

***“The Foundations of Our Faith Revealed, Theme by Theme, Genesis —  
The Sovereignty of God”***

***Review: “The Foundations of Our Faith Revealed, Theme by Theme, Genesis and Sin:***

- ***Sin is Revealed as a Foundational Theme of Our Faith in Genesis***
- ***The Sin Offering is Fundamental in Understanding God’s Redemptive Plan***
- ***The Conscience of Sin Is Universal, Whether for Believers or Unbelievers***
- ***Sin in a More General Sense is Also Common in the Old Testament***
  
- ***Sin is Revealed as a Foundational Theme of Our Faith in Genesis***
  - ***Sin is a fundamental concept in the Bible and it is revealed as such even in Genesis. Sin requires judgment but God provides redemption. This is a great theme of the Bible and is found early in Genesis, in chapter 4 and verse 7.***
  - ***The primary Hebrew word for sin has a number of what are called “cognates” or alternative forms. Altogether there are six of them and although used in the Old Testament nearly 600 times, they are used only 14 times in Genesis. But that does not mean that sin is not fundamental in the first book of the Bible, for it is. We will look at two of those Hebrew words today, together used over 530 times in the Old Testament. Each refers to God or to man with the common use in reference to God, of course. What is most interesting about the first of these words we will consider today is the way this word is used of sin as we normally understand it, or of the “sin offering” so prominently found in Leviticus and Numbers.***
  
- ***The Sin Offering is Fundamental in Understanding God’s Redemptive Plan***

***Gen. 4:7*** If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, [the] sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. ***Here is the Hebrew word “chata” which is translated “sin offering” many times. This is the first use of any of the words for sin and it is found early in Genesis. This is an important verse because it sets the stage and prefigures the redemptive plan of God involving substitution and requiring blood sacrifice.***

  - ***Some examples illustrate this well from the Law of Moses:***

**Lev. 4:28-29**

**28 Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned.**

**29 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering. [See also Lev. 4:14, 23 & 26]**

**Lev. 4:33 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering.**

- **So the idea here is one of blood sacrifice as a substitution for the punishment of the guilty party. There is a ritualistic exchange of the personal sin to the animal being offered. In many cases the sinners hand was placed on the animal's head signifying that the sin guilt was thereby being transferred to the sacrificial animal. That animal then becomes, as it were, the sin [offering].**

**The other uses of this word refer not to an offering but to the sinner himself:**

- **The Conscience of Sin Is Universal, Whether for Believers or Unbelievers**
  - **This Hebrew word is common in the Old Testament and in total is used 296 times in the Old Testament. and here in Genesis, 4 times, the one regarding the animal available for sacrifice, as we have seen, if only Cain would have seen and known as Abel did, but the other references to personal sin itself, a universal reality known by all. But there are few references in Genesis. Why? Perhaps it is as simple as that “sin is not imputed when there is no law”, Rom. 5:13. Genesis was written pre-law.**
- **Sin in a More General Sense is Also Common in the Old Testament**
  - **Here we refer to the second most used Hebrew word for sin or “missing the mark”. Even unbelievers know of it, do they not? This word is used 238 times but here in Genesis 7 times:**

**Gen. 20:6, 9**

**6 And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.**

...

9 Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done.

**Gen. 39:9** There is none greater in this house than I [**Joseph**]; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? **See also 2 Sam. 12:13**

**Gen. 42:22** And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required. **See also Gen. 31:39, 40:1, 43:9, 44:32**

- ***We go on to our final verses in Genesis for sin, where other less used Hebrew words based on the same root are used:***

**Gen. 13:13** But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly. [See Ps. 1:1, 5: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful ... Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.”]

**Gen. 20:9** Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. [See also Ps. 32:1, 40:6, 41:9]

- ***But Ps. 40:6 is memorable: “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin [offering] hast thou not required.”***
- ***The concept of sin and its essential character is a principle found deep in the heart of all of us that is in its nature contrary to God and man. That is the fundamental teaching of Genesis. That teaching is amplified exceedingly in the Law of Moses. There are hundreds***
- ***But in allowing the sin of Adam, God also provided a plan of redemption to be fulfilled in due time by his only son our savior Jesus Christ. But until then he provided a legal system with a sacrificial system and a priesthood. Those sacrifices pointed forward to their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. But they were previewed even in Genesis 4, the first place sin is mentioned as such in the Bible.***

**Our Outline: The Promise of a Son to Abraham, and the Fulfillment of that Promise, Assures All Believers of God's Absolute and Final Sovereignty Over His Work**

- ***The Gift of a Son, Prophesied — Can Satan or Sin Destroy the Plan of God?***
- ***The Gift of a Son, Promised — And There are Many Challenges***

**Introduction:**

***The Sovereignty of God over his creation is established so clearly in the book of beginnings, Genesis.***

- ***The truths we find written in God's word are essential for our understanding as believers: What God has done, what he is doing and what he has said he will do in the future, are all central for our faith and our lives? Believers are the focus of his work but the unsaved world is the larger context of the believers life. They are "fulfilling the desires of the flesh and spirit" while believers are transformed by the power of Almighty God.***
- ***How is this revealed in Genesis? For God's sovereignty is manifested in his word and his work, in his word AND his work — this is most important.***

