and so the saying is the mountain of God.

(Verses 14-21): **Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." 15 But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" And Rachel said, "Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes." 16 When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes." And he lay with her that night. 17 And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. 18 Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband." So she called his name Issachar. 19 Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. 20 And Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun. 21 Afterward she bore a daughter, and called her name Dinah.**

Reuben, the son of Leah, found in the field a plant called the mandrake, which they called the apple of paradise, and they believed that it would bring the husband's love to his wife. Reuben gave mandrakes to his mother, Leah. It seems that Jacob had deserted Leah to live with Rachel (A symbol that God left the Jews because of His love for the Church). And Rachel asked Leah to give her the mandrakes. This was another mistake for Rachel that she believed in these superstitions. Can a kind of plant bring the husband's love or gives her children? These are failed human attempts instead of praying and turning to God. However, Leah also seized this opportunity and allowed her to take the mandrakes to let Jacob sleep with her. So she took the mandrakes, and Jacob went to Leah, and she gave birth to **Issachar** = Means reward, and she meant that God had given her wages. Then Leah bore Zebulun = "Dwelling," which means "Now my husband will live with me because I bore him six sons.". Then she bore **Dinah**. The reference to Dinah here is because of her story that will come next.

(Verses 22-24): **Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. 23 And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach." 24 So she called his name Joseph, and said, "The Lord shall add to me another son."**

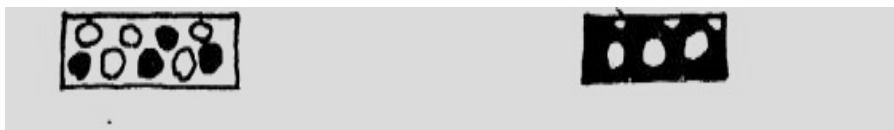
God allowed Rachel to be barren to open Jacob's heart to love Leah. Another reason is becoming a symbol of the Church or the Gentiles who were in a state of barrenness and became fruitful. Rachel

finally gave birth to a child and named him **Joseph**: Add more, for she longs for more children, so that the church grows and multiplies and is always fruitful. Note that the second son of Rachel, whom she died immediately after giving birth to him, was called **Benjamin**: The meaning is that after the end of this time (death), the Church sits at the right of God in heaven like sheep, and not on the left rejected, like goats. And Rachel's pain in childbirth and then her death is an expression of the church's pain in the world which ends with the last enemy to be abolished, which is death. However, the result is that she becomes the daughter of the right because Benjamin means the son of the right. Although Rachel wanted to call him the Ben-Oni, meaning the son of my grief, his father Jacob called him Benjamin. The death that we think of as grief (as Rachel understood) transports us to heaven, as Jacob expressed this

(Verses 25-34): **And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my country. 26 Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know my service which I have done for you." 27 And Laban said to him, "Please stay, if I have found favor in your eyes, for I have learned by experience that the Lord has blessed me for your sake." 28 Then he said, "Name me your wages, and I will give it." 29 So Jacob said to him, "You know how I have served you and how your livestock has been with me. 30 For what you had before I came was little, and it has increased to a great amount; the Lord has blessed you since my coming. And now, when shall I also provide for my own house?" 31 So he said, "What shall I give you?" And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks: 32 Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and these shall be my wages. 33 So my righteousness will answer for me in time to come, when the subject of my wages comes before you: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if it is with me." 34 And Laban said, "Oh, that it were according to your word!"**

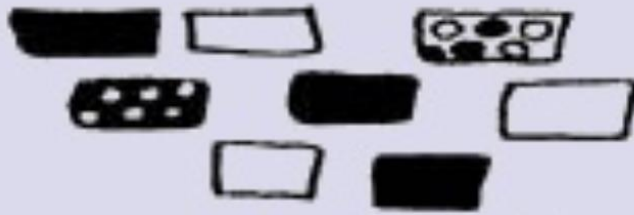
We see Jacob here wants to return to the promised land. And in verse (27), we see how Jacob became a blessing to Laban's house, and Laban felt the blessing, so he hoped that Jacob would stay with him for the blessings to continue. Then we find out that Jacob and Laban agree on a way for Jacob to take his wages.

**spotted**: Black and white are equally distributed. **speckled**: Black with white dots.



These herd characteristics (whether sheep or goats) are rare, as most sheep are white, and most goats are black.

Primarily the sheep are white  
and the goats black.  
Spotted are rare



### Laban's herd which Jacob shepherded

The agreement was to divide the herd into two parts:

The first part:

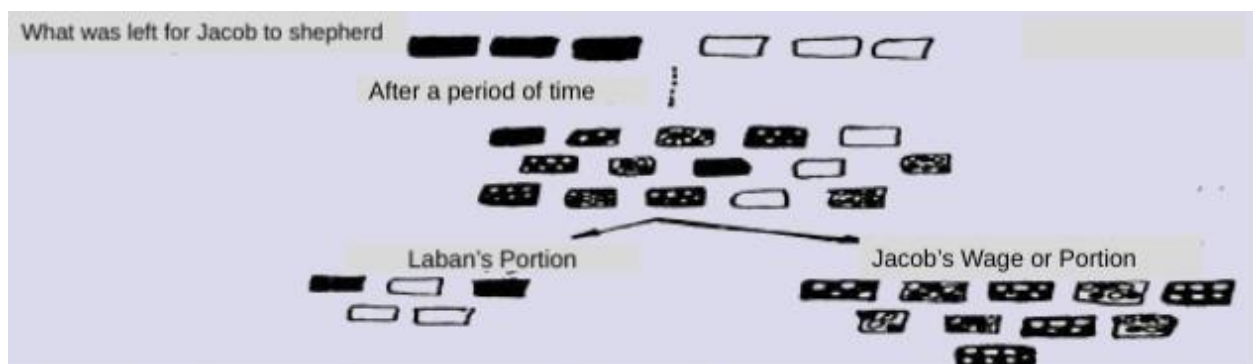
What is only black and white, sheep are primarily white, and goats are black.

The second part:

What is (Spotted and Speckled) and the dotted is rare.

The first party would remain with Jacob to take care of.

And the second part, Laban takes with him and moves away from Jacob for three days for a certain period.



Laban accepted Jacob's offer because he assumed that the black and white flock would produce a black and white herd and that the spotted and speckled portion in it, i.e. Jacob's agreed portion, would be

little. Laban accepted the offer due to his greed and insatiability, thinking that he would come out with the lion's share. But God disappointed Laban, and the largest share was for Jacob, so the majority came as spotted and speckled. From (Genesis 31: 10), we understand that God revealed this idea to Jacob that his wages were to be spotted and speckled. God had intended to compensate him for his faithfulness and faithfully serving his uncle all these years, and God knew his uncle's greed and that he would deceive him repeatedly, so God guided him to this plan. But we find Jacob once again falling into human solutions, deception and cunning. We find him peeling the sticks of some plants so that they look dotted and put them in front of the sheep that will give birth when he sees the sheep strong. He relied on the idea of birthmarks in females who give birth. When the sheep that will give birth look at with dotted colours in front of it, the newborn sheep will be dotted. This idea exists up till now, but it has not been scientifically proven. We find that the large number of strong, spotted sheep that became for Jacob resulted from the Lord's blessing and not from Jacob's deceptions. It is a lack of faith and trust in the promises of God who told him that he would bless. This happened twice in Jacob's life. God promised Rebekah that the older shall serve the younger. And God promised him that he would bless him, and the first time he deceived his father Isaac to ensure the blessing, and the second time he deceived his uncle Laban to ensure a blessing for his share. And God would have given him the blessing both times without deceiving! What is the result of deception? He was deceived twice, the first in the matter of Leah and the second in the case of Joseph (Obadiah 15).

(Verse 30): **For what you had before I came was little, and it has increased to a great amount; the Lord has blessed you since my coming. And now, when shall I also provide for my own house?"**

Laban's flock increased from a small flock led by Rachel to herds separated by a 3-day journey, or about 65 km. This distance is evidence of the large size of Laban's flocks.

(Verse 31): **So he said, "What shall I give you?" And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks:**

(Verse 32): **Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and these shall be my wages.**

**Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there:** That is, they both pass through the flock together, but Laban is the one who isolates, chooses, and supervises the separation process to ensure his right.

**and these shall be my wages:** That is, after separating everything spotted and speckled, what is white and what is black will remain. And after this black and white herd is isolated for Laban, everything spotted, and speckles will be Jacob's share.

(Verse 33): **So my righteousness will answer for me :in time to come, when the subject of my wages comes before you: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if it is with me."**

**So my righteousness will answer for me:** A form of an oath means that his righteousness and honour bear witness to him or against him if he tries to change the wage he has appointed for himself.

**will be considered stolen, if it is with me:** Everything that does not have these qualities will be stolen from you.

(Verse 34): **And Laban said, "Oh, that it were according to your word!"**

**Oh, that it were according to your word!:** Laban agreed, thinking he was the winner in this deal, as the spotted are rare.

(Verses 35-36): **So he removed that day the male goats that were speckled and spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had some white in it, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and gave them into the hand of his sons. 36 Then he put three days' journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.**

(Verse 37): **Now Jacob took for himself rods of green poplar and of the almond and chestnut trees, peeled white strips in them, and exposed the white which was in the rods.**

**poplar:** A plant with milk like honey is called Maya

**chestnut:** A plant found in the plains and on the rivers banks.

And Jacob put these sticks after peeling them in the watering cans in front of the sheep when they came to drink. And God promised him a blessing when he guided him to choose the point, but he did not guide him for this trick.

(Verses 38-40): **And the rods which he had peeled, he set before the flocks in the gutters, in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, so that they should conceive when they came to drink. 39 So the flocks conceived before the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled, and spotted. 40 Then Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face toward the streaked and all the brown in the flock of Laban; but he put his own flocks by themselves and did not put them with Laban's flock.**

(Verse 41): **And it came to pass, whenever the stronger livestock conceived, that Jacob placed the rods before the eyes of the livestock in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.**

We note that Jacob used to do this with the strong sheep so that his share would be strong, and he did not do this with the weak ones so that the whites would be the share of Laban, the weak ones.

(Verse 42): **But when the flocks were feeble, he did not put them in; so the feebler were Laban's and the stronger Jacob's.**

(Verse 43): **Thus the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.**

**Thus the man became exceedingly prosperous:** Not because of the trick but because God wants to bless him.

The Peeled Rods



## Chapter 31

Jacob's return to Canaan with his family represents Christ carrying the church into the heavenly Jerusalem (Canaan). However, while the Church is striving on earth, the devil symbolized by Laban pursues her during this journey, trying to bring her back and prevent her from entering Canaan.

(Verse 1): **Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth."**

**Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons:** Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons and their envying him for his success.

**all this wealth:** Wealth (in KJV the word wealth came Glory, the same in Arabic). Glory in the eyes of the children of Laban is just a herd of goats and sheep, and even now, people consider money, palaces, world positions...etc as glory. But what is the true glory? See what the Lord says, "For I," says the Lord, "will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst." (Zechariah 2: 5). God is the true glory, this is His nature, and we will only realize it in heaven. The apostle Paul says, "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Ephesians 1:17). So we understand that the presence of God in the church is the glory of the church, and the presence of God in me is glory for me, but the glory that is in us is not visible now but will be revealed in us in eternity (Romans 8: 18). The apostle Paul says about Christ that He is "brightness of His glory" (Hebrews 1: 3) (In Jerusalem Bible came the reflection of God's Glory. This may be more expressive) for He is what appeared before us, and whom we saw. He is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1: 15). What appears from light is rays, and what appears from glory is brightness. In the Transfiguration, the disciples saw as simple a picture of God's Glory as much as they could bear.

(Verse 2): **And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and indeed it was not favorable toward him as before.**

(Verse 3): **Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you."**

Undoubtedly, Jacob's longing was to return to the land of his forefathers, and we see God encouraging him. Rather, God allowed the envy and hatred of Laban's sons to reach his ears so that he would feel alienated and go away. How many pains God allows for us to feel our alienation on earth and our longing for heaven.

( Verse 4): **So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field, to his flock,**

Jacob's invitation to Leah and Rachel to consult the matter in the field probably was because he was busy shearing sheep.

(Verses 5-6): **and said to them, "I see your father's [a]countenance, that it is not favorable toward me as before; but the God of my father has been with me. 6 And you know that with all my might I have served your father.**

(Verse 7): **Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not allow him to hurt me.**

**changed my wages ten times:** The Bible does not say how this happened. Some interpreted this as Laban coming and taking from the spotted and speckled sheep from Jacob, despite this being his share.

(Verse 8): **If he said thus: 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore speckled. And if he said thus: 'The streaked shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore streaked.**

The meaning is that God gave me to increase the sheep whose colour I chose.

(Verse 9): **So God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me.**

**So God has taken away the livestock of your father:** God punished your father for his wrongdoing to me and gave me.

(Verses 10-13): **"And it happened, at the time when the flocks conceived, that I lifted my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold, the rams which leaped upon the flocks were streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted. 11 Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.' 12 And He said, 'Lift your eyes now and see, all the rams which leap on the flocks are streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted; for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. 13 I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.'"**

God is the one who guided him to this plan to get his wages and return to the land of his forefathers. The males are called **the rams**.



(Verses 14-16): **Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? 15 Are we not considered strangers by him? For he has sold us, and also completely consumed our money. 16 For all these riches which God has taken from our father are really ours and our children's; now then, whatever God has said to you, do it."**

His two wives' sympathy for him because they felt that God blessed Jacob and all he had. They felt that their father wronged them and their man. When they said **Is there still any portion:** their words implied negation, meaning that they have no share, as their father has wronged them. And their saying **Are we not considered strangers by him? For he has sold us:** As if we are not his daughters, he did not give us anything from dowry or any gifts. Rather, he took everything for himself, as if he sold us and took the price for Jacob's service to him

(Verses 17-18): **Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels. 18 And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained, his acquired livestock which he had gained in Padan Aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.**

(Verse 19): **Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the household idols that were her father's.**

This was another mistake for Rachel as she **stolen the household idols that were her father's** = The idols mentioned here are called "teraphim." They were small statues in the form of people that the pagans used to put in their homes, and they used them for superstition, believing that they would bring good, and they used to consult them. Rachel stole it, perhaps with the same meanings, as she was superstitious about it that it would facilitate their journey and prevents her father from consulting these idols, so he does not get hold of them. It is strange that Rachel, who has been living with Jacob, the man of God and the man of prayer all this life, would have such pagan beliefs. She represents the Christian who is still carrying his sins in his heart. Because of these idols, Laban revolted and intended to take revenge on those who stole them. This is what Satan does with everyone who embraces sins in his heart. He seeks everything that is hidden in us. That is why the Bible says, " He who covers his sins will not prosper."

(Verse 20): **And Jacob stole away, unknown to Laban the Syrian, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee.**

That is, he did not show to him that he intended to flee from him.

(Verse 21): **So he fled with all that he had. He arose and crossed the river, and headed toward the mountains of Gilead.**

**crossed the river:** The river is the Euphrates. Note the symbol to the story of salvation: 1. Christ crossed with us the waters of baptism as the first step towards the heavenly Jerusalem. 2. Our tongue says with Rachel and Leah that our old father, the enemy of the good, treated us like strangers and robbed us of our lives, our freedom, and our glories. 3. We are now setting out with our Bridegroom Christ (the true Jacob) on the way to the heavenly Canaan. 4. Note that the beloved Rachel dies on the way to complete the symbol, and the Church tastes death on her way to the heavenly Jerusalem, but her children shall have their portion on the right. 5. Also, note in the following verse, Laban sought after the procession heading to Canaan as a symbol of Satan's wars against the Church and the children of God to prevent them from reaching the heavenly Canaan.

**mountains of Gilead:** It is a rocky sphere, and its mountain was a barrier between the Arameans and the Canaanites, Jacob gave it the name Galaid.

(Verse 22): **And Laban was told on the third day that Jacob had fled.**

Laban here, in his pursuit of the procession going to Canaan, represents the enemy of good. Thus did Pharaoh when he pursued the people led by Moses (that is, the descendants of Jacob). We notice that every repentant who begins a journey of repentance and escape from sin is pursued by Satan, trying to prevent him. But God gives aid to those who want and are determined to repent (Here we see God preventing Laban from extending his hand to Jacob verse 24).

**And Laban was told on the third day:** The enemy of good did not know the secret of Christ's redemptive work except by the resurrection of Christ on the third day when He granted us life. The war of Satan against God's children does not begin until a person thinks of repentance and rising from the death of sin. (The number 3 refers to the resurrection of Christ and also refers to the resurrection of each of us from the death of sin). "for your brother was dead and is alive again" (Luke 15: 32). That is why the apostle Paul says, "Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." (Ephesians 5: 14). But there is always God's help that supports the repentant.

(Verse 23): **Then he took his brethren with him and pursued him for seven days' journey, and he overtook him in the mountains of Gilead.**

He pursued Jacob with an army of his brothers, and so does Satan and all his soldiers who follow us, trying to stop us.

**and he overtook him in the mountains of Gilead:** That is, at a vast distance, and this was probably due to an intelligent plan from Jacob, as the distance was about 400 km from the place of Laban to Mount Gilad. Presumably, when Jacob intended to escape, he planned this for an extended period, and not in

just seven days. He moved all his cattle first, so when he moved, his slow-moving cattle were already near Mount Gilead. Days after his livestock left, he and his family moved. And the fact that Laban's pursue was for seven days, is a sign that the enemy of good continues to pursue us throughout the days of our life (7 days of life)= All life;

(Verse 24): **But God had come to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, "Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad."**

This is God's care for his children, as he warned Laban not to harm Jacob. Why should we fear if God protects us like this? This is an interpretation of what God told Abraham " I am your shield" (Genesis 15: 1)

**neither good nor bad:** with **good** means employ sweet words to try to bring him back to Aram. And with **bad** means to try to harm him. For God protects us from both the deceptions of Satan and his harm.

(Verse 25): **So Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountains, and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mountains of Gilead.**

**Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountains:** This is a beautiful expression about the Church that lives in the heavenly places, for the mountain refers to the heavenly places, and the Church is firmly established. Laban will also come to the mountain. The appropriate interpretation for this is in (Ephesians 6: 12) " For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of [a]the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." The devil cannot bear that the Church lives in the heavenly places, so he fights her there to draw her to the earthly matters.

(Verse 26): **And Laban said to Jacob: "What have you done, that you have stolen away unknown to me, and carried away my daughters like captives taken with the sword?"**

(Verse 27): **Why did you flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and not tell me; for I might have sent you away with joy and songs, with timbrel and harp?**

**with timbrel and harp:** Here Laban is deceiving. However, this saying expresses the collapse of spiritual values in the family, as Rebekah was sent away with prayers and blessings. And now he would have liked to send them away with worldly celebrations, timber and harp. However, Laban would have wanted to stop them entirely from leaving.

(Verses 28-29): **And you did not allow me to kiss my sons and my daughters. Now you have done foolishly in so doing. 29 It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.'**

(Verse 30): **And now you have surely gone because you greatly long for your father's house, but why did you steal my gods?"**

**why did you steal my gods:** This is evidence of spiritual stupidity. Can gods be stolen? And they don't defend themselves.

(Verse 31): **Then Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I said, 'Perhaps you would take your daughters from me by force.'**

(Verse 32): **With whomever you find your gods, do not let him live. In the presence of our brethren, identify what I have of yours and take it with you."** For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

**do not let him live:** Jacob meant that Laban would kill whoever he finds his idols with. But it was said that he prophesied about Rachel's death on the way.

(Verse 33): **And Laban went into Jacob's tent, into Leah's tent, and into the two maids' tents, but he did not find them. Then he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's tent.**

(Verse 34): **Now Rachel had taken the household idols, put them in the camel's saddle, and sat on them. And Laban searched all about the tent but did not find them.**

**the camel's saddle:** What is placed on top of the camel to ride on, and when placed on the ground, it is suitable for sitting on it.

(Verses 35-38): **And she said to her father, "Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women is with me." And he searched but did not find the household idols. 36 Then Jacob was angry and rebuked Laban, and Jacob answered and said to Laban: "What is my trespass? What is my sin, that you have so hotly pursued me? 37 Although you have searched all my things, what part of your household things have you found? Set it here before my brethren and your brethren, that they may judge between us both! 38 These twenty years I have been with you; your**

**ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your flock.**

(Verse 39): **That which was torn by beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it. You required it from my hand, whether stolen by day or stolen by night.**

**That which was torn by beasts I did not bring to you:** The shepherd was responsible for anything stolen from the herd and had to compensate the herd owner if anything was stolen. However, he was not responsible for what the beasts prey on, provided that he brings part of the prey to the herd's owner. Except that Jacob did not do even this; he was compensating Laban for the predatory sheep from his own. Here, we see that one of the good qualities of Jacob is his honesty, and one of his bad qualities is cunning and deception. Here is a meditation for servants. If sheep are so precious to the herd's owner, how much more are the souls before Christ, the owner of the herd.

**stolen by day or stolen by night:** Laban was asking for compensation for all that was stolen, and Jacob returned to him.

(Verses 40-41): **There I was! In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes. 41 Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times.**

(Verse 42): **Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night."**

**the Fear of Isaac:** He did not mention his father's name directly out of respect for him.

(Verses 43-45): **And Laban answered and said to Jacob, "These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and this flock is my flock; all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they have borne? 44 Now therefore, come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me." 45 So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar.**

(Verse 46): **Then Jacob said to his brethren, "Gather stones." And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there on the heap.**

**they ate there on the heap:** It is a covenant sacrifice, and compare with verse 54 (They used to slaughter and eat to make a covenant). And the pillar and the heap (pile of stones) that they set up and ate on it is a testimony between them so that none of them cross it to the other party to harm him.

(Verse 47): **Laban called it Jegar Sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed.**

**Jegar Sahadutha** is an Aramaic word, and **Galeed** is a Hebrew word. And both mean the heap of the covenant.

(Verses 48-49): **And Laban said, "This heap is a witness between you and me this day." Therefore its name was called Galeed, 49 also Mizpah, because he said, "May the Lord watch between you and me when we are absent one from another.**

**Mizpah:** It means watchtower. That is Jacob called the heap by two names; Galeed and Mizpah. Galeed = witness heap

(Verses 50-51): **If you afflict my daughters, or if you take other wives besides my daughters, although no man is with us—see, God is witness between you and me!" 51 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Here is this heap and here is this pillar, which I have placed between you and me.**

(Verse 52): **This heap is a witness, and this pillar is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and you will not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, for harm.**

**for harm:** That is any can pass beyond, but for good, love and friendship.

(Verse 53): **The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, and the God of their father judge between us." And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac.**

**The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor:** Here appears the paganism of Laban and Nahor. = 2 Gods; one for Abraham and the other for Nahor.

(Verses 54-55): **Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread. And they ate bread and stayed all night on the mountain. 55 And early in the morning Laban arose, and kissed his sons and daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned to his place.**

## Chapter 32

Now Jacob set out in the direction of Canaan, after getting rid of Laban's harassment, but now he began to fear, rather dread, of Esau and his expected vengeance. He was afraid of Esau's revenge on him and his wives and children.

(Verses 1-2): **So Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. 2 When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's camp." And he called the name of that place Mahanaim.**

### **angels of God met him:**

Angels were always surrounding him; however, he didn't see them. And now, they made him feel their presence as an encouragement to take away his fears of Esau. There is another beautiful meaning; the church procession heading towards the heavenly Canaan, and the angels accompany the procession, just as the angels carried the poor Lazarus as he was going to heaven.

It seems that the number of angels was huge, so Jacob called them **God's camp**. And he called the place **Mahanaim**, that is, two camps or two settlements because Jacob and his family represented one camp and the angels another. And this has a beautiful application in the Coptic Church rite in the Twelfth Hour prayer on Good Friday when deacons chant "Thwk Teti Gom" in the Altar (representing the heavenly ones), And the congregation from the church respond to them with the same hymn (representing the Church on earth). How wonderful is this picture of the striving church on earth and the victorious church in heaven, and Christ is the cornerstone that unites the earthly with the heavenly ones?

**God's camp:** According to the Hebrews, when God's name is added to something, it indicates its greatness. Here it means a great and huge army. And if we say the mountain of God, this means a huge mountain, and so on.

