

GENESIS

A THEOLOGICAL COMMENTARY

THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB

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SUMMARY OF GENESIS

It's time to wrap up our study and look at the overall picture that has developed over these 50 chapters of Genesis. There were many characters involved, many themes, many directions we *could* have gone (which accounts for the myriads of interpretations of Genesis in the current literature). But by following the lead of the rest of the Bible (which, unfortunately, seems to be a unique approach in our day), what we have in our hands is God's own account of his second Creation – *a new Son for a new world*.

What Genesis is not

Over the last two centuries so much has happened in the fields of Biblical interpretation and theology that we've strayed far afield not only from the meaning of the Bible but even in our approach to it. The dictates of our culture have forced us to change the way we deal with the Bible, whether most people are aware of that or not. We have been conditioned to look at it through the lens of our modern values and principles. Some are fully aware of what has happened, and they like it that way – they don't want a book from God, they want the Bible re-defined in our own image, to suit the tastes of modern man. But even Conservatives no longer approach the Bible in the way that God intended. We know that simply because their interpretations don't match the message of the Prophets and the Apostles.

Genesis in particular suffers from this skewed methodology of ours. Following are some of the ways that many interpret the book and the reasons their interpretations can't be right.

- *Genesis is just a family history of the predecessors of the nation of Israel* – Almost the entire Old Testament deals with the history of the Israelites – in other words, the Jews. And in the New Testament we read of Jesus coming to the Jews with the Gospel, and when they rejected it the Apostles took the Gospel to the Gentiles instead. And that means the nation of Israel plays a prominent role in the entire Bible.

There had to be a beginning to the Nation of Israel, of course – and so that's what most people think is the role of Genesis. It's like a modern biography of a famous person: the first thing you do is lay out their family tree. You tell of their parents, their grandparents, the countries they came from, dates and places, in order to put that person in some sort of historical context. But the biography is the thing; the family tree is not much more important to the biography than interesting trivia. In the same way, Genesis is just a historical prelude to the real story of the Israelites as the rest of the Old Testament shows us.

But that's not true, not according to the Bible as a whole. At the risk of sounding repetitive, the entire Bible (Old and New Testaments) keeps using the name “the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” – not “the God of the Israelites.” What God did with the Patriarchs was not trivia, but foundational. God laid something down in

their lives that is the very definition of what it means to be a believer. In fact the Patriarchs passed on that treasure to their descendants to be respected, left unchanged, and sought after by all who claimed to be Abraham's heirs.

We will see in what follows that what God did in Genesis with the Patriarchs is the very heart of the Christian Gospel. If we don't understand Genesis, we don't understand the Christ himself. In fact, this is primarily why the Jews rejected Christ when he came – they interpreted Genesis in a physical way instead of in the spiritual way that God requires. They missed out on Abraham's true Inheritance.

- *The book records the failures of sinners and their ignorance* – Recently a friend told me of a sermon he heard on the Internet given by a pastor in NYC. The man was preaching about Abraham and condemning him roundly for the faithless and cowardly way he tried to solve his problems. And then the preacher said, "I'm more righteous than Abraham!" Meaning, supposedly, that he wouldn't have acted wrongly as Abraham did.

The man's arrogance staggered me. This is the modern approach to the Patriarchs – mostly critical and condemning, using current standards to make them look inferior to ourselves in our more "enlightened" religion. While most preachers would not have said such a thing in public, most Christians feel that way nevertheless – because we invariably miss the point of Abraham's faith and insert our arbitrary moral systems into the story.

As we've seen, however, the stories do not show us the Patriarchs' ignorance and cowardice, but rather their walk of faith with a spiritual God in a hostile world – and the Patriarchs always came out the winner. God saw to that. We can only hope for the same kind of blessed life that they had.

We must remind ourselves once again that God doesn't look at the Patriarchs in the way we do. He called them righteous, men of faith, his heirs, in touch with spiritual treasures, prophets, wise men, entitled and enabled to live in his eternal House. These blessings did not come from ignorance but from a life with God. And the entire Bible looks at them in this light, including Jesus and the Apostles. It seems that, historically, only modern students have the audacity to criticize God's favored servants.

- *Genesis deals with physical issues only* – Modern Christians feel that they are at the top of the evolutionary peak, as if man started out on a primitive level and we are now capable of understanding and living with issues in a way that past generations had no concept of. Pagans feel that way in general about history, particularly when they don't read history. People in past ages were just as savvy as we are, in fact many times were more so. Bible students generally think that Abraham and the rest were not aware of spiritual realities such as Heaven and Christ and the Spirit's work. So they think that the Patriarchs dealt only with the physical land of Canaan and food to eat every day and protection from the Philistines.

The problem is that (once again) the Apostles tell us otherwise. Hebrews particularly tells us that Abraham "desired a better country, that is, a Heavenly one." (Hebrews 11:16) They *put up* with living as strangers and aliens in this physical

world because they knew the Covenant Promises were of a spiritual, eternal nature. In fact, the physical blessings that God gave them along the way illustrated God's goodness to them in this world, in the same way that he takes care of us. But the physical was never the heart of the matter. Abraham didn't even get much of that in his lifetime.

This makes perfect sense when you consider that Abraham knew the living, eternal God, heard his voice, and followed his leading. God is Spirit, no matter what age you encounter him in. God is Spirit, so he deals with his children on a spiritual level. God gives *himself* to all his children ("*I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.*") – in other words, spiritual treasures. God's Word is ageless and eternal. How can we so casually assume that there was only a primitive, physical manifestation of God in Abraham's day in light of his eternal nature?

