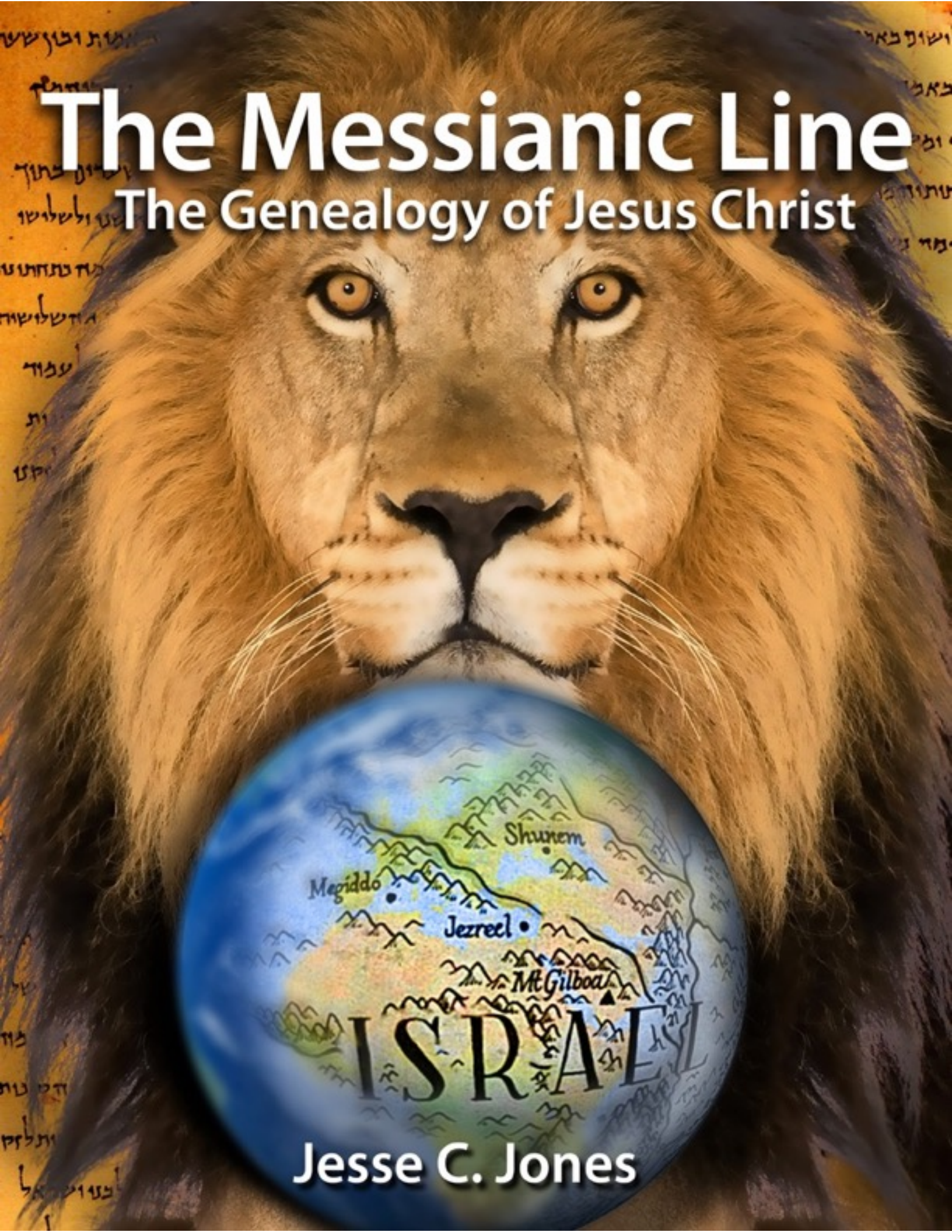




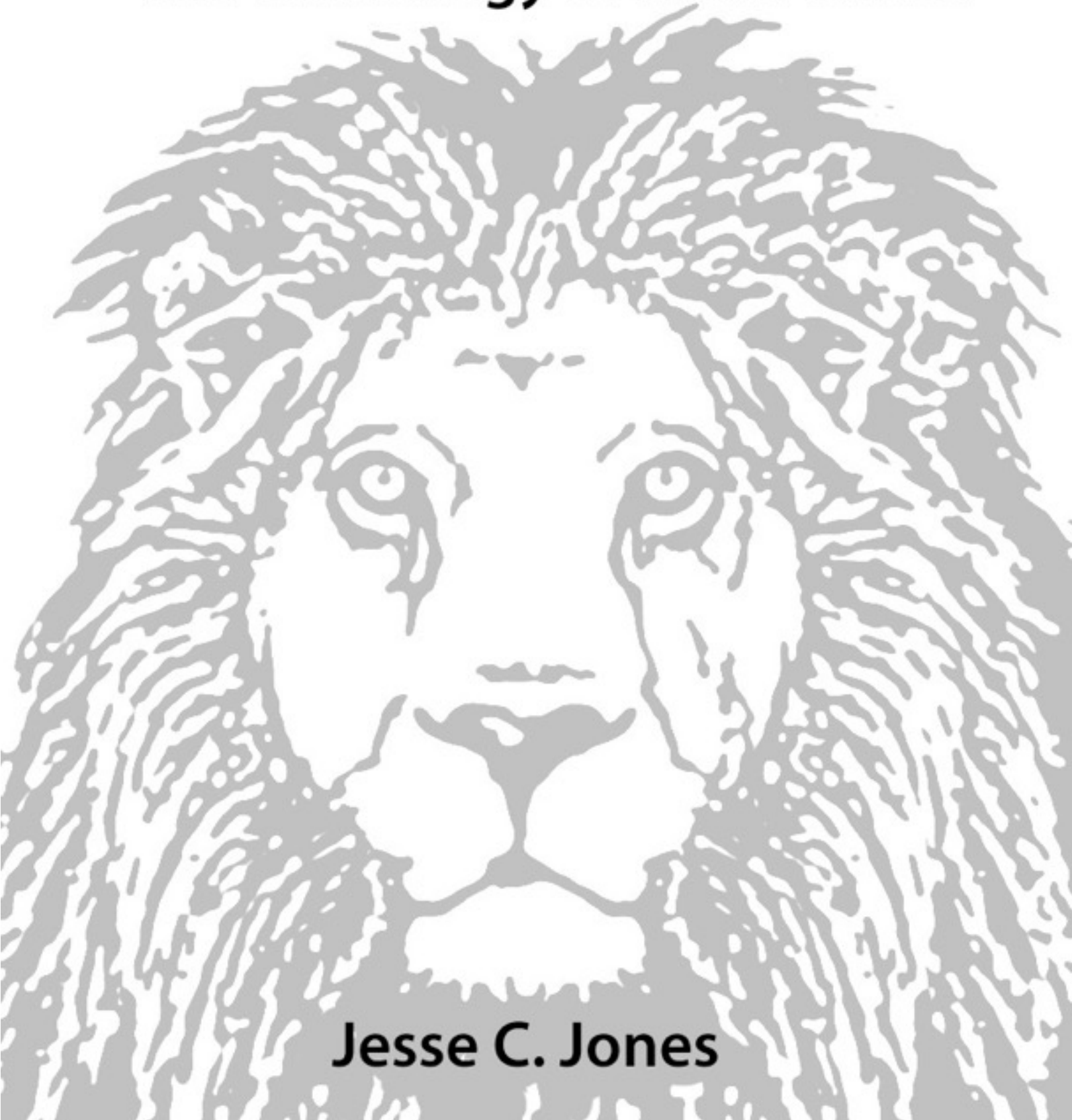
The Messianic Line

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

Jesse C. Jones

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Do not weep!
See, the lion of the tribe of
Judah, the root of David has
triumphed.



Revelation 5:5

About the Cover Art

Cover art for this project was a special gift from Rex Morache. Rex has graciously illustrated a number of Jesse C. Jones' books over the years. Each one special and with both an artistic style and a spiritual message capturing the heart of the content. We are most grateful for His love of the Lord and ministry to us and to all who read these pages. He and his wife were in California but are now living in Texas.

In collaboration with Rex about this cover, we thought the lion of Judah overlooking the world positioned to show Israel would be a continuation of several of his covers for Jesse C. Jones' works. Your worldview affects not only how you see things but how you respond to the Lord. Seek Him above all earthly treasures. You will find eternal treasures you did not know existed before He unfolds them to you!

Enjoy the journey and the discovery!

Note: The verse on the title page is excerpted from Revelation 5:5 and is most similar to the Berean study bible. The King James version uses the word prevailed instead of triumphed; but triumphed is much stronger and seems to more accurately describe what He has done on our behalf!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

Chapter 1

The Birth of Christ 8

Chapter 2

From the Beginning to the Flood 17

Chapter 3

From the Flood to Abraham 28

Chapter 4

Isaac through Judah 36

Chapter 5

Pharez through David 60

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

Links to Other Books Available 69

PREFACE

In my writing on biblical subjects God has always introduced me to the subject that He wants me to address, at times after considerable argument from me. I thought He had given me a new subject awhile back, so I started working on it. Then I ran into all kinds of roadblocks that seemed to be saying that I was on the wrong track. During this time I came across the subject of “The Messianic Line,” the genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ. I was not familiar with this term so I began to study the two genealogy lines given in the NT, in Matthew and Luke. To my great surprise I discovered that neither one of these listings were what I expected: an ancestry of Jesus Christ, starting from Adam and leading up to His birth. Matthew 1:2-16 gives the genealogy of Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Luke 3:23-38 gives the genealogy of Mary, but attributes it to Joseph, her husband. There are also other questions that arise in the makeup of the two genealogies: the inclusion of the name of Tamar (a woman) in Matthew 1:3; Jeremiah’s curse against the Solomonic branch of David due to the godlessness of Jehoiachin; and the inclusion of the non-royal descendants of Nathan, Solomon’s brother in Luke 3:31. With this discovery I

