

The Remnant

“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”
Romans 11.5

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OBSERVATIONS ON GENESIS 1:1

By Elder Kenneth Adams

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Genesis 1:1).”

Prior to creation, the triune God existed in an eternity without time or space as we know it. There was neither heaven for His throne, nor earth for His footstool. He was self-existent and needed nothing to support Him or provide for Him in any way. Neither was there anything to hinder or oppose Him in anything He desired or thought to do. It pleased Him to bring everything into existence that is, ever has been, or ever will be. “I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.” His works are not done haphazardly. He never has, nor is He now conducting some sort of an experiment. There is nothing that He can find out, for He has declared the end from the beginning and all things are known by Him. As surely as it is impossible for Him to acquire knowledge, it is impossible for Him to change His mind or His purpose. “For I am the LORD,

I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.” “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” He is without limitations and has both the wisdom and the power to accomplish with infinite precision all that He desires. He is incapable of error and consequently has never tried to do anything. He simply speaks and it is done. “The Lord of Hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.”

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist (Col 1:16-17).”

The scriptures declare there to be visible things of creation, and also things that are invisible. There are certain “laws of nature” such as gravity and inertia that are not visible, yet they exist. We know they exist because we can see the effect they have on things that are visible. No man has seen God, but His existence is evidenced by the visible things of

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His creation. We further believe by the evidence of the scripture that among the invisible things created by God are spiritual powers, dominions, and principalities. Some are Holy and delight in His will and purpose. Others are evil and rebellious. All however, are His creation and have their movement and being according to His sovereign decree. Like God who is a spirit, they, being spiritual, are invisible to the natural eye but nevertheless exist just as surely as God Himself exists. We see evidence of their existence by the depraved actions of men who are given over to their power and influence.

As He is God and changes not, it is manifested in the constant and unchangeable nature of His being that there are certain and predictable laws that govern His creation and indeed all of His works. The innumerable bodies that inhabit the heavens, whether they be suns, moons, comets, galaxies, or solar systems, they were all made by Him and for Him. Each is following the predetermined course that allows all the heavenly bodies to exist in perfect harmony. Not one can waver from its course without throwing the whole in jeopardy. Without this order, there would be

chaos in the universe and all of creation would be in constant peril. This created order is seen in all of His creation, whether visible or invisible. They are evidence that as He is perfect, so are all of His works perfect. If it were possible for Him to blunder or err in any way, His promises would be unsure and we would be reduced to trusting in the gods of chance. These laws of creation that apply to the visible host of the heavens also apply to the invisible, whether they be His holy and elect angels, kept by His power, or fallen angels, both demons and devils. They apply to all of His creatures whether earthly or heavenly. He spake them all into existence according to His infinite wisdom, by His infinite power, bound by His immutable decrees.

According to His infinite wisdom He knew the course of their existence and the purpose each of His creatures would serve. He gave them various degrees of intellect and set it in their nature to serve the very purpose for which He created them. He has so ordered the universe that all things whatsoever come to pass, whether good or evil, are in perfect harmony with His wise design in creation. Although His rebellious creatures commit horrible and ungodly acts, their evil intentions are overruled by the invisible hand of His providence. Even their sinful and rebellious acts are part of an unbreakable chain of events that culminate in the accomplishment of His most holy and righteous purpose. Hence the Apostle could say with all certainty, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose (Rom 8:28)."

"For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." All creatures are sustained by God's power and whatever power they possess is given to them

by Him. No rational thinking person would suggest that He has given any one of his creatures power to go beyond the purpose for which they were created. To presume that men or devils have the ability to thwart or frustrate the will and purpose of the God that created them is incompatible with the perfection of His being and the perfection of His work in creation. His creatures have not the power to resist His will, nor do they have the power to change either His mind or His purpose. All of His creatures are at His disposal and subject to His will. They receive mercy or justice as it pleases Him. "For who hath resisted His will?" "Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God willing to show His wrath and make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He hath afore prepared unto glory."

In their ignorance and arrogance, men, since the fall of Adam, have sought to take counsel with the Creator that they might instruct or advise Him in some way. What folly to suppose that He is somehow deficient in wisdom or power that He needs the assistance of helpless creatures who are totally dependent upon Him for their very existence? No creature has either the power or freedom to act independent of the Creator in whom they have both their movement and being. Jesus Christ himself, who was and is verily one with the Father, the express image of His person, and by whom all things were made, declared in His humanity, "I can of mine own self do nothing." Men deluded in their own arrogance profess themselves to be "God's helpers."

