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[0 : 00] So, Genesis chapter 17, we left off finishing verse 6 approximately, so let's, Genesis chapter 17, and as you look at that, read at least through verse 14 for these next set of questions.

So, this is the fourth time that God's spoken directly to Abraham.

That's not going to be a regular thing for most people, is it? Who are some other folks that God's going to talk directly to?

Moses. He did talk to Noah. And Adam and Eve, of course.

And Cain and Abel, or Cain, we know of for sure. Benny. Yeah.

[1 : 21] Yeah. Or as. He wrestled with Jacob. And he did speak to him. Because Jacob, in that wrestling, Jacob said, I won't release you until you bless me, right?

Right? So, now, is that something that should be commonly looked for by every believer?

Why not? How did he give us his word? How did he give us his word? Well, does his word come to me through the Holy Spirit?

Or do I need to read it? Well, his spirit testifies with my spirit.

Let's get that quote down. That we are his. Right? We are children of God. It does not necessarily say, Roger, you're reading this right.

[2 : 39] Now, he did say to his disciples, I want to be careful with it. He did say to his disciples, that is, Jesus said to his disciples, when that Holy Spirit comes, he will lead you into truth.

All truth. And you have heard it taught, that that means, well, you may not have heard it taught.

But I have heard people say, you don't really need to read the Bible because the Holy Spirit brings you into truth. You've heard that, haven't you, somewhere, or some variation of that.

Or at least the idea, in fact, there's a very, how did I get off on this? There was a very, and it still remains a very popular book, sold to Christians, marketed to Christians.

And now, I won't have the exact quote, but the preface goes like this. The word of God wasn't quite enough. I needed something more.

[3 : 58] Now, what she was saying was, I wanted to hear directly from Jesus. Now, what does the Bible actually say about who God talks to?

Well, the scripture says that God chose, remember 1 Peter? At sundry times and in diverse manners, he spoke to the prophets.

Yeah. What's a prophet? Specifically, it's a person who hears directly from God. Yeah.

And then he speaks it. Yeah. He speaks it forth. But the idea isn't always to tell future events. A prophet is anyone who hears directly from God and speaks to the people.

That's why we read so much, especially in the Old Testament, but we also read it in Paul's epistles, a variation of this. Thus saith the Lord.

[5 : 07] Right? Now, the reason for that is God doesn't talk immediately to every believer.

He didn't in Israel, and he doesn't now. He talks through his word. He did talk immediately to some. Were they the ones who were seeking it? Did Moses seek it?

You mentioned Moses. Tell us how God approached Moses. Quickly. We aren't even into Genesis 17 yet.

The burning bush. He's feeding sheep on the backside of the desert. He's feeding sheep for a Midianite, for crying out loud.

[6 : 05] His father-in-law. And what's he do? What's he see? What about a burning bush? What's the big deal about a burning bush?

It didn't get consumed. It was burning, but it wasn't consumed. And he said, I'm going to check this out. So he walks over there, and God talks to him.

Now, when his sister Miriam, by the way, after they're out of Egypt, and they're heading toward Canaan, his sister Miriam gets a little grumpy, and she says, are not all of the Israelites God's people?

Now, what's the answer to that? Yes. So, aren't we all supposed to have this message?

And what did God say? Come over to the tent of meeting. I'm going to give you an object lesson.

What was the object lesson? Real quickly, she got, she didn't get a word from God, she got a sign.

[7 : 30] She got leprosy. Because he said, I'll tell you who I'm going to speak through, and who doesn't. So, remember this.

Even in Israel, let's use, let's stay with Moses. They're going through, they're going through the desert. Did they, did everybody in Israel get the message about where they're going to go, or where they're going to camp?

Who got it? Let's go into the, this dispensation, the Apostle Paul. All those who went with Apostle Paul on the journeys, did they all get the same word about where they were going and what they were doing?

No. Who got it? Paul. So, when, when Paul said, I received a vision, we're going to Macedonia, we're not going on into Asia, we're going over to Europe, what did they say?

Now, wait a minute, Paul, I didn't hear that. No. Why? Because Paul was chosen, now, we don't usually say he was chosen as a prophet, but it equals that.

[8 : 56] He is a disciple, or, disciple's not the right word, apostle. He's the representative of God to people.