(Verses 3-8): **Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. 4 And he commanded them, saying, "Speak thus to my lord Esau, 'Thus your servant Jacob says: "I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now. 5 I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in your sight."'" 6 Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him." 7 So Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies. 8 And he said, "If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the other company which is left will escape."**

In human weakness, Jacob is still afraid, even after God showed him that he protected him from Laban and after he saw the army of angels. We see him sending to his brother as if asking permission to come back and to know his feelings towards him. And he used the language of humility.. **my lord Esau.. your servant Jacob.**

And when he heard that Esau was coming with 400 men, he was terrified. And the fact that Esau comes with 400 men is a declaration of his wealth and strength. And Jacob began to think of dividing his family into two companies, so that part of them would survive if Esau attacked the other company.

All this fear that entered Jacob's heart, was caused by the sin of deceiving his father Isaac.

Thus, every sin causes a person to lose his peace and joy

(Verses 9-12): **Then Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you': 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. 11 Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children. 12 For You said, 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"**

Jacob's prayer is the first prayer mentioned in the Bible with its words and details.

**O God of my father Abraham:** God for him is not a God hidden from men. God is a father to him and his family. There is a personal relationship between God and his family, his grandfather and his father. He is a father to him and to his family.

**the Lord who said to me:** He is reminding God of his promises, and God rejoices in His children who insist on fulfilling the divine promises. That is why the Church says in its prayers: "Remember, O Lord, such and such..."

**I am not worthy:** It is a feeling of weakness and humility before God.

**I crossed over this Jordan with my staff:** Means I didn't own anything.

**and now I have become two companies:** Therefore, this is a blessing from God. He thanks God for His blessings and graces and mentions them to him. There is a contemplation that Jacob, who came out



with his stick, represents Christ, who carried his cross. And Jacob returned with his family, and Christ bought His church.

(Verses 13-21): **So he lodged there that same night, and took what came to his hand as a present for Esau his brother: 14 two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, 15 thirty milk camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten foals. 16 Then he delivered them to the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass over before me, and put some distance between successive droves." 17 And he commanded the first one, saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going? Whose are these in front of you?' 18 then you shall say, 'They are your servant Jacob's. It is a present sent to my lord Esau; and behold, he also is behind us.'" 19 So he commanded the second, the third, and all who followed the droves, saying, "In this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him; 20 and also say, 'Behold, your servant Jacob is behind us.'" For he said, "I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me." 21 So the present went on over before him, but he himself lodged that night in the camp.**

Here Jacob sends tremendous gifts to Esau to extinguish the flames of his anger. And he sends it to him in pieces—each gift followed by a gift to capture his brother's heart. And he commanded his servants, bearers of gifts, to speak with utmost humility : **my lord Esau ... your servant Jacob**

(Verse 22): **And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok.**

**the ford of Jabbok:** Jabbok Yabouk is a branch of Jordan. And ford means a shallow portion that can be crossed underfoot.

(Verse 23): **He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had.**

(Verses 24-29): **Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. 25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. 26 And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" 27 So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." 28 And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." 29 Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there.**

God tried to confirm Jacob and encourage him with a vision to Laban and then a vision of the camp of angels, but Jacob remained in terror. We see here God dealing with him in a new way to encourage him and give him confidence in himself. On this night, which began with the prayer mentioned above, certainly, after Jacob sent his gift, he continued striving in prayer **and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day**. God gave him this strength for struggling and striving, as he did not possess this strength. There are two opinions about this person; the first is that He is one of the appearances of Christ before his incarnation, and the second is that he is an angel in the form of a human being, but he represents the divine presence. God's objective was to give him self-confidence when he was victorious so that he would not be afraid of meeting Esau. But this wrestle refers to striving in prayer and the fruit of striving and adherence to God's promises. The struggle began physically (Jacob realized that the one in front of him is not an ordinary person, but a person who can bless him, so he grabbed his feet asking for blessing and refused to leave him). It ended as a spiritual struggle, which Hosea the prophet refers to (Hosea 12: 3-4). He cried and begged him for it was not a physical struggle, but he cried and asked for mercy from God. He held him and would not let him go (Song of Solomon 3: 4). When he saw that, he prevailed, meaning that when the angel saw that Jacob in his struggle did not give up, but rather he continued to struggle all night, the matter in which the angel seemed as one who was defeated and Jacob as the conqueror. Can God be defeated? We read in the book of Song of Solomon, "Turn your eyes away from me, For they have overcome me." (Song of Solomon 6: 5). God is overcome with tears and repentance, and Jacob here cried and begged him.

There is a spiritual contemplation by Pope Shenouda that he understood the story of the angel's struggle with Jacob through his struggle and his strife in the bedchamber prayer. Jacob's struggle with the angel is a struggle to convey a spiritual striving and insistence that man obtain a blessing from God.

And so that Jacob's victory would not have a counterproductive result, and he would enter into pride, the angel struck the right of his thigh, and it was dislocated. Same as God allowed a thorn in the flesh to Paul lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelation. The socket of the hip is the hip joint, and the word "touched" in Hebrew comes with the meaning of a light touch, "touching the socket of his hip." Thus, if it leads to the joint's dislocation, the one that touched Jacob would not be an ordinary person.

**for you have struggled with God and with men:** He **struggled with God** because he insisted that God bless him, and that was through his weeping, supplications and prayers. Struggling with God is two types: The first is positive, which is prayer and supplications to God, and prayer for people and their needs so that God may be glorified in them. The second is negative, that is avoiding everything that angers God. **Struggling with men:** It means that his behaviour with people glorifies God, for people to see his good deeds and glorify God.

**Let Me go:** This shows what became of friendship between God and Jacob, for the angel did not want to leave him without asking him. And Jacob's struggling to acquire the blessing = the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force (Matthew 11: 12).

Note that Jacob's problem was his deceptions and cunning due to his feeling of weakness, and here we see him terrified of meeting Esau, while God tried to show him that he supports him many times.

1. A prophecy to Rebekah even before his birth.
2. The vision of the ladder on his way.
3. His success in meeting Rachel and his family.
4. The blessing in Laban's house
5. The vision to Laban in which God declared that He is protecting him.
6. The vision of the angels camp.

However, the fearful and disbelieving soul is terrified at the first mention of a problem like Esau, and forgets all the announcements and blessings of God!! How does God deal with this character?

An angel wrestles him to feel his weakness, for he was overcoming his weakness with tricks, cunning and deception. Now, what is the solution for this man who struggle with him face to face? There is no place for trickery, deceit and cunning. Rather, there is only one solution: cry, beg for mercy, pray, strive, overcome, and obtain blessings. Here he learns how to abandon himself, putting all his trust in God. Therefore, what visions and declarations did not solve, this vision or striving solved. For God touches our weaknesses, so we feel our weakness and our need for Him, and that in Him is our sufficiency. He was afraid of meeting Esau because his plans and tricks did not help him, for Esau was coming with 400 men, but after this encounter, he knew that the solution is not in tricks and cunning, but in his struggle with God and that God is the One who protects him. After this encounter, the angel asked Jacob about his name, not because he is ignorant of his name, but to announce to him that his old name Jacob has changed to a new name that fits the blessing he obtained through his struggle.

**Israel:** Prince of God or strong with God, or he is a strong striver in the side of God. He is strong in his struggling, and he is striving with God and with people.

Sra: Prince / El: God / Therefeore, Israel: Prince of God.

From this name Sarah: Princess

There is another interpretation

Is / Ra / El

Man / saw / God

This interpretation is consistent with Jacob calling the place Penuel.

In (29), Jacob asks the angel about his name, but he does not answer him. This is in line with what the angel said to Manoah, the father of Samson " Why do you ask My name, seeing it is wonderful?". Christ

is the One whose name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9: 6). Here he refuses to answer His name because the time for the incarnation and the announcement of this truth has not yet come.

(Verse 30): **So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."**

**Peniel:** The face of God. He named the place like this because he saw God face to face and did not die. He did not name the place with a name that means that he has defeated God; rather, he is happy that he saw God and did not die = **my life is preserved**

(Verse 31): **Just as he crossed over Penuel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip.**

**the sun rose on him:** Christ is The Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4: 2). How beautiful this saying is. Now Jacob knew a new knowledge about God, so the light of Christ shone for him after he abandoned himself and put his trust in the Lord. It is not essential afterwards if he **limped on his hip** = The thorn in the flesh with the true knowledge of God becomes nothing.

(Verse 32): **Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank.**

**the muscle that shrank** extends from the hip to the heel and passes beside the right thigh. The Jews extract it from their slaughtered animals and do not eat it in honour of this fact.

## Chapter 33

In the previous chapter, Jacob struggled with God with his prayer, and in this chapter, he struggled with the human being (Esau) with his love and humility, with kindness and gifts, and self-denial. Now gifts, love and humility are not out of fear after the blessing he received but out of love. Fear was cured in the struggle with the angel. God took away from him self-dependence and cunning and also took away fear. We also see Esau with Jacob, a loving and sympathetic person who weeps when he sees his brother after this separation! Where is the previous brutality? Indeed When a man's ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. And indeed, The king's and the people's hearts are in the hand of the Lord

(Verses 1-4): **Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and there, Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maidservants. 2 And he put the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph last. 3 Then he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. 4 But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.**

Note that he puts his beloved Rachel and her son Joseph last out of concern for them, and he passed in front of everyone and bowed himself in humility. Here he represents Christ, who leads the procession, as a defender of His servants and His body, that is, His church. And the fact that his family is behind him allows them the opportunity to escape, declaring his protection for them and giving himself for them. And the Bible states the virtues of Esau, his love, and his weeping. Just as the Bible does not hide the faults of the saints, it does not hide the virtues of the worldly man. But let us know that every good gift is from above from God. God is the one who made Esau so for Jacob's sake.

(Verses 5-7): **And he lifted his eyes and saw the women and children, and said, "Who are these with you?" So he said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." 6 Then the maidservants came near, they and their children, and bowed down. 7 And Leah also came near with her children, and they bowed down. Afterward Joseph and Rachel came near, and they bowed down.**

(Verse 8): **Then Esau said, "What do you mean by all this company which I met?" And he said, "These are to find favor in the sight of my lord."**

**What do you mean by all this company which I met?:** He means the gifts that preceded him. Then Esau tried to refuse the gift, as he had a lot.

(Verse 9): **But Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself."**

(Verse 10): **And Jacob said, "No, please, if I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present from my hand, inasmuch as I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me."**

**I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God:** That is, I saw in you the image of God who meets us with love and forgiveness because you have forgiven me, I became like this. Or I saw in your face love, benevolence and forgiveness, which is the result of God's work with you.

(Verse 11): **Please, take my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." So he urged him, and he took it.**

(Verses 12-16): **Then Esau said, "Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you." 13 But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing are with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. 14 Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Seir." 15 And Esau said, "Now let me leave with you some of the people who are with me." But he said, "What need is there? Let me find favor in the sight of my lord." 16 So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir.**

Here we find Jacob refusing to go on the road with Esau, or for Esau's men to remain with him, as he does not guarantee his actions. And he does not need anyone's protection as long as he is under God's protection.

(Verses 17-20): **And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, built himself a house, and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth. 18 Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. 19 And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. 20 Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel.**

**Succoth:** Tents. Then he came to Shechem and bought a field there for which he paid a hundred pieces of money (**pieces** in Hebrew is **kasita** which has unknown value).

**pieces of money:** A high-value coin, and we knew this because Job's friends gave him each one as a gift of the same coin (Job 42: 11). Some translate it as a sheep, and the reason may be that this coin has a sheep drawn on it. The first thing that Jacob did was that **he erected an altar there**. This land that Jacob bought from Shechem is where Joseph was buried. It is the second purchased land after the Machpelah. And this land remained the property of Jacob even after his residence in Egypt. But Jacob's stay in Shechem and his delay in returning immediately to Bethel or Beersheba, where Isaac was, caused him Dinah's problem. He violated God's command for him to return to the land of his fathers (Genesis 31: 3). Therefore, the problem occurred, rather the problems.

## Chapter 34

Dinah's problem came as a result of living in an evil place, not carrying out God's command, and living in a city that God did not command.

(Verse 1): **Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.**

**Now Dinah ... out to see the daughters of the land:** She probably went out to attend a celebration, as Josephus said. She went out to see their jewelry and their clothes. She represents God's children when they want to imitate the children of the world; they live like the world's people and are attracted to the evils of the world. And what was the result?

1. The girl was lost.
2. Bloodshed.
3. Fear of Jacob's family for revenge.

And this is the way of Satan, he first invites us to go out of our father's house (the Church), and then he draws our attention to the beauty of the world, so we are deceived. Note that he does not call us first to sin, but to go out, and then sin comes afterwards. Often his attempt includes convincing us that we are deprived of the world's pleasures.

(Verses 2-3): **And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her and lay with her, and violated her. 3 His soul was strongly attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the young woman and spoke kindly to the young woman.**

**loved the young woman:** This is not love, rather it is lust, as whoever loves a girl does not rape her and confine her in his house. But since ancient times, people used to call lust "love." However, love has a different meaning, which is sacrifice.

(Verse 4): **So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this young woman as a wife."**

(Verse 5): **And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. Now his sons were with his livestock in the field; so Jacob held his peace until they came.**



Jacob's silence when he heard it was to give her brothers the right to act. This was a custom with polygamy. Dinah's brothers from the same mother, Leah, have the right to act.

(Verses 6-7): **Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. 7 And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved and very angry, because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, a thing which ought not to be done.**

(Verses 8-12): **But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife. 9 And make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters to yourselves. 10 So you shall dwell with us, and the land shall be before you. Dwell and trade in it, and acquire possessions for yourselves in it." 11 Then Shechem said to her father and her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. 12 Ask me ever so much dowry and gift, and I will give according to what you say to me; but give me the young woman as a wife."**

Hamor thought that he would compensate Jacob for his honour by making an offer that his son would marry Dinah. Then he made a generous offer to enter into family affinities, become one family, live together, trade, and own property. It is a generous offer, but what can be offered in return for honour? Here we see one of the methods of Satan. After he calls a person out and then entices him with sin, we find him taking a step further and asking for intermarriage, and that the soul lives and dwells with him, but " And what communion has light with darkness?"

(Verses 13-29): **But the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father, and spoke deceitfully, because he had defiled Dinah their sister. 14 And they said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a reproach to us. 15 But on this condition we will consent to you: If you will become as we are, if every male of you is circumcised, 16 then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to us; and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. 17 But if you will not heed us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and be gone." 18 And their words pleased Hamor and Shechem, Hamor's son. 19 So the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter. He was more honorable than all the household of his father. 20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came to the gate of their city, and spoke with the men of their city, saying: 21 "These men are at peace with us. Therefore let them dwell in the land and trade in it. For indeed the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters to us as wives, and let us give them our daughters. 22 Only on this condition will the men consent to dwell with us, to be one people: if every male among us is circumcised as they are circumcised. 23 Will not their livestock, their property, and every animal of theirs be ours? Only let us consent to them, and they will dwell with us." 24 And all who went out of the gate of his city**

heeded Hamor and Shechem his son; every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city. 25 Now it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males. 26 And they killed Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went out. 27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled. 28 They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, what was in the city and what was in the field, 29 and all their wealth. All their little ones and their wives they took captive; and they plundered even all that was in the houses.

Here we find the ploy of Simeon and Levi to take revenge for the honor of Dinah and the honor of the family, and their mistake was:

1. Deception: the people of Shechem and Hamor considered them friends. They agreed to be circumcised for their sake.
2. Exploitation of religion: They convinced Shechem and Hamor that this, i.e. circumcision, is a religious necessity for marriage.
3. They looked at Shechem's mistake and did not look at their sister's sin, as she was the one who went out to them, and perhaps what happened was with her consent.
4. They did not kill the wrongdoer, but they killed everyone while they were innocent, and this is brutal and barbaric.
5. They did not take into account the generosity and affection of the people of Shechem and the honor they displayed.

Indeed, Shechem erred when he thought the matter was a commercial transaction. But Jacob's sons acted wrongly.

(Verse 30): **Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I."**

It is a brutal crime that disturbed and upset Jacob and made him fear revenge. He is now in pain because of the cunning of his two sons. His whole life has become a series of pains.

(Verse 31): **But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a harlot?"**

## Chapter 35

(Verses 1-4): **Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother." 2 And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. 3 Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone." 4 So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which were in their hands, and the earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem.**

God here renews the invitation to Jacob so that he ascends to Bethel to reside there and makes an altar to God. When Jacob felt that there would be an encounter with God, he buried and isolated all the strange gods (the teraphim) that Rachel stole and what was with his servants before they entered into the divine covenant and all that his children plundered from Shechem. [And let us note that Jacob's servants were from Aram, where paganism is widespread, and let us note that Jacob's sons have plundered the women and children of the Shechem family, and all of them are pagans]. We cannot meet God except based on holiness and the isolation and burial of everything foreign to God. The burial of these things refers to the burial of every satanic act, and every evil thought under the Cross, as an application of the words of the Apostle Paul, "by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.". Also, as an application to the words of David the Prophet, "Happy the one who takes and dashes Your little ones (lusts and sins) against the rock (Christ)! (Psalm 137: 9). **change your garments:** A reference to the purification and purity of the body. **earrings:** These were not only used for adornment but for superstitious religious purposes, such as bringing goodness and warding off envy, and for this reason, the golden calf that Aaron made for the people was one of their earrings.

(Verse 5): **And they journeyed, and the terror of God was upon the cities that were all around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.**

**and the terror of God:** God inflicted terror on those around Jacob so that they would not touch him, so no one dared to go after him or follow his trail. They felt that the fear of God is visible in the life of this person.

(Verses 6-7): **So Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. 7 And he built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.**

**El Bethel:** The Lord God of Bethel.

(Verse 8): **Now Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the terebinth tree. So the name of it was called Allon Bachuth.**

It is strange that the book is concerned with the death of Rebekah's nurse, Deborah, and the book does not mention the death of Rebekah herself. All that the book mentions is that Rebekah is buried in the cave of Machpelah (Genesis 49: 31). The reason is simply that Rebekah symbolizes the Church that does not die spiritually but dies physically in the hope of resurrection. All the bodies of the saints are buried in the hope of resurrection.

Nurses had a great status and respect close to that of a mother. Jacob brought her from his father Isaac's house in Hebron, and perhaps Jacob was visiting his father, Isaac. On one of the visits, he asked his permission to take Deborah to stay with him to take her blessing, and most likely his mother, Rebekah, died during this period. Commentators estimate the age of Deborah at this time to be about 180 years.

**below Bethel:** That is, at a lower place in or near Bethel.

**Allon Bachuth:** The weeping oak and Bethel means the house of God. There David, who represents the striving church, resided, and there Deborah, who represents the fallen (asleep), was buried. And the Church prays in every Vesper, the litany of those who have fallen asleep, for all the alive and the asleep are one church and one house to the Lord.

(Verses 9-15): **Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram, and blessed him. 10 And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name." So He called his name Israel. 11 Also God said to him: "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. 12 The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land." 13 Then God went up from him in the place where He talked with him. 14 So Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He talked with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it. 15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel.**

As Jacob buried the strange gods and ascended to Bethel as God wanted him first, this corresponds to repentance (for with repentance, we return to see and hear God). He deserved that God appears to him and renews his promise of blessing.

**but Israel shall be your name:** As Jacob left Shechem and headed to Bethel according to the will of God, we find that God repeated to him the promise and blessing that He previously gave him in (Genesis 32: 28) that his name will be Israel. This corresponds to what the Lord said, "Return to Me," says the Lord of hosts, "and I will return to you" (Zechariah 1: 3). It also corresponds to Christ's saying to Peter three times, "Feed my lambs," thus restoring him to his apostolic rank after denying him.

And Jacob offered a stone pillar and a drink of wine and oil. Pouring oil is for dedication or consecration, meaning that this place has become dedicated to God, and pouring wine is a person's acknowledgment of God for his good deeds and a sign of sacrifice. And God condescends, whom heaven and earth cannot accommodate, and accepts to dwell in a place that man gives Him as a sign of His dwelling among his people. There is another symbol for the stone pillar, which is a sign of Christ, the cornerstone, who declared the pouring out of wine, the offering of joy, and the anointing oil, which is the coming of the Holy Spirit on the church.

(Verses 16-20): **Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel labored in childbirth, and she had hard labor. 17 Now it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said to her, "Do not fear; you will have this son also." 18 And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni; but his father called him Benjamin. 19 So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). 20 And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day.**

**Ephrath:** It is Bethlehem, that is, the house of bread, where Christ was born. Here we see the death of the beloved Rachel. It is also strange that he mentions the mourning of Deborah and does not mention any mourning or weeping for the beloved Rachel. The death of Rachel, who refers to Christ's Church, indicates the transition of the Church from this world to heaven, which is joy. Note that Rachel previously said, "Give me children, or else I die." And now she died because of children and because of her birth. And often, God withholds from us what we think is good, and God sees it otherwise. And Rachel's death after the birth of Benjamin indicates that the church continues to labour in Pain until when the elect is completed, the whole church departs to rest eternally. And what hurts the church here that she calls him Ben-Oni, the Lord rejoices in him, so he calls him Benjamin. The Church suffers for a while and grieves, but our sadness turns into joy when we all set out on the clouds with the Lord and are at His right hand. Rachel wanted to name her son Ben-Oni, meaning the son of my grief, because of the severity of the Pain and sorrow she had experienced. But his father, he called him Benjamin, meaning the son of the right, and it is a name full of hope in God despite his sorrows. A token of strength to the ancient people [Pain will be a reason for our being on the right hand of God (John 16: 20-22)].

Why does he mention here **Ephrath** and **the tower of Eder**?

Notice the symbol in the story, so how do we, children of grief, become children of the right side?

1. Through Christ's incarnation: **Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath** (Verse 16) = This would happen by the birth of Christ in Bethlehem = **Ephrath**. And because there was still time until Christ was incarnated, it was said **And when there was but a little distance**.

2. Through Christ's sacrifice on the Cross = **Then Israel journeyed and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder** (Verse 21) = Tower of Eder (Micah 4: 8) where the shepherds are watching over the flock (Luke 2: 8) that will be offered as a sacrifice in the temple. These sheep are examined by the priests and

sealed as the lambs that are without blemish. These symbolize the perfect Christ, Who is without sin, "because God the Father has set His seal on Him." That is, he testified that he was without blemish, and offered him as a sacrifice on the Cross. (John 6: 27)

(Verses 21-22): **Then Israel journeyed and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder. 22 And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard about it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:**

**tower of Eder:** that is the Tower of the Sheep, which is located in the Shepherds' Plain, east of Bethlehem. And here occurred the terrible sin of Reuben, because of which he lost his birthright, and which Jacob kept reminding him bitterly until his deathbed (Genesis 49: 4). Saying **and Israel heard about it:** It means that he did not speak, but he concealed a bitterness in his heart that neither time nor words can erase. Reuben thought that he did it in secret, for nothing is secret that will not be revealed.

### **Final Remark on Jacob's Life**

Why did God choose Jacob and leave Esau, despite Jacob's weaknesses and his sons' faults? God tolerated Jacob's weakness and perfected and chastised him, while Jacob submits to his hands and accepts the chastisement. As for Esau, who is brutal in his nature, does not submit to God's work in his life. There are two sins that God cannot tolerate:

1. Pride
2. Brutality, cruelty, and vengeance " I will kill my brother"

These sins prevent God's work in man so that he is not perfected, and God's discipline does not discipline him, and his end will be rejection. God rejects those who do not accept chastisement.

(Verses 23-29): **the sons of Leah were Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; 24 the sons of Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin; 25 the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant, were Dan and Naphtali; 26 and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, were Gad and Asher. These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Padan Aram. 27 Then Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt. 28 Now the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years. 29 So Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people, being old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.**

## Chapter 36

### **Why was the book interested in listing Esau's descendants?**

The lists were brief so that the believer could understand the later events through the ages by knowing the origin of every people or nation. To show that the Bible is neither myths nor written stories, but its people have existed in history. It also appears from the book's concern for the descendants of a rejected person like Esau that all humanity was one body and was torn apart by sin. The one body became two parts: the saints who chose God, and the second the wicked who chose the world.

