

GENESIS PART THREE-"CALLING" JI JI Travelling alone with God AN INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE GENESIS 12.1-17.27

THE ACCOUNT OF TERAH ...11.29-32

It is of first importance to observe, as Moses records in 12.1 that the LORD had previously called Abram to leave "his land" and "his people." The sudden death of HARAN and the marriage of his granddaughter, HARAN'S daughter Sarah to Abram his Son together with the caring relationship of Abram for Lot comforted Terah. These considerations played no small part in altering the plans and future of Terah. Besides this circumstances of persecution had arisen in Ur if tradition is to be believed and good men like Terah and Abram were no longer content in the land of their birth. The declared "call" of Abram from the Most High now became a very weighty consideration for TERAH, who threw his lot in with his first Son and boldly declared he too would go to Canaan. TERAH was as Hopeful to Pilgrim but like Pilgrim Abram must personally respond to God's call as to him alone. Abram was to follow his lively calling even if Terah's long "delay" and happiness in ARAM had dampened his resolve to continue. For Terah there would be a "thus far and no further"; for Abraham the imperative was "where He leads me I will follow". Abram shared his calling with his wife quite naturally and with Lot whom he treated as a son. Both possessed faith and were willing to venture with Abram.

NOTE ON UR

Bricks from Ur marked with that name "Moon-God" have been dated to 2000BC. Ur was 6 miles from the Euphrates and 125 miles from the sea -though the waters of the Persian Gulf had laved its borders in earlier time. The massive silting up at the mouth of the Euphrates changed Ur's sea-side littoral within 300 hundred years of the flood {Flood 2348BC Foundation of Ur by the Sea 2000BC-silting up by 1800BC}

READING No.1. 12 .1-13 GO EVEN IF YOU GO ALONE JI JI THE SOVEREIGN CALL OF GOD TO ABRAM

JI JI "Go yourself" This is life's great challenge-to go alone with God

....I God continued to speak 卐—he had never left off to call men to walk with Him since the beginning of creation. Abram is dealing with the God of life and salvation hwhy who was later to reveal his name to Moses. The name "Abram" means "Father of elevation". He was progenitor of the highest and best in life as he dwelt amid sophistication and he was a natural leader showing aptitude in business in warfare and in spiritual matters. God's call required three decisions; Abram was called to leave his earth-his soil-the place he grew up; he was asked to leave the place he was born with its associations and friends and the house of his father. Happily he took his father with him. His destination is described as "The Land". It is further described as "the land of vision"har Xra. Abram's call in its simplicity was encapsulated in 10 Hebrew words.

PROMISES TO THE LONELY PILGRIM

2-3 The call of God is always accompanied by his promises because it is a loving direction. Here there are seven promises. Promises are plentiful with God-because he is so loving-so great a giver-so concerned to provide for our desires (Psalm 145) as they centre in Him.

- God will give him a vision to keep before him at all times-to seek a land and a city
- God will work on him hc[and spiritually crafted to belong to a nation of greatness-of "twisting" l dq akin to that of the triune- i.e. of "Abraham Sarai & Isaac"
- God will bless him krb stooping to meet and help him
- His name will be great-because It too will twist round God-being changed to Abraham-Father of elevation-of the Jews and of the faithful

- e. He will be a benefit a benediction and a gift to all mankind
- f. Those who bow to you I will stoop and bless
- g. Those who curse you I will detest-to the point of rendering their life unhappy rra
- h. And all who are blessed **from the families that spread out will** be blessed in your house-i.e. the house of faith.

....4 Without interruption or resistance Abram went out according to the Lord's *persistent call* Rbd(Piel). It is instructive to recognise that God kept calling as with Samuel-the intensive continuous tense is in use. It is further of interest that Lot accompanied him. His name "covering" "veil" "secret" suggests the incantations of Ur and these he left behind for the walk of faith. Abram was the "son of five and seventy" or the "son of bravery-prepared for the fight and the son of promise" (*being the other meanings of "five and seventy"*). So at 75 Abraham went out aXy as a soldier -as the sun rising-as one who was spent up as far as Ur was concerned-he set out for Haran

....5 And Abram took Sarai His wife with him and Lot the son of his brother and all the possessions v/qr (the word signifies rapid accumulation-and is used of fast horses) that they acquired speedily in Haran. They expanded aXy (*the word is used of merchant prosperity and of expedient plant growth and numerous men marching out*) to "expand their families -to concentrate on nation building Jly in the land of Canaan-and they gradually moved to the land of Canaan aby

SHECHEM & MOREH

Abram came to "enchanted country" but was not held back by its grandeur-as God kept calling.