God speaks to him and he delivers it. Now, we here understand that because he delivers the big message we preach, isn't it?

who told Paul that I'm going to do something that I didn't tell anybody else?

I didn't tell anybody this, but you're going to teach it. It's the gospel of the salvation by grace through faith and that not of yourselves, right?

So, who got that message? Paul got the message and he delivers it because he's an apostle. So, back here, let's roll back.

[9 : 59] When I learn from Abraham, I need to learn principles of behavior and obedience, but I do not take from Abraham a concept that you are supposed to hear from God directly.

directly. That's not what God's word says. In fact, later on, Paul's going to write and he says, study to show yourself unto God a that, come on, that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The workman is a literally, it has to do with a skilled technician.

And to make a straight cut, rightly dividing is to make a straight cut, he's careful about it. But what is he careful with? The word of God, the completed word of God.

Now, back to my illustration about that person who needed to hear from God more than what the scripture says. Because she claimed that the relationship with God would only be really full or proper if she heard from God directly, not just mediated through his word.

[11 : 32] That is not true. that one of the very principles, and the reformers got this right, one of the main principles is the sufficiency of scripture.

God said, I have given you everything that pertaineth to life and godliness. Now, what am I to look for? The word.

God says, it's already there. So, when I go to the Lord and I say, tell me this, he says, I already did. Why don't you listen?

Kind of like going back to Moses, one of my favorites, Moses standing before the Red Sea, and Egypt's armies are here, and the mountains are here, and the Red Sea's here, and he says, what do I do?

And God says, why are you crying out to me? Turn around and raise your rod. I told you what I'm going to do, I'm going to show myself glorified in Egypt.

[12 : 46] So, Moses turns around, raises the rod, and what happens? Now, he didn't say to Jacob Ben-Gurion back here, father of the tribe of Benjamin, you go out and part the Red Sea, did he?

He said it to Moses. So, when I learn from Abraham, I need to learn principles of behavior, and principles of obedience, and principles mainly of faith, because that's how he's used in the New Testament, isn't it?

The father of the faithful. Okay, I didn't mean to do that. I'm sorry.

So, we're starting about verse 7. God confirms something. What does he confirm with Abraham? Chapter 17, verse 7, and on, 7 through 14.

what is the covenant? Israel's not born.

[14:13] Israel's not going to be born for a long time. The land belongs to, literally, the land belongs to Abraham and his seed.

and specifically, well, we'll get to that. We'll reiterate that later. There's a specific line to whom it belongs.

Now, usually, a covenant would be between two parties. from chapter 15, we remember that this particular covenant is what?

It's a one-sided covenant. Who went through the covenant? God with Abraham. God alone.

There you go contradicting again. God alone. So, that's going to be important in Romans chapter four.

[15:21] Isn't it? You remember Romans chapter four? That's going to be important because Paul's going to say that the law that comes later doesn't set this aside.

He said, and he uses that as an illustration of my faith and my position in Christ. But, we'll go on because I don't need to chase.

And, what's he going to do? What is he going to do? I'm going to give to you what? You and your seed. Okay.

Now, what is God's part in this covenant? I'm going to do this.

What's Abram's part in this covenant? Okay.

[16:33] what does he say about that? Okay.

Now, we're going to get to that in a moment. But, back to what Marva said. What was Abraham's part? Back to Romans chapter 4.

Abraham believed God. God, and it was credited or reckoned to him as righteousness.

Who reckoned it to Abraham as righteousness? God. That's pretty important to me, isn't it? By the way, we, Sherry invited them back.

We had a couple of Jehovah's Witnesses visit us last week. and I invited them in. One of them wants to argue.

[17:39] So, he said, well, do you mind if we come back? I like seeing somebody who reads the Bible. Well, little does he know. But, anyway, I thought, I did not say this.

I did not say this, but I thought, boy, you don't meet very many people then, do you? But, anyway, I said, sure, you can come back, but it will have to be in a couple of weeks because our next couple of weeks are going to be pretty full and we can't sit down and actually discuss like we should.

So, that is only an illustration of what we're looking at here because he's not going to believe, he does not believe that his position with God is dependent upon believing God.