2. The book mentions Esau's descendants to show that God blessed him, that he bore fruit, and that God's promises to Abraham and Isaac were fulfilled. These blessings to Esau were due to his holy parents. And God's promises to them were that kings and chiefs would emerge from them, and their offspring would be like the stars of the heaven and the dust of the earth. And there is a fulfillment of what God said to Rebekah, "Two nations are in your womb." So here we see that Esau has become a large nation.

3. Here, the emphasis is placed on Esau because afterwards, he will leave him altogether and devote the book to Jacob's descendants.

4. It appears here that the descendants of Esau possessed the land. But Jacob and his sons remained homeless and even enslaved in Egypt for hundreds of years, alienating themselves in the land but in the hope of inheriting the Promised Land. As for those who are strangers to God, they quickly possess this land and become kings. No wonder Satan is the ruler of this world.

5. From the previous, we see that, as believers, we prefer to live as strangers to the hope of inheriting the heavenly Jerusalem than to inherit and own in Mount Seir, that is, the world.

6. The talk about Esau comes before the book tells us about Joseph as a symbol of Christ. As the Apostle Paul said, " However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual" (1 Corinthians 15: 44-50).

7. Edom's struggles with Jacob since they were in the womb refers to the ancient conflict between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, between Satan and the children of God. We find that Edom often tried to obstruct God's children's path, which is what Satan, who has been fighting for people from the beginning, does.

8. The names of Esau's women have already been mentioned in (Genesis 26:34, 35 + 28:9). Here we find a difference in the names between what was previously mentioned and what is mentioned here, and the reason is that people used to have more than one name, and this was a custom among men and women. Esau is Edom. And Sarai is Sarah, and Abram is Abraham. And Paul is Saul, and Peter is Cephas, and he is Simon..etc. Perhaps it was Esau who called his wives the new names.

(Verse 1): **Now this is the genealogy of Esau, who is Edom.**

(Verse 2): **Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite;**

**Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite:** Is Basemath (Genesis 26: 34). **Aholibamah:** daughter of Anah, she is Judith, and her father is Anah who found the water in the wilderness (verse 24). We find here once that he mentions the Hivites and once the Hittites. This is because of the intermarriage between them, so he was the Hivite and also he is also the Hittite because his father is a Hittite and his mother is a Hivite. The Hivites and Hittites are among the descendants' tribes of Canaan (Genesis 10: 15, 17).

(Verse 3): **and Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth.**

Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, is also Mahalath, the sister of Nebajoth (Genesis 28: 9).

#### Remarks:

1. We find many kings and princes from the descendants of Esau who **reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel**: before a king reigned for Israel's children: what is not from God sprouts and flourishes quickly, but what is from God grows gradually and slowly and in the end blossoms and bears fruit, and its fruit lasts forever. Moses wrote this verse with faith as he believed in God's promise "and kings shall come from your body" (Genesis 35: 11). He wrote it hundreds of years before the kings' era. As for the critics, who do not understand the meaning of faith, they said that this phrase was added after the era of kings.

2. As both Esau and Jacob became wealthy, the land could no longer bear them together. Jacob dwelt in the land of Canaan, the inheritance of his forefathers, as God had promised him. As for Esau, he moved to the country of Seir, which extended from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba, and it included a series of mountains with rugged areas and agricultural areas as well.

3. Seir is a name for Esau because he is hairy. Some say it is instead a name for the area where there are many trees, so the land resembles a hairy body.

4. The chiefs of the tribes were called princes. The Hebrew word came to mean the heads of thousands; they are the elders of the tribes.

(Verses 4-43): **Now Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel. 5 And Aholibamah bore Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah. These were the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan. 6 Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the persons of his household, his cattle and**



all his animals, and all his goods which he had gained in the land of Canaan, and went to a country away from the presence of his brother Jacob. 7 For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together, and the land where they were strangers could not support them because of their livestock. 8 So Esau dwelt in Mount Seir. Esau is Edom. 9 And this is the genealogy of Esau the father of the Edomites in Mount Seir. 10 These were the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, and Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. 11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. 12 Now Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son, and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These were the sons of Adah, Esau's wife. 13 These were the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife. 14 These were the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon. And she bore to Esau: Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah. 15 These were the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn son of Esau, were Chief Teman, Chief Omar, Chief Zepho, Chief Kenaz, 16 Chief Korah, Chief Gatam, and Chief Amalek. These were the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom. They were the sons of Adah. 17 These were the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: Chief Nahath, Chief Zerah, Chief Shammah, and Chief Mizzah. These were the chiefs of Reuel in the land of Edom. These were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife. 18 And these were the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife: Chief Jeush, Chief Jaalam, and Chief Korah. These were the chiefs who descended from Aholibamah, Esau's wife, the daughter of Anah. 19 These were the sons of Esau, who is Edom, and these were their chiefs. 20 These were the sons of Seir the Horite who inhabited the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, 21 Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These were the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir, in the land of Edom. 22 And the sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam. Lotan's sister was Timna. 23 These were the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. 24 These were the sons of Zibeon: both Ajah and Anah. This was the Anah who found the water in the wilderness as he pastured the donkeys of his father Zibeon. 25 These were the children of Anah: Dishon and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah. 26 These were the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. 27 These were the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. 28 These were the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran. 29 These were the chiefs of the Horites: Chief Lotan, Chief Shobal, Chief Zibeon, Chief Anah, 30 Chief Dishon, Chief Ezer, and Chief Dishan. These were the chiefs of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir. 31 Now these were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel: 32 Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah. 33 And when Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place. 34 When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. 35 And when Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who attacked Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his place. And the name of his city was Avith. 36 When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place. 37 And when Samlah died, Saul of Rehoboth-by-the-River reigned in his place. 38 When Saul died, Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place. 39 And when Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor died, Hadar reigned in his place; and the name of his city was Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab. 40 And these were the names of the chiefs of Esau, according to their families and their places, by their names: Chief Timnah, Chief Alvah, Chief Jetheth, 41 Chief Aholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon, 42 Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar, 43 Chief Magdiel, and Chief Iram. These were the chiefs of Edom, according to their dwelling places in the land of their possession. Esau was the father of the Edomites.

Seir - Edom - Esau: - Seir is the name of the Hurrian prince whose name was given to the mountainous regions in which he and his descendants inhabited. Some say it is rather a name for the area where there are many trees, so the earth resembles a hairy body. Seir is a Hebrew name that means "hairy." Prince Seir the Horite established a family that ruled this region (about 1700 BC) until Esau seized it. He did to the Hurrians what the children of Israel did to the Canaanites (Deuteronomy 2:12). Thus, Seir and Mount Seir became synonymous with Edom (Genesis 36: 30 + 2 Chronicles 20: 10): First) Because he was called Esau as he was hairy, and Seir means a lot of hair. Second) Because Esau owned the land of Seir, and Mount Seir is the mountain range of Edom. It is located east of the Dead Sea, south of the Arnon River, and close to the Gulf of Aqaba.

**Esau the father of the Edomites:** Esau is the same as Edom, two names of one person and he is Jacob's twin. We note that the people were known in history and in the Bible as the people of Edom.

## Chapter 37

Starting from this Chapter, we see the story of Joseph as a symbol of Christ, but it is interrupted by the story of Judah, who is the one from whom Christ came in the flesh. The book did not detail the life story of Judah but described the life story of Joseph in detail because it carried clear symbols of the life and work of Christ. Joseph's life is considered the link between the Patriarch's era and the emergence of the Jews as a people and a nation under slavery crying out for salvation. And Joseph opened the way for Israel, his father and his family to live in Egypt. And thus, to be a body separate from the paganism of Canaan and the pride of Egypt.

Christ came taking a body from Judah tainted with sins, and Christ came to carry all these sins in his body (Details in Chapter 38). But here, we see the story of the pure and clean Joseph, in which we see clear symbols of who Christ is.

We meet here Joseph as a symbol of Christ who took the image of a slave for our love. Then (chapter 38) explains that the reason for Christ's suffering was our sins that he would bear in his body. Then we see Joseph's ascension to glory, a reference to Christ who will carry us in him to His glory.

### **Joseph as a symbol of Christ:**

1. Joseph was the beloved son of his father and then became a slave in Egypt. Christ is the Beloved Son who came into the world as a slave (Egypt symbolizes the world). He took the form of a slave while He is the Beloved Son. (Ephesians 1: 6) + This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
2. The first time we meet Joseph in (Genesis 37: 2), we see him feeding the flock with his brothers, a symbol of Christ the Good Shephard.
3. In (Genesis 37: 3) he worked and looked after the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, the two maidservants. He is the beloved son who serves the children of slaves. Christ is the Beloved Son who came to serve, not to be served. Serves who? the sons of his servants.
4. Joseph is the son of the old age of Jacob. And Christ is the Son of Ancient of Days (Daniel 7: 13).
5. Joseph's dreams indicated that he is not an ordinary person, but his brothers rejected his ruling. The rejection of Joseph's brothers of his dreams is the same as when the Jews refused to bow down to Christ and worship Him as a king. However, He is to whom every knee should bow (Philippians 2: 8-11). And Pharaoh asked to prostrate to Joseph.
6. Joseph's brothers envied him (Genesis 37: 11). And Pilate knew that the chief priests had handed Christ over because of envy (Mark 15: 10).

7. kept the matter in mind, same as Virgin Mary (Luke 2: 19). And Jacob marvelled at Joseph's dreams, perhaps he understood that he would be great, but he kept it secret so as not to provoke the envy of his brothers more.

8. Jacob sent Joseph to his brothers (Genesis 37: 13), and The Father sent Christ to the world (John 5: 36-38).

9. Joseph went to his brothers in love. He did not find them in Shechem, where his father sent him, so he went to search and inquire about them and went after them to Dothan (It is said to mean revolution). He could have returned to his father saying I didn't find them, but it was his love. As for his brothers, as a result of their envy, they planned to kill him. And Christ came to his own, and his own did not receive him (Matthew 21: 38). He found his brothers in a state of revolution against him (Dothan).

10. He went to his brothers, carrying to them bread. They sent him to Egypt as a slave, and he was imprisoned to go out and enter the palace and return to give his brothers bread to satisfy them and give them life. He gave life to every human being from wheat, that is, bread, and Christ came to provide us with Himself bread. He is now in His heavenly palace, satiating every human being.

11. Their consultations to kill Joseph are the same as the consultations of the Jews to kill Jesus.

12. Just as Joseph saved the world from famine, Christ saved the world from famine for truth and spiritual death.

13. His brothers rejected him and could not speak to him in peace, but he spoke to them in peace and came to serve them, and they rejected him. His brothers rejected him, and the nations accepted him (Egypt), and so Christ was rejected by the Jews and accepted by the whole world.

14. His father gave him a tunic of many colours. And Christ had the Church as colourful clothes; clothes because it adhered to Christ as clothes and colourful as she has a variety of gifts.

15. They hated him because, in his dreams, he declared his glory. And Christ always declared His relationship to God, which aroused the Jews to hate him (John 8: 58-59). Joseph did not hate his brothers, despite their hatred for him, and neither did Jesus.

16. Joseph's brothers took off his clothes, and thus did the Jews to Christ.

17. The Egyptians dressed Joseph in royal clothes after they imprisoned him, and the world submitted to Christ after they rejected him for a while.

18. The nations bought Joseph for silver. And the nations bought Christ by their faith in him.

19. We did not hear that Joseph resisted them, and Christ did not, but rather he was like as a lamb to the slaughter, and he was obedient.

20. Joseph was sold for twenty pieces of silver. And Christ was sold for thirty pieces of silver.

21. Judah, his brother, is the one who advised of the sale of Joseph. And Judas is the one who delivered Christ.

22. Joseph's brothers, after they threw him into the well, sat down to eat, and Christ, after they crucified him, ate the Passover.

23. Joseph's descent to the well and his coming out alive indicates the death and resurrection of Christ.

24. Joseph was handsome in form and appearance (Genesis 39: 6), and Christ was fairer than the sons of men. When was it said about Joseph that he was handsome in form and appearance? This happened when he was in the house of Potiphar, which is the house of slavery. And we did not know the beauty of Christ's love until after He was incarnate, taking the form of a bondservant (Philippians 2: 7), and we saw it clearly on the Cross. It was said about Christ, " You are fairer than the sons of men" (Psalm 45).

25. Joseph was unjustly judged in Egypt, and thus Christ was unjustly judged in the world (Egypt is a symbol of the land of slavery).

26. Joseph was tempted by Potiphar's wife and he overcame, and Christ was tempted by Satan and He overcame.

27. The woman accused Joseph unjustly and falsely, and Christ was repetitively accused falsely: He is mad, casts out demons by Beelzebub, and that he is a glutton and a winebibber. During the trial of Christ before Caiaphas, the chief priests, the elders, and the council were looking for false witnesses (Matthew 26: 60). Even now, there are accusations against Christ.

28. There were two prisoners with Joseph in prison, a baker and a butler. And Christ was crucified between two thieves. And as the butler escaped and the baker perished, so the right thief was saved, and the left thief perished. And so is the whole world. Part of the world will be saved, and the other part will perish (John 5: 29).

29. Joseph was imprisoned not for a sin he committed. Thus, Christ became a man and was crucified for our sins, not His own.

30. Joseph stood before Pharaoh when he was 30 years, and Jesus began his service at the age of 30 years. Joseph's service was to satisfy the world, and so was the work of Christ.

31. Joseph took off his prison clothes and put on royal clothes to announce that the time of pain is over and the time of glory is coming. The path of glory to Joseph was through his sufferings (from his brothers, the Egyptians, and in prison), and Christ sat at the right of the Father after passing through the way of sufferings and the Cross.

32. Pharaoh put on Joseph white linen clothes (A symbol of Christ's righteousness. The white robe refers to the priestly garments and the clothes of kings. And Christ was our greatest high priest, who reigned over us with his Cross) and a ring (symbol of authority and sonship) and a gold chain around his neck (symbol of glory).

33. Joseph's advice to Pharaoh is wisdom and measure, and Christ is the Hypostasis of Wisdom. If we give Him our lives, He will manage them well, so we will not be hungry. Joseph's trait was generally wisdom.

34. Pharaoh called him Zaphnath-Paaneah, and it has many translations, which we will mention later. It means the food of life, the savior of the world, or the one who reveals secrets. These are all the names of Christ, the satisfier and Savior of the world.

35. Joseph's marriage to Asenath is a symbol of Christ, who took the Church of the Gentiles as his bride. The fruit of the marriage was Manasseh (God made me forget all my toil) and Ephraim (God made me fruitful). Christ rejoices and forgets all his sufferings when he finds the Church fruitful. Rather heaven rejoices over one sinner who repents.

36. Pharaoh dreamed of 7 fat cows being eaten by seven ugly cows. The fat cows refer to the church emerging from baptism (the cows came out of the water). Ugly cows refer to heretics and all the attempts of the enemy of goodness to swallow up the church. Unfortunately, we have seen many heresies that have swallowed up many churches. Many heresies and deviations are still swallowing up Christian churches and peoples, especially the attempt of the beast at the end of days to swallow up the church and attack it. Note verse (Genesis 41: 21) "no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were just as ugly as at the beginning." Is this not a sign of the churches that heretics have swallowed up, and people think that they are churches whose faith is true according to the heart of Christ, and they are deceived in them?

37. The famine was a plan from God for Joseph's brothers to return and meet with Joseph. God also planned a famine for the prodigal son to return to his father's bosom. A whale swallowed Jonah. God intends to draw every soul to repentance so that it may meet Christ, its true Joseph.

38. Joseph's meeting with his brothers took place in 3 stages, indicating God's dealings with the repentant sinner:

a. Joseph's brothers did not know him in the first meeting, and the Jews did not know Jesus. Thus, at the beginning of his repentance, every sinner, his knowledge of Christ is minimal, and he almost does not know Him. And Christ may treat the sinner harshly as Christ treated the Canaanite woman and Joseph treated his brothers (Song of Solomon 5: 2-7).

b. In the second meeting, they still did not recognize him, but he cried alone. It is the heart of Christ that longs for each one of us.

c. In the third meeting, he declared himself to them and cried and drove everyone out, for Christ does not reveal himself except to his beloved ones, same as in the Resurrection. This may also indicate that the Jews will know him at the end of days [Those whom Isaiah called " the remnant" (Isaiah 10: 21)].

d. Note that Joseph ordered them to be imprisoned for three days and then gave them wheat. Thus, to be satisfied with Christ, we must die with him (the crucifixion of the passions and desires), and the three

days are a sign of the Resurrection. On the third day, we meet with Christ on the basis of the Resurrection (that is, by His resurrected life that He gives us).

39. Joseph's brothers were terrified when they saw him, and sinners will be terrified at Christ's appearance. They were terrified, but he says, "Come to me." Just as Joseph forgave his brothers, so did Christ on the Cross, "Father, forgive them."

40. Joseph was not ashamed of his brothers, so Christ is not ashamed of us but calls us His brethren. (Hebrews 2: 11). And just as Joseph presented his brothers to Pharaoh, not ashamed of their lowliness, so Christ will present us to the Father as his brethren, saying: " Here am I and the children whom God has given Me." (Hebrews 2: 11-13). Rather Christ is the only way to the Father "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14: 6). And as the apostle Paul said, " For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2: 8).

41. Joseph's invitation to Jacob and his brothers to live in the place of his glory (Egypt), is Christ's call for us to witness His glory; " To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." (Revelation 3: 21). And sending the royal chariots to Jacob to bear witness to Joseph's glory is the same as sending the Holy Spirit to us to proclaim the glory of Christ " He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you." (John 16: 14).

42. Jacob said to his children, Why do you look at one another? go down to that place and buy for us there, that we may live and not die. It is the call of the Church to her children: repent and return to Christ, and He will return to you so that you will have life and not die.

43. Pharaoh said, " Also do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours." and the chariots are earnest. And Paul the apostle said that counts all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ (Philippians 3: 7-8).

44. The return of Joseph's brothers to Joseph indicates the return of the Jews to Christ and their belief in Him in the last days.

45. It was said about Jacob " the spirit of Jacob their father revived." when he heard about Joseph. For We do not live without him and die if we stay away from him. He is life " He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live, and he is the Bread of Life.

46. It was said about Joseph that he is the governor of the land, and Christ is the King of kings and master of all creation.

47. Jacob's bowing down to Joseph's staff represents the bowing down of the whole Church to the Cross by which salvation has taken place.

48. Perhaps the most beautiful thing Joseph said was, "you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive." Isn't this what happened

with Christ? The Jews intended to harm him and to inflict evil upon him; God turned it for the good of all mankind and the life of the world (Psalm 2: 1-4).

49. God wanted His people, from whom Christ would come, to be separated from the Canaanites' defilements. So He brought them to Egypt and isolated them in the land of Goshen (the eastern) to isolate them from the idolatry and pride of the Egyptians. Note that God, in His wisdom, allowed the people to go down to Egypt during the life of Joseph and in the time of his glory so that he could protect them. Otherwise, they would have escaped and returned to Canaan with its impurities again had they encountered troubles from the Egyptians. This is what we live now on earth, for our Christ protects us so that we do not fall back to the evils of the world.

50. The troubles began after the death of Joseph; however, they had settled in Egypt and forgot the land of Canaan. And the feeling of slavery and humiliation of the Egyptians began to them. But if we understand that Joseph is a symbol of Christ, then we have to realize that Christ in our midst is the cause of our victory and our consolation amid the world's pain in the days of our sojourn. But if Christ disappeared from our midst because of our sins, the world's pain would begin to tire us because we would be without consolation.

The entire Old Testament is a shadow of the New Testament. All references to the work of Christ. It is a means of explaining the plan of salvation. There are some clear prophecies concerning Christ, like "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son" (Isaiah 7: 14). And some characters refer to Christ as Isaac and Joseph. And some characters refer to the Church as Rachel and Rebekah. Some events refer to the plan of salvation, such as Israel's people's passage in the sea as a symbol of baptism and the flood. Rather, the whole tabernacle is a symbol of Christ, as we shall see. The fathers said that the New Testament is hidden in the Old Testament, and the Old Testament is explained in the New Testament. The Gospel of Matthew, for example, tried to explain how in Christ the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled. This is what Christ meant by saying that He did not come to destroy the Old Testament but to fulfill—fulfilling means that he fulfills in Himself all that the Old Testament tried to explain. He declared the meaning of all the stories written in the Old Testament, for all of them referred to Him, the Blessed One. He solved the symbols and mysteries of the Old Testament. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Revelation 19: 10).

### **The Life of Joseph:**

Joseph is the beloved son of Rachel, so his father loved him and made him a colourful tunic that was the cause of his pain. His brothers hated him because they felt their father's extra love for Joseph. And they were able to attract their father's love wisely by being submissive to their father. But they chose the path of evil, so Reuben assaulted his father's bed, Simeon and Levi were savages, and the children of Bilhah and Zilpah were wicked, and Joseph brought their gossip, that is, he conveyed to his father the news of their wickedness. Certainly, reporting such news is not proper, but it seems that Jacob had grief in his heart because of his children, and he loved Joseph and saw him perfect and that he was the son of Rachel. And here we find perhaps a mistake by Jacob that he loved Joseph more than his brothers, and



this special treatment causes jealousy and envy among the brothers. Note that Joseph, in his love, as he loved his brothers despite their hatred for him, carried out the commandment of Christ 2000 years before Christ came. In his purity and rejection of adultery, he carried out the commandments of Moses before Moses came or the commandments were written (this was by tradition, everything is delivered orally to the fathers, and Moses wrote it). God's commandments were written on Joseph's heart before they were written on stone tablets.

There were other reasons why Joseph's brothers hated him. They were his dreams, which he told them, which stirred up all their hidden grudges, and this gives us the idea not to talk about our physical success or our spiritual success in front of others so as not to stir up their grudges and be the cause of a stumbling block for them.

As for Joseph's brothers, we see in their plots the utmost brutality and wonder that they sit down and eat after they threw their brother into the well and perhaps even ate from the food he brought them.

Perhaps God allowed Joseph to suffer this pain because he was a spoiled person whom God wanted to polish to prepare him for great work. Thus, Joseph's saying, " So now it was not you who sent me here, but God" gives us the idea that our lives are in the hands of God, and he permits everything and that all things work together for good to those who love God. And God allowed Joseph to go through a severe trial, but he was with him at every step, as happened with the three saintly youth in the fiery furnace. God accompanied him in the house of Potiphar and prison, and he turned into a blessing for all. And He gave him an open heart and an open eye, so he interpreted dreams. Rather, he saved the world from famine and became a blessing to the world. And God gave him a blessing in the eyes of everyone (Potiphar / chief of the prison / Pharaoh).

However, Satan did not stay silent but moved Potiphar's wife. Joseph did not find an excuse to sin because he was young and in need or that Potiphar's wife could harm him .. etc. But he felt he is before God and should not sin. This young virgin was purer than David, who his wives surrounded. He preferred to be thrown in prison. He chose disgrace and perhaps death than sinning against God. In Joseph's life, we see how God's grace works amid trials and how God interpreted dreams on his hands to prepare for him the way to the palace. These dreams (the baker's, the butler's, then the dreams of Pharaoh) were from God, although there are dreams from Satan and dreams from the subconscious mind. Let us consider Joseph when he asked the butler to mention him in front of Pharaoh. What were his greatest hopes: Either Pharaoh sets him free and returns to his father and his wicked brothers, or he works as an assistant to the butler. But did he know the goodness of God's mind toward him, or rather toward the whole world? It is nice to see in the life of Joseph that the name of God is always on his tongue. He doesn't sin before God. He does not interpret dreams, but God.. So he gives glory to God, for that God exalted him. And we should not seek glory for ourselves, but leave this to God, we glorify Him, and He is the one who bears witness to us. He wanted to hide so that God might appear, but God has revealed and glorified him until now.

Another point that becomes evident in the life of Joseph is religion. It shows that religion is not only fasting and prayer, but work and management, and God participates in the work so that it will be successful " The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man."

His harsh behaviour with his brothers was outward as he was an emotional, sensitive person who cried repeatedly. But the reason for the apparent roughness was that his brothers feel their mistake. He also carried out " do good to those who hate you" before Christ. We also see in Joseph, his righteousness towards his father; how he received him properly and in his death, how he followed and carried out his will to be buried in the Cave of Machpelah. He endured all the hardships of travel in honour of his father.