"The ground sinks down to a valley towards the west with a soil of a rich back vegetable mould. The valley is filled with gardens of vegetables, orchards of varied fruit watered by fountains and streams-enchanted" Here God appeared to Abram and he built an altar. 6 And Abram passed (*like an overwhelming river*) into the land (or) his land (or) consecrated land. The significance is that Abram did not yet possess it though it was potentially his and it was holy as designated by God -but **he cut through it irresistible as a mighty stream**. The Canaanite was then in the land. Abraham's penetration was as far as the portion (or) rising village) m/qm (cf Jeremiah 51.27 and the radicals mWq& nmm) of **Shechem** to the terebinth of Moreh. The Canaanite (*Augustine discovered in conversation with some Phoenicians had ancient Canaanite ties*) merchants were then in the (low) land whilst the Amorite occupied the high ground.

GOD APPEARS AND COVENANTS THE LAND TO ABRAM

7 And the Lord caused himself to appear (*Niphal*) as events moved on (*significance of the Hebrew Wwhere*) and he built an altar there belonging to Jehovah who appeared to him A place he would never forget-a place where God met him-a place of promise-"To your seed I will give this land"-ntn having as Gesenius argues the meaning "to cause to receive"

GLORIOUS BETHEL

"One of the finest tracts of pasturage in the whole land"(A.T.Robinson)... "We stand on the highest of a succession of eminences topped by an olive grove. Abram could take a wide survey of the country as from no other point"(Dean Stanley)

...8 From there he transferred qT[or hastened to the eastern hills belonging to Bethel and pitches or strictly with the Hebrew W "pitched" his tent looking east toward Bethel (*Hebrew m*) and Ai toward the sea or to the West. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the Lord in the house of His name. This "building" hnb is most frequently used of a house or of defences so Abraham made the LORD his defender and was at home with God. Here is a continuing lasting testimony-such as a church might be today to the local people of the God of Abram.... 9 Then Abram "plucked up the cords of his tent and left to continue "plucking up his cords" towards the Negev. He was heading to the south constantly-to the "dry" place-where there was nothing but sand and sun and one had to depend on God for everything. There would be space-and Abram needed space most of all as a settler-and there would be the azure sky and artesian water-and time for God.

SARAH BEARS ABRAM'S REPROACH ALONE IN EGYPT

Josephus relates that Abram had two reasons for going south. The first is stated in scripture-the second, a curious but compelling thought was that Abram wished to listen to the Egyptian priests and their ideas **and to convert them. He adds that Abram knew the Egyptians were "mad" where women were concerned**, so Abram knew his danger in entering that realm. Josephus informs us that Abram also in consultation with the Egyptians communicated arithmetic and astronomical science to them. As a member of the Shemite family he certainly had inherited a rich tradition and developed skill in these disciplines. Shem was the first to develop a deep competence in astronomical science. It may be that Shemites shortly after the flood built the historic pyramids and that the skill involved was not endemic in later Egyptian dynasties. However this fact merely serves to show that Abram was a multi-talented man. He was an able soldier with a strong private army, a merchant, a mathematician and a farmer with large herds.

10 There was a famine in the earth and Abram "flowed down" (like the flow of the Jordan) to Egypt with his powerful entourage and extensive herds to sojourn temporarily as a stranger for there was a heavy famine in the land. As in any case through the search for pasture he was by the river of Egypt and now food for the souls committed to his charge virtually demanded entering that land of plenty. (Egypt was a HAMITE territory settled by MIZRAIM, uncle of Nimrod from whose land Abram had seceded. This power at the western end of the Fertile Crescent was for centuries to parry Assyria in the east before she finally gained the upper hand.