began to realize that God was leading me into the study of the Messianic Line for good reason: the promise in Acts 2:30, that Jesus would be the fruit of David's loins led Matthew and Luke to attribute His lineage to the virgin Mary, and Joseph, her espoused husband. The Holy Spirit undoubtedly allowed this since the other alternative necessitated Matthew and Luke having knowledge about the reproduction and genealogy process they did not have. I will try to clarify this delicate subject with great caution.

I pray that what is provided herein is totally in agreement with what God did in bringing our Lord and Savior into the world to provide a way for us to be adopted as His children.

Chapter 1

The Birth of Christ

To fully understand what was involved in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ we need to review the normal reproduction process that God gave mankind so they could be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth (Genesis 1:28). The female gestation process is one of unbelievable complexity, involving spiritual overtones that boggle the mind (see “The Beginning (Gestation),” Chapter 1 of the book “The Spiritual Life,” by Jesse C. Jones). I feel that God must surely have taken advantage of this process He created when bringing the God/man Jesus into our world. The mystery that remains is: what method did He use to activate this process within Mary’s body? We need to briefly review the female gestation process to help us in arriving at an answer to this question:

Ovulation: On the 14th day of a female’s menstruation cycle an egg escapes from a sac in her ovary, fully prepared to share in the formation of a new human life. This “escape” occurs as a result of the “rupture” of one of the Graafian follicles (sacs) within the female ovary.

Fertilization: Makes the female reproductive cell fruitful by introducing the male germ cell, to impregnate or pollinate. The egg released from the ovary must be fertilized within 24 hours or it will die, and no life will result. When sperm is deposited in the vagina, it travels through the cervix and into the Fallopian tubes. Fertilization usually takes place in the Fallopian tube. A single sperm penetrates the mother's egg cell, and the resulting cell is called a zygote. The term "conception" refers variably to either fertilization or formation of the conceptus (after uterine implantation). Half of the genetic information comes from the mother's egg, and half from the father's sperm. A zygote is the cell that forms from a woman's egg and a man's sperm within the woman's womb during conception. The zygote contains all the genetic information necessary to form a fetus, which will become a new person: half of the chromosomes come from the man and half from the woman. Men have both X and Y chromosomes, whereas women have only X chromosomes. It is the presence (or absence), of genes on the Y chromosome that determines the sex of the fetus: if present the fetus will be male, but if absent the fetus will be female. Thus, we see that it is the male that determines the sex of the child: he is the one that determines whether the child will be male or female.