Joseph's demand of his brothers, " See that you do not become troubled along the way." is the commandment of Christ to His Church and His people, not to be angry or quarrelsome, but to be one body and one spirit. (Ephesians 4: 4).

And Joseph obtained the firstborn's share for his faithfulness, as he received two portions in the inheritance in the persons of his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Therefore, we always find that the names of the 12 tribes do not include the name of Joseph but rather the names of Ephraim and Manasseh. Thus, Joseph has obtained the firstborn's share, that is, two portions of the inheritance, and this is a reference to the spiritual birthright that Reuben lost to his sin. The Church obtained the spiritual birthright because of the sin of the Jewish people, their crucifixion of Christ and their rejection of Him.

(Verse 1): **Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.**

**Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger:** Until his sons and grandsons receive it as a promised land where they live not as strangers in tents but as citizens who build cities and homes.

(Verse 2): **This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father.**

(Verse 3): **Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors.**

At that time, the region's people considered coloured clothes to be luxury items worn by honorees.

(Verses 4-9): **But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him. 5 Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his**

brothers; and they hated him even more. 6 So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: 7 There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf." 8 And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. 9 Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."

(Verse 10): **So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?"**

**Shall your mother and I:** Probably, he meant Bilhah (Rachel's maidservant), who took care of him after his mother's death, but the meaning is that the whole family bow down to him.

(Verses 11): **And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind. Joseph Sold by His Brothers**

**And his brothers envied him:** Because of his dreams and because of his father's love for him, and perhaps what made the matter even worse, he transferred their gossip to his father.

(Verse 12): **Then his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.**

(Verse 13): **And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." So he said to him, "Here I am."**

**Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem:** Jacob's fear for his sons is due to his fear of the revenge of the people of Shechem.

(Verse 14-19): **Then he said to him, "Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks, and bring back word to me." So he sent him out of the Valley of Hebron, and he went to Shechem. 15 Now a certain man found him, and there he was, wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, "What are you seeking?" 16 So he said, "I am seeking my brothers. Please tell me where they are feeding their flocks." 17 And the man said, "They have departed from here, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan. 18**

**Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him. 19 Then they said to one another, "Look, this dreamer is coming!**

(Verse 20): **Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, 'Some wild beast has devoured him.' We shall see what will become of his dreams!"**

**some pit:** They are pits dug to collect water (rainwater) and save it for the time of need, and they dry up in the summer. And whoever was thrown into it would seldom survive, as it was deep and broad from below, narrow at the top.

(Verse 21-24): **But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, "Let us not kill him." 22 And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit which is in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him"—that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father. 23 So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was on him. 24 Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; there was no water in it.**

(Verse 25-28): **And they sat down to eat a meal. Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry them down to Egypt. 26 So Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? 27 Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh." And his brothers listened. 28 Then Midianite traders passed by; so the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.**

**spices:** A type of glue used in medicine and in gluing.

**balm:** A good-smelling ointment that flows from the elderberry tree when its leg is cut. It is used in medicine and embalming.

**myrrh:** A type of gum used in medicine.

(Verses 29-31): **Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph was not in the pit; and he tore his clothes. 30 And he returned to his brothers and said, "The lad is no more; and I, where shall I go?" 31 So they took Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood.**

(Verse 32): **Then they sent the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, "We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son's tunic or not?"**

**they brought it to their father:** Jacob deceived his father in Esau's clothes, and now he is deceived in Joseph's clothes.

(Verses 33-35): **And he recognized it and said, "It is my son's tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces." 34 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days. 35 And all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, "For I shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning." Thus his father wept for him.**

(Verse 36): **Now the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard.**

In (Genesis 39: 1), it is mentioned that Potiphar is an Egyptian which is strange. The explanation is that Pharaoh was a Hyksos and his men were all shepherds (shepherd kings). The focus of the Bible here is that the eunuch of Pharaoh was an Egyptian becomes understandable because he is an Egyptian among the palace men who are all Hyksos shepherds. This is the reason that Joseph asked his brothers to tell Pharaoh that they are shepherds (Genesis 46: 34), as he will have compassion on them being a shepherd like them. We also understand how Joseph rose to this great position while stranger, as the King himself is a stranger. And because the foreign Hyksos were shepherds, the Egyptians hated the shepherds and considered them an unpleasant thing (Genesis 46: 34).

## Chapter 38

This Chapter historically precedes its place in the book. Why did he come to this place and at this time?

Joseph was a symbol of Christ in his message, but Judah is the father of Christ in the flesh, and the Bible presents the descendants of Judah so that we can trace the genealogy of Jesus. This Chapter came full of sins and transgressions because Christ came to carry every transgression in his body, which he took from Judah. Every transgression, all the sins of his forefathers, and every hereditary weakness, he came from the line of Judah with his son's wife (he committed adultery with her). He came from the offspring of sinners to redeem them.

(Verses 1-3): **It came to pass at that time that Judah departed from his brothers, and visited a certain Adullamite whose name was Hirah. 2 And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua, and he married her and went in to her. 3 So she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name Er.**

Perhaps **Hirah** the Adullamite was a friend of Judah. **Canaanite:** means that either he is a Canaanite or a merchant. Judah's marriage to the daughter of a Canaanite man brought many misfortunes to the family. The Canaanites are very perverted, so Judah's children from the Canaanites were also perverted. **Adullamite:** To which Hirah is attributed, is one of the great cities of Canaan. There is contemplation that Judah to whom the Jews are attributed (Jews from Judah), as Judah was the largest tribe, including the kings of Judah. The focus of the Bible that Shelah, his son, was born in Chezib indicates that the Jews insisted on their denial of belief in Christ, believing in the lies that they tell about Christ.

(Verses 4-5): **She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name Onan. 5 And she conceived yet again and bore a son, and called his name Shelah. He was at Chezib when she bore him.**

(Verses 6-11): **Then Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. 7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord killed him. 8 And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother." 9 But Onan knew that the heir would not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother's wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother. 10 And the thing which he did [a]displeased the Lord; therefore He killed him also. 11 Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house till my son Shelah is grown." For he said, "Lest he also die like his brothers." And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.**

The fruits of a sinful marriage are two evil sons whom the Lord will put to death. Moses legislated later that a brother would marry his brother's wife if he died without leaving offspring. In order not to erase his brother's name, the offspring (mostly the first child only) was attributed to the deceased brother. But Onan, Judah's second son, refused to have offspring for his brother and did not want to have children from Tamar, the wife of his deceased brother, Er, so that the son would not share the inheritance with him. This was very evil in the eyes of the Lord, and He killed him. Judah refused to give his remaining son Shelah to Tamar for marriage, citing his young age. But he thought that she was the reason for the death of his two sons, a view of rejected pessimism. The solution was to remove sins from the family, not to claim that a person is the cause of our misfortunes (as ordinary people would say).

(Verses 12-19): **Now in the process of time the daughter of Shua, Judah's wife, died; and Judah was comforted, and went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. 13 And it was told Tamar, saying, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep." 14 So she took off her widow's garments, covered herself with a veil and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place which was on the way to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as a wife. 15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, because she had covered her face. 16 Then he turned to her by the way, and said, "Please let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. So she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?" 17 And he said, "I will send a young goat from the flock." So she said, "Will you give me a pledge till you send it?" 18 Then he said, "What pledge shall I give you?" So she said, "Your signet and cord, and your staff that is in your hand." Then he gave them to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him. 19 So she arose and went away, and laid aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood.**

**for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as a wife:** Tamar longed to have offspring, as she lived among the family of Jacob, and heard that the Messiah would come from their offspring. She accepted to put her life in danger. She played a harlot to get offspring.

**she had covered her face:** Not just for Judah doesn't recognize her. The harlots did not cover their faces, but those who vow themselves to adultery (This was a Canaanite custom in the pagan temples). These people would go to the pagan temples, dedicate themselves for a year, and receive their reward from adultery, a young goat to donate to the temple. They used to call the harlot "Kedsha" which means Saint. Note that Judah's wife and children died, and then he went to commit adultery and called this "Comforted." As for the pagan Tamar, she accepted to be an adulteress so that a descendant might come from her that might be the Messiah. Indeed, we do not justify the mistake she committed, but it was confirmed that her desire was to have a holy offspring that she then lived with Judah without knowing him. All she wanted was offspring, not sinful lust in itself. That is why Judah said about her "has been more righteous than I" (verse 26). Tamar qualified to be the grandmother of the Lord Christ with this work of faith, her blood flowing in his veins. Matthew recorded her name in the genealogy of the Lord Christ (Matthew 1:3), while Sarah and Rebekah were not recorded. And she became to refer to the Church of the Gentiles, which was like a deserted widow until she became a holy church for the Lord.

Verse 18: **signet**: The ring was attached to a rope on the chest to stamp important documents. Each one had a picture on his signet, It may be an animal image, and the image that Judah placed on his signet may be a lion image. And perhaps Issachar had on his signet a picture of a donkey, so Jacob, their father, said in his prophecy, "Judah is a lion's whelp .. Issachar is a strong donkey" (Genesis 49: 9, 14).

Tamar's mistake: Jacob's family knew that the Messiah would come from the line of this family. God promised Abraham that in his descendants, all nations would be blessed " And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.+ In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:3 + 22: 18). God repeated this promise to Isaac that He will bless all the nations in Isaac's descendants " and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 26: 4). God again repeated the promise to Jacob " and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 28; 14). So they understood that this blessing in which all the peoples of the earth will be blessed, i.e. the expected Messiah, will come from the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Every man and woman waited and longed to have the Messiah from their descendants. For this reason, barren women in the Old Testament were considered to be in disgrace. Therefore, Esau's sin was great when he sold his birthright, and it was said about him, "Thus Esau despised his birthright." (Genesis 5: 34) since they knew that the blessing is from the firstborn. Unlike Esau, Tamar desired to be the mother of the expected Messiah; although she was a pagan from Canaan, she believed in the divine promises.

Once again, we are faced with mistaken human solutions. As Sarah advised Abraham on the matter of Hagar, and Rebekah pointed to Jacob in deceiving his father Isaac, Tamar resorted to wrong human solutions, while if she had been patient, God would have given her the desire of her heart and her sacred desire to be the mother of Christ without committing this sin. We see here that Christ comes from the descendants of the sinful Judah (who went to commit adultery to be comforted) and from the descendants of the sinful Tamar: \* To carry their sins, but rather the sins of the whole mankind. \* But at the same time, he came from the descendants of Tamar, who desired to be the mother of this promised Messiah to fulfill her holy desire. And this was the desire of the heart of all the believers in the Old Testament, who had faith and believed the promise " Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down!" (Isaiah 64: 1) and revise the interpretation of (Revelation 19: 10)

(Verses 20-26): **And Judah sent the young goat by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand, but he did not find her. 21 Then he asked the men of that place, saying, "Where is the harlot who was openly by the roadside?" And they said, "There was no harlot in this place." 22 So he returned to Judah and said, "I cannot find her. Also, the men of the place said there was no harlot in this place." 23 Then Judah said, "Let her take them for herself, lest we be shamed; for I sent this young goat and you have not found her." 24 And it came to pass, about three months after, that Judah was told, saying, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; furthermore she is with child by harlotry." So Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!" 25 When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "By the man to whom these belong, I am with child." And she said, "Please determine whose these are—the signet and cord, and staff." 26**



**So Judah acknowledged them and said, "She has been more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son." And he never knew her again.**

In (verse 21) **Where is the harlot:** The origin is where is the kedsha. And Judah's saying, **Let her take them for herself** about the signet and the staff as her wages, so that he would not be accused of not paying her, and his friend the Adullamite testifies.

Verse 24 **Bring her out and let her be burned:**

As the head of the family and the house, Judah orders her to be punished for her sin. He took advantage of the general concept that she is the wife of his son Sheila, and she has committed adultery, and her punishment is burning. Here he judges and condemns, and he does not judge himself. He is the adulterer, and he refused to marry her to his son. The signs of pregnancy **about three months after:** Here, Tamar symbolizes the Church that adhered to Christ after she was a Gentile, and the fruits of the Holy Spirit (the third hypostasis) appeared to her, with her belief in the Trinity and her enjoyment of the resurrection in Christ who rose on the third day. That is why it is said **she took off her widow's garments:** The soul that converges with Christ (here Judah symbolizes Christ) no longer lives in sorrow.

The fact that she was covered with a veil symbolizes that we are still in the body (the veil), and we do not see His glories. But we have obtained His signet (the sign of sonship), as the prodigal son received, and His cross (his staff).

(Verses 27-30): **Now it came to pass, at the time for giving birth, that behold, twins were in her womb. 28 And so it was, when she was giving birth, that the one put out his hand; and the midwife took a scarlet thread and bound it on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." 29 Then it happened, as he drew back his hand, that his brother came out unexpectedly; and she said, "How did you break through? This breach be upon you!" Therefore his name was called Perez. 30 Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand. And his name was called Zerah.**

Zerah took out his hand, and the midwife tied his hand with a scarlet red thread, but he put his hand in to get Perez out and after him Zerah. Some fathers see Zerah as an example of the Jewish people, who should have been the firstborn. He extended his hand and received the law of blood sacrifices (the scarlet red thread), but he refused to believe in Christ, symbolized by sacrifices and drew back his hand again. And he lost the birthright that Perez had taken, the representative of the gentiles who had the Spiritual firstborn.

## Chapter 39

This chapter refers to the purity of Joseph, the symbol of Christ, who was without sin, whom his master's wife could not defile him despite his difficult circumstances, in contrast to Judah, who defiled himself with the Canaanite in adultery.

(Verse 1): **Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there.**

(Verse 2): **The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.**

The blessing of the Lord appeared with Joseph in his pain, as he was like a slave deprived of his father's care, so he became a blessing.

Note that God was preparing Joseph for great work through great suffering (to make him stronger). But God, with the temptation, will also make the way of escape (1 Corinthians 10: 13). Here, amid the trial, God surrounds Joseph with the love of those around him to be comforted.

(Verse 3): **And his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord made all he did to prosper in his hand.**

(Verse 4): **So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority.**

**Then he made him overseer:**

In Greek, he made him a bishop, that is, an overseer. And he noticed his honesty, as he did not be lazy and said, "I am the beloved son of Jacob, or I am the son of Abraham." And Christ became a slave to serve and work

(Verse 5): **So it was, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had in the house and in the field.**

(Verse 6): **Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.**

**except for the bread:** That is, he left the whole house to Joseph and only cared about what he ate.

**Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance:** The tribulation revealed his beauty and inner peace of his heart. All this (blessing and beauty) did not appear in his father's house. This is what happened with Jacob, his father, as he did not enjoy the vision of the ladder except when he was deprived of his parents. The beauty of Christ's love was revealed in His incarnation and His enduring suffering for us.

(Verses 7-15): **And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." 8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" 10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her. 11 But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, 12 that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside. 13 And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, 14 that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. 15 And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside."**

**There is no one greater in this house than I:**

The enemy of good was not satisfied with agitating his brothers against him, but he stirred up Potiphar's wife against him, so the enemy's attacks of goodness are varied.

But God looks from above and turns all things for good for those who love Him, and Joseph loved God and did not fall, so all things turned for good. Joseph had strong excuses to fall into sin.

1. He is a young man, unmarried and lacking the love of his parents.
2. He is unfairly put in his bondage, feeling the betrayal of those around him, even his brothers (i.e., bad psychological conditions).
3. It is his master's wife who is asking him, and she can do him harm, and it happened.
4. Her constant insistence, she did not ask for sin once, but rather: **she spoke to Joseph day by day**

5. They were alone in the house.

6. Leaving his garment was dangerous for him and can put his life at risk.

7. The law of Moses, "You shall not commit adultery," was yet to come. Rather, the commandments people inherited from father to grandfather, which is called tradition. Joseph respected this tradition. Rather, God's commandments were written in his heart, for God imprinted his commandments on the hearts of human beings in what is called the conscience or the natural law. Some obey this natural law and fear God, and some follow their lust and rebel against this natural law, and their heart is hardened. As for Joseph, he loved God and felt that he stands before God the whole day, and God sees him and sees all his actions.

8. And the love of Potiphar's wife for him was not called love but was lust, and this kind could quickly turn into enmity, and it happened, and she put him in prison. We see how this kind of lustful love turns into hatred in the story of the sin of David's children, Amnon and Tamar. It was said that Amnon loved her and committed adultery with her, then hated her with an extreme hatred " Then Amnon hated her exceedingly, so that the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her" (2 Samuel 13: 1-15).

**Question: Did Joseph have lust for that woman?** There was definitely lust for her as he is a young man, and she seduces him every day. But he carried out what the apostle Paul said " I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12: 1). His saying also "Love Joy Peace .. " (Galatians 5: 22-23). But who has these fruits? The Apostle Paul continues, saying: " those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Galatians 5: 24). And this is what the young Joseph did: he crucified his lusts and desires and offered himself as a living sacrifice before the Lord. Indeed, Joseph became an example of purity. He risked everything for his purity and relationship with God. He let his lusts burn, as did Tobias and Sarah, his wife. And the smoke of the fire of his desires rose, but before God, it was perfumed with the fragrances of purity and respect for God's commandment. Review the interpretation of " Who is this coming out of the wilderness Like pillars of smoke, Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, With all the merchant's fragrant powders?" (Song of Solomon 3: 6).

9. As for Joseph, he truly loved her, as he loved his brothers despite what they did. And the evidence of this:

a. He did not expose her.

b. He did not take revenge on her after he was in his glory.

c. He did not hurt her feelings with a word. Rather, he reminded her of her husband's and her position, gave her advice and, in humility, reminded her that she was his mistress.

(Verses 16-19): **So she kept his garment with her until his master came home. 17 Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me; 18 so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and**

**fled outside." 19 So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his anger was aroused.**

(Verse 20): **Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison.**

From (Psalm 105: 18), we know that Joseph was first tortured in prison, and it seems that they later learned his innocence, but they did not release him:

1. To avoid scandal.
2. Perhaps Potiphar was afraid that his wife would betray him again with Joseph.

But he had a special status in prison. Note that this prison was held for the king's prisoners, which is God's arrangement:

1. He is sold to Potiphar.
2. Imprisoned in the king's prison to meet with the butler. Because God had in His plan to glorify Joseph and save the world from famine. And God was with Joseph in the house of Potiphar and in prison. As he was with the three Sainly Youth in the fiery furnace. And if God is with us, even fire turns into heaven, prison turns into heaven, and the house of slavery turns into heaven. We notice that the Pharisee was forbidden to meet with God while he was inside the temple, for God looks at the heart. Joseph was humble, and God dwells with the humble (Isaiah 57: 15), so their hearts turn to heaven wherever they are. Prison turns into a path to glory. And what we thought was evil, then it is precisely that which is good for us.

(Verses 21-23): **But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. 23 The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.**

**whatever they did there, it was his doing:** In another translation, he "was responsible for whatever works done" or "he is the mastermind of every work done." His management was the reason for the success of every work done = **and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.**

## Chapter 40

God allowed Joseph to be imprisoned as God completes his plan with some pain.

(Verse 1): **It came to pass after these things that the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt.**

(Verse 2): **And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker.**

**officers:** That is, their position is very high.

(Verse 3): **So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph was confined.**

(Verses 4-8): **And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while. 5 Then the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, had a dream, both of them, each man's dream in one night and each man's dream with its own interpretation. 6 And Joseph came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw it is a service that he asks them about what grieves them and consoles them as much as possible house, saying, "Why do you look so sad today?" 8 And they said to him, "We each have had a dream, and there is no interpreter of it." So Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell them to me, please."**

**and he served them .. Why do you look so sad today:** They did not find anyone who would serve them faithfully and with kindness like Joseph. And note what Joseph said **Do not interpretations belong to God =** In all his words, he gives glory to God.

(Verses 9-19): **Then the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, "Behold, in my dream a vine was before me, 10 and in the vine were three branches; it was as though it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes. 11 Then Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand." 12 And Joseph said to him, "This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days. 13 Now within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your place, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand according to the former manner, when you were his butler. 14 But remember me**

when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house. 15 For indeed I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews; and also I have done nothing here that they should put me into the dungeon." 16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, "I also was in my dream, and there were three white baskets on my head. 17 In the uppermost basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, and the birds ate them out of the basket on my head." 18 So Joseph answered and said, "This is the interpretation of it: The three baskets are three days. 19 Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head from you and hang you on a tree; and the birds will eat your flesh from you."

The officers refer to the fallen race of mankind, which is divided into two parts. The first crosses anger through faith and crosses into the kingdom of God, and the other, in his denial, loses his life forever. Here, Joseph, when he tells them both of their fate, represents Christ, who tells us about the fate of each group of us in (John 5: 29)

Christ divided humanity into two parts in parables of the wise and foolish virgins. And note that the number 3, i.e. the three days that both of them dreamed of, refers to the period of death and then the resurrection, which takes place on the third day. It is mentioned that Joseph was weakened when he asked the butler (verse 14) to mention him before Pharaoh; that is why the Bible focused to say that the butler forgot him (Genesis 40: 23). And let us note that the right thief asked Christ to remember him, and Christ did not forget him, but rather he said, "today you will be with Me in Paradise." But whoever asks people to remember him, they will forget. This lesson is for us not to ask that humans remember us. Rather, we pray for the one who does not forget. God made the butler forget Joseph because if he mentioned him in this period, Pharaoh might have released him, and Joseph had gone to his father, and the story of salvation would have been disrupted, and he would not have saved anyone from starvation. We can say that God made the butler forget to complete God's plan. However, it is hard to blame Joseph for his request to the butler while he was in these harsh conditions. It is a lesson for us to put our trust in God.

**three white baskets:** white is the same word used in (Genesis 18: 6) which means fine meal or costly flour.

**hang you on a tree:** It is a frightening punishment for the Egyptians, as he will not embalm his body, and therefore according to the belief of the ancient Egyptians, he will not have a resurrection. Note that Joseph did not hurt Potiphar's wife or expose her in front of the butler and the baker.

(Verses 20-23): **Now it came to pass on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. 21 Then he restored the chief butler to his butlership again, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. 22 But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. 23 Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.**

God plans and manages our affairs while we do not know. God began planning for Joseph to go out to glory with dreams that He placed in the head of the butler and the baker. There is a high probability that Joseph had thought that God had forgotten him, so he asked for the help of the butler to mention him before Pharaoh. But God implemented His will in the fullness of time. So God made the butler forget the story of Joseph, and at the time that God saw fit, the butler remembered Joseph when God gave the dream of Pharaoh. God manages all the affairs of our lives, while in our weakness, we think that God has forgotten us if the painful experience is prolonged. But at the end, God gets out of the strong came something sweet."



## Chapter 41

In the fullness of time, that is, when God saw fit, God raised Joseph and placed him in the palace.

(Verses 1-5): **Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river. 2 Suddenly there came up out of the river seven cows, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow. 3 Then behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the river, ugly and gaunt, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the river. 4 And the ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven fine looking and fat cows. So Pharaoh awoke. 5 He slept and dreamed a second time; and suddenly seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, plump and good.**

(Verse 6): **Then behold, seven thin heads, blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them.**

**the east wind:** Hot winds which are harmful to crops, full of dust. And the east wind refers to the work of the beast (the Antichrist), who will corrupt many (Hosea 12: 1, 13: 15). Rather, the ugly cows and the thin heads refer to the heretics in the days of the Antichrist - and even through time, and from the beginning of the heresies - as they swallowed the children of God (the fat cows).

Heresies started from the beginning of the church's founding until now and will reach the worst days with the appearance of the beast, who is the Antichrist. He will take over the churches, and he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God (2 Thessalonians 2: 4). The true church that follows the sound faith once delivered to the saints is rich in its faith, right teachings, and satiating mysteries. These are referred to as fat cows. The churches that have deviated from these heresies are what are referred to here as the ugly cows. This ugly swallows up everyone who is deceived by its teachings and joins it. But no matter how many they are, they will still be ugly, for their teachings are not according to the delivered faith, once for the saints. And it will increase with the appearance of this beast.