They deceive others with promises of miraculous cures or of worldly gain through their intercession with God. What could be brought to God's attention that He does not already know and with whom would He seek counsel? Without conscience or remorse these masters of priestcraft broadcast their lies into the homes of poor widows and would defraud them of their last dollar in the name of Jesus Christ. Like their forerunner Judas Iscariot, their only interest is in holding the purse. Jesus addresses these proud, arrogant and self aggrandizing "helpers of God" as follows: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Whatever the depth of their depravity, neither men nor devils can act beyond the bounds set by God. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." In their anger, Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt unknowingly fulfilling God's promise to Abraham and accomplishing God's purpose to bring forth the nation of Israel out of bondage in Egypt. Joseph revealed the truth of God's sovereign rule over his brothers' ungodly actions when he spoke these words to them: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." According to the hatred that was in his heart, Herod sought to kill the Christ child. God restrained the wrath of Herod by warning the wise men in a dream that they should depart the country by another route and not reveal the Child's whereabouts.

Nevertheless, within the bounds set by God, Herod in his wrath slew all the children, two

years and under, in Bethlehem and the coast thereof and thereby fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah to the glory of God. The Scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day sought to kill Him long before His crucifixion, but they were restrained until the time appointed of God. John testifies in his gospel on numerous occasions that they would have taken Him, but "His hour was not yet come." However, the scriptures do testify that at the appointed time and in the appointed place, the kings of the earth stood up and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

They were not compelled to act against their will. They acted out of their own depraved desires and according to their fallen and corrupted nature. They could not, however, do anything outside of the immutable decrees of the all wise and all powerful God. They could not by taking thought have designed the course of their collective actions. And yet they all worked together in perfect harmony to accomplish God's purpose. They did not gather themselves together, they were gathered. And having been gathered together, they acted according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

Such is the depth of His wisdom and the perfection of His work, even the evil acts of men and devils are brought to pass in such a way as to accomplish His most holy and righteous purpose. Whereas rational thought and sound reason demands acquiescence to the sovereignty of God both in creation and in His dealings with His creatures, to provide

further evidence in this writing, is unnecessary to rational thinking minds. For the heavens themselves declare the glory of God and the earth shows forth His handiwork. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead...."

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GEMS 5

by
Elder Lynwood Jacobs

Gems are single verses of scripture that alone carry a powerful message to believers.

Eph. 1:4. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." With this statement before us, how can anyone deny the doctrine of election? The undeniable truth is that God chose his children in Christ before the world began. This letter was addressed to the Saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, which reaches those Saints who were to follow, even to this day. Every one of them was ordained to eternal life because of God's love for his Elect. Christ took upon himself to pay for the sins of his brethren, who would be manifested in time.

Matt. 6: 10. "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." These

words from Jesus are part of what is commonly called the Lord's prayer. They totally refute man's free-will doctrine. Why? Because Christ knew that God's will, not HIS or OURS, is done in earth as it is in heaven. We pray from thankful hearts for God's will to be done when he has first reconciled us to his will by his Spirit.

1 Cor. 13:13. "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Faith, when worked by God's love in our heart, gives substance to the things we hope for, and is evidence of things not seen. By God's gift of faith, we hope that God, whom we see not, is our heavenly Father. By faith, we hope that Christ, whom we see not, is our Saviour. By faith, we hope that God has united our hearts in love with a few of his elect children here on earth. By faith, we hope to partake of that life and immortality that Christ brought to light through the gospel of peace.