Implantation: Attachment of the fertilized egg to the wall of the uterus.

About six days after fertilization the developing embryo comes in contact with the wall of the uterus and attaches to it. As the cells of the embryo divide, the outer cell layer grows into the lining of the uterus to obtain oxygen and nutrients from the mother's blood. Remarkably, the timing of implantation in the process of gestation, is indefinite. The fertilized egg travels down the Fallopian tube to the uterus at its own pace, taking anywhere from two to six days to implant. Before embedding into the uterus it first must "hatch" from its shell. It then adheres to the uterine lining and becomes embedded in the uterine epithelial cell layer about day six. The inner cell mass is known as the embryo, whereas the outer cell layers form embryonic membranes. The embryo adheres tightly to the endometrium, where it receives nourishment via the mother's bloodstream. The cells of the embryo now multiply and begin to take on specific functions in accordance with directions from the DNA. This process is called differentiation, and it produces the varied cell types that make up a human being (such as blood cells, kidneys, and nerve cells).

Implantation marks the point at which the fertilized egg arrives safely in the uterus and begins its formation into what will become a fetus, and then a human being. Upon implantation in the uterus the formation of a previously nonexistent human being is initiated: a new (physical) life is starting to be de-

veloped. The lining of the uterus was properly prepared to nourish the new life that would be formed therein. The Bible states that life is in the blood, and this is perfectly demonstrated in the “soil” in which the fertilized egg is implanted.

A New Being: On the 50th day after implantation the embryo (undeveloped stage) becomes recognizable as a human fetus, made in God’s image.

Ears to Hear: By the first day of the seventh month of pregnancy hearing is fully developed.

Blood Changes: The hemoglobin of the blood changes from that of the fetus to that of a self-respiring human being, with its own circulating system. This occurs on the tenth day of the seventh month.

A Living Soul: By the 15th day of the seventh month a normal baby has two healthy lungs. If it is born at that point it can breathe on its own. After the 15th day of the seventh month the baby can be delivered safely because the lungs and other internal organs are fully developed, and it can breathe on its own. In other words the baby’s body (tabernacle) has been completed and he/she can live in it. Prior to this time the fetus had tabernacled in the mother’s womb, a temporary shelter. Everything needed has now been gathered into the body, and it can live on its own outside the body of the mother.

We can now make several observations relative to the birth of Jesus that I hope will clear up some of the confusion surrounding this earth-shaking event.

1. Mary's gestation period must have followed the normal process outlined above, for the Bible says that she conceived (Matthew 1:20. Luke 1:31), and the gestation period lasted approximately nine months, the average period of time from conception to birth. All evidence points to the fact that Mary's pregnancy was normal in every way, and the Lord was born like other babies of that time.
2. Jesus has always been referred to as the Son of David by believing Jews, and the Bible uses this same description many times. Acts 13:23, speaking of David says, "*Of this man's seed hath God according to His promise raised unto Israel a savior, Jesus.*" The Greek word interpreted "seed" here is "*spermatos*," which is the identical word used in Hebrews 11:11 for "virile semen," by which Sarah conceived Isaac when she was past the age of child-bearing.
3. Some scriptures refer to Jesus being the fruit of David's loins, others to Him being the seed of David's bowels, some say He comes to sit upon David's throne, and some identify Him as a righteous branch of David. Some scriptures say that Jesus was made of the seed of David, and He is called the Lion of Judah the Root of David. Jesus Himself said "*I am the*

root and offspring of David.” We can safely conclude that in some way that only God knows, He fertilized the egg in Mary’s body with a righteous seed of David, and thus impregnated her.

4. I believe the Holy Spirit coming on Mary can best be understood by His movement [brooding] over the waters during creation. This is explained by several expositors of God’s Word: (1) “He moved over the waters to cherish, quicken, and dispose them to the production of things following. Like a bird hovering, fluttering over, and sitting upon their eggs to warm and quicken them.” (2) Another expositor says, “this same Spirit ‘moved’ or brooded upon the face of the waters to impregnate them . . . to give them a quickening virtue to produce living creatures in them.” (3) “Still another expositor says, the Spirit of God moved [brooded] over the waters as a fowl does when hatching eggs. (4) And finally another says, “The Spirit combined, arranged, and ripened the elements into a state adapted for being the scene of a new creation.” Note: Some words relating to the creation and not applicable to the birth of Christ have been left out.
5. Since the genealogy of Jesus is a combination of the genealogy of Mary, traceable to Nathan, son of David, and the genealogy of David (see above),

transferred to the Body of Mary by the Holy Spirit, Jesus is then a true branch of David from both His Mother and Father.

6. Joseph, Mary's husband, and Jesus' stepfather was also a descendant of David through Solomon, a son of David. Thus, Jesus was raised by his mother and stepfather, both descendants of King David.
7. The question raised in the literature in regard to Mary's ancestor Nathan (son of David), not being of the royal line, seems to be of little concern since the sex of the fetus is determined by the presence (or absence) of the Y chromosome, provided only by the male seed. The Y chromosomes exert their effects on the body through other constituent genes, which contain coded instructions for processes within the body that determine growth and development.
8. Also, the Solomonic curse by Jeremiah upon Jehoiakim's line due to the evil of Jehoichin would seem to be of no concern, since this relates to the genealogy of Joseph, Jesus stepfather.

We have now discussed the formation and birth of the physical and material body of Jesus Christ. Before we try to identify the individuals that comprise His genealogy we should at least mention the spiritual side of His life. Jesus was both God and man: He had both the nature of God and the nature of man.

In trying to understand this I am going to assume that God generally uses the processes and methods He ordained in the beginning; and only added to, or changed when necessary to achieve a particular result. Accordingly, I believe He adopted the method used in developing the spiritual nature of man in the spiritual life of Jesus. Thus, we need to briefly review our understanding of how the spiritual nature of man evolved.