(Verses 7-13): **And the seven thin heads devoured the seven plump and full heads. So Pharaoh awoke, and indeed, it was a dream. 8 Now it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them for Pharaoh. 9 Then the chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying: "I remember my faults this day. 10 When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, both me and the chief baker, 11 we each had a dream in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream. 12 Now there was a young Hebrew man with us there, a servant of the captain of the guard.**

**And we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his own dream. 13 And it came to pass, just as he interpreted for us, so it happened. He restored me to my office, and he hanged him."**

**(Verse 14): Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh.**

**he shaved:** In Egypt, those who grow a beard are either in grief or the captives and the lowly. Pictures of prisoners were painted those days with a beard.

**(Verses 15-32): And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it." 16 So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace." 17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: "Behold, in my dream I stood on the bank of the river. 18 Suddenly seven cows came up out of the river, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow. 19 Then behold, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such ugliness as I have never seen in all the land of Egypt. 20 And the gaunt and ugly cows ate up the first seven, the fat cows. 21 When they had eaten them up, no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were just as ugly as at the beginning. So I awoke. 22 Also I saw in my dream, and suddenly seven heads came up on one stalk, full and good. 23 Then behold, seven heads, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them. 24 And the thin heads devoured the seven good heads. So I told this to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me." 25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do: 26 The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads are seven years; the dreams are one. 27 And the seven thin and ugly cows which came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty heads blighted by the east wind are seven years of famine. 28 This is the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do. 29 Indeed seven years of great plenty will come throughout all the land of Egypt; 30 but after them seven years of famine will arise, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine will deplete the land. 31 So the plenty will not be known in the land because of the famine following, for it will be very severe. 32 And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.**

**(Verses 33-36): "Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. 34 Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years. 35 And let them gather all the food of those good years that are coming, and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh, and let them**

**keep food in the cities. 36 Then that food shall be as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land may not perish during the famine."**

God gives us periods in our lives in which we can be satisfied, and they are days of peace. Let us strive hard to be satisfied with the consolations and joys of the Holy Spirit and the knowledge of Christ in our relationship with Christ in the inner room. So that when the days of sufferings and trials come, we will have experienced and known the way of consolation. We find that whoever has experienced the joy that Christ gives, resorts to Him in the relationship of the inner room, and Christ will not let him go empty, but rather taste the joy that Christ gives, who conquers any tribulation, whatever it may be (John 16: 22). As for the one who did not experience the relationship with Christ that is fulfilling and joyful will soon be broken and may argue with God who allowed the trial.

(Verses 37-39): **So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. 38 And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?" 39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you.**

(Verse 40): **You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you."**

**all my people shall be ruled according to your word:** One of the most excellent positions where it is he who issues orders. So the meaning is, let everyone accept your commands with love and submission.

(Verse 41): **And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt."**

(Verse 42): **Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.**


**signet ring:** that he seals his orders with.

**garments of fine linen:** these are the garments of priests and kings.

**gold chain around his neck:** This is one of the signs of the king in Egypt.

(Verses 43-44): **And he had him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried out before him, "Bow the knee!" So he set him over all the land of Egypt. 44 Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."**

(Verse 45): **And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-Paaneah. And he gave him as a wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On. So Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.**

**Zaphnath-Paaneah:** In Coptic to be read Saf-Enti-Ebonkh. Saf means seeds or food, Onkh  means life. The meaning that Pharaoh meant in the Egyptian language is the food of life. Some believe that the name in Hebrew means the saviour of the world or the revealer of secrets.

**Asenath:** The beloved of nat. Nat is the goddess of wisdom for the Egyptians, and she corresponds with Minerva to the Romans.

(Verses 46-49): **Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. 47 Now in the seven plentiful years the ground brought forth abundantly. 48 So he gathered up all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities; he laid up in every city the food of the fields which surrounded them. 49 Joseph gathered very much grain, as the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for it was immeasurable.**

(Verse 50): **And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him.**

The fact that Joseph bore children before the years of famine indicates that the church will be completed before the coming of the Antichrist. And when the church is complete, it will be ready for glories and the end of sufferings (Revelation 6: 9-11)

(Verses 51-52): **Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." 52 And the name of the second he called Ephraim: "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."**

God made him forget the pain caused by his brothers and his distance from his father's house and his prison in his glory. And God made him fruitful in the land of Egypt, and made him in glory " God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." Thus, for every soul that clings to Christ, God will let her forget her worries and give her multiplying fruit. She forgets the evil past, reaches forward to what is ahead, and practices good and serves God.

(Verse 53): **Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended,**

(Verse 54): **and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. The famine was in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.**

If we hand our lives into the hands of our God when we are full, He will not leave us hungry in times of need.

(Verses 55-57): **So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Then Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, do." 56 The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt. 57 So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine was severe in all lands.**

### **God's amazing plan**

#### **Why the famine?**

\* God wants to isolate his people from the uncleanness of the Canaanites, so he will send them to Egypt. And he isolates them from the paganism of the Egyptians and puts them in the land of Goshen. The people will grow numerically, but they are isolated from the Canaanites and from the Egyptians. They will not be able to grow numerically among the Canaanites without being corrupted because of the impurities of the Canaanites. Thus among the pagan Egyptians.

\* In their descent into the slavery of Pharaoh, it was a symbol of mankind's slavery to Satan because of sin. Then their salvation by Moses as a symbol of the salvation of Christ.

\* The plan of famine and the promotion of Joseph's stature, and thus the ease of life of the people under Joseph's protection, was a guarantee that they would not return to Canaan at the beginning of their lives in Egypt. For if they found it difficult at the beginning of their stay in Egypt, they would have refused to continue there.

\* God wants them to grow numerically so that they can conquer the lands of the Canaanites. Note the incredible blessing in their growth. They entered 70 people (the adult men) and left nearly 3 million people (all men, women and children).

## Chapter 42

(Verse 1): **When Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?"**

**When Jacob saw:** Why was it not written "Israel" although God has already called him Israel before? Because Jacob here represents the Jews, not God's people. Here Jacob is the father of the ten who delivered Joseph and sold him. A symbol of the Jews who crucified Christ. And Jacob here calls his Jewish children to believe in Christ, for He alone has the fullness. The famine that occurred symbolizes the spiritual famine that will occur at the end of days "A quart of wheat for a denarius." The brothers' descendants to Egypt refer to the Jews' belief and their resort to the Gentile Church to saturate them with their knowledge of the true Christ. The Jews who will believe in Christ, and whom Isaiah names the remnant, will come to Egypt to learn from it the soundness of the faith that satiate them with Christ. [Revise the interpretation of (Isaiah 19: 23-25)].

Thus, whoever sold Christ because of sin loses what he has and becomes in need, as happened with the prodigal son.

**Why do you look at one another:** Look at Joseph, who refers to the Messiah. He alone has fullness and life. This is Jacob's call now to the Jews who still refuse to believe.

(Verse 2): **And he said, "Indeed I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down to that place and buy for us there, that we may live and not die."**

**go down to that place:** Whenever we meet with Christ, we must humble ourselves. The Jews were proud.

(Verse 3): **So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt.**

**ten:** Also, to meet Christ, we must abide by the Ten Commandments. God allowed the famine to bring these arrogant people to Egypt to meet Joseph (This is God's plan with every soul until she repents, to allow some trials so that the soul feels her sins and repents). Perhaps Joseph's brothers had forgotten what they had done to their brother, and if God had left them like this, they would have perished because they had not repented of this sin.

(Verses 4-5): **But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, "Lest some calamity befall him." 5 And the sons of Israel went to buy grain among those who journeyed, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.**

(Verse 6): **Now Joseph was governor over the land; and it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth.**

Why did the brothers go to Joseph and not go to the staff? The Egyptians were afraid of everyone who comes from the east, especially the Semites, so they set up castles on their borders. When the officials found that they were ten men, they thought that each of them came as a representative of a tribe to spy on the land as a preface to conquering the land. Note that their servants were with them, so they were a significant number.

(Verses 7-8): **Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as a stranger to them and spoke roughly to them. Then he said to them, "Where do you come from?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan to buy food." 8 So Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.**

**spoke roughly to them:**

1. Because he remembered their cruelty.
2. To know the news of his father and brother Benjamin, for he was afraid that they had killed him too. He articulated the plan that we shall see to bring his father and Benjamin.

(Verse 9): **Then Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them, and said to them, "You are spies! You have come to see the nakedness of the land!"**

**to see the nakedness of the land:** That is, you know the weak points to attack them.

(Verse 10): **And they said to him, "No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food.**

(Verse 11): **We are all one man's sons; we are honest men; your servants are not spies."**

**We are all one man's sons:** This statement takes away from them the charge of spying. Is it conceivable that one man sends all his children as spies and exposes them to perdition? Or will one man with his children attack Egypt with its armies?

(Verses 12-14): **But he said to them, "No, but you have come to see the nakedness of the land." 13 And they said, "Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in**

**fact, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no more." 14 But Joseph said to them, "It is as I spoke to you, saying, 'You are spies!'**

**(Verse 15): In this manner you shall be tested: By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here.**

Joseph's planning appears here that he wants them to bring him, Benjamin.

**(Verse 16): Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you shall be kept in prison, that your words may be tested to see whether there is any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies!"**

Joseph's question about Benjamin, the youngest son, declares that Christ is looking for the minor soul.

**(Verses 17-23): So he put them all together in prison three days. 18 Then Joseph said to them the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God: 19 If you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined to your prison house; but you, go and carry grain for the famine of your houses. 20 And bring your youngest brother to me; so your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so. 21 Then they said to one another, "We are truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us." 22 And Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not speak to you, saying, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Therefore behold, his blood is now required of us." 23 But they did not know that Joseph understood them, for he spoke to them through an interpreter.**

**he spoke to them through an interpreter:** Joseph was speaking to them in Egyptian and the translator was translating between them. When they spoke in Hebrew, they thought that Joseph did not understand them.

**(Verse 24): And he turned himself away from them and wept. Then he returned to them again, and talked with them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.**

Joseph cried at their first confession of their sin. That is, his feelings moved towards them after their repentance.

Why did he bound Simeon?

1. Perhaps he was the most violent among them in his persecution of Joseph.



2. Perhaps he had the least minor feelings of repentance, sense of remorse, and disregard for the situation in front of Joseph, among his brothers.

3. To stir the feelings of others with repentance and remorse when they see their brother bound and imprisoned. Many hardships surround them until they remember what they did to their brother Joseph. These afflictions are a symbol of the afflictions that will happen to the Jews at the end of time, for their crucifixion of Christ. And their saying in 22 **his blood is now required of us** = the beginning of repentance or the beginning of faith. And so, we must condemn ourselves for all the pain that falls upon us.

(Verse 25): **Then Joseph gave a command to fill their sacks with grain, to restore every man's money to his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. Thus he did for them.**

**restore every man's money:** An indication that Christ's gifts are free

**his sack:** large bag

(Verse 26): **So they loaded their donkeys with the grain and departed from there.**

(Verse 27): **But as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the encampment, he saw his money; and there it was, in the mouth of his sack.**

**at the encampment:** Meaning hostel or hotel on the way. It was a room beside the wells on the way. It does not mean here in their father's house.

(Verses 28-35): **So he said to his brothers, "My money has been restored, and there it is, in my sack!" Then their hearts failed them and they were afraid, saying to one another, "What is this that God has done to us?" 29 Then they went to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them, saying: 30 "The man who is lord of the land spoke roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. 31 But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies. 32 We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is with our father this day in the land of Canaan.' 33 Then the man, the lord of the country, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me, take food for the famine of your households, and be gone. 34 And bring your youngest brother to me; so I shall know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men. I will grant your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.'" 35 Then it happened as they emptied their sacks, that surprisingly each man's bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.**

(Verse 36): **And Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me."**

**All these things are against me:** Would Jacob have said such a thing if Jacob had known God's plan? Or that what happened was to save his life, his children's lives, and the lives of an entire people? " all things work together for good "

(Verses 37-38): **Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you." 38 But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is left alone. If any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave."**

## Chapter 43

(Verses 1-2): **Now the famine was severe in the land. 2 And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, "Go back, buy us a little food."**

(Verse 3): **But Judah spoke to him, saying, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'**

**You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you:** Your brother, i.e. Benjamin, and the meaning of his name is the son of the right. Joseph represents Christ, rejected and isolated from his brothers, but risen like a king. And Benjamin represents Christ in glory at the right hand of the Father. We cannot meet with Christ until we follow the same steps of Christ, represented here by Joseph with Benjamin. Joseph, who suffered and then rose as a king, represents Christ, who died and rose again. We must now die to sin and rise to a life of repentance. We notice that the work of Christ did not end with his resurrection but with his glorified body to give us a share in his glory. This is represented by Benjamin, meaning the son of the right. Thus, after the crucified Christ is glorified and sits at the right of His Father. Therefore, everyone who follows the steps of Christ in the life of death, and resurrection from the death of sin, will be found with Christ in his glory, seeing and knowing Him.

Christ was incarnated and resembled us in everything except sin, died and rose and was glorified at the Father's right hand. And we, through baptism, die with Him and rise to a new creation that can enter glory to join Him in glory. Jesus became firstborn among many brethren (Romans 8: 29). And He will meet us, His brothers, in His glory, for everyone who overcomes and continues in the life of repentance and does not return to the death of sin. We find Joseph here pushing his brothers to repent for their actions to meet with him in his glory, and this is how Christ does with us as He allows us to experience multiple trials to lead us to repentance and change to meet with him in his glory (John 17: 24).

If their repentance was genuine, Joseph intended that his brothers would bring him Benjamin, without causing him any harm, and then he would reveal himself to them. **You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.**

This refers to those who live the life of death and resurrection from the death of sin (referred by Joseph) will meet with Christ in his glory and see and know Him (Represented by Benjamin).

**Joseph + Benjamin** = The suffering Christ who died and rose + then ascended and sat at the Father's right hand in great glory. We are his brothers in the body, and we will meet with him in his glory if we follow in the same steps.

(Verses 4-8): **If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. 5 But if you will not send him, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'** 6 And Israel said, "Why did you deal so wrongfully with me as to tell the man whether you had still another brother?" 7 But they said, "The man asked us pointedly about ourselves and our family, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' And we told him according to these words. Could we possibly have known that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'" 8 Then Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones.

(Verse 9): **I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever.**

Judah's offer here represents salvation, and it is a reasonable offer = **let me bear the blame**. As for Reuben's offer, it was a brutal and unacceptable offer. Was Jacob going to kill his two sons? (Genesis 42: 37). Here Judah, the father of Christ in the flesh, refers to Christ's redemptive work.

(Verse 10): **For if we had not lingered, surely by now we would have returned this second time."**

**we would have returned this second time:** Jacob's refusal to send Benjamin was why they did not go to Egypt, so the price of wheat increased during this period. And if Jacob had agreed to send Benjamin, they would have gone to Egypt and bought wheat twice at a low price during this period.

11 **And their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: Take some of the best fruits of the land in your vessels and carry down a present for the man—a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds.**

**spices:** A type of glue that was used in medicine and making adhesives. Perhaps it was called a lot (in Arabic translation) because it increases in size when it is placed in water.

**myrrh:** type of frankincense.

**the best fruits of the land:** In its Hebrew origin, the most glorious song of the earth is the fruits that we praise God for giving us. The earth, when it bears fruit as if it sings, and when it is barren, it becomes as if it is mourning (Hosea 4: 3). And if the earth refers to man when he is filled with the Holy Spirit, he will have fruits, and he will praise (sing). Let us contemplate what was found in Canaan: pistachios, almonds, myrrh, etc. They are valuable things, but they do not replace bread. Without Christ, the true bread, whatever pleasures in the world, it is still a hungry and mortal world.

(Verses 12-13): **Take double money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight. 13 Take your brother also, and arise, go back to the man.**

(Verse 14): **And may God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release your other brother and Benjamin. If I am bereaved, I am bereaved!"**

**If I am bereaved, I am bereaved:** That is, this will be a matter decreed by the Lord, so let it be according to His will.

(Verses 15-22): **So the men took that present and Benjamin, and they took double money in their hand, and arose and went down to Egypt; and they stood before Joseph. 16 When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, "Take these men to my home, and slaughter an animal and make ready; for these men will dine with me at noon." 17 Then the man did as Joseph ordered, and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. 18 Now the men were afraid because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, "It is because of the money, which was returned in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may make a case against us and seize us, to take us as slaves with our donkeys." 19 When they drew near to the steward of Joseph's house, they talked with him at the door of the house, 20 and said, "O sir, we indeed came down the first time to buy food; 21 but it happened, when we came to the encampment, that we opened our sacks, and there, each man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight; so we have brought it back in our hand. 22 And we have brought down other money in our hands to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks."**

All of Joseph's attempts with his brothers (hardness/coldness/imprisonment / a meal shared / their brother's detention / Benjamin's request / putting the silver and then the bowl in their sacks) were to stir their consciences to repentance. And when Joseph asked to prepare to dine with them, he spoke in the Egyptian language (verse 16), so his brothers did not understand. When they went to Joseph's house, they were afraid and thought they were punishing them for the stolen silver, so they tried to justify their position.

Verse 16: When Joseph saw Benjamin safely and that they did not harm him, he was sure of their good intentions. He slaughtered an animal and a table of food to eat with them. Before they ate, he gave them water to wash their feet (verse 24). Is this not what the Lord Jesus did on the night of Thursday, when he washed the feet of his disciples and offered them the sacrifice of himself, establishing the sacrament of the Eucharist? And before partaking of the Eucharist, their sins were washed away (the washing of the feet).

**to take us as slaves with our donkeys:** Notice their concern for their donkeys and their fear that the Egyptians might take them over. Was the donkeys' value in their eyes more valuable and important than

their brother Joseph, whom they threw into the well to die and then sold him to the Ishmaelites with a dead heart? And for us, is a trivial sin or fleeting pleasure more precious than the salvation of our souls, or any soul that we cause to stumble and perish?

(Verse 23): **But he said, "Peace be with you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money." Then he brought Simeon out to them.**

It seems that Joseph taught this man these words to reassure his brothers.

(Verses 24-28): **So the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed. 25 Then they made the present ready for Joseph's coming at noon, for they heard that they would eat bread there. 26 And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed down before him to the earth. 27 Then he asked them about their well-being, and said, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" 28 And they answered, "Your servant our father is in good health; he is still alive." And they bowed their heads down and prostrated themselves.**

(Verse 29): **Then he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother of whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "God be gracious to you, my son."**

Joseph left Benjamin when he was 8 years old, and now he is about 30 years old.

(Verses 30-31): **Now his heart yearned for his brother; so Joseph made haste and sought somewhere to weep. And he went into his chamber and wept there. 31 Then he washed his face and came out; and he restrained himself, and said, "Serve the bread."**

(Verse 32): **So they set him a place by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians.**

The Egyptians considered eating with strangers an abomination.

1. For strangers eat the meat of sacrifices considered sacred by the Egyptians.
2. They despise the shepherds because of them, the Hyksos.

3. They do not like strangers in general, so they even refrain from using a knife that a Greek used before, as he might have used it to slaughter one of their sacred animals. That is why Joseph had a table for his high status, and each of the Jews and the Egyptians had a table, each separately. But on the other hand, the gathering of everyone with Joseph to eat in it symbolizes Christ who gathered the Jews and the nations around one table.

And the fact that the brothers did not know Joseph indicates that the Jews had their eyes closed from knowing Christ because of the hardness of their hearts " for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (1 Corinthians 2: 8). The brothers did not know Joseph, as he was about 22 years older, in addition to his prestige, glory, clothes and Egyptian language.

(Verse 33): **And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked in astonishment at one another.**

(Verse 34): **Then he took servings to them from before him, but Benjamin's serving was five times as much as any of theirs. So they drank and were merry with him.**

**was five times as much:** Number 5 is the number of grace. Christ fills us with His grace freely.

#### **Notes on Verse 24:**

The brothers entering Joseph's house: Our entering the Church.

The water to wash their feet: Baptism followed by continuous repentance.

Sitting at Joseph's table: The sacrament of the Eucharist.

## Chapter 44

(Verse 1): **And he commanded [a]the steward of his house, saying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack.**

(Verse 2): **Also put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money." So he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.**

**the silver cup:** It is a cup used for drinking, and some nations were optimistic about this cup, and they used to throw a coin or a ring in it and contemplate the number of bubbles that appear and their directions, and accordingly, they determine the future (This custom is still present in Egypt with those who claim to know the future from a cup of coffee). Some used the cup to attract sleep during continuous and deep meditation on the bubbles in it, as this gives a person something of sleep. These pagan customs were what he meant in verse 5: **practices divination**. Certainly, Joseph, the pure and chaste, God-fearing, could not mean this literally. Rather, as we said, it is a plan to bring them back.

(Verses 3-5): **As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. 4 When they had gone out of the city, and were not yet far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good? 5 Is not this the one from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing.'"**

(Verses 6-13): **So he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words. 7 And they said to him, "Why does my lord say these words? Far be it from us that your servants should do such a thing. 8 Look, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord's house? 9 With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves." 10 And he said, "Now also let it be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and you shall be blameless." 11 Then each man speedily let down his sack to the ground, and each opened his sack. 12 So he searched. He began with the oldest and left off with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. 13 Then they tore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city.**

The plan worked, and they returned to him.



(Verse 14-15): **So Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, and he was still there; and they fell before him on the ground. 15 And Joseph said to them, "What deed is this you have done? Did you not know that such a man as I can certainly practice divination?"**

(Verse 16): **Then Judah said, "What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; here we are, my lord's slaves, both we and he also with whom the cup was found."**

**? God has found out the iniquity of your servants:** Here the success of Joseph's plan appears, as they felt their sin and publicly confessed. Their hearts were changed, they tore their clothes, and they came back in bitterness. Didn't the Lord Christ do this to the Samaritan woman when he conversed with her and pushed her to confess her sin? This confession was the entrance after which she turned into a preacher.

(Verses 17-19): **But he said, "Far be it from me that I should do so; the man in whose hand the cup was found, he shall be my slave. And as for you, go up in peace to your father." 18 Then Judah came near to him and said: "O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's hearing, and do not let your anger burn against your servant; for you are even like Pharaoh. 19 My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?'**

(Verses 20-28): **And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, who is young; his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.' 21 Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.' 22 And we said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' 23 But you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.' 24 "So it was, when we went up to your servant my father, that we told him the words of my lord. 25 And our father said, 'Go back and buy us a little food.' 26 But we said, 'We cannot go down; if our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we may not see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' 27 Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; 28 and the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he is torn to pieces"; and I have not seen him since.**

**his brother is dead .. he is torn to pieces:**

It seems that from repeating this lie, they believed it.

But why did Joseph choose Benjamin's sack to put the bowl in it? Joseph wanted to test whether they really repented and whether they loved Benjamin. For if they were in their former brutality and found that Joseph wanted to arrest Benjamin alone as a thief, they would have left him to the men and fled

themselves, but they did not do this. Rather, they returned as a sign of the sincerity of their repentance, so they deserved that Joseph reveals himself to them. And if the cup had brought the brothers back to Joseph, then the cup of suffering that the Lord drank brought us back to him.

(Verses 29-32): **But if you take this one also from me, and calamity befalls him, you shall bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.' 30 "Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad's life, 31 it will happen, when he sees that the lad is not with us, that he will die. So your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to the grave. 32 For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father forever.'**

(Verse 33): **Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers.**

Here Judah as the grandfather of Christ, symbolizes Him in His redemption as he puts himself in place of his brother who is accused of theft.

(Verse 34): **For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would come upon my father?"**

## Chapter 45

(Verses 1-3): **Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!" So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 2 And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it. 3 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph; does my father still live?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence.**

Joseph sent the Egyptians out from him so that they would not know the brothers' plot against him so that they would fall in the eyes of the Egyptians. This refers to God, who covers us and covers our weaknesses.

Joseph's saying **I am Joseph** = Christ's saying, "It is I; do not be afraid." And Joseph's crying is the father's emotions when his prodigal son returns (Luke 15: 20). He may sometimes conceal it, but one day he will certainly make it known to the repentant. And Joseph's declaration of himself to his brothers, without the Egyptians, indicates that Christ will reveal Himself in the Resurrection to his people and his loved ones only; while many witnessed the crucifixion, only the disciples and his loved ones saw him in his Resurrection.

**the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it:** They were like the guards on the tomb of Christ. They felt the earthquake and saw great splendour, but they did not understand the mystery of the Resurrection. This is what also happened with Saul of Tarsus, for he alone heard the voice of Christ and saw him.

