



THE VOICE of ELIJAH

Restoring the hearts of the fathers to the children

You Cannot Know God Without Knowing the Word

Therefore Abraham also, knowing the Father through the Word, who made heaven and earth, confessed Him to be God; and having learned, by an announcement [made to him], that the Son of God would be a man among men, by whose advent his seed should be as the stars of heaven, he desired to see that day, so that he might himself also embrace Christ; and, seeing it through the spirit of prophecy, he rejoiced.

Wherefore Simeon also, one of his descendants, carried fully out the rejoicing of the patriarch, and said: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace. For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light for the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of the people Israel." And the angels, in like manner, announced tidings of great joy to the shepherds who were keeping watch by night.

Moreover, Mary said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my salvation;"—the rejoicing of Abraham descending upon those who sprang from him,—those, namely, who were watching, and who beheld Christ, and believed in Him; while, on the other hand, there was a reciprocal rejoicing which passed backwards from the children to Abraham, who did also desire to see the day of Christ's coming. Rightly, then, did our Lord bear witness to him, saying, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad."

For not alone upon Abraham's account did He say these things, but also that He might point out how all who have known God from the beginning, and have foretold the advent of Christ, have received the revelation from the Son Himself; who also in the last times was made visible and passable, and spake with the human race, that He might from the stones raise up children unto Abraham, and fulfil the promise which God had given him, and that He might make his seed as the stars of heaven, as

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John the Baptist says: "For God is able from these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Now, this Jesus did by drawing us off from the religion of stones, and bringing us over from hard and fruitless cogitations, and establishing in us a faith like to Abraham. As Paul does also testify, saying that we are children of Abraham because of the similarity of our faith, and the promise of inheritance.

He is therefore one and the same God, who called Abraham and gave him the promise. But He is the Creator, who does also through Christ prepare lights in the world, [namely] those who believe from among the Gentiles. And He says, "Ye are the light of the world;" that is, as the stars of heaven. Him, therefore, I have rightly shown to be known by no man, unless by the Son, and to whomsoever the Son shall reveal Him.

But the Son reveals the Father to all to whom He wills that He should be known; and neither without the goodwill of the Father, nor without the agency of the Son, can any man know God. Wherefore did the Lord say to His disciples, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: and no man cometh unto the Father but by Me. If ye had known Me, ye would have known My Father also: and from henceforth ye have both known Him, and have seen Him." From these words it is evident, that He is known by the Son, that is, by the Word.

Therefore have the Jews departed from God, in not receiving His Word, but imagining that they could know the Father [apart] by Himself, without the Word, that is, without the Son; they being ignorant of that God who spake in human shape to Abraham, and again to Moses, saying, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people in Egypt, and I have come down to deliver them."

Irenæus, "Against Heresies," Book iv, Chapter vii, in Roberts and Donaldson (Eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1867), Vol. 1, pp. 469-470.

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A Note From the Editor

We recently received an email from a woman who wanted to thank us for sending her a free copy of *The AntiChrist*, a gift we offer on our website to anyone who requests it. In her correspondence she stated that she had just begun reading the free articles posted on our website and that she could hardly wait to read them all. She also said she had been searching for the Truth for quite some time (mostly on the internet) and that she was beginning to believe she had finally found it on our website. She then signed off by saying that she was anxious to read another article because she couldn't "get enough" of what we had to say.

A few days later we received another email from this woman, but this time she was singing a different tune. Although she stated that she thought Larry Harper has the "gift of teaching," she also made it clear that she didn't agree with everything he teaches by stating that only "a fair portion of it is true." She went on to give an example of something he wrote that she didn't agree with before closing with the statement that she was finished trying to find the Truth on the internet because there is too much "baloney" on it. Her implication, of course, was that she considered Larry's teaching—The Teaching—to be "baloney."

Although it is not uncommon for Larry to be ridiculed for what he teaches (which he accepts as part of his calling), I always find it interesting to learn what Pretenders ridicule him for. More often than not, they don't deride him for anything in particular that he teaches, but merely for being too "unloving" or "insulting" in what he says. (See "As a Rule, It's Better to Do What You Know You Should Do," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 2005.) But on occasion, Pretenders will cite something specific in what Larry teaches and let us know that they don't accept it as true and that they don't care to listen to anything more he has to say. Such was the case with the "baloney" woman.

As is the case with most Pretenders, this woman didn't hang around long after she heard (as all Pretenders do) something that didn't ring true to her "way" of thinking. Rather than contemplating the possibility that her "way" might be skewed and thoroughly examining the evidence we provide in support of the Truth, she decided it was best to have nothing more to do with us. Naturally, she told herself this was the wise thing to do since, in her mind, we were full of "baloney" and not to be trusted. But the Truth is, she ran for cover because that's what Pretenders do when confronted with the Truth. Why? Because Pretenders don't feel comfortable around the Truth, so they look for some reason to reject it so that they can go on believing the lies they want to believe.

Had this woman been a True Believer in search of the Truth, and had she been willing to read the vast wealth of information contained on our website with an open mind, she would have readily recognized the Truth for what it is and embraced it. (We see this happen on a regular

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basis these days.) As a Pretender, however, she couldn't "see" the Truth for what it is because Pretenders don't have spiritual "eyes" to "see" the Truth. Parabolically speaking, the "eyes" of their "heart" still have "scales" on them, which renders them totally "blind." As such, it was inevitable that this woman would eventually "stumble" over some nugget of Truth set before her because she was incapable of "seeing" the Truth.

You see, the Truth of God's Word is still a "stumbling stone" and "rock of offense" (Rom. 9:32-33; 1 Pet. 2:7-8) to unbelievers today just as it was in the time of the Apostles. In the case of the "baloney" woman, one of the nuggets of Truth she "stumbled" over and found "offensive" was something Larry wrote in April 1997. He said this:

The written Teaching one finds in the Pentateuch allows the informed reader to look back from the future and corroborate that what he believes is the same oral Teaching that Moses delivered to Israel. That is exactly as God planned it all along. The Scriptures were never meant to teach. They were meant to confirm that one has, in fact, been taught The oral Teaching of Moses.
*("The Holy Bible: What Is It? What Does It Mean? Who Wrote It? When and Why?" **The Voice of Elijah**®, April 1997)*

What this woman found "offensive" was when Larry said, "The Scriptures were never meant to teach." That statement seemed heretical to her based on what the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy:

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

The issue the "baloney" woman raised is a valid issue: How can Larry say, "The Scriptures were never meant to teach" when the Apostle Paul says they are "profitable for teaching"? The problem is,

the woman took Larry's statement out of context and failed to see that he answered her question in the article he wrote. But since his explanation didn't make sense to her, she took exception with a single statement and used that statement as an excuse to stop reading his "baloney."

For those of you who would like an answer to the woman's question, I suggest you read the article that Larry wrote for the April 1997 newsletter. If you don't have that issue, you can read it on our website at www.voiceofelijah.org. For those of you who are too lazy (or too unconcerned about the Truth) to go to that much trouble, let me offer you a simple statement of fact: Unless you can read the Scriptures with understanding, they won't be instructive to you. That's the same as saying: If you can read the Scriptures with understanding, they can be "profitable for teaching," provided you *have been called* to be a Teacher.

Nobody understood this fact better than the Apostle Paul. He knew "the mystery"—that is, The Teaching—he received by revelation from Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:3) and taught to his disciples (including Timothy) provided them the understanding that allowed the Scriptures to be "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, {and} for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16) when they taught others. That's why Paul continually warned Timothy in his letters (1 and 2 Tim.) to guard The Teaching he had been taught (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:13-14) and to hand down The Teaching to other faithful individuals who would do the same. That context must be kept in mind when reading what Paul says to *Timothy* about the Scriptures being "profitable for teaching."

Paul knew the Scriptures have nothing to say to anyone who has not already been given insight into The Teaching. That's why he considered the things he learned as a Pharisee to be nothing but "rubbish" after he came to "know" Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:7-11). That is, he knew his Pharisaic understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures was worthless without the insight The Teaching provides because, as Larry said, "the Scriptures were never *meant to teach*."

Allen Friedman

The Problem With Liars? They Always Try to Rewrite History

This is the fourth in a series of articles that, when complete, will explain how the ancient Hebrew idioms “build/make a house,” “raise up a seed,” and “raise up/make a name” both conceal and reveal the first of seven messages God has hidden in the Hebrew Scriptures. The first article in this series is “The Sad, Sordid History of the People of God,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, July 1996. The second article I have specifically designated as a part of this series is “So Why Would a Nomad ‘Build a House’ and Settle Down?” **The Voice of Elijah**®, October 1997. The third is “A Promise Is Good, but a Promise Kept Is Better,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, October 2005. In actual fact, a fourth article that should also be considered a part of this series is “Jesus Is the Carpenter Who ‘Built The House’ of God,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, October 2002.

Recommended reading for the series includes Michael David Coogan’s *Stories From Ancient Canaan* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978) and N. K. Sandars’ *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (London: Penguin Books, 1972). Academically minded readers might also want to consult John Gibson’s revision of G. R. Driver’s *Canaanite Myths and Legends* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, Ltd., 1977). Recommended reading for the second article also includes S. N. Kramer’s *The Sacred Marriage Rite* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969).

For the benefit of those who may be coming into the middle of this discussion without any point of reference, I refer you to what I have already explained in the booklet titled *In the Image and Likeness of God*.

Introduction

In the last article that I wrote for this series, I explained how, when God banished Adam and Eve

from the Garden of Eden, He gave Adam *the promise* with instructions that *the promise* was to be *handed down* from generation to generation as *the blessing* until God finally *fulfilled the promise* and *delivered what was promised* to *the Heir of the promise*. The essence of *the promise* was that God would one day create “The Man” Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness—the image and likeness of the *Living Word* of God that He is—and then go on to create other members of “The Man” Jesus Christ in that same image and likeness as well. I also explained that is what Moses is *talking about* in this passage:

Then God said, “Let Us make a man in Our image, according to Our likeness, so that they may have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the Sea of Waters and over the domesticated animals and over all the Earth and over all the crawling things that crawl on the Earth.” Then God created “The Man” in His image. In the image of God He created Him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the Earth and subdue her and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the Sea of Waters and over every living thing that crawls on the Earth.” Then God said, “Look! I have given you {all} every green plant seeding seed which is on the surface of all the Earth and all the trees in which is fruit of a tree seeding seeds. It will be food for you and for all wildlife of the Earth and for all the birds of the Sea of Waters and for everything crawling on the Earth in which is a living soul. All green plants are for food.” And it was so.
(Genesis 1:26–30) —my interim translation

After God ignominiously booted Adam and Eve out of the Garden, Eve bore two sons for Adam. Cain

was the firstborn and would have become *the heir of the promise* who *inherited the promise* from Adam had he not killed his brother Abel. When he moronically accomplished that utmost ridiculous feat, he became unqualified to *inherit the promise* in the eyes of God, so Adam *handed down the promise* to his third son, Seth. Moses then gives us a genealogy in Genesis 5:6–31 to explain where *the promise* went from there.

To make a long story short, Noah eventually became *the heir of the promise*, which explains why he was the only man God deemed worthy to escape destruction in the Flood. God spared Noah because Noah knew and believed the Truth explained in *the promise*. If you didn't already know that, you must not read your Bible very carefully:

By faith Noah, being warned {by God} about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

(Hebrews 11:7)

Did you notice that the translator added the words “by God” to his translation? He did that because he didn't understand that *only a part of* the warning that the author of the Book of Hebrews had in mind came directly from God just prior to the Flood. The other part came from things in *the promise* that God had already stated when He *delivered the promise* to Adam. Many of those are still “things not yet seen.”

The point that the author of the Book of Hebrews is making in Hebrews 11 has to do with the fact that those people in the Hebrew Scriptures who actually believed *the promise* when they had opportunity to hear *the promise* always acted in accordance with their belief. My point is, Noah's belief in *the promise*, rather than the specific warning of God, is how he “became an *heir of the righteousness* which is according to faith.” That is, he responded to God's warning concerning the immediate danger posed by the Flood because he already believed *the promise*. His belief in *the promise* is how he secured for himself participation in *what was promised* when God finally *fulfilled the promise*.

