

# Every spiritual blessing

'Blessing' is a central theme of the cross. Paul taught that the *cup of blessing* which we bless is a *participation in the blood of Christ*, and the bread that we break is a participation in the body of Christ. Jesus declared that we have *no life in ourselves* if we do not eat His flesh and drink His blood. He said, 'He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has *eternal life*, and I will *raise him up on the last day*. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood *abides in Me*, and *I in him*.'

We obtain 'blessing' when we abide in Christ and receive the life of God. Blessings are not just the good things that He does for us by meeting our needs, making us prosperous and granting us good health. We must properly understand 'blessing' so that we can live our lives according to the kind intention of *His will*.

Because judgement has already been passed on all flesh, 'blessing' has nothing to do with the advancement of our natural man. Paul writes that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ 'has blessed us with *every spiritual blessing* in the heavenly places *in Christ*'. The Father's blessing provides redemption through the blood of Christ, forgiveness of our trespasses, as well as abundant grace, wisdom and insight. We gain the knowledge of His will, allowing us to participate in an administration suitable for the fullness of times. We are enabled to obtain our inheritance which has been 'predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will'.

## References:

1Co 10:16      Joh 6:54-56  
Jer 25:31      Isa 66:16  
1Jn 2:6        Psa 72:19

## Further Study

Eph 1

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 4

# The blessing of Abraham

The life of Abraham exemplifies the theme of 'blessing'. Paul wrote, 'The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations will be blessed in you". So then *those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham*, the believer.' The covenant purpose of God is expressed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This gospel was preached to Abraham, promising a blessing to those who are of faith. The apostle explained, 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us – for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"- in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' The blessing of Abraham is the promise of the Spirit, available to us in Christ Jesus.

The apostle Peter said that we have been granted His precious and magnificent *promises*, so that by them we may become '*partakers of the divine nature*, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust'. When we are receiving the promise of the Spirit, we are partaking of the divine nature. We inherit our name, works and life as a son of God in Christ Jesus. Paul drew our attention to this reality when he testified that he was 'an apostle of Christ Jesus *by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus*'.

The secret of our 'new self', or sonship, is hidden in Christ. All references to 'blessing', 'promise' and 'inheritance' in the account of Abraham's life, are speaking to us about our sonship.

## References:

2Pe 1:4      2Ti 1:1  
Col 3:3      Gen 26:4-5  
Gal 3:8-9, 13-14

## Further Study

Gen 15

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 5

# A renewed spirit

It is important to note that 'blessing' refers to *both* the divine nature *and* the capacity to receive the divine nature. Scriptural references to 'blessing', reveal how we receive God's magnificent and precious promises; our inheritance as sons of God. Jesus spoke quite specifically about 'blessing' in the 'Beatitudes'. These foundational statements describe how sons of God receive the inheritance of the divine nature. For example, Jesus proclaimed, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'. He wasn't just giving encouragement and hope to those who were distressed or depressed. Jesus was highlighting an important truth.

To be acceptable to God, we must recognise and accept our need for a renewed spirit. As we *continue* to be poor in spirit, we are given a new spirit and a new heart. To obtain an inheritance as a son of God, we need to mourn and be humble. Jesus told us to hunger and thirst for righteousness. He requires us to be merciful and pure in heart. We are to be peacemakers. And further to this, we must be willing to be persecuted and insulted for His name's sake. It is only by *His* Spirit that we are enabled to enter the kingdom of heaven.

The first element of 'blessing' is illumination. The word causes us to see the offering of the Lamb and our participation in that offering. And having received blessing, we are able to bless God. The offerings of the nation of Israel in the days of King David are a helpful picture of this principle. David and the people blessed God with a whole heart and consecrated themselves to the Lord for the service of building His temple.

## References:

2Pe 1:4

2Ch 29:9

Isa 59:21

Eze 36:26-27

Isa 44:3-4

Eph 1:13-14

## Further Study

Mat 5

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 6

# A willing heart

The blessing of God enables us to have a willing heart. After they had offered so willingly toward the building of the temple, the nation of Israel rejoiced. And because they had offered with a whole heart, David blessed God. On behalf of the nation of Israel, David prayed, 'O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, our fathers, preserve this forever in the intentions of the heart of Your people, and direct their heart to You'. As we continue to walk on the pathway of sonship, Yahweh blesses us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. And when we are receiving blessing, we are able to bless God and others. He causes us to be a blessing to others when we come to know our name and works.

