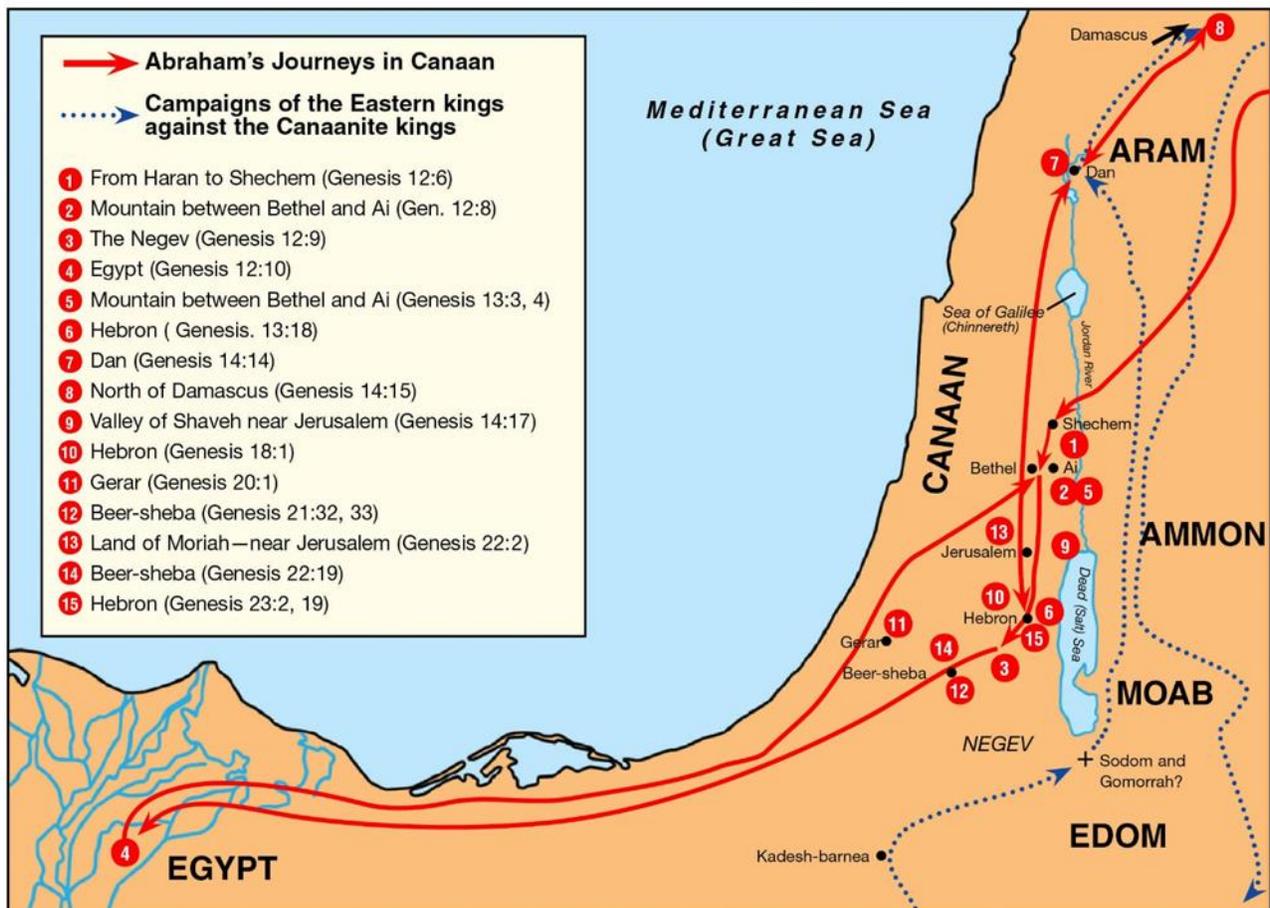
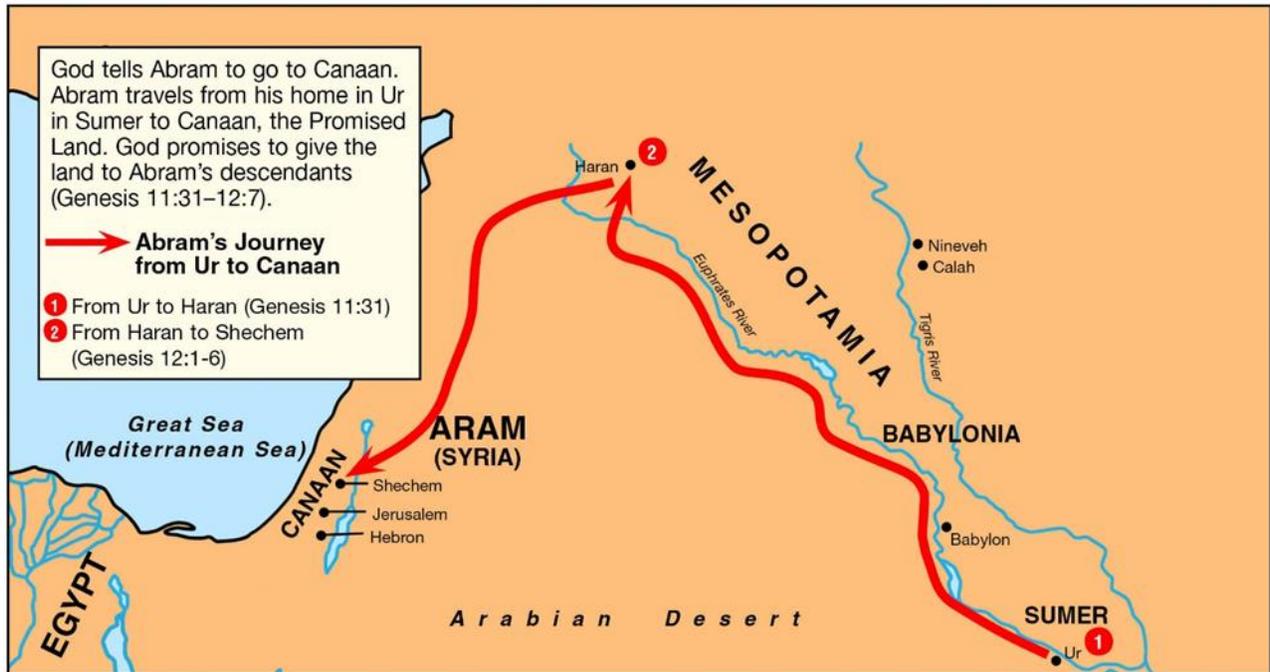