Two of the three constituents of man, the spirit and soul, are immaterial, formed and implanted by God, and (in the case of believers) destined to return to Him in heaven, or, in the case of unbelievers, to descend into the abyss (bottomless pit) to join Satan. Ecclesiastes 12:7, and Zechariah 12:1, indicate that God “*gave*” and “*formed*” man’s spirit. Psalm 139:13 NIV seems to say that the phrase “*my inmost being*” refers to our human spirit. Ezekiel 18:4 indicates that all souls belong to God, and the soul that dies in unforgiven sin is the one that breaks this bond and receives death as payment. As stated above, God creates the body through ordained natural processes within the womb of the expectant mother’s body. It is material (fleshly) by nature, and is formed by programmed physical processes, whereas the spirit and soul are formed by the direct action of God, without any contribution from man.

Thus, I believe that God implanted Jesus' human spirit while in the womb of Mary during her pregnancy. The difference in the Lord's spirit, and that of mankind in general, is that Jesus' spirit was "righteous," and not the dead spirit of unregenerate man received by all men born after the fall of Adam. But it remained for Jesus' baptism and blessing by the Holy Spirit for His human spirit to become one with the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17). As recorded in Matthew 3:16-17: "*And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and landing upon Him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" Although little is written in the Bible about Jesus' early life we can take from this that He grew to manhood in all ways pleasing to God the Father, and after His baptism His spiritual life is well-documented in the NT.

We can now begin to consider Jesus' ancestry:

Chapter 2

From the Beginning to the Flood

Genesis 1:26 says “*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...*”

Since the Bible presents God to us in a triune image: Father, Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit, we should be looking for the triune image of man, one that encompasses the three elements of God’s image. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 provides the answer: “*... and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto [at] the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” This truth is borne out in many scriptures in the Bible, but this verse in Thessalonians is the only one I know of that identifies all three elements of the image. Thus, man is a tripartite entity, just as is God. It seems logical to conclude that His image in man is manifested by the three parts of man: spirit, soul, and body. We can see the connection between the human spirit and the Holy Spirit since the human spirit receives the word of God from the Holy Spirit. In fact, God’s goal is for believers to become holy through sanctification so that our human spirit becomes one with the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17). The body seems to relate to Christ: Jesus Christ is the physical representation of God on earth, who be-

comes the immaterial Son of God in heaven. Just as His body was of a material nature on earth, and immaterial in heaven, we likewise, have material bodies on earth, but immaterial when we join Him in heaven. 1 John 3:2, says,

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”

Vincent’s Word Studies in the NT describes the soul (one of our two immaterial entities), as the principle of our individuality, the mediating element between the spirit and body. The soul is the source of the personal impression we make in the physical world with men, and in the spiritual world with heavenly beings. The mystery of life itself resides within the soul, for it is when God breathes into us (figuratively) in the womb we become a living person: we become “self-conscious.” Our soul manifests our personality, for it is our personality that identifies us. It is our soul that reflects the gift of life that God has given us, and the “will” that will be blessed by following His will.

It is through our spirit that we worship God. John 4:24, says that *“God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.”* We cannot enter into God’s presence in any way other than through our spirit. Just as He provides guidance from the Holy Spirit to our human spirit, He receives worship only when it comes through our spirit to Him. God deals with man

through his spirit, for man's spirit knows all things about man (Proverbs 20:27; 1 Corinthians 2:12). Our spirit, which could no longer communicate with God after the fall, is renewed at rebirth (Ezekiel 36:26), while our body (really the biblical heart) is just starting the process of being perfected (sanctified). God identifies our human spirit as being the "real" us, so it seems logical that this is the element of our persona that He would choose to fellowship with.

An additional point worth noting in this regard is the fact that in the OT the thinking was that man consisted of only two parts: the inner man, and the outer man. The inner man included the soul and the human spirit, and the outer man was the body. In NT times it was recognized that man consisted of three parts, but there is some justification for considering the soul and spirit as separate parts of the total image, but joined together as in the OT. Hebrews 4:12, points out the difficulty in separating the soul from the spirit to emphasize the penetrating power of the Word of God: sharper than any two-edged sword, and able to penetrate even to the heart of man, but not able to separate the soul from the spirit, both of which are immaterial and spiritual.

Several references to the appearance of physically dead believers being seen in heaven are recorded in the Bible. In Revelation 6:9, John saw the "*souls*" of those slain for the Word of God under the altar in heaven. In Ecclesiastes 12:7,

the “*spirit*” of a godly man is said to return to God who gave it at physical death. Job 31:14, refers to God gathering the “*spirit*” and “*breath*” (soul) of man. The appearance of the believer who dies and returns with the Lord at the rapture is not described in the Bible (see 1 Thessalonians 4:14). However, I believe there is considerable evidence that the believer’s spirit/soul accompanies Jesus when He comes in the clouds to gather both the dead, and those that remain alive, at rapture.

We need to return now to Adam’s creation in God’s own image: spirit, soul, and body. God planted a garden “*Eastward in Eden*,” and placed Adam therein to dress and keep it. God told Adam that he could eat of every tree in the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he must not eat, for if he did he would surely die. Adam was totally innocent and he had no knowledge of the meaning of good or evil, but he understood God’s command.

Recognizing that Adam needed an helpmeet, God took a rib from Adam while in a deep sleep and He formed Eve, and called her woman, because she was taken from man. God intended that they should come together as one flesh, just as He had prophesied in Genesis 1:27, and later described in more detail in I Corinthians 6-7, and Ephesians 5. Now Satan was present in the Garden, and he approached Eve in the form of a serpent asking her if God really

said they would die if they ate of the tree in the midst of the Garden. Eve answered that God said they should not eat of it, nor should they touch it, or they would die. To this Satan responded that they would not die, but their eyes would be opened, and they would be as gods, knowing good and evil. Eve was beguiled by Satan and took of the tree and ate, and also gave to Adam, and he also ate.

In their “Commentary on the OT” Keil and Delitzsch suggest that God’s intent in placing the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden was to train Adam to be obedient, and to transform his earthly nature to the spiritual essence necessary for eternal life. This sounds remarkably like the purpose of sanctification described in the NT: believers into Christ present their bodies a living sacrifice to God through obedience, renew their minds through guidance of the Holy Spirit, and become conformed to the image of Jesus Christ in preparation for eternal life. Sanctification is the path to holiness a believer should follow if he wants to see the Lord in eternity (Hebrews 12:14). It seems evident that this was God’s plan in the Garden as well: to bring Adam to holiness through knowledge and spiritual maturity, provided by His guidance. But Adam didn’t wait: he took on knowledge of evil that he was not prepared to deal with.