In the book of Romans, Paul explained that Abraham was the father of all who believe. He encouraged us to 'follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised'. Abraham died in faith without receiving the promises. But he saw them and welcomed them from a distance. He considered himself a stranger and exile on the earth.

The pattern or pathway of 'blessing' was established in Abraham. He was told that his descendants would receive a blessing. This is now available to us in Christ Jesus. To receive the Father's blessing, we are required to walk upon the same pathway as Abraham. We are to follow in his steps even though Abraham did not receive the promise of the divine nature in his own flesh. This doesn't mean that we need to sell our houses and live in tents! But we will share Abraham's experiences and should follow his exemplary responses to the proceeding word of God.

## References:

Rom 4:12  
Gal 3:13-14  
1Ch 29:9, 17-18

## Further Study

Heb 11:13-16  
Psa 110:3  
Gen 12

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 7

# Abraham's steps

In his letter to the Romans, Paul instructed them to 'follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham'. There is a *pathway* that allows us to *progressively attain* the blessing of God. While Paul confessed that he had not fully attained to his sonship, he testified that he was pressing on to take hold of that for which Christ had taken hold of him. Furthermore, the apostle recognised that there were degrees of attainment on this pathway of blessing. He was able to live according to these progressive standards because they had been made substantial in his life.

Abraham's steps reveal a progressive attainment of a promised blessing. We must understand his life and faith because Abraham's steps also represent our experience with God. Following his example, we are to be strangers and pilgrims on this earth, progressively receiving the substance of our inheritance. Although we are the sons of God, it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. Paul wrote, 'As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so *walk in Him*, having been firmly rooted and now *being* built up in Him and *established* in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude'.

We need to ask the question of ourselves, 'Where are we in relation to the steps of the faith of Abraham?' 'To what have we attained, and what has been made substantial in our lives?' The faith and pilgrimage of Abraham reveals four elements of our recovery to sonship.

1. Delivery from our old man and remaining separate from the world;
2. Yahweh's justification is a gift;
3. True circumcision through discipleship;
4. The inheritance is attained by resurrection.

## References:

Rom 4:12  
1Jn 3:2  
1Pe 2:11

Php 3:12, 16  
Heb 11:13  
Col 2:6-7

## Further Study

Gen 17

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 8

# Deliverance and separation

The steps of Abraham reveal four elements of the Father's blessing. In order to recover our sonship, we firstly need deliverance from our old man and separation from the world. The Lord said to Abram, 'Go forth from your country, and your relatives and from your father's house to the land that I will show you'. God promised that He would *bless Abram*, make his *name great*, and *make him a blessing!* We note that God's promise to Abram and his descendants was conditional upon him leaving behind the former principles of his life. He would now live by the proceeding word of God.

The call to come out from the world is the beginning point for every person who seeks to recover their sonship. Paul highlighted this point to the Corinthian church when he quoted the prophet Isaiah, saying, 'Come out from their midst and be separate' so that they might be the sons and daughters of God. The word of the cross does not come to refine us or fix our aberrant ways. It comes to bring complete deliverance from all that is old so that we can be a new creation in Christ. We are called to put off our former conduct and loyalties. According to Paul, our 'former conduct' is our 'old man'. It has been corrupted by deceitful lusts. The apostle John exhorts us to 'not love the world nor the things in the world'. He said that the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life are not from the Father but from the world. The apostle warned that 'the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but *the one who does the will of God lives forever*'.

## References:

Gen 12:1-3    2Co 6:17-18  
2Co 5:17    Gal 6:15  
Eph 4:22-24    1Jn 2:15-17

## Further Study

Gen 14

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 11

# Called alone

Like Abram, we are to be separated from the principles of the world and from the familiar cultures of our families. The word of the cross calls us to leave our relatives and the houses of our fathers. God has nothing against families! In fact, He desires that they be places of blessing, the blessing of Abraham. But in the first instance, God calls each person alone. We are instructed by God to learn from Abraham in this regard. *'Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who bore you; for I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him.'* There can be no blessing or multiplication of His life if we do not respond to the word of God, alone. When Abraham is our father and Sarah is our mother, the culture of their family will be our culture. Each individual is called out of their fallen familiar cultures and into the culture of Abraham's family. This is where all the families of the earth are blessed.

As each individual responds to God's call to be delivered from what is passing away, they are *also* delivered from fallen familiar cultures. As we come into Christ, putting Him and His body first in our lives, we are able to be joined to family members who are also doing the will of the Father, in Christ. The culture of the family is reformed, allowing blessing to abound. Within their family, each person receives the capacity to love as God loves in His family.