Pastor Scott Velain

Genesis Chapter 13

This week will be moving into a brand-new chapter of the book of Genesis as we venture into chapter 13. Now I have a map that I want you to have, that gives us a more detailed path and shows us the territory that Abram has covered so far.



So far, we've seen Abram and his family leaving the land of Ur, and marching up along the Euphrates River past Babylon into Mesopotamia into Haran and then westward down on into Syria and into Canaan and then on into Egypt. Now I have this map that is being displayed here before you, and I want to leave it up on the screen for just a moment so that you can take a screenshot of it if you like, but this particular map is also included in our downloadable PDF file if you'd like to have it. And once again as we always do... we have made sure that this particular map is free for everyone. All you have to do is go to our website at HolyImpactMinistries.com, and then go to our live Bible study night page and hover over the Genesis button and you'll get a drop-down menu that will allow you to pull up this week's study of Genesis chapter 13 in a PDF format and printed out or save it to your computer.

One of the things I really like about this map is the fact that it lays out the path of Abram in each one of the Scriptures. If you'll notice on this map you'll see numbers one through 15. And right next to each one of these red dot numbers, you'll find the Scripture that makes mention of what Abraham did at each one of these places. And so, this can be a very valuable tool to have in your study library because it really helps us to understand how many miles Abram had traveled along with his nephew Lot and their family along with all of the riches and flocks that they had accumulated along the way. I always love to look at the maps because these maps can really give us a sense of reality. These things really did take place, and they took place in a very real land that we can even go in visit to this very day. And so, I hope that this map is a blessing for you and I hope that it helps us to see the very real path that Abram and Lot had taken back in those early days.

And so, now armed with this information, I want us to take the time to read Genesis chapter 13 so that we can once again know and understand what it says, and so that we can also just as importantly know and understand what it does not say. So, let's begin with Genesis chapter 13 versus one through 18.

Gen 13:1 So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb.

Gen 13:2 Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold.

Gen 13:3 And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai,

Gen 13:4 to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of the LORD.

Gen 13:5 And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents,

Gen 13:6 so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together,

Gen 13:7 and there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land.

Gen 13:8 Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen.

Gen 13:9 Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left

hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left.”

