

Opening Scripture Reading/Prayer:

Exodus 31:12-17

The Sabbath

¹² And the Lord said to Moses, ¹³ “You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you . . . ¹⁶ Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. ¹⁷ It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.’”

Isaiah 56

Salvation for Foreigners

¹ Thus says the LORD:

“Keep justice, and do righteousness,
for soon my salvation will come,
and my righteousness be revealed.

² Blessed is the man who does this,
and the son of man who holds it fast,
who keeps the Sabbath, not profaning it,
and keeps his hand from doing any evil.”

³ Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say,
“The LORD will surely separate me from his people”;

and let not the eunuch say,
“Behold, I am a dry tree.”

⁴ For thus says the LORD:

“To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,
who choose the things that please me
and hold fast my covenant,

⁵ I will give in my house and within my walls
a monument and a name
better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
that shall not be cut off.

⁶ “And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD,
and to be his servants,

everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it,
and holds fast my covenant—

⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain,
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples.”

⁸ The Lord GOD,

who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares,
“I will gather yet others to him
besides those already gathered.”

Isaiah 58:13-14

¹³ “If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath,
from doing your pleasure on my holy day,
and call the Sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the Lord honorable;
if you honor it, not going your own ways,
or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly;
¹⁴ then you shall take delight in the Lord,
and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth;
I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Isaiah 66:22-23

²² “For as the new heavens and the new earth
that I make
shall remain before me, says the LORD,
so shall your offspring and your name remain.
²³ From new moon to new moon,
and from Sabbath to Sabbath,
all flesh shall come to worship before me,
declares the LORD.

Ezekiel 20:20

*I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my
judgments, and do them; and keep my SABBATHS holy; and they shall
be a SIGN between me and you,
that ye may now that I am the LORD your God.*

Jesus Lord of the Sabbath

“For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.” Matthew 12:8

Shadows

Freedom from Human Rules

“Let no one therefore judge you in eating or in drinking, or in respect of a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths
which are a shadow of what is to come but the Body of the Messiah.”
Colossians 2:16-17 (KJV)

Here, he is telling us that the **Appointed Times** (Feast Days) and the Sabbath are a **shadow of things to come**. A shadow is of the same image as what it is portraying. So, doesn't this imply these will be observed in the future kingdom? And note the text says that these commands **ARE** a shadow of things to come, **not** “were a shadow” or “used to be a shadow” of things to come. He then says, ‘**let no man judge you**’ (in these things: new moon; Sabbath; feasts) ‘*but the Body of Messiah*.’ The word “is” has been added to the original text and did not appear in the Greek.

The Body of Messiah is to judge each other with regard to these things. A second witness to this can be found in the following verses:

“But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone called ‘a brother,’ if he is one who whores, or greedy of gain, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler – not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge, to pick out by separating, to be of opinion, to judge those who are inside? But Elohim judges those who are outside. And put away the wicked one from among you!” **1 Corinthians 5:11-13**

“*not judge*” - (*krínō* (2919): to distinguish (to approve what is correct and reject what is wrong - discern).

“*to pick out*”: choose.

“*opinion*”: decide.

“*to judge*”: “bringing to trail” - expressing severe disapproval of (someone or something), typically in a formal statement).

Let's Remember what God told the People to do before they got delivered out of Egypt, which we are reminded to do prior to Christ's 2nd Coming:

1. I Will Provide the Way Out and All the Way Into the Promise Land

Exodus 11:2 - Speak now in the hearing of the people, that they ask, every man of his neighbor and every woman of her neighbor, for silver and gold jewelry.”

2. Know the Times

Exodus 12:1-17 - The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “**This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you.** ³Tell all the

congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household.

. . . ⁷“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it . . .

. . . ¹³The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴“This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast . . .

. . . ¹⁷And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day, throughout your generations, as a statute forever.”

Word Study by Ryan Roberts of Key 2 Changes

This Week:

“Sacrifice is the Beginning of God’s Provision!”

The Vision God has Given God’s People to Focus their Heart, Mind, and Purpose in this Life . . .