If one understands that righteousness always comes by believing the Truth of *The Teaching*, one should also be able to understand that the phrase “an *heir of righteousness*” is just another way of saying “an

heir of the promise.” But then, of course, one would also have to understand that *the promise* is the same as *what was promised*, and that opens up a completely different Pandora's Box as far as Pretenders are concerned. They prefer the vomitus they have chosen to believe rather than anything that actually explains what the Prophets and Apostles are *talking about*. Here is how I would (rather enigmatically) translate the verse:

Because of belief, Noah—having been warned concerning things not yet seen—cautiously “built” an ark for the salvation of his “house”; through which {belief} he condemned the world and became heir of what is required in accordance with belief.

(Hebrews 11:7) —my interim translation

After his account of how Noah escaped the Flood because of his knowledge of and belief in *the promise*, Moses provides yet another genealogy in Genesis 11:10–32 to show the reader where *the promise* went after Noah died. In that genealogy, he indirectly tells us Noah *handed down the promise* to his son Shem, who *handed down the promise* to his son Arpachshad, and so on, until finally the one man Abraham became *the heir of the promise*.

At that point in his history of *the promise*, Moses begins to provide a whole lot more historical detail. His reason for doing that is because he wants the reader to clearly understand that, before Jacob divvied up *the promise* among his sons and grandsons (Gen. 48–49) and before God made a covenant with the sons of Israel at Mt. Sinai to bind *the promise* back together, *the promise* had always been *inherited* by *one man* as a *spoken blessing*. That is, *the heir of the promise* could *hand down the promise orally* by *blessing* whomever he decided he wanted to make the next *heir of the promise*. Every *heir of the promise* *received the promise* by simply believing it. He thereby became “righteous”—that is, “declared innocent,” or “declared not guilty,” of all the charges God held against him. (See “The Righteous and the Wicked: One Simple Distinction Lies Between Them,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 2002.) That is the point the Apostle Paul is making in this passage:

Just as Abraham “BELIEVED THE {Living} GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS,” so also you know that those from belief, these are sons of Abraham. But the Scripture—seeing in advance that, from belief, the

{Living} God would declare the Gentiles not guilty—preached the Gospel in advance to Abraham, that “ALL THE GENTILES WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU.” Therefore, those from belief are being blessed with the Believer—Abraham. For as many as are from works of law are under a curse. For it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT REMAIN IN ALL THE THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO DO THEM.” But {the fact} that no one is declared not guilty before the {Living} God by law is obvious, because “THE RIGHTEOUS ONE WILL LIVE FROM BELIEF.” But the Law is not from belief; rather, “THE ONE WHO DOES THEM WILL LIVE IN THEM.” Christ bought us back from the curse of the Law, having become a curse on our behalf—because it is written, “EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE IS CURSED”—(1) So that into the Gentiles the blessing of Abraham might come—in Christ Jesus, (2) so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through {our} belief. Brothers, I am speaking according to man, nevertheless, no one can set aside the validated testament of a man, or add a codicil. But the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his “Seed.” He does not say, “And to the seeds,” as of many; but as of One: “And to your Seed,” that is, Christ. But I am saying this: The testament previously validated by the {Living} God, the Law which came four hundred and thirty years later does not invalidate, so as to abolish the promise. For if the inheritance is from law, it is no longer from a promise; but the {Living} God freely gave it to Abraham through a promise. Why the Law then? It was added on account of transgressions until the Seed should come to Whom it had been promised, having been directed through messengers into the hand of a Mediator. Now, a mediator is not for one, but the {Living} God is One. So is the Law against the promises of the {Living} God? Certainly not! For if a law that was able to give life had been given, the inheritance would have been from law. But the Scripture has imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise—from the faith of Jesus Christ—might be given to those who believe.

(Galatians 3:6–22) —my interim translation

Before giving an account of how Abraham handed down the promise to his son Isaac as a spoken blessing and thereby made him the heir of the promise, Moses first explains that God reaffirmed the promise to Abraham (Gen. 12). Then he tells us God also swore an oath to Abraham not only to assure Abraham that he would have a biological son to whom he could hand

down the promise but also to assure him that he would himself inherit what was promised when God finally fulfilled the promise (Gen. 15; Heb. 6:17–19).

Moses next tells us that thirteen years after Abraham acquired a son through the concubine Hagar—a son that he thought would be the next heir of the promise—God ratified yet another “covenant” with Abraham (Gen. 17). In that “covenant,” God established circumcision as the sign of the relationship He had with the “people” of the heir of the promise who would also share with the heir of the promise in what was promised when He finally fulfilled the promise. Immediately after He did that, God told Abraham that his thirteen-year-old firstborn son, Ishmael, was not going to be the next heir of the promise:

Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai, your woman, you will not call her name Sarai, because her name is Sarah. And I will bless her; I will even give you a son from her. I will bless her and she will become nations; kings of peoples will come from her.” Then Abraham fell on his face, and he laughed and said in his heart, “Will a child be born to a hundred-year-old man? And Sarah? Will a ninety-year-old woman give birth?” So Abraham said to the {Living} God, “If only Ishmael could live before You!” But God said, “No. Sarah, your woman, is going to give birth to a son for you, and you must call his name Isaac. I will establish My covenant with him, for a covenant of ‘olam, for his Seed after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you. Look! I have blessed him; and I will make him fruitful and I will multiply him tremendously. He will engender twelve ‘carriers,’ and I will make him a great nation. But I will establish My covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah will give birth to for you at this time next year.”

(Genesis 17:15–21) —my interim translation

I will pick up the biblical account at this point and explain what Moses says Isaac and Jacob did with the promise.

Isaac, Born to Be Heir of the Promise

As God plainly told Abraham when He established circumcision as the “sign” of His “covenant” relationship with the “people” of the promise, He expected Abraham to hand down the promise to his son Isaac, thereby making him the heir of the promise. God states His intentions in no uncertain terms. Yet

Abraham still had some very strong feelings for his firstborn son Ishmael. That is obvious from an event that Moses recounts a bit later:

Then His Majesty took care of Sarah just as He had said; and His Majesty did for Sarah just as He had spoken. So Sarah conceived and gave birth to a son for Abraham, for his old age, at the designated time that God had told him. And Abraham called the name of his son—the one who was born to him, {that is,} the one Sarah gave birth to for him—Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac at eight days of age just as God had commanded him. Now, Abraham was one hundred when Isaac, his son, was born to him. Then Sarah said, “God has made me a laughing-stock. Everyone who hears will laugh at me.” And she said, “Who could have told Abraham, ‘Sarah will nurse sons’—that I would give birth to a son for his old age?”

*When the child had grown and was weaned, Abraham made a great banquet on the day Isaac was weaned. Then Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian—whom she had engendered for Abraham—laughing. So she said to Abraham, “Disinherit this handmaiden and her son, because the son of this handmaiden will not inherit with Isaac!” Now, the thing was very wrong in the eyes of Abraham because of his son. **So God said to Abraham, “Don’t let it be wrong in your eyes concerning the boy and your handmaiden. All that Sarah says to you, listen to her voice, because in Isaac a Seed will be summoned for you. But I will also make the son of the handmaiden a nation, because he is your seed.”** So Abraham got up early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water, and he gave {them} to Hagar—setting {them} on her shoulders—along with the child, and sent her away. She left, and went and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. When the water in the skin was finished, she cast the boy under one of the shrubs, and she went and sat herself down across from him about the distance one would shoot a bow, because she said, “I don’t want to see when the child dies.” So she sat across from him, and she lifted up her voice and she wept. When God heard the voice of the boy, the messenger of God called to Hagar from the Sea of Waters and said to her, “What’s happening, Hagar? Don’t be afraid, because God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Get up, lift the boy up and hold him in your arms, because I will make him a great nation.” Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the skin with water, and she gave the boy a drink. Then God was with the boy as he*

grew up, and he lived in the wilderness and was an archer. He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a woman for him from the land of Egypt. (Genesis 21:1–21) —my interim translation

The point of that passage is, Sarah insisted that Abraham *disinherit* Ishmael because he laughed (that is, after all, the *specific* verb that Moses uses) at a time when she was sensitive about people laughing at her. Her reason for feeling sensitive? Probably because she was embarrassed about having a child at her age. The text does not tell us that Ishmael was actually laughing at the circumstances facing Sarah because that information is not even relevant. All that mattered was, she *thought* he was laughing because of her circumstances, and so she insisted he had to go. In the following passage, the Apostle Paul seems to be indicating Ishmael was actually laughing at Isaac:

*And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as **at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him {who was born} according to the Spirit**, so it is now also. But what does the Scripture say?*

*“CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON,
FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE AN HEIR
WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN.”
(Galatians 4:28–30)*

Did you see how the translator added the words “who was born” to that text? He did that because he didn’t understand what Paul had in mind. Since God had already appointed Isaac to be the next *heir of the promise*, Isaac was “according to the Spirit.” But then again, I suppose that phrase doesn’t *mean* all that much unless one is thinking in terms of what a “spirit” was according to the ancient mind-set.

Paul is merely speaking in terms of the *parabolic imagery* inherent in the *parabolic pantomime* that God orchestrated when He insisted that Abraham make Isaac *the heir of the promise*. So there is still at least a wee bit of room for doubt that Ishmael did anything seriously amiss when he laughed. That conclusion is reinforced by the fact that Abraham did not feel there was any good reason for him to do what Sarah demanded. But Moses tells us God stepped in immediately so that Abraham would understand that Sarah’s demands were what He had in mind as well. God

essentially told Abraham that he would eventually have to do to Ishmael exactly the same thing he would be required to do to all his other sons. He would have to send them away as well:

*Then Abraham took another woman, and her name was Keturah. For him she gave birth to Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. Jokshan engendered Sheba and Dedan. Now, the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim; and the sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoah, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah. **And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac; but while he was still living, Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines that Abraham had and sent them away from Isaac, his son, toward the east—to the land of the east.***
(Genesis 25:1–6)—my interim translation

Then, after Moses tells us those things, he slips in a couple brief statements to let us know that Isaac was in total control of *the promise* after Abraham died:

*Now these are the days of the years of the life of Abraham—that he lived: one hundred and seventy-five years. When he expired, Abraham died at a good age—old and satisfied—and was gathered to his people. Isaac and Ishmael, his sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar the Hittite, to the front of {east of} Mamre—the field that Abraham acquired from the sons of Heth. Abraham was buried there—and Sarah his woman. **Then, after the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac, his son; and Isaac lived at Beer-lahai-roi.***
(Genesis 25:7–11)—my interim translation

Then there was a famine in the land—{one} separate from the first famine that was during the days of Abraham—and Isaac went down to Abimelech, king of the Philistines at Gerar. And His Majesty appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt. Settle in the land where I tell you, ‘Live as alien in this land’; and I will be with you and I will bless you, because to you and to your Seed I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham, your father. And I will multiply your seed like the stars of the Sea of Waters and I will give to your seed all these lands; and all the nations of the Earth will be blessed in your Seed as a consequence of Abraham doing My

guard duty—My commandments, My statutes, and My Teachings.” So Isaac lived in Gerar.
(Genesis 26:1–6)—my interim translation

Excursus

The meaning and significance of the things the Apostle Paul explains about *the promise* in the third and fourth chapters of the Book of Galatians has long eluded the grasp of theologians. So, just to drive another nail in the coffins of all the pious pulpit parrots who use the Scriptures as a dropping off point for another ponderously pretentious Sunday sermon, I will explain openly what Paul *means* by what he says there. (That is a rather preposterous statement, isn't it?)

