



Pastor Scott Velain

## Genesis Chapter 35 Idols, Symbols and Israel

If you were with us during our last session you already know that Simeon and Levi Jacobs two sons had just gotten done murdering King Hamor and his Son Shechem, because the king's son Shechem had raped Jacob's daughter Dinah. And as we've already read in chapter 34, they had murdered all the males within the kingdom and Jacob scolded his sons Simeon and Levi, and he told them that they had brought trouble upon him by doing this wicked thing. All of the inhabitants of the land of the Canaanites and the Perizzites would surely come up against him.

As we move into chapter 35 we see Yahovah telling Jacob to arise and go to Bethel and to live there. And so, before we go any farther let's take the time to once again read Genesis chapter 35 so that we can know exactly what it does, as well as what it does not say. Genesis chapter 35:

*Gen 35:1 God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau."*

*Gen 35:2 So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves and change your garments."*

*Gen 35:3 Then let us arise and go up to Bethel, so that I may make there an altar to the God who answers me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone."*

*Gen 35:4 So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had, and the rings that were in their ears. Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree that was near Shechem.*

*Gen 35:5 And as they journeyed, a terror from God fell upon the cities that were around them, so that they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.*

*Gen 35:6 And Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him,*

*Gen 35:7 and there he built an altar and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed himself to him when he fled from his brother.*

*Gen 35:8 And Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried under an oak below Bethel. So he called its name Allon-bacuth.*

*Gen 35:9 God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him.*

*Gen 35:10 And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name." So he called his name Israel.*

*Gen 35:11 And God said to him, "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body.*

*Gen 35:12 The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you."*

*Gen 35:13 Then God went up from him in the place where he had spoken with him.*

*Gen 35:14 And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone. He poured out a drink offering on it and poured oil on it.*

*Gen 35:15 So Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.*

*Gen 35:16 Then they journeyed from Bethel. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor, and she had hard labor.*

*Gen 35:17 And when her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for you have another son."*

*Gen 35:18 And as her soul was departing (for she was dying), she called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin.*

*Gen 35:19 So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem),*

*Gen 35:20 and Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day.*

*Gen 35:21 Israel journeyed on and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder.*

*Gen 35:22 While Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine. And Israel heard of it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve.*

*Gen 35:23 The sons of Leah: Reuben (Jacob's firstborn), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.*

*Gen 35:24 The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin.*

*Gen 35:25 The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's servant: Dan and Naphtali.*

*Gen 35:26 The sons of Zilpah, Leah's servant: Gad and Asher. These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram.*

*Gen 35:27 And Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned.*

*Gen 35:28 Now the days of Isaac were 180 years.*

*Gen 35:29 And Isaac breathed his last, and he died and was gathered to his people, old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.*

As we move through the first few verses we find that Yahovah tells Jacob to arise and to go dwell in Bethel. And of course, Bethel is where Yahovah appeared to Jacob when he was running from his brother Esau after stealing his birthright. If you'll remember correctly, this is where we read about Jacobs ladder when he had the dream of the Angels descending from heaven to earth.

In verse two Jacob says something rather striking. He says to his household and all those who are with him to put away their foreign Gods and to purify themselves. Changing their garments was part of the purification process, and so he tells his household and all who are with him to once again put away their foreign gods and to purify themselves and to change their garments.

In verse four we were told that they gave Jacob all the foreign gods that they had along with the rings that were in their ears and that Jacob buried these idols under a terebinth tree, which is a tree that is part of the pistachio family. And so, Jacob receives all of these trinkets and these idols and he buries them and gets rid of them.

I want us to stop here for just a moment and I want us to think about what we're seeing here. Here's Jacob who is a man of God the son of Isaac, and not only the people that are with him... but his own household... has idols and other gods that they shouldn't have.

Of course, we know that Rebecca stole her father Laban's idols and his false gods, and we saw how much that upset her father, but not only did Rachel have these other gods, but so did the people that were with Jacob. The rest of his entourage also had these other gods, and these trinkets, and these things that they were worshiping.

I want us to understand that just like Rebekah's father Laban... these pagan people had many gods. And for the most part these other gods had been confined to certain territories. You had the gods of Egypt, and then you had the gods of Mesopotamia, and of course you have the God of Canaan which is the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. But these people all believed in all kinds of different God's. And most of these people believed in Yahovah, the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob just like Rachel's father Laban believed in Yahovah, but... he also believed in many other gods.

