

Dr. Kenneth Mathews, Genesis, Session 17, Jacobs Flight and Dream at Bethel, Genesis 27:41-28:22

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This is Dr. Kenneth Mathews in his teaching on the book of Genesis. This is session 17, Jacob's Flight and Dream at Bethel. Genesis 27:41-28:22.

Today's session is session 17. We are looking at Jacob's flight from Beersheba to the homeland of his mother Rebekah in Haran. And in route he has a dream and we will be looking at it in detail as well.

So, our passage begins in chapter 27, verse 41, through chapter 28, 22. By way of recollection, I'll speak of what has occurred in the life of Isaac's family. And Esau, who is the twin brother of Jacob and proves to be his arch enemy, remarks in verse 36 of chapter 27, isn't he rightly named Jacob? And Jacob sounds like the language of grasping the heel, which was what he did as a baby in his womb.

He grasps the heel of Esau. And so there was a struggle already within the womb of Rebecca. And the metaphorical meaning of grasping the heel is to deceive.

And so, it reads in 36, and he has deceived me these two times. He took my birthright. Remember that there was an exchange for the stew that had been prepared by Jacob and was sold to Esau, who says he was famished even unto death.

And Jacob received the birthright, although Esau was the older of the two twins. And then second, and now he's taken my blessing. By deception, fittingly for his name, Jacob, he deceived his father, and he received it from his father, who was blind, and he was suspicious that Jacob was not who he pretended to be, namely Esau.

But nonetheless, he did bless him. This was at the conspiracy of his very wife, Rebekah, who favored Jacob and wanted him to receive the blessing from the patriarch, who would then receive the greater portion of the inheritance. So, we pick up with learning that Esau's anger has fomented into potential murder.

And therefore, Rebekah advises Jacob to flee for his life. Now, this is all reminiscent, in my mind, reminds me, I should say, Matthew 5:21, Sermon on the Mount, and Jesus says, You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, you shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment. Matthew 5:22. But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment.

And then again, in 1 John 3, verse 15, John says, Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer. And you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. So, Jesus rightly explains that those who are living in the kingdom of God, although they may not have acted out in actual physical murder, nonetheless, if they have an angry, hateful, bitter attitude towards someone, then it is, in effect, murder.

So why is that the case? It's because a person who wants to murder may not have the possibility, the availability, or the opportunity to commit murder, either because the circumstances don't provide for it or because of fear of being caught. But nonetheless, this person could be considered a murderer because of his deep-seated, deep-rooted anger. Now, let's pick up with Jacob, who is fleeing for his life.

It starts in verse 41 and continues through chapter 28, verse nine: His flight will take him away from the land. In the Abraham story, the tension was having a promised son, which was resolved, as you know, by the intervention of God, who produced Isaac through the very aging Abraham and his wife, Sarah. The tension in the Jacob stories is land.

After all, he will come away from Haran, which is located in northwest Mesopotamia, with 11 sons and a daughter. So, procreation is not a problem that's being realized. Blessing that too he receives through the proliferation of not only family, but his herds, his flocks, and then simply his wealth.

But when it comes to the land, it seems that Jacob as soon as he's in the land, that he slips out of the land. Here immediately, he will be out of the land for 20 years. And we have to, as readers, wonder about whether or not, as God had promised in his dream in chapter 28, he will, in turn, really come back to the land and be blessed there in accordance with the promises made to Abraham and to Jacob.

Then, later in Jacob's life, he left Canaan again and went to Egypt, where there will be, in the midst of a famine, the opportunity for well-being. And we'll come to the details of that account when we move to the last series of stories regarding Joseph, Jacob's favorite son, and Jacob's other sons.

Now, looking then at verse 41, Esau held a grudge. Now, most of the modern translations say Esau held hated, held hated, better translate, Esau simply hated against Jacob. So, as you can see in the Hebrew text, it's a much more robust, vigorous rejection of planning on the part of Esau.

So, he said to himself when his father passed away, then he would take vengeance and kill. And he says, my brother, Jacob, all of this reminds you, doesn't it? It reminds you of Cain and Abel, the struggle that must have occurred between the two, and how Cain, in his wickedness, actually murdered Abel. Here, the murder does not take place, but it's on the precipice.

And so, we don't know how Jacob, how Rebekah learned of this. But we are told in

verse 42, that this was Esau's plot. This was in his heart.