THE MUTUAL COVENANT

...11-13 Abram in timidity of heart thought of a subtle if compromising scheme involving his wife and niece. He said to his wife, "I know you are a beautiful woman to look at. **It is sure to happen that the Egyptians will see you and say, "This is his wife" and they kill me as a lamb and you will live on!** Here we should add that the necessity of survival lay behind this scheme. Abram was wisely pre-empting a situation in which hunger and death would sweep through his tents. Please, Abram pleaded, say you are my kinswoman or niece (Hebrew *ja*) that it may go well with me in your passing through (Hebrew *rb*["in passing over the River"])and my life shall be preserved because of your "reproach"(Hebrew *lg*)Abram did not order his wife to take this unusual step. Abram did not wilfully break the eighth command any more than when he said to Isaac, "God will provide a lamb"-rather he planned a covenant or vow that meant his wife would bear "reproach" which would enable his soul to live. For later time and fuller revelation were those days when God's saints like Moses put their extremity to God and discovered that God could provide a table in the wilderness.

READING No.2 12.14-13.4

ABRAM AND PHARAOH

It happened (just as he predicted) that as Abram entered Egypt the Egyptians saw his wife and remarked that she was very beautiful. Abram was soon to invoke his covenant. When Pharaoh's courtiers or commanders saw her they praised her to Pharaoh himself. The wording here is superlative-"they celebrated her"-*"they spoke of her radiance"* And she-the wife-was taken into the house of Pharaoh. And he was good to Abram in the dowry or the transition (Hebrew *hrmb*) and **there happened** (to come) flocks and cattle; male and female donkeys men and women to serve and camels. And the LORD smote Pharaoh and his household with great scabs or eruption in the body because of the **promise** or oracle or affair of Sarah. *I take the view that God was Sarah's protector who interposed between meeting and intimacy by striking Pharaoh with an affliction and in appreciation of her willingness to bear reproach He stood with this beautiful and obedient believer.* Pharaoh called Abram and asked him, "Why did you not say she was your wife and why, secondly, did you make clear to me that she was your sister" The use of the Hebrew word *dgm* (to declare an enigma) suggests that Pharaoh's officials were curious and confused as to who this gorgeous beauty was who travelled with Abram -but at no time had Abram spelled out that Sarah was his wife. Why, thirdly, did you say to me that

she was your kinswoman so that I took her to be my wife and look-she is your wife-**take her** as one who belongs to you! *The scene would have been very compelling-Sarah sitting as queen of Egypt yet looking as the astute Pharaoh could see with deep affection at her highly embarrassed husband.* Then Pharaoh gave orders to his mighty men that they deport Abram and his wife and everything he had.

BACK TO BETHEL-ALONE AT THE ALTAR

And Abram his wife Sarah and Lot with all Abram had went up from Egypt to the Negev. Abram was very wealthy in acquisitions, in silver and gold. And he travelled breaking up camp from the Negev to Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning. *One gets the distinct impression that the writer, Moses relaying the mind of the LORD is reflecting on the better country which he left and the better spirituality that he prejudiced.* On the east was Ai (a heap of ruins) and to the west the Bethel ridge. *He came to the very place where the altar which he made in the beginning still stood and there he called on the name of the saving LORD.* Abram was deeply moved to see the altar and his heart was not content till he got back to that place. *Like Jacob who after long absence came back to Bethel and Joshua who fought twice at Ai he was back from defeat, at peace with God and walking as a child of God should walk before the LORD.*