VAYERA (And He Appeared) Genesis 18:1–22:24; 2 Kings 4:1–37; Luke 1:26–38, 24:36–53

“The Lord APPEARED to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day.” Genesis 18:1

This portion of text (Genesis 18-22) is a prophetic picture of our Messiah, fulfilling the promised chosen servant of the promise (Abraham’s Circumcision / Mary’s conception of Jesus), fulfilling the promised “new covenant” (Circumcision of the Heart), fulfilling the promised victory over death (Lot and his family being saved from the Wrath of God), fulfilling the promised first born of the promise (Birth of Isaac / the son of the Ultimate Sacrifice), and fulfilling the promised provision of salvation (the Ram stuck in the thicket / Jesus’ death and resurrection).

Inheritance is the Key, either an earthly inheritance or a heavenly inheritance, both produce a blessing, but only one produces an eternal blessing. Monetary gain is the currency of the earthly inheritance, but it is faith that is the currency of eternity; as without Faith it is impossible to please God (i.e. Matthew 6:19-21 – Treasures in Heaven – ¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also; The Rich Young Ruler).

THE BINDING OF ISAAC This particular question—what is it that sets apart the Binding (Akeidah) from the countless other instances of human martyrdom and self-sacrifice – is raised by almost all the commentaries and expounders of Torah. For the “Binding of Isaac” has come to represent the ultimate in G-d’s peoples (the Jew’s) devotion to G-d.

Meaning of Jew:

Anyone who rejects idolatry is called a Jew (Yehudi).

One who acknowledges G-d’s existence and submits to His authority—to the extent that he is willing to sacrifice his life for the sanctification of His name—he is called a Jew.

(our aligning our heart and mind with the heart and mind of our Heavenly Father – true prayer)

“And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”
Romans 8:27

Every morning, **we preface our prayers by reading the Torah’s account of the Binding (Akeidah) and then say: “Master of the Universe! Just as Abraham our father suppressed his compassion for his only son to do Your will with a whole heart, so may Your compassion suppress Your wrath against us, and may Your mercy prevail over Your attributes of strict justice.”**

And on Rosh Hashanah, when the world trembles in judgment before G-d, we evoke the Binding of Isaac by sounding the horn of a ram (reminiscent of the ram which replaced Isaac as an offering) as if to say: If we have no other merit, remember Abraham’s deed. Remember how the first Jew bound all succeeding generations of Jews in a covenant of self-sacrifice to You. Obviously, the supreme test of a person’s faith is his willingness to sacrifice his very existence for its sake. But what is so unique about Abraham’s sacrifice? Have not countless thousands of Jews given their lives rather than renounce their covenant with G-d.

Nevertheless, as the Arabanel writes in his commentary on Genesis, it is the Binding of Isaac “that is forever on our lips in our prayers . . . For in it lies the entire strength of Israel and their merit before their Heavenly Father . . .” Why?

For Abraham bequeathed to his descendents the essence of Jewishness: that at the core of one’s very being lies not the self but one’s commitment to the Creator. And that, ultimately, one’s every choice and act is an expression of that “spark of Divinity” within. *(For faith defined is Loyalty to God practiced towards reaching the prize, therefore, let us each commit our lives towards practicing perfection with the ultimate goal of immulating the image of God that we were Created to immulate, the light of the World, God’s way, God’s truth, God’s life. - Ryan)*

Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, www.therebbe.org; adapted by Yanki Tauber, editor@chabadonline.com.