As we have seen, Genesis most certainly isn't dealing with just physical issues. Here are the very principles of the grace of God to sinners, something that we Christians too often consider our own exclusive property. The Son of God, the Heir of Heaven's treasures, the substitute Sacrifice, the House of God, the High Priest of the Family, the Home for God's people, the Ruler of God's Kingdom, the Bride of the Son – all the basics of our faith appear right here at the beginning of the Bible.

- *The issues in the book are not related to Christianity* – The last point leads to this one, but we need to say something in addition about the Jews. Christians too often assume that the Old Testament is a Jewish book and of little concern to them. On a theoretical level the schools and teachers have given us a million reasons to disregard or even reject the Old Testament – including the "fact" that its Hebrew text is unreliable, the history is myth, the prophecies were written after the fact, and so on.

On a practical level, preachers and believers almost never look in the Old Testament – it's too foreign and unmanageable. So we only hear about the Fall in Genesis 3, and David and Goliath, and the prophecies of Isaiah concerning the Christ – very little more than this. All our sermons come from the New Testament.

Either way the modern Christian has been cut off from the Old Testament and so it's no wonder he/she is not aware of how much they're missing out on. And what they don't know about, they don't miss. "Ignorance is bliss."

I'm afraid many are going to miss out on Judgment Day as well. "I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness." (Matthew 8:11-12) If people don't know what God gave Abraham, they will not think to lay claim to it when the time comes to do so. Whoever cares nothing for Abraham's inheritance will get none of it.

- *Genesis is mainly man's take on things* – This is a pernicious interpretation invented by the enemies of God's Word. It started back in the 19th Century and has grown so extensive as to take hold across almost all schools, seminaries, churches and ministries in our day. Its assumption is that the events of Genesis supposedly happened so long ago, in a culture so foreign to ours, to people who were obviously

inferior to us in many ways. It assumes that we now have the Truth; we now can understand history in a scientific way; we have modern morals that are “right.” Which means, essentially, that God couldn’t have written Genesis – man did. There’s so much that’s obviously wrong with the book that we have to take it with a grain of salt (or two!) and recreate it into something more palatable and useful to us today. If man wrote it, man can re-write it. God himself would certainly approve.

You can see the goal here: if God didn’t write it, then we can use it (or ignore it) at our pleasure. It’s not binding on our faith or our lives.

Well, it’s a free country. If you don’t like Genesis, if you want to use it or abuse it, then you’re free to do so – in the eyes of our nation’s laws. But before you do, consider these points:

First, the text says “Then God said ...”. There is nothing in the passage, and there is nothing across the rest of the Bible, that gives us any reason at all to doubt that this isn’t exactly what God said and did. And there is nothing in secular history or records (in spite of the claims of the Liberals to the contrary) that disputes the claims of Genesis. In fact, secular sources are completely silent about the events recorded in Genesis because they have no interest in God anyway. Our *only* source for God’s works is the Bible.

Second, if these things aren’t true, then someone is lying. Let’s just put it on the table. Reasonable people wrote this book (Moses in particular), eyewitness testimony came in from various sources, and mature adults passed on this history through generations. It isn’t rocket science. Either these people were lying or they told us what they saw and heard of the living God.

Third, the Prophets, Jesus and the Apostles all put great importance on the events recorded in Genesis. They both believed the stories and deliberately founded our faith on them. Take Creation, for example: the Apostle Paul purposely used the word “new Creation” to describe the Christian’s conversion, because the steps used to create a Christian are the same steps that God used to create the world in the beginning. The data of Genesis is the data of Christianity.

Now if these three points are true, anybody who ignores or despises Genesis in any way is creating a new religion, worshiping a false god, and letting their culture instead of God’s Word define their faith. Again, you’re free to do so – until Judgment Day. Ignore the message and you will find yourself “having no hope and without God.” (Ephesians 2:12) The only ones allowed into the Promised Land are Abraham’s descendants.

What is Genesis giving us?

Genesis is giving us a theology to work with. A “theology” is a system of doctrines, or beliefs, about God that reveal what we need to know about him. Theologies are usually written by men; they’re called “systematic theologies”, and the list of doctrines are chosen by the author according to the way they read the Bible. The list is arranged by subjects.

A “biblical theology”, by contrast, is a system of doctrines that the Bible itself teaches – along the way, so to speak, through the stories themselves. Men write biblical theologies as well, although the point is to bring out what the Bible itself reveals to us about God – in other words, the system should be there in the Scriptures and not an artificial construct of our own. But the field of biblical theology (it’s fairly new – just in the last two centuries) is littered with attempts and failures of scholars trying to uncover the Bible’s own message. Right now the consensus in the academic field is pretty much that there is no theme or message that pulls the whole Bible together, and that the Bible is a conglomeration of related and unrelated concepts.¹

But that’s not good enough. God would not go to all the trouble to accumulate and present a Book that only confused his people concerning its message. If he did that, we wouldn’t be responsible or liable for anything in it. And that’s not what we read concerning Judgment Day.

No, the message is there – we just have to have “eyes to see and ears to hear.” God’s message is not for “the wise according to worldly standards.” It’s for those who have a child-like faith, for the “low and despised in the world, even things that are not.”

In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.” (Luke 10:21)

Since we’re dealing with Genesis here,² let’s assume that the book as a whole has a message that God wants us to understand.