In the first two chapters of the Book of Galatians, the Apostle Paul explains that the Gospel he preached (which is nothing but an introduction to *The Teaching* that explains how one can *inherit what was promised*) agrees completely with the Gospel the other Apostles preached. Then he describes an encounter he had with Peter and in so doing leaves no room for doubt where he stands on the issue of True Believers *doing* rather than *being*:

*But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he {began} to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. **But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, “If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how {is it that} you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? We {are} Jews by nature, and not sinners from among the Gentiles; nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be! For if I rebuild what I have {once} destroyed, I prove myself to be***

a transgressor. For through the Law I died to the Law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the {life} which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness {comes} through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."
(Galatians 2:11–21)

In the third chapter of Galatians, Paul begins to explain that all True Believers attain possession of *the promise* by simply *believing* the Gospel (which is an introduction to *The Teaching* that explains *the promise*). He adamantly insists that Believers don't have to *do this*; they don't have to *do that*; and they certainly don't have to be circumcised and adhere to all the other *symbolic rituals* that were mandated by the Mosaic Law. All that any True Believer has to do to be saved is continue to believe the Truth of the Gospel that Paul and all the other Apostles gained by revelation—as Paul explains in the first two chapters of the Book of Galatians.

At the conclusion of the third chapter of the Book of Galatians, Paul explains that every True Believer becomes an *heir of the promise* in exactly the same way. He believes the Truth of the Gospel and is thereby engendered as a Child of God, thus becoming a member of the Body of Jesus Christ—"The Man" Who now is Corporate Israel, *the Heir of the promise*:

But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore the Law has become our tutor {to lead us} to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.
(Galatians 3:23–29)

Paul's point in the Book of Galatians is this: Faith (belief in the Truth) is all that God has ever required of the *individual members* of Corporate Israel. But the Jews, because they distorted *The Teaching of Moses*, came to

the erroneous conclusion that God required the *individual members* of Corporate Israel to somehow work for their salvation by adhering to all the *symbolic rituals* prescribed by *The Law of Moses*. So some of the Jewish "Christians" (including Peter and some of the other Apostles) began to insist that gentile Christians—because they were now members of Corporate Israel—had to act like the Jews. That is, they had to observe all the same *symbolic rituals* the Jews observed. Paul vehemently disagrees.

In the fourth chapter of Galatians, Paul explains that the Jews may still claim to be members of Corporate Israel, *the Heir of the promise*, but that is not true. They have instead been "cut off from" the "people" of *the promise*, and Jesus Christ has become Corporate Israel. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*.) Therefore, if any Believer goes back to believing the lies that the Jews believe after coming to a knowledge of the Truth of the Gospel, that person has thereby "cut" himself "off from" the Body of Jesus Christ by believing a lie:

Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.
(Galatians 5:2–4)

In explaining why the Jews are no longer the "people" of *the promise*, Paul alludes to the fact that Isaac's *inheritance of the promise* was nothing but a divinely orchestrated *parabolic pantomime* in which Isaac depicts the "assembly" of True Believers—who have now become members of *the Heir of the promise* by believing *the promise*—and Ishmael depicts the "congregation" of the Jews—who have been "cut off from" Corporate Israel:

Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. This is allegorically speaking: for these {women} are two covenants, one {proceeding} from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia,

and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. For it is written,

*"REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR;
BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR;
FOR MORE ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE
THAN OF THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND."*

And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him {who was born} according to the Spirit, so it is now also. But what does the Scripture say?

*"CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON,
FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE AN HEIR
WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN."*

*So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman.
(Galatians 4:21–31)*

Don't look for any profound doctrinal statement in all that. Paul is just speaking in terms of the *parabolic imagery* inherent in the *parabolic pantomime* in which God used Isaac to *parabolically* depict Jesus Christ, *the Heir of the promise* Who would eventually *inherit what was promised*. The point he is making is based on the fact that Jesus Christ became *Corporate Israel—the Heir of the promise*—when every other Jew was "cut off from" Israel. Consequently, any Believer who wants to go back to relying on the Jewish understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures—which will be nearly everyone when the Antichrist appears—has also been "cut off from" Jesus Christ.

A Usurper Inherits the Promise

Moses tells us that after Isaac *inherited the promise*, he had two sons himself. And even before Jacob was born, God indicated that he would be the next *heir of the promise*:

Now, these are the generations of Isaac, son of Abraham. Abraham engendered Isaac; and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his woman. Then Isaac entreated His Majesty on behalf of his woman because she was barren; and when His Majesty was entreated by him, his woman Rebekah conceived. And the sons crushed each other within her; so she said, "Why am I this {way}?" And she went to

*inquire of His Majesty. So His Majesty said to her,
"Two nations are in your womb;
And two peoples will be separated from your belly.
But a people will be stronger than a people;
And an older will serve a younger."*

*When her days for delivery were fulfilled, then: Look! Twins were in her womb; and the first came out red—all of him—like a hairy cloak, and they called his name Esau. And after that his brother came out—his hand was hanging on to Esau's heel—and his name was called Jacob. And Isaac was sixty years old when he engendered them.
(Genesis 25:19–26) —my interim translation*

This is the point at which Moses begins to add a few even-more-devious twists and turns to his history of *the promise*. Therefore, the True Believer who really wants to know the Truth won't mindlessly *think* what Moses wants the Pretender to *think*. He will instead listen carefully to what Moses says—keeping in mind the sleight-of-hand tricks that Moses has already used to conceal the Truth—and eventually come to the *only* logical conclusion: Moses is intentionally hiding the Truth so that it can be seen only from a very specific perspective. So let's pick up his account where the passage above leaves off:

*When the boys had grown up, Esau was a man who knew {only} game—a man of the field; but Jacob was a complete man, living in tents; and Isaac loved Esau because game was in his mouth; but Rebekah loved Jacob. While Jacob was stewing some stew, Esau came in from the field—and he was fatigued. So Esau said to Jacob, please let me have a swallow of the red {stuff}—this red {stuff}—because I am fatigued. (Therefore, his name was called Edom {"Red"}.) And Jacob said, "Sell me—today—your right of firstborn." Then Esau said, "Look! I am going to die! So of what {use} to me is this right of firstborn?" And Jacob said, "Swear to me—today." So he swore to him and sold his right of firstborn to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and a stew of red {things}. He ate, drank, got up, and left. And so Esau despised the right of firstborn.
(Genesis 25:27–34) —my interim translation*

This passage is pivotal to an accurate understanding of the Truth. If you don't understand what Esau did, you absolutely will not understand things that are stated later in the Hebrew Scriptures. Believe me; I

know. One of the passages that well-educated people in theological seminaries the world over go to incredibly great lengths to explain away is this one:

The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi. "I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How hast Thou loved us?" "{Was} not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob; but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation, and {appointed} his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness." Though Edom says, "We have been beaten down, but we will return and build up the ruins"; thus says the LORD of hosts, "They may build, but I will tear down; and {men} will call them the wicked territory, and the people toward whom the LORD is indignant forever." And your eyes will see this and you will say, "The LORD be magnified beyond the border of Israel!"
(Malachi 1:1–5)

The point that God is making through Malachi has to do with the fact that Jacob *inherited the promise* and Esau didn't. But the reason Esau didn't *inherit the promise* is because he "despised the right of firstborn." That left the door wide open for Jacob to walk right in and *steal the blessing*—which is what *the promise* is sometimes called simply because it was *handed down* as an *oral blessing*. Esau would have ample opportunity to regret his overt repudiation of *the promise*, as the author of the Book of Hebrews understood full well:

Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; that {there be} no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a {single} meal. For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.
(Hebrews 12:14–17)

Did you understand what the author of that text said? He *made an obvious distinction* between the occasion on which Esau sold the right he held as firstborn and the occasion on which he "desired to *inherit the blessing*" but "was rejected." Esau's action on the first occasion resulted in his rejection on the second. In mentioning Esau's rejection, the author of the Book of

Hebrews is referring to the things Moses describes in this passage:

Now, when Isaac was old and his eyes grew too dim to see, he called Esau, his oldest son, and said to him, "My son." And he said to him, "Here I am." Then he said, "Look! I am old. I don't know the day of my death. So now, take up your equipment—your quiver and your bow—and go out to the field and hunt game for me. Then make tasty things for me just as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, so that my soul may bless you before I die." But Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau, his son. And when Esau went to the field to hunt game to bring in, Rebekah said to Jacob, her son, saying, "Look! I heard your father speaking to Esau, your brother, saying, 'Bring game for me, and make me tasty things that I may eat and bless you before His Majesty before my death.' So now, my son, listen to my voice—to what I command you: Go to the flock and take for me from there two of the best kid goats and I will make them tasty things for your father just as he loves. Then you must bring to your father that he may eat, so that he will bless you before his death." And Jacob said to Rebekah, his mother, "Look! Esau, my brother, is a hairy man and I am a smooth man. What if my father feels me? Then I will become like a mocker in his eyes, and I will bring on myself a curse and not a blessing." So his mother said to him, "Your curse is on me, my son; only listen to my voice and go; take for me." Then he went, took, and brought to his mother; and his mother made tasty things just as his father loved. And Rebekah took the clothes preferred by Esau, her oldest son—those that were with her in the house—and clothed Jacob, her youngest son. But she put the skins of the kid goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. Then she put the tasty things and the bread that she had made in the hand of Jacob, her son; and he went to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" So Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau, your firstborn. I did just as you said to me. Please get up, sit and eat my game so that your soul may bless me." And Isaac said to his son, "What is this? You found {it} so quickly my son!" And he said, "Because His Majesty, your God, caused {it} to happen right in front of me." Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come near so that I may feel you my son, {to see} whether or not you are really my son Esau." So Jacob came near to Isaac, his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." But he did not recognize him because his hands were—like the

hands of Esau—hairy. So he blessed him. Then he said to him, “Are you really my son Esau?” And he said, “I am.” So he said, “Bring to me, and I will eat some of the game, my son, in order that my soul may bless you.” Then he brought, and he ate. He brought wine for him, and he drank. Then Isaac, his father, said to him, “Please come near so that I may kiss you, my son.” So he came near, and he kissed him; and when he smelled the scent in his clothes, he blessed him and said, “See! The scent of my son is like the scent of a field that His Majesty has blessed.

Now, may God grant you
 From the dew of the Sea of Waters,
 And from the fatness of the Earth,
 Both abundant grain and new wine;
 May peoples serve you,
 And populations bow down to you.
 Be a **gibbor** for your brothers,
 So that the sons of your mother bow down to you.
 Those who curse you are cursed,
 And those who bless you are blessed.”

And just as Isaac finished blessing Jacob—Jacob had barely gone out from the presence of Isaac, his father—his brother Esau came in from his hunting. And he too made tasty things, brought {them} to his father, and said to his father, “Let my father get up so that he may eat some of the game of his son so that your soul may bless me.” And Isaac, his father, said to him, “Who are you?” So he said, “I am your son Esau, your firstborn.” Then Isaac began to shake intensely, and he said, “Then who was he who bagged game and brought {it} to me so that I ate some of everything before you came in, and I blessed him? And he will certainly be blessed!” When Esau heard his father’s words, he cried out with a loud, bitter cry and said to his father, “Bless me also, my father!” But he said, “Your brother came in deceptively and took your blessing.” Then he said, “Is it because his name is called Jacob {usurper} that he has usurped me these two times? He took my right as firstborn, and now look! He has taken my blessing!” Then he said, “Have you not held back a blessing for me?” But Isaac responded and said to Esau, “Look! I made him a **gibbor** for you; and I gave all his brothers to him as servants. {With} grain and new wine I have upheld him, so what could I possibly do for you, my son?” Then Esau said to his father, “Is one blessing {all} that you have, my father? Bless me—me also—my father!” And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

(Genesis 27:1–38)—my interim translation

Just to make sure you get the point as to why God hated Esau, let me say this: Esau had certain inherent rights just because he was born first. One of those rights had to do with the fact that he was first in line to *inherit the promise*. The fact that his father had the right to *hand down the promise* to whomever he wanted is immaterial. When Esau sold his right of firstborn to Jacob, he tacitly said he did not see any value in *the promise*. That is why God hated him. God’s hatred was not because of any arbitrary decision on God’s part but because God knew—before Esau was born—that Esau *would not believe the promise*. Unfortunately, Esau was but one in a long line of scoffers and skeptics. The majority in our day will likewise reject the Truth simply because it is easier not to believe than it is to believe. Those of you who are “The Many” who know the Truth will quickly discover you can do absolutely nothing to convince them. The Apostle Paul puts it this way:

*I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, {separated} from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the {temple} service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. But {it is} not as though the word of God has failed. **For they are not all Israel who are {descended} from Israel; neither are they all children because they are Abraham’s descendants, but: “THROUGH ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED.” That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.** For this is a word of promise: “AT THIS TIME I WILL COME, AND SARAH SHALL HAVE A SON.” **And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived {twins} by one man, our father Isaac; for though {the twins} were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God’s purpose according to {His} choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, “THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER.” Just as it is written, “JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED.”***

(Romans 9:1–13)

Most folks think Paul is *talking about* the “predestination” of individual Believers. That is not the case at all. He is *talking about* the fact that God chose Jesus Christ to be *the Heir of the promise* because He knew Jesus Christ would believe *the promise*; therefore, He “cut off” all the other Jews “from” Corporate Israel because their actions revealed they did not believe *the promise*. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*.) Paul mentions God’s selection of Isaac and Jacob as “children of *the promise*” only because they were two of the last three individuals that God chose to be *the heir of the promise* before His actions in “cutting off” the Jews made Jesus Christ Corporate Israel, *the Heir of the promise*. So much for the ignorant opinions of those who only *think* they understand.

