

***“The Foundations of Our Faith Revealed, Theme by Theme in Genesis —  
The Genesis Themes and Their Consequences for Pauline Doctrine,  
Part 6”***

***Our Outline Today: The Mark of the Testimony, Verses that made a difference for me.***

***Next Time: The Glory***

***Last Time: The Suffering and the Testimony, in Abraham, in Jacob, in Joseph, and in Paul***

- ***Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph. What were their walk in faith like as revealed here in God’s word, designed to give us, we should remember, hope?***

***Heb. 11:17-22***

***17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,***

***18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:***

***19 Accounting that God was able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.***

***20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.***

***21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff.***

***22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.***

- ***Of course since this was written about the Old Testament patriarchs, Paul was not included in the list. We did look at Paul however and his sufferings and testimony and concluded with a quick overview of all of his writings about his own personal sufferings and therefore the foundation of his testimony, for indeed it was his sufferings that provided that foundation. It is the same for us, of course. That is the theme of our study today. Yes, there is much value in studying the scripture as Paul writes: “that we might have hope” as these patriarch’s did. Amen.***
- ***The plan for our study today is to review last week’s lesson but especially to focus on the Mark of Testimony that just two of God’s chosen ones possessed, Jacob and then Paul, and then to apply this to ourselves, our Mark and Its Testimony, for surely we all, unless we were only saved recently, we all have such a Mark AND such a Testimony...***

***Our Outline Today: The Mark and Its Testimony — in Jacob, in Paul, and in Ourselves:***

- ***The Mark and Its Testimony — in Jacob***
- ***The Mark and Its Testimony — in Paul***
- ***The Mark and Its Testimony — in Ourselves***

***We could have gone back to Abraham, to Isaac, or earlier, to Noah, but we begin today with Jacob, for there is more written about his sufferings and how they marked his life providing his testimony than perhaps any other Biblical figure except Paul himself. We will look again at his as our example, and then ask the question, “in what ways is Paul’s mark of testimony our own example?” And, when we read of his trials and victories, do we see ourselves in that grand history? For what God was doing in Paul’s life in many ways (but not all — he was an apostle, remember, and we are not) he is or may be doing in ours, praise his glorious name.***

***I. The Mark and Its Testimony — In Jacob:***

- ***We start with The sufferings that came to him were often overwhelming indeed. We have looked at these verses several times.***

***Gen. 32:1-8***

**1 And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.**

**2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This *is* God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim. [*Or, in Hebrew, “two hosts or two camps”*]**

**3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.**

**4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now:**

**5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.**

**6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.**

**7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;**

**8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.**

- *So Jacob in his human strength was acting here like a military man. He was trying his best to minimize the potential danger of an attack by his brother Esau. But, as he will learn, the Lord God can change the probabilities and he will do that here dramatically to Jacob's very great advantage.*
- *Through it all Jacob will be changed, even marked, forever!*

**Gen. 32:9-12**

**9** And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

**10** I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

**11** Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, *and* the mother with the children.

**12** And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

- *So Jacob worships the Lord testifying but reminding the Lord of his promises . Verse 10 shows his humility before the Lord, but the promises he repeats in 9 and 12 show his dependence on the Lord's faithfulness as well.*
- *But verse 9, the references to Abraham and Isaac and "their" God, show his failure at this point to trust in the Lord God. But that also will soon change with the Mark of that God-given transformation becoming transparently clear to all. When God marks a person as his own it is a wonderful thing indeed.*

**Gen. 32:22-23**

**22** And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok.

**23** And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

- *Now the supreme trial of his life occurs, the one that will mark him forever:*

**[READ ] Gen. 32:24-32**

**24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.**

**25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.**

**26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.**

**27 And he said unto him, What *is* thy name? And he said, Jacob.**

**28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.**

**29 And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore *is* it *that* thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.**

**30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. [*The Hebrew name means lit. "The face of God"!*]**

**31 And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. [*The same word as in verse 30*]**

**32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which *is* upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.**

- ***And so it was for Jacob as he wrestled with God bringing to him a mark that continued with him for all of his life. He was wounded in his flesh so that he could not walk without his shepherd's staff and that provided a foundation in life for witness, for testimony. You will remember the words well in Gen. 32:***
- ***The Mark of his Testimony was so significant that it affected his children and all following generations as verse 32 indicates:***

**Gen. 32:32** Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.

- ***So what is the staff the sign of? That is a key question. Primarily that Jacob was born a shepherd, was raised a shepherd, and would die a shepherd. He was an alien and a stranger in a strange land owned by others. He and his family were allowed to live in that land but were entirely dependent on the Lord for their provision. Thus it often is for shepherds.***

- *Jacob's blessing given to his son Joseph at the end of his life illustrates this so well. That is found in chapter 49. I cannot even imagine how much this touched Joseph considering all that he had been through in life. But the Mark of His Testimony is clear here isn't it, in all the words of that blessing?*