READING 3 13.5-18

ABRAHAM MUST GO ALONE. LOT MUST GO ALONE

And Lot also, travelling with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. And the earth could not carry them on a common seat (*Hebrew tbc of pasturage or Sabbath rest*) for their acquisitions were so great it was not possible they could rest as one. Added to that there was strife between the keepers of Abram's herds and Lot's and for a long time in that place the Canaanite and Perizzite were settled in the land. *There were three problems: the lack of sufficient pasture, strife and pressure from local landowners....*⁸ And Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between me and you, my herdsmen and yours for we are wealthy kinsmen. *Abram was saying that the straying of a few beasts or the possession of a field was nothing between men of such substance.* Is not the whole land before you? Please take the initiative in separating from me! If you take the left I will take the right. If you take the right I will go left. *From the ridge the whole land lying south could be seen. Lot saw the plain of Jordan-before Sodom and Gomorrah's destruction rendered much of it a lake of salt-it was completely irrigated and could only be compared to Eden of which he had read and known and Zoar in Egypt where he had superb pasture....*¹¹ And Lot chose for himself the whole valley of Jordan and struck camp travelling east and each man parted from his kinsman. *The break weakened Lot spiritually and, as time would tell, Abram in his soul felt deeply for his nephew and brother in law.* ...¹² Abram settled in the land of Canaan and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and was moving his tent toward Sodom....¹³ And the wealthy fleshly men of Sodom were loud calamitous lawbreakers and great sinners before the LORD. And the LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Please lift up your eyes north south east and west of here-for all the land you are looking at I will give to you and your seed for perpetuity(*"until" "during" and "even to" an age*) ...¹⁶ And I will constitute your seed as the dust of the earth which no man can divide or set up or number (*Hebrew hnm "to divide" hence "to number"*) Also your seed cannot be "divided". *Whereas we take it that this relates to the other covenant about great numbers of Jews and of the faithful this statement is better interpreted in the light of the division of the human race in the days of Peleg and in this instance in a miniature of the same division Lot had parted with Abram-in the light of which God assures us through the patriarch by prophetic TORAH that the Jews will not be divided and the faithful Christians will not be divided and Christ will on no account be separated from them.* Rise; keep on till you have walked through the land -through its length and its breadth for I have given it to you. *God invited Abram to explore and enjoy his possessions. While others watched his earthly possessions he went on one of the loveliest trips of his lifetime and explored from Hermon in the north to Bathsheba in the south. He may have taken the Jordan valley route north and the seaward Shephelah route south and he may have criss-crossed the land by its four lovely valleys to take in the beauty of its east west contours at this season (It was probably spring as the Jordan valley was rejoicing in overflow) Having seen it all he settled at Mamre near*

Hebron. The place is expansive. A beautiful Oak Grove was ideal for a tented settlement giving shade by day and shelter for flocks. Added to this Abram had probably met the good Amorite as he went north and south - who gave him gracious concessions for his need for the asking. How good is to obey God and to find He leads to people who can supply needs at different stages of our lives! Abram struck camp and moved to the oaks of Mamre (Hebrew for "fatness") which is Hebron and dwelt there and there he built an altar to the LORD

READING No.4 14.1-20

ALONE IN PRAYER ALONE AGAINST FOUR ASSYRIAN KINGS ALONE WITH MELCHIZADEK

...1-3 And the days of Amraphel(failure of command) king of Shinar and Arioch(lion-like)king of Ellasar and Chedorlaomer(Handful of sheaves) king of Elam and Tidal (Venerable/the "feared")king of nations-their days came. And they made war on Bera (Gift) king of Sodom and Birsha (stout man) king of Gomorrah, Shinab (Father's rest) king of Admah and Shemeber (soaring with wings on high) king of Zeboim and king of Bela (destruction) which is Zoar (smallness). All these joined together in the valley of Siddim which is the sea of salt. *Moses writes as Abram reported-because the battlefield was previously a bitumen and oil deposit area but later became a salt desert....*4 For twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, in the thirteenth they rebelled. ...5 In year 14 Chedorlaomer and his allies smote the Rephaim or giants (beyond Jordan) in the Bashan Ashtoreth worship summits. They then defeated the Zuzim who pre-dated the Ammonites The next defeat was in the dale of Keriathaim where Reuben later settled. Next they dealt with the Enim or "terrors" that pre-dated the Moabites. ...6 Next for the sword were the cave dwelling race that pre-dated the Edomites in Seir as far as the ancient oaks of Paran in the south where they hit desert7 They turned back a very thirsty army reaching the spring of Mishpat or Kadesh due south from Beersheba. This strategic pause and refreshment would set them fair for battles to come. Next they conquered all the cultivated land of the Amalakites and the Amorites who dwelt among palm trees which were cut down. These victories provisioned the armies for their final onslaught. Moses, himself a first class strategist under divine inspiration gives us more detail as to how these combined forces worked. They prepared for battles with considerable care. The campaign had moved east of Jordan along the king's highway and far south to Paran-then north along the route of the spies to the productive land in what is now southern Israel. There is no mention of Jebusites or Salem in my view because this city was not yet established. The armies moved down towards the Dead Sea where Moses resumes the narrative