Gen 13:10 And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)

Gen 13:11 So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other.

Gen 13:12 Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom.

Gen 13:13 Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the LORD.

Gen 13:14 The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward,

Gen 13:15 for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever.

Gen 13:16 I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted.

Gen 13:17 Arise, Walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.”

Gen 13:18 So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD.

Now as you can see, Genesis chapter 13 is not a very long chapter, but there are some very intriguing things found within these verses worth taking the time to make note of. One of the first things that I want us to make note of is what happened to Abram in Egypt. Abram goes to Egypt knowing that if Pharaoh knows that Sarai is his wife... he will kill Abram and take her from him. Now I want us to just stop here for a moment and ask ourselves the question, “how did Abram know that Pharaoh would kill him if he knew Sarai was his wife?” There is nothing found within the Scripture that would lead us to believe that Abram had ever been to Egypt before, so what caused him to believe that Pharaoh would kill him if he thought that Sarai was his wife? The only plausible way that Abram could have known that Pharaoh would have killed him if he knew Sarai was his wife, was if God had revealed this to Abram beforehand.

Our beloved brother Bill who is always with us at Fellowship sent me an email questioning this very thing, and so I wanted to address this for just a moment because I think that brother Bill brought up some very valid questions concerning why Abram seemed to lie to Pharaoh about Sarai being his sister. As we mentioned last week, Abram never really lied to Pharaoh about Sarai being his sister. Sarai was his sister because she was the daughter of one of his father’s wives. And I often hear pastors who preach on the book of Genesis telling us that Abram lied to Pharaoh when in reality, this is simply not the case at all.

I want us to see what is written about Abram just a few chapters in the future. Genesis chapter 26 versus four and five:

Gen 26:4 I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,

Gen 26:5 because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my

statutes, and my laws.”

So here we find several chapters in the future, that God says that Abram obeyed his voice and kept his charge, his commandments, his statutes, and his laws. So, with that in mind, it's a little difficult to believe that Abram lied and broke God's commandment concerning Pharaoh. I would submit to you my friends, that Abram was doing exactly what the Ruach Hakodesh of God was leading him to do. Abram was going where God wanted Abram to go, and God's unfolding plan was taking place in Abram's life because he was indeed following the spirit of God. There should be no doubt in our minds that it was God's intention for Abram to become wealthy and for Abram to have all of the flocks and the treasures and the things that he had. God was clearly equipping Abram for the task that was set ahead of him.

As we see Abram departing Egypt, we can clearly see that Abram becomes rather wealthy from Pharaoh's mistake. We have to remember that Pharaoh took Abram's sister from him. Abram did not give Sarai to Pharaoh... he took her for himself, and he gave Abram all kinds of riches and flocks and material things because he took Sarai from Abram. It shouldn't be too difficult for us to understand that if Pharaoh thought that Abram was married to Sarai, that he would have simply killed him in order to take his wife from him. But Abram was able to outsmart Pharaoh because it was made known to him in advance what Pharaoh would do to him if Abram allowed Pharaoh to know that Sarai was his wife. And so, the question then begs... how did Abram know in advance what Pharaoh would do to him? The answer to that question should be clear from what we've already seen in the Scripture. We must remember that God was constantly talking to Abram. Our Father in Heaven and Abram had an open line of communication going on. We've already heard the promise that God gave to Abram. We've already been told that God called Abram out of the land of Ur. And so there should be no doubt in our minds that God was indeed guiding his servant Abram to where he wanted him to go, and what he wanted him to do.

And this is tectonically important for us to understand as modern-day Christians. If we allow our Father in Heaven to guide us in our ways and the paths that we take, he will lead us back to the path that his only begotten son has created for us that will lead us back to the tree of life. How many of us have the kind relationship with the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob that Abram had? Many of us will laugh, and snicker, and even belittle the idea that we can have that kind of relationship with the creator of the heavens and the earth. But I tell you the truth my friends... it is because of his unfolding plan that we can indeed have that kind of relationship with him.

The Christian who believes that God does not lead them, is a Christian who simply does not believe. I cannot tell you how many times my plans have changed because he has prepared another path for me to take. I cannot tell you how many things that I have been able to accomplish, not because of my own will, or because of my own intelligence, but because of his. I believe that everything that we see happening in Abram's life was God's will. I believe that Abram obeyed God's voice and kept his charge and his commandments and his statutes and his laws, and I believe just as were told in Genesis chapter 26 verse four, that this is why God

multiplied his offspring to be more numerous than the stars of the heavens, and this is why through Abram's offspring, all the nations of the earth shall indeed be blessed.