Generally speaking, we can say these things about it:

- *This is God’s version of what happened.* We all have our own interpretations of events, our own opinions, our own outlooks, our own feelings and standards. That’s why God doesn’t bother asking us what we think about him. How could we possibly know the mind of God unless he reveals himself to us? How could we understand his works unless he shows us what he did, how he did it, and why he did it?

We could fill in the blanks with our own opinions and “facts,” but that’s the same as creating another god. Doing that will get us nowhere with the real God, nor will it solve any of our problems. No, the first item of business is that we sit down and listen and wait for the true God to explain to us every single piece of data that we need to know if we want to relate to him. In light of the original sin of mankind – turning away from God and dreaming up our own standards and goals that we want from this world – the Word of God is a humbling but necessary first step back to God.

¹ “By now it is common consensus that no one theme adequately captures the message of the Scriptures.” Thomas Schreiner, *The King in his Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*: Baker Academic, 2013; prologue.

² For a Biblical Theology of the entire Bible, see *Biblical Theology for Pastors and Teachers*.

- *Genesis describes how God intends to work with man on earth.* Creation tells us what God wanted his world to be in the beginning; the Fall tells us what we did to ruin that and what the situation is right now between us and God. From Abraham on, the story shows us the necessary steps back to God, calling and restoring and lifting man up to a new Creation.

Again, we can't simply fall back on our own opinions and feelings and dictate to God what we want from him. He's not listening to those kinds of prayers and worship. To him, that is a rebellious attitude and our false worship falls on deaf ears. But if we get in line with the way he is summoning us in this book, then we will find that the answers in Genesis straighten out *our* thinking, and make our way plain, and bring us life from Heaven to replace the death and destruction that so typifies a world-without-God.

- *The book shows us that there's another power besides us in this world.* Because God made the world, he's always been beyond and around and beneath and through it, "raising up nations and bringing nations down," whether we're aware of his presence or not. That's the value of the Bible: it shows us what's behind the scenes spiritually.

It's like a movie set. In a movie, we can see the actors and scenery and hear the sounds, but that's all we perceive. But if we back up far enough, the cameras and director and stage-hands and supporting staff come into the picture and we realize that the stage itself was not the whole story. With the Bible, God pulls back the curtain and we can see spiritual realities directing and affecting our world, and we can see the spiritual consequences of our physical actions. Knowing this, now when we do something we would be foolish to forget this revelation. God punishes the wicked, he rewards faith in him, he protects his own and destroys whoever touches his elect, and he directs the steps of his people in ways they can't see at the time but which become clearer over time. Here is a spiritual world worth living for; here is the reason for praying and living by faith. And here is the wrath of God against the wicked made very plain, so much so that for all of history men and nations have talked about, for example, the world-wide Flood, the destruction of Sodom, and the Exodus, and the plundering of Egypt. Only a fool would ignore this revelation of God's power at work in our world.

- *Here is man stripped of his pretence and excuses.* You have to admit that man is revealed here (as the old saying goes) as he is, warts and all. It's not a flattering image. And that's all the more important to note in light of the fact that every one of us thinks the world of ourselves; we have highly critical opinions of our neighbors, but as for ourselves we consider ourselves normal, reasonable, good, wise, and largely the innocent victim of everyone else's actions.

God does not agree. Remember the lesson of the Flood in Noah's day: God doesn't accept any of us. His opinion is that none of us deserve to live.

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. (Genesis 6:5-6)

That means that those who think well of themselves are deceiving themselves. A better measure of their true character would be to ask someone else what they're like!

The proper starting point, if you want to get along with God, is to admit that you have failed him in all things (if you really want an extended list, you can check the Creation structure, the character of the Perfect Son, and the Law of Moses, to see exactly where you have failed God), and put yourself on your face before his throne ready to change before he destroys you. Take this seriously: you may not, but he does.

- *Genesis addresses a problem: man's sin.* It's amazing how all of us can fill our daily lives with so much trivia and ignore *the one thing needful*. God's revelation doesn't deal with economics or politics or education or social justice or sports or shopping on-line, all of which take up more than 99% of our days. God is concerned only with guilty sinners.

All of Heaven is focused on this issue. God's perfect Creation was ruined; there was a spiritual explosion in Heaven when Satan and his angels were thrown out down to the earth; angels have been sent repeatedly to punish the wicked and protect God's righteous ones; Jesus the Son himself took a totally unexpected step that shook the earth and changed Heaven; and daily the angels (we are told) are joyfully welcoming the few Family members into their eternal dwelling, which is right now being made ready for them.

In contrast, "All a man's efforts are for his stomach." Everything we do will come to nothing, because it's worth nothing in the cosmic scheme of things. But what God has been doing since the beginning is winning himself eternal glory at man's expense. This is war. Whoever understands this will prioritize their lives and start working on their spiritual standing before God.

- *The rest of the Bible draws from the lessons of Genesis.* An honest student won't ignore the facts. If we are so tied to our culture that we close a deaf ear to the message of Genesis, and twist the stories to conform to our modern standards and goals, then we're obviously not seeing what the Prophets and the Apostles saw in it. All the Bible draws from the data of Genesis. And it's not just a superficial mention of its characters and terms, but the fulfillment of its foundation concepts. We can hardly call ourselves "heirs of Abraham" if we don't even know what he received from God. We can't say that we're preaching the Gospel if the Apostles tell us that the Gospel comes from the Old Testament and then we don't use the Old Testament. And we can't be followers of Christ if we're using his words with our own (new) meanings.