If you've been with us in our journey through the book of Genesis you already know that Yahovah even spoke to Rachel's father Laban and Laban listened to what Yahovah said... but this did not stop Laban from believing in several other gods.

Many of the things including the trinkets and the symbols and the things that represented these gods all got thrown into one basket, and it was commonplace for a person to believe in several different God's especially if they were travelers who traveled throughout the land, because each new territory that you went to seemed to have its own god. And it's tectonically important that we understand this for several different reasons.

I want us to understand that this tradition if you will, extended all the way up throughout the halls of time even unto the time of the apostles. In the New Testament in the book of acts chapter 17, we read about Paul being in Athens Greece. And while Paul was in Athens we read about how he became provoked because the city of Athens was full of idols. Once again my friends, nothing has changed between Genesis chapter 35 and Acts chapter 17. And just to clarify that, I want us to read acts chapter 17 versus 15 through 33:

*Act 17:15 Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens, and after receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they departed.*

*Act 17:16 Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.*

*Act 17:17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there.*

*Act 17:18 Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babblers wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign*

*divinities”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.*

*Act 17:19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?”*

*Act 17:20 For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean.”*

*Act 17:21 Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.*

*Act 17:22 So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious.*

*Act 17:23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.*

*Act 17:24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man,*

*Act 17:25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.*

*Act 17:26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,*

*Act 17:27 that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us,*

*Act 17:28 for “‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, “‘For we are indeed his offspring.’*

*Act 17:29 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.*

*Act 17:30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,*

*Act 17:31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”*

*Act 17:32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, “We will hear you again about this.”*

*Act 17:33 So Paul went out from their midst.*

And so once again, these people had so many gods they even had a God that they called “The Unknown God”. It was like they just wanted to be sure that they were worshiping the right God and they didn’t want to leave any room for error. So, they created a completely new God called “The Unknown God”.

Let me ask you something my friends... Does it seem like these people were yearning for spiritual manna to you? Can you see the void of Yahovah in their lives, and what happens when people can’t seem to find him? They knew that they were there for a purpose, they knew that they had been created by someone, they knew there had to be an intelligent designer, but they had no knowledge of who he was. And this caused a great rift in their lives, and so they began

grasping at straws, and because they wanted to be obedient, and because they knew from creation alone that surrounded them... that there had to be an intelligent designer somewhere, they just made up their wise men simply made up their own gods (most of the time for monetary gain) but it seemed to fill the spiritual void. Let's turn to Romans chapter 10 is 14 through 17:

*Rom 10:14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?*

*Rom 10:15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"*

*Rom 10:16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"*

*Rom 10:17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

And so, the apostle Paul picks up on this so-called "unknown God" and he tells them who the unknown God truly is. And of course, Paul wins some of them but some of them are so entrenched in their false gods that their hearts had been hardened and they had no eyes to see nor ears to hear the truth that the apostle Paul was trying to convey to them.

And some of them just like Rachael's father Laban, and the people that were traveling with Jacob... believed what Paul preached, but they also believed in the old gods that they believed in before. In the days of the apostles it would've been commonplace to see statues of the goddess Diana, and Isis, and a cross all standing next to each other in someone's home. And this is important for us to understand. Just because a person happened to believe in one God, didn't necessarily mean that they shunned, or got rid of the other gods.

You'll find as you walk in the faith for any length of time, that you will eventually run up against people who will try to tell you that the Trinity and the resurrection and the cross, and even the name of Yahovah is all pagan... because it was all used by pagan people in the past.

They'll try to point to pagan ways and pagan teachings in order to dissuade you from believing in your Bible. In Samaria, they believed that the universe was divided into three regions, each of which became the domain of a god. Anu's section was the sky. Enlil's section was the earth. Ea's section was the waters, but together they constituted the Trinity of the great God's. And you can find more information on that in the Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology 1994 pages 54-55.

Babylonia also had its own Trinity of God's that consisted of a composite God with three heads forming part of their mythology. And you can read more about that in Thomas Dennis Rock's book "The Mystical Woman and the Cities of the Nation's" 1867 pages 22 through 23.

India has its own Trinity of God's, and Greece has its own Trinity of God's. The Pathagoreans of Greece believed that everything was bounded by three's, or in Trinities. Egypt believed in a Trinity of God's called "Amun" and it was said that "Amun" was the one true God and that there were no gods before Amun, Re, and Ptah... which was their Trinity.