Now that I have expressed my total disdain for those who stupidly teach others when they have no knowledge of the Truth themselves, let me show you where Moses confirms that Isaac’s *blessing* had indeed made Jacob *the heir of the promise*:

So Isaac summoned Jacob and blessed him; then he commanded him and said to him, “You must not take a woman from the daughters of Canaan. Get up, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel the father of your mother, and take for yourself from there a woman—from the daughters of Laban, the brother of your mother. El Shaddai will bless you, make you fruitful, and multiply you; and you will become a congregation of peoples. He will give you the blessing of Abraham—to you and to your Seed with you—so that you inherit the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham.” Then Isaac sent Jacob, and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, mother of Jacob and Esau.

(Genesis 28:1–5) —my interim translation

Most commentators think Moses is describing what Isaac said to Jacob when he blessed him. That is not so. Isaac blessed Jacob before he told him what to do; then after he told him what to do, he expressed his complete confidence that God would indeed *fulfill the promise* Jacob had *received* when Jacob deceived him into believing he was Esau. Of course, if one does not believe there ever was a *promise* or that it was transferred from one *heir of the promise* to the next *heir of the promise* as an *oral blessing*, one has absolutely no reason to read the passage that way. But I continue:

So Jacob went out of Beersheba and went toward Haran. And he happened upon a maqom and spent the night there because the sun had gone down. He took one of the stones of the maqom, put {it} under his head, and lay down in that maqom. Then he dreamed, and: Look! A ladder was set up on the Earth and its top was stretching out toward the Sea of Waters. And Look! The messengers of God were going up and coming down on it! And Look! His Majesty took His stand above it and said, “I am His Majesty, the God of Abraham, your father, and the God of Isaac. As for the land on which you are lying, I will give it to you and to your Seed. And your Seed will become like the dust of the Earth and you will spread out toward the sea, toward the east, toward Zaphon, and toward the Negev. All the families of the ground will be blessed in you and in your Seed. And Look! I am with you, and I will guard you everywhere you go. I will bring you back to this ground because I will not abandon you until I have done what I have spoken to you.” Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely His Majesty is in this maqom and I did not know.” And he was afraid and said, “How frightening is this maqom? This is nothing but ‘The House’ of God, and this is the Gate of the Sea of Waters!” So Jacob got up early in the morning and took the stone that he had put under his head and made it a massebah. Then he poured oil on its top, and he called the name of that maqom “House of God.” However, Luz was the name of the city previously.

(Genesis 28:10–19) —my interim translation

That passage is rather humorous on a couple of different levels, but to see the humor one first needs to know what the ancients thought went on inside the rocks they set up as *massebahs*. Since those things are not relevant here, I will say no more. The only point I want to make has to do with the fact that God is clearly affirming, by what He says on this occasion, that Jacob did indeed hold title to *the promise*. Earlier, He said much the same thing to both Abraham and Isaac after they became *the heir of the promise*:

*Then His Majesty said to Abram, “Go!
From your land,
From the place of your birth,
From the house of your father,
To the land which I will show you,
And I will make you a great nation,*

And I will bless you,
 And I will make your Name great,
 And you will be a blessing,
 I will bless those who bless you,
 But the one who curses you I will curse.
 In you all the families of the Earth will be blessed.”
 (Genesis 12:1–3) —my interim translation

Then there was a famine in the land—{one} separate from the first famine that was during the days of Abraham—and Isaac went down to Abimelech, king of the Philistines at Gerar. And His Majesty appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt. Settle in the land where I tell you, ‘Live as alien in this land’; and I will be with you and I will bless you, because to you and to your Seed I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham, your father. And I will multiply your seed like the stars of the Sea of Waters and I will give to your seed all these lands; and all the nations of the Earth will be blessed in your Seed as a consequence of Abraham doing My guard duty—My commandments, My statutes, and My Teachings.” So Isaac lived in Gerar.
 (Genesis 26:1–6) —my interim translation

In the following passage, Moses again confirms that Jacob was *the heir of the promise*:

Then God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram, and He blessed him. And God said to him,
 “Your name is Jacob.
 Your name will no longer be called Jacob,
 Because Israel will be your name.”
 And He called his name Israel. Then God said to him,
 “I am El Shaddai.
 Be fruitful and multiply;
 A congregation of nations will be from you;
 And kings will come out of your loins.
 And the land that I will give to Abraham
 and to Isaac I will {also} give to you.”
 But I will give the land to your Seed after you.”
 Then God went up from him in the **maqom** where He had spoken with him. And Jacob set up a **massebah** in the **maqom** where God had spoken to him—a **massebah** of stone. Then he poured a drink offering on it and poured oil on it. So Jacob called the name of the **maqom** where God had spoken with him ‘The House’ of God.”
 (Genesis 35:9–15) —my interim translation

A Promise Divided Against Itself

If one wants to know what happened to *the promise* when Jacob died, one has only to read what Jacob did right before he died. For the benefit of those who have not yet taken on the mind-set of “the fathers,” I will briefly explain the *meaning and significance* of the things that Moses tells us about Jacob *handing down the promise* to the next *heir of the promise*. Here is what he says:

After these things, Joseph was told, “Look! Your father is ill.” So he took his two sons with him—Ephraim and Manasseh. When it was reported to Jacob, “Look! Your son Joseph has come to you,” Israel gathered strength and sat up on the bed. Then Jacob said to Joseph, “**El Shaddai** appeared to me in Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me. He said to me, ‘Look! I am going to make you fruitful and multiply you; and I will make you a congregation of peoples; and I will give this land to your Seed after you {as} a possession of ‘**olam**.’ But now, your two sons—the ones born to you in the land of Egypt before my coming to you in Egypt—are mine. Ephraim and Manasseh shall be to me as Reuben and Simeon. But those you engendered—that you engendered after them—shall be yours. They will be called along with the names of their brothers in their inheritance. But I, when I came from Paddan-aram, Rachel died on me in the land of Canaan on the way while there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath, that is, Bethlehem.” Then Israel saw the sons of Joseph and said, “Who are these?” And Joseph said to his father, “These are my sons whom God gave to me in this {land}.” So he said, “Bring them to me please, so that I may bless them.” Now the eyes of Israel were so heavy from age that he was not able to see, so he brought them to him and he kissed them and hugged them. Then Israel said to Joseph, “I did not pray to see your face, but Look! God has allowed me to see your seed as well!” Then Joseph took them from his knees, and he bowed down with his face toward the ground. And Joseph took both of them—Ephraim with his right to the left of Israel and Manasseh with his left to the right of Israel—and brought them to him. Then Israel stretched out his right hand and placed it on the head of Ephraim (even though he was the youngest) and his left hand on the head of Manasseh—crossing his hands because Manasseh was the firstborn; and he blessed

Joseph and said,
*“The God before Whom my fathers
 Abraham and Isaac walked,
 The God Who has shepherded me
 ever since I was until this day,
 The Messenger Who redeemed me from all evil,
 Will bless the boys;
 And my name will be called in them,
 As well as the name of my fathers
 Abraham and Isaac,
 So that they increase into a multitude
 in the midst of the Earth.”*

When Joseph saw that his father placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it was wrong in his eyes. So he grasped the hand of his father to move it from the head of Ephraim to the head of Manasseh. And Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, because this is the firstborn. Place your right {hand} on his head.” But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He also will become a people; and he also will be great. However, his younger brother will become greater than he, and his seed will become the fullness of the Gentiles.” Thus he blessed them that day, saying, “By you Israel will bless, saying, ‘May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh,’” and he put Ephraim before Manasseh. Then Israel said to Joseph, “Look! I am about to die, but God will be with you all and bring you all back to the land of your fathers. But I have given you one shoulder more than your brothers—what I took from the Amorites with my sword and with my bow.”
 (Genesis 48:1–22) —my interim translation

There are actually only a couple of things in that passage that you need to remember. (1) Jacob adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, making them his firstborn and second born in place of Reuben and Simeon. Be careful now, Jacob did not “cut off” Reuben and Simeon “from” the “people” of *the promise*. He merely elevated two of his grandsons to the status of sons—making the “twelve tribes of Israel” fourteen tribes instead of twelve. Moses will have a bit of fun with those numbers later on. If you want to know *why* Jacob did what he did, all you have to do is read what Reuben and Simeon did that displeased him. Here’s a hint: Genesis 34:25–30 and 35:22. (2) Jacob made Ephraim the one who, as his adopted firstborn, “carried *The Name* of the fathers.” If you don’t understand the ancient mind-set in regard to “carrying *The Name*,” I suggest you start by reading what I have

written in *The Mystery of Scripture*. Then you might want to consider shucking your tripartite view of man and begin to think in terms of eight parts, like the ancients did. One of those “parts” was “*The Name*.”

Now that you know what Jacob did with his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh, let’s quickly review: What did Abraham and Isaac do when they *handed down the promise*? They both made sure that they specifically *excluded* their other sons from *the blessing* and *handed down the promise* to just one *heir of the promise*. Moses also tells us that after Abraham *disinherited* Ishmael by sending him away, he did exactly the same thing to his other sons:

Then Abraham took another woman, and her name was Keturah. For him she gave birth to Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. Jokshan engendered Sheba and Dedan. Now, the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim; and the sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah. And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac; but while he was still living, Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines that Abraham had and sent them away from Isaac, his son, toward the east—to the land of the east.

(Genesis 25:1–6) —my interim translation

Abraham made sure Isaac was the sole *heir of the promise* because God told him to. But remember what happened to Esau? What did Isaac tell him after he blessed Jacob? Take a look:

And just as Isaac finished blessing Jacob—Jacob had barely gone out from the presence of Isaac, his father—his brother Esau came in from his hunting. And he too made tasty things, brought {them} to his father, and said to his father, “Let my father get up so that he may eat some of the game of his son so that your soul may bless me.” And Isaac, his father, said to him, “Who are you?” So he said, “I am your son Esau, your firstborn.” Then Isaac began to shake intensely, and he said, “Then who was he who bagged game and brought {it} to me so that I ate some of everything before you came in, and I blessed him? And he will certainly be blessed!” When Esau heard his father’s words, he cried out with a loud, bitter cry and said to his father, “Bless me also, my father!” But he said, “Your brother came in deceptively and took your blessing.” Then he said,

"Is it because his name is called Jacob {usurper} that he has usurped me these two times? He took my right as first-born, and now look! He has taken my blessing!" Then he said, "Have you not held back a blessing for me?" But Isaac responded and said to Esau, "Look! I made him a **gibbor** for you; and I gave all his brothers to him as servants. {With} grain and new wine I have upheld him, so what could I possibly do for you, my son?" Then Esau said to his father, "Is one blessing {all} that you have, my father? Bless me—me also—my father!" And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

(Genesis 27:30–38) —my interim translation

Because he had already *handed down the promise* to Jacob, Isaac goes on to pronounce what is essentially a curse on Esau. You can read that for yourself. The point here is, Jacob did not do what his father and grandfather had done when they *handed down the promise*. Instead, he not only adopted and blessed two of his grandsons right before he died, he also blessed every one of his own sons—including Joseph—with "the blessing appropriate to him":

All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him.