John 3:5. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water (the flesh) and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." If being born of water refers to water baptism by man then we have to be born three different times, born of the flesh, born of the water, and born of the Spirit. I don't believe that. Christ insisted that one has to be born again to even see the kingdom of God. In preparing his Saints for everlasting life, God ordained that they would be born of the flesh first, and then born again of the Spirit. A birth follows conception. In the first birth of the flesh, we are conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity. In the new birth of the Spirit, we were conceived in righteousness and are brought forth free of sin. They that are in the

flesh desire the things of the flesh, while they that are in the Spirit desire the things of the Spirit. The non-elect's strength is in the arm of flesh, while the elect's strength is in the arm of God, Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. 11:3. "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." In this letter unto the church of God at Corinth, and all the Saints at Achaia, Paul both praises and reproves them for the myriad practices, both sound and unsound, that were taking place in the days of his Apostleship. An example of folly was Simon the sorcerer who attempted to buy from Peter power to give the Holy Ghost. Simon had bewitched the people until they thought he was some great one. Peter said unto Simon, "Thy money perish with thee, BECAUSE THOU HAST THOUGHT THAT THE GIFT OF GOD MAY BE PURCHASED WITH MONEY." The world is full of beguiling Simons today, and they with him are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. They cry out to the deluded, "Send me your money, and I'll see that you go to heaven."

Love one another as He loved is the simplicity in Christ Jesus. Upon this Love in his brethren, all Spiritual and everlasting events depend for manifestation.—Elder Lynwood Jacobs (2012)

The above article, Gems #5, completes Elder Jacobs' five installments that he finished before he went to be with his Lord and Master. We trust these short but powerful articles have been blessed to the comfort of God's children.—Ed.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON ON THE "PROPHETIC PAST" AND THE "PROPHETIC PRESENT"

Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) was one of the most brilliant men in history. Not to be confused with John Newton, the hymn-writer who is best known for writing "Amazing Grace," Sir Isaac was a mathematician and physicist who has been criticized for "dabbling in alchemy." But alchemy in his day was the early forerunner of modern chemistry.

The first person who jumped from a tree or a rooftop and broke a bone was the first one to discover the law of gravity and its effects, but Newton gets the credit for recognizing gravity as a law of God's natural creation and for developing the mathematical formulas used to calculate the speed of a falling object, its momentum, and other related rules, formulas, and laws of physics.

Secularists have criticized Newton for his great interest in the Bible, to which he devoted much time and writing. He was particularly interested in the book of Revelation and spent untold hours and years trying to calculate the date of Christ's second coming.

In one of his books about Revelation, Sir Isaac Newton made an excellent point on the Prophetic Past and the Prophetic Present:

The words, five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come, are usually referred by interpreters to the time of John the Apostle, when the Prophecy was

given: but it is to be considered, that in this Prophecy many things are spoken of as present, which were not present when the Prophecy was given, but which would be present with respect to some future time, considered as present in the visions. Thus where it is said upon pouring out the seventh vial of wrath, that great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath; this relates not to the time of John the Apostle, but to the time of pouring out the seventh vial of wrath. So where it is said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap; and the time of the dead is come, that they should be judged; and again, I saw the dead small and great stand before God: these sayings relate not to the days of John the Apostle, but to the latter times considered as present in the visions.... (Observations Upon The Prophecies of Daniel & The Apocalypse of St. John, pages 202-203)

Here Sir Isaac Newton points out what has been repeatedly mentioned in The Remnant: Prophecies written in the past or present tense are written in what is called the prophetic past or the prophetic present, as viewed from the future time the prophetic vision has already been fulfilled or is being fulfilled. Examples previously given in The Remnant included several prophecies from Isaiah 53, written in the past tense ("But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him....") and in the present tense ("...with His stripes we are healed."). Yet Isaiah wrote these prophecies over

seven hundred years before Christ was born and crucified; so Isaiah was not referring to these events as being past or present in his own day. David Brown and others of his figurative way of thinking (including those of the "historical application" approach) make major mistakes in

(a) extracting prophecies from the timeline of the book of Revelation;

(b) wrongly thinking those prophecies were fulfilled when the New Testament, including Revelation, was still being written; and, more specifically,

(c) wrongly applying these prophecies in Revelation, of events yet future even to us, to events current within the Roman Empire in the days of the apostle John, the Revelator.

Interpretation is a fine word in and of itself. "Let one interpret (1 Corinthians 14:27)." It is the misuse of this word that we deplore. Those who dote on making everything a spiritual (figurative) "interpretation" —

—presume the Bible is all symbolic and therefore must be "interpreted" ("How do you interpret angel? How do you interpret the resurrection? How do you interpret a star? How do you interpret an earthquake? How do you interpret heaven?" etc.), and

—presume they have a license to say a verse of scripture is anything they can make up from within their own fertile imagination. When someone asks another person, "What's your interpretation of that verse?" be prepared for some of the wildest speculation a man's mind can produce for an answer.