I want us to understand that the author of the Bible is setting us up to understand the patterns that we will see all throughout his God breathed Scriptures. Many of us, when we see Abram leaving Egypt with all kinds of riches, also see the Israelites coming out of Egypt centuries later with all kinds of riches. For those of us who have already read the book through at least once... these are astounding realities of dualities.

Remember when we started our study into the book of Genesis we spoke about how we would often times see the reality of duality coming to fruition all throughout our Scripture. Time and time again we would see a reenactment of something that would once again happen in the future. This my friends, is just another one of those examples. When we get into the book of the Exodus we'll see the reality of duality coming to fruition as Moses leads God's people out of Egypt just like Abram led Lot and his family out of Egypt. Abram and his offspring left Egypt with many riches, just like the offspring of Abram will once again leave Egypt with many riches when God rescued them from the hand of Pharaoh in the future. And in both of these instances, we find a wicked Pharaoh that God uses to show his mercy and his grace and the awesome power and majesty that he has. And once again if you were with us for last week's study, you already know that God created Pharaoh as a dishonorable vessel in order to show his mercy and his grace and his awesome power to his people according to Paul in Romans chapter 9 verse 17.

And so, there is a lot to contemplate here, a lot to think about, and a lot more to see than meets the eye and unless we actually take the time to slow down and meditate upon these things while asking for the discernment to understand them, we could very easily miss these things.

As we move into about the fifth and sixth versus of Genesis chapter 13 we see that because both Abram and Lot had become so wealthy... they could no longer dwell together in the same area. Lots herdsmen and Abram's herdsman were beginning to squabble because the herds were so large and they were becoming intermingled. Remember what we spoke about last week concerning the way that God divides, elects, and separates. Even our Messiah said when he came, that he did not come to bring peace on earth. He tells us very clearly in Luke chapter 12 verse 51 through 53, and again in Matthew chapter 10 verse 35, that he came to bring division, not peace. And once again we can see a direct correlation between Father and Son concerning the way that both Father and Son divide, elect, and separate. This my friends, is another pattern that we see all throughout the biblical narrative.

And so, we see this division going on between Abram's nephew Lot, and Abram. This is one of the very first times that we see a rather wayward Lot being divided, and separated from the elected Abram. And as we'll see in the very near future, this is the first of several bad decisions that Lot makes when he decides to move closer to the big cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. And there are all kinds of patterns in parallels that we can see in the big cities of our time, and the multitude of sin and sexual immorality, and abominations that go on in the big cities of our

time, but we will leave those direct parallels for you to ponder as we move forward.

I want us to also notice the kindness of Abram, when he tells his nephew Lot, that he will allow Lot to decide which way he will go. If we will notice in Genesis chapter 13 versus nine Abram tells Lot his nephew, that if he chooses to go to the left, Abram would go to the right, but if Lot chose to go to the right, Abram would go to the left. I believe that the reason Abram allowed Lot his nephew to decide which way he would go, was so that Abram could not be blamed for Lot's decision. It was God's will once again, that Abram would allow Lot to choose for himself which way he would turn. Unfortunately, whatever drew Lot to choose to live near the big cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, it wound up not being very lucrative for Lot and his family, but we'll get into that later as the story progresses.

Something else that we should make note of in verse 13 of Genesis 13 is that the men of Sodom were wicked, and that they were great sinners against Yahovah. And once Lot had separated himself from Abram and moved towards Sodom... God once again expounds and expands upon the promise that he had already given to Abram. After... Lot separates from Abram, God tells Abram that he will give him all the land for as far as he can see, and that he will make his offspring as the dust of the earth so that if one can count the dust of the earth, his offspring could then also be counted. And so, I want us to make note of the fact that God waited for Lot to separate from Abram until expounding and expanding upon the promise that he once again reinforced with Abram.

Something else that I want us to see in Genesis chapter 13 versus 15, is that God says that this land he is giving to Abram and his offspring is going to be theirs and I quote, "forever". Now my friends, "forever" is an awfully long time. And I would submit to you that "forever" means exactly that... "forever". What we as Christians must understand is that there are people occupying our land today in our time. But these people who are in our land are going to be evicted from our land, and it will indeed be the landlord who will evict them in the very near future. Now, why is it that I say such a thing? Let's go ahead and take a look at what is written in Ezekiel chapter 36:

Eze 36:1 "And you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel, and say, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD.