A good student won't miss the facts. The Genesis story, if we slow down and think about what we're seeing, gives us the data that the rest of the Old Testament deals with. The Nation of Israel looked forward to, enjoyed, was denied, and was finally restored to the Promises first given to Abraham. Their entire history revolved around these Promises. You can analyze every story in the Old Testament and see that. And the work of Christ only makes sense in light of the four Abrahamic Promises, if you have eyes to see and ears to hear. That's why he called those who had faith "children of Abraham" and heirs of their forefather's estate. And the Apostles, of course, continued in their Master's teaching and applied the Promises of the Covenant to the life of the Church. It's all there.

- *We have only those concepts laid out here that are critical for our faith.* Abraham, as was mentioned earlier, lived a long life and no doubt experienced all kinds of things that are not recorded in Genesis. *This is not a biography.* Biographies tell us all sorts of details about a person, from birth to death, because that's what readers want to know. But Genesis is a theological treatise: God is telling us only those concepts that have to do with our faith. That means every single event that Genesis records about Abraham has direct bearing on our relationship with God. Every story is critical; every lesson is a revelation.

Having said that, it's all the more important that we come away with the right lesson from the story, since so little is given us. Again, we must turn to Jesus and the Apostles for our interpretation rules. Paul refers to "Abraham, who is the father of us all." (Romans 4:16) That means (since we also claim these things as Christians) Abraham heard God, he learned what true faith is, he received righteousness, he walked with God, he saw and enjoyed Heaven's Treasures, he grew in wisdom, he served God and man – the list goes on. All that and more are packed into the few stories about Abraham in Genesis. Why do you think we have our Christian faith now? Where do you think all the essentials that we stand on came from? They were first worked out with the Patriarchs. The Jews have always known this; it's unfortunate that modern Gentiles have so cut themselves off from their spiritual forefathers that they not only ignore them but condemn them for crimes they weren't guilty of.

- *This is a Family matter only.* God has always dealt with man as a Father does his son. That means there are certain realities at work that are not true of other creatures, even the angels. The angels are only servants; that's all they ever will be. But man was designed to walk with God, to learn from his Father, to work with the Father on the Creation Project, to share the Father's glory. There's a deep love here between Father and son; the Father gives his all to his son, and his son lives to please his Father in everything he does.

That was the idea, anyway. Man was created "in God's image" – to relate to God as the eternal Son does to his Father. Since that day is over now, God has shifted his emphasis to a new Family. Why God so desires this kind of relationship with man, nobody knows. "What is man that you are mindful of

him, and the son of man that you care for him?" (Psalms 8:4) But the Family pattern is still the foundation upon which God's relationship with Abraham's descendants is based. Whatever we would expect to see between a Father and his Son is what defines the believer's relationship to God. Nothing less.

But we can't miss the fact that in Genesis that special relationship is unique among Abraham's descendants – physical or spiritual. Anyone and everyone outside of the Family gets nothing from God but punishment and death. The message of the Bible is strictly a Family matter. There is nothing for pagans here but a sentence of death.

If we can get hold of these concepts, that will at least head us off in the right direction and get us ready to come to grips with the central point of Genesis. These ideas help us avoid all sorts of problems with which modern scholarship has clouded the issues.

The root idea of Genesis

Genesis gives us the solution to a problem that developed immediately after Creation. So we first have to understand what God made at the beginning.

The short version is this: God made a perfect world, and a perfect son to rule over it. Creation was vastly complicated, interconnected, and virtually limitless. But it's not all explained in Genesis as to just how God made the world; for that we have to trace the concept of Creation through the rest of the Bible. The world is not just a physical entity but also a delicately balanced interplay between the physical and the spiritual. We can trace at least ten methods that God used to create the world. Now the physical hangs within a spiritual framework; all our actions have spiritual consequences, and whatever happens is of great interest to God our Maker.

Now if the world was made in this way, there would have to be a ruler who could interact with it on its physical and spiritual levels in a way that would be pleasing to God. And that's how God made Adam and Eve: out of the dust of the world they were to rule over, but fully aware of God and walking in his presence. But making a servant wasn't enough. God made man to be his son on earth – which meant that man related to God as a son does to his Father. The two of them were one in mind and spirit, they both had the same goals in view, and whatever the son did would be pleasing to the Father and reflect the closest bond between them. They were a team; their hearts were in the same place. To measure up to this level of relating to God required that man needed seven characteristics that would ennoble him, glorify him, and make him capable of doing the task that God gave him.

CREATION STRUCTURE



Miracle
Command
Wisdom
Witness
Spirit
Blessing
Christ
Glory
Judgment
Revelation

THE PERFECT SON

Creation
Covenant
Deliverance
Priesthood
Kingdom
Wisdom
Prophet



So now we have a perfectly structured world, and a perfect son pleasing to God. *This* is the world “that God so loves.”

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.
(Genesis 1:31)

And then it all fell apart. Satan, the fallen messenger of God, appealed to man’s pride to be independent of God. Through Eve first, and then to Adam, he tempted them to try the Knowledge of Good and Evil – the ability to make their own judgments of what ought to be, and what is good and bad. In that one act they turned their back on God their only source for all things. Instead of living God’s way, they began living on their own without God.