And it's the same thing with the resurrection my friends. Those who study pagan deities will quickly point to Horus. Horus was said to have a virgin mother. The birth of Horus was supposed to have been announced by an Angel. Horus was said to have been baptized in a River. It was said that Horus had 12 disciples, right down to the resurrection, and many atheists will claim that Yeshua is nothing more than a copy of Horus and that it's all been done before and that the Bible is a fraud.

The problem with his story about Horace... is that it's simply false. There is no Egyptian historical or Archaeological support for these things. What I just described to you concerning this false Egyptian God Horus... is simply a reflection of the effort of atheists to make Horus look as much like Yeshua as possible. And for more information on the falsities of this nonsense I'll leave you with a link to a website that better explains all of this nonsense if you're even interested in wasting your time with it.

<http://coldcasechristianity.com/2017/is-jesus-simply-a-retelling-of-the-horus-myth/>

But the reason that I'm telling you these things, is because you're going to run up against these kinds of people, and you're going to run up against these kinds of video teachings and even books that have no historical foundation to stand on. There is so much misinformation going on in the world today that it can be hard to parse out what is true and what is not. But it can be done if we ask the right questions.

A book or a paper that is written without the reference of where they got their information is absolutely worthless. The problem is that people believe anything and everything and they never ask for where this person or that person got their information or what their references are. And we must be very careful about that because many of our brothers and sisters today are afraid to even wear a cross around their necks because they've been told that some pagan used it at some point in time in history. And this may sound futile, but it's a perfect example of the nonsense that people believe because someone wrongly taught them things that are simply not found in the Scripture. And some of it is found in our history books... but we need to understand why things like the cross, the resurrection, and even our Fathers holy name was used by pagans at one point in time or another.

If we threw out everything that the pagans ever used... we'd have to chuck our whole bible in the trash can and walk away from the faith. But for those of us who read the book from the beginning.... We know that all of these gods including the one true God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had all been tossed into one basket through out time, and so it should be no wonder why certain Christian names, concepts, and symbols were used by pagan people.

But... concerning the cross... just as an example... what did the apostle Paul have to tell us about the cross? Do we even know? Here's a short summary:

### The Power of The Cross According To Paul

*1Co\_1:17 For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.*

*1Co\_1:18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

*Gal 5:11 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

*Eph\_2:16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.*

*Php\_3:18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.*

*Heb\_12:2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*



Now we all know that the cross does not have power. The cross does not have a word. We don't boast in the cross. We're not reconciled to God in one body through the cross. There is no such thing as enemies of the cross.

That is... unless... you believe. Spiritually speaking... the cross does have power just like Paul says it does. Spiritually speaking, the word of the cross is extremely important to our salvation. Spiritually speaking, we can boast in the cross of our Messiah by which the world has been crucified to us.. and we to the world. Spiritually speaking we are reconciled to the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob through the cross just like Paul says we are. And... you and I certainly know who the enemies of the cross are (at least I hope we do).

Just as it is written in Hebrews chapter 12 verse two... The cross represents the endurance not only of our Messiah... but the endurance that we need to have to endure to the end.

Many people will say "Well you can't have a cross because you can't have a graven image!" To those people I would once again simply suggest that they might go back and read their Bible. Let's turn to the book of Exodus chapter 20 versus three through six:

**Exo 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before me."**

**Exo 20:4** “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

**Exo 20:5** You shall not bow down **to them** or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a **jealous God**, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,

**Exo 20:6** but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Once again my friends, understanding the truth of Scripture is all about context, and keeping things in the proper context. What is the context of Exodus chapter 20 versus three through six? The context is about **other god’s**. It’s about bowing down to **them**, them who?... them **other god’s** that you just made for yourself. It’s not about carved images, is not about symbols, it’s not about what you want to make it about... it’s about **other god’s**, and serving **other gods**. It’s not about making a statue, it’s not about making a symbol... it’s about creating something for yourself, specifically for the purpose of adoration, and then bowing down to it, and worshiping it as another god.

The Hebrew word used for “**carved image**” or as the King James version puts it, “**graven image**” is the Hebrew word “pesel”. And according to both Strong’s and Brown driver Briggs Hebrew definitions, it means “**Idol**”. You shall not make for yourself... and “**Idol**”. He’s not talking about any old image here. He’s not talking about a little carved duck that you have sitting on your mantle, or a little plastic pony or a toy army figure, or a Barbie doll. He’s talking about not making for yourself an idol out of the likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth below or that is in the water underneath, and bowing down to it in order to worship it like a god. He’s talking about making for yourself and I quote, “**other gods**” that you can bow down in front of and worship. We must keep things in the proper context.

