

November 7, 2020

We are Winners

Shalom,

A great battle is raging in the world today. It is an ancient problem, and yet it is manifest in every age. We surely are surrounded by so many different manifestations of attack: Covid 19, floods, fires, protests, political unrest, lying spirits unleashed in many ways. These truly are perilous times, but despite all we witness in the natural realm, the people who know their God will continue onward. Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. No matter the circumstances, God is on the throne and willing to make victors of all who trust Him.

The portion of the Torah (remember Torah is "Instruction", not "Law") found in **Genesis 18:1—22:24** is called **Vayeira** and means "**And He appeared.**" It includes the time that three visitors appeared to Abraham as he sat at his tent door in the heat of the day. I believe that one of the visitors was a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Who informed Abraham that Isaac would be born to Sarah and him in about one year. God revealed His plan to Abraham little by little. After Isaac's birth and weaning, the account of sending Hagar and Ishmael away is related in the 21st chapter and seems very puzzling for the natural mind. For a man to send a son and that son's mother away seems unthinkable and exceedingly cruel, and yet we read that God confirmed the demand of Sarah and approved of the exile. Abraham was shocked by the thought until the LORD revealed His will to him.

"But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom Hagar had borne to Avraham, making fun of Yitz'chak; so Sarah said to Avraham, '**Throw this slave-girl out! And her son!** I will not have this slave-girl's son as your heir along with my son Yitz'chak!' Avraham became very distressed over this matter of his son. But God said to Avraham, 'Don't be distressed because of the boy and your slave-girl. Listen to everything Sarah says to you, because **it is your descendants through Yitz'chak who will be counted**'" (Genesis 21:9-12 CJB).

Don't allow your natural mind to question God in this matter, nor the seeming severity of the action that the separation required. In God's love, the angel of the LORD was sent to minister provision to Hagar and Ishmael. Abraham, when interceding for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 18:25, was speaking by the Holy Spirit when he said, "**Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?**" **God not only does right. He does all things perfectly, and that applies to this situation as well.** Notice that YHWH assures Abraham of His care for Ishmael in Genesis 21:13 where He says, "**And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.**"

The direction given by God to Abraham stressed that Isaac and his descendants are at the center of His plan. Galatians 4 gives us new covenant insight into a basic

principle of the Word of God that, when revealed by the Holy Spirit and acted upon, will lead every child of God to be fully utilized as a member of Messiah's body. Each of us must recognize that the ways of the Spirit of God; His thoughts, plans, and purposes are infinitely above our natural understanding. This is related to us in a picture of two sons, **Ishmael** and **Isaac**, and their mothers, **Hagar** and **Sarah**, to show the way of the **flesh leads to bondage** while **the way of the Spirit leads to freedom**.

“It says that Avraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and one by the free woman. The one by the slave woman was born according to the limited capabilities of human beings, but the one by the free woman was born through the miracle-working power of God fulfilling His promise. Now, to make a midrash on these things: the two women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai and bears children for slavery—this is Hagar. Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Yerushalayim, for she serves as a slave along with her children. But the Yerushalayim above is free, and she is our mother; for the Tanakh says, ‘Rejoice, you barren woman who does not bear children! Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor! For the deserted wife will have more children than the one whose husband is with her!’

“You, brothers, like Yitz'chak, are children referred to in a promise of God. But, just as then, the one born according to limited human capability persecuted the one born through the Spirit's supernatural power, so it is now. Nevertheless, what does the Tanakh say? ‘Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for by no means will the son of the slave woman inherit along with the son of the free woman!’ So, brothers, we are children not of the slave woman, but of the free woman” (Galatians 4:22 – 4:31 CJB).