THE DEFEAT OF SODOM AND HER ALLIES

...8-9 Then the kings of Sodom(conflagration) Gomorrah(culture depression) Admah(tilled field-perhaps with links far back to the early days of Adam-so God was loathe to destroy this immensely fertile area.."How shall I give you up?" the LORD said of this tract of land) Zeboim ("gazelle" -indicative of a very beautiful habitation which the LORD also prized) and Zoar ("become mean or despised"-perhaps a city that kept somewhat aloof from Sodom and was not favoured-for which reason it may be mentioned twice as the pariah in the alliance) went out and stretched themselves across the valley of Siddim in a long battle front. Four kings against the five. 10-12 Now the valley of SIDDIM was pits of pits of boiling bitumen welling up. The king of Sodom and the king of Gomorrah fled; the remnants (of the army) fell in the pits and fled to the hills.

LOT STANDS ALONE

...11 The four kings took all the goods (Hebrew *vpr*) of Sodom and Gomorrah and walked away. *They did not stay overnight in the cities-perhaps the order was not to fraternise-for the discipline of armies is ruined by immorality and drunkenness. They showed great respect for the dangers in the valley and having achieved their objective were glad to be headed homewards before darkness set in and no doubt their ranks were depleted after a long series of battles and they carried injured with them....*12 They also took Lot nephew of Abram and his goods and they walked away-and he was abiding in Sodom and as we later learn had a well

secured home. Lot became highly vulnerable separated from his mentor Abram. He lived a lonely life and stood alone as he and his family were bound and taken captive.

ABRAHAM FIGHTS ALONE

...13 One who escaped explained this to Abram the Hebrew who dwelt by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite brother of Aner and these men had a covenant with Abram. When Abram heard Lot was taken captive he drew out an army of 318 (elite) young men born and trained in his house and pursued to Dan. Abram had received camels from Pharaoh which would now give him a fair advantage both in pursuit and war. The journey to Dan was taken at night and necessitated covering at least 150 miles of terrain in the moonlight. He divided his men at night possibly during a short halt for refreshment before battle and attacked and routed the enemy and pursued them to Hobab north of Damascus where he had lived for years. It is impossible to believe that an army successful in every battle having waged a faultless campaign was so sorely defeated by a band so small. The LORD who was Abram's "shield" surely stood with him as with Daniel. As Hudson Taylor said, "One man with God is a majority" To go alone with God is to be mightily resourced. ...16 Abram recovered all the goods and also Lot and his goods and also the women and the other people who were taken This was a complete rout and a full recovery of all losses suffered

THE DUAL WELCOME FOR A HERO OF FAITH

...17 After Abram returned from the smiting or killing (Hebrew חָקַל) of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh which is the king's valley. "Shaveh" is a most interesting term carrying the idea of equalling or compensating. It is recognised as a valley north of Jerusalem It is mentioned in 2Kings 18.18 and it was there that Absalom placed a monument. Today an Absalom monument which is unlikely to be original stands south of David's city. The valley in question is not "cheese makers" to the west of David's city but it could well be the northern reaches of the kidron. There kings of Israel were later buried-but since that fact would not be known to Moses. I do not think these three words in Hebrew were added later. I believe Moses spoke of the valley of the King of Righteousness. So the first to stand with tired victorious Abram was a grateful king of Sodom who fled the forces that Abram routed.