(Verse 4): **And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt.**

(Verse 5): **But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.**

We note here the tenderness of Joseph's feelings, as he neither reprimands nor blames. They were terrified of him and feared his revenge while he was in his glory. But all he told them was "come near to me." Sin keeps us away from Christ, but we always find His voice calling us to draw near. And note Joseph's feeling that God is the ruler of all and is always in his presence = **for God sent me before you.**

1. He bears witness to God before Pharaoh. 2. He And fear God in front of Potiphar's wife. 3. He says to the Butler and the Baker " Do not interpretations belong to God?". 4. Now he feels that everything is allowed by God = **for God sent me.**

In the eyes of Joseph, God is the controller of all, managing all things together for good. He feels that he is always standing before God.

(Verses 6-7): **For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. 7 And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.**

(Verse 8): **So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.**

**a father to Pharaoh:** The prime minister or the highest minister of the Egyptians, the kings of Persia, the Arabs, the Romans and the Phoenicians was called "father of the king." The king leaves him the management of all matters, as the son surrenders everything to his father. Thus Christ became the father of all the kings of the earth.

(Verse 9): **"Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph: "God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry.**

**Hurry and go up:** The coming famine leaves no time for slackness. And do we repent quickly?

(Verse 10): **You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have.**

**the land of Goshen:**

Northeast of the Delta, and its place is now the Sharkia Governorate, and it is called the land of Rameses (Genesis 47: 11). It is one of the best lands for shepherding.

(Verses 11-12): **There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for there are still five years of famine.'" 12 "And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my mouth that speaks to you.**

(Verse 13): **So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here."**

He hastens the coming of his father and his brothers to Egypt to enjoy his glory, and Christ is likewise (John 17: 22).

(Verses 14-16): **Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. 15 Moreover he kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him. 16 Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, "Joseph's brothers have come." So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well.**

(Verses 17-20): **And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan. 18 Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land. 19 Now you are commanded — do this: Take carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come. 20 Also do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"**

Everyone loved Joseph. That is why Pharaoh was very generous with him and his family. **the fat of the land:** The mysteries of the kingdom of God, and the abundance of the riches of heaven that was given to us from God through Christ (symbolized by Joseph). **do not be concerned about your goods:** By faith, we have to give up everything. What God has prepared for us of heavenly glories can not be compared to what we leave here of dust on the earth, no matter if it is gold or silver, for everything is vanity.

(Verse 21): **Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them carts, according to the command of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey.**

**carts** They refer to the works of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church, which are divine wheels capable of lifting us into the bosom of the Father. We note that the Eucharist is our provision on our way to heaven, to continue steadfastly in Christ until we see Him in His glory.

(Verse 22): **He gave to all of them, to each man, changes of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments.**

**changes of garments:** The union with Christ becomes for us like a garment that will cover us eternally.

**hundred pieces of silver:** The number 300 in Greek is T as the sign of the cross, and the silver symbolizes covering. This is what Christ gave us as an atonement on the cross.

**five changes of garments:** By His grace, we were clothed with a robe of righteousness. And we have to share in His Cross and His pain. This is the meaning that he gave his brother 300 silver. And if we do and crucify the passions with the desires, we will put on a garment of righteousness. But we must share in

His cross and sufferings by offering our bodies as a living sacrifice and crucifying the body with the passions and desires (Romans 12: 1 + Galatians 5: 24). This is the meaning of giving his brother 300 silver. And if we do, we will be dressed with righteousness.

Why specifically Benjamin? He is his brother from his mother. But in terms of symbol, Benjamin means son of the right, "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." (Matthew 25: 33). And the children of the right are the ones who benefited from the redemption of Christ through His cross (300 pieces of silver). And Christ clothed them with a robe of righteousness (five changes of garments). As Isaiah the prophet said " I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels." (Isaiah 61: 10)

(Verse 23): **And he sent to his father these things: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and food for his father for the journey.**

He sent food for the road until the travellers reach the land of glory, to where Joseph is in his glory. This is what Christ did, as everything he gave us is a deposit and a provision for the road until we reach the heavenly glories.

(Verse 24): **So he sent his brothers away, and they departed; and he said to them, "See that you do not become troubled along the way."**

He was afraid that each of them would blame the others in the matter of Joseph and his sale to the Ishmaelites. And now is not the time for reproach, but they must hurry and return with their father and their homes so that the famine does not overtake them.

(Verses 25-28): **Then they went up out of Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to Jacob their father. 26 And they told him, saying, "Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt." And Jacob's heart stood still, because he did not believe them. 27 But when they told him all the words which Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. 28 Then Israel said, "It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."**

The situation was more than what the heart of the old Jacob could bear to the extent that it seemed to him that his heart had stopped beating. Jacob was not occupied with the chariots, nor the glory of Joseph, but rather that Joseph, his son, is alive. He applies what the psalm says " Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You." (Psalm 73: 25). We note here also the

return of the name Israel to Jacob (verse 28) when he realized that Joseph, his son, is alive, when his soul lived, it is life and resurrection with Christ.

Therefore, the name Jacob refers to the church before Christ

***The name Israel refers to the church after the resurrection of Christ***

***It refers to the risen church in Christ***

But why did Joseph not contact Jacob for all this time so that Jacob would pay his ransom and free him from slavery to Potiphar? Maybe he was afraid of his brothers so they would find another way to kill him. And why didn't he contact him after his glory? It is God's management until the fullness of time comes, that is, to complete God's work in all aspects.

## Chapter 46

(Verses 1-4): **So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. 2 Then God spoke to Israel in the visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob!" And he said, "Here I am." 3 So He said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there. 4 I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes."**

As much as Jacob longed to see his son Joseph, he did not go down to Egypt until after he consulted God and prayed **and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac**. He knew that God chose Canaan as a land for them, and he also knew that God had rejected the descent of Isaac to Egypt in a similar famine. And God was not happy when Abraham went down to Egypt also because of a famine. So Jacob went to Beersheba, the holy place where God appeared to Abraham and then to Isaac. Especially that Beersheba is on the way to Egypt. And Jacob descended to Egypt at the age of 130, after about 215 years of the promise to Abraham (Genesis 12: 1-4) in the year 2298 for the world and before Christ by 1706 years. He went after God assured him of his descent to Egypt. And this vision was the last vision of Jacob, and God did not appear to anyone afterwards except to Moses in the bush. He appeared to Jacob for the last time when he was going down to Egypt, and He appeared to Moses after that when he was coming out of Egypt. And if Egypt represents the land of slavery, and Pharaoh represents Satan, then God's saying: **do not fear .. I will go down with you** = His saying to us: Do not be afraid of battling against Satan, for I am with you. I have come down to you to wrestle with you, for without Me, you can do nothing.

**I will also surely bring you up again:** This, then, is a picture of God descending into this world to establish His Church and to make her grow into a great nation. Paul the Apostle called her Israel of God (Galatians 6: 16), the church that includes Jews and gentiles from all over the world. Then His ascension to the Father, and Christ ascends His church with Him in glory at His second coming.

Why did God call him **Jacob, Jacob** and did not call him Israel although it is written before **Then God spoke to Israel in the visions of the night?** Jacob here and his family are 70 souls who represent the whole of creation, for the creation procreated from 70 people, the descendants of Noah - (Revise Genesis 10). And God explains to us that Jacob's family of 70 souls descended to be enslaved to Pharaoh. And that the entire creation of the 70 peoples were subject to futility (Satan) because of sin. Jacob (his old name) because here he represents the first Adam and his descendants who are all the creation, the 70 peoples that were subject to futility, and his symbol here in the story is Pharaoh. As Jacob went down to Egypt, he and his descendants, to be enslaved to Pharaoh, who symbolizes futility. Thus the whole creation was subjected to futility but in hope " For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;" (Romans 8: 20). And the creation lived enslaved to this futility (Satan) and in conflict with him, but note what God said to Jacob: **do not fear to go down to Egypt** for I have a plan to bring you up, God had planned to send a saviour, Moses, to save the people from their bondage to Pharaoh. And on this hope, O Jacob, come down to Egypt and do not



be afraid. **for I will make of you a great nation there:** Indeed, God has blessed the people in Egypt, so they became between 2-3 million people, and the Egyptians were in dread of them (Exodus 1: 12)

They became a great nation; then he brought them out of Egypt. This was God's plan for the people to grow numerically, isolated from the impurity of Canaan and the paganism of Egypt. And when they grow numerically, they can inherit the land of Canaan.

**Why was the creation subjected to futility?** We understand this from the story of Job, for example. Job's sin was that he feels that he is righteous, even more righteous than God; he imagines that he does not sin while God can sin. This sin would have led to his destruction. And Satan was the instrument of discipline for Job. And so God did with the Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 12: 7). And so the apostle Paul did with the fornicator of Corinth (1 Corinthians 5:5). God knows that man has a rebellious spirit that loves to sin, so there must be discipline, and Satan is this discipline tool. And all this was a symbol of the work of Christ the Savior, who incarnated and came down to us incarnate **I will go down with you to Egypt** The Son of God incarnated and humbled himself, taking the form of a servant (Philippians 2: 7). And He came down to us to the land of bondage, to crush the head of the serpent under His feet, and to grant His people conquest and victory, forming His Church, His body, the Israel of God (Galatians 6: 16). Note that when the Hebrews attach the name of God to something, this indicates its greatness, and this indicates the greatness of the Church and its extension throughout the world in relation to the size of the old Israel = **I will make of you a great nation**

Christ formed his body here on earth to ascend with him to his heavenly paradise and then to his glory at his second coming **I will also surely bring you up again.** Therefore, we can understand the verse as follows:

**Then God spoke to Israel** (This is about the church, which is the body of Christ after Christ's redemptive work) **in the visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob!"** (This is about all the old creation that was condemned to death as a result of sin, and after death, it would go to hades) And God saying **do not fear** is directed to Adam's children, the first ancient creation. The meaning is that it is for a short period that you submit to the futility, die and go to hell. But in hope, there is a solution, as I will come and take you to paradise. By this, God's quote to Isaiah is fulfilled " For a mere moment I have forsaken you, But with great mercies I will gather you" (Isaiah 54: 7). And Christ's saying to the right thief "today you will be with Me in Paradise." is directed to all of us who came down with Christ to ascend with Him.

**and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes:** It is a common custom for the dearest relative to close the eyes of the deceased. And Jacob received these promises at Beersheba (the well refers to baptism: Beer in Hebrew means well).

**What does that mean: the using of both names Jacob and Israel**

| Jacob                                    | Israel = The Church                    |
|--|--|
| The old name - represents the first Adam | The new name - represent the last Adam |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 70 souls descended to Egypt  | The nations of the world are 70 (Genesis 10)  |
| The 70 souls are Jacob and his descendants   | They are all the descendants of Noah = the whole creation   |
| Enslaved to Pharaoh  | The creation was submitted to futility (Satan)  |
| Slavery is for a specific period of 400 years then finished  | The creation was submitted but in hope to be set free from Satan  |
| God's wisdom in this:<br><br>God was isolating them from the uncleanness and idolatry of the Canaanites and the paganism of the Egyptians. | God's wisdom in this:<br><br>Satan was a tool of chastisement for humans because we have a rebellious spirit after sin. |
| Do not be afraid to descend into the servitude of Pharaoh in Egypt, for I am with you to protect you                                       | Satan plots evil for man, and the Lord brings good out of it. But he is not completely free (Job's story)               |
| I have a plan to take you to Canaan  | I have a plan for the salvation of man  |
| I will go down with you = God supported them in Egypt  | Christ descended and incarnated   |
| God made a great people of them of about 3 million   | God formed His Church (His Body) Israel of God  |
| The Egyptians dreaded of them (Exodus 1: 12)   | The Church is a light to the world through her Christ to attract people   |
| God sent Moses to them   | The Father sent His Son, the saviour  |
| He brought them up from the land of Egypt to Canaan, the promised land   | Christ ascends us with Him to glory at His second coming  |

(Verses 5-7): **Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their wives, in the carts which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. 6 So they took their livestock and their goods, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him. 7 His sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt.**

(Verses 8-27): **Now these were the names of the children of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: Reuben was Jacob's firstborn. 9 The sons of Reuben were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 10 The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman. 11 The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 12 The sons of Judah were Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan). The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. 13 The sons of Issachar were Tola, Puvah, Job, and Shimron. 14 The sons of Zebulun were Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. 15 These were the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Padan Aram, with his daughter Dinah. All the persons, his sons and his daughters, were thirty-three. 16 The sons of Gad were Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. 17 The sons of Asher were Jimnah, Ishuah, Isui, Beriah, and Serah, their sister. And the sons of Beriah were Heber and Malchiel. 18 These were the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bore to Jacob: sixteen persons. 19 The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife, were Joseph and Benjamin. 20 And to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him. 21 The sons of Benjamin were Belah, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard. 22 These were the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob: fourteen persons in all. 23 The son of Dan was Hushim. 24 The sons of Naphtali were Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and [n]Shillem. 25 These were the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and she bore these to Jacob: seven persons in all. 26 All the persons who went with Jacob to Egypt, who came from his body, besides Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six persons in all. 27 And the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt were two persons. All the persons of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt were seventy.**

**The numbers of the children of Israel according to the Hebrew version that we have:**

- \* Reuben and his sons = 5
- \* Simeon and his sons = 7
- \* Levi and his sons = 4
- \* Judah and his son Shelah + Perez and his two sons Hezron and Hamul + Zerah = 6
- \* Issachar and his sons = 5
- \* Zebulun and his sons = 4
- \* Jacob and Dinah = 2
- \* The first group, which is Jacob and the sons of Leah = 33 souls.
- \* Zilpah's children, Gad and his sons, Asher and his sons = 16 souls. This is the second group.
- \* Rachel's sons; Joseph and his sons = 3
- \* Benjamin and his sons = 11

- \* The third group = 14 souls
- \* Bilhah's sons; Dan and his son = 2
- \* Naphtali and his sons = 5
- \* The fourth group = 7 souls
- \* Therefore the total souls are  $33+16+14+7 = 70$  souls.

The number of souls without Jacob, Joseph and his two sons = 66 souls, as Joseph and his two sons were in Egypt and did not go down with Jacob. That is why it is said that all the souls of Jacob that came to Egypt were sixty-six souls (Verse 26).

These lists of the tribes in 1 Chronicles 4-8 + Numbers 26, were presented with some differences. These differences are due to the following reasons:

- \* One person may have several names, or one name may be pronounced in several ways.
- \* Sometimes, the grandchildren are called sons. Perhaps the names of some of the grandchildren who were born in Egypt were added during the 17-year period of Jacob's life in Egypt. An example of this is the sons of Perez, who were most likely born in Egypt.
- \* Perhaps some names were dropped because of their death, their evils, or because they left no children.

+ St. Stephen the martyr mentioned that the number of Jacob's family was 75 people!! (Refer to Acts 7:14) There are two explanations for this:

1. It was mentioned in the Septuagint that there were 5 grandchildren of Joseph, and their names were added in verse 20 of this chapter with the children of Joseph. They are Machir of Manasseh, Gilad son of Machir, Sutlam and Tamm, sons of Ephraim, and Edom son of Sutlam. When he was speaking, Stephen had his eye on the Septuagint version, so he added the five grandchildren to the 70 souls, making them 75 souls.

2. some denominations do not recognize the Septuagint version, and these have another conception of solving the problem. They add to the 66 the same number of brothers' wives, which are 9 (because the wife of Judas is mentioned that she died in Chapter 38. Most likely, Simeon's wife died because he fathered Saul from a Canaanite, so the number becomes  $66 + 9 = 75$ . But this solution is illogical. Thus, the first solution is reasonable, especially since our church adopts the Septuagint version. Even the New Testament evangelists and apostles adopted it, and their quotes were from the Septuagint version.

(Verses 28-30): **Then he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out before him the way to Goshen. And they came to the land of Goshen. 29 So Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; and he presented himself to him, and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while. 30 And Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you are still alive."**

Jacob sent his son Judah to Joseph to show them the way to Goshen and arrange their descent there for them. If Jacob represents the Church and Judah is the grandfather of Christ in the flesh. So the meaning is that Christ is the one who leads the Church in the land of her exile. Rather, He is her way.

#### **Now let me die, since I have seen your face:**

Because seeing you was all I wished for happiness in this world, and there is no other joy left for me in life than this. And every soul that meets Christ says with Paul, "having a desire to depart and be with Christ." And says with Simeon, the Elder, "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace."

(Verses 31-34): **Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers and those of my father's house, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me. 32 And the men are shepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock; and they have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.' 33 So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?' 34 that you shall say, 'Your servants' occupation has been with livestock from our youth even till now, both we and also our fathers,' that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians."**

#### **Why was Goshen chosen for the dwelling of Israel's sons?**

1. To be in the northeast of Egypt, as close as possible to the land of Canaan. As if God had guided Joseph to this, so that the people throughout their exile, which lasted for more than 200 years, would have the heart ready to leave for Canaan, for God gave them Canaan as an inheritance.
2. They were in Goshen isolated from the Egyptians. They were not subjected to contempt and harassment. The people of Egypt are a pagan people who sanctify sheep and some of the animals slaughtered. In addition to the Egyptians' hatred of the Hyksos and strangers (the Hyksos were shepherds who ruled Egypt for a period, and the Egyptians hated them as colonists), so they considered taking care of sheep an abomination.
3. This land was good for them, as it is a land of pastures, and they are shepherds.
4. By their isolation in Goshen, they will not be affected by pagan worship as much as possible.
5. The number of Egyptians in the land of Goshen is minor, for it is a land of pastures.
6. In this way, they will not dissolve and mingle with the Egyptian families, so the holy line will not mingle with the pagan people and intermarry with them.

7. So that they can practice their religious rituals (including sacrifices) freely and without harassments.

## Chapter 47

Joseph was not ashamed of his father and brothers but set out with his chariot to meet them and hurried to Pharaoh to inform him of their coming.

(Verse 1): **Then Joseph went and told Pharaoh, and said, "My father and my brothers, their flocks and their herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan; and indeed they are in the land of Goshen."**

(Verse 2): **And he took five men from among his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh.**

**he took five men:** As representatives of his brothers. And maybe the number "5" represents something for the Egyptians

(Verse 3): **Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" And they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, both we and also our fathers."**

(Verse 4): **And they said to Pharaoh, "We have come to dwell in the land, because your servants have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now therefore, please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen."**

**We have come to dwell in the land:** The feeling of sojourn does not leave them because they believed in God's promise that Canaan is their land.

(Verses 5-6): **Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. 6 The land of Egypt is before you. Have your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land; let them dwell in the land of Goshen. And if you know any competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock."**

(Verse 7): **Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.**

**and Jacob blessed Pharaoh:** Pharaoh felt the dread of this man, so he asked for his blessing twice (Review verse 10). Here we see an application to what Paul the apostle said as unknown, and yet well known; as poor, yet making many rich (2 Corinthians 6: 9, 10). And look at God's work in healing Jacob, the weak and helpless, who deceives to reach his goal, so God heals him to become a blessing for people. Rather, he blesses a person in the position of Pharaoh because Pharaoh felt the blessing of this man. Truly, God is the true physician of our souls, bodies and souls. Let us surrender ourselves to Him and do not object to any decision of Him, even if it is a severe trial because it is God's plan for healing

(Verses 8-9): **Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How old are you?" 9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."**

#### **How old are you .. The days of the years of my pilgrimage:**

Note Jacob's feeling of estrangement \* and note his estimation of age in days. Age is short, no matter how many days. As St. James said about it, " It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." (James 4:).

The days of Jacob, in his view, were **few and evil** = They were restless, rather a series of difficulties, for he; 1 \*suffered by the violent Esau. 2 \* He fled to his uncle Laban and served him a hard and tough service (Genesis 31: 40) instead of the comfort and love in the house of his father and mother. 3\* His uncle tricked him 10 times. 4\* He lived in terror of Esau's revenge. 5\* He suffered from a wrenched hip. 6 \* He was saddened by his two sons, Simeon and Levi, and Dinah's daughter. 7\* Rachel, his beloved wife, died. . 8\* Reuben betrayed him with his wife. 9 \* His children deceived him in the story of Joseph. 10\* They wanted to take Benjamin to Egypt while Joseph was holding Simeon.

Jacob suffered a lot, but he blessed Pharaoh twice as if the pain only increased him as a blessing.

But we find that God has brought out sweetness from the strong, for all these pains were the reason for Jacob's recovery from his weakness, which he used to cover by deception and cunning. So he is turned into this spiritual giant, whom people feel his blessing, and they ask to bless them. He even prophesied, as we will see in chapter 49.

#### **Pilgrimage in the understanding of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob:**

1. They are in Egypt in exile because God promised them the land of Canaan.
2. Rather, they also feel that they are in this world, even while in the land of Canaan, that they are in estrangement, and they are waiting for the new life after the end of this world. As Paul the apostle said about our father Abraham; " 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 God." (Hebrews 11: 9-10)



(Verse 10): **So Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.**

(Verses 11-12): **And Joseph situated his father and his brothers, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. 12 Then Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with bread, according to the number in their families.**

**the land of Rameses:** It is part of the land of Goshen (probably San-elhagar currently), in which the Hebrews built the city of Rameses for Pharaoh (Genesis 1: 11).

**and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt:**

A reference to Christ, who gave his church to possess spiritually, when a person can control his desires. The people's residence in Egypt is also a sign of the spread of faith among the nations, especially since it was with the king's approval.

(Verses 13-26): **Now there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. 14 And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. 15 So when the money failed in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us bread, for why should we die in your presence? For the money has failed." 16 Then Joseph said, "Give your livestock, and I will give you bread for your livestock, if the money is gone." 17 So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for the horses, the flocks, the cattle of the herds, and for the donkeys. Thus he fed them with bread in exchange for all their livestock that year. 18 When that year had ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, "We will not hide from my lord that our money is gone; my lord also has our herds of livestock. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands. 19 Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh; give us seed, that we may live and not die, that the land may not be desolate." 20 Then Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh's. 21 And as for the people, he moved them into the cities, from one end of the borders of Egypt to the other end. 22 Only the land of the priests he did not buy; for the priests had rations allotted to them by Pharaoh, and they ate their rations which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their lands. 23 Then Joseph said to the people, "Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, here is seed for you, and you shall sow the land. 24 And it shall come to pass in the harvest that you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh. Four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and for your food, for those of your households and as**

**food for your little ones." 25 So they said, "You have saved our lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants." 26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt to this day, that Pharaoh should have one-fifth, except for the land of the priests only, which did not become Pharaoh's.**

These events most likely occurred in the last two years of the famine, when the famine intensified, and Joseph took them to the cities (21) where the grain stores were. Here we find that the Egyptians gave Pharaoh first their silver, then their livestock, bodies, and land. That is, they were enslaved to him completely.

**we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh:** They are the ones who suggested to Joseph **Buy us and our land**

So it is the people's suggestion, not Joseph's. They were slaves to Pharaoh for a long time, but we find that Joseph wisely agreed to make them slaves to the existing king so that they would not rebel against him and peace would prevail.

**that Pharaoh should have one-fifth:** Or this is not the case in the whole world. It is almost the same tax that citizens pay to the state to use in public services.

**There are several reflections on what happened in these verses:**

1. Here, Joseph refers to the Lord Christ, who saved us from hunger and bought us and our money for God the Father " For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood" (Revelation 5: 9). Note that the Egyptians were giving themselves joyfully to Joseph and to Pharaoh to live, as he saved their lives, and this is how we should do when we surrender ourselves to God with joy.

2. The  $\frac{1}{5}$  to Pharaoh. The number 5 is the number of grace  $5 = 4 + 1$  (creation + God). God created man from his grace and gave him life and gave the earth to man. Everyone is His, and He gives generously of His grace and asks only tithes. Everything belongs to God, humans and the earth "The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein." (Psalm 24: 1). As for us, we are stewards of what God gives us [The Parable of the unjust steward (Luke 16) / And the parable of talents (Matthew 25) / And the parable of the minas (Luke 19)].

3. The land of the priests was not bought by him. As the priests had an ordinance from Pharaoh: And God says to his priests: I am your portion (Numbers 18: 20).