Transition: So, let’s begin by ourselves reading the account of the Binding:

The Sacrifice of Isaac

God’s Covenant is the Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever Hebrews 3:18 (Covenant with Abram (Genesis 15:1-21), Abraham (Genesis 17:5), The Faith of Abraham Extended to You and I (Matthew 5:20))

Genesis 12:1-4

The Call of Abram

¹Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

⁴So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

Genesis 17:18

Abraham and the Covenant of Circumcision

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty; **WALK BEFORE ME (not a walk with God as of men before Abraham, but as a fulfillment of God’s greatest Good for our lives), and be blameless.** ²that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.” ³Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, ⁴“Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be (your destiny and purpose, with God, has changed from self-promotion to God’s Kingdom restoration and expansion) to called Abram (father), but your name shall be Abraham (the change of name emphasizes the new mission of Abraham, which is “To Bring all the peoples under the wings of the presence of God in the world” – father of many/nations), for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. ⁷And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. ⁸And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”

⁹And God said to Abraham, “As for you, **you shall keep MY COVENANT, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations.** ¹⁰This is **MY COVENANT, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be CIRCUMCISED.** ¹¹**You shall be CIRCUMCISED in the flesh** of your foreskins, and it shall be a **SIGN** of the covenant between me and you. ¹²He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, ¹³both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be **CIRCUMCISED. So shall MY COVENANT be in your flesh an everlasting covenant.** ¹⁴Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised **in the flesh** of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; **he has BROKEN my covenant.**”

Genesis 22:1

Isaac’s Binding

¹After these things **God tested** (testimony of our Faith/Trust in God, opening the door of eternity that all man might see the mighty hand of God working in and through our lives, reaching our fullest potential, as we were created.) God and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am” (the ultimate test of our faith/loyalty towards God, which Adam fled from, when God asked Adam where he was, Adam answered I was hiding because I was naked, crippled by his perceived limitations, Abraham instead, asked the same question, after many trials and tests that he faced up to this question, “Abraham!” answers in his perceived potential, “Here I am”, opening the eternity of God’s greatest Good for Abraham and full potential of impacting the world with his Faith in God, exercising his full potential of loyalty towards God’s Greatest Good for Abraham and the Light of God’s Goodness to draw the world back in right relationship with God).

Transition: Read the Binding

Genesis 22:1-19

The Sacrifice of Isaac

¹After these things **God tested Abraham** and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ²He said, “Take 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.” ³So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey,

³and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. ⁵Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy^[p] will go over there and worship and come again to you.” ⁶And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. ⁷And Isaac

said to his father Abraham, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”⁸ Abraham said, “God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So they went both of them together.

⁹ When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ¹² He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”

¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, “The Lord will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”

¹⁵ And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶ and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” ¹⁹ So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba. And Abraham lived at Beersheba.

Transition: Uncovering God's Appointed Times

Here we see God uncovering the **Appointed Times** (the set times in history when God will reveal himself for the purpose of redeeming His creation back into right relationship with Him) of the True Followers of the Faith, those who are loyal to practicing the Ultimate goal of our Faith, Sacrifice. Following is the Journey towards that goal that we will see demonstrated through the life of Abraham, that we too are called to demonstrate:

John 15:12-17 ¹²“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ **Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends** (the ultimate **GOAL** of our creation, to lay our lives down for one another, to restore man back in right relationship with their creator). ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but **I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you** (the ultimate **PURPOSE** of our creation, to let God be known and the mysteries of God uncovered). ¹⁶ **You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide** (the ultimate **CALLING** of our creation, to answer the call of God to pursue our greatest good in our lives, our best self in becoming like God, reaching our full potential of creation, that the world might see God in and through our lives (i.e. Hebrews 12:14, “pursue holiness, because without it the world will not see God.”) . . .

1. **Abram's call** – Our answer to the call of God to rule our life and change our destiny for the things of God instead of for the things of this world, by receiving His name as our identity and His spirit as our empowerment to fulfill His mission.
2. **Abraham's circumcision** – Our obedience to God's rules for life.
3. **Abraham's inheritance** – Our promise to be blessed and to be a blessing.
4. **Abraham's sacrifice** – Our sacrifice of denying ourselves to walk in the light of eternity that we might lead others into that same light of eternity.

Let's begin by uncovering the first Appointed Time of the True Followers of the Faith:

1. **Abram's call** – Our answer to the call of God to rule our life and change our destiny for the things of God instead of for the things of this world, by receiving His name as our identity and His spirit as our empowerment to fulfill His mission.