When Abram was called to leave his country and family, he was also expected to cease from his idolatry. Abram's countrymen and family served other gods. They were moon-worshippers. The proceeding word of God was separating Abram from this way of life.

## References:

Isa 51:2      Gen 28:14  
Jos 24:2      Eze 33:24  
Heb 11:8-12    1Jn 2:17

## Further Study

Neh 9

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 12

# Idols of the heart

The proceeding word of God calls us to cease from our idolatry. While most Christians have not worshipped manufactured gods of wood or stone, we need to be delivered from idols 'of the heart'. Today, our idol is the name that we make and pursue for ourselves. The word of the cross delivers us from this idolatry so we can be His people and He can be our God. When we respond to the call to leave the old and come into the new, we accept that our name and works are only found in the corporate body of Christ. Our families are not the reference point for our name and works, and nor are we the source of our own destiny. In the fallen and familiar contexts of life, we learn that we can be whatever we set our minds to be. Because our mind is set on the flesh and is under the sway of the wicked one, we need to have it renewed so that we can set our mind on the things of the Spirit.

The call to come out from the world and from our familiar culture is not a one-off event. In order to enter into the 'rest' of our inheritance, we must diligently maintain our sanctification. We do this by living according to the proceeding word of God, rather than our fleshly perceptions of what is good or evil. If we put our own interests, our family interests, or our business interests ahead of God's interests, we are returning to what is *dead* and *passing away*. This makes us unclean. Furthermore, Christ says that if we love these things more than Him, we are not worthy of Him. We will lose our eternal life.

## References:

Eze 14:4-5  
Eph 4:23  
1Jn 2:17

Rom 8:6-7  
Mat 4:4  
Heb 3:18-19

## Further Study

Mat 10

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 13

# The nature of our walk

Abram continually made offering as he walked throughout the land of his inheritance in accordance with the proceeding word of the Lord. As he walked about the land, the Lord greatly blessed him and his household, including his nephew, Lot. The multiplication of their possessions had been so great that the land could no longer sustain the livestock of both men. This created tension between the two parties, precipitating a conversation between them regarding their need to separate. The Scriptures record that 'Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well-watered everywhere'. Because it was like the garden of the Lord, 'Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan and journeyed eastward'.

This highlights a notable distinction in the way Abram and Lot viewed 'blessing'. Lot viewed 'blessing' through the senses of his flesh. With his eyes, he observed that the plain of Jordan looked like the garden of the Lord. He, therefore, presumed that it must be a place of blessing. In contrast, Abram *waited* for the word of the Lord which called him to 'arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you'; and then he built an altar to the Lord. Abram did not proceed to inherit the blessing according to the sight of his eyes or the faculties of his flesh. Rather, the word of the Lord defined where and how he lived. He obediently walked all over a land that *God had nominated for him*. The distinction is clear. Lot decided what his portion should be on the basis of his fleshly perceptions. In contrast, Abram waited for the word to define what his plot or inheritance would be.

## References:

Gen 12:7    1Jn 2:15  
Deu 11:10-12    1Jn 5:4  
Eph 2:1-2    Joh 8:23

## Further Study

Gen 13

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 14

# Abram and Lot

Abram and Lot sought to receive the blessing of God in very different ways. In the end, Abraham was called 'the friend of God'; while Lot's righteous soul was tormented day after day by the lawless deeds of those around him. We read that he lost everything. All his possessions were destroyed with Sodom. His wife turned to a pillar of salt when she looked back toward the culture they were fleeing. And Lot's two daughters showed themselves to be morally debased.

In the context of our Christian pilgrimage, the experiences of Lot and Abram should cause us to reconsider how we make decisions in life. Do we proceed according to the flesh? Or do we follow the example of the psalmist, who declared, 'The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup. You support my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places.' At times, we may think, like Lot, that the lines defining our inheritance are limiting our potential or the potential of our families. This might be in regard to wealth, career, profile, or even ministry grace. However, God blessed us when we were small in our own eyes. When we began our Christian walk, we laid everything before God and committed our lives to His service. But some have forgotten what the blessing of God is. We have wilfully forgotten that the Lord is the source of our lives. Everything we have is from His hand to enable us to fulfil His will and purpose. Abraham is the father of those who believe. He was completely obedient to the proceeding word of God. And he made offering in relation to the word that was defining his life.