Now, Rebekah will have to explain why Jacob should flee, or it would create additional tension between her and her deceived husband, Isaac. So, she uses a ploy. This is a part of the motif, the idea that runs through the Jacob story and really through all of the patriarchal accounts.

And that is deception, misleading, lying. We can think of this as human manipulation, despite the promises of God, despite how it seems that the promises of God are being realized, that prayers are being answered according to God's timetable. Nonetheless, the human condition is always one that wants to take hold, wants to control, and wants to bring about the best outcome instead of entrusting the outcome to God.

So here it is again with Rebekah. She takes control, as she had with the deception of her husband. This time, she uses a ploy to say, we've got to send Jacob away so that he can obtain a wife from my father's household. She says, back in Haran, where these are true worshippers of the Lord God, not idolaters like we find among the Canaanites and other people groups here in the land. Now, you will remember how important that was to Abraham.

Abraham sent his servant in chapter 24, back to the household of the family of Abraham's brother, Nahor, who birthed Bethel. And he fathered Rebekah, and also Laban, Rebecca's son, or brother, I should say. And so that's what we have in mind when it comes to the reason for going, is to find a true Yahwist, a true worshipper of the Lord God to be the wife for first, Isaac, and his wife was Rebekah.

And then also, here, we will find it will be two wives, plus their handmaidens when it comes to Jacob. So, let's continue understanding the nature of this ploy. So, when she learned of this, she said to Jacob in verse 43, Now then, my son, do what I say.

So, Jacob is a co-conspirator; he is responsible for his behavior. And so flee at once to my brother, Laban, in Haran and stay with him for a while. Now, for a while is not a precise translation.

Most of your translations are going to take a few days. And that's what it reads in the Hebrew text. So, she was fully anticipating that this would not be a permanent arrangement.

Then, after a short period, Esau would forget to let go of his anger, at least modify it, and Jacob would come back. And she concludes, why should I lose both of you in one day? I think that what she has in mind is that she loses her son Jacob because he

could be murdered by Esau. In turn, Esau, there could be vengeance against Esau by family members, and Esau could be executed.

So that's, I think, what she has in mind, losing both sons. And this would be problematic; we would be back where we started with Sarah, who was barren, and then Rebecca, who began, who was beginning as barren. And so, who is going to be a successor to the family's inheritance and promises?

So, this would be seen then as the gravest of losses, even beyond the emotions of parents losing their sons. Verse 46. Basemath, the daughter of Elan the Hittite, was also there.

They were a source of grief to Isaac and Rebecca. So, she was terribly troubled by these marriages that were taking place, marriages that Hittites who were idolaters. And so that's what's in mind here.

When turning back to chapter 27, she says, I'm disgusted with living because of these Hittite women. She seems to say life is not worth living if we're going to be satisfied with Jacob marrying locals as well. But the word disgusted might be better-rendered loathing.

So, she was loathing, a much stronger word, isn't it, with what had occurred with her oldest son Esau. Continuing our reading, if Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, my life will not be worth living. So now we see that although there are echoes of the Abraham story, there is a significant contrast.

Abraham sent his servant to find a wife for Isaac. He did not want Isaac to leave the land. Well, in this case, both father and mother encourage and send Jacob away out of the land.

So, in verse 1 of chapter 28, Isaac called for Jacob and blessed him and commanded; we don't have the contents of that blessing, but I suspect it would be similar to what we find in the blessing in chapter 27, beginning in verse 27, where it says Isaac blessed Jacob. But here is the command, the prohibition: do not marry a Canaanite woman. And this is called endogamy, where there is marriage within the family, as opposed to exogamy, which is outside the family.

This would be critically important for maintaining the solidarity of the family, unity of the family, the perpetuation without threat, it is proposed or thought, of the inheritance and of the blessing. But he sends him back to Padan Aram, that Northwest place, to the house of Rebecca's father, Bethuel. And Bethuel is the father, I said, of Rebecca and also Laban.

And, excuse me, yes, Rebekah. So, take a wife for yourself there from among the daughters of Laban. And then he offers up this blessing.

Perhaps this is the blessing he gave Jacob: May God Almighty bless you. This reminds us of the promise of procreation.