**I. The Gift of a Son, Prophesied: Can Satan and Sin Destroy the Work of God?**

- ***Satan's work to thwart the purpose, plan and work of God goes back to the heavens and also then the earth. The Lord created all things, the universe, the world, the earth, life on earth, mankind in Adam and then Eve. Satan did his work as well, in instigating Eve and Adam to sin, and then continued on the Long War Against God with a focus on the Promise of the Coming Redeemer — chapters 1-3. God's response is a judgment on satan with an implied blessing to come through the Seed of the Woman:***

***[READ ] Gen. 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.***

- ***Of course, this verse and its promise set the stage for the entire Bible and the Long War Against God. All show God's sovereignty over all of creation and over humanity — but especially over God***

*chosen people. And, admittedly some intersections are more influential than others as we shall see in today's study in Genesis. A quick overview of some of those intersections would include these:*

- *Cain and Abel and Seth and their descendants — chapters 4 & 5*
- *Noah, the Ark, and the Flood (chapters 6 - 8) and promise to never destroy the earth again with a flood, but his absolute Sovereignty over mankind is again so clearly revealed here. Again, satan has failed!*
- *Ham's sin and Canaan's curse — chapter 9*
- *The descendants of Noah through Shem, of Japheth and of Ham down to Nimrod are listed here along with Babel's tower and its judgment with the division of peoples and languages to Abram and Lot and their trek to Haran — chapters 10 & 11*

## **II. The Gift of a Son, Promised — And There are Many Challenges:**

- *Satan seeks to thwart the plan of Almighty God regarding the promised seed. But he is not omniscient. He watches carefully though and has many angelic, demonic slaves to carry out his bidding.*

*So as the Lord brings forth his plan, one step at a time, satan does all that he can to interfere. Nothing, not even satan with his minions, can prevent the purpose of God from being accomplished, for GOD IS SOVEREIGN (though there are many, many challenges listed in these chapters):*

- *God calls out some Shemites from the rest of their brethren — chapters 11 & 12 as Terah, Abram, Lot and wives leave Ur for the promised land. They stop in Haran, just outside the border of Canaan.*
- *Now we have reached that great chapter where Abram is justified by faith and the promises of a son, a great family and heritage, and the land are renewed — chapter 15:*

***[READ ] Gen. 12:1-5 [the land promises are given with implied descendants and therefore a son]***

**1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:**

**2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:**

**3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**

**4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.**

**5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.**

- ***They dwelt for a time in Haran (named after Lot's father who had died in Ur) until Terah had died, then they departed into the land of Canaan, the land of promise. Gen. 11-12 is the introduction to the sacred history of the Patriarch Abraham and the story of the wonderful promise as we have just seen. Abraham's story (Abram's, before the son is given) is full of surprises:***
- ***Abram goes to Egypt because of the famine and gives Sarah to Pharaoh, but God protects her — chapter 12***
- ***Abram and Lot separate — Lot goes to Sodom, Abram remains in the land of promise — chapter 13***
- ***Lot is captured by the a group of kings that took Sodom & Gomorrah captive but Abram and his servants are victorious over them delivering Lot to the King of Sodom's restored domain; Melchizedek, "the priest of the most high God" comes to fellowship with and encourage Abram and offers him the blessings of Almighty God. This, again, shows God's sovereignty, doesn't it? — chapter 14. But now we have reached the great 15th chapter where we need to dwell today:***

**[READ ] Gen 15:1-7 [the great section on Justification quotes by Paul]**

**1 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.**

**2 And Abram said,**

**3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.**

**4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.**

**5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.**

**6 And he believed [in] the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.**

**7 And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.**

- ***What is truly important though is not the gift of the land by the one who owns it all, but what is written here in verse 6, “And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness”. This is not about physical things like land and riches, but about relationship. Abraham’s response is most interesting. The whole conversations is astounding and wonderful indeed:***

- ***First the statement by the Lord (Verse 1):*** “Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.”
- ***Then Abraham’s response (verse 3):*** “Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.”
- ***The Lord’s response follows (Verses 4 & 5):*** “This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.” ***Note that this is a sacred promise of the Lord God who is sovereign over all the world, mankind, and therefore the history yet to come. There is so much here, isn’t there?***
- ***But, as we close, Moses’s comment in verse 6 and finally the Lord’s renewing of the Land Promises in verse 7 must be carefully considered:***

***[READ ] Gen 15:12-15 [the prophecy of the 400 years of bondage in Egypt]***

**8 And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?**

9 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

**12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.**

**13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;**

**14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.**

**15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.**

16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

**19 The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,**

**20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,**

**21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.**

- ***These including verses constitute a summary of a greatly expanded land grant that has never been even close to fulfillment, even in the days of Solomon. Its fulfillment awaits the time of the Millennial Kingdom. But the Sovereign Lord God had spoken to Abraham and his seed with these words written here. AND WHAT AN ENCOURAGEMENT THEY ARE TO ALL OF US!! GOD IS SOVEREIGN, AMEN!***
- ***Paul went to get lengths so many centuries later to write this about it in this manner:***

***[READ ] Rom. 4:16-21 [Paul's commentary on Abraham's justification by faith alone]***

***16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the***



*law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,*

*17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*

*18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.*

*19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:*

*20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*

*21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

- *The Sovereignty of God is so clearly revealed in all of these words in Genesis. Amen and amen.*

#### **Conclusions and Application:**

- *The Sovereignty of God is written on every page of Genesis, isn't it. This should be a great encouragement to us all. Has it been? I trust so.*
- *God will keep his promises toward us as well, just as he did with Abram as we shall see next time, Lord willing, as we see:*