He believes that if he doesn't get out there and work, what's going to happen? He's not going to be saved. Now, he also doesn't believe in eternal damnation.

He believes in annihilation. But, that's neither here nor there. He will believe the truth once he meets the Lord.

[19:08] Let's pray by the way that he meets the Lord. Yeah, I'll trade you this for the watch tower.

This one's important and that one won't be. Anyway, so, Abraham, back, we know, Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

and God promised Abraham even before the reckoning or, well, I'm not sure that I can be so specific about that, but at least it's recorded before the reckoning.

He made the promise even when Abraham's still in earth. but, what then, now, back to this, what is Abraham's part in this covenant?

Literally, Abraham's part was believe, but now something's going to be added. Has God changed the covenant? it?

[20:27] No. Well, then, why this? He says specifically here what it's going to be.

Specifically, what does God say that this is going to be, that Abraham has to do? Okay, what is that specifically?

It's a sign of the covenant. that's fairly important. This is going to be a sign that Abraham's going to bear.

Right? And, who else? Is that all? Oh, wait a minute.

If you buy a slave, what? Right. Right. Now, how long is Abraham and his descendants to keep this covenant?

[21 : 37] This sign of the covenant? Throughout your generations. Right. As long as you last, you're to keep this sign. Okay?

Now, what happens if they ignore the token of the covenant?

Okay. Now, once again, before we go on, what is the point of the circumcision? it is a token or a sign of the covenant.

Okay? Now, and not only his descendants need to be circumcised, but who else? His servants, anybody who's in his household.

Now, let's think about, let's go to Joshua chapter five, if you would.

[22 : 46] Joshua chapter five, verse 25. God grants Israel grace even regarding the sign.

Now, what had he told them? You have to be circumcised, you have to bear this circumcision. He told them when they were to be circumcised.

Now, they are actually entering or preparing to enter the land. There is no 525. What did I write down?

Yes, actually two, two through five. For some reason, that dash was invisible.

What'd they do? Well, actually not. But all the men had to be circumcised because they had not been circumcised during the sojourn in the wilderness.

[24 : 05] Right? So, during the wandering, they hadn't been keeping the sign of the covenant. And God's gracious here. And he says, okay, but take the sign now.

So, that is interesting to me, isn't it? God's God's Christ.

What's the difference for us today? Go to Galatians, or Colossians, and I'll be more careful in my reading. Colossians chapter 2, verse 10.

In the Abrahamic covenant, or we call it the Abrahamic covenant, or I do, God says you bear this sign what about now Colossians chapter 2 verse 10 what's my position in Christ and ye and who's ye or you the Christian right what's my position in Christ that's pretty important isn't it my completion is in what God has done through Christ my safety is in Christ not in myself if I have to be righteous in myself what's going to happen imaginary standing before God how righteous must I be what is it yeah as righteous as God is now yeah so he is the head over what all rule and authority or literally principalities and powers and these are all he's also talking about the angelic the spirit world whose head over everything

God God now by the way I'm going to digress again I know does it look that way when I read the newspaper imaginary newspaper I don't know who has I don't know where you find one no does it does it look that way does it look that way when you look at popular entertainment or listen to popular entertainment the other day someone was rolling down our street with their window down because they are missionaries of obscenity you can imagine what the radio was doing it was horrible it was embarrassing I thought so when I look out and I think what's going on

[28 : 12] I need to look at God's word and remind myself he is the head now I don't understand everything that's for sure because in my mind I say put an end to it now right in my mind but in God's plan he's still the head of overall authority and what's my position in him complete now in him also and now what you were mentioning you were circumcised with what a circumcision made without hands that is it's not a physical circumcision but it's not putting off the body of sin or it is rather putting off the body of sin in the flesh by what Christ so the body of sin is spiritually circumcised by Jesus

Christ now there's no sign of the covenant is there that and we're not talking about the Abrahamic covenant now I'm talking about salvation by grace through faith there's no sign of it you don't have to wear a an epipel on your shoulder that notifies everybody of it the we partake of the Lord's Supper of the what we call communion because we call it communion because we're communing around the table it's a common grace everybody and in when you read in Corinthians you understand it because you see in its context he's talking about how how one person in the body treats another person in the body and we realize that we're all saved by by grace there is no one more deserving than another none of us deserve it and that's why we partake of what Christ did on the cross for us but it's a sign that we do together to as a remembrance but it is not a requirement is it it are you saved if you partake of the holy communion you get the joke or