Eze 36:2 Thus says the Lord GOD: Because the enemy said of you, 'Aha!' and, 'The ancient heights have become our possession,'

Eze 36:3 therefore prophesy, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Precisely because they made you desolate and crushed you from all sides, so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations, and you became the talk and evil gossip of the people,

Eze 36:4 therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD: Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains and the hills, the ravines and the valleys, the desolate wastes and the deserted cities, which have become a prey and derision to the rest of the nations all around,

Eze 36:5 therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Surely I have spoken in my hot jealousy against the rest of the nations and against all Edom, who gave my land to themselves as a possession

with wholehearted joy and utter contempt, that they might make its pasturelands a prey.

Eze 36:6 Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I have spoken in my jealous wrath, because you have suffered the reproach of the nations.

Eze 36:7 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I swear that the nations that are all around you shall themselves suffer reproach.

Eze 36:8 "But you, O mountains of Israel, shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to my people Israel, for they will soon come home.

Eze 36:9 For behold, I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown.

Eze 36:10 And I will multiply people on you, the whole house of Israel, all of it. The cities shall be inhabited and the waste places rebuilt.

Eze 36:11 And I will multiply on you man and beast, and they shall multiply and be fruitful. And I will cause you to be inhabited as in your former times, and will do more good to you than ever before. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

Eze 36:12 I will let people walk on you, even my people Israel. And they shall possess you, and you shall be their inheritance, and you shall no longer bereave them of children.

Eze 36:13 Thus says the Lord GOD: Because they say to you, 'You devour people, and you bereave your nation of children,'

Eze 36:14 therefore you shall no longer devour people and no longer bereave your nation of children, declares the Lord GOD.

Eze 36:15 And I will not let you hear anymore the reproach of the nations, and you shall no longer bear the disgrace of the peoples and no longer cause your nation to stumble, declares the Lord GOD."

Eze 36:16 The word of the LORD came to me:

Eze 36:17 "Son of man, when the house of Israel lived in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds. Their ways before me were like the uncleanness of a woman in her menstrual impurity.

Eze 36:18 So I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood that they had shed in the land, for the idols with which they had defiled it.

Eze 36:19 I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries. In accordance with their ways and their deeds I judged them.

Eze 36:20 But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name, in that people said of them, 'These are the people of the LORD, and yet they had to go out of his land.'

Eze 36:21 But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came.

Eze 36:22 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came.

Eze 36:23 And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.

Eze 36:24 I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you

into your own land.

Eze 36:25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.

Eze 36:26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Eze 36:27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Eze 36:28 You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Eze 36:29 And I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. And I will summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you.

Eze 36:30 I will make the fruit of the tree and the increase of the field abundant, that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations.

Eze 36:31 Then you will remember your evil ways, and your deeds that were not good, and you will loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your abominations.

Eze 36:32 It is not for your sake that I will act, declares the Lord GOD; let that be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel.

Eze 36:33 “Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt.

Eze 36:34 And the land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by.

Eze 36:35 And they will say, ‘This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.’

Eze 36:36 Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I am the LORD; I have rebuilt the ruined places and replanted that which was desolate. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it.

Eze 36:37 “Thus says the Lord GOD: This also I will let the house of Israel ask me to do for them: to increase their people like a flock.

Eze 36:38 Like the flock for sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

I want us to understand that the covenant that God made with Abram was not a conditional covenant. It was not an “if, then” kind of covenant. It was not about “If Abram does this, then I will do that” kind of covenant. The covenant that God made with Abram was an everlasting covenant that was made by our Father in Heaven to last and I quote, “forever”. The ramifications of this perpetual covenant still affect us even to this very day in our time and will continue to affect us literally... forever.

For those of us who have read the whole book, we know that the house of Israel and many of the descendants of Abram profaned the name of the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. We know that our Father in Heaven divorced the house of Israel and scattered them throughout the earth, and we know that the house of Judah along with the tribe of Benjamin were taken into

captivity under Babylon. But we also know that it has always been God's unfolding plan to not only repair the damage that was done to the house of Israel because of their transgressions... but that it was always God's unfolding plan to include all people from all nations, nationalities, colors, creeds, and tribes, and to gather his children from all over the four corners of the earth back to him, once again rescuing them from the wicked hand of the ultimate Pharaoh who is Satan himself.

