



TEEN TREE OF LIFE What Child Is This?

Part 2

January 3, 2021

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called Rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1 JOH 1:9: *If we confess [name] our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

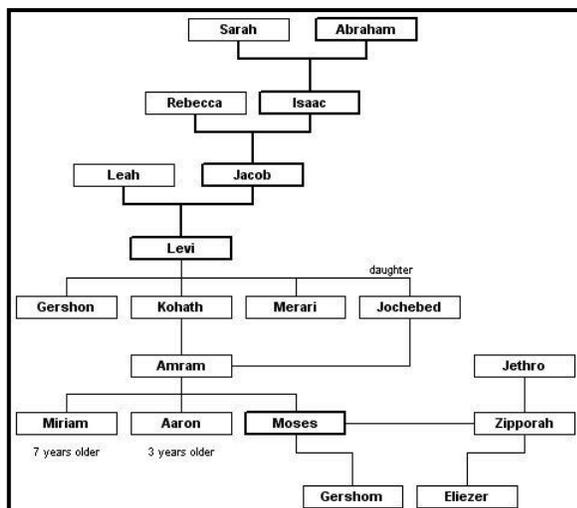
In last week's Teen Tree, we learned that the nation of Israel was born out of God's Promises to Abraham: *When Abram was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to him. He said, "I am the Mighty God. Walk faithfully with me. Live in a way that pleases me. I will now act on my covenant between me and you. I will greatly increase the number of your children after you." Abram fell with his face to the ground. God said to him, "This is my covenant with you. You will be the father of many nations. You will not be called Abram anymore. Your name will be Abraham, because I have made you a father of many nations. I will greatly increase the number of your children after you. Nations and kings will come from you. I will make my covenant with you last forever. It will be between me and you and your family after you for all time to come. I will be your God.*

And I will be the God of all your family after you. (GEN 17:1-7 New International Reader's Version)

Everything God promised Abraham was passed down to his son Isaac, and then to his grandson, Jacob. All that God promised is taught in **GEN 15:18-21 (New International Reader's Version):** *On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates: the land of the Kenite, the Kenizzite, the Kadmonite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Rephaim, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Girgashite, and the Jebusite."* But an important part of this family's story is that before they would possess the land, it was prophesied that their descendants would spend four hundred years enslaved and oppressed in ANOTHER land!

Abraham's wife Sarah, as we learned, became pregnant when Abraham was a hundred years old! They named their son Isaac, and he would go on to become a key figure of the Bible, fathering another Old Testament superstar – Jacob. Jacob (Sarah and Abraham's grandson) was also called Israel. He eventually had twelve sons: Reuben; Simeon; Levi; Judah; Zebulun; Issachar; Dan; Gad; Asher; Naphtali; Joseph; and Benjamin. Each of Jacob's sons became the father of a Tribe of the ancient nation of Israel. They ended up in Egypt (along with their descendants) where they grew and multiplied and became a large nation – but remember, they were also enslaved!!

Abraham's migration to the land of Israel was the beginning of a long, difficult journey for the Jews which would eventually end with them finally settling in their land. But this journey would first include a long and difficult exile in Egypt, followed by a miraculous exodus and culminating in the receiving of Divine Law. They would finally settle in Israel, where King David would rule over his people, and King Solomon, his son, would establish his own mighty kingdom and build the First Temple. The journey would continue with the exile to Babylonia, the return, and the building of the Second Temple – the destruction of which would mark the beginning of the longest and most bitter exile. For 2000 years, the Jewish people would suffer terrible persecutions until they would finally be able to return home.



If you look at the Family Tree (left) showing the lineage from Sarah and Abraham all the way to Moses, you can see six generations between them and their ancestor Moses. God raised up Moses to deliver the Jews from their bondage in Egypt and to bring them back to the promised land of Israel. God did this through a series of miracles that destroyed Egypt's power. When Moses and the Jews reached Mount Sinai, God gave the nation specific laws about worshipping Him. He also gave them specific laws concerning their behavior toward one another and their behavior with other nations. However, that generation rebelled, ignoring

His laws and God condemned them to wander in the wilderness until they were dead.

Just before Moses died, he gave the children of that first rebellious generation a recounting of their history and God's Laws. They would enter and conquer the promised land under the leadership of Joshua. This is what Moses wrote about Joshua: **Joshua, the son of Nun, was filled with wisdom. That's because Moses had placed his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to Joshua. They did what the Lord had commanded Moses. (DEUT 34:9 New International Reader's Version)** Moses, representing the Law, brought the people to the border of the land, but it took Joshua to take them into the land. Divinely commissioned for such a task, Joshua was probably about eighty-five years old when he assumed command at Shittim. His conquests and victories are typical of all that God has made possible for those who love Him!

Also, right before he died and turned over everything to Joshua, Moses gave the Jews specific warning about what would happen if they turned away from God: **But suppose you don't obey the Lord your God. And you aren't careful to obey all his commands and rules I'm giving you today. Then he will send curses on you. They'll catch up with you. Here are those curses. You will be cursed in the cities. You will be cursed out in the country. Your baskets and bread pans will be cursed. Your children will be cursed. Your crops will be cursed. Your calves and lambs will be cursed. You will be cursed no matter where you go. The Lord will send curses on you. You won't know what's going on. In everything you do, he will be angry with you. You will be destroyed suddenly and completely. This will happen because you did an evil thing when you deserted the Lord. He will send all kinds of sicknesses on you. He'll send them until he has destroyed you. He'll remove you from the land you are entering to take as your own. The Lord will make you sick and very weak. He will strike you with fever and swelling. He'll send burning heat. There won't be any rain. The hot winds will completely dry up your crops. All those things will happen until you die. The sky above you will be like bronze. The ground beneath you will be like iron. The Lord will turn the rain of your country into dust and powder. It will come down from the skies until you are destroyed. The Lord will help your enemies win the battle over you. You will come at them from one direction. But you will run away from them in every direction. All the kingdoms on earth will be completely shocked when they see you. Birds and wild animals will eat up your dead bodies. There won't be anyone left to scare them away. The Lord will send boils on you, just like the ones he sent on the Egyptians. You will have growths in your bodies and boils on your skin. You will itch all over. No one will be able to heal you. The Lord will make you lose your mind. He will make you blind. You won't know what's going on. Even at noon you will have to feel your way around like a blind person in the dark. You won't have success in anything you do. Day after day you will be robbed and treated badly. No one will be able to save you. (DEUT 28:15-29 New International Reader's Version)** Obedience would bring blessing and rebellion would bring disaster! As you can see in **DEUT 28:15-29**, Moses wrote about a series of judgements that would come as their rebellion increased. It started with a curse of withholding blessings from them, then increased to pestilence upon them and their land. It also included being defeated by their enemies, then increased to worse diseases and oppression by their enemies. It ended with them being deported from their land by their enemies.

The reality of both the blessings of obedience and curses of rebellion was lived out in the history of Israel. After Joshua conquered the land, there were blessings until a generation arose that had not served with Joshua. Then a cycle of curses and blessings began as they would rebel, be oppressed, repent and be delivered by a judge God would send.

{to be continued}