God named the two trees in the midst of the Garden the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life (Genesis 2:9). Names in the OT had great significance: eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil allowed evil to enter Adam's biblical heart (mind). Adam was created both innocent and with free will: he was free to choose between right and wrong without being swayed by any preconceived knowledge or memories, or undue influence. He seemingly acted based on his assessment of the instant situation, he was totally innocent: he had neither a sin nor a godly nature. He had no previous exposure to spiritual decision-making, and thus, he had no preconceived bias toward either "right" or "wrong." After he chose to disobey God's command, things changed: he came under the influence of what is identified as the Adam-ic (or sin) nature. Adam could have followed God's plan, and refrained from eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. In this case he would have remained free to choose as he saw fit, but teachable by God, somewhat like the NT believer who is gradually conformed to the image of Jesus Christ by the renewing of his mind (Romans 12:2). Sadly, Adam was drawn by his wife to disobey God's command, and thus, to *know* evil. This was a "sea change" event in Adam's life that would be manifested in the lives of all his descendants.

Death was the penalty for sin, and in the OT death was understood to be separation from God. That is exactly what happened to Adam and Eve after they ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil: their human spirit could no longer communicate with God, and without this source of life their bodies began the aging process. Genesis 3:6 indicates that Satan (through the serpent), used enticements that he knew would appeal to the three weaknesses of mankind listed in 1 John 2:16: lust of the eyes (Eve thought the fruit was pleasant to the eyes), lust of the flesh (she believed that the fruit would be good for food), and the pride of life (she desired to become wise). Eve was deceived, and thus committed transgression, but Adam was not deceived (1 Timothy 2:14), he disobeyed God willfully. Eve thought the tree would be good for food and would make her wise, so she took of the fruit and ate, and gave also to her husband and he did eat. Later, when confronted by God, Adam blamed Eve, saying “*The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*” This seems unbelievably weak considering the monumental effect of this act upon all mankind. Adam undoubtedly did not understand the full implications of his act, but his helpmate, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, had taken a serious step, and he either had to follow her lead, or face the spiritual separation that would undoubtedly result from her disobedience. So

Adam disobeyed willfully, and thereby brought death (separation from God) upon mankind. Satan's inducement for evil was now free to work on mankind. Adam made a frightful decision here: in essence he chose to continue his relationship with Eve at the cost of his relationship with God. Adam was not aware of all the consequences of his action; however, he was aware of his disobedience to God's command. His decision "changed everything." He chose to be "free" to make his own decisions (to be his own God): little did he know that he had actually enslaved himself and his descendants to sin, and disobedience to God. The changes in Adam's DNA (brought about by this action), led to what we now identify as a sin nature (or Adamic nature), which is passed on to all Adam's posterity (see Ephesians 2:2-3). I believe this also explains why Adam and Eve were ashamed of their nakedness after choosing to disobey God's command: they were no longer innocent. They were ashamed of members of their bodies, whereas before they felt no shame when they encountered God. Thus, they prepared aprons from fig leaves and covered themselves. Obviously, God had to do something to save mankind, and He had a solution already in mind: send His Son into the world to frustrate, and to destroy Satan (Genesis 3:15; Revelation 20:3, 10), and provide a way to regenerate unbelievers.

The consequences of Adam's sin are given in the third chapter of Genesis.

Verse 7 records the fact that the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked. Just as the serpent told Eve, they now knew both good and evil. But the thing he did not tell them was that they could no longer do God's will. *"To the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow [toil] shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."*

After mankind lost communication (guidance and correction) from God, his wickedness grew greatly. Adam's own son Cain, killed his brother Abel, in a jealous rage. Both Cain and Abel offered a sacrifice to God, but God had rejected Cain's offering and accepted Abel's, thus Cain was violently jealous of Abel, and even though God had talked to him about his attitude, he slew his brother.

God saw that the thoughts of man's heart were evil continually, and He was sorry that He had created man. Thus, He decided to destroy both man and beast, as well as creeping things, and fowls of the air: all life other than that in the seas. But there was one man who found grace in the eyes of the Lord: his name was Noah. Noah and Enoch were the only men during this time who were described as walking with God. Both Noah and Enoch were descendants of Seth, whom God gave to Adam and Eve to replace Abel (Genesis 4:26). Seth was thus chosen to be the head of the Messianic line, and in the Antediluvian Age this attribution passed from Seth through Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, to Noah. This is the only specific information given in the Bible about how these two were able to remain good men in spite of the fact that they lived in an evil world. God chose Seth and his descendants to be forebearers of Jesus Christ, and both Enoch and Noah were descendants of Seth (Abel's replacement). So God chose Noah as the progenitor for mankind, and He told Noah to build an ark and bring into it his family of three sons and their wives, as well as his own wife. In addition he was to bring clean beasts, unclean beasts, fowls, and every creeping thing into the ark. And then God brought the flood, but not until all but one of the remaining mem-

bers of the Messianic line had passed: the last one, Methuselah, died in the year that the flood started, 2348 (Ussher).

Chapter 3

From the Flood to Abraham

Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Shem was chosen by God to carry on the Messianic line. *“And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a floods to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.”* From the three sons of Noah the whole earth was inhabited. This seems almost unbelievable, but Noah himself lived for 350 years after flood, and Shem lived 700 years, so the three sons and their wives all lived for many years after the flood. I am sure they were following God’s guidance given to them in in Genesis 9:1, *“Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.”* The Bible Atlas by Barrett, Hudson,

and Bolen, indicates that Noah's descendants settled in various lands of the Western Mediterranean, with Ham's descendants primarily located in Africa and Arabia including Canaan; Shem's descendants in Southern Mesopotamia and Southern Arabia; and Japheth's descendants in Northern Mesopotamia.