What's important for us to understand as we read through our Fathers Torah, is how our Father's Torah is relevant to us in our day and age and how it applies to our lives. Our very generation has seen some of the most significant biblical prophecies come to fruition with the rebirth of Israel as a Jewish nation and the return of the control of Jerusalem to the Jewish people just as our Father in Heaven prophesied within the pages of his God breathed Scriptures, and yet... today's modern-day denominational charters of men seem to have no interest in what God is doing right before their very eyes.

Since the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. nothing much really happened for better than 18 centuries concerning what God had prophesied through his God breathed Scriptures. For almost 1900 years God's people had no way of gauging where they stood in biblical history. But today, that's no longer the case for you and I. It is written that our Father in Heaven would make Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples. It was written that our Father in Heaven would make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the people, and that all who lift it would surely hurt themselves.

I've heard many modern-day pastors and lay people proclaiming that Israel today has nothing to do with the prophecies of the Bible. But I would submit to you my friends that those who proclaim such nonsense are the ones who have nothing to do with the prophecies of the Bible.

In 1867 Mark Twain visited Israel, and he makes mention in his writings of how desolate Israel was back in the 1800s. Here's a quote from Mark Twain that can be found in his book entitled "The Innocents Abroad":

https://www.amazon.com/Innocents-Abroad-Mark-Twain/dp/1494462966/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1523389212&sr=1-2&refinements=p_lbr_one_browse-bin%3AMark+Twain&dpID=41H6NqZVXmL&preST=_SY344_BO1,204,203,200_QL70_&dpSrc=srch

"..... A desolate country whose soil is rich enough, but is given over wholly to weeds... a silent mournful expanse.... a desolation.... we never saw a human being on the whole route.... hardly a tree or shrub anywhere. Even the olive tree and the cactus, those fast friends of a worthless soil, had almost deserted the country."

The land of Israel had all but died without God's people living in it. But just as our Father had

prophesied in the book of Ezekiel... the land of Israel today has become almost like the garden of Eden itself. Israel today is one of the world's leading fresh citrus producers and exporters including oranges grapefruit, tangerines, and the pomelit. More than 40 types of fruit are grown in Israel today.

<https://unitedwithisrael.org/israeli-exports-exceed-100-billion-in-2017/>

According to "United with Israel" Israeli exports of wine exceeded \$100 billion in 2017, and not only is Israel producing wine made in the land of Israel, they are now set to open new wineries in China this year as well. If Mark Twain could see the land of Israel today, I daresay that he would barely recognize it compared to what he saw in the 1800s before Israel became a nation. And yet, even though the land has been revitalized and is producing great yields of produce for God's people... the land of Israel has also become a cup of staggering to the surrounding nations, and Jerusalem has indeed become a heavy stone for all the peoples of the world... just like we were told that it would be in Zachariah chapter 12.

Let there be no doubt about it my friends, the hand of the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob is indeed at work in the land of Israel and in Jerusalem where he has put his name, and although this prophecy has not been fulfilled in its entirety... we should be wise enough to see, know, and understand that we are witnessing the beginning fulfillment of the prophecy of the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob in our time.

After the fall of the temple in 70 A.D. and what was called "the Roman dispersion" or "the Roman exile", the Jewish people waited expectantly for their Messiah to come but it didn't happen. The Gentile church and the messianic Jews of the second century A.D. believed that the Messiah would surely return at any moment, but it didn't happen. In the fourth century the Gentile church of Jesus Christ was still awaiting the return of Jesus, and the Jews of every nation around the world wondered if the time was finally near when they can go back home, but it didn't happen. The people of the fifth, the sixth, the seventh, and the eighth centuries, right on up to the 17th century were all waiting for the fulfillment of the return of Israel to their homeland.

After all this time, the Gentile Christian church concluded that there wasn't going to be a Jewish Israel after all. The Gentile Christian church began to preach and teach that the people in the land of Israel found in prophecy, is were simply symbolic of their newfound Gentile church. During the 17th century the Gentile Christian church began to proclaim that they were a replacement of the Jews, and that God had completely and utterly forgotten about his promises, and his prophecies concerning the only people that he ever called his people anywhere in the Bible. The new Gentile church began to teach and preach that Israel had been thoroughly and permanently rejected by God because they had rejected his son (even though this is a far cry from what we find all throughout the biblical narrative from the Old Testament to the new).