What were the people in the book of Genesis doing? They were making images of things in heaven and things that are on the earth and things that are under the water, and they were praying to them and bowing down to them and they believed that these inanimate objects could actually do something for them. This is what they were doing, and people still do today. You see statues of Buddha, you see statues of Shiva, you see statues of Mary, you see statues of Peter, and you see people constantly bowing down before them and worshiping them as god’s. The Roman Catholic Church actually teaches its students to pray directly to marry, and to the dead Saints. This ... is breaking Exodus chapter 20 versus three through six. This is what he was talking about.

If you have a cross that you’re bowing down in front of... and your worshiping that cross as a god that can save you... and if you believe that that cross is what created you... and if you believe that that cross has any power in of itself... then your breaking the commandment of Exodus chapter 20 versus three through six!

But... if you have a cross hanging in your house because it reminds you why you need to endure to the end like your Messiah did, or it reminds you of the sinful nature of the world and why you don't want to be a part of it, or it reminds you that you are reconciled to Yahovah through his only begotten son, or because it reminds you to stand against the enemy of the cross which represents our Messiah... Then you're not breaking Exodus chapter 20 versus three through six just because you have a cross hanging on the wall.

I've heard people say to me "well if my Messiah was murdered with a gun I wouldn't worship the gun." First of all, let me be very clear... Guns don't kill people, people kill people. A cross never killed anyone, it was the people who nailed our Messiah to that cross that killed him. Should we get rid of all people then? Secondly, a gun does not have any spiritual implications that can be found within the context of our Scripture. The cross clearly....does, not according to me.. but according to the apostle Paul. Let's turn to Matthew chapter 24 versus 29 through 31:

*Mat 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*

*Mat 24:30 Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

*Mat 24:31 And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

Exactly what sign is it that we will see in heaven that represents the Son of Man? What sign do you suppose it will be? Could it possibly be the sign that Paul continuously talks about in his writings... The cross? Could it possibly be the sign that everyone on earth equates with the Son of Man? What will be the sign that will appear in heaven that is the sign of the Son of Man?

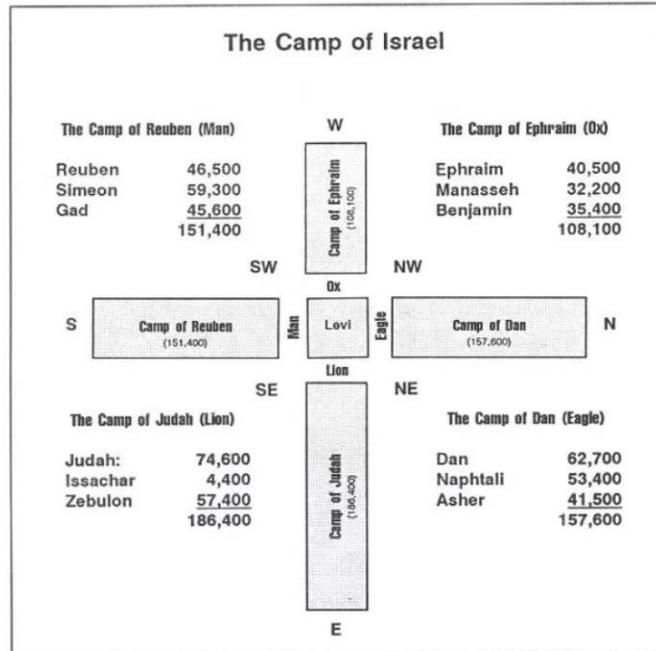
The bottom line is... we don't know. That's the truth. We don't know that it's not going to be the cross, and we don't know that it is going to be the cross. But... we do know that there's going to be something that's going to be the sign of the Son of Man that will be seen in heavens just before he returns.

What we do know is this... Yahovah our Father in heaven always used symbols and even commanded images of cherubim to be woven into the veil. He also had the Israelites create golden figurines of cherubim to be placed on the Ark of the covenant, and so we know that our Father in heaven is not going to break his own commandment. If it was truly against our father's law to create an image or a figurine then our Father in heaven would never have done it himself, or commanded his people to do so.