The Lord God Almighty gave Sir Isaac Newton one of the most brilliant minds in history; not only in the fields of mathematics, astronomy, and other sciences, but also in the understanding of God's inerrant word, the Bible.

—CCM

WHY EPHRAIM?

by

C. C. Morris

“And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren (Deuteronomy 33:16).”

“The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein (Psalms 24:1).”

“If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof (Psalms 50:12).”

“For the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof...for the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof (1 Corinthians 10:26 and 10:28).”

EPHRAIM, the son of Joseph, was a grandson of Israel, not one of his own sons. Ephraim is mentioned in the Old Testament (OT) 175 times and once in the New Testament (NT). 1 and 2 Chronicles, Isaiah, and Hosea speak of Ephraim 76 times, over 43% of all references—nearly half of all the references to him. Then, toward the end of the OT kingdom of Israel, prior to the Babylonian captivity, say in the time of Isaiah and Hosea, why did Jacob’s grandson become so prominent, even figuring into latter-day prophecies? To find out, we might do well to examine Ephraim from the very beginning.

I.

Introduction: God Owns the Earth and All That Is In It

The above texts establish the Lord’s ownership of the earth or this world. No one should

have a problem with that. The first verse quoted, Deuteronomy 33:16, also provides a connection to Ephraim, which link we hope to eventually address.

“Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? (Matthew 20:15)” Owning the earth, then, God may dispose of it however He so chooses. Does anyone among us have a problem with that?

“The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD’S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men. (Psalms 115:16).” That is, He gave the earth to men in general to occupy it. He did not deed Italy to the Italians, China to the Chinese, England to the English, Russia to the Russians, or France to the French. In His sovereign will He has “...made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation (Acts 17:26).”

The only specific title deed to any land that God ever gave was the deed to the Promised Land that He gave unconditionally to Abraham and to his descendants through Isaac and Jacob (NOT through Ishmael and Esau!) forever. “In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates (Genesis 15:18).” The Promised Land was not merely a little strip from the Mediterranean Sea on the west to the Jordan River valley on the east and from Lebanon on the north to the Sinai peninsula on the south. The Creator God gave Israel all the land from the Nile River in Egypt all the way to the Euphrates! If the Muslim terrorists really knew how much land God has given to Israel, they would be more violently murderous than they already are.

Furthermore, even though He has freely given that land to Israel as an everlasting possession, Jehovah Elohim still retains the guardianship of that land as its divine Administrator and protector. Even though He has granted certain occupancy rights and other privileges to Israel, It is still HIS land. In this regard, Jehovah Elohim mentions in Joel the third chapter seven things that are HIS, that, down through history, the nations of this earth (including our own nation) have violated:

1. MY people (verse 2)...MY people (verse 3);
2. MY heritage Israel (verse 2), whom they have scattered among the nations;
3. and parted MY land (verse 2);
4. MY silver (verse 5) and
5. MY gold (verse 5);
6. MY goodly pleasant things (verse 5);
7. MY holy mountain (verse 17).

All these are most serious violations; woe be to the individual or the nation that has participated in any one of them, is participating now, or ever will. One of the most prominent current violations is that of parting God's land, the present-day partitioning of this land between Israel and the Philistine ("Palestinian") usurper-invaders. No nation or group of nations, including the "United Nations," has any authority whatsoever to partition God's land and give it to anyone other than Israel's descendants.

The United States of America will never secure their (former) borders, because of her dominant role in pushing Israel to give her land to the current-day self-styled Philistines. Remember: In 2005, the USA's President signed away her own borders between herself, Mexico, Canada, and indeed all of Central and South America and the nation-islands of the Caribbean. Legally, now, by international

treaty, it is no more "illegal" for a Mexican to come into Texas that it is for someone from Louisiana or Oklahoma to come into Texas. (See The Remnant, November-December 2008, pages 14-17, for details; you might as well read all of that article. It could be re-published today and be more timely than it was over five years ago, without taking back a word. It is on the Internet at <http://www.primitive-baptist.com>: Go there, go to The Remnant button; click on Issues of The Remnant; go to 063-ND08, select.) What our nation has done to push Israel to destroy her borders, God has sovereignly done to our own borders by our own "leaders."