But then along comes the 20th century, and the worthless babblings of a new Gentile church was

exposed through the power of the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob who in 1948 once again forced the world to recognize Israel as a nation upon the earth. In 1967 Jerusalem was returned to the control of the Jewish people just as prophesied. But did this new Gentile church recognized their mistake and turn from their misguided proclamations? No... they simply doubled down on the demonically inspired nonsense that they had taught for generations. Thousands of Christian denominational charters of men have completely rejected what they have witnessed with their own eyes, and to this day, preach and teach a man-made, man created, man concocted doctrine that places themselves over God's chosen people, and makes themselves out to be the replacement of the house of Israel.

We watched on TV as the Israeli army defeated an alliance of five powerful Arab armies in a matter of only six days, and in 1967 they re-claimed Jerusalem as their own holy city for the first time since 70 A.D., and yet... there are still those who insist that none of this has anything to do with the hand of God or what he prophesied in his God breathed Scriptures.

This re-formation of Israel and the restoration of the land of Israel that we have seen with our own eyes is just the beginning of the prophecies that our Father in Heaven told us would come to pass. Right now, only the tribe of Judah is scarcely being brought back into the land, but according to the Scriptures, the other 10 tribes of the house of Israel will also be brought back into the land.

What today's modern-day Christian needs to understand is that near the end of what we know as the Old Testament... the house of Israel broke into two nations. One nation was known as the southern kingdom, also known as Judah which consisted of the tribe of Judah and what was left of the tribe of Benjamin. The other nation was known as the "*Northern Kingdom*" also known as "*the kingdom of Ephraim*" (sometimes incorrectly called the house of Israel).

These two kingdoms began to war against each other, and because the northern kingdom bowed themselves down to other gods and worshiped idols and played the whore... God divorced them and scattered them throughout the four corners of the earth by the hands of the Assyrians. The southern kingdom (known as Judah) also bowed themselves down to other gods and worshiped idols and played the whore just like their sister northern kingdom did, and so God cast them into bondage under Babylon for 70 years. Judah who was taken into bondage under Babylon returned to the land of Israel and rebuild her temple, but the northern kingdom (also known as the lost sheep of the house of Israel) never did return to the land of Israel. But I want us to understand what our Father in Heaven tells us is about to happen concerning both Judah and the other 10 tribes of Israel known as Ephraim. Let's turn to Ezekiel chapter 37 versus 16 through 28:

Eze 37:16 "Son of man, take a stick and write on it, 'For Judah, and the people of Israel associated with him'; then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with him.'

Eze 37:17 And join them one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand.

Eze 37:18 And when your people say to you, 'Will you not tell us what you mean by these?'
Eze 37:19 say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am about to take the stick of Joseph (that is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated with him. And I will join with it the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, that they may be one in my hand.
Eze 37:20 When the sticks on which you write are in your hand before their eyes,
Eze 37:21 then say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land.
Eze 37:22 And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms.
Eze 37:23 They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.
Eze 37:24 "My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes.
Eze 37:25 They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever; and David my servant shall be their prince forever.
Eze 37:26 I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore.
Eze 37:27 My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
Eze 37:28 Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore."

It is written that our Father in Heaven would join both the northern tribe of Ephraim and the southern tribe of Judah back together again into one nation. Our Messiah Yeshua, Jesus came to begin this process. Matthew chapter 15 versus 21 through 28:

Mat 15:21 And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon.

Mat 15:22 And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon."

Mat 15:23 But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us."

Mat 15:24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Mat 15:25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me."

Mat 15:26 And he answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it

to the dogs.”

Mat 15:27 She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.”

Mat 15:28 Then Jesus answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

Yeshua our Messiah tells us very clearly in verse 24 that he was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel at that point in time. Why? Because it has always been, first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. He brought the healing message of both Judah and Ephraim to the lost sheep of the house of Israel first, and then to the Gentile. It is through our Messiah Yeshua, Jesus, that the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and the Jew, and the Gentile will all be made into one stick in the Father's hand. The lost sheep of the house of Israel also known as the northern kingdom of Ephraim must come through the one door that no man can shut who is Yeshua Hamashiach, Jesus our Messiah. The Jew must also come through the one door that no man can shut who is Yeshua Hamashiach, Jesus our Messiah. The Gentile, must also come through the one door that no man can shut who is Yeshua Hamashiach, Jesus our Messiah.