Transition – Our daily Cry to God and is daily seeking an Answer:

“And G-d revealed himself to Abraham...” **Why, wept the child, doesn't G-d reveal Himself to me?**

“**The Lord APPEARED** to Abraham near the great trees of **Mamre** while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day.” Genesis 18:1

Mamre: means myrrh, a bitter and fragrant spice that was originally used to mark the tabernacle, but which came to be used to proclaim, the sense of smell, **THE CONSUMMATION OF MARRIAGE**. Hence, despite its links to words that mostly describe hardship, Myrrh oil was known as the “oil of joy”. The famous “oaks of Mamre” obviously don't denote a breezy stand of fine timber but **a wisdom school**.

The Sense of Smell:

2 Corinthians 2:14-20

¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵ For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶ to one a

fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? ¹⁷For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

Mark 9:49

⁴⁹For everyone will be salted with fire.

Myrrh: is a sap-like substance that comes from trees. It is often used as a fragrance, to flavor food products, and for its potential health benefits:

1. **Kills Harmful Bacteria** (in Biblical times, myrrh incense — often in combination with frankincense — was burned in places of worship to help purify the air and prevent the spread of contagious diseases, including those caused by bacteria)
2. **May Support Oral Health**
3. **Supports Skin Health and May Help Heal Sores**
4. **Combats Pain and Swelling**
5. **May Be a Powerful Antioxidant** (defends your cells from damage, aging, diseases)
6. **Kills Some Parasites** (including pets, sexual activity, contaminated food or water)
7. **Sunscreen**
8. **Cancer** (help kill or slow the growth of **cancer cells**)
9. **Gut health**
10. **Mold** (help kill mold)

Deuteronomy 27:26 – 28:67

²⁶“**Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.**” And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

Blessings for Obedience

²⁸“And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. ²And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God . . . ⁷“**The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways . . .**” ⁹The Lord will establish you as a people holy to himself, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in his ways . . . ¹³ . . . if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, being careful to do them, ¹⁴and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Curses for Disobedience

¹⁵“But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you . . . ²⁰“The Lord will send on you curses, confusion, and frustration in all that you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me . . . ²²The Lord will strike you with wasting disease and with fever . . . ²⁵“The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. **You shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them . . .**” ²⁷The Lord will strike you with the boils of Egypt, and with tumors and scabs and itch, of which you cannot be healed. ²⁸The Lord will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of mind, ²⁹and . . . you shall not prosper in your ways. And you shall be only oppressed and robbed continually, and there shall be no one to help you . . . ³³ . . . you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually, ³⁴so that you are driven mad by the sights that your eyes see . . . ³⁷And you shall become a horror, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples where the Lord will lead you away . . . ⁴³The sojourner who is among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower . . . ⁴⁵“All these curses shall come upon you and pursue you and overtake you till you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that he commanded you. ⁴⁶They shall be a sign and a wonder against you and your offspring forever. ⁴⁷**Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, because of the abundance of all things . . .**” ⁵⁸“**If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God,**” ⁵⁹**then the Lord will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions, afflictions severe and lasting, and sicknesses grievous and lasting . . .**” ⁶²Whereas you were as numerous as the stars of heaven, you shall be left few in number, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God. ⁶³And as the Lord took delight in doing you good and multiplying you, so the Lord will take delight in bringing ruin upon you and destroying you . . . ⁶⁶**Your life shall hang in doubt before you. Night and day you shall be in dread and have no assurance of your life.**” ⁶⁷In the morning you shall say, ‘If only it were evening!’ and at evening you shall say, ‘If only it were morning!’ because of the dread that your heart shall feel, and the sights that your eyes shall see.

Romans 8:1-39

Life in the Spirit

¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus^{ab} from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Heirs with Christ

¹²So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶The

Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Future Glory

¹⁸For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.¹⁹For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.²²For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.²³And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.²⁴For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.²⁷ **And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.**²⁸And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

God's Everlasting Love

³¹What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ³³Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.³⁴Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Transition: Why did God Choose Abraham, following we find out why?:

Genesis 18:19

¹⁹For I have chosen him, **that he may command his children and his household after him** (Make Disciples – the Great Commission) **to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.**”

Let's begin by uncovering the second Appointed Time of the True Followers of the Faith:

2. Abraham's circumcision – Our obedience to God's rules for life.

Circumcision is the sign of the covenant between God and Abraham and His descendants forever.