**Gen. 49:22-26**

**22 Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:**

**23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at *him*, and hated him:**

**24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence *is* the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)**

**25 *Even* by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb:**

**26 The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.**

- *Both names are given, Jacob, signifying his humility in the flesh so often proven in his life, and Israel, the new name given by the Lord that signified so much. Yes, he was the God of Abraham and Isaac, but now also of Jacob as he testifies here.*
- *The Lord had kept his promises toward these patriarchs and now Jacob passes a blessing on the his son Joseph who had also suffered so very much. Amen.*

*The language here is so instructive:*

- *His own God: "the mighty God of Jacob"*
- *The shepherd: The promised Seed of the Woman, the redeemer*
- *The types continue: "the Stone of Israel"*
- *And then he must go on with: "the God of thy father, "the Almighty"*
- *Finally, the word "blessing" repeated SIX TIMES! Most of this is still unfulfilled — but it will be at God's appointed time.*
- *See the blessing on Judah in chapter 49:9-12 for more typology and prophetic language to be fulfilled in the Great Tribulation and Kingdom.*

- *So Jacob bore the indelible marks of the Lord in his life as his staff signified. And that was several fold too as it was necessary for him the walk as shepherds must always be able to do.*
- *This is further underscored in Joseph's instructions to his father as he introduces them to Pharaoh. We see that just before in chapter 46. This has a silver lining as it were, for the Egyptians hate shepherds and by this fact Joseph knew that they would be settled in Goshen, a fine place indeed!*

**Gen. 46:30-34**

30 And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou *art* yet alive.

31 And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, **My brethren, and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me;**

**32 And the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.**

**33 And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What *is* your occupation?**

**34 That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, *and* also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd *is* an abomination unto the Egyptians.**

- *Why make this so significant. It is only a walking stick or cane, right?*

***Because it is that significant. For Paul writes of this further in Hebrews in this way in 11:21: "By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff." This is singled out as the one act of faith for Jacob!! Jacob finished his life well, worshipping on the top of his staff. It simply cannot be true the staff is not that important.***

***Consider the meaning of that.***

- ***The new Lord-given name, Israel or Prince, the hip infirmity, and therefore the staff accommodation are the foundation of Jacob's testimony. It is through his weaknesses at the hand of the Lord that the Lord determined to use for his glory!***

***What are our marks of testimony? There are some, I am sure.***

***II. The Mark and Its Testimony – In Paul:***

- ***It is an ongoing question unbelievers always ask (and believers do too) “why do good people suffer so much” if there is truly a God that loves them? An assumption underlies that question, that suffering in this life is the result of our sin and unbelief as God’s children. But God has a higher purpose for bringing suffering into the life of a believer. And his higher purpose, as I have been sharing here in our studies in Genesis, is most important for us to know.***
- ***Is God really still judging us because of our sin even though we are living under grace? Many are teaching this error but No, for that is not the reason for the suffering at all according to Philippians 1, Ephesians, and Colossians 1.***

***There we read that there is a different and greater purpose for the suffering of the saints today under grace: That is to share with him in his ongoing suffering and then also to share with him in his glory! What an amazing privilege we have. In Paul we see that greater purpose magnified for each of us to clearly see how God is working today under grace.***

***We are the body but he is the head. And, he dwells within each of us! So his sufferings are ours and ours are his. Amen. So blessed indeed is this teaching and the great work of grace in us that makes it a reality. That is our main focus today as it is one of the central teachings of the apostle Paul for us Gentiles – and it is largely being missed in the preaching and teaching so common today. For the focus for so many pastors and teachers in our own day is on Christ’s earthly ministry instead of where it should be, on Christ’s heavenly ministry through Paul, our apostle.***

***But what does Paul write about that? Last time we began with two defining selection of verses in Philippians and Colossians that state the Pauline teaching regarding suffering in the life of a believer:***

***Phil. 1:29-30***

***29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;***

**30 Having the same conflict [lit. “agony”] which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me. [So our suffering with Christ is a “grace” gift.]**

- ***That is the teaching. But how was that reality demonstrated in Paul’s life for all to see?***

**[READ ] Col. 1:23-25**

**23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;**

**24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:**

**25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;**

**26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:**

**27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:**

**28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:**

**29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.**

- ***As we have shared here so often, this is at the very center of the doctrines of grace as Paul teaches it. May we take it to heart and rejoice in it and never skip past it or over it as if it is of little importance. For the revelation given by the ascended Christ Jesus to Paul for our benefit is the revelation of God’s working in us believers today, under grace. The Law is not operative today. But grace is, as Titus 2:11-13 make so plain:***