We can go all the way back to Genesis 1, verse 28, where God blesses the human family and speaks to them and promises and commands them to procreate and to exercise dominion, and that he will bless them. This is for all peoples. That is what's in view here, a procreation.

May he give you and your descendants the blessing given to Abraham. And then the land promise, so that you may take possession of the land where you now live as a sojourner, an alien, the land God gave to Abraham. And so here we have that continuity of descendants and unity in the family.

So, what we want to remember is that the language translated God Almighty is not a translation of the Hebrew. It is relying on the Greek Old Testament, who translated in Greek, the Hebrew, which is a name of God. El Shaddai.

We don't really know the meaning of Shaddai. What we do know is that the patriarchs tended to use the generic terms El and Elohim, meaning God, and into various descriptions. And in doing so, El Olam, God Eternal, El Elyon, El Roy, that is what you will find, but the most popular is El Shaddai, the same language that was used for Abraham in chapter 17.

In that chapter, we have a prologue regarding the promises made by El Shaddai and an admonition to live in accord with the way and word of the Lord. El Shaddai is identified in a number of places as the covenant name Yahweh, who made a covenant with the fathers and then also with the people of Israel. Now, Esau learned in verse 6 that the family was terribly distressed, angrily distressed, at his marrying the Hittite women.

So perhaps poor Esau, and he doesn't appear to be the brightest person. He certainly is weak in his social skills. So, I think he decided, well, maybe I can do some bridge building, reconciling.

If I marry a daughter of Ishmael, after all, Ishmael is part of the family group, the eldest son born to Abraham, although not by Sarah, but by her handmaiden Hagar. So, he does so. And Ishmael, of course, was not the favored son, and it apparently did little, apparently did little to help heal the schism that had occurred in the family.

So, there is an intermarriage then between these two offspring, Ishmael, the father, generally speaking, of the Arab tribes, and then Esau, the father of the Edomite

people group. Now, we move to what's next. What's next is the dream that occurs en route.

And we want to look at this in detail because embedded in this, beginning with verse 10 through the end of the chapter, verse 22, we will find promises made by God to Jacob regarding his immediate future at Haran and then his return. And we will see this reiterated on a number of occasions through the Jacob narrative. Then, when we come to chapter 35, we will see his full restoration to this place where he first meets God in the midst of this dream.

Well, here is another echo of the Abraham story, showing the identity of Jacob with the Abrahamic promises. And that is a dream. And you remember in chapter 15, where the covenant promises made with Abraham are formally ratified through an act of ritual, where there the animals were cut, and the pieces were set parallel with an aisle between the two.

The fire pot representing God's presence moved between the pieces. Meanwhile, Abraham was viewing this through a dream. I'll make the point that he was a passive observer and that the promises then were weighing upon the shoulders of God himself and he alone.

Well, Jacob left Beersheba, and that was a far journey to Haran, another country outside of Canaan. In the region of Paddan Aram, or another expression for that region, Aram and Naharaim, which would be the Aram of the two rivers, you have the Tigris and Euphrates.

That has to do with northwest Iraq. And Aram becomes the setting then for the Arameans. And that's why the family group of Bethuel and Laban, Rachel, will be identified as Arameans because of their locations.

They are not identified as Hebrews. That's unique to Abraham and his offspring. So, Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran.

When he reaches a certain place, now the language place will become increasingly important. And that's what we have here in view, the significance of place. So, in here, verse 11, notice how the word place recurs three times.

When he reached a certain place that eventually he will name as Bethel, which means the house of El, the house of God, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep.

So, in verse 11 in the Hebrew Bible, the word place occurs three times. In most of your translations, it will reflect that. So, if you look at verses 16 and 17 with me,

when Jacob awoke from his dream, his sleep, he thought, surely the Lord, and you see Lord here is Yahweh, is in this place, again place, and I was not aware of it.

In other words, when he arrived, he did not recognize that it was a holy place. And then he goes on to say, or rather the narrator says, he was afraid. That's commonplace when God or his angels, his messengers, appear.

The people respond typically in fear. They are beset with fear because of the almighty presence, a feeling of the other, the transcendence of God and all of his majesty and power. He is truly God Almighty El Shaddai.

And so, he says, that is Jacob, how awesome is this place? This is none other than the house of God. This is the gate of heaven. Now, there's always been something of a mystery about how a person could put his head on a stone.