*...18 And my king of righteousness, king of retribution restoration or recompense had caused bread and wine to be brought or to come forth -and he is priest **belonging to God Elyon**. This description declares a person righteous and provider of Moses' righteousness and one who can restore or atone and recompense and one who deals in "bread and wine" in relation to His restoration and one who is an eternal priest belonging to God and not man. He blessed Abraham (as the greater) and said, "Blessed be Abram belonging to God Elyon possessor of heaven and earth and praised be Elyon God (most high) who constantly or **again and again delivers** (Hebrew Piel) your enemy into your hand and he gave Him a tenth of all. The assumption that there was a city called Salem is the factor that introduces confusion. **Shem** alone of all men (who was still alive) would fit the description. He was still alive. He had not been born in the new world but came out of the ark. His parents were deceased. He served the people of God in prayer for a "long age" By tradition he is known to have lived in or around the area we now know as Jerusalem.*

*Though Shem is the best candidate as a resident none but the pre-incarnate Lord could fulfil the text of scripture in this **prophetic TORAH***

READING No.5

Genesis 14.21-15.6

And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the souls and keep the goods for yourself". And Abram said, "I have lifted up my hand to Yahweh God Elyon (Most High) possessor of heaven and earth. Certainly I will not take from a tie cord to a shoe latchet of what is yours so you will not say, "I made Abram rich". Definitely nothing unless what the young men have eaten and the portion which the mighty men who are confederate with me-Aner, Eshcol and Mamre -let these take their portion

ABRAMS ULTIMATE PERSONAL LONELINESS; GOD'S ANSWER," I AM YOUR SHIELD AND YOUR VERY GREAT REWARD"

After these "promises" or "edicts" (*Hebrew myrbd*) (of the LORD and of Abram) it happened that the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision (*a prophetic seeing* [of God]) saying, "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield and your exceeding great wages or reward. And Abram said, O Adonai Yahweh, what will you give me for I walk forsaken of child and the son of inheritance of my house is this ELIEZER of Damascus. *Abram was walking around but how he would have loved like other men to have a little son as his companion. This would have completed his life joy. Eliezer(God is help)was a believing Syrian and senior male servant or steward added to Abram's household-possibly in Haran ...3* And Abram said, "You have not given me a seed and behold a stranger in my house is my heir" ...4 And the word of the LORD came to him saying, "This shall not be your heir for truly one that shall spring from your body shall be your heir".

ABRAM GOES OUT ALONE AS GOD CALLS (IN HIS VISION)

This is a most remarkable case of where vision becomes reality.

*And he did that(ACT 1)-he was taking action to go out(Hebrew Hiphil performative of xuj) (in the vision) **outside the gate** (typical of going out to Him who suffered without the camp)of his house **and** He (God) was saying, (ACT 2)"Act now I implore you to look **-doing nothing** (Hebrew Hiphil performative fbu "look in wonder or gaze and expect")(*It is a vital truth of Salvation that we can "do nothing but look and live" to be saved*) at the heavens and count the stars if you will have been able to count them" (Hebrew rps) **and** He said to him, "Thus shall your seed(*singular*) be."(ACT 3) *He acted a third time-this time inside-He actively believed the LORD and He was counting or continuing to count (Hebrew bvj future) it to him for righteousness. Thus the great challenge of this vision through serious heart to heart communication brings Abram to see that God would keep reckoning the righteousness of the king he had met-the priest-to him for righteousness as long as he lived and he was not yet one hundred and he was to experience this wonderful justifying grace for a further 75 years until called into the presence of the King of Righteousness.**

READING No.6 15.7-16.6

LONELY VISION OF TERRIBLE DARKNESS

...8-21 And He (God) said to him, "I am the LORD that brought you from Ur of the Chaldees to give you this land to possess. And he said, "LORD God how shall I know that I will possess it." And the LORD said to him, "Bring me a heifer a she-goat and a ram all three years old and a female dove and a young turtle." Abram brought them, cut them in two and he arranged the divided parts each opposite its fellow; he did not divide the birds. Birds of prey swooped on the carcasses but Abram chased them away. *These 3 animals and 2 birds represent **prophetic TORAH** of the divine provision for redemption in Jewish history and the eagles represent Satan who would endeavour to prevent the redemption by Messiah while the action of Abram represents faithful witness and obedience. As the sun sank Abram fell deeply asleep and a frightening deep darkness fell upon him. This represented a time after Abram's death. ...13* And the Lord said, "Know for certain that your seed will be a stranger in a land that is not theirs and they will be enslaved and brought low over 400 years. I will punish the nation that enslaves them and after that they will come out with great wealth. You will go to your fathers in peace and be entombed in good grey hairs. In the fourth generation your descendants will return here because the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete. *The LORD explains that Israel have to stay out of Canaan pending days of judgement on the Amorites whose practice of infanticide marked them out for judgement. At sunset Look! a great burning smoking furnace(of persecution) and a flame of lightning (representing wrath and divine judgment) which passed between these pieces. ...18-24* On that day the LORD cut a covenant with Abram saying , "To your seed(*singular*) I will give this land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates." *This promise of the land formerly owned by ten nations is specific **prophetic TORAH** of the kingdom of Messiah*