## References:

Jas 2:23      2Pe 2:8  
Psa 16:5      1Sa 15:17  
Rom 4:11  
Gen 19:25-26, 30-36

## Further Study

1Ch 29

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 15

# The capacity to overcome

While Abram was walking the length and breadth of the land in obedience to God's call, he heard that Lot had been captured by the armies of four powerful kings. Abram called together three hundred and eighteen *trained* men from within his household to pursue the four armies. With this small band of men, Abram attacked and defeated the ruling kings of the whole ancient world. He was able to prevail because no worldly army could take from Abram what God had promised to him. The word of blessing had within it all the capacity that Abram needed to possess the land that God was giving to him as an inheritance. Nothing could stand in the way of God's will. However, to maintain his inheritance, Abram still had to fight and prevail against the four kings who represented the ruling principles of the world.

Like Abram, we need to fight the good fight of faith in order to take hold of eternal life. We must continue to be separated from the world if we are to maintain our inheritance. Our sonship, the land of our inheritance, will be overrun by the principles of this world if we do not diligently guard our hearts. God has promised our sonship to us. But the devil seeks to devour our life. The capacity to guard our inheritance from our adversary is contained within God's word concerning us. But we must ask ourselves this question! 'Are we willing to wage a good warfare to protect our families and to maintain our personal sanctification so we can inherit eternal life?' Many Christians are overrun by the cares of this world. They are not defending the life that He is granting to us and our families in Christ.

## References:

Gen 14:14-15  
IPe 5:8  
Mar 4:19

Pro 4:23  
ITi 1:18

1Co 9:25-26

## Further Study

ITi 6

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 18

# The promised blessing confirmed

The blessing was *confirmed* to Abram when Melchizedek brought the communion elements to him. Scripture records that ‘Melchizedek, king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. He blessed him and said, “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High who has delivered your enemies into your hand”. Then he [Abram] gave him a tenth of all.’ Previous to this encounter, Abram only walked according to the *promise of blessing*. After he had overcome the world, Melchizedek came to bless Abram according to the blessing that he had first received. The great High Priest was bringing this blessing in the name of *El Elyon* (‘God Most High’).

Melchizedek said that *El Elyon* is the Creator and the Possessor of heaven and earth. The apostle John called Him ‘The Word’, through whom all things came into being. He wrote, ‘In Him was life and the life was the Light of men’. Clearly, Melchizedek blessed Abram in the name of Christ. He gave Abram the elements by which the blessing would be made substantial in his life. This transaction is described by Paul in the book of Ephesians. The apostle said, ‘Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has *blessed us* with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places *in Christ*, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.’

## References:

Gen 14:18-20    Joh 1:3-4  
Eph 1:3-6        Deu 26:18  
Act 7:5            Rom 4:21

## Further Study

1Ki 8

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 19

# The bread and cup

The bread and the cup that Melchizedek brought to Abram represented His flesh and His blood, in type. Abram responded by confessing that he would no longer live by any other provision. Because he was hungering and thirsting after righteousness, blessing was being confirmed to him. Abram was fully *satisfied* with the provision available in the bread and the wine. In order to have life in ourselves, we have to be connected to a fellowship where we can eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood in an ongoing and substantial manner. The bread and wine are not just religious sacraments. When we are *abiding* in the body of Christ, the communion elements are the provision of blessing which enable us to inherit our sonship.

Having participated in the bread and the wine, Abram blessed *Elyon* (Christ) with tithes of all that he possessed. The word of God was redefining his whole life and provision. He was motivated to give a tenth of everything that he owned because he recognised that it all belonged to God. A person who recognises the blessing of God will tithe in the same manner. The tithe is not a payment to a clergy group. It is a vow that we make to God Most High. Those who partake of the communion and who receive God's word from His messengers will respond by raising their hands and paying their tithe. In so doing, we are demonstrating Abraham's faith. Abram made an oath to God Most High by lifting up his hands in this communion service and swearing that he would now only prosper in this world, and the world to come, by the blessing that comes from God. He would make no allegiance with the kingdoms of the world.

## References:

Gen 14:18, 20 Mat 5:6  
1Co 10:16-17 Joh 5:26  
Lev 27:32

## Further Study

Heb 7

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 20

# Justification is a gift

Abram refused to be unequally yoked with the kingdoms of the world so they could not say they had made him rich. Having eaten the bread and wine and received blessing, he vowed to not live by any other provision. Abram would not allow any mixture between the culture that was now defined by the bread and wine, and the culture of this world. He would not even accept a piece of leather from the king of Sodom.