Jehovah's curse of Genesis 12.3, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee," applies to both individuals and to nations, including the USA and her inhabitants. This curse also applies to religions and religious orders, whoever they are, who misappropriate the Lord's promises to Israel, misapplying them to the church; that is, those religious leaders who teach replacement theology (those who say, "God has replaced Israel with the Church"; and/or, "God is through with Israel as a nation, and in this time God's Old Testament promises to Israel are now to be applied spiritually, only to the Church").

Caveat: We know God has made some of the same (and even greater) promises to the church that He made to Israel, that the blessings of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through the Lord Jesus Christ: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of

none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. (Galatians 3:16-18)."

NONE OF THIS MEANS OR IMPLIES THE CHURCH IS ISRAEL, SPIRITUALLY OR OTHERWISE, OR THAT THE CHURCH REPLACED ISRAEL IN ANY WAY.

The deed to the Promised Land has nothing to do with the keeping of the law; that promise is secure to the nation of Israel, secured in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad (John 8.56)." However, the occupancy of the land was linked to a conditional covenant, and that, in the wisdom of God, for His purpose to demonstrate that no man and no nation can keep a conditional covenant between God and men. For the sake of space and time, we cite here but two examples:

A. At the foot of Mount Sinai, "all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD (Exodus 19.8)."

About a month later, or a little more, before Moses returned from the summit with God's law, the Lord told Moses, "They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt (Exodus 32.8)." Paul's commentary on what happened there is found in 1 Corinthians 10.

B. Israel's Restoration Before Their Conversion: Arminians, Conditionalists, and amillennialists have slightly different ways of expressing their position on this subject, but

they all alike say that Israel must repent and believe in Jesus before God will restore the land to Israel and restore Israel to the land. The amillennialists among us thereby prove their deep-seated Arminian-conditional belief in man's ability to meet certain requirements before God will bless a person, group, or nation. They obtained this fantasy directly by drinking liberally at Rome's poisoned well.

Ezekiel 36.24-29 makes it plain that Israel will first be restored to their land before God converts them:

FIRST, "I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land (verse 24)."

"25 THEN will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. 28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. 29 I will also save you from all your uncleanness: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you."

This is the unwavering way God saves all of His elect: First, He brings them to Himself and regenerates them. Only after that does He give them faith, repentance, His indwelling Spirit producing the fruits of His Spirit (Galatians 5.22f) and leading them in paths of righteousness for HIS NAME's sake (Psalm 23.3). This is reflected in earlier verses of Ezekiel 36: "...when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own

way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman. Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it: And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land. But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes (Ezekiel 36.17-23)."

Yet, in the face of this biblical principle, untold millions of Arminian Conditionalists insist to this day that their chief hope for temporal and eternal blessings is rooted in their earning them by meeting whatever conditions God has set forth.

And, since the Lord's gracious promises are truly unconditional, they are timeless; they are as firm as the throne of the Lord of Hosts and as valid today as they were when He first spoke to Abram and gave the land to him.

Let us look more closely at the biblical history of God's land-grant covenant:

1. Abram/Abraham: God called Abram and gave him promises that were eternal

and unconditional, including His perpetual land-grant, the title deed to the Promised Land, free and clear. It is hard for men steeped in Roman amillennial tradition to comprehend the Lord's eternal, unconditional, gracious promises to Israel, but they truly ought to try, if they would present themselves as sovereign grace authorities. Even as we say this, we know it is impossible for them to try or to do what they ought to do if God has not determined to graciously work in their hearts and souls, to give them both the will to do and the doing of His own good pleasure: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13)."

Genesis 12.1, 7: And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land....

Genesis 13.14-17: 14And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. [We ask those who say "God is through with national Israel": Do you understand what "for ever" means?] And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

Genesis 15.18-21: In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: 19The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, 20And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, 21And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

Genesis 17.3-8: And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, "As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

God's changing Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's name to Sarah by the adding of the H-sound to each of their names was highly significant. The Hebrew "H," a huffing, rough-breathing sound ("huh" or "heh"), signifies God's Holy Spirit (Who is also typified by the breath or the wind): "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2.2-4)."