But it’s not as if we committed only one sin and now we’re waiting around for the end. We’ve rebelled against God so completely that we’re not only failing to live up to the seven responsibilities of God’s son, we’re doing the very opposite of each. It’s like a perfectly designed, complex machine suddenly failing in all sorts of ways and ruining whatever it touches. Our sin is enormous and ruinous. And instead of receiving blessings through the ten open doors of the Creation structure, we find curses now wherever we turn.

So the son has failed the Father. What happened next explains so much of what the rest of the Bible talks about: *God is no longer treating man as his son.* Man is the criminal of the universe, and by God’s decree has been cast out of Paradise, he is no longer welcome in God’s world, his future is misery and death, and there is now alienation and open warfare between God and man. Ever since then that’s been the status of the entire human race.

When a son loses his father’s love, he finds himself outside in the street and life gets pretty bleak. Everyone treats him as a stranger; nobody wants him around; he has to struggle to survive on his own. That paternal source of love and resources and context and meaning isn’t there anymore. But you can be sure that man isn’t the only one who feels pain from all of this. God is “grieved” that he made man because of the way his son turned out. His son is now under a new father’s ruthless and deadly kingdom; and man is

cursed in four ways that will bring him down to death. This is not the way he wanted it to turn out; but he has to carry out the sentence for justice's sake.

Now we're ready for Part Two, where Genesis begins a new story line – beginning in chapter 12 with Abraham.

It suddenly occurred to me that there was a huge concept that I wasn't seeing in Genesis. Meaning, there's something big that's *not there*.

In all of Scripture we find God dealing harshly with people about their sins — from the Law to the Israelites in Canaan, from the message of the Prophets to Jesus' "severity passages",³ and to the book of Revelation.

And in Genesis God does address and punish sinners — for example, Adam and Eve, Satan, Cain, the world in Noah's day, etc. There were many people who experienced the anger and punishment of God.

But with the four Patriarchs God said *not a word* to any of them about either their sin or their sinful nature. He never brought it up.⁴ Were they sinners? Of course – the Bible tells us that everyone is a sinner according to the Law.

Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.
(Ecclesiastes 7:20)

For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:22-23)

THE GOSPEL IN GENESIS

Dealing with sinners

Adam and Eve
Satan
Cain
The world in Noah's day
Pharaoh
Abimelech
Sodom
Ishmael
Esau
Laban
Shechemites

**God condemns
and punishes
sinners**

Dealing with his Son

Abraham
Isaac
Jacob
Joseph

**God does not deal
with them according
to their sins**

**"The God of Abraham,
Isaac and Jacob"**

³ For a fuller discussion of the "severity passages" in the teachings of Jesus, see *The Severity Passages of the Four Gospels*, Ravenbrook Publishers: 2017.

⁴ The reason I'm tracing only the Patriarchs here is because the Bible itself does. Remember that God is called "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." Only these four men (the three Patriarchs and Joseph) are mentioned because the main story line in Genesis concerns what God did in their lives. What God did with other people in the book are related but only as secondary issues to the main point.

Most of the Patriarchs were humbled with the fact that God was good to them, but the subject of their sin never came up. *Not a word*. The only thing that God ever discussed with them was the Covenant Promises that he would bless them with. The contrast in how he dealt with them and the rest of the world is stark.

Did they go through hard times? Yes — but only as discipline, training, a weaning from the world. We would expect a Father to train his son “in the way he should go.” There is a great deal of work to get the son ready for his increased responsibilities at God’s right hand, which of course includes cleaning up his act.

And we know that God does talk about sin and crucifying the flesh to all his children — *but not in Genesis*. Genesis focuses on the renewing of the relationship of Father/Son only.

In other words, we are watching the Father bringing his son home and forgetting the past completely. Sin no longer separates the son from the Father. They’re already in the House together.

What does that remind you of?

And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate. (Luke 15:21-24)

And this is what I was seeing in Genesis:

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. ***He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.*** For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. (Psalm 103:8-13)

In fact, passages about God putting aside our history of sin and welcoming us into his presence with only love in his heart abound all across the Bible. This is the heart of the Gospel.

The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin ... (Exodus 34:6-7)

The ones in Scripture whom God accuses of sin and deals with them on that basis are the pagans, and the religious hypocrites who aren’t really his spiritual children. And he only has wrath for unrepentant sinners.

... but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation. (Exodus 34:6-7)

The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. (John 3:35-36)

For his true children, the treatment is this: come to me, and I will give you rest. See the way Jesus dealt with the woman caught in adultery. Rest from what? Sin, of course ... he's going to solve the problem of sin *for* them. We come before God expecting a blow, but instead he welcomes us and kisses us.

So Genesis is the making of the Son of God; it's a revelation of how God deals with his Son, what's in store for the Son, and the contrast between the Son and those outside of the Family. There's only love here, never condemnation.

And for those who condemn the Patriarchs — they're wrong. Genesis can't be about their failings, because it would violate all of Scripture. It would deny the Gospel. It's ironic that critics are doing what God refuses to do. It's the Pharisees condemning the sinners, the tax collectors, the foolish and the weak — those the world despises but whom God has chosen as his very own. Were the Patriarchs sinners? Yes. But that chapter is closed now and we're moving on to a new creation, the impossible, a union with the Perfect Son — for whom the Father only has love and acceptance. Whatever sins the Patriarchs might have had aren't part of the story line; they're God's children now, learning faith and being treated like the royal Family they are. The relationship between Father and Son is not based on the Son's sinfulness but on the Father's loving-kindness. The sin-problem is solved, never to be brought up again. We know that because of the Cross.