The Holy Spirit is revealing that Ishmael and Isaac represent the natures that are present in each of our lives. **Ishmael**, who was born by fleshly planning, is a manifestation of **the works of the flesh** while **Isaac**, who was miraculously born through the supernatural enablement of the Word and Spirit of God, represents the mind of the Spirit. Isaac and his children are **fruit born of the Spirit and are to show the Spirit-led life**. **We must cast out or send away that natural fleshly inclination that desires to rule and have dominion through soulish decision-making and usurping control by natural senses and physical strength**. That fleshly realm persecutes and mocks the God-ordained, spiritual nature placed within us which is denoted by the covenant words, “**In Him**,” and it is through our place in His authority, that we show forth our true nature as the sons of God.

I am convinced that the most crucial thing that believers can understand is the different parts of us created by God as **spirit**, **soul (mind)**, and **body**, and to recognize that, in His perfect creation, our spirit is to be in control of the mind part of us, having dominion in the earth, not by reasoning, but by seeing with the Father. To understand this great truth, we must receive revelation directly from the Spirit of God, and He is willing to open your heart and give revelation to you from His Word made alive by the Holy Spirit.

“So Yeshua said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know Who I am. I do nothing by Myself, but speak just what the Father has taught Me” (John 8:28 TLV).

“I say what My Father has shown Me; you do what your father has told you” (John 8:38 CJB)!

When we are born again, by the blood of Yeshua, the Messiah, our spirits are made alive in Him, and the authority to control the old flesh nature is granted to us; but in order for us to exercise that authority, we must trust in His Word and take forceful, decisive action against the fleshly impulses at work in us by speaking the authority granted to us through being united with Him. We speak the living Word of God by the power of the Holy Spirit.

“For **the Word of God** is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword—**piercing right through to a separation of soul and spirit**, joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12 TLV).

The very words, “cast out,” indicate a degree of severity necessary to dislodge. Just wishing to change won’t cut it, nor is it something we can just pray that God will do for us. No, **you must choose to crucify the flesh**, to put the fleshly nature in its place, that is remove it from its place of control, and at the same time, **give place to the working of the Holy Spirit within you by walking in obedience to God’s Word, His teaching and instruction. Our fleshly nature is under the control of our mind. We need to make certain that we bring our minds (souls) under submission to our spirits which are united with the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.**

“Do not be conformed to this world but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2 TLV).

“**For if you live according to your old nature, you will certainly die; but if, by the Spirit, you keep putting to death the practices of the body, you will live**” (Romans 8:13 CJB).

It’s clear that this is the way to live, but putting it into practice is a challenge; nevertheless, we must treat this as a matter of life and death. When the Spirit of God, by the Word of God, shows you an area where the old man of the flesh is in control, **don’t tolerate it.** Don’t make excuses. **Cast that “old man” way of doing things out.** Do it promptly and with force. **Choose to handle everything as a new creation.** No more gossip, no more judging others, no more solving problems with your own devices, and no more letting your mind run wild. Your thoughts, your tongue, your relationships, and your entire life can be under the control of God if you choose to walk according to His Word

by the spirit.

“What I am saying is this: run your lives by the Spirit. Then you will not do what your old nature wants” (Galatians 5:16 CJB).

“Moreover, those who belong to the Messiah Yeshua have put their old nature to death on the stake, along with its passions and desires. Since it is through the Spirit that we have Life, let it also be through the Spirit that we order our lives day by day” (Galatians 5:24-25 CJB).

If you have been wondering what is happening all around us, it is the war between good and evil, light and darkness, and it is rooted in the fact that there are those who love darkness and hate light. There are many who prefer to lean on their own understanding of things rather than trust God. The battle illustrated in this week’s Torah teaching is still being waged today, and those who will live in the spirit are enabled to be overcomers, or more than conquerors, by the power of God within them.

Since this is a life and death matter, take action to live by the spirit. Say this with your mouth and believe it in your heart, “I will walk in the spirit, and never gratify the desires of my flesh.” **You can use your faith to change the way you operate and be an agent of change in the world.**

So Grateful,
Terry

We want to give continuous praise and thanksgiving to God for His protection to all who evacuated before the East Troublesome fire raged through our area. God is faithful to deliver us from all evil, and for those who lost property, we proclaim with utmost assurance that God will supply all needs and restore everything the enemy has stolen.