(Genesis 49:28)

I am not going to go through *the blessing* that Jacob pronounced on his twelve sons. With the single exception of *the blessing* that Judah *received*, those things are completely irrelevant to the central point of the passage. That is, Moses wants it understood that Jacob gave all *fourteen* of his sons an *equal* share in *the promise*. Under those circumstances, it would seem to be impossible for any one Person (Jesus Christ) to again become *the Heir of the promise* Who would *inherit the promise* and be in sole possession of *the promise* when God finally *fulfilled the promise* and transferred *what was promised to the Heir of the promise*. But God has always had a way of doing things that would appear to be impossible from our point of view. Jacob knew that. That's *why* he did what he did. And Jesus repeatedly ridiculed the scribes and Pharisees for their total ignorance in regard to what Moses and the other Prophets of Israel tell us about the role that *Corporate Israel* played in *handing down the promise*. For example, he told them this parable on one occasion:

"Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers, and went on a journey. And when the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. And the vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. **But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'** But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, '**This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and seize his inheritance.**' And they took him, and threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?" They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers, who will pay him the proceeds at the {proper} seasons." Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER {stone;} THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES'?

Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust." And when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them. And when they sought to seize Him, they feared the multitudes, because they held Him to be a prophet.

(Matthew 21:33–46)

Well! Well! What do you know? Even total morons can sometimes understand when they are being ridiculed. I'm sure some of the pulpit parrots here at the End will get the message as well. Too bad they can't understand the *parabolic imagery* that explains how Jesus Christ came to be *the Heir of the promise* Who *inherited the promise* when God *fulfilled the promise* by doing exactly what He said He would in this passage:

Then God said, "Let Us make a man in Our image, according to Our likeness, so that they may have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the Sea of Waters

and over the domesticated animals and over all the Earth and over all the crawling things that crawl on the Earth." Then God created "The Man" in His image. In the image of God He created Him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the Earth and subdue her and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the Sea of Waters and over every living thing that crawls on the Earth." Then God said, "Look! I have given you {all} every green plant seeding seed which is on the surface of all the Earth and all the trees in which is fruit of a tree seeding seeds. It will be food for you and for all wildlife of the Earth and for all the birds of the Sea of Waters and for everything crawling on the Earth in which is a living soul. All green plants are for food." And it was so.

(Genesis 1:26–30) —my interim translation

The Pretender, being as blind as a bat and as dumb as a goose, will never be able to understand that *the promise* is exactly the same as *what was promised*. It is the *Living Word* of God. Therefore, if anyone—like Esau—takes *the promise* of God lightly or begins to meddle with perfection, they will find themselves coming up quite a bit short at the End. That is why the author of the Book of Hebrews issues this rather cryptic admonishment:

*Therefore, leaving the Word concerning the beginning of the Messiah, let's carry on to completion, not again laying a foundation: (1) of repentance from dead works and (2) of faith toward God, (3) of teaching concerning: (a) baptisms, as well as (b) laying on of hands, (c) resurrection of the dead, and (d) eternal judgment. And this {carrying on to completion} we will do only if the {Living} God allows. For it is impossible, for those who have been given light once—those who have: (1) tasted the gift of Heaven, (2) been made to share a Holy Spirit, and (3) tasted a good statement of God and powers of a coming Age—and fall aside, to renew them again to repentance. They are crucifying the Son of the {Living} God in themselves and making a show of {Him}! For ground that drinks the rain that often comes upon it, and produces fodder convenient for use by those for whom it is being tilled, partakes of a **blessing** from the {Living} God. But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to cursed. Its completion is to be burned.*

(Hebrews 6:1–8) —my interim translation

Abject idiots, being what they are, will ignore the warning in that passage and keep on believing the lies they have been told about their goofy god of unconditional grace. Those who have a bit more common sense will take heed: If you tamper with *the promise* you *received* when you believed the Gospel, you absolutely cannot expect to *inherit what was promised*. Why so? Because *the promise* is *what was promised*. If you give up *the promise* just because you find it more comfortable to believe a lie, you will get exactly what you have chosen to believe. Pretenders are, after all, not called "children of darkness" for no good reason.

I know there are still a few of you out there—those whom God has rather facetiously chosen to call "The Many"—who will understand the things I have been called to explain. For your benefit, I second what the author of the Book of Hebrews has said about your treatment of *the promise* you have already *received*:

*But we have been persuaded concerning you, brothers, of much better things (and the coming salvation), even though we are talking like this. For the {Living} God is not unjust to forget your work and the love you have displayed to His Name, by having served, and continuing to serve, the holy ones. **But we desire for each of you that {you} display the same zeal toward the absolute certainty of the hope until completion—that you would not become lazy, but imitators of those who (through faith and patience) are inheriting the promises.** For, after promising Abraham, the {Living} God swore by Himself—since He had nobody greater to swear by—saying: "{I swear!} I WILL DEFINITELY BLESS YOU, AND I WILL CERTAINLY MULTIPLY YOU!" **And so, by being long-suffering, he obtained the promise. For men swear by the greater, and for them the end of every dispute is the oath (for confirmation). In the same way, the {Living} God—resolving to demonstrate even more for the heirs of the promise the irrevocability of His resolve—became a Mediator by an oath!** So that—through two unchangeable actions in which it is impossible for the {Living} God to lie—we who have taken refuge to lay hold of the hope laid out before us would have strong encouragement; which {encouragement} we have as an anchor—both secure and permanent for the soul, and {one which} enters behind the curtain, where Jesus entered as a scout for us, becoming a High Priest in the Age according to the order of Melchizedek.*

(Hebrews 6:9–20) —my interim translation ■



The Voice of Elijah® includes this column to show you how some of the underlying parabolic images of the Gospel message of the Old Testament speak to the times in which we find ourselves. There are a variety of weather images to be found in the parables of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Most are associated in some way with the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Some of the Prophets are called “minor prophets.” Consequently, folks think they have nothing important to say. Not so. One Prophet who doesn’t get all that much respect is Nahum. Part of his problem is, he says things that most people nowadays don’t want to hear:

*A jealous and avenging God is the LORD;
The LORD is avenging and wrathful.
The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries,
And He reserves wrath for His enemies.
The LORD is slow to anger and great in power,
And the LORD will by no means
leave {the guilty} unpunished.
In whirlwind and storm is His way,
And clouds are the dust beneath His feet.
He rebukes the sea and makes it dry;
He dries up all the rivers.
Bashan and Carmel wither;
The blossoms of Lebanon wither.
Mountains quake because of Him,
And the hills dissolve;
Indeed the earth is upheaved by His presence,
The world and all the inhabitants in it.
Who can stand before His indignation?
Who can endure the burning of His anger?
His wrath is poured out like fire,
And the rocks are broken up by Him.
The LORD is good,
A stronghold in the day of trouble,
And He knows those who take refuge in Him.*

*But with an overflowing flood
He will make a complete end of its site,
And will pursue His enemies into darkness.
(Nahum 1:2–8)*

The only part of that passage that Pretenders can understand is verse 7. The difficulty with that is, Pretenders seem to prefer reading Believers’ mail. They should be paying more attention to what Nahum says about the jealousy, vengeance, anger, and wrath of God. But they just don’t have ears to hear bad news. Too bad. If they did, they might not get caught unprepared for the “overflowing flood” that Jesus describes this way:

*“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and {yet} it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall.”
(Matthew 7:24–27)*

Jesus is talking about the “latter rain” that will come just before the End of the Age. Nahum was too. That “rain” will gradually increase in intensity, steadily saturating the “ground” until, finally, the “ground” has all that it can hold. Then, the “water” will swiftly “inundate” those caught unawares. Isaiah puts it this way:

*“Behold, the Lord has a strong and mighty {agent;}
As a storm of hail, a tempest of destruction,
Like a storm of mighty overflowing waters,
He has cast {it} down to the earth with {His} hand. ...
And I will make justice the measuring line,
And righteousness the level;
Then hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies,
And the waters shall overflow the secret place.
And your covenant with death shall be canceled,
And your pact with Sheol shall not stand;
When the overwhelming scourge passes through,
Then you become its trampling {place.}”
(Isaiah 28:2, 17–18) ■*



The Voice of Elijah® publishes articles based on the findings of The Elijah Project, a private research group headed by Larry D. Harper. In this column we seek answers to general-interest questions concerning the findings, purpose, and philosophy of this project.

Editor: When Jacob divided the promise amongst his sons and two grandsons (Joseph's sons), who got what with regard to the promise? I can see that Judah received the blessing associated with kingship (Gen. 49:10) but how did Jacob divvy up the rest of the promise amongst the other sons? Genesis 49:28 says that Joseph blessed every one of them with "the blessing appropriate to him," but were there enough elements to the promise to give each son or grandson a part of it? Also, do you have any idea why Jacob was compelled to divide up the promise in the first place?

Elijah: I have addressed all those issues in the article I submitted for this issue, "The Problem With Liars? They Always Try to Rewrite History."

Editor: We recently received two different emails from two different individuals who both wanted to know more about the Fourth Commandment and the need to "keep the Sabbath day holy." The fact that two different people suddenly asked the same question within a few days of each other seemed like more than just a coincidence, so I thought I should ask you about it. Would you please explain to our readers the meaning and significance of "keeping the Sabbath day holy" and also explain why God included that particular commandment among the Ten Commandments?

Elijah: Let's begin by going back to what the original Hebrew text says *God said* when He gave Moses the Fourth Commandment. I assume it is rather obvious to reasonable people that what God said always holds sway over "conventional wisdom" in regard to what folks think God said. But one can no longer be sure about that, since—if that were true—empirical evidence would tend to indicate that most folks are completely unreasonable. Surely that cannot be.

Enough sarcasm. Moses hid the Truth concerning the meaning and significance of the parabolic pantomime in which the sons of Israel "observed" every seventh day as a sabbath behind the Hebrew Prophetic Perfect and a clever bit of doublespeak just as he hid the meaning and significance of God's creation of "The Man" in His Own image and likeness on the sixth "day" behind the Prophetic Perfect and a clever bit of doublespeak. [See *In the Image and Likeness of God*.] Therefore, if you can't "see" what Moses did in Genesis 1:26–27, you certainly won't be able to "see" what he has done here.

By "doublespeak," I mean Moses uses "the sabbath day" to refer to two entirely different "sabbath days" just as he uses "the man" in the Creation Account to refer to both the man Adam and "The Man" Jesus Christ. But just for the sake of making fools of all those who have absolutely no interest in understanding the Truth, I will do what I have already done in regard to "the man." I will explain these things openly so that those who want to go on believing Satan's lie will be left completely without excuse.

Moses uses two different verbs to tell us what the sons of Israel were supposed to *do* in regard to the Sabbath "day." The first appears in the account with which most folks are familiar:

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; {in it} you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy."

(Exodus 20:8–11)

First of all, I should point out that "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" is not *literally* what the

Fourth Commandment says, but we can *talk about* that later. The only point I want to make here is, when people read the Fourth Commandment—which is translated here as “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy”—they automatically (and *mistakenly*) assume God is *talking about* observing every seventh day as a day of rest. That is not so. He does not begin to *talk about* the sons of Israel conducting that *parabolic pantomime* until he says, “Six days” Then He explains what they are supposed to do in order to help them *remember* what *The Teaching of Moses* explains concerning the *meaning* and *significance* of the *parabolic pantomime* in which every seventh day is observed as a *parabolic* day of “rest.”

Think about it: If God had been *talking about* the people observing every seventh day as a day of rest, would it not have made more sense for Him to say, “Remember the sabbath *days*, to keep *them* holy”? Just a thought. Maybe not. But then again, maybe so. After all, the conventional “way” of thinking about every seventh day as “the Sabbath” could just as easily have had its origin in Satan’s lie as in God’s Truth.