The whole earth was of one language, and of one speech, and many gathered in the land of Shinar, located in the plain of Babylonia. And they began to think prideful things they could do: like building a city with a great tower that would reach to the heavens. They gathered together because they were concerned about being scattered over the face of the whole world. But this was exactly what God wanted: He wanted to populate all of the lands of the world. So He confounded their language so they could not understand each other, and they gave up on their grandiose plans, and migrated to many other lands. One of Shem's descendants named Terah, lived in Ur, a city of the Chaldees, in northern Mesopotamia, slightly west of the Euphrates river. Terah had three sons named Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Abram was selected by God to carry on the Messianic line, and God apparently spoke to him about leaving Ur, for it was an idolatrous land, and God had plans for Abram. Thus, the Bible says that Terah took his son Abram, Lot (Haran's son), and Sarai (Abram's wife and half-sister), and they left Ur to go into the land of Canaan, but they stopped in

Haran and dwelt there. The Bible does not give a reason for this, but it could have been due to Terah's health, for he was quite old when he and his family left Ur: he was 130 years old when Abram was born, and they did not leave Ur until many years later, for Abram was married to Sarai (who was 10 years younger than himself), and they had tried to have children, but Sarai was barren.

Now Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran. He apparently left Haran in the same year that his father Terah died at the age of 205 years. God then spoke to Abram and told him, *"Get out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."* So Abram departed with his wife Sarai, Lot, his brother's son, and all the substance they had gotten in Haran, and went forth into the land of Canaan. And the Lord appeared unto Abram and told him that his seed would be given all the land of Canaan. This obviously refers to the Israelites, who were the descendants of Abram. And it happened like this: Sarai, being barren, brought her handmaiden Hagar, unto Abram, and told him that since God had restrained her from bearing, that she hoped to

have children through Hagar. Abram subsequently went in unto her and she conceived, and bore a son who was named Ishmael. Although Sarai arranged this situation, she was very distraught after Hagar bore Ishmael, and she went to Abram asking for him to judge between herself and Hagar. Abram responded by telling Sarai to deal with Hagar as she saw fit, and she dealt harshly with her. Hagar then tried to leave, but an angel of the Lord spoke to her and told her to return to her mistress, and submit to her hand. He also promised that she would have many offspring and her son Ishmael would be a wild man, and his hand would be against every man, and every man's hand would be against him. Abram was 86 years old when Ishmael was born.

The story of Isaac and Ismael is also related in the NT book of Galatians 4:22-31, in which Sarah and Hagar represent two covenants: Hagar representing the present Jerusalem which is in bondage, and Sarah representing the promise of the free Jerusalem which is promised to come. In a prophecy that seems especially pertinent to today's world, vs. 29-30 say, *"But as he that was born after the flesh (Ishmael) persecuted him that was born after the Spirit (Isaac), even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scriptures? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman."*

When Abram was 99 years old the Lord appeared to him and told him that he was to have a son by Sarai, and his name would be Isaac. He further promised that His covenant with Isaac would be an everlasting covenant with him and his descendants, signified by the circumcision of the flesh of the foreskin, a token of the covenant He had made with Abram earlier. He also changed the name of Abram to Abraham (exalted father), and Sarai to Sarah, (a princess). Abraham was 100 years old, and Sarah was 90 years old when Isaac was born.

The Lord made Abraham wealthy with flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. And after these things the Lord tested Abraham by asking him to sacrifice his son Isaac as a burnt offering. Obediently, Abraham took Isaac and two of his young men, and an ass with him to Moriah, where God had told him to go to sacrifice. When they arrived at the place Abraham told the two young men to wait with the ass, while he and Isaac went further on. When they arrived at the site Abraham asked Isaac to carry the wood for the sacrifice, and he then took fire, and a knife, and they went on further to the place God had told him of. Isaac asked his father where the lamb for the sacrifice was, and Abraham reassured him that God would provide. When they arrived Abraham built an altar, and

laid the wood on it. Then he turned to Isaac and bound him, and laid him on the wood. When Abraham stretched out his arm with the knife to slay his son, an angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, and told him to not lay a hand on the child: *“for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven a second time, and said, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thy only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand of the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”* Contrary to many believers, I do not believe that God knew positively beforehand what Abraham’s reaction would be. Abraham could have cried out at the last minute that he could not slay his promised son; but instead Abraham’s great love and trust in God gave him the strength to obey, even in this extremely difficult test. And the angel of the Lord called out *“Now I know . . .”* which certainly implies that He did not know before. As a result, the angel of Lord blessed Abraham, and promised that his descendants would be like the stars of heaven, and the sand of the seashore, and they would bless all the nations of the earth.

Afterward, Abraham and his son Isaac, together with his young men that accompanied him, returned to Beersheba, where Abraham dwelt for several years before moving to Hebron. Sarah died in Hebron when she was 127 years old, and Abraham buried her there in the cave of Machpelah, which he purchased from Ephron the Hittite for 400 shekels of silver. Abraham was 137 years old when Sarah died, but he would live another 38 years, and bear six more children by his second wife Keturah, before he died. Abraham had doubted when God told him that he and Sarah would bear the promised child, Isaac, in their old age. Here we find him fathering another family when he was older yet.

To summarize our analysis to this point I want to quote a paragraph about Abraham from the Dickson New Analytical Bible, “The call of Abraham was the beginning of a new great order in Messianic development. The line has run through individuals from Seth to Shem, covering many centuries. It is now to take a national form, and Abraham is selected as the head of the Messianic nation. Thus, to this stage, we have the five special points: The promise of the Redeemer, Seth the head of the historical line to bring forth the seed of the woman, Noah the preservation of the line, Shem the head of the Shemitic nations, and Abraham the head of the Messianic nation.” Abraham was the pre-

eminent man of faith who left his native land of Chaldea at God's call; through faith believed that God would provide another land for his family; by faith trusted God when asked to sacrifice Isaac; and at 100-years old believed that God would give him a seed through which all nations of the earth would be blessed. But Abraham was not perfect: on more than one occasion he passed his wife off as his sister because he thought powerful men he encountered would kill him so they could take Sarah. Actually, Sarah was Abraham's half-sister, so it was technically not a lie, and God obviously forgave him. It was this man Abraham that God chose to be the progenitor of the chosen nation Israel, through which Messiah was brought forth.