4. The people of God came to Egypt during the rule of the Hyksos. The kings of the Hyksos (Pharaohs) loved Joseph and his people. When the rule of the Hyksos ended, the time of Egyptian pharaohs came to hate, enslave and humiliate the people of God. In terms of symbols, we say that the Pharaoh of Joseph refers to God and whoever came after him refers to Satan.

5. If we look at Pharaoh as a symbol of God who gave us everything, then we must offer Him ourselves and what we have, just as the Egyptians enslaved themselves to God. And this is the truth that we and

what we have, we are His. He gives of his grace " who gives to all liberally and without reproach" (James 1: 5).

6. On the other hand, we see that the Egyptians enslaved themselves to Pharaoh. If we look at Pharaoh as a symbol of Satan, we find an example of someone who enslaves himself to Satan, and this person gradually sold:

- a. The Silver: Losing the word of God and being separated from it, as silver refers to the word of God.
- b. The Livestock = selling the senses to the devil.
- c. The Bodies = This represents their complete enslavement.

And if we assume that another pharaoh than "Pharaoh Joseph" had enslaved the people of Israel after, but against their will. Therefore, whoever falls against his will, God sends him a Savior who will set him free, Moses.

(Verse 27-28): **So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and grew and multiplied exceedingly. 28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years.**

(Verse 29): **When the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "Now if I have found favor in your sight, please put your hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me. Please do not bury me in Egypt,**

**Please do not bury me in Egypt .. but let me lie with my fathers:**

Jacob lived in Egypt, but his heart was in Canaan with God, who promised him Canaan. This means his trust in God's promises and his concern for the presence of his body in Canaan, which God promised them to inherit. And if we live in the sojourn of the world, our longings should be there in heaven, where our heavenly Father is. Who promised us the inheritance of heaven, and this was the request of the Lord Christ (John 17:24).

(Verse 30): **but let me lie with my fathers; you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place." And he said, "I will do as you have said."**

(Verse 31): **Then he said, "Swear to me." And he swore to him. So Israel bowed himself on the head of the bed.**

### on the head of the bed:

The bed or mattress in Hebrew is Mittah, and the staff is Mattah, and in Hebrew, it is written from three letters M T H with changing the dots above the letters. Adding dots above the letters is something new that was not used from the old. Therefore, the word of his bed can be read as his staff. And so did the Septuagint and read the verse on the head of his staff. This is how St. Paul the Apostle mentioned the verse as it was written in the Septuagint " By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff." (Hebrews 11: 21).

\* Joseph's stick represents his sceptre, his sovereignty, and his ruling. This prostration is a recognition of God's mercies. And what Jacob did with his prostration was Jacob's recognition of God's favours to him and his son Joseph. And Jacob thanks Joseph because he will return his body to Canaan.

\* If we understand that Jacob is a symbol of the Church, and Joseph is a symbol of Christ, and Joseph's rod is a symbol of the cross, then this position refers to the church's prostration to the cross in which there is salvation. We worship Christ, who by His cross brought us back or will return us to heavenly Canaan.

\* The staff is the scepter, a symbol of Joseph's reign, and it is a reference to the cross with which Christ reigned over His Church " For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder." (Isaiah 9: 6). And the Bible saying, "The government will be on his shoulder," refers to the cross that Christ carried on his shoulder before he was crucified on it. Rather, after he carried the cross, He slept on it to nail him with nails before they raised the cross.

The harmony of the words his bed and his rod with Christ? Christ reigned over us with His cross, and the cross (His staff or sceptre) was the bed on which Christ died (slept), and in it, Christ reigned over us.

## Chapter 48

(Verses 1-2): **Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, "Indeed your father is sick"; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. 2 And Jacob was told, "Look, your son Joseph is coming to you"; and Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed.**

Joseph wanted his father's blessing for his two sons, as Isaac blessed his son Jacob. Thus, they would have hope of salvation.

(Verse 3): **Then Jacob said to Joseph: "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me,**

Jacob's reference to God's appearance in Luz indicated that every blessing for him comes from God who blessed him. Thus, every blessing that the church offers to her children is from God, the giver of the blessing.

(Verse 4): **and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.'**

(Verse 5): **And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.**

Here Jacob gives Joseph the share of the firstborn, that is, the double of his brothers. Therefore, Ephraim and Manasseh are both like the rest of the tribes. Thus, he deprived Reuben of this blessing because of his sin. The prophecy that Jacob said about Reuben "... you shall not excel, Because you went up to your father's bed; Then you defiled it" (Genesis 49: 4) clearly states that he is deprived of the blessing of his birthright (you shall not excel = You shall not be distinguished or superior to the rest of your brothers, and you shall not have the first place as the firstborn among your brothers). As for Simeon, who was the second to be entitled to the birthright, as Reuben was deprived of it. The third is a Levi. Both Simeon and Levi were deprived of their birthright because of their brutality with the people of Shechem. To take it the fourth, who is Judah. Judah obtained the spiritual birthright and came from his descendants Christ, and Joseph took the double share as a firstborn because of his purity. Note the accuracy of the prophecy. Jacob did not include Levi with Reuben and Simeon because out of Levi will come the great Moses among the prophets and the priesthood. Details will follow in the next chapter.

(Verse 6): **Your offspring whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance.**

**shall be yours:** Means children other than Ephraim and Manasseh, who will not be counted among the tribes.

**they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance:** Means the new sons of yours, O Joseph, whom you bore after Ephraim and Manasseh, they take their share. As your children inherit with their brothers Ephraim and Manasseh in their inheritance. That is, Ephraim and Manasseh will give them portions of their inheritance. But Joseph had no other children. As for Ephraim and Manasseh, when the Promised Land is divided, their share will be as my sons, that is, as two tribes. Thus, Joseph obtained the birthright, as he had a double share, which is the share of the firstborn.

(Verse 7): **But as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died beside me in the land of Canaan on the way, when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."**

Up to his last breath, he does not forget his beloved wife, Rachel. He blesses her grandchildren. It is as if he wants the children to focus on Canaan, where their mother is buried, so that Egypt should not make them forget their land, Canaan. But Jacob's grief for his beloved Rachel is the grief of Christ for His church and His people whom He loved up to the death of the cross, whose members still suffer death, grief and distress. Christ grieved for the people He loved, so He created them to live in a paradise to rejoice (Eden is a Hebrew word that means joy and happiness). He said about them, " And my delight was with the sons of men." (Proverbs 8: 31). Those whom He loves have died and grieved. This is what grieves the heart of God. This was the reason why the Lord Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus. When Lazarus was in the tomb, stinking, and everyone around him was crying and screaming, He was saying: Did I create you for this destiny? I wanted joy for you, but this is what you did to yourselves. Some people accuse God that He does not feel their pain when one of their loved ones passes away, and in fact, God suffers when one of His loved ones dies, and the loved ones of the deceased grieve. For the Bible says." In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the Angel of His Presence saved them;" (Isaiah 63: 9). He gets upset and afflicted when we grieve. But he is looking for the right way and timing to ensure the salvation of His children's souls. This is the meaning of the Angel of His Presence saved them. God knows what the right time for Him to take His children to heaven is. The psalmist David the Prophet says, " Precious in the sight of the Lord Is the death of His saints." (Psalm 116: 15). God rejoices in the souls of his loved ones when they move, and the angels accompany them to heaven (the story of Lazarus and the Rich), and God includes them with His saints in heaven. But he pities the grief of his loved ones and comforts them.

Note that Rachel was buried on the way to Bethlehem, where Christ was born. And Christ gives life to all who died in hope. The meaning is that she was buried in the hope of eternal life that Christ, born in Bethlehem, would bring. This is the case for the whole Church, which Christ loved until the death of the cross and still loves her. We die on our way to eternal glory.

(Verses 8-11): **Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said, "Who are these?" 9 Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me in this place." And he said, "Please bring them to me, and**

**I will bless them." 10 Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. 11 And Israel said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!"**

(Verse 12): **So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth.**

**bowed down:**

That is, Joseph bowed down before his father. Most likely, Joseph and his two sons bowed down before him.

Ephraim and Manasseh were in Jacob's lap, between his knees, so Joseph made a place for him between them to bow down to his father with them.

(verse13): **And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near him.**

(Verse 14): **Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn.**

**knowingly:** Came in the Septuagint that he crossed his hands in the shape of a cross. Joseph and perhaps Jacob also wanted to bless the firstborn Manasseh. But God guided Jacob that the one who will receive the greatest blessing is the younger (And this is what happened with Abel, Isaac, and Jacob, for it is not the oldest in the flesh which is always worthy)

History indicates that Jacob did this knowingly. In the first census made in the days of Moses, the tribe of Ephraim was 40,500, while the tribe of Manasseh was 22,200. The tribe of Manasseh lived divided, half of it east of the Jordan and the other on the west, which exposed them to mixing with the pagan peoples. As for the tribe of Ephraim, it was always strong. The northern kingdom (Israel) was called Ephraim, and from this tribe came Joshua the son of Nun and Deborah the prophetess, and from them Jeroboam, the first king of Israel after separating from Judah. Jacob put his hands in the form of a cross, indicating that the true blessing was by the cross. And the choice of Ephraim the Younger for the blessing is a sign of the church that is physically smaller than the Jewish people (The firstborn son Exodus 4: 22), but she deserved the blessing. Thus, the last Adam, Christ, became first, and the first Adam became last.

Paul the Apostle focused in (Hebrews 11: 21). Although Jacob had lost his physical sight, faith gave him spiritual sight, he blessed the younger against natural desires and he bowed down to Joseph's staff (the cross)

(Verse 15): **And he blessed Joseph, and said: "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has fed me all my life long to this day,**

**he blessed Joseph:** Although he laid his hands on Ephraim and Manasseh, the blessing was counted for Joseph.

(Verse 16): **The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; Let my name be named upon them, And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."**

He did not ask for glory like that of Joseph, but the blessing of God that he gave to Abraham and Isaac. And that the angel who redeemed him from all evil would save them. Note that the angel does not prevent evil but rather redeems from it. God allows what we call evil, that is, some sufferings in our lives, but we are completed and qualify for Heaven with these sufferings. Note the result of the evils that befell Job, through them he begot the salvation of his soul. **Let my name be named upon them =** Ephraim and Manasseh became two independent tribes like the rest of the tribes.

(Verses 17-19): **Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 18 And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head." 19 But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."**

(Verse 20): **So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!'" And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.**

Meaning if a person prays for someone, he asks God to bless him as he blessed Ephraim and Manasseh, and the Jews have always used this blessing.

(Verse 21): **Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am dying, but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers.**



(Verse 22): **Moreover I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."**

The word **bow** in its Hebrew origin is "Shechem," and Shechem means "high above the ground" or "a shoulder." Jacob bought land in Shechem for a hundred pieces. Then the sons of Jacob took the land of Shechem with a sword and a bow. Indeed, they fought with a trick, but they took the land. His saying **with my sword and my bow** is a reference to this battle between his sons and the sons of Shechem. But which is more correct that it is a prophecy about the conquest of the whole land by the people of Israel, led by Joshua the son of Nun. This is because Jacob did not accept what his sons Simeon and Levi did. But he said " Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly" (Genesis 49: 6). After this, it is impossible to consider that he took the land of Shechem with his sword and bow.

The meaning of what Jacob said here is that when you take the land, this land belongs to Joseph. This land was the deposit of the acquisition of the whole land. Shechem was one of the cities of Ephraim after that (Joshua 20:7), and there Joseph was buried. To this land, the Evangelist refers in (John 4: 5,6), it was understood that Jacob gave this land to Joseph. Let us note that:

Judah: From him came kings.

Levi. From him came priests.

Joseph: He had the share of the firstborn, he took a deposit of the distinguished inheritance, and we find that (Deuteronomy 21: 17) states that the firstborn has two shares. And see proof of this (1 Chronicles 5: 1) that is why Jacob said to Joseph (Genesis 49: 26) "The blessings of your father Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors."

### **Contemplation:**

God promised to bless Jacob and not Esau. But human solutions have caused a great deal of pain to everyone. And if Rebekah had not done this and left the arrangement to God, God would have found an easy solution that would not cause any problems. We saw this in the way of Jacob's blessing to the children of Joseph that he put his hands in the form of a cross. And God's will was carried out easily.

## Chapter 49

(Verse 1): **And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days:**

**in the last days:** It is a biblical expression that refers to the future in general. It may refer to the end of days or the end of the world. It may also refer to the days of the Church of Christ, and thus the end of the days of the Jews as God's people.

(Verse 2): **"Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob, And listen to Israel your father.**

Jacob gathers his children to tell them what is happening to them. And he saw with the Spirit of prophecy Christ coming from the tribe of Judah, and the view of the Church emerging from the ancient people.

(Verses 3-4): **"Reuben, you are my firstborn, My might and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. 4 Unstable as water, you shall not excel, Because you went up to your father's bed; Then you defiled it—He went up to my couch.**

**Reuben:**

**you are my firstborn, My might:** The sons were considered the strength of the fathers, and because he is the firstborn, he is the first of his power and strength.

**beginning of my strength:** He is the result of human strength. But what is the result of the fallen man's strength except for the lust that made our parents Adam and Eve lose their simplicity, and now Reuben loses his birthright.

**The excellency of dignity:** Meaning the best of them because he is the first since he is the firstborn.

**Unstable as water:** The word's origin is "an act of ugliness" and an act of evil by indulging in pleasures and desires. As the water evaporates but falls quickly, it indicates the intensity of the rage of his emotions.

**you shall not excel:** This is the penalty of everyone who follows his desires. He loses his dignity. You will have no privilege or superiority over the rest of your brothers. And you shall not have the first place as the firstborn among your brothers. Thus, Reuben lost the birthright blessing.

Jacob was proud of his firstborn and called him his might, and the beginning of his strength, he attained the best status and honour. But he followed his lust. And his father did not forget what he had done

with Bilhah even on his deathbed. That is why he lost his birthright to be obtained by the sons of Joseph. And the spiritual birthright was taken by Judah.

Here Reuben represents the fall of Adam and Eve. Adam, who was the firstborn of creation and fell and lost his blessing. He represents the Jewish people before Christ, who were counted as firstborn in the knowledge of God. But by ingratitude, they lost the birthright, spiritual strength, elevation, and dignity, and they were counted as unclean by the crucifixion of Christ and their persecution of his Church. Rather, in the last days, by way of the Antichrist, whom they follow, they will attack the Church, the bed of God their Father (the Church is the Bride of God) with the intent of corrupting it.

(Verses 5-7): **"Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. 6 Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. 7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob And scatter them in Israel.**

#### **Simeon and Levi:**

Here we see another aspect of the fallen humanity before Christ. Reuben represents corruption and lust. At the same time, Simeon and Levi represent cruelty and injustice. And if Reuben represented Adam, they are represented by Cain, who shed blood. And the rule of Jacob or Jacob's prophecy on them because of their cruelty and sin is dispersal and division. This is what God did in Babylon when God confused the tongues.

**brothers:** Meaning they are similar in their cruelty and their cunning planning to kill.

**Let not my soul enter their council:** I do not participate in their evil conspiracy.

**Let not my honor be united to their assembly:** That is, their agreement on evil is unsuited with my dignity. Therefore, our evil deeds are inconsistent with the honour of our Heavenly Father.

**And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox:** A person's peak of evil is that he does evil while satisfied; that is, he rejoices while he plans his evil. He plans calmly and with pleasure. This is what the Jewish people did in Christ. Thus, Saul of Tarsus was with Stephen, " Now Saul was consenting to his death" (Acts 8:1). The Hebrews used the word ox for great men, as the word ox is very close to the word prince (Psalm 22:12).

**Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce:** Simeon and Levi are brothers, meaning have similar characteristics. Each of them took his sword, and both came to Shechem, where they killed every male, and they did not observe justice in what they did, so they caused pain for their father. Levi came from him the priests, and Simeon came from him the scribes, where both are the ones who plotted the cunning of killing Christ. The scribes and priests were brothers in this. They killed a human being, for Christ is the Son of Man. And they **hamstrung an ox** = He came to offer himself as a sacrifice (an ox). Their anger was severe against Christ, and their anger was severe against Shechem, and probably also

against Joseph, so they were crueller to him than the rest of the brothers. Therefore, Joseph detained Simeon.

**I will divide them in Jacob:** Levi was divided throughout all of Israel. And Simeon was not assigned an independent portion, but they were within the portion of Judah (Joshua 19:1), but in the worst places in the portion of Judah. Simeon was not mentioned in the blessing of Moses. Then they were scattered to other places where they formed Simeonian tribes (1 Chronicles 4:39). As for Levi, because his children stood in a sacred position, we find that God used their division amid Israel for blessing, and the Lord was their portion. As Levites and Priests, they were dispersed to teach the people the law.

(Verses 8-12): **"Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you. 9 Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him? 10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people. 11 Binding his donkey to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes. 12 His eyes are darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk.**

#### **Judah:**

We saw in the preceding verses corruption and lust in Reuben, and injustice and cruelty in Simeon and Levi. We see here in Judah the coming of Christ. Judah is the father of Christ in the flesh. Judah received the lion's share of the blessing, as Jacob saw the Lord Christ the King and the priest coming from his descendants to bear all these sins.

**Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise:** Judah means praise. And who is this Judah, whom his brothers praise, exalt and honour, except for the Lord Christ Himself, who came out of the tribe of Judah, the Forgiver of sins?

**Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies:** This was done with David the Prophet in his wars and victories. David is the true founder of the kingdom of Israel. As for Christ, with His cross, He put his hand on the neck of His enemy Satan, so He destroyed him and freed humanity from his authority, establishing the Church as his heavenly kingdom.

**Your father's children shall bow down before you:** David as a king liberated the land, all worshiped him. And at the name of Jesus every knee should bow (Philippians 2:10). And they bowed down here, in the sense that they worship. And the saying **Your father's children** Means all the tribes, that is, the children of Jacob bow down to the royal tribe from which David came. As for Christ, He said about the Father, " My Father and your Father." We have become in him children of the Father, and we bow down to Him and worship Him, for He is our God.

**Judah is a lion's whelp .. a lion** (in Arabic **as a lion and a lioness**) = Judah had chosen for his ring a symbol, the image of a lion. The evolution here begins with a young lion, then a lion, and then a lioness.

It is said that the lion's cub refers to the warrior Caleb of the tribe of Judah (Joshua 14:6-14). He grew and became a lion in the days of David; that is, he came out of the tribe of Judah, fighters who owned the land, and the beginning was with Caleb until David came and established the kingdom. And from the descendants of David came fierce kings, who were likened here to the lioness, which is more fierce than the lion. If we look at this prophecy as being about Christ, we say that a lion's cub indicates the birth of Christ as a son. And the lion refers to the king, and Christ reigned on the cross. That is why it is said **he lies down as a lion**. Jacob saw in Judas the Christ coming from his seed and called him the lion who came out of the war of the cross, meaning his spiritual enemies. He knelt, that is, nailed in weakness or something like weakness, and slept on the cross, but He was like a lion crouching in anticipation of the battle, so He surrendered Himself by his own will to fight in fierceness (John 10:18).

**as a lion** = here is a reference to the Church, the bride of the lion, who must be crucified with him and bear the cross, so that she becomes His disciple, for whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. (Galatians 6:14).

**who shall rouse him:** In the sense that no human raises him, but rather he rises by Himself. (John 2: 19).

**From the prey, my son, you have gone up:** He was a lion in his war, but what was his image in front of people but a submissive **prey**, like led as a lamb to the slaughter, ascended to His cross in surrender to his crusaders. But he rose and ascended to sit at the right of his father to ascend his brothers, that is, the church.

**The scepter shall not depart from Judah:** The scepter is the king's scepter. And kings procreated from David.

**Nor a lawgiver from between his feet:** A lawgiver is a legislator of laws, between his feet means of his descendants.

**Until Shiloh comes:** Shiloh is from the same source as Siloam, i.e. sent from God (John 9:7 + Luke 4:18 + John 5:36-38). And in (Isaiah 8:6), the word Shiloah comes from the same source, and the Septuagint translated it by Siloam. (And the eyes of the blind man were opened in Siloam, and compare this with His eyes are darker than wine). This verse means that the Messiah will come after the kingdom departs from Judah, and Judah will no longer have the right to legislate, rule, and judge. This happened during the Roman rule, when the Jews said, " We have no king but Caesar." And the registration which was carried out and ordered by Augustus Caesar, included Judea, then it was subject to his rule (Luke 2:1-2). The fact that the Jews no longer had the authority to rule is clear from the verse (John 18:31). The Jews, then, were subject to Roman rule, they had no authority to judge or execute, and their king or ruler, Herod, was an Edomite. And thus, the prophecy in verse 10 indicates that:

1. The kingship will be in Judah (the scepter and the legislation).
2. Shiloh, meaning the sent Messiah, will come from the descendants of Judah. It was agreed that Shiloh is the Messiah, and the Jews and Christians agreed on this. It is also agreed that the word refers to rest and peace. And that the period of Christ will be a period of peace, and this is what happened. The period

of Christ's presence on earth was a period without wars in the Roman state, and the pagan temples that open only in days of war were closed, and the temples of peace were opened which opened in times of peace. Note the use of the word Shiloh to refer to peace and tranquillity in Isaiah's words "Inasmuch as these people refused The waters of Shiloah that flow softly, And rejoice in Rezin and in Remaliah's son" (Isaiah 8: 6).

3. Judah will continue to rule until the Messiah comes. And Christ will come after the rod is transferred to another people. **Binding his donkey to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine:** The vine means the grape tree. The direct meaning of the verse is that it is an expression of the prosperity and wealth that the tribe will enjoy. Because of the abundance of fertility, a man ties his donkey to the vine. The vine is a weak tree, so the meaning of a man tying his colt is that it will be strong until it bears. But the vine is, in a symbolic sense, a sign of the people of Israel, and then it became a sign of the Church (Psalm 80:8 + Hosea 10:1 + Isaiah 5:1-7 + Jeremiah 2:21 + Matthew 21:33 + John 15:1), So the vine is God's people in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Note that on the day Jesus entered Jerusalem, he asked for a colt (people used this, and they rode it before) and a son of a colt (this was not ridden by anyone before), and he rode the son of the colt. The fathers saw that the colt refers to the Jews, and the son of the colt refers to the Gentiles. Christ linked both of them to His vine. He is the vine, and we are all the branches. He is the one who made the two into one and noticed that He linked the son of the colt, the symbol of the Church, to the chosen vine.

4. God's people in the Old Testament and the New Testament are one people, one olive (Romans 11), and one vine, as in Jacob's prophecy. After Christ, as explained by St. Paul the Apostle, the vine branches from the Jews who refused to believe in Christ were cut. And Christ grafted the vine with the wild branches, that is, the gentiles who believed. But we find here that the people of God in the old days were the vine, but after the redemption of Christ, the vine became to be called the "chosen vine," for it is the Church, the beloved bride of Christ. And after the symbol of the Jews associated with the vine was the colt (this was used in riding a lot) because God had led them in the old days. And the symbol of the gentiles was the son of the colt (this was never ridden on) because there was no relationship between God and the gentiles in the past. Now everyone who is connected to the chosen vine is called by the revelation, " I have compared you, my love, To my filly among Pharaoh's chariots." and " And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer." (Song of Solomon 1: 9 + Revelation 6: 2). The horses are an ancient instrument of war. We are in non-stop battle (Ephesians 6:12). But the victorious leader is the knight who leads the horse (we are the instruments of war now). He is the one who gathered the Jews (the colt) and the gentiles (the son of the colt) in His one vine.

**He washed his garments in wine:** From the abundance of goodness, wine becomes like water, and they wash their clothes with it, but the garments indicate the church (as Joseph's coloured robe indicated for the multi-talented church. And as St. Pope Peter the seal of martyrs saw Christ with a torn robe in his dream, so he asked him who ripped His robe, and He replied: Arius Tore my church.' Also, in Psalm 133, we see the Holy Spirit pouring out first on the head of Aaron the High Priest as a symbol of Christ, then it pours on his beard and clothes, and his beard and clothes symbolize the church that clings and surrounds Christ to her head).

And the fact that the garment is washed with wine and even says the blood of grapes; then this is a clear prophecy that the Church was cleansed by the blood of Christ (Revelation 7:14 + 1 John 1:7). The wine is a reference to the cup of the Lord's blood that is given for the forgiveness of sins.