When God says, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,” He is referring to the sons of Israel *bringing to mind* what He has already stated in *The Teaching of Moses* concerning *the promise* that only those who remain in Israel until *the fulfillment of the promise* will attain *what was promised* by being granted entry into the “rest” that God will enjoy on the seventh day of Creation—which “day” is yet to come. From that statement, you should be able to see why Satan places such a high value on keeping people in the dark concerning the fact that God has not yet finished His creation of “*The Man*” in His Own image and likeness on the sixth “day” of Creation. In this case, what the “sons of darkness” don’t know is definitely going to kill them. The author of the Book of Hebrews puts it this way:

Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, “TODAY, IF YOU SHOULD HEAR HIS VOICE, [Ps. 95:7] DON’T HARDEN YOUR HEARTS LIKE IN THE REBELLION EVERY DAY OF THE TESTING IN THE WILDERNESS, WHERE YOUR FATHERS TESTED {Me} by examination AND THEY SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS. [Ps. 95:9] Therefore, I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND I SAID, ‘THEY ARE CONTINUALLY MISLED IN THEIR HEART, BUT THEY DON’T KNOW MY WAYS.’ [Ps. 95:10] JUST AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH: ‘{I SWEAR:} THEY WON’T ENTER MY REST!’” [Ps. 95:11] [Watch out], [Brothers], [lest perhaps] [there might be] [a [nasty] Heart] [in] [any] [of you]

[because of a Lack of Belief in God’s Promise] [so] [that] [{you} withdraw] [from] [{the} [living] God]. But exhort one another every day, while it is {still} called “today,” so that none of you be hardened by the deception of “the sin;” for we have become those who share with the Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our “foundation” firm until completion, while it is said, “TODAY, IF YOU SHOULD HEAR HIS VOICE, DON’T HARDEN YOUR HEARTS LIKE IN THE REBELLION” [Ps. 95:7–8] for who rebelled after they heard but all those who went out of Egypt through Moses? And with whom was He ANGRY FORTY YEARS? Was it not those who sinned—the limbs who fell IN THE WILDERNESS? And to whom did HE SWEAR they would not ENTER HIS REST except to those who were unbelieving? So, we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief. Therefore, let us fear lest, giving up a promise of entering into His rest, any of you might think so as to arrive too late. For we are also those who have had good news proclaimed just as they were. But the Word they heard did not benefit them, not having been joined to belief in those who heard. For the ones who have believed are entering “the Rest” just as He has said, “JUST AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH: ‘{I SWEAR:} THEY WON’T ENTER MY REST!’” [Ps 95:11] Yet “the works” have been “engendered” from world’s foundation, for thus He has said somewhere concerning the seventh: “AND GOD RESTED IN THE SEVENTH FROM ALL HIS WORKS.” [Gen. 2:2] And in this {statement} again, “{I SWEAR:} THEY WON’T ENTER MY REST!” Therefore, since it remains for some to enter into it, and those who had good news proclaimed earlier did not enter because of unbelief, He again appoints a certain day—“Today” —saying by David after such a long time just as had been said before: “TODAY, IF YOU SHOULD HEAR HIS VOICE, DON’T HARDEN YOUR HEARTS.” For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken concerning another {rest} after those days. Consequently, a Sabbath rest remains for the People of God. For the One Who has entered His rest has Himself also rested from His works just as the {Living} God from His Own. Therefore, let’s be zealous to enter that rest so that nobody “falls” by the same pattern of unbelief. For the word of God is living, and working, and more cutting than any two-edged sword; and it reaches as far as a division of soul and spirit—both the joints and the core—and is able to discern the considerations and thoughts of a heart. And not a creature is hidden in His presence, but all are naked and have been laid bare to the eyes of Him on Whose behalf the Word is for us! (Hebrews 3:7–4:13) —my interim translation

My point in showing you that passage is, the author of the Book of Hebrews obviously has in mind the *parabolic* “today” with which God is concerned, not the *literal* “today” with which ignorant men are concerned. That *parabolic* “today” is the current era in which God is continuing to create “*The Man*” Jesus Christ (that is, the male and female Believers in the Body of Jesus Christ) under the terms of the New Covenant—which Moses and the other Prophets of Israel explain will occur *during* the latter part of the *sixth* “day” of Creation. His point is, those Believers who have opportunity to hear the Truth of *The Teaching* while “today” is still the *sixth* “day” of Creation rather than the *seventh* “day” of Creation had better do what is necessary to “remember the Sabbath”—that is, to *remember The Teaching* concerning the *seventh* “day” of Creation—because “tomorrow” will most definitely be too late.

Now that I have explained what God said about the responsibility of the sons of Israel for *remembering The Teaching* concerning the Sabbath, let me show you a passage where Moses uses a couple of unique synonyms to replace the verb *remember*:

“Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; {in it} you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your ox or your donkey or any of your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you, so that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day.”
(Deuteronomy 5:12–15)

That translation appears to contradict what I just told you about the Fourth Commandment being concerned with the sons of Israel *remembering The Teaching* concerning the *eternal* seventh “day” of Creation. Unfortunately, Satan has made a whole lot of hay out of the fact that Moses and the other Prophets intentionally made appearances deceiving, and none more so than in this case. The first inaccuracy that needs to be corrected is the illusion that the passage begins and ends with the expression “observe the sabbath day.” It

does not. The translator translated two entirely different Hebrew verbs as “observe” simply because he did not know that Moses was *talking about* the people’s obligation to *remember* the things he had taught them about the *eternal* Sabbath. The translator’s translation reflects the fact that his mind-set is that of a Pharisee. That is, it is one in which God requires correct *deeds* rather than correct *beliefs*.

The verb that Moses used at the beginning of the passage is exactly the same verb that one encounters in the expression “*keep* the commandments.” Does anyone in the Church still know what Moses *meant* by that Hebrew idiom? Of course not! If they did, they would be able to easily explain what the Apostle John *meant* when he said this:

And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.
(1 John 2:3–6)

Huh? Did we, or did we not, just walk into the middle of an ongoing discussion about what it *means* to “keep the commandments”? If you think John was *talking about* maintaining correct *external* actions rather than maintaining correct *internal* beliefs when he used the Hebrew idiom “keep the commandments,” you definitely need to go back and read what he has already written. That Hebrew idiom obviously provides the underlying basis for his train of thought because he comes back to it a bit later:

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.
(1 John 3:21–24)

John has just told you that to “keep His commandments” is not the same as to “do the things that are pleasing in His sight.” That is, your *being* is not the same as your *doing*. If you don’t know what I am *talking about*, you definitely need to go back and read what I have already written. But that is another matter. John continues on later in the same vein:

*Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the {child} born of Him. **By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.** For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*
(1 John 5:1–5)

Did you see that? John did not just say “keep the commandments.” He first said “observe the commandments,” and then he said “keep the commandments.” Well, not really. What he actually said the first time was “do/make the commandments.” Then he said “guard the commandments.” In using two different Greek verbs, he was most likely alluding to the two Hebrew verbs that Moses used when he said this:

*“Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; {in it} you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your ox or your donkey or any of your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you, so that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. **And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day.**”*
(Deuteronomy 5:12–15)

If one checks the Septuagint translation of that passage, it immediately becomes obvious that the Jews who lived 250 years before Christ still understood their primary obligation was to *guard* the Sabbath. I say that

because they translated both Hebrew verbs that are here translated “observe” with a Greek verb that can only *mean* “guard.” What they understood that verb to *mean* they were supposed to *do* is a bit more difficult to discern. But the Apostle John gives us a fairly good idea what the Pharisees understood it to *mean*. He says this:

*Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Again, therefore, the Pharisees also were asking him how he received his sight. And he said to them, “He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, “**This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.**” But others were saying, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And there was a division among them.*
(John 9:14–16)

The Greek verb translated “keep” is exactly the same verb we saw John use earlier in the expression “keep the commandments.” It *means* “guard.” That is exactly what the Pharisees thought they were doing by constantly criticizing what Jesus did on the sabbath day—*guarding* the sanctity of the sabbath day. The only problem with what *they thought* lies in the fact that the Fourth Commandment has nothing to do with *guarding* the sanctity of *every* seventh day down here. It has to do with *guarding* the sanctity of *the only* seventh “day” up there. And the only “way” anyone can do that is by protecting (“guarding”) the Truth of *The Teaching*—that is, by accurately *remembering* the Truth concerning the *eternal* Sabbath so as not to contaminate the Truth of the *Living* Word of God that God is.

Although Jesus went out of His way to make the Truth known to the Pharisees by intentionally “breaking the sabbath” on a variety of occasions, they could never quite get the message. And one still encounters dimwits today who think God is more interested in them *doing* what He requires *externally* rather than *being* what He requires *internally*. So much for the hope of aliens ever finding much intelligent life on Planet Earth.

Now, before I go on to explain what God *meant* by the prepositional phrase that has been erroneously translated “to *keep* it holy,” let me briefly (or maybe not so briefly) explain what Moses was *talking about* when he said this:

“And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day.”

(Deuteronomy 5:15)

The Hebrew verb translated “observe” in that verse is an ordinary verb that *means* nothing more than to “do” or to “make” something. (Hence my assumption that John had this verse in mind when he said “do/make the commandments.” The same *parabolic imagery* of protecting the Truth of *The Teaching* applies.) For example, Moses tells us God used the same Hebrew verb when He said this:

*Then God said, “Let Us **make** man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”*

(Genesis 1:26)

If you read the verse that immediately follows that one, you will discover that the Hebrew verb under discussion here could clearly be used as a synonym for another verb that *means* “create.” Therefore, one can legitimately ask what Moses might have had in mind if he *meant* the sons of Israel were to “create” (a *parabolic image* of) the *eternal Sabbath* by conducting a *parabolic pantomime* in which they “rested”—that is, did not “work”—on every seventh day. When you do that, the verse almost stands right up and salutes:

“And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day.”

(Deuteronomy 5:15)

For the benefit of those who have not yet read all that I have written about *parabolic pantomimes* and *parabolic equivalencies*, Moses is referring to the fact that the Exodus from Egypt was itself a *parabolic pantomime* by which God depicted both the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the Resurrection of the Righteous in Jesus Christ (Corporate Israel) at the End of the Age. [See *The*

Passover Parable. For an explanation and discussion of *parabolic equivalencies*, see “He’s Coming in Clouds of Glory (Whatever That Means),” *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 2001; “‘The Law’ of This, ‘The Law’ of That, So Much ‘law’ One Can’t Keep Track,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 2001; “Questions & Answers,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 2001; “Two Agreements Made: One a ‘Covenant,’ the Other a ‘Testament,’” *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 2002; “Jesus Is the Carpenter Who ‘Built *The House*’ of God,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 2002; “Oh! How the Mighty Has Fallen!” *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 2004; “Questions & Answers,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 2004; “Questions & Answers,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 2005; “A *Promise* Is Good, but a *Promise* Kept Is Better,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, October, 2005.]

Like the Exodus from Egypt, the entry of the sons of Israel into Canaan was nothing more than a *parabolic pantomime* by which God depicted resurrected Believers entering into the “rest” of the seventh “day” of Creation—which “day” will begin immediately after the Resurrection of the Righteous at the End of this Age—after all unbelievers have been “cut off from” Corporate Israel.

God’s point is, as a means of *remembering The Teaching* concerning those things, the sons of Israel were supposed to “make” or “create” a *parabolic pantomime* in which every seventh day *parabolically* depicts the *eternal Sabbath “day”* on which God’s “Spirit” will cease “striving” with mankind as He currently is (Gen. 6:3). That is the *parabolic imagery* the author of the Book of Hebrews had in mind when he wrote about Joshua not giving the sons of Israel “rest” and unbelievers “today” not being allowed to enter the “rest” of the seventh “day” of Creation if they ignore the Truth they now have opportunity to hear. By the way, isn’t “striving” basically a synonym for “working”? If it is, how can God be “resting” on the seventh “day” if He is still “working” to create His Own image and likeness in Believers? That must be just another one of those “Bible contradictions” I guess.