That's why the Apostle can say to sinners,

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. (Hebrews 10:19-23)

It's because we know our Father in Heaven will accept us, and never forsake us, though the whole world may reject us.

So this “missing subject” is a critical foundation stone of the message of Genesis; it's part of the plot. Of course all this fits in with what the Father gives his Son, explained in detail, through the stories of Genesis, broken down in the lives of the four Patriarchs.

We've already gone through an extended discussion of each of these men; so here we will simply give a short review of what God did in particular in each man's life that pertains to our faith.

- **Abraham** – God called Abraham to be his Heir, to inherit the Treasures of Heaven. God made a Covenant with him, promising him four things: a son who would inherit his estate; the land for his Family to live in; the growth of his Family into a nation; and the blessing of peoples through Abraham all around the world. These Promises had a spiritual, eternal fulfillment in

Christ, which we now know as the Gospel: the Heir is Christ, through whom all the rest of the Family would inherit the Promises; the Land is Heaven; the Nation is the Church; and the Blessing is forgiveness of sins and resurrection from the dead. They reversed the four curses from Creation. And Abraham knew about these spiritual realities.

- **Isaac** – Abraham had two sons, but the Firstborn that God chose was not Abraham’s physical firstborn. Isaac was born of the Spirit – it was a miracle, the hand of God, that made Sarah give birth to him. The Inheritance goes to the son born of the Spirit. The Spirit of God, of course, gives spiritual life to the Son so that he can see and know the Father in Heaven.
- **Jacob** – Again, though Jacob was not the physical firstborn of Isaac, he nevertheless struggled for the rights of the Firstborn all his life. He made himself look like the Firstborn in order to get the Inheritance. His final struggle was with the Firstborn Son of Heaven in order to lay claim to his Inheritance rights: life with the Father in Heaven in his House. This is the true situation of every believer in the Father’s House: none of us deserve the Firstborn’s rights, but all of us who live with God will nevertheless enjoy those rights to the full.
- **Joseph** – Though he was the eleventh son of Jacob, God chose Joseph to be the Designated Heir of the Family: only through him, as he ruled over Egypt, would they be protected and blessed by God. They had to submit to his authority; Joseph was their King. Jesus, as he sits at the right hand of the throne of God, rules over all believers and requires their obedience to him if they want the blessings of the Inheritance. He is the Son of God, a reality that they have to see and submit to if they want what they would otherwise never receive.

So the point of Genesis is *the making of the Son*. God is bringing his own Family back to himself and restoring that Father/Son relationship that he wanted at the beginning. But this time it’s firmly founded on the life of the eternal Son so that it can’t fail. God no longer deals with these particular people according to their sins, but in love as his own Son. And *what* he gives them – the Inheritance meant only for the Son – is the fullness of the riches of the Father himself.

Checks on validity

Granted, this interpretation of Genesis doesn’t align with what most scholars and teachers tell us about the book. So before we lay our pen down, we have to do one more thing: check with those people who knew absolutely what Genesis is teaching us. And for that information we can’t turn to modern sources.

The only people who knew for certain what Genesis was teaching were the Prophets and Apostles – and of course Jesus Christ himself. They received direct revelations from God. Those revelations were passed on to us as God’s Word – and our only option, since

we don't receive or even need direct revelations, is to believe what they were told. So they got it directly from the Source, and that makes their writings authoritative for us.

What they said about Genesis confirms our interpretation here. For one thing, how God made the world is discussed all through the Bible – the ten Categories of Creation are scattered through the Old and New Testaments. Those passages explain more fully how God made the world in the beginning, and they reveal the ramifications for our lives in God's world. For example, Paul tells us that the world was made by Christ.

For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things were created through him and for him. (Colossians 1:16)

And if this is true, then the whole world was the Son's project, man was made in the image of that Son and was therefore was enabled to relate to God as the Father, and the Son remains in authority over the world to this day – which we see in the Gospels when he ascended to Heaven to rule over it in power. So the whole Bible testifies that God did make the world both physical and spiritual, complex and open to his judgment.

When it comes to the Patriarchs it's even more important to check with our only reliable authorities.

- *What did Jesus say about the Patriarchs?*

The following list shows the frequency of the Genesis names throughout the Bible.

MENTIONED IN BIBLE – OT AND NT

GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB – 18 (6)

ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB – 46 (12)

ABRAHAM – 246 (70)

JACOB – 388 (24)

ISRAEL — 2673 (72)

The first number is the frequency of occurrences in the entire Bible; the second is for those in the New Testament. Obviously the Patriarchs remained the topic of conversation on through the New Testament; they weren't just discussed in the Old. It makes me wonder why modern preachers hardly mention them at all (and never according to the original story's lesson!) when they are so important to the Bible's message.

Jesus referred to Abraham continually. The Gospel of Matthew reminds us that Jesus was himself a "son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1), to make sure we understand that he was in the line of the Covenant heirs. God only works with those.

When Mary was told by the angel that she would have a son by the power of God, and when she learned from Elizabeth that the promised Prophet was

about to be born (Malachi 4:5-6), she praised God for fulfilling the Promises given to Abraham. *That* was the spiritual Jew's hope.

He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his offspring forever.

(Luke 1:54-55)

When Zacchaeus showed the same faith as that of the Patriarch, Jesus said of him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham." (Luke 19:9) Not because of his works, but because he called Jesus "Lord" and immediately gave up this world for the sake of the next world – exactly what his forefather Abraham did.