**His eyes are darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk:** Dark-eyed, translated, shining eyes, meaning his eyes are beautiful and bright, a sign of visual acuity. Wine is a sign of abundance and goodness, as well as milk. The meaning is that the many goodnesses (vineyard and milk) gave him strong and sharp eyes, strong teeth. And spiritually, wine in the book refers to joy. Christ gave us spiritual joy as a fruit of His Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22 + John 16:22), and the Holy Spirit, who gives joy to the heart, also gives enlightenment and clarity of vision. He provides teaching and knowledge of Christ (John 14:26 + John 16:14 + Hebrews 8:10, 11). This knowledge is the reason for the love that the Holy Spirit pours out in our hearts for God (Romans 5:5). We cannot love those we do not know. And notice the chain of fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22), which is love, joy, peace, for love precedes joy. So when the Holy Spirit pours out the love of God into our hearts, we experience true joy. Rather, the strong obtain strong food and turn it into milk, which they give to the young (1 Corinthians 3:2 + 1 Peter 2:2). The Holy Spirit gives strong food to the adults, and these nourish the weak (2 Timothy 2:2; and revise Isaiah 55:1). And the Holy Spirit uses the word of God as food that satiates the souls. He gives generously. And the Holy Spirit uses the word of God as food that fills the souls. He gives abundantly.

We see here Christ who was incarnated and born as a child (**a lion's whelp**) and the timing of his coming will be when the kingship departs from Israel, and it will be a period of peace (**The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes**). And we see in the prophecy the crucified Christ (**the prey**), the resurrected lion (**a lion**), and His church that accepted to be crucified and suffer with him (**a lion**). Satan was defeated with his cross (**Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies**). So His church believed in Him, knowing that He was the Savior Son of God (**Your father's children shall bow down before you**), and we see Christ purifying his church with his blood (**He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes**). And his church praises him for his salvation (**you are he whom your brothers shall praise**). He made **the vine** (the Jewish Church) to be **the choice vine** (the New Testament Church). And this Church, Christ leads her members (the son of the colt) to link them to the Church. The church became the body of Christ in which the Holy Spirit resides, to give it the open eye and knowledge (**eyes are darker than wine, And teeth whiter than milk**).

(Verse 13): **"Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea; He shall become a haven for ships, And his border shall adjoin Sidon.**

#### **Zebulun:**

Zebulun means dwelling. After we saw the world before Christ in corruption and cruelty, and we saw Christ coming from Judah in the flesh. Now we see the dwelling of all in the Church, Jews and Gentiles, and Christ dwells amid His Church, " I am with you always, even to the end of the age." + " For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." (Matthew 28: 20 +

Matthew 18: 20). It is also said about the Heavenly Jerusalem, " the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them" (Revelation 21: 3).

The tribe of Zebulun dwelt beside the sea, and they were next to the Phoenicians, who were merchants of the sea. They acquired from them with their trade and traded with them. So Zebulun will be merchants. This refers to preaching, especially that the sea refers to the gentiles and the river refers to the Jews. And the dwelling of Zebulun (the Jews) next to the sea (the gentiles) is a sign of the One Church from both. Sidon is in the Mediterranean. (The world knew Christianity from the Jewish people who believed in Christ, that is, His disciples and apostles who toured the whole world preaching Christ).

(Verses 14-15): **"Issachar is a strong donkey, Lying down between two burdens; 15 He saw that rest was good, And that the land was pleasant; He bowed his shoulder to bear a burden, And became a band of slaves.**

**Issachar:**

**Issachar is a strong donkey:** Most likely, Issachar chose the donkey as his emblem for his ring. This tribe worked in agriculture, and they had patience. Their land was fertile, so they were satisfied with agriculture and were not preoccupied with politics. And they were liable to pay taxes. The comparison of Issachar with a donkey indicates his hard work, as he carried two loads: 1) his hard work in agriculture; 2) taxes.

And what was their reward? Their fertile land and successful cultivation.

And their barns are many, meaning their sheep are many = **Lying down between two burdens ... , And that the land was pleasant.** And pleasant means with its fertility and fattiness. They did not care about taxes because their land was fertile. How beautiful is this analogy about the church, which came in its place. After we heard about the coming of Christ from the tribe of Judah and the dwelling of Jews and gentiles together, we hear that their land is rich, a sign of the Church, which is the body of Christ and feeds on His body and blood. The Church is satiated with Christ, so she does not care about the pains and hardships that the enemies of Christ raise against her, or any tribute that is placed upon her. And that the church is fertile, and its flocks increase greatly (many pastures). The servants of God realized that the earth is a pleasure, in heaven what no eye has seen and no ear has heard, and on earth they saw the work of Christ in His church, so they took care of their preaching and their work in the field of Christ without caring about any pains imposed on them. This is what Paul the Apostle said, " For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more" (1 Corinthians 9: 19 + 2 Corinthians 12: 15).

(Verses 16-18): **"Dan shall judge his people As one of the tribes of Israel. 17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, A viper by the path, That bites the horse's heels So that its rider shall fall backward. 18 I have waited for your salvation, O Lord!**

**Dan:**



Dan was a warrior tribe, and Dan's descendants were known for cunning and deceiving (Judges 17, 18). The mighty Samson came out of them. They were like a snake that stings the horses of their enemies, and their enemies fall off their horses = **So that its rider shall fall backward**. But the salvation is from the Lord. That is why Jacob said **I have waited for your salvation, O Lord**.

But from a prophetic point of view, Jacob's words are interpreted in another sense. We have already seen the fruitful church and its servants. And we saw her servants how they suffer, from where does this pain come? It must have come up with the old tricks of the devil. That is why Dan is **a serpent by the way**.

He always raises problems in the way of God and His servants. This war between Satan and the Church reaches its peak at the end of days when Satan is released from prison and works with his power with the Antichrist.

The tribe of Dan was the first to introduce pagan worship into Israel by placing the statue of Micah in the city of Dan. Because of this, Dan's name was deleted from those sealed in Revelation (Revelation 7). This may be due to the paganism of the tribe of Dan. However, many of the fathers saw that this prophecy of Jacob, with the omission of the name of Dan from (Revelation 7), is because the Antichrist will come from the tribe of Dan. But we can say that the meaning is; Satan, the ancient serpent, started his war against man from the beginning when he brought down Adam and Eve, and he will continue to fight the church and try to disrupt God's work until the end of days. This war will be most intense in the days of the beast or of the so-called Antichrist (Rev 13).

**Dan shall judge his people As one of the tribes of Israel** = Dan is the son of Jacob and is a brother to the rest of the tribes. The meaning is that there will be found amid the Church those who surrender to the serpent's deception, i.e. Satan, and stir up heresies and schisms amid the Church. With their satanic pride, they will reject any repentance, mislead many and split the Church. We have seen something similar in (Ezra 2:13). The number of the beast 666 was found with those who returned from captivity, which refers to the satanic wars within the church. However, certainly, Christ is the conqueror "These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them." (Revelation 6: 2 + Revelation 19: 19-21 + Revelation 17: 14), and he who follows Christ will conquer "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony" (Revelation 12:11). Rather, God sees all the attempts of the serpent and those who follow it, laughing and mocking them (Psalm 2:1-5), for He knows that everything they do can be transformed for the glory of His name and the good of His children, for He can get out of the strong sweetness.

The meaning of the name Dan = judge (Genesis 30:6). The meaning is that God sees the evil deeds of Satan and will judge him and condemn those who follow him who have misled the Church and left themselves to the deceit of the serpent, and God sees and judges justly. There are those who will reject the tricks of the serpent. But some will follow the devil, as they have been deceived by lust or by the deception of the devil when he convinces them with a heresy that he spreads. And they become stubborn in their pride, rejecting the church's attempts to change their opinion and misconceptions, causing the church to split.

But does God leave his children alone in this battle? Certainly not, for he is the one who says, "for without Me you can do nothing" (John 15: 5). But this aid is for those who want and leave the leadership to Christ. In our battles with Satan, we are nothing but a horse, and Christ is the one who leads this horse. And the image of Christ leading the horse we see when the first seal was opened when we see Christ sitting on a white horse (Revelation 6: 1, 2). And the horse is white because Christ justified the believers in him with his blood (Revelation 7:14), and again Christ leads whomever he wants, saying, "How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing" (Matthew 23:37). Whoever leaves the leadership to Christ and gives Him complete submission, then Christ will prevail through him and in him. It is Christ who "and he went out conquering and to conquer." (Revelation 6:2).

As for the one who is led and deceived by his lust, he gets stung by the serpent, and Christ will no longer lead him, as he has rejected Christ. This is what we see in the remaining three seals (Revelation 6), as Satan is the one who leads the remaining three horses, red, black, and pale (green), and it is clear that he leads to death, whether by martyrdom (the red horse) or by heresies (the black and pale (green) horses) and blessed those who are martyred. But whoever is stung by a serpent, that is, deceived by Satan's deceptions, Christ is no longer the one who leads his life; he has left himself to Satan to lead him. Satan was a serpent slithering on the ground, only can reach man's heels. The serpent now stings him; that is, he surrendered to its deception, and after Christ was the one who led him, he refused his leadership and handed the leadership over to Satan. And after Satan was at his feet, only reaches his heels, we find that now he is the one who leads him. And this is the meaning of what Jacob said about the serpent Satan, **A viper by the path, That bites the horse's heels So that its rider shall fall backward.** But therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:1). Note that the word condemnation in this verse is in the sense of judge = Dan. This we also see in (Revelation 6), whoever was a white horse led by Christ is in heaven wearing white clothes, meaning he is justified. And whoever refused the leadership of Christ and was a black or pale horse, we find him terrified of the judgment of Christ the Judge, and he says to the mountains: "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!" (Revelation 6: 16).

Because of the many sufferings that these heretics will inflict and the schism of the Church that they will cause with their pride, especially what will happen in the last days of the Antichrist, Jacob cried, **I have waited for your salvation, O Lord!** For Christ will come immediately after these events. There is no real salvation for every apostasy except through Christ. This verse is a belief in the work of Christ the Savior.

**Dan shall judge his people As one of the tribes of Israel:** The meaning could be:

1. The Antichrist will come out of this tribe, and this Antichrist will be a cause of condemnation for Israel and the Jews whom he will lead.
2. Or the meaning is that the serpent, that is, the devil, who is now working to deceive the Jewish people, so that they deny Christ until now, this will be a reason for their condemnation and elimination.

3. Or it is a prophecy about the heresies and schisms that will be raised by church members, who the serpent has deceived, and they misled many behind them, thus, causing their condemnation. Wasn't Judas among the disciples and was deceived by the devil, wasn't Nicholas the deacon among the seven deacons and he brought a fatal delusion, and wasn't Arius, a priest?

Note that Dan's name came among the tribes in Jacob's prophecy about his sons and their future, as we have seen and will see that this is a prophecy about the church as well. We saw here that the war against the church continues. And we have seen something similar to that in (Ezra 2:13), as the number of the beast 666 was included with the returnees from captivity. The war will not stop against the Church.

(Verse 19): **"Gad, a troop shall tramp upon him, But he shall triumph at last.**

#### **Gad:**

The portion of the tribe of Gad east of the Jordan was as his request. This made them continuously exposed to fighting from the enemies around them (such as Aram, the Ammonites, and the Amorites), but they were always fighting their enemies and never remained silent, and they were strong warriors (1 Chronicles 12:8-14) whose faces were like the faces of lions. Therefore Gad is in a continuous war **a troop shall tramp upon him**. But he quickly strikes the rear of his enemies' armies and recovers his spoils **But he shall triumph at last**. Therefore, Gad represents the Church, which is in a continuous war, but will eventually win, as she is awesome as an army with banners. The Church is in a continuous war, but she has powerful armour to win (Ephesians 6:10-20). This is because, in her Christ, she overcomes (John 16: 33).

(Verse 20): **"Bread from Asher shall be rich, And he shall yield royal dainties.**

#### **Asher:**

#### **Bread from Asher shall be rich, And he shall yield royal dainties**

Jacob prophesied about Asher the abundance of goodnesses, and Moses said about him in his prophecy that he would dip his foot in oil (Deuteronomy 33:24). Indeed, the two prophecies were fulfilled. The tribe of Asher enjoyed a fertile land rich in olive trees from which oil was extracted. And the yields of his land were abundant, so it was said that his bread was fat. And he gives from his bounties to the kings and the rest of the tribes. This indicates the fullness of God's children and the abundance of grace in the lives of the spiritual fighters. With Gad, we saw striving, but is striving alone sufficient for salvation? Absolutely not, so we hear here about the oil, which symbolizes the Holy Spirit, which gives the fighter the grace and strength to support him in his struggle.

(Verse 21): **"Naphtali is a deer let loose; He uses beautiful words.**

**Naphtali:**

**deer:** mentioned as female.

**let loose:**

That is, it was captured, then someone freed it let it loose, and here Naphtali is likened to his love of freedom to a deer scurrying through an open wilderness, moving lightly and quickly wherever it wanted. But the freedom of this tribe was not an opportunity for corruption and evil. Rather, he adhered to good relationships with the rest of the tribes. His words were = **beautiful words.**

This is a wonderful picture of the Church liberated by Christ, " Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." He who was freed by Christ praises and testifies to Christ, that is, gives beautiful words. Here we find the practical application of the words of the Apostle Paul, "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. " (Galatians 5:13). Here we see the fruits of the Holy Spirit and the grace that he pours out on those who strive, here we see true freedom, here the believer arrives to leave his sin with complete freedom, as the Holy Spirit convinces him of that (Jeremiah 20:7). Freedom is obtained by the believer by the work of grace, and it means that he rejects the deception of sin with his conviction. He understands that grief on earth and eternal destruction is the end of the path of the pleasures of sin, and he leaves the path of sin with complete freedom and not out of pressure or fear of punishment.

(Verses 22-26): **"Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a well; His branches run over the wall. 23 The archers have bitterly grieved him, Shot at him and hated him. 24 But his bow remained in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), 25 By the God of your father who will help you, And by the Almighty who will bless you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb. 26 The blessings of your father Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.**

**Joseph:**

Joseph was praised more than his brothers, for he was faithful with God and loving to everyone, regardless of his position. And he was fruitful: **a fruitful bough.** This is the highest degree of growth for a spiritual person to be fruitful no matter how the enemy's arrows hit him (his brothers, then Potiphar's wife, then Potiphar himself). **The archers have bitterly grieved him, Shot at him and hated him.** And Jacob repeated twice that Joseph was a fruitful bough. Despite the persecutions that faced him, he persevered, grew, increased, and everyone gained the fruits of his love for God and all. Here, Joseph resembles Christ, whom they persecuted, but everyone enjoyed His salvation, even those who persecuted him. Then Jacob said **branches run over the wall =** He was a bough and became branches, so

it is growth and increase, and so is the Church the body of Christ. Christ is the branch (Isaiah 11:1 + Jeremiah 23: 5 + Zechariah 3: 8), and why did he say bough and branch? Number 2 refers to the Incarnation by which He made the two into one, and Christ became the vine, and we are the branches. The branches refer to the church, the body of Christ (John 15:5), and this church leans on a wall. Christ is the real rock. The vineyards need a solid wall to support them, as they are weak if no one supports them. These are the blessings of Christ for his persecuted church. **A fruitful bough by a well** = The well of water refers to the Holy Spirit who waters the church and brings forth fruit. Despite the persecution of Joseph (or of Christ or the Church), **his bow remained in strength**, and **the arms of his hands were made strong** with the help of God **By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob**. God is the Mighty of Jacob, his beloved God, the shepherd and the rock assigned to him. And Jacob asks for his beloved son all blessings. **blessings of heaven above** = rain and dew. And **Blessings of the deep that lies beneath** = any rivers and springs. And **Blessings of the breasts and of the womb** = that is, the abundance of offspring, the health and blessing of children from the milk of the breasts. **The blessings of your father Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors** = that is, more than the blessings that Jacob's parents gave to Jacob. These blessings are a symbol of the spiritual blessings that God gives to His church, and they are far greater than the physical blessings that God's people received in the Old Testament. **Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills** = is the high hills. **everlasting** = for eternity. The meaning is let these blessings come upon you, and my wish is that they will continue with you as long as the hills remain, which will remain forever. Then the blessings are upon you forever. These are the blessings of Christ for the church and will continue until heaven and earth pass away.

**And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers:**

Joseph's brothers kept him away from them, but he had been separated, dedicated, and devoted to God, so the Nazirite isolates himself from his brothers and all people. Whoever is devoted to God deserves all these blessings for him.

With Judah, we saw the redemption of Christ, and with Zebulun, we saw Christ dwelling amid His church. With Issachar, we saw the fulfillment of Christ, and with Dan, we saw a continuous external and internal war against the Church. With Gad, we saw striving in these constant wars. And with Asher, we saw the work of the grace of the Holy Spirit in the Church. With Naphtali, we saw disciplined freedom as a fruit of the Holy Spirit. After all of this, it was natural for us to reach a fruitful church based on her beloved, which has many fruits that are the fruits of the Holy Spirit who fills her. The end will be the share of the Church on the right, which means that Benjamin comes last.

(Verse 27): **"Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; In the morning he shall devour the prey, And at night he shall divide the spoil."**

If we understand that all of the prophecies that Jacob passed on to his children refer to the striving Church (the body of Christ), and the sufferings that fall upon her. Then we see at the end, the Church sits at the Father's right hand, as Benjamin means the son of the right. And the right is the place of the sheep, while the left is the place of the goats. And Moses' blessing to Benjamin refers to the same thing

in (Deuteronomy 33: 12) The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him. After a long struggle, we will dwell with the Lord in the heavenly Jerusalem, the dwelling place of God with people (Revelation 21:3).

**Benjamin is a ravenous wolf:** A reference to the courage of the tribe in wars (Judges 20: 16). It refers to the courage of the striving Church, which is awesome as an army with banners. It was also said that it is a prophecy about Saul of Tarsus, who went out as a wolf in the morning to devour the faithful Christians and kill them as a persecutor of the church. After his belief, many believed on his hands. **divide the spoil:** Means the believers who believed by his preaching.

(Verses 28-33): **All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them. And he blessed them; he blessed each one according to his own blessing. 29 Then he charged them and said to them: "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, 30 in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial place. 31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. 32 The field and the cave that is there were purchased from the sons of Heth." 33 And when Jacob had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.**

Jacob finds death more important than life. Life made him imprisoned in Egypt, the land of slavery. As for death, it is a chariot that carries him to Canaan and brings him to his fathers and the God of his fathers. When he instructs his children to bury him in the land of his forefathers, he looks beyond life, to outside Egypt. He sends his dead body to possess the inheritance in hope. That is why he asks his children and Joseph to take his body to Canaan (Genesis 47:30 + 49: 29). So the hearts of his children also remain attached to Canaan.

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Reuben          | Represents Adam, the firstborn of creation who fell and lost his blessing because of sin.         |
| Simeon and Levi | The corruption of the human race as a result of sin, fornication and murder have entered into man |
| Judah           | The solution was in salvation through Jesus Christ of the tribe of Judah.                         |
| Zebulun         | Christ founded the church in the world, and He dwells in it.                                      |
| Issachar        | The church has many good things and is satiated with Christ who is in it.                         |
| Dan             | But Satan, the old serpent, must fight it.  |

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Gad      | The Church is a Church that strives to bloodshed against sin and Satan (Hebrews 12: 4)     |
| Asher    | Striving alone does not work, so God filled his church with the Holy Spirit (oil = grace). |
| Naphtali | It is a church that freely chooses Christ, as the Holy Spirit has convinced her.           |
| Joseph   | It is a fruitful church (they became the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh).                  |
| Benjamin | The end of the days, the flock of Christ on the right in glory.                            |

## Chapter 50

### Why did Jacob insist on being buried in Canaan?

1. For his children to realize that as he joins his fathers with his body, his soul will meet their souls. Thus, declaring that there will be a day when all will meet and that there will be a resurrection for all.
2. Jacob wanted his children to live in Egypt as strangers, confident that they would one day return to the land that God had promised them in Canaan. And they lived as strangers, depriving their bodies of luxury, so they were waiting for a glorified body on the day of the Lord after this life, as the Apostle Paul said about Abraham, "or he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11: 10).
3. Jacob wanted to assure his children that although he lived in Egypt, his heart was attached to that place where the Lord promised.
4. His request to be buried with his fathers, a declaration of their same faith.

(Verses 1-2): **Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him, and kissed him. 2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel.**

(Verse 3): **Forty days were required for him, for such are the days required for those who are embalmed; and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.**

Jacob's body had to be embalmed so that they could transport it to Canaan so it would not spoil on the way. This is a declaration that our bodies are preserved in some form until we have luminous bodies.

Regarding the embalming process, Herodotus said that it lasts for 40 days, during which the abdomen is opened, the entrails are removed, and chemicals and odours are placed. Then the body is placed in salt for 30 days. Then it was wrapped in glued linen. And for the seventy days, it is mourning for the family, and they go out to the streets, their faces darkened.

(Verse 4): **Now when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying,**

**Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh:** As he couldn't speak to Pharaoh when he was sad and with his beard unshaved because of his grief over his father's death (Esther 4: 2)



(Verses 5-6): **'My father made me swear, saying, "Behold, I am dying; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me." Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father, and I will come back.'" 6 And Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear."**

(Verses 7-9): **So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, 8 as well as all the house of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's house. Only their little ones, their flocks, and their herds they left in the land of Goshen. 9 And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great gathering.**

It is an ascent, not a descending procession. He carried a symbol of the Church's rise towards the higher Jerusalem, the true Canaan, to be with her Groom forever. The procession included Joseph, who is the leader of the procession (2 Corinthians 2:14), and Christ is the leader of our procession. And the procession set out from the land of Egypt (the land of slavery), the symbol of the world that we leave to go to heaven. This procession included a large number as many who go to heaven.

(Verse 10): **Then they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, and they mourned there with a great and very solemn lamentation. He observed seven days of mourning for his father.**

**threshing floor of Atad:** Atad is a kind of thorn, and thorns refer to Jacob's pain in his life and even the pain of all human beings. Thorns were the result of sin.

**mourned there with a great and very solemn lamentation:** The mourning here refers to the mourning of the human race on the consequences of sin, the most difficult of which is death, so Christ wept at the tomb of Lazarus.

(Verse 11): **And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a deep mourning of the Egyptians." Therefore its name was called Abel Mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.**

**Abel Mizraim:** Means mourning of Egypt. And we should mourn on our sins in this world.

(Verse 12): **So his sons did for him just as he had commanded them.**

(Verse 13): **For his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial place.**

We did not hear that they made mourning in Canaan, as it symbolizes heaven, where God will wipe away every tear from our eyes; (Revelation 21:4).

(Verses 14-21): **And after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father. 15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him." 16 So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying, 17 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you."' Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants." 19 Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? 20 But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. 21 Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.**

Great is Joseph in his love and forgiveness. We did not see in Joseph's life visions or angels. But we find him a living example of love and obedience to God. His brothers' fear stems from their sins, for perfect love casts out fear. And Joseph's loving heart could not bear the humbleness of his brothers, so he cried and said **for am I in the place of God?** that is to take revenge.

Perhaps the return of Joseph's brothers to him at the end indicates the return of the Jews to Christ in the last days.

**you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good:** God is the Pantocrator who can get the sweetness out of the strong.

**I will provide for you** and in (verse 24) **God will surely visit you** means that God will provide for them by using Joseph as a tool.

(Verses 22-23): **So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's household. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. 23 Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were also brought up on Joseph's knees.**

(Verse 24): **And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."**

**but God will surely visit you, and bring you out:** Probably he said it with faith and trust in God's promises (Hebrews 11:22).

(Verse 25): **Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely [e]visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."**

(Verse 26): **So Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.**

Genesis began with the creation of life and ended with death and burial, and this is resulting from sin. Now the people are in bondage in the land of Egypt, longing for salvation, and this is what we will see in the Book of Exodus.

**Remark 1:** We did not hear about a tent or an altar with Joseph, as he represents a life of glory and not a life of exile, a life of glory after suffering.

**Remark 2:** Here, we hear about embalming and its meaning in the Egyptians' concept that there is another life after death. And the fact that the Bible ends Genesis referring to embalming implies there is a resurrection after death.