Enough sarcasm. If you want to know *why* Believers are no longer required to conduct the Sabbath as a *parabolic pantomime* under the terms of the New Covenant, you will just have to ask another question about that some other time. The short answer is, that *parabolic pantomime* has been replaced by the *parabolic pantomimes* of the Eucharist and baptism—which both *look back at* the same event that the *parabolic pantomimes*

of the sabbath and the Passover *looked forward to*. Since those things are not relevant to this discussion, I won't say more about them here. But I will point out the fact that Paul did say the following about all those snooty folks who want to go on piously observing "the Lord's day" and looking down their royally self-righteous noses at all us "unclean" folks who have chosen to make every day of the week a day of rejoicing in the freedom for which Christ died:

Now accept the one who is weak in faith, {but} not for {the purpose of} passing judgment on his opinions. One man has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables {only.} Let not him who eats regard with contempt him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One man regards one day above another, another regards every day {alike.} Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God. For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived {again}, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God.

(Romans 14:1-10)

That last verse contains some mighty fine advice for all the imbeciles who insist there is something very special and "holy" about one day out of every seven. Unfortunately, such folks simply do not have ears to hear anything that disagrees with the lie they have already chosen to believe. Since they would rather live other people's lives for them instead of keeping their noses out of other people's business and taking care of their own, they do the same dumb thing that similarly self-righteous coxcombs have been doing for centuries: They go out of their way to tell other people what they should and should not do. Those simple-minded folks have overlooked one *very important* passage of

Scripture. In it, the Apostles described *in detail* the only things they expected of gentile Believers; and the only things they mention are the three things gentile Believers should *avoid doing*.

Now, I have looked high and low on the list that the Apostles provided, turning over commas and up-ending periods, thoroughly checking every letter from A to Z, trying to find even a mere mention of Believers being required to *do anything*, much less "observe" every seventh day as a sabbath. I couldn't find a thing. Maybe you can. If you can, I would certainly appreciate you letting me know where they hid it. It seems to me they are saying Believers no longer have to *do anything* that was required by *The Law of Moses*. If that be true, I would think their word should carry a whole lot more weight than some self-righteous busybody here at the End who somehow got it into his head that God appointed him Judge of All. Here, take a look:

And some men came down from Judea and {began} teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, {the brethren} determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue. Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren. And when they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses." And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we are saved

through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are." And all the multitude kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. And after they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, "Brethren, listen to me. Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name. And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written,

'AFTER THESE THINGS I will return,

AND I WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID

WHICH HAS FALLEN,

AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS,

AND I WILL RESTORE IT,

IN ORDER THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK

THE LORD,

AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME,'

SAYS THE LORD, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN

FROM OF OLD.

Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles, but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood. For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath." Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas—Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren, and they sent this letter by them,

"The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings. Since we have heard that some of our number to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with {their} words, unsettling your souls, it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also report the same things by word {of mouth}. **For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell.**"

(Acts 15:1–29)

So much for the idiotic religious zealots among us who want to drag out their long list of do's and don'ts, telling us how we ought to be absolutely ecstatic at the thought of slipping back into their bonehead bondage where salvation depends on Believers *doing* something rather than just *believing* the Truth. The best thing those who know (and believe) the Truth can do is leave those deluded dimwits alone. If they won't listen to the Apostles, they certainly won't listen to anyone else.

In the following passage, the Apostle Paul flatly tells every pathetically pated Pharisee he is a fool for trusting in any exterior *ritual*. Paul is specifically *talking about* circumcision, but his earlier statements in the Book of Galatians should tell *any reasonable person* (I borrowed that manipulative phrase from a former President of the United States) that what he says applies to all of the other *parabolic pantomimes* instituted by Moses. His point is based on the fact that those *parabolic pantomimes* were intended to *remind* the sons of Israel of the things Moses had taught them concerning Jesus Christ. Now that the Messiah has come and died as a sacrifice for our sins, why would anyone but a blithering, blathering buffoon think we need some visible *reminder* that we are to be continually looking for Him to come again and do the same thing He did when He came the first time? Here is what Paul said:

It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love. You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion {did} not {come} from Him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump {of dough.} I have confidence in you in the Lord, that you will adopt no other view; but the one who is disturbing you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is. But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished. Would that those who are troubling you would even mutilate themselves. For you were called to freedom, brethren; only {do}

not {turn} your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.
(Galatians 5:1–13)

Now that I have taken full advantage of this opportunity to vent my spleen in regard to the idiotic duplicity of mendacious morons, let me explain what Moses meant by the prepositional phrase erroneously translated “to keep it holy” in these two verses:

“Remember the sabbath day, **to keep it holy.**”
(Exodus 20:8)

“Observe the sabbath day **to keep it holy**, as the LORD your God commanded you.”
(Deuteronomy 5:12)

I have already explained that the two phrases translated “remember the sabbath day” and “observe the sabbath day” are both referring to the sons of Israel protecting *The Teaching* concerning the eternal seventh “day” of Creation, so it should be obvious that the prepositional phrase “to keep it holy” somehow refers to that as well. That said, I must now tell you the Hebrew verb used in that phrase does not mean “keep holy;” it means “sanctify”—that is, “make holy.” Furthermore, the same prepositional phrase occurs in the following passages, where you can clearly see how it is used in the Hebrew Scriptures. In each case, I have bolded the translation of that particular phrase:

“Then bring near to yourself Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel, to minister as priest to Me—Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons. And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. And you shall speak to all the skillful persons whom I have endowed with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron’s garments **to consecrate him**, that he may minister as priest to Me.”
(Exodus 28:1–3)

“Now this is what you shall do to them **to consecrate them** to minister as priests to Me: take one young bull and two rams without blemish, and unleavened bread and unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers spread with oil; you shall make them of fine wheat flour. And you shall put them in one basket, and present them

in the basket along with the bull and the two rams. Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting, and wash them with water. And you shall take the garments, and put on Aaron the tunic and the robe of the ephod and the ephod and the breastpiece, and gird him with the skillfully woven band of the ephod; and you shall set the turban on his head, and put the holy crown on the turban. Then you shall take the anointing oil, and pour it on his head and anoint him. And you shall bring his sons and put tunics on them. And you shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and bind caps on them, and they shall have the priesthood by a perpetual statute. So you shall ordain Aaron and his sons.”
(Exodus 29:1–9)

“And you shall take the ram of ordination and boil its flesh in a holy place. And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the bread that is in the basket, at the doorway of the tent of meeting. Thus they shall eat those things by which atonement was made at their ordination {and} **consecration**; but a layman shall not eat {them,} because they are holy. And if any of the flesh of ordination or any of the bread remains until morning, then you shall burn the remainder with fire; it shall not be eaten, because it is holy. And thus you shall do to Aaron and to his sons, according to all that I have commanded you; you shall ordain them through seven days. And each day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement, and you shall purify the altar when you make atonement for it; and you shall anoint it **to consecrate it**. For seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it; then the altar shall be most holy, {and} whatever touches the altar shall be holy.”
(Exodus 29:31–37)

Moses then took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it, and consecrated them. And he sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times and anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the basin and its stand, **to consecrate them**. Then he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron’s head and anointed him, **to consecrate him**. Next Moses had Aaron’s sons come near and clothed them with tunics, and girded them with sashes, and bound caps on them, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.
(Leviticus 8:10–13)

Then he brought me through the entrance, which {was} at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers for the priests, which faced north; and behold, there {was} a place at the

extreme rear toward the west. And he said to me, "This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, {and} where they shall bake the grain offering, in order that they may not bring {them} out into the outer court **to transmit holiness to the people.**"
(Ezekiel 46:19–20)

Those passages contain seven separate instances in which *exactly the same phrase* that we saw translated erroneously in Exodus 20:8 and Deuteronomy 5:12 as "to keep it holy" occurs. Did you see any instance where the object of the verb needed to be "kept" holy? Of course not! What you saw were seven distinct cases in which holiness was being *conferred on* someone. With that in mind, now let me show you two more places in which *exactly the same prepositional phrase* occurs:

Then Moses and Aaron came in from the presence of the assembly to the doorway of the tent of meeting, and fell on their faces. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to them; and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Take the rod; and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water. You shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock and let the congregation and their beasts drink." So Moses took the rod from before the LORD, just as He had commanded him; and Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, "Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?" Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank. But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not believed Me, **to treat Me as holy** in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."
(Numbers 20:6–12)

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go up to this mountain of Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the sons of Israel. And when you have seen it, you too shall be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother was; for in the wilderness of Zin, during the strife of the congregation, you rebelled against My command **to treat Me as holy** before their eyes at the water." (These are the waters of Meribah of Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.)
(Numbers 27:12–14)

Why do you think the translator would suddenly change gears and translate the expression he elsewhere translated "to keep it holy" as "to treat Me as holy" when it refers to God? He did it because he did not understand the *meaning and significance* of the *parabolic pantomime* in which Moses and Aaron were supposed to *speak to the rock* instead of *striking it* as they did. If you don't understand the *meaning and significance* of those things, perhaps you should consider what Paul said in that regard:

For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.
(1 Corinthians 10:1–4)

If you still don't understand the *parabolic imagery*, perhaps you should consider how this statement fits into the picture:

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.
(Ephesians 5:25–27)

Without getting into the *parabolic imagery* in which the anointing oil with which Aaron was "anointed" depicts the *Living Word of God*—that is, *The Teaching*—the essential point you need to remember is this: The only way anyone ever gains holiness—is "sanctified"—is by *hearing and believing* the Truth of the *Living Word of God* that God is. As Jesus said:

"Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth."
(John 17:17)

After a Believer has *attained* holiness by believing the Truth of the Gospel, the only way he can *maintain* the holiness of God's "Spirit" within him is by *remembering* the Truth he has already heard and by continuing to believe the Truth of *The Teaching* that he has opportunity

to hear. That is, he can only *remain* holy by being continually “washed” with the *parabolic* “water” of “the Word”—which is the *Living Word* of God that God is. Moses and Aaron fell short in that regard because their unbelief completely obviated the point of the *parabolic pantomime*: God’s holiness derives from the simple “working” of the *spoken* word; it does not come from browbeating or coercing people into *saying* they believe. But that bit of insight still doesn’t resolve the issue of how God Himself would be “sanctified” by the people seeing a *parabolic pantomime* that visibly depicted how salvation is accomplished. So maybe this next text will help you understand:

*But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, {you are} blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, but **sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts**, always {being} ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.*
(1 Peter 3:14–15)

You don’t think it is possible for Christ, the *Living Word* of God, to be “sanctified” in your “heart”? Well then, look at what Jesus said immediately after He made the statement I quoted above:

“Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, {art} in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me.”
(John 17:17–23)

If you are now beginning to wonder how Jesus Christ could “sanctify” Himself—since He was already holy—you are getting to the “heart” of the matter. He “sanctified” the *Living Word* of God that He was by continuing to believe the Truth of *The Teaching* He

understood. That is what Moses and Aaron did not do when they failed to act in accordance with the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching*. But that is what God expected the sons of Israel *to do* by first *remembering* what they had been taught concerning the seventh “day” of Creation and then conducting a *parabolic pantomime* in which they ceased “working” on every seventh day.