ABRAM ALONE FAILS TO MEDIATE A FAMILY CRISIS

....16.1-16 Sarai Abram's wife bore no child. She had an Egyptian maid, Hagar by name. *Sarai said that the LORD had shut her womb and said, "Please go in to my handmaid (to see) whether I can build a family from her." Abram listened! This was a repeat of Adam's error....3 Sarai took Hagar after a full decade in Canaan and gave her as a wife to Abram. ...4 Abram's connection with her resulted in pregnancy and when she had that confirmed to her she "weighed up her mistress in her eyes". She understood that as the mother of the heir she could command respect...5 Sarai reminded Abram that she put Hagar her maid in his arms. She was showing that she did it with all earnestness. She said she was being hurt (Hebrew *Smj*) by her handmaid. Hagar on account of bearing Abram's child had shamed (or even "cursed" her (the Hebrew word is *l l q*) Sarah insisted it was a matter between the LORD her husband and herself*

SARAI ALONE BECOMES HARSH

....6 Abram gave her permission to do what she thought fit. Sarai afflicted Hagar and she fled from before Sarai This Hebrew term (*hna*) is used of the affliction(Exodus 3.7) experienced by Israel in Egypt. In both cases it was "seen" by God. The LORD is careful to curtail misery and affliction!

HAGAR ALONE IN THE DESERT TURNS TO PRAYER

The angel of the LORD (Torah shorthand for Messiah pre-incarnate, the Word of God) found Hagar at a desert water fountain -at a fountain in the desert of SHUR. She had journeyed about 100 miles possibly by donkey. The messenger displayed full knowledge of her name and position with Sarai. He asked where she came from and into what "happening" or "sexual impulse" or "danger" (Hebrew *hna*) was she walking? She spoke of fleeing from Sarai. He bade her return to her mistress and be submissive. The LORD He promised to increase her seed to be beyond counting. The host sprung from Ishmael over close to 4 millennia is innumerable. He further blessed Ishmael the baby boy whom God said she would deliver.

You will bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael ("God hears"-a testimony to "Hagar's prayer and cry to God" which may be assumed from the further words of the Angel) for the LORD has heard your affliction. He will be a "wild-donkey man"-his hand against all and the hand of all against him. He will continue insolent with all his kindred. She called the name of the LORD who spoke with her "God who sees me" for she said, "Truly thus far" I have seen the "futures" (Hebrew *yrja*) of the One who sees me. Moses added, "That's why the well, still there, is called "Well of the Living one who sees me"- "See it for yourself between Kadesh and BERAD!" Hagar did have a son and it was Abram (who must have heard the whole story from his wife Hagar) that called the child "Ishmael".

ALONE WITH GOD -SEVEN DECLARATIONS OF THE LORD (Including circumcision)

GOD'S FIRST DECLARATION-ABRAM'S NEW NAME & INTERNATIONAL WORTH

...17 1-22 Abram was now 99.The Hebrew reads coyly "The son of ninety nine years"-still young as we might say. He lived 175 years in all.

(1)GOD SAID -BE PERFECT

The Lord "showed himself (Hebrew Niphal intimating "allowing Himself to be seen) to Abram and said, "I am El Shaddai, walk before me and be perfect" In the town of Ayr I was delighted while listening to my friend Rev Bill FREEL to learn that the Hebrews would cause their children to walk in front so that they could observe their walk and direct them aright. Hence "walking before" God enables perfect direction. Abram had made plenty of mistakes in his walk as is common when we retire from the presence of God for a time...