Chapter 4

Isaac through Judah

Abraham wanted to make sure that Isaac would have a wife from his own family, and thus, he dispatched the eldest servant of his house to travel to his home country and to his kindred to take a wife for his son. As a result (with God's involvement), the servant encountered Rebekah at a well outside the city where Abraham's brother Nahor lived. Now Rebekah was the daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son. And when the servant related the instructions he was given, and how the the angel of the Lord blessed him when he encountered Rebekah, Laban (Rebekah's brother) and Bethel (Rebekah's father) recognized that the Lord had arranged the encounter, and they agreed to let Rebekah go with Abraham's servant. Isaac was in the field as Rebekah's entourage approached, and together they went to Sarah's (now deceased) tent, and Isaac took her as his wife. And he loved her.

After 19 years of marriage Rebekah remained barren, so Isaac intreated the Lord for her, and she conceived. Isaac's prayer was answered, and resulted in Rebekah having twins. As the pregnancy came to a conclusion the twins were

struggling, so she sought the Lord as to why. He said to her: “*Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger*” (Genesis 25:23). When the time for her to be delivered came the first child came out red, like a hairy garment, and they called his name Esau (hairy). And when his brother came out his hand grabbed Esau’s heel, and they named him Jacob, meaning “he clutches.” His name may also have resulted because he “supplanted” (to take by the heel, to overtake) Esau. The Bible notes that Esau’s name was changed to Edom after he sold his birthright to his brother (Genesis 25:30) for a bowl of pottage. As the boys grew Esau became a cunning hunter, and man of the open country, whereas Jacob was a mild man who stayed in tents.

Jacob was not a very likable person during his early years, He began by cheating his brother out of his rightful inheritance as the first-born, and then in seeking the blessing of his father Isaac by pretending to be Esau. Esau did not offer to sell his birthright when he asked his brother Isaac for something to eat. Instead of being a kindly and helpful brother Isaac took advantage of Esau’s lack of appreciation for the birthright, and “sold” him a bowl of “pottage” in exchange. Much later when Isaac was old and about to bless Esau, Rebekah conspired with Jacob to fool Isaac, and steal the blessing he was plan-

ning to give Esau. We see from these events that Jacob was a rather unsavory character when he was young. Much of this was probably due to the fact that Rebekah favored Jacob, and Isaac favored Esau: they were raised in a competitive environment.

When Esau found out that Jacob had stolen the blessing that Isaac intended to give him (being the oldest), he was infuriated. Jacob wanted to escape Esau's fury, so his mother Rebekah again misrepresented the situation to Isaac by telling him that they needed to send Jacob to her kin in Padden-aram so that he could marry a member of her clan, to eliminate any chance of a mixed marriage. It was on his way to Padden-aram that Jacob had possibly his first encounter with God. At Bethel, where his grandfather Abraham had built an altar, Jacob rested and while he slept he had a remarkable dream. In his dream a ladder was erected from earth to heaven, and angels were ascending and descending on it. Genesis 28:13-15 says, "*And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold, I am with thee, and will keep you in all places whither thou goest, and I will bring*

you again into this land; and I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Genesis 28:13-15). When Jacob awoke he took the stone that he had rested his head on and poured oil on it in recognition of his encounter with God. He also made a vow saying “If God will be with me and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee” (Genesis 28:20-22).

Jacob then resumed his journey into the land of the people of the east. There he encountered men watering their flocks. These men were from Haran, and they were acquainted with Laban, son of Nahor. They told Jacob that Rachel, Laban’s daughter was on her way to the well to water her father’s sheep. It came to pass that when Jacob saw Rachel coming to water the sheep, he rolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the sheep for her. Jacob was attracted to Rachel for she was beautiful and well favored, and he kissed her, and lifted up his voice, and wept. This does not sound like the old Jacob: the influence from his dream at Bethel was already showing through. After they had journeyed on and met with Laban, Jacob told him that he wanted to marry Rachel: he told Laban that he would work seven years for her hand

in marriage. So Jacob served Laban for seven years, and it seemed like only a few days, for he loved her very much. But Laban was a schemer, and he wanted to get his older daughter Leah married off. So he prepared a wedding feast including plentiful drinks, and Jacob was “in his cups” when he went into his tent that night. Instead of Rachel, Laban brought Leah to Jacob’s tent after the feast, and Jacob was not aware of the switch until morning. When Jacob confronted Laban over his trickery Laban claimed that it was not proper in his country to give the younger daughter for marriage before the firstborn. As a result of Laban’s perfidy Jacob served him for another seven years before Rachel was given unto him for a wife. This story sounds very much like God was teaching Jacob a lesson for his past duplicity in dealing with Esau. Jacob did not love Leah, so God opened her womb and she bore a child which she named Reuben, and Rachel remained barren. Leah thought Jacob would love her after she brought him a son, but it didn’t happen. Then she bore three more sons named Simeon, Levi, and Judah, and yet Rachel remained barren. As a result Rachel envied her sister Leah and she told Jacob to give her children or she would die. At this, Jacob was angry at Rachel, so she had her maid Bilhah, to go in unto Jacob so that she would bear a child for Rachel. In our time this sounds very strange, but I think we can begin to see God’s plan lead-

ing up to the establishment of the nation of Israel shaping up here. Billhah bore a son who Rachel named Dan. Then Bilhah bore a second son who Rachel named Naphtali. At this turn of events, Leah had left bearing, so she took her maid Zilpah in unto Jacob and she bore him a son named Gad. And then Zilpah bore Jacob a second son who Leah named Asher.

After this things began to be really weird: Reuben found mandrakes in the field at harvest time and gave them to his mother Leah. A mandrake is a beautiful, odoriferous plant that supposedly acts as a love potion. Rachel then accosted Leah and asked for the mandrakes, to which Leah responded by accusing Rachel of taking her husband, and now wanting her son's mandrakes. At this Rachel then said that Jacob would sleep with Leah that night in exchange for the mandrakes. Leah conceived and bare another son whom she named Issachar. And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob a sixth son, whom she named Zebulun. And after that she bare a daughter and called her name Dinah. And God remembered Rachel, and He opened her womb to bare a son whom she named Joseph. The Lord also gave her a word saying that she would have another son.