I didn't mean it as a joke necessarily but as a sacramental view are you saved through that no are you lost if you don't no so I'm no more righteous if I partake than if I don't and I'm no less righteous if I do not than if I do now I do it personally because I want to remember not only what Christ has done but the body of believers who are my church family we are all saved by grace through faith and I want to remember that and it's a visual sign Joe that's interesting because the this is the new covenant in my blood the only the only time in the old testament the new covenant

God says it's either in Jeremiah or Isaiah I think it's in Isaiah I will make a new covenant not like the old covenant which they broke he said I will make up with them a new covenant and I will write my law in their hearts they will no longer need anyone to teach them because they will all know me from the least to the greatest and so forth so back back to what Jesus says to his disciples yeah that part is Jewish right now when isn't for me to know but I don't know when by the way neither does anyone else other than the

Lord in fact even with his own apostles Jesus said before he he said it is not for you to know the times or the the seasons he said you're not only going to not know a date you're not even going to know the time frame because God has appointed that for himself but nevertheless the we can call it I will say this I do not fault somebody calling it the New Testament being for the church salvation by grace through faith because that was not prophesied before and they had no idea of it at that time the unfolding of

[34 : 31] God's prophecy is in God's hands so I don't get too strung out about calling it the New Testament for instance because in that respect the Pauline epistles would not necessarily be New Testament but I always refer to it that way but it's not in the same way that he delivered it say through Isaiah where he said this I will make a new covenant yes yes it is right the foundation is the same the foundation is the same the mistake is to call the

God for instance Matthew Mark and Luke especially John I kind of see as a transition Acts I see as a transition because only well that there are reasons for that that we'll get into another day when you talk to me maybe but anyhow especially the synoptic gospels it's a mistake to call those the New Testament because that's not the New Testament that's the end of the Old Testament well it's not even the end of the Old Testament is it it's the it's the beginning or the breaking point if you will for the grand parenthesis for the mystery the church the church as we understand the church those saved by grace through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of

God not of works lest right the salvation always has been of God in fact Jesus name Joshua because I can't really pronounce Yeshua correctly but Jesus name is God saves now he's not the only Jew ever to have carried that name by the way not all of them necessarily some right if you go if you go to

Acts chapter 15 you see that the delivery from Peter and James especially was these people went out from us having no order from us to teach that they weren't supposed to go out and teach circumcision but they did it anyway now and you read about that in Acts in that middle part and you read about it Paul references it in Galatians so the other part here though is what happened to the law the mosaic law the code the ordinances what happened to the ordinances through the work of Christ they're blotted out how he nailed it to the cross so not only was

Christ nailed to the cross but he carried the law to the cross in fact back there when Peter when the discussion is in Acts in Jerusalem Peter says wait a minute this is a yoke and he's talking about the law and how did he describe it none of us nor our forefathers could bear this yoke what are you doing by laying this yoke on Gentiles so anyway back back to our chapter 17 so we know we know we don't carry a mark of circumcision the circumcision for the Christian is really the spiritual circumcision done by

[39 : 42] Christ the taking it's actually not a symbol of the overlooking of sin it's a symbol of taking it away that's why Paul can say later on it is no more I that sin but sin that dwell within me now some some of us stumble over that sometimes don't we well none of you do but sometimes I do but what he's saying is look before me you're perfect why because I've trusted Christ and without him I have to stand on my own righteousness and that's a dangerous place to be that's even a dangerous place for you to be and I know how dangerous that would be for me well I don't even know not really but

God in his grace and his mercy and his love and his provision to be the just he is just because he's going to punish sin and the justifier that's a wonderful verse isn't it not that they aren't all wonderful but for the Christian that is a marvelous verse because what Christ did on the cross was not

exemplary it was propitiary he was the propitiation the turning away of the wrath of God in fact did I see the insert that that's going to be mentioned in a new song before the throne of God is that in for this morning there's a line in there God was pleased to look on him and bruise him for me he became sin for me that

I might be the righteousness of Christ in him that is wonderful thanks very much have a wonderful week joke