For instance, when David referred to the giant Goliath, he called him an “uncircumcised Philistine.”

“For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” 1 Samuel 17:26

David was not announcing the state of Goliath's physical condition; rather, he was emphasizing the fact that this giant was not in holy covenant with the God of Israel.

In other words, David was proclaiming a message of faith **that God would uphold the covenant and protect Israel.** It might have been challenging not to look on the strength and prowess of his enemy, but David overcame and, instead, looked to the strength and faithfulness of the God of Israel.

Although the commandment to the Jewish People to circumcise their sons on the 8th day still holds true, the Torah tells us that God will circumcise our hearts and those of our descendants — to love and obey Him when we come back into the Land:

“The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love Him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.” Deuteronomy 30:6

The ancient Hebrew prophet, Jeremiah, also called the Jewish People to circumcise their hearts:

“Circumcise yourselves to the LORD; remove the foreskin of your hearts, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest My wrath go forth like fire, and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.” Jeremiah 4:4

The issue of circumcision extends far beyond the physical and becomes a crucial matter of the heart.

The circumcision of the heart is not done with human hands (God's Covenant with Abraham was God's alone with no Assistance of Man, as Abraham Slept) but is only accomplished by the faithful working of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who follow Jesus.

“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Messiah.” Colossians 2:11

Deuteronomy 10:12-22

Fear the LORD/ Circumcise Your Heart

¹² And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³ and to observe the LORD’s commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

¹⁴ To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. ¹⁵ Yet the LORD set his affection on your ancestors and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations—as it is today. ¹⁶ **Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer.** ¹⁷ For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. . . . ²⁰ Fear the LORD your God and serve him. Hold fast to him and take your oaths in his name. ²¹ He is the one you praise; he is your God, who performed for you those great and awesome wonders you saw with your own eyes. ²² Your ancestors who went down into Egypt were seventy in all, and now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky.

CIRCUMCISION: a spiritual interpretation was imposed upon the procedure when the Israelites were instructed to circumcise their hearts (Deut 10:16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.). This demand required them to recognize that, in addition to bearing the physical mark of covenant membership, they were also under obligation to manifest specific spiritual qualities of commitment and obedience to the Lord’s will. Jeremiah (Jerem 4:4 Circumcise yourselves to the Lord . . . because of the evil of your deeds.) made precisely the same demands upon his contemporaries because of their evil deeds, which were the very opposite of what God required. For him, circumcision entailed consecration to the Lord and to the high moral ideals of the covenant, of which holiness was representative (Lev 11:44 For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy.). A true covenant member would be motivated by love of God (Deut 6:5) and one’s neighbor (Lev 19:18). **A simple definition of the meaning of Circumcision is the emotional, physical, and spiritual separation of this world to God’s ways, emotional, physical, and spiritually, or in thought, action, and word:**

Romans 12:1-2

A Living Sacrifice

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a **living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² **Do not be conformed to this world**, but **be transformed by the renewal of your mind**, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Example: This covenant, of circumcision, had not been exercised during the desert wanderings.

“Then Joshua circumcised their sons whom He raised up in their place; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way. So it was, when they had finished circumcising all the people, that **they stayed in their places in the camp till they were healed. Then the LORD said to Joshua, ‘This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.’**” (Joshua 5:7–9)

Deuteronomy 30:1-20

Repentance and Forgiveness

¹ And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, ² and return to the Lord your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, ³ then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. ⁴ If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there he will take you. ⁵ And the Lord your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. ⁶ **And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.** ⁷ And the Lord your God will put all these curses on your foes and enemies who persecuted you. ⁸ **And you shall again obey the voice of the Lord and keep all his commandments that I command you today.** ⁹ The Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. **For the Lord will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers,** ¹⁰ **when you obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.**