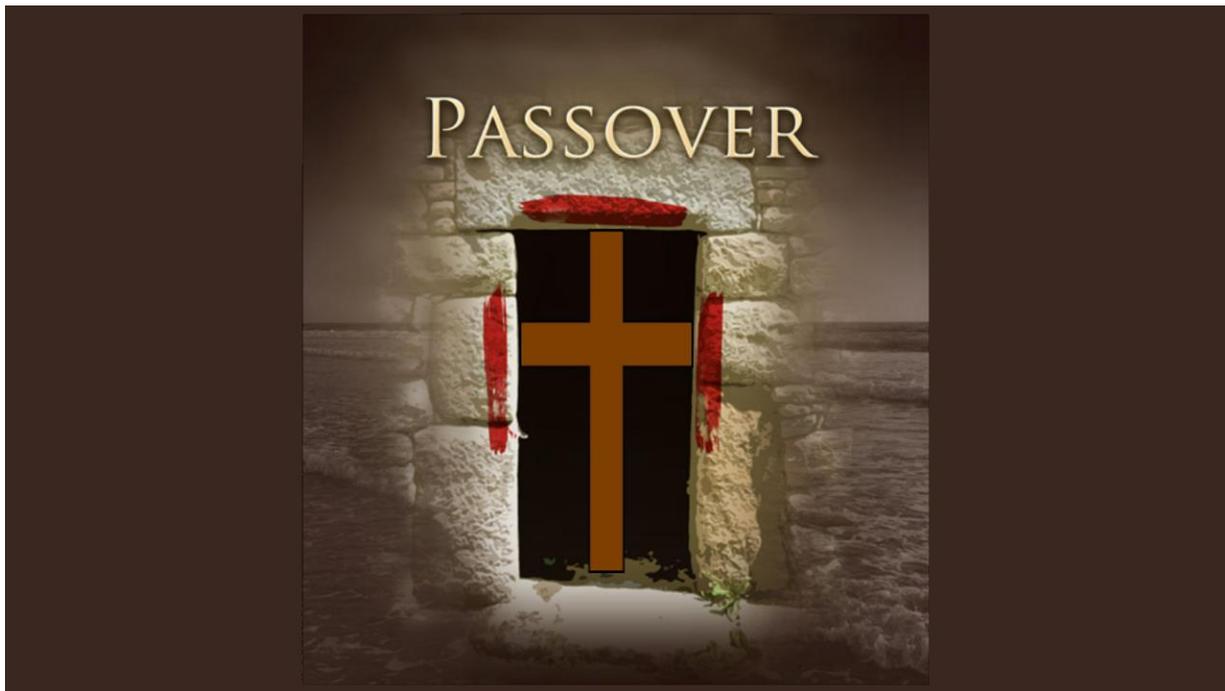
The Israelites never worshiped the cherubim on the Ark of the covenant, and they never worshiped the angles that were woven into the veil, thus... it is not wrong to have a figurine, or

even a statue unless you're bowing down to it and worshiping it, thinking that it has some kind of godly power, or that it can do something for you. The figurines, and the images of angles woven into the veil simply reminded the Israelites of the majesty of Yah. Just like the cross reminded Paul of the majesty of our Messiah and what he did for us.

If we think that the sign of the cross has not always been important to our Father in heaven, let me put some truth in your hearing. This my friends is how our Father in heaven commanded the House of Israel to encamp around him. If you were to fly over head of the camp of Israel... this is what you would have seen.



This is the way that our Father commanded the Israelites to put the blood of the lamb on the doorpost during the Exodus. Why did he tell them to put the blood on the threshold of their doors like this? Remember... our Father does nothing by accident.



Like us to also turn to the book of Ezekiel chapter 9 verses one through six:

**Eze 9:1** Then he cried in my ears with a loud voice, saying, “Bring near the executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand.”

**Eze 9:2** And behold, six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his weapon for slaughter in his hand, and with them was a man clothed in linen, with a writing case at his waist. And they went in and stood beside the bronze altar.