Again, "Then said Jesus to them again, 'Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.' And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost'...(John 20:21f)." This is basically the same act He used in Genesis 2.7: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and

breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." In Genesis it was physical life; in John it was spiritual empowerment.

The Lord's adding an H to a person's name signifies His giving them His Holy Spirit—either in the new birth (regeneration) or in preparing someone to serve Him in the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. Isaac: God's promises to Abram/Abraham He confirmed in Isaac. Before Isaac was born, God named him and promised, "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year (Genesis 17.19ff)."

We might ask our "replacement theology" friends, who believe the land-grant covenant is no longer valid: How long is "everlasting"?

3. Jacob/Israel: God's promises to Abraham and Isaac were confirmed in Jacob, whose name God later changed to Israel.

Isaac, in blessing his son Jacob, said: "And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham (Genesis 28.3f)."

Remember—that is from the Nile to the Euphrates, forever.

God told Jacob, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast

thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. (Genesis 32:28).” Later He told him, “I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land (Genesis 35.11f).”

Later, the nation that came from this man was known as “the children of Israel,” or simply “Israel.” When the nation lapsed into idolatry or other sins (or for other reasons), the nation is often referred to as “Jacob,” his natural or fleshly name, reflecting this people’s fleshly nature.

Laws of the Firstborn

Before we continue with Jacob’s offspring (“the children of Israel”), we must momentarily digress, long enough to examine the God-given rights of firstborn sons. Those rights and privileges are pertinent to Ephraim’s ascendancy among the tribes of Israel.

Remember what Laban told Jacob about marrying off his younger daughter Rachel before her older sister Leah? “And Laban said, ‘It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn’ (Genesis 29:26).”

The customs concerning the rights of firstborn sons were even more strict. The first son born to a couple receives the title of Firstborn. When the old head of the clan died, his eldest or firstborn son became “the prophet, priest, and king” of his family and received a double portion of the inheritance, all of which put added responsibility upon him. As the Firstborn son,

(1) he became the ruler (king), leader, or head of the clan-family when his father died. As “king,” he was to rule the family-tribe in righteousness with absolute final authority.

(2) he became prophet of the clan-family: He was responsible to guide the family spiritually, teaching them the laws and the true worship of God. He was to make sure (as well as he could, under God’s sovereign blessing) that they worshipped only the one living and true Creator God and that they did not go into idolatry and other sins.

(3) he becomes priest of the clan-family: He is responsible for the spiritual leadership of the family, praying for the family-members and providing sacrifices to God in their behalf. As “priest,” before the Lord established the Levitical priesthood, he was to offer whatever sacrifices JHVH required in behalf of the family.

This is the exact role Job fulfilled for his children: “...Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually (Job 1.5).”

(4) For these reasons (and others) the eldest son was entitled to a double portion of the inheritance, partly because of the additional expenses related to his duties.

The son declared to be a man’s firstborn received a double portion of the inheritance: The double portion was figured by adding one to the total number of heirs, dividing the inheritance by that number, and giving the firstborn son two of these shares. The other heirs got one share each. Example: A man with four sons and one hundred acres would not divide the land equally among his four sons (twenty-five acres each). The land would be divided into five parcels (twenty acres each), of which the Firstborn received two (forty acres total). The younger heirs would receive twenty acres each.

Note that nationally, David was a king and a prophet, but not a priest.

Elijah was nationally a prophet and a priest, but not a king; and

Melchizedek (spelled Melchisedec in the NT) was nationally a priest and a king but not a prophet.

No OT “type of Christ” was nationally all three—prophet, priest, and king.

As no OT saint ever filled all three offices of prophet, priest, and king, even so, none of Jacob’s twelve sons received all the blessings of the firstborn son.

Next we will examine

Jacob’s Wives, Concubines, and Children

Although he had two wives (Leah and Rachel) and two concubines (Bilhah and Zilpah), and children by all four, Jacob truly loved only Rachel and wanted her son Joseph recognized as his firstborn son. By legally declaring Joseph to be his firstborn son, he could pass God’s promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob on to Joseph, but he had to find a way to do this according to God’s laws and the laws and customs of the day.

Small Harem, Big Problem

With the firstborn title and honor, Joseph would be the prophet, priest, and king of this growing family, and would inherit a double portion of whatever inheritance Jacob would leave to his heirs. But Jacob could not simply and arbitrarily eliminate his older sons from consideration. To disinherit the children of Leah, he must have legal reasons to do so.