The Choice of Life and Death

¹¹ **“For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you**, neither is it far off. ¹² It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ ¹³ Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ ¹⁴ But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

¹⁵ “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. ¹⁶ **If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.** ¹⁷ But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, ¹⁸ I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. **Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live,** ²⁰ **loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”**

Ezekiel 36:26-27

I Will Put My Spirit Within You

²⁶ **And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.** ²⁷ **And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.**

Mark 16:16

¹⁶Whoever believes and is **baptized will be saved**, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Let's begin by uncovering the third Appointed Time of the True Followers of the Faith:

3. Abraham's inheritance – Our promise to be blessed and to be a blessing

Genesis 18:15

¹⁵But Sarah denied it,^[e] saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid. He said, “No, but you did laugh.”

Mo'adim – God's Appointed Times and Promises Fulfilled

“Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time (mo'ed) next year and Sarah shall have a son.” (Genesis 18:14)

After sharing a meal together with Abraham, the angel made an outrageous promise to both him and Sarah: next year, at the appointed time (mo'ed), they would have a son.

The word **mo'ed** (or **mo'adim** in the plural form) is used to describe the appointed festival and remembrance times in Leviticus 23. In English, these times are loosely translated as **feasts of the Lord**, but this is a poor translation, since one is actually a fast.

The **mo'adim** are **special times** that God has chosen or appointed for a specific purpose (a set Divine Appointment when God will Reveal His Redemptive Purposes/Himself to His People – origin: Genesis 1:14-19). In this case, that purpose is the fulfillment of God's promise to give Abraham and Sarah a son.

Genesis 1:14-19: ¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for **seasons (mo'ed – appointed times – God set Appointed Times for the Redemption of Mankind, before Man was even created, and even before Man had even fallen, in the DNA of His Creation, before the Foundations of the World, that He would Reveal Himself at Set Times in History to Redeem His People for Salvation, that None Should Perish)**, and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

Sarah's initial reaction to this promise was to laugh to herself because she was well beyond childbearing age.

To this God responded, “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” Genesis 18:14

There may be promises that we have received from the Lord that perhaps seem impossible; however, **we should be encouraged by the words of Jesus who reminded us, “Everything is possible for him who believes.”** Mark 9:23

In the New Testament, we see another important mo'ed or set time:

An angel came to a young, Jewish woman named Mary to tell her that she would conceive without having known a man intimately, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, her son would be called Yeshua (**Salvation**), and He would reign eternally over the house of Jacob/Israel from the throne of His father David.

While this may seem outside the realm of possibility, the angel told Mary that “nothing will be impossible with God.” Luke 1:37

The same God who parted the Red Sea can truly make a way where there is no way, if we will only believe. But it must happen in His way and His time, not our way on our schedule. Our job is to wait in hope, faith, and expectation until the set time (mo'ed) arrives.

Obeying the Commands of God will Defy the Laws of Nature.

Genesis 18:16-18

¹⁶Then the men set out from there, and they looked down toward Sodom. And Abraham went with them to set them on their way. ¹⁷The Lord said, “**Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,** ¹⁸seeing that **Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?**”

God does not want to hide from you what He wants to do. Gen. 18:17

What has God Promised You . . . Gen. 18:18

Let's begin by uncovering the fourth Appointed Time of the True Followers of the Faith:

4. Abraham's sacrifice – Our sacrifice of denying ourselves to walk in the light of eternity that we might lead others into that same light of eternity.

Transition: So, let's begin by ourselves reading the account of the Binding:

The Sacrifice of Isaac – Genesis 22:1-19

God's Covenant is the Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever Hebrews 3:18 (Covenant with Abram (Genesis 15:1-21), Abraham (Genesis 17:5), The Faith of Abraham Extended to You and I (Matthew 5:20))

¹ After these things God tested Abraham

AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THESE THINGS, THAT G-D DID TEST ABRAHAM (22:1) Said Rabbi Jonathan: A potter does not examine defective vessels, because he cannot give them a single blow without breaking them. What then does he examine? Only the sound vessels, for he will not break them even with many blows. Similarly, the Holy One, blessed be He, tests not the wicked but the righteous. (Midrash Rabbah)

Genesis 22:1

Isaac's Binding

¹ After these things God tested (testimony of our Faith/Trust in God, opening the door of eternity that all man might see the mighty hand of God working in and through our lives, reaching our fullest potential, as we were created.) . . .