In order to recover our lost sonship, we must firstly be delivered from our carnal natures (the old man) and we must remain separate from the world. We must then receive Yahweh's justification as a *gift*. This is the second element of our recovery. 'After these events, the word of Yahweh came to Abram in a vision, saying, "*Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward*".' This was God's gift to Abram, according to the blessing that he had received from Melchizedek. After delivering Abram from fear, He was promising to be Abram's shield and his reward.

When Yahweh said to Abram, 'Do not be afraid', He was not just helping him get over his anxieties. Abram had already overcome the whole world! There was nothing left in this world for him to fear. Yahweh was giving to Abram the capacity to love and believe God. John the apostle tells us, 'By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgement; because as He is, so also are we in this world. *There is no fear in love*; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.' Love was perfected in Abram's heart.

## References:

Gen 14:23    Lev 19:19  
Gen 15:1    1Jn 4:17-18  
Rom 3:24    Rom 4:2

## Further Study

Rom 5

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 21

# Do not fear

Abram knew that he could have confidence on the day of judgement. Because he was in fellowship with Yahweh, Abram could be *of Him* and live *like Him* in this world. At this point, he was receiving revelation of the name, Yahweh – Him who was, is, and is coming. Yahweh's name and His invitation to Abram to fellowship with Him, was delivering Abram from the fear of judgement. Abram was receiving the assurance of things that he hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.

Paul instructed us to take up the 'shield of faith'. When God covenanted to be his shield, Abram was receiving the faith of Yahweh. This faith works by the love of God that was being poured into his heart. Paul taught that those who are of faith are the sons of Abraham. He was saying that we must also receive and live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself up for us. Abraham did not have to find sufficient faith in his heart to believe and obey. His heart was fallen. However, Yahweh was giving him faith which would enable him to continue on the pathway of blessing.

Furthermore, Yahweh told Abram that an heir from his own body would also inherit the Covenant of God. Yahweh then took Abram outside and said, 'Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them'. And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be'. As we read this passage, we can easily focus on the sheer number of stars that represent a great multitude of sons. However, it is equally significant that stars are full of *light*.

## References:

Gal 2:20      Rev 1:8  
Heb 11:1      Eph 6:16  
Rom 5:5      Gen 15:5

## Further Study

1Jn 4

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 22

# Abram received illumination

As he viewed the stars of heaven, Abram received *illumination* concerning the *nature* of the blessing. His descendants were going to be full of the light of life! It is then recorded in Scripture, 'Then he [Abram] believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness'. At this point, Abram was genuinely saved. He had been justified through faith.

The capacity to believe was not in Abram. He was enabled to believe by the word of sonship that brought illumination. The righteousness of faith that is accounted to those who believe was given to Abram as a gift. Although this is an amazing truth, it is obviously not the end of Abraham's steps of faith. Having believed, Abram still asked, 'How will I know that I will inherit?' He was told that he would find this assurance through offering.

God commanded Abram to bring Him a three year-old heifer, a three year-old female goat, a three year-old ram, a turtledove and a young pigeon. Abram cut the heifer, goat and ram in two, and laid each half opposite the other. In the heat of the day, the vultures came to steal his offering, but Abram beat them off. When the sun was going down, he fell into a deep sleep. Terror and great darkness came upon him. In the darkness, God revealed what would happen to Abram's descendants. After a smoking oven and a flaming torch passed between the pieces of his offering, the Lord made covenant with Abraham. He declared, 'To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates'. Abram was given this inheritance as he participated in the offering of the cross.

## References:

Gen 15:2, 6, 8-18  
Rom 5:1  
Gen 12:7  
Gal 3:16

## Further Study

Act 26

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 25

# The red heifer

When Abram made offering to the Lord, he bore witness to the vicarious work of the cross of Christ. If we die *with* Him, we will also be raised *with* Him to walk in newness of life. Jesus said, 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad'. Before Abram received the covenant of sonship by circumcision, God gave him the land of Canaan as well as the various elements of offering. One of those elements was the *red heifer*. Through the heat of the day until evening, Abram had to drive away the vultures that sought to defile his offering with their uncleanness. He had to protect and maintain his offering. His actions that day vividly foreshadowed the work of the priests under the Law Covenant, as well as the work of Christ in the New Covenant. We read, for example, that the priests were *unclean* until evening, as they priested the offerings that were dealing with the corruption of the people. Similarly, Christ who knew no sin was made to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Abram's offering was accepted once the other elements of fire and light were added to sanctify it. These elements are symbolised in the sprinkling of the waters of the red heifer. The fire or smoking oven was the Spirit of God *burning* upon the offering. This revealed the element of the ashes. The torch, or light, was the word bringing illumination. This is the word of the covenant itself, which is described in the Scriptures as the water of the word that cleanses and regenerates (or rebirths) the hearer.