Jacob had a big problem. He had a small harem, consisting of a senior wife (Leah), a second, younger wife (Rachel), and two

concubines (Bilhah and Zilpah). Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah had given him a total of ten sons before his favored wife Rachel bore Joseph.

Therefore, Jacob tried to legally eliminate the sons of the other three women: Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah. Because those ten sons were older than Joseph, they would be in line for the firstborn’s blessing before Joseph.

Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher

The sons of the concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah (Dan and Naphtali of Bilhah, and Gad and Asher of Zilpah), were no problem to eliminate, as they were the children of the concubine servant-girls, “second class citizens” who did not have the full privileges of wives.

Four down, six to go.

Reuben

Next, he began eliminating Leah’s sons Reuben, Simeon, Levi.... In truth, Reuben was Jacob’s firstborn son. Should anything ever happen to Reuben, however, Simeon was next in line for the firstborn’s blessings; and so on. That’s the way it worked.

But something did “happen” to Reuben, Simeon, and Levi.

First, Leah’s oldest son, Reuben, was eliminated because he had committed fornication with the servant-girl Bilhah. “And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father’s concubine: and Israel heard it...(Genesis 35:22).”

(In those days, it was not all that uncommon for the heir apparent to take his father’s wives or concubines to prove he was the heir. Absalom took David’s concubines to prove he had succeeded his father—see 2 Samuel 16.20ff. Later, the fact that David’s son Abijah asked for David’s concubine Abishag was sufficient

grounds for king Solomon to kill Abijah, his older half-brother. The complete account of that is in the first two chapters of 1 Kings.)

And Jacob never forgot Reuben's disqualifying himself by presuming to take Bilhah. When Jacob heard about Reuben and Bilhah, he took this opportunity to exclude Leah's firstborn from the birthright. Israel's deathbed pronouncement on Reuben was, "Unstable as water, thou [Reuben] shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch (Genesis 49.4)."

Five down, five to go.

Simeon and Levi

Next he removed Leah's two sons Simeon and Levi from consideration. They had scared him badly when they destroyed the entire Canaanite town of Shechem (Genesis 34). Jacob feared that the other Canaanites would retaliate by destroying his entire little family. Israel never forgot his fright over that incident, nor would he ever forgive these two sons for what they had done. On his deathbed, Israel cursed Levi and Simeon instead of blessing them. Rather than give them a specific land inheritance among their brethren, he divided them in Jacob, and scattered them in Israel (Genesis 49.5-7).

Seven down, three to go—Somehow Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun must next be eliminated before he could declare Joseph his firstborn.

He was down to Judah, but he could go no further.

(To be continued in the next issue, Lord willing.)

JEREMIAH 23.5-14

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.

Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness. For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force is not right. For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD. Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err. I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

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We have now received word from Brother Hoyt Sparks on the availability of the books which Elder Phillips was preparing at the time of his passage from this life:

Monday, Apr 21, 2014, at 12:12 PM

Greetings Elder Morris:

Hope this finds you and yours doing well in the Lord.

I brought the remaining books published by Elder Phillips back with me. Today I finished separating the various books and counted them for inventory; and am ready to accept orders. Below is an announcement for you to please publish in The Remnant. I will also announce the books for sale via the Predestinarian email forum....

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All proceeds, after shipping costs, will go to the widow of Elder Phillips, Sister Alma Phillips. Sister Phillips has been a semi-invalid for about 40 years. Her family and friends are making efforts to keep her in the family home for her remaining years, rather than her residing in a nursing home.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

God bless,

Hoyt D. F. Sparks, SL

Jeremiah 5:31

The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

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We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall in

their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total depravity, and just condemnation; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state;

6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

7—The sovereign, irresistible, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in quickening the elect of God; the new birth is by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without the use of any means;

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10—The peaceable fruits of righteousness are the certain result of God's working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and His people will be found walking in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;

11—The separation of church and state;

12—The principles outlined in the Black Rock Address of 1832;

13—The bodily resurrection, first of Christ, and also that of all the dead;

14—The final and eternal judgment; and,

15—The bliss of the redeemed and the torment of the wicked are both eternal and everlasting.