FIRST DECLARATION-THE "SOVEREIGNTY" OR GRACE OF THE DIVINE COVENANT

2 *I will provide a covenant between me and you* The Hebrew *hnt* means "I will give as your hire" or "distribute on your account to many" and I will make you very great. The wording is "very exceedingly"

(2)GOD SAID- HERE ARE MY TERMS OF THE COVENANT Abram fell face down as God spoke to him.

SECOND DECLARATION-THE JOY OF BELIEVING GENTILES

4. Look, I am with you my covenant is with you; **I will give you to be father to "many and singing" nations** (Hebrew *nmh*) No longer will your name be Abram but Abraham. God gave Him as a gift to nations as their spiritual head.

THIRD DECLARATION-SPIRITUAL HEADSHIP

6a. **I will make you very fruitful** This expression is used mainly of women and of the bearing of children but God applies it to a man of whom it is strictly valid. Immense spiritual fecundity attended the offspring of Abraham and in Christ He becomes "Father of the faithful" as a man of faith.

FOURTH DECLARATION-THE THEOCRACY

6b and I will give you to belong to the Gentiles and kings will spring from you Both these prophetic declarations have been fulfilled as Jewish persons intermarried through numerous lands-especially in the West and in earlier time all Israel and Judah's kings sprang from "Abraham

READING No.7 17.7-23

FIFTH DECLARATION -THE MILLENNIAL ASPECT

I will cause my covenant between me and you and your seed after you in their generations **to arise** as an age-long covenant. This covenant was made 3800 years ago and it seemed dead till 1948 but it has risen and will revive to provide territorial enhancement between the Euphrates and the Nile for Israel in the millennium. This **prophetic TORAH** was promised through "The seed afterwards". Both the Seed and Covenant come around a second time

SIXTH DECLARATION-LAND COVENANT

And I will give to you and your seed after you the land where you are a stranger -**the whole land of Canaan** (*xra lk* -Genesis 17.9) **to be held** age-long

SEVENTH DECLARATION- THE SECOND ADVENT AND KINGDOM

8b And I will be their God. This **prophetic TORAH** statement has special validity for the age when the land covenant operates at its broadest. It has retained, however, intermediate effect in the theocracy and in the Diaspora as in modern Israel.

(3)GOD SAID-THE REQUISITES ARE CIRCUMCISION AND HOLINESS

...9 God directed Abraham and his posterity to "keep" the covenant. ...10-14 God detailed that this agreement entailed every male being circumcised. You are to circumcise the flesh of your uncircumcised Circumcision involved Abraham and all male members of his household. God directed that even slaves bought with silver should be circumcised. It was a thorough mandate of separation to God. This divine covenant was to be age-long. Any uncircumcised male would be cut off from the people as a covenant breaker.

(4)GOD SAID-SARAI SHALL BE BLESSED

...15-18 God directed that Sarai be called Sarah. God promised she would have a son and that nations and kings and peoples would spring from her Abram fell face down and laughed and said in his heart, "Will a man of a hundred years father a son and Sarah the daughter of ninety bear? It is in his favour that Abraham immediately used the name Sarah which showed that under laughter he had faith! And Abraham said to Him, O that Ishmael should live before your face!

(5)GOD SAID-ISAAC WILL BE HEIR, ISHMAEL WILL FATHER 12 RULERS

...19-22 God said, "True indeed but your wife Sarah will bear a son whom you will name Isaac (Hebrew "laughter") and I will raise up my covenant with him -an age-long covenant-and with his seed after him. God also reassured Abraham that he had heard his prayer for Ishmael and that he would become great, the father of 12 rulers and a great nation. And I will raise up my covenant with Isaac whom Sarah will bear to you at a set or festival time next year. And God completed (Literally, "Continued to complete") speaking with Abraham and went up from near Abraham.23 On that day Abraham circumcised Ishmael and all males of his house-soldiers, slaves, and the lot.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

....24 Abraham was 99, Ishmael 13 the day they were circumcised. Both were circumcised that day with soldiers, slaves and foreigners of the household. Behind this simple introduction we have to imagine a very painful camp and a considerable task (there were 318 soldier servants) which was done in the "strength" of the day. That gave the healing process time before they lay down at night.

The end of Part 3: "Obeying God's call"