**Eze 9:3** Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his waist.

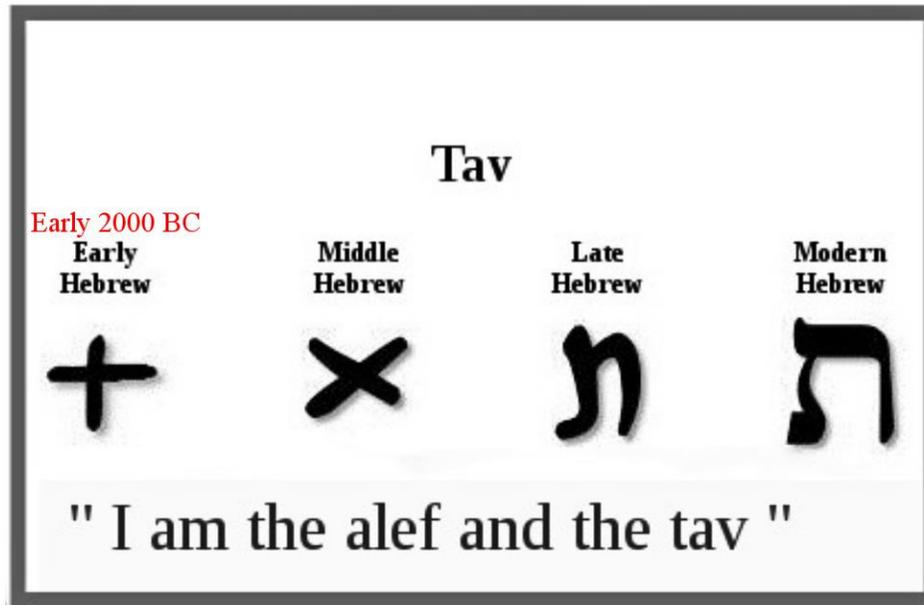
**Eze 9:4** And the LORD said to him, “Pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it.”

**Eze 9:5** And to the others he said in my hearing, “Pass through the city after him, and strike. Your eye shall not spare, and you shall show no pity.

**Eze 9:6** Kill old men outright, young men and maidens, little children and women, but touch no one on whom is the mark. And begin at my sanctuary.” So they began with the elders who were before the house.

If we examine the word “mark” in verse four that they used to “mark” the four heads of the men who were to be spared, and saved from the slaughter... we’ll find that the actual mark they were using was the early Hebrew “Tav”. You’ve heard it said that I am the beginning and the end, the Alef and the Tav, which are the beginning and the end letters of the Hebrew alphabet. If we take a closer look at the letter “Tav” we find that it has evolved over time, but I want us to notice

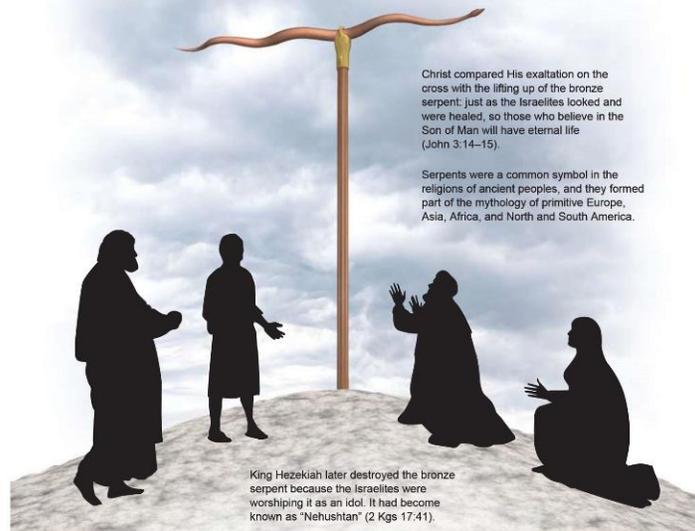
what the original letter Tav would have looked like back when he Ezekiel told this story:



My friends I could go on and on about the different usages of the symbol of the cross that our Father has used since the beginning of his Torah, but I think you get the point. If you think that the symbol of the cross means nothing to our Father, you might want to study just a little bit deeper.

## The Bronze Serpent

The Israelites spoke against God and Moses in the desert, and God sent serpents that bit them—and many died. They repented, and Moses prayed for them. Yahweh had Moses make a bronze serpent to heal those who looked upon it (Num 21:4–9).



And I won't even get into numbers chapter 21 where Moses was told to make a bronze serpent and to put it on a pole and to raise it up for the people to see so that all of those who were bitten by snakes would be saved... But I think that by now you get the point.

If we have a symbol that reminds us of our Father in heaven... let me assure you my friends that it is not considered to be an idol. It simply cannot be unless... it's used for the worship of a false god, and the cross is not used to worship a false god unless you're abusing the image as the Satanists often times do. But that has nothing to do with us. The Devil will always imitate what our Father and his Son do to the best of his ability, but his upside-down cross is nothing more than a cheap imitation just like everything else he does.

And let me ask you this my friends... If the cross really meant nothing, then why would the devil turn it upside down in first place? Think about it. Why would he desecrate something that had no meaning? The only reason that he does it, is because it does mean something to those of us who have the hope of salvation and the laws of Yahovah written in our hearts and in our minds.