## References:

Joh 8:56      Rom 6:8-9  
Gen 17:10     Eph 5:26  
2Co 5:21     Lev 9:24  
Gen 15:9-11, 17

## Further Study

Num 19

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 26

# The waters of separation

The covenant that God made with Abram guaranteed the promised land to his descendants, four hundred and thirty years after he had made offering. But when the people came to the border of the promised land, they disobeyed the word of God that called them to enter and inherit 'today'. Consequently, God judged their disobedience to His word and their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness for forty years. God gave their children, who were willing to receive their inheritance, the 'waters of separation'. These waters of purification contained the blood of the red heifer and various other elements.

This offering cleansed the children of the covenant and delivered them from the dead body of sin which was their parents' culture of disobedience. Just weeks before they crossed into the promised land, the Israelites saw Christ lifted up as the serpent on the pole. When they looked upon the serpent, they mourned because they had murmured against God and Moses. After this generation received circumcision, the Lord said, 'Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you'. Now, as the covenant people, they were able to enter the land that had been promised to Abraham and his descendants.

The elements of purification typify the circumcision of Christ. He came as the Lamb of God to do the Father's will. And by His will, we were sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all. Through His offering, Jesus inaugurated a new and living way. We can now 'draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water'.

## References:

Exo 12:40-41 Num 19:9  
Num 14:9-10  
Num 21:7-9  
Heb 10:10, 20-22

## Further Study

Jos 5

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 27

# A child after the flesh

If we are to recover our sonship, we must be delivered and separated from the world, and we must receive justification as a gift. For us, these steps are the vicarious work of Christ, just as they were for Abraham. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. The apostle Paul declared, ‘When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions’. However, we must not continue in sin or we will die eternally. We must move from flesh to Spirit in order to receive our sonship inheritance. The blessing of Abraham is the promise of the Spirit. The necessity for a new way of walking is highlighted in Abram and Sarai’s attempts to bring forth a child in their own strength.

Although Abram had received illumination concerning an heir who would come from his own body, Abram and Sarai still sought to bring the promise to fruition through their *own enterprise*. This required them to negotiate and compensate for Sarai’s inability to bear a child. God had said that the heir would come from Abram’s body, so a logical answer to their dilemma was to conceive a child with another woman, Hagar. This was their best effort to bring forth an heir according to the word that they had heard. Their intentions were noble and seemingly consistent with the word. However, Paul highlights that the son brought forth from Hagar ‘was born according to the flesh’. Moreover, he likened this birth to the Law Covenant, explaining that this covenant was only able to bring forth children who were slaves to the flesh. Abram and Sarai needed to receive the word that was calling them to take the next step.

## References:

Rom 5:8      Col 2:13  
Gal 4:22-26   Rom 9:7-8  
Heb 10:19-20  
Rom 4:18-21

## Further Study

Gen 16

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 28

# True circumcision through discipleship

Beyond His vicarious work on the cross, God was calling Abraham and Sarah to participate in the fellowship of the Everlasting Covenant. A breach on their lives was needed to make this transition. In the book of Genesis, we read, 'Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before Me, and be blameless".' Abram had left his country and his father's house some twenty-four years earlier, so what change was God after? The answer lies in the word of the covenant that God was establishing with Abram.

Yahweh was establishing His own covenant with Abram and his descendants as an 'Everlasting Covenant'. Abram would be the father of a great multitude. Yahweh would be their God and they would be His people! In accordance with the declaration of this covenant, Abram received a new name. He was now called 'Abraham' and his wife's name was changed from 'Sarai' to 'Sarah'. The third feature of this experience was circumcision. It was firstly described by God as 'the covenant' and then as the 'sign of the covenant'.

Having responded to the call to leave his country and family, Abram was now being called to walk blamelessly before God. Jesus highlighted that the pathway of salvation involves a change in the way that we walk and our expectations of life. This is the pathway of discipleship. Jesus taught that a person cannot be His disciple if they do not love Him more than their family and their own life. The name and works that God has prepared for us are not dependent upon our families or our familial heritage. The secret of our name, works and life is hidden in Christ, the New Creation.

## References:

Gen 17:1, 7    Mat 10:37  
Col 3:2-3    Col 2:11-12  
Rom 2:29    Php 3:3

## Further Study

2Co 5

## Daily Proverb

Proverbs 29