Notice that this woman that we see in Matthew chapter 15 was not accepted as part of the house of Israel until she acknowledged her faith in her Messiah. Once she knew her place, and once she humbled herself at the feet of the only begotten son of God... then, and only then was she accepted as part of the house of Israel and her request was granted to her.

Now... with all of that being said I'd like us to read all of Ezekiel chapter 37 so that we can better understand all of this prophecy put together properly. Ezekiel chapter 37:

Eze 37:1 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones.

Eze 37:2 And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry.

Eze 37:3 And he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered, “O Lord GOD, you know.”

Eze 37:4 Then he said to me, “Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

Eze 37:5 Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.

Eze 37:6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD.”

Eze 37:7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone.

Eze 37:8 And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them.

Eze 37:9 Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these

slain, that they may live.”

Eze 37:10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

Eze 37:11 Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.’

Eze 37:12 Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel.

Eze 37:13 And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people.

Eze 37:14 And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD.”

Eze 37:15 The word of the LORD came to me:

Eze 37:16 “Son of man, take a stick and write on it, ‘For Judah, and the people of Israel associated with him’; then take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with him.’

Eze 37:17 And join them one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand.

Eze 37:18 And when your people say to you, ‘Will you not tell us what you mean by these?’

Eze 37:19 say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am about to take the stick of Joseph (that is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated with him. And I will join with it the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, that they may be one in my hand.

Eze 37:20 When the sticks on which you write are in your hand before their eyes,

Eze 37:21 then say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land.

Eze 37:22 And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms.

Eze 37:23 They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

Eze 37:24 “My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes.

Eze 37:25 They shall dwell in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, and David my servant shall be their prince forever.

Eze 37:26 I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in their midst forevermore.

Eze 37:27 My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Eze 37:28 Then the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when my

sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”

Now there are many people who believe that Ezekiel chapter 37 is the fulfillment of what we have already seen concerning Israel becoming a nation in our time... but I would argue that this may not be the proper interpretation of Ezekiel chapter 37.

Clearly, what we see in Ezekiel chapter 37 is the resurrection of the dead, and we know that the resurrection of the dead does not happen until the end of the book. Revelation chapter 20 verses four through six:

*Rev 20:4 Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. **They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.***

*Rev 20:5 **The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.***

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

So, unless we are to believe in reincarnation... our Father in Heaven is not going to raise up these old dead dried-up bones until the first resurrection just as our Messiah tells us that he will in Revelation chapter 20. But this does not negate the fact that our Father in Heaven will indeed resurrect the dead and bring them back into their own land in his good time, nor does this negate the fact that our Father in Heaven told us very clearly that he would cause Israel to be a burden some stone to the world, and there should be no doubt in our minds that he has certainly done just that. There is no other nation in the world that is questioned concerning whether or not their land belongs to them other than the nation of Israel. There is no other nation in the world that is repeatedly threatened with complete genocide and annihilation other than the nation of Israel. And there is no other nation as small as Israel who has defended itself from five other Arab nations. And not only did they defend themselves against five separate Arab nations... they did it in six days, and they took so much land that they felt guilty and gave half of it back.

In the end... how all of these prophecies will come to fruition is still up in the air according to most biblical scholars. But just as I have always said... we need not rub the Bible like a crystal ball in order to try and tell the future. When these prophecies come to pass... we will know it. How they will come to pass, and how our Father's unfolding plan actually happens will be revealed to us when it happens. The Bible is not a crystal ball that is to be used to tell the future. The Bible is a roadmap that allows us to know where we are within the biblical timeline and within the biblical narrative. We know when we see these things come to pass where we are in time, and what is yet to come.

What we can say for sure, is that Israel is once again a nation, and has indeed become a burden some stone for the rest of the world. No one can reject what we can see before our very eyes.

And so, my point in all of this is that the covenant that God made with Abram concerning the land of Israel is an everlasting covenant, and we should be able to see that with our own eyes in our own time today. Israel is indeed a burden some stone. Jerusalem is indeed where God has put his name. And the house of Israel will indeed be brought back to the land that was given to us as the seed of Abraham in the very near future at a time of our Father's choosing.

Will pick up with Genesis chapter 13 part two, and move into chapter 14 next Wednesday evening at 7 PM Eastern standard time