My point in all of this is that we shouldn't chastise our brother or our sister for things that we simply don't know about. Let's not argue about things that are speculative or questionable. Let's not cause divisions within the assembly over things that we ourselves could possibly be completely misunderstanding.

Why do I mention these things? I mention these things to help us think for ourselves. Think about what the message truly is in its proper context. Think about what we should be arguing about as Christians and what we should not be arguing about as Christians. Think about what a salvational issue is versus what a salvational issue is not.

If we are going to bicker, and argue, and point fingers at each other, and leave the assembly because we think in our small minds that we are more pious than our brother or our sister... Let us pray for discernment and then let us think before we accuse. Think, before we point the finger. What damage will this do to my relationship with my brother or my sister, and is it truly worth it? Is it a serious salvational issue, or might the Scripture possibly pave the way for another completely different understanding other than my own?

It's important my friends that we don't make ourselves into gods. Have some humility, have some understanding... Have another look.

As for the earrings that they had in their ears, once again I think it's important to point out that these earrings and the jewelry that they handed over to Jacob had to do with those false gods. There's no reason to think that women can't wear earrings or jewelry as long as they don't have any symbols of any other gods on them, and as long as they're not being used to worship another god. Once again, in order to be an "idol", it has to be used in adoration of another god other than the one true God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob.

And let me reiterate this as well my friends... our Father in heaven knows what you are doing whether you're wearing a cross or whether you're wearing a peace symbol, or whether you're

wearing a swastika, or whatever else it might be.

We must remember that our Father in heaven searches the hearts and minds of men, and he knows not only what's in your mind, but he also knows what's in your heart. So, we don't have to worry about anybody pulling the wool over the eyes of our Father in heaven. Once again, it's not about not being allowed to make a graven image, it's about not making an Idol of adoration for the worship of another god.

By the way for those of you who think that you are not allowed to make a graven image, you better get rid all your knickknacks and you better not let your little girls play with any dolls, and you better not let your son play with a G.I. Joe figure or any of those little plastic green army men, and you better not have any dice hanging from your rearview mirror, and so we really are opening up a box of worms by wrongly taking Scripture out of context. Having the eyes to see and ears to hear truly is important. Those who hear the truth will know the truth.

And I hope that this gives us a little bit of biblical insight on graven images and the idols and what our Father's purpose was for commanding us not to create or worship an Idol.

I want us to understand my friends that the early Israelites would not have understood any of this. Our Father in heaven progressively... Reveals his truth to us through his living word and his holy Scripture in concert with his Ruach Hackodesh.

The early Israelites had no idea of the significance of the Passover Lamb, or the symbol of the cross, or why they were sacrificing animals for the atonement of sin. But over time, our Father in heaven has progressively revealed his unfolding plan to those of us who are now standing in the last days. We now see the fulfillment of prophecy in the Messiah that was to come because we have seen it unfold. We now understand what the Passover Lamb was all about. We now understand what the firstfruits of the new harvest is all about. We understand how Pentecost and Shavuot are connected. We understand the significance of the cross, but the early Israelites had no idea why they were doing what they were doing, or the significance of what they were doing would hold in the future.

When we begin to read the Bibles, we have no idea what God's unfolding plan is until we turn to the next page. Our Father progressively... Shows mankind his unfolding plan. And this is exactly why we are able to see things that scholars even 50 years ago could not see. Because the details were just too shadowy, but now because we've seen them unfold in real time and come to fruition, we in this generation have had our Father's unfolding plan revealed to us in a way that past generations never had.

And this is exactly why it's important that we read the Bible for ourselves and not let some so-called early church father tell us what the Scripture is all about. We have more information than they had. And this is exactly why our Messiah tells us that he left his Ruach Hackodesh in charge of reminding us of the things that he taught, and to teach us the ways of righteousness

and truth instead of some earthly man.

Moving forward...

And so, Jacob gets rid of all of these other idols that represent other gods, and he moves on. I want us to notice in Genesis chapter 35 verse five, that as they journeyed a terror from God fell upon the city's that were all around them so that they didn't pursue the sons of Jacob. Once again Yahovah was with Jacob just as he had promised that he would be, and it was because of the hand of Yahovah that these nations didn't raise up against Jacob for the slaughtering of King Hamor and his son Shechem.