And actually, the stone will become important and we'll see that also in this dream at Bethel and the events following it. Well, there's another way to translate the language, and you'll find this in some of your translations. He put it beside his head or perhaps adjacent, maybe at the top of his head.

Stones are an important feature of worship in the ancient Near East. And it will be also the case here. So, he takes this stone, again, not recognizing, not realizing that God is present.

Also, he doesn't sense that this stone—it doesn't say so—is in a sacred place. It's not a stone yet to be a stone of worship. Now, here is his dream, and this is what he saw.

You see the verb saw. This is what he saw. A stairway.

Now, perhaps you have the translation ladder. Stairway is, I think, a good translation. And both of them will serve the purpose because it is, especially the language stairway, is reminiscent of what we find in the Babel event.

Where in chapter 11, you recall, a tower is built, and its top reaches to the heavens. Or you can translate that sky. And here, similarly, he saw a stairway resting on the earth.

So, you can envision what Jacob saw. With its top, its head, reaching to heaven. And you can translate that sky.

The point of the imagery here is that we now have a connection, a linkage between the heavenly sphere, the divine sphere, and the concrete earthly dwelling. Again, the place. Then we are told that this connection between heaven and the earth is furthermore connected by virtue of the angels of God.

Now, this translation, angels, is a good one. But it could be more of a generic rendering, messengers of God who were ascending and descending on it.

So, they give the impression that they're on a mission. And that they are linking the two, God and also Jacob. Now, angels are very important in the patriarchal account.

And also, the readers of Genesis from the perspective of Moses' generation and successors, the importance of the angel of the Lord, who's engaged in delivering the people at Passover from their exile in Egypt. And then the angel of the Lord leads them through the wilderness. So, ultimately, the angel of the Lord would have been critically important to the readers, knowing that God is present.

And when it comes to the idea of the presence of angels, you will find that in many places in former passages that occur in the Abraham story. Reminiscent, for example, of how the angel of the Lord rescues the flight, the expulsion of the handmaiden. There to take place in chapter 16, Hagar and her son Ishmael.

And then the three visitors and the two were Solomon Gamora, who was involved in rescuing Lot. And then we find, and that's taking place in chapters 18 and 19. And then the rescue of Isaac in chapter 22, when Abraham is just short of sacrificing his son and the angel of the Lord speaks from heaven.

So, angels will become important in your reading. Now, angels are spiritual beings and they're not corporeal. They're always represented as male figures in the masculine pronoun.

They have some competency and ability to know what's taking place on earth and among the people of God. So, they are ascending and descending on it. And then we move to verse 13.

There above it stood the Lord. Now, this is an interpretive conundrum, a difficulty, because above it can be translated in different ways and it does not depart from the Hebrew. Because in Hebrew, the word it could be him referring to Jacob.

So there above it or above him. The word above can also mean beside. So, we might imagine if he's on earth, he'd be beside the ladder or beside Jacob.

If he's in heaven, or they, that is, well, I should say the Lord, he, it would be that he's above it in his celestial, heavenly appearance there. So there stood the Lord. That has largely to do with the theology of God's presence.

That's a very important theological aspect to how God relates to the human community by virtue of his presence. This will be important for Jacob's survival because he's traveling alone. He does not have an escort service or an army.

He's alone in the wilderness, subject to all kinds of mischief that could occur. He lives in a hostile environment because of Laban, the father of his two wives, Leah and Rachel. So that's what's in view in verse 15, where it reads, I am with you.

The theology of presence, God's promise of protective presence, of prospering his presence. And now, we turn to the identity of Yahweh. He says in verse 13, I am Yahweh.

Now what's important about that in terms of his identity is what follows. The God of your father. Now, the word father just simply means ancestor.

It can mean father, it can mean grandfather, it can mean ancestor. In this case, Abraham is his grandfather. And then the God of Isaac.

Well, it will come to be that Jacob will be added to the identity of Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, the God particularly of Israel. Jacob's name will take up a second name, Israel. Jacob will become Israel.

Israel will become Jacob. All of his 12 sons are ultimately the fathers of 12 tribes of Israel. And then it will ring to remind you of what you've heard perhaps many times in the reading of Scripture.

The God of your father, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So, the promise is reiterated. I'm going to give you a great number of descendants, even like the dust of the earth, reminding us of the imagery that was used before with Abraham in that God promised that his descendants would be as numerous as the sand of the seas.