¹ and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ² He said, “Take 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.”

Genesis 22:1

Isaac's Binding

¹ . . . Abraham and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am” (the ultimate test of our faith/loyalty towards God, which Adam fled from, when God asked Adam where he was, Adam answered I was hiding because I was naked, crippled by his perceived limitations, Abraham instead, asked the same question, after many trials and tests that he faced up to this question, “Abraham!” answers in his perceived potential, “Here I am”, opening the eternity of God's greatest Good for Abraham and full potential of impacting the world with his Faith in God, exercising his full potential of loyalty towards God's Greatest Good for Abraham and the Light of God's Goodness to draw the world back in right relationship with God).

Cost of the Sacrifice:

Luke 14:26-34

²⁶ “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple . . . ³³ So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

³ So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey,

AND HE SADDLED HIS DONKEY (22:3) This is the very same donkey which Moses Rode to Egypt (cf. Exodus 4:20); and this is the very same donkey upon which the Messiah will arrive (cf. Zechariah 9:9) (Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 25)

³ and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴ On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. ⁵ Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy^[e] will go over there and worship and come again to you.” ⁶ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. ⁷ And Isaac said to his father Abraham, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” ⁸ Abraham said, “God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So they went both of them together.

⁹ When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac

AND HE BOUND ISAAC HIS SON (22:9) Can one bind a man thirty-seven years old without his consent? But when Abraham made to sacrifice his son Isaac, Isaac said to him: ‘Father, I am a young man and am afraid that my body may tremble through fear of the knife and I will grieve you, whereby the slaughter may be rendered unfit and this will not count as a real sacrifice; therefore bind me very firmly.’ (Midrash Rabbah)

⁹ his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ¹² He said, “Do not lay

your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”

AND AN ANGEL OF G-D CALLED TO HIM... “LAY NOT YOUR HAND UPON THE LAD, NEITHER DO ANYTHING TO HIM” (22:11-12)
The founder of Chabad Chassidism, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, once related: In Mezeritch, it was extremely difficult to be accepted as a disciple of our master, Rabbi DovBer. There were a group of Chassidim who, having failed to merit to learn directly from our master, wanted to at least serve his pupils: to bring them water to wash their hands upon waking, to sweep the floors of the study hall, to heat the ovens during the winter months, and so on. These were known as “the oven stokers.” One winter night, as I lay on a bench in the study hall, I overheard a conversation between three of the “oven stokers.” “What was the specialty of the test of the Akeidah?” the first one asked. “If G-d had revealed Himself to me and commanded me to sacrifice my only son, would I not obey?” Answering his own question, he said: “If G-d told me to sacrifice my only son, I would delay my doing so for a while, to keep him with me for a few days. Abraham’s greatness lay in that ‘he arose early in the morning’ to immediately fulfill the divine command.” Said the second one: “If G-d told me to sacrifice my only son, I, too, would waste not a moment to carry out His command. But I would do so with a heavy heart. Abraham’s greatness lay in that he went to the Akeidah with a heart full of joy over the opportunity to fulfill G-d’s will.” Said the third: “I, too, would carry out G-d’s will with joy. I think that Abraham’s uniqueness lies in his reaction upon finding out that it was all a test. When G-d commanded him ‘Do not touch the child, and do nothing to him,’ Abraham was overjoyed—not because his only child would not die, but because he was being given the opportunity to carry out another command of G-d.” Rabbi Schneur Zalman concluded: “Do you think this was mere talk? Each of them was describing the degree of self-sacrifice he himself had attained in his service of the Almighty.”

¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, “The Lord will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”

AND ABRAHAM CALLED THE NAME OF THAT PLACE ADONAI-YIREH (22:14) Shem (the son of Noah) called it Salem, as it is written “And Melchizedek king of Salem” (Genesis 14: 18). Said the Holy One, blessed be He: If I call it Yireh as did Abraham, then Shem, a righteous man, will resent it; while if I call it Salem as did Shem, Abraham, the righteous man, will resent it. Hence I will call it Jerusalem, including both names, Yireh Salem. (Midrash Rabbah)

¹⁵ And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶ and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” ¹⁹ So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba. And Abraham lived at Beersheba.

God Will Provide through our Sacrifice:

Every morning, **we preface our prayers by reading the Torah’s account of the Binding (Akeidah)** and then say: “Master of the Universe! Just as Abraham our father suppressed his compassion for his only son to do Your will with a whole heart, so may Your compassion suppress Your wrath against us, and may Your mercy prevail over Your attributes of strict justice.”

Luke 23

Jesus Before Pilate

¹ Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate. ² And they began to accuse him, saying, “We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.” ³ And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” ⁴ Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no guilt in this man.” ⁵ But they were urgent, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.”

Jesus Before Herod

⁶ When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. ⁷ And when he learned that he belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. ⁸ When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. ⁹ So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. ¹⁰ The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. ¹¹ And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate. ¹² And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.

¹³ Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, ¹⁴ and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him. ¹⁵ Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by him. ¹⁶ I will therefore punish and release him.”^[a]

Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified

¹⁸ But they all cried out together, “Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas”—¹⁹ a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. ²⁰ Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, ²¹ but they kept shouting, “Crucify, crucify him!” ²² A third time he said to them, “Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him.” ²³ But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. ²⁴ So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. ²⁵ He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will.

The Crucifixion

²⁶ And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. ²⁷ And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. ²⁸ But turning to them Jesus said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹ For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ ³⁰ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ ³¹ For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

³² Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. ³³ And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”^[b] And

they cast lots to divide his garments. ³⁵ And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!” ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him,^{l1} “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴² And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” ⁴³ And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

The Death of Jesus

⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵ while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” And having said this he breathed his last. ⁴⁷ Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, “Certainly this man was innocent!” ⁴⁸ And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. ⁴⁹ And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

Jesus Is Buried

⁵⁰ Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, ⁵¹ who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. ⁵² This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. ⁵⁴ It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. ⁵⁵ The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. ⁵⁶ Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

The Resurrection

²⁴ But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. ² And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. ⁵ And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.” ⁸ And they remembered his words, ⁹ and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, ¹¹ but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

On the Road to Emmaus

¹³ That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles^{l1} from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” ¹⁹ And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. ²² Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.” ²⁵ And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

²⁸ So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ²⁹ but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” ³³ And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

³⁶ As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!” ³⁷ But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. ³⁸ And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate before them.

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for^{l1} the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

The Ascension

⁵⁰ And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. ⁵¹ While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³ and were continually in the temple blessing God.

God's Answer to our Sacrifice, our Ultimate Goal, Purpose, and Calling:

Genesis 22:13-14 ¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, “**The Lord will provide**”.

John 15:12-17 ¹² “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ **Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends** (the ultimate **GOAL** of our creation, to lay our lives down for one another, to restore man

back in right relationship with their creator).¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but **I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you** (the ultimate **PURPOSE** of our creation, to let God be known and the mysteries of God uncovered). ¹⁶ **You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide** (the ultimate **CALLING** of our creation, to answer the call of God to pursue our greatest good in our lives, our best self in becoming like God, reaching our full potential of creation, that the world might see God in and through our lives (i.e. Hebrews 12:14, “pursue holiness, because without it the world will not see God.”) . . .

Summary of it all:

Ecclesiastes 12:13 “The end of the matter; all has been heard. **Fear God** (follow Him) and **keep his commandments** (obey Him), for this is the whole duty of man.”

Next Week’s Reading:

Week 5 – CHAYEI SARAH (Life of Sarah)
Genesis 23:1–25:18; 1 Kings 1:1–31; Matthew 2:1–23

Upcoming Event:

Hanukkah (Jesus' Conception) **2021**
will begin in the evening of
Sunday, November 28 and ends in the evening of Monday, December 6