In verse six we're told that Jacob came to Luz. Luz was simply the name of that territory before Jacob renamed it "Bethel", which was in the land of Canaan. We'll often times see that in the Scripture. It will give the name of the territory that it had before it was renamed by the children of Israel. Once again in verse seven we find that Jacob built an altar there at Bethel and he renames that particular place "El-Bethel" because once again, that was the place that we read about Jacobs ladder and the dream that Jacob had with the Angels ascending and descending from heaven.

When we look at Genesis chapter 35 verse 11, we see that Yahovah tells Jacob that a nation... **and...** a company of nations will come from Jacob. Yahovah also tells him that Kings shall come from Jacobs own body.

And so, Yahovah is being very specific here. He's telling Jacob that there's going to be a nation which will be a very special nation. But aside from that very special nation there will be a company of nations that will come from Jacob. And I want us to understand that at this point in time even though the house of Israel has never had a King as of yet... Yahovah is telling Jacob that there will be Kings that will rule over the house of Israel that will come from Jacobs body. And not only will kings come from Jacobs body... but so too will the THE KING of Israel come from Jacobs body, Yeshua Hamashiach. And so Yahovah is giving Jacob a little bit of a precursor as to what the future holds.

In verse 16 we find that Rachel goes into labor, and by verse 19 Rachel has passed away giving birth to her last son Benjamin. Rachel Originally named her son "Ben-oni" which means son of old age but Jacob called him Benjamin which basically means son of happiness. Rachel's tomb still exists today about a mile north of Bethlehem where our savior was originally born.

As we move down to verse 22 we find that Jacobs firstborn son Reuben decides to lay with Bilhah his father's concubine. And we're told that Jacob... Who's new name is now Israel finds out about it.

Now I want us to stop right here for just a moment because there's more than meets the eye here when we're told that Reuben slept with Bilhah his father's concubine and that Israel found out

about it. You see Reuben wanted his father Israel to find out about it. It was important to Reuben that his father Israel knew what he had done.

What Reubin did when he laid with Bilhah was very calculating. Back then if the wife of a man died it was commonplace for that man to elevate a concubine to the position of a wife when a full legal wife had died. We have to remember that Reuben was Leah's son. And that Leah always played second fiddle to Rachel who was the more beautiful of the two sisters. As far as Reubin and his mother Leah were concerned, the passing of Rachel opened the door for Leah to finally become Israel's only wife and his most beloved.

However... Ruben was worried that Jacob might decide to comfort himself with Rachel's handmade Bilhah rather than with his mother Leah. And so, Reuben knew that if he laid with his father's concubine Bilhah that this would defile her and ruin her for that position. No way could Jacob now legally marry Bilhah after she laid with another man. This made Bilhah undesirable. It would've been shameful beyond imagination for Jacob to marry a woman who would have slept with another man, let alone the son of her own husband.

And this is why Reubin wanted what he did to be made known to his father Israel. Reuben was making sure that his mother Leah essentially became queen bee.

This is also why sometime later Jacob would remove Reubin from the office of the firstborn and give it to Judah. We can find this judgment against Reuben in the book of Genesis chapter 49 versus one through four:

**Gen 49:1** *Then Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in days to come.*

**Gen 49:2** *"Assemble and listen, O sons of Jacob, listen to Israel your father.*

**Gen 49:3** *"Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the firstfruits of my strength, preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.*

**Gen 49:4** *Unstable as water, you shall not have preeminence, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it—he went up to my couch!*

And so once again Reubin loses the position of the first born and the blessing and inheritance of the first borns natural right.

After we're given a list of Jacobs sons we're told that Jacob who became Israel came home to his father Isaac and Mamre. And just before Isaac passed away he had the opportunity to meet all of his grandchildren through Jacob and then Isaac eventually passed away at the ripe old age of 180 years of age. At that point we're told that Esau came and both Esau and Jacob buried their father Isaac in Hebron.

Now before we get into Joseph... next week we'll look at chapter 36 and we'll hear a little bit

about the line of Esau. Now it's important to know that Esau and the Edomites are going to be the traditional enemies of Israel. It's important to remember that Herod was not Jewish. Herod was an Edomite. And so, it's important to remember that Esau and the Edomites will indeed become the archenemy of the house of Israel, but we'll get into that next week as we move into Genesis chapter 36.

As we always ask my friends, I want to ask you again to please, please take these things to your prayer closet, and bow your head, and bend your knee and face the holy promised land of Jerusalem and ask in the name of Yeshua Hamashiach if what you've heard here today be true... or not.

Ask, seek, and knock and the door will be opened to you, and if you'll do that... you and I will walk hand in hand through the gates of his soon coming kingdom.