When the centurion showed the same faith, Jesus was amazed that he had what the Jews didn't have. So, the centurion would enjoy the Covenant Promises and the Jews would not.

Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven, while the sons of the Kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 8:10-12)

In fact, the Jews often considered the Patriarchs to be simply a history lesson, as if they were long gone, and what God was doing among *them* at the time was of primary importance (much as we do today in our historical context). The next world was not important to them; this world was all-important. Jesus responded that the Patriarchs were still quite alive, waiting in Heaven now for the consummation of all things, and only those who came to Christ in faith would be resurrected to join the Patriarchs there.

"God spoke to [Moses], saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'. He is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite wrong. (Mark 12:26-27)

Being a Jew didn't guarantee anybody eternal life. Only those who have the faith of Abraham – those born of the Spirit (as Isaac was), spiritual heirs who can see and know the living God in his spiritual world – would be the true heirs.

And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. (Matthew 3:9)

Men were not the only heirs. Jesus once healed a woman of her bleeding and said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." (Luke 8:48) That word "daughter" is filled with meaning: Jesus came to seek the children of Abraham, sons *and* daughters, to give them the Inheritance. He never used

his words lightly when working with the Jews. The Promises can only be given to Abraham's children, not to anybody outside the Family.

The problem of the Jews was a constant theme in Jesus' ministry. Though they claimed to be descendants of Abraham physically, they were not entitled to the Covenant Promises as God intended – those Promises were, ultimately, not of this world. Abraham himself knew that. Abraham's actions showed that he saw the living God and walked in a way that pleased his Father in Heaven. The Jews, however, were blind to that spiritual world and they proved it in how they lived. "I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you." (John 8:37) Their actions proved that they had a different father: "You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires." (John 8:44)

You seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. You are doing the works your father did. (John 8:40-41)

True faith sees God's spiritual world, and walks in the light of that world. Abraham learned that when he followed the LORD through the land of Canaan, getting a tour (so to speak) of the future of his Family. He saw everything: the Heir, the Land, the Nation, the Blessing. God opened his eyes to see past the physical and take hold of the eternal. It's that kind of faith that Jesus was looking for when he worked with the Jews – but he rarely found it.

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in Heaven." (Matthew 16:15-17)

You can tell that Jesus had a high regard for Abraham, considered him still alive and waiting in Heaven for the great feast, and would let no one into the Family who didn't have the Family traits of the Patriarch.

Was Abraham greater than Jesus? No. But Abraham knew that he would have a great Heir, a Son descended from his own body, who would be the Designated Heir through whom all the Family of God would be blessed with the fulfillment of the Promises of the Covenant.

Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad. (John 8:56)

- *What did the entire New Testament say about the Patriarchs?*

We who are in the 21st Century care little about what was given to Abraham. They were physical blessings, and we have no real interest in them or use for them (even if they were still intact, which they aren't!). So we miss their significance in the overall scheme of the Bible.

But to the Jews they were everything. As we saw above, this is precisely what Jesus came to give God's people. And the Apostles' entire ministry revolved around revealing these mysteries and giving them to the Church. If

we don't recognize them in their spiritual dress, it's because we haven't been doing our homework – nor do we have the faith of Abraham. The Jews were satisfied with nothing less than the Promises, and we shouldn't be satisfied with anything else.

Once you see what the spiritual realities behind the Covenant Promises are, you see them everywhere in the New Testament. We simply can't list them all here; they are the very heart of the Gospel. It's just that most students have failed to recognize our inheritance from the Patriarchs in the concepts that we've grown so accustomed to in our religion.

The Son – “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, ‘And to offsprings,’ referring to many, but referring to one, ‘And to your offspring,’ who is Christ.” (Galatians 3:16) Jesus is the Heir of Abraham, the Designated Heir who will bless the entire Family. The Heir is the executor of the estate: only by coming to him will anybody receive anything from God. “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6-7)

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in Heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. (Colossians 1:18-20)

The Land – “Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.” (Revelation 22:1-2) The kind of life that God has for his people is beyond our comprehension. Paul talks about God's world as something that will make up for every kind of trouble we may have suffered in this world.

For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:17-18)

And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows — and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. (2 Corinthians 12:3-4)

... The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints. (Ephesians 1:17-18)

The Nation – “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.” (Romans 8:29) Everyone who is born of the Spirit is now part of the Family of God – brothers and sisters who share the same image, the same inheritance rights, the same eternal future home. And since we are all one Family, we’re supposed to act like it: to love each other deeply, to see to the interests of one another, to submit ourselves to the King, to gather together in God’s House to worship and serve God and each other.

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13)

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit — just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call — one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. (Ephesians 4:1-7)

Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. (1 John 2:10-11)

The Blessing – “We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:4) If death is our curse (see Genesis 3), then resurrection from the dead is the great blessing promised to God’s people. It’s the entrance into a new life: we will leave this cursed world behind and enter into God’s eternal Kingdom, renewed into the image of the Son so that we will be pleasing to our Father. But we don’t have to wait till eternity to experience the blessings of the new life: the Spirit of God gives us the life of the Son now, in this world, so that we can see and know and experience the fullness of God. This is what gives us hope that we are indeed destined for glory, when the life of Christ burns within our own souls. And so death is swallowed up in victory.

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14)

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)

The four terms of the Covenant reverse the four curses that God laid upon man in Genesis 3.