And then all peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. Well, that brings us back to 12:3 where there it is said all peoples through Abraham and his descendants will be a blessing to people groups who honor Yahweh and the promises made to Abraham. And here it is again.

And the question is, is he going to be, that is Jacob, mistreated or is he going to be blessed? Now, initially, in a number of ways, he's going to be mistreated. But it ends ultimately in a peace treaty between the two. And so there is a chasm that is initiated by Laban, but then ultimately, there is a restoration that occurs.

So, then we move past the elaboration of promises and look at verse 16 again. When Jacob awoke, he identified that he had seen the Lord. Now I want to recognize with you the importance I've been saying again and again and again how covenants is

language that's used having to do with a relationship between the God of the covenant, Yahweh, and then the second party, Abraham and his descendants.

So, a relationship is built on the theology of image. God has created all men and women as persons who as persons can have a personal relationship with God who is also person. And as the New Testament clarifies for us, he is three persons united in one being, one essence.

And so, now Jacob is coming to know Yahweh, the God of his fathers, personally. It is not just theoretical, and it's not just a knowledge of the past recounting stories of God's relationship, His appearances to Abraham and to Isaac, and their responses in dreams and in responding to the spoken promises of God. So, he's developing a relationship with God.

His own relationship with God. Many of us who grew up in the context of a Christian home will recognize that there comes a point, and this was true of me; there has to come a point in your life where you don't depend upon the faith of your parents or grandparents. Rather, it is your own personal faith that is placed in the revelation that God has given us.

In the case of Jacob, it will be El Shaddai, Yahweh. In our case, it's much more specific. Because God in Jesus has come to this earth, we are told to offer the kingdom of God, wherein we have a relationship with God.

And that he came to secure that we would have this relationship with the Father by the forgiveness of sins in the life that we have within the triune God, our life in Jesus, and Jesus who sent his Spirit into our lives. And so, we have to own our own faith. Those of us wrongly depend upon knowing about, hearing the stories of our grandparents and parents.

We've got to come to a place like Abraham, where Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned, it was accounted to him as right standing, as righteousness, right standing with God. And we will see then that Jacob will undergo a series of struggles in his life. The great deceiver, in turn, will be deceived.

And the consequence of that is not a rejection, not a fitful, angry response, but progressively he comes to a place of confession and trust in the Lord. Now, continuing from what we found in 16 and 17, as is often the case in the Bible, there is a name that is associated with the event. Here, the place in verse 17 is identified as the house of God.

In other words, this is not to be understood in a rather crass, literal way, that God is sitting up there in a great palace, but rather that this is the presence of God and

interesting, not in heaven, but on earth, and this is the gate of heaven. This is the means of entering into heaven. Now, what is heaven? It is the presence of God.

The heavenly presence of God that there is this connection. And God has revealed Himself to Jacob. And Jacob has received Him.

And he shows his faith when he says, I wasn't aware of it, but now I see that Yahweh is in this place. This is a place that is sacred because of the presence of God in His sent messengers. So, we need to keep this in mind.

Again, there is probably a reference in the mind of the author to what occurred in the Tower of Babel. You'll remember a play on the word Babel, which means confusion, whereas the Babylonians understood Babylon to mean the gate of the gods. And so, this is the true gateway to God.

So, early the next morning we learn there is a pillar. Now it becomes a sacred stone. The stone He had placed under His head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it.

Now we know in the ancient Near East that, stones and those that were used and carved for pillars, in this case, the adornment of the oil, representative of the presence of richness, the presence of God in the case of Jacob. And it's an act of worship on His part. This was true of His predecessors, Abraham and Isaac, when they had these appearances of God that were transformative.

Their response was to bow in worship, to build altars. Here He takes this memorial stone, places it as a marking out in the land. He's leaving the land.

He's leaving Bethel. This is in the northern section of Canaan, Bethel. And He's going to depart Canaan and go to Aram.

And so, by establishing this pillar, it is an act of faith on His part. Not only was God there, but this is the place to which He will return. He expresses that faith and faithfulness in verse 20 and following where He makes a vow.

And here is the significance then of the naming of that place. Bethel. We speak of it as, of course, a location.