I made that last statement just because it informs the Prophet Jeremiah’s devious double talk in the following passage, where he rapidly switches back and forth between *talking about* the *eternal Sabbath* and the *parabolic pantomime* by which the sons of Israel were supposed to “sanctify” that *eternal Sabbath*. See if you can discern which “sabbath” Jeremiah is referring to each time he says “the sabbath day”:

*Thus the LORD said to me, “Go and stand in the public gate, through which the kings of Judah come in and go out, as well as in all the gates of Jerusalem; and say to them, ‘Listen to the word of the LORD, kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all inhabitants of Jerusalem, who come in through these gates: Thus says the LORD, “Take heed for yourselves, and do not carry any load on the sabbath day or bring anything in through the gates of Jerusalem. And you shall not bring a load out of your houses on the sabbath day nor do any work, but **keep the sabbath day holy**, as I commanded your forefathers. Yet they did not listen or incline their ears, but stiffened their necks in order not to listen or take correction. But it will come about, if you listen attentively to Me,” declares the LORD, “to bring no load in through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but **to keep the sabbath day holy** by doing no work on it, then there will come in through the gates of this city kings and princes sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city will be inhabited forever. They will come in from the cities of Judah and from the environs of Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin, from the lowland, from the hill country, and from the Negev, bringing burnt offerings, sacrifices, grain offerings and incense, and bringing sacrifices of thanksgiving to the house of the LORD. But if you do not listen to Me **to keep the sabbath day holy** by not carrying a load and coming in through the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day, then I shall kindle a fire in its gates, and it will devour the palaces of Jerusalem and not be quenched.””*
(Jeremiah 17:19–27)

Now that I have answered your question about “keeping the sabbath day holy,” let me show you a rather humorous exchange that Jesus had with the Pharisees about their slavish preoccupation with everybody observing every seventh day as a sabbath:

And it came about that He was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while picking the heads {of grain.} And the Pharisees were saying to Him, “See here, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” And He said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he was in need and became hungry, he and his companions: how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar {the} high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for {anyone} to eat except the priests, and he gave {it} also to those who were with him?” And He was saying to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Consequently, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

(Mark 2:23–28)

I absolutely love that passage because it captures the essence of all the vitriolic statements Jesus made to the scribes and Pharisees. When they came to Him asking Him dumb questions that stemmed from the lame-brained lies that they believed concerning *literal* things, He answered their questions with derisive answers concerning *parabolic* things that are explained in *The Teaching of Moses* that He understood.

In this case, the Pharisees were totally fixated on the fact that Jesus and His disciples were “breaking” an *external ritual* that was never intended to be anything more than a *parabolic pantomime* which depicted the “rest” that “The Many” who are created in the image and likeness of God will enjoy on the *eternal* seventh “day” of Creation. So Jesus comes right back in response to their idiotic question with a statement in which He is not referring to the *parabolic pantomime* they had in mind but to the *spiritual reality* that *parabolic pantomime* was originally intended to depict. But the humorous part of this particular exchange doesn’t show through unless you already know what Moses has said about “*The Man*” and are also able to see what Jesus actually said. So let me show you what He said:

And He said to them, “The Sabbath came into being because of ‘The Man,’ and not ‘The Man’ because of the

sabbath. Therefore, His Majesty is the Son of {both} the man and the Sabbath.”

(Mark 2:27–28) —my interim translation

I won’t tell you what Jesus *meant* by that. I’ll let you figure that out on your own. But I will tell you He intentionally confused the issue by—like Moses and the other Prophets of Israel—*talking about* two of each.

Editor: As you probably know, a highly contentious squabble has developed between “Christians” and the scientific/academic world over the issue of “intelligent design” vs. evolution. Not surprisingly, neither side is willing to give an inch and concede that the other side sometimes makes sense when arguing their case. I know you have no desire to involve yourself in political issues (and that’s really what this has become), but since some of our readers would undoubtedly be interested in hearing the Truth about Creation, I was hoping you might be willing to shed some light on the subject. If so, would you please explain (with as much or as little detail as you care to) how this Creation came into being?

Elijah: Anyone who is interested in my opinion about such things is free to join The Next Step program. I have long since explained my understanding of Creation to the participants in that program.

Editor: It’s been nearly forty years since God called you as a Teacher and it’s been over thirty years since you first understood that He called you for the specific purpose of restoring The Apostolic Teaching. Having spent more than three decades striving to understand The Teaching, you have undoubtedly been surprised at times by what you have learned. What have you found to be the most surprising or intriguing aspect of The Teaching?

Elijah: I should probably begin by correcting something you just stated, just for the record. It is true, on August 17 of this year it will be forty years since God called me. But it has been only fourteen years since April 1992, when I first understood I had been called to restore The Teaching. In mentioning thirty years, you are referring to the fact that it has been over thirty years since late March of 1974, when I first began to understand the meaning and significance of the Hebrew Scriptures. At that time, I knew God had called me; but I had no idea what He had called me to do.

To answer your question, if I were to pick the one thing in *The Teaching* that has repeatedly surprised me, it would have to be the fact that all of the Hebrew idioms and *parabolic imagery* in *The Teaching* are somehow related to the destruction of the man Adam at the End of the Age and God's creation of "The Man" Jesus Christ in the image and likeness of God. That *parabolic imagery* also depicts the death and Resurrection of Jesus because His life, death, and Resurrection are a *parabolic* depiction of the history of Corporate Israel. That history, in turn, is a representation of the history of the man Adam from the time he was banned from the Garden until his destruction at the End of the Age.

The one thing I find intriguing about all of those things is the fact that God's *parabolic* depiction of both the death and Resurrection of "The Man" Jesus Christ and the death and resurrection of the man Adam at the End of the Age are based squarely on the *parabolic imagery* of the Passover Parable, which in turn explains *why* Jesus intentionally stayed away from Jerusalem until the last minute so that He could die—in *parabolic pantomime*—on Passover as the *parabolic* Lamb of God.

The *parabolic imagery* that explains the *meaning* and *significance* of the *parabolic pantomime* that Jesus conducted when He died on the cross comes directly out of the mythology related to the death and resurrection of the Pharaoh—which was itself nothing more than a distorted understanding of *the promise* God gave to Adam. Although I have understood most of those things for nearly twenty-five years, it has never ceased to amaze me how God was able to take a distortion of *the promise*, use Moses to *restore The Teaching*, and then hide the Truth so completely in the writings of Moses and the other Prophets of Israel that Jesus not only had to *reveal* it to the Apostles but also enable them to understand it.

The thing that I find most difficult to understand about *The Teaching* is how the *parabolic imagery* the Prophets took from the Canaanite myth concerning the death and resurrection of Baal relates to the *parabolic imagery* that Moses took from Egyptian mythology concerning the death and resurrection of the Pharaoh—who was considered to be the Egyptian god Horus. Those things simply do not make sense to me. Every time I *think* I have gotten a glimpse into that part of *The Teaching*, what I *think* I have seen immediately fades into obscurity. So I assume some essential element in that part of *The Teaching* is still sealed.

The *parabolic imagery* that Moses took from Egyptian mythology explains how Corporate Israel—that is, Jesus Christ—became "The Man" Who will forever "carry *The Name*" of God. The *parabolic imagery* the Prophets took from Canaanite mythology explains how Jesus Christ became qualified to be "The Name" of God. He did that by "passing through the fire," thereby becoming immortal just as the mythological Achilles became immortal when his mother Thetis dipped him in the River Styx. The *parabolic imagery* taken from Egyptian mythology is concerned with Jesus Christ as "The One," while the *parabolic imagery* taken from Canaanite mythology is concerned with "The Many" who are *in* "The One." That is, the *parabolic images* taken from Egyptian mythology are concerned with Jesus Christ as "The Name," those based on Canaanite mythology are concerned with Him as "The House."

I can see those things fairly clearly, but I don't understand how they are intertwined because I do not understand the mind-set of the Canaanites in regard to kingship. Specifically, I have repeatedly tried to comprehend the *parabolic imagery* in *The Teaching* that is based on the sons of Israel first "giving a seed to Molech" (Lev. 18:21, 20:2-5) and then making that child "pass through the fire to Molech" (2 Kin. 23:10; Jer. 32:35). I have been able to piece together the fact that the transliteration "Molech" is based on an erroneous vocalization in the Massoretic text. The text says "*the molek*," indicating that the noun transliterated as "Molech" is not actually the name of the god to which it refers, and it isn't. The Massorettes should have vocalized the Hebrew term *mlk* as *melek* instead of *molek*. The term *melek* means "king," and "the king" to which the text refers is El, the supreme god of the Canaanite pantheon. El was the god to whom the Canaanites (who were later known as the Phoenicians) were sacrificing their children by "making them pass through the fire *to/for the king*." Moses and the Prophets say "the king" to avoid confusing El, the God of Israel, with El, the mythological "king" of the Canaanite pantheon.

Since the burning of the firstborn was an integral part of the Canaanite mythology, I can clearly see how that *parabolically* depicts the "burning" of the *physical* body of Jesus Christ when "*The Light*" of the Glory of God instantly transformed Him into His Own burning image and likeness on Resurrection Morning. It also *parabolically* depicts the "burning" of the man Adam in the fires of a nuclear holocaust at the End of the Age.

Unfortunately, understanding isolated facts about the mind-set of the sons of Israel when they lived in the land of Canaan does not provide the same comprehensive insight that the Egyptian royal myth allows into the mind-set they had when they lived in Egypt. I am still trying to see their beliefs clearly; but the more I tried in the past, the more frustrated I became. So I have backed off in recent years. I assume I will not be able to understand fully until the appropriate “seal” comes off and the biblical text is allowed to “speak” freely like every other literary text.

Editor: As part of your calling, you have also done extensive research into the history of the Church. Is there any one time in Church History that you find to be the most interesting? If so, why do you find it interesting?

Elijah: I am totally intrigued by the events that led up to the Protestant Reformation. I understand somewhat the political side of the Reformation, and to a certain extent I also understand the mind-set of the Reformers. But I do not have much insight at all into the various factors that contributed to their sudden revolt against the leaders of the Church in Rome. I find it interesting that both Luther and Calvin seem to hold a vehement disdain for the fact that Church theology had been heavily influenced by Aristotelian philosophy. As is well known, that blatant intrusion of Greek philosophy into Christian theology stemmed from the earlier work of Thomas Aquinas. But both Luther and Calvin were themselves strongly influenced by the “Christian philosopher” Augustine. As I have previously indicated, I have no respect at all for that man’s paltry contribution to Christian theology. I see him as nothing more than a Pretender along the lines of Origen. (See “Questions & Answers,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 1998.)

I am absolutely convinced that there is much more to the Protestant Reformation than has met the eye of those scholars who have spent a lifetime studying the political and theological aspects of the Reformation. I say that because I am certain that the Gospel was somehow still alive as a *spoken* Word at that time. And I am just as convinced that Calvin, if not also Luther, came into contact with that *spoken* Word—and *believed* it—somewhere along the way. I would like to know where and how that happened. I would also like to know how that *spoken* Word was protected and *handed down* through earlier generations. I have a

hunch it was in a monastery that was somehow insulated from the corrupting influence of Pretenders who had an iron grip on the leadership positions in Rome.

It is fairly easy to track how the *spoken* Word of the Gospel has been *handed down* since the time of the Reformation. One of the last major segments of the Protestant Church to see *legitimate* revival was the Pentecostal wing of the Church. But those people have just about given up preaching the Gospel now in favor of encouraging folks to seek what they call “the baptism in the Holy Spirit.”

It is also rather easy to see why preaching the Truth of the Gospel has gradually died out over the past thirty years. If one studies the factors that contributed to the demise of the Gospel in our time, one of the primary causes would appear to be the sudden influx of Pretenders who came into the Pentecostal churches from Lutheran, Episcopalian, and even Roman Catholic churches during the charismatic movement of the late 1960s and the early 1970s.

Most of the people in the charismatic movement had absolutely no knowledge of the Gospel because they came out of old-line churches where the Gospel had not been preached for a century or more. All that most of those people had was a mystical experience in which they suddenly started speaking in tongues. I know that only because I was there, and I saw what went on. Many of those people migrated into independent Pentecostal/charismatic churches where they were led by Pretenders who had no *legitimate* salvation experience themselves. A lot of the young people eventually became leaders in Pentecostal churches. In Satan’s plan, they continued to bring other Pretenders into the Pentecostal churches for the *specific* purpose of diluting the Gospel that was still being preached in some of those churches during the 1960s.

Now that the End of the Age is right around the corner, I seriously doubt that God plans to do what He did during the Protestant Reformation. That is, I do not believe He is going to shake the established churches to the core as He did the Roman Catholic Church at that time. Instead, I expect Him to work quietly among True Believers to accomplish something completely unexpected. The only problem with that is, I have not yet learned to *think* as God *thinks*. So you should probably take what I *think* with a HUGE grain of salt. Maybe even toss in an extra cup or two for good measure. But only under the direct supervision of a doctor, of course. ■