- ***The Heir*** – now in Jesus Christ
- ***The Land*** – now it's Heaven
- ***The Family*** – now it's the Kingdom ruled over by the King
- ***The Blessing*** – now it's resurrection from the dead and eternal Life

Faith – “At one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:8-10) Faith is walking in the light of God's world. Abraham saw the eternal in the land that God showed him. In the same way, we walk by faith when we see the glory of God, when we see that Jesus is the Son of God, when we believe that the Bible is the Word of God, when we know the deadly nature of this world we live in, when we put our hope “on things above, not on things below.”

The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light. (John 12:35-36)

If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)

I'm sure you can take it from here. Everywhere you turn in the Bible, you will see the richness of the Covenant Inheritance passed on down to us from the Patriarchs. Now you can trace where your Christian Faith came from.

- *Does our modern Gospel include the Genesis themes?*

Yes and no.

Of course modern Christians (the Conservatives, at any rate) believe in Jesus as the Son of God, that Heaven is our destination, and that we must live by faith. The basics are obvious in the New Testament.

The problem is that most people have no idea where those ideas came from. They think the Old Testament (including Genesis) is for Jews, not Christians. And so they rarely go to the Old Testament for anything except for a few prophecies and a lot of morality lessons.

The result is that they end up using Biblical words but with shallow, inadequate meanings. “Faith” for instance: this is usually defined as believing in the right things about God and Christ. That’s not Abraham’s faith. And the “new Creation” that Paul talks of – Christians take this to mean that we are born of the Spirit, the old nature is crucified, we have the new nature of Christ in us now, and now we live a new kind of life. But that doesn’t even get to the heart of the lesson of Creation in Genesis, which of course Paul understood completely when he used that phrase.

So if people aren’t interested in connecting back to Genesis then they are going to do two things: *first*, they will use words and concepts in line with our modern definitions and cultural standards; and *second*, they will focus on other issues that Genesis doesn’t even deal with. Without the anchor the boat drifts off into the wrong directions.

What is worse, we moderns are not paying attention to the alerts that the New Testament writers gave us. Jesus and the Apostles told us that our future inheritance is what God gave Abraham; do we know what that is? Do we even care? Or have we made up a new religion that caters to our modern worldly context and desires?

Without Genesis teaching us, we are going to think that everything that Jesus did is new – after all, it *is* called the “New” Testament, right? But that’s not the testimony that Jesus gave of himself: “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in *all* the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24:27) In all his work on earth, there wasn’t a thing that Jesus did which didn’t relate directly to the Promises that God gave Abraham.

Gentiles are being given what the Jews rejected.

Through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. (Romans 11:11)

They certainly wouldn’t be jealous of us if they didn’t see that God is giving us what was first promised only to them. Paul told us plainly that Christians are “heirs” of Abraham. Heirs inherit something concrete from their forefather. If we don’t go back to Genesis and find out what that Inheritance was, if we’re headed to Heaven having no idea of what God has for us, how do we know we’re going to like it? Do we in fact even want it? And for that matter, if we told people at the door of the church what the ministry is designed to give them (the Covenant Promises), would they come in? Or would they turn away not interested and find some other church that will give them the treasures of this world? We have to clear up this matter of what exactly we inherit from Abraham or we’re going to look like fools, claiming to be followers of Christ only to be turned away on Judgment Day.

Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in Heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty

works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’ (Matthew 7:21-23)

For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. (Revelation 3:17)

So yes, our authorities – Jesus and the Apostles – all agreed that the Patriarchs first received our Inheritance from God. Another way of saying that is that the Gospel of Christ (as Paul told us plainly) “was first given to Abraham.” The entire Genesis story unfolds the basic foundation for our Christian faith. This is why the entire Bible calls our God the God of the Patriarchs. We can only hope that we are part of that Family.

And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac.” (Genesis 32:9)

And Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” (Genesis 50:24)

And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. (Exodus 2:24)

I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. (Exodus 3:6)

Say this to the people of Israel: ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ (Exodus 3:15)

Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me.’ (Exodus 3:16)

That they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.” (Exodus 4:5)

I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them. (Exodus 6:3)

And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you. (Deuteronomy 6:10)

And that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. (Deuteronomy 9:5)

And that he may be your God, as he promised you, and as he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. (Deuteronomy 29:13)

For he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. (Deuteronomy 30:20)

‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead, but of the living. (Matthew 22:32)

Have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite wrong. (Mark 12:26-27)

In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. (Luke 13:28)

But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. (Luke 20:37)

The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus. (Acts 3:13)

‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.’ And Moses trembled and did not dare to look. (Acts 7:32)

A new Son for a new world

Genesis started out with God creating “the heavens and the earth.” When he was done, he “saw that it was very good.” God loved his Creation.

But man, the key player in the picture, refused to cooperate and turned away from God. He was supposed to rule the earth under the Father. Instead what ensued was ruin and disaster. So God pronounced doom upon man and crippled him in four key areas. Their Family relationship came to an end.

God, however went back to that original idea. He has in mind to create “a new heavens and a new earth”, something on a higher level than the first Creation, something that cannot be ruined. To prevent another disaster, God is creating a “new Man” in his own Son to live in that new Creation. Genesis is showing us the process of making that “new Man”. When that Man is complete (in other words, when all of Abraham’s descendants finally make up the Body of Christ), and Man once more assumes his place at the right hand of the Throne of God over the entire universe, then the old will be destroyed and the new world will take its place. And *that* world God will love deeply. It will be perfect, never to fail – because his own Son will rule over it.

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