Bethel is a town that will grow, by the way, in great size and influence in the future life of Israel. But it begins to be recognized as a sacred site associated with one of the fathers, Jacob. So, this is Bethel, and it means literally in Hebrew, house.

That's the word Beth. And then El, the house of God. Now, the house of God would, and the gods, if you were speaking of the houses, it's the idea of a temple.

And it's the residence of gods. And here, of course, El is referring to the one true God, Yahweh. Now, in verses 20-22, we see this vow that is made.

And this vow that He undertakes has been very misunderstood. And that is, do we have a conditional statement? If you will do this and do that, then I'll make up my mind to worship you, to be loyal and faithful to you. Or is it rather than an assumption that God will carry out His Word, He expresses it as a vow. He's making a commitment out of faith like Abraham did by saying, in effect, I know you're going to bring me back, and I want you to know I am going to be loyal to you.

From this point forward, you will be truly my God. And I will be loyal to you even as you have shown your loyalty to me. So, verse 20 says, Jacob made a vow.

This is distinguishing him from Abraham and Isaac, saying, if God will be with me, see, that's the theology of presence. Recognizing that if the Lord is with him, then there's going to be protection and prosperity. And He will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear.

Now, this will be important for the community of faith during their wilderness journey when God did that very thing for them, providing food and also clothing. Clothing that did not wear out, in fact. Verse 21, so that the consequence is I will return safely to my father's house.

Now notice it says there as a play on the idea my father's house. So, God will actually exceed this promise by bringing him back to his father's house. Not just to Bethel, but to Bethel and then Beersheba.

So here is his act of consecration, his act of devotion. Then the Lord will be my God. Then the Lord will be my God.

And this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, Bethel. And of all that you give me, I will give you a tenth, which reminds us of how Abraham gave a tenth portion of the booty to Melchizedek as an act of recognition that he and Melchizedek were co-worshippers of Yahweh, Yahweh the one true God who is identified there as El Elyon. And he is showing the same kind of faith and devotion that his grandfather had.

And so, this is what's in mind when it comes to the perpetuation of the promises now in Jacob. And as I said, here's the tension. Chapter 29, he arrives in Paddan Aram.

Will he go back? What an irony. Rebekah thought he'd be gone a few days, but it will be a whole 20 years. Rebekah will never see Jacob again.

Now, by way of conclusion, I would just remind us of how in the New Testament the notion of God's presence in Jesus Christ and that we have the presence of angels in the life of Jesus. And Jesus identifies himself on one occasion with one of his disciples-to-be when in John 1, verse 51, he identifies himself with this scene here with Jacob. The lesson to be learned here is, as we've said every time that God is superseding the sins, the weaknesses, the failures, the selfishness, the greed of this family, the struggles, and

the divisions that occur.

He supersedes that by remarkable acts of grace and mercy, healing where healing is required, and sustaining where sustaining is required. Followed through with his promises so that he would not only cause the fathers and Israel to come, sustain them, preserve them, and provide for them. Out of his love for the fathers, his loving nature, his loving character is not going to be thwarted by human wickedness or manipulation or control.

But he does this not in ending of itself, but rather that, as we have heard many times and we hear again in this chapter 28, that these descendants that will be remarkably numerous will be a blessing, will be blessed, I should say, as we see it in verse 14. All peoples. Now that's going to include the other peoples.

And that's going to include the Ishmaelites and the Esauites, in other words, the Edomites. All people groups that are found in Genesis 10. And on that, in chapter 11, God raises up a nation, Abraham, to be the antidote to the nations and how God will use Abraham in the blessing of God to provide that salvific work that only God can achieve through Abraham's appointed descendant who alone can accomplish this.

Certainly not Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Nor the people of Israel. Rather, the one true offspring of Abraham, we are told.

In whom rest all of the promises that will be bestowed upon all people groups who will bless, who will receive, who will acknowledge, who will express their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who made this all possible because He reconciled all those who placed their faith and trust in Him through the shedding of His own blood as a sacrificial offering on the cross. And then the coming forth of life and His ascension into the heavenlies where He makes perpetually, as Hebrews 7, verse 25 tells us, intercession. He is perpetually making an atonement that is effective.

Even in the midst of our sin, atonement and reconciliation are occurring. That is what was and is and will be necessary as there is a coming together of the family of God, those who believe, and God, who is the lover sending forth the beloved, His only unique, special Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

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