***Tit. 2:11-13***

**11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,**

**12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;**

**13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;**

- ***For indeed we are a blessed and privileged people due to God’s unlimited provision of his abundant grace through his son Jesus Christ. And it is our privilege to suffer with Christ specifically for the reason that we have been made members of his body enjoying all***



***the benefits of his resurrection quality of life. This most intimate of relationships brings heavenly blessings both in this life and for eternity, but it also brings us into the realm of Christ's own suffering during this dispensation of grace. Amen.***

***Without those sufferings together with him we would therefore be missing so much of what God is doing today. We would be missing the abundance of his LIFE. Following Paul in this high calling is our opportunity! To receive this abundant grace and to consequently reign in life though the one man Christ Jesus sharing his new life.***

- ***Now for even more wonderful teaching where Paul shares so powerfully his own Mark of Testimony in 2 Corinthians 4:***

***2 Cor. 4:5-8***

***5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. [This speaks of our intimate union with Christ, doesn't it?]***

***6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. [Christ was revealed in and through Paul]***

***7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.***

***8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;***

***[READ ] 2 Cor. 4:9-12***

***9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;***

***10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.***

***11 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.***

***12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.***

- ***The wording here is so very important: "... in the face of Jesus Christ". I can do no more here this morning than refer you to some scriptures for further study: 1 Cor. 13:12, 2 Cor. 3:18 and 4:6, Gal. 4:11-16. I will read just one of those:***

***Gal. 4:13-16***

***13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.***

14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if *it had been possible*, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

- *Please note that there is more here than a teaching about how God is working today under grace. Paul is giving his testimony about how God worked IN HIM, his testimony of how God revealed Christ Jesus through Paul the Man!! He was a marked man as he boldly proclaims, one whom the Lord marked and used for his glory. It was through his suffering, though his infirmities, that God chose to powerfully work.*
- *Paul was testifying that being identified with Christ in his death has consequences. Being identified with Christ in his life also has consequences (or should if only ...). Paul was a living example for our sakes he writes here: "For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you." **May it be so for us, for you, and for me, today and always. These verses have changed my life. What about yours? May today be the day.***

*But there is more:*

**[READ ] 2 Cor. 4:13-18**

13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you.

15 For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

- *See also 2 Cor. 6:1-10:*

**2 Cor. 6:1** *We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.*

- *These words are so powerful. What do I mean when I say that? That even as the gospel is the power of God to salvation, these words are the power of God unto sanctification and growth in the Christian Life. Do they draw you into the realm of his abundant grace? I pray that they do.*

**2 Cor. 6:2-10**

2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)

3 Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

4 But in all *things* approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;

6 By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,

7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true;

9 As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed;

10 As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

- *Now, let's proceed to consider how the Lord worked in Paul to enable him to comprehend this transforming truth about the sufferings today.*

**2 Cor. 12:6-10**

6 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but *now* I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me *to be*, or *that* he heareth of me.

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

**10** Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

- *So Paul had well learned much as these 2 Corinthians verses say so powerfully. They along both so many others have changed my life and continue to do so today. Paul wrote again on this theme in Phil. 4:*

***Phil. 4:9-13***

**9** Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

**10** But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

**11** Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.

**12** I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

**13** I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

- *And then there are all the other verses in his letters. I read them last time we met. Please study them carefully and take to heart their meaning for there is so much spiritual food there. Our hearts so need this teaching:*

**Rom. 8:17** And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.,

**2 Cor. 1:5** For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

**Gal 2:20** I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

**2 Tim. 2:12** If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

***Finally, the Mark of the Testimony in Paul***

***[READ ] Gal. 6:11-18***

**11** Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

**12** As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

**13** For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

**14** But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

**15** For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

**16** And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

**17** From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

**18** Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

- *What mark has the Lord left on you, beloved?*

### ***III. The Mark and Its Testimony – In Ourselves:***

***Heb. 11:21*** By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, [leaning] upon the top of his staff.

- *What is the essence of testimony and what is its proper ending?*
- *How did Jacob's life end? Did he finish well? What were the marks of his testimony at his life's end?*
  - *His faith was central*
  - *He blessed his children and grandchildren*
  - *He was living in the sphere of worship*
- *Do you have any doubt that his final words had power with those that heard?*

### ***Conclusions / Application:***

### ***The Genesis Themes and Their Consequences for Pauline Doctrine:***

***Summarizing what we have focused on today, it is our privilege to suffer with him for his glory and grace.***

***As members of his heavenly Body of Christ, our relationship with him is real, permanent, and intimate. So when he suffers, so do we, and when we do, he does as well. The same goes for our rejoicing and his as this is the nature of our union. Praise God for his unsearchable gift by his inexhaustible grace and love. Amen and amen.***

***May these verses draw us always into the realm of his working and his powerful grace as he transforms us day by day and hour by hour. And may we be a witness and a testimony always.***

***These verses have changed my life forever. What Makes the Difference for You?***