And it came to pass that Jacob asked Laban for permission to leave, and to go to his own place in his own country. Laban seemed agreeable to this and Ja-

cob proposed they divide the cattle, and sheep, and goats by their markings, with Jacob taking the animals that were speckled, spotted, and ringstraked. So Jacob separated the animals accordingly, and encouraged the unmarked animals to bear marked offspring by placing rods that were peeled and spotted at the watering troughs where the animals conceived. He also influenced the stronger cattle to observe these rods so that the stronger offspring would be marked accordingly. As a result, Jacob accumulated large herds of cattle, sheep, and goats, as well as maidservants, manservants, camels and asses. When Laban received word of what was going on he confronted Jacob, who realized that Laban no longer looked upon him as a friend. The Lord spoke to Jacob, and said *“Return to the land thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.”*

Jacob then gathered his sons and daughters, and all his cattle, sheep, and goats, and fled with all he had, and set his face toward mount Gilead. Three days later Laban found out that Jacob was gone, so he pursued him, and overtook him at mount Gilead. Laban had been warned by God in a dream that he should not speak either good or bad to Jacob. Nevertheless, Laban accused him of taking his daughters as captives, and stealing his images (gods). Actually, Rachel had taken the images unbeknownst to Jacob, and he then made an edict that anyone found with the images should not live. When Laban got to

Rachel's tent to search for his images he was not able to find them for Rachel had hidden them with the camel's furniture, and sat on them. She used as an excuse for not rising up for the custom of women was upon her. After Laban's search was not fruitful, Jacob berated him and asked why he had pursued them so hotly. As a result of these events Laban and Jacob made a covenant, and marked it with a pillar that they erected. They swore that neither Jacob nor Laban would pass over the pillar with the idea of harming the other. And with this Laban and his followers headed back to his home.

Jacob then went on his way, and he sent messengers to Esau telling him about his sojourn in Laban's household, and of the many cattle, sheep, goats, and manservants and maidservants he now had. The messengers returned with the message that they had met Esau, and he was returning with them accompanied by 400 men. At this Jacob was greatly affrighted, so he divided his company into two groups, and separated them so if Esau should attack one, the other could escape. And Jacob prayed that God would protect them from Esau. Then he sent a gift to Esau of goats and camels and camped there overnight with his company. Later that night he rose up and took his wives, two women servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. Then he sent them on ahead and he stayed back at the place he later identified

as Peniel (Penuel). It was at Peniel (Penuel) that Jacob wrestled with God's angel.

There are different interpretations of this encounter with God due to it being so unique: totally unlike other encounters between God and man throughout the Bible, and beyond any logical explanation of man. Because of this I am going to focus on God's apparent purpose in dealing with Jacob this way, and not attempt to analyze the means He used to achieve the desired result. In spite of all the positive things that had happened to Jacob, he still carried a good bit of baggage that God wanted to clean up. I liken this to a new believer who has just received salvation and joined Christ in His death on the cross: they must now enter into sanctification, and allow God to renew their mind, and make them holy. In Jacob's dealings with Laban he had lied many times, and he finally tricked him out of most of his wealth as overseer of his herds of cattle, camels, sheep, and asses. It was true that Laban dealt with Jacob in the same way, so God overlooked Jacob's acts, but He surely must have wanted more honesty and trustworthiness from Jacob in his role as father of the Jewish nation. His dealings with Esau, and his father Isaac were also a stain on his character, and his treatment of Leah, his unintended first wife, left a lot to be desired. His first encounter with God at Bethel brought about some desirable

changes in his life, but it was going to take a second encounter for Jacob to begin anew, and relieve his mind of the fear of returning to His family. His encounter with the angel of God left him with a decided limp, possibly a reminder of becoming a new man in God's eyes, and he received a new name "Israel," signifying his role as the fountainhead of the 12 tribes of the nation Israel.

"And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. . . And Esau ran to meet him, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him: and they wept." It seems obvious that God had done a work in Esau's life in regard to his relationship with his brother, and he now held no animosity toward Jacob about the birthright. After they had exchanged greetings Esau proposed that they proceed together to Seir, a mountain range in Edom where Esau lived, but Jacob's entourage included many children, and they could only travel at a very slow pace, thus, they agreed to travel separately. Esau set off for Mt. Seir, and Jacob proceeded to Succoth, a place east of Jordan, where he built a house, and a place for his animals. It is not clear how long Jacob resided at Succoth, but from there he moved to the city of Shechem, in the land of Canaan, which Jacob considered his family home. There he bought land which

eventually fell to the lot of the sons of Joseph, and also where Joseph's bones were buried.

Sadly, Jacob's family was not protected from evil in spite of his new relationship with God. As they settled in at Shechem, Dinah, Jacob's daughter by Leah, went out to make the acquaintance of neighboring daughters of the land. Unfortunately, she was accosted by Shechem the Hivite, son of the prince, who seduced her. Although Dinah was only about fifteen to sixteen years old, she was considered mature by the standards of the East, which considered the age of twelve as the age of maturity for girls. Shechem wanted to marry Dinah, and he asked his father to obtain permission from Jacob for the marriage. Unfortunately, when the Jacob's sons heard about the proposal they were grieved, and they burned with wrath. Their primary concern seemed to be that she had been seduced by an uncircumcised man, who had "wrought folly in Israel," by lying with Jacob's daughter. Hamor, Shechem's father went to Jacob and his sons to ask permission for Shechem to marry Dinah, and made them a very gracious offer, in addition to a generous dowry, but Jacob's sons would not accept Hamor's offer. Their view was that Dinah could not marry an uncircumcised man. Instead, Jacob's sons proposed that if all the Shechemites would agree to be circumcised, then Israel's honor would be maintained, and the mar-

riage would be acceptable. But Jacob's sons were planning evil. On the third day after the mass circumcision, when all the men of Shechem were incapacitated, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi with their servants fell upon all the males, including Hamor and Shechem, and killed every one of them. Then Jacob's sons plundered the town, and took all the Shechemites possessions.

Jacob reproved the perpetrators of this horrendous act severely for their wickedness: "*Ye have brought me into trouble (conturbare), to make me stink (an abomination) among the inhabitants of the land . . . and yet I (with my attendants) am a company that can be numbered, and if they gather against me, they will slay me.*" It seems obvious from this statement that Jacob was rightly upset with Simeon and Levi for committing this act, as well as the rest of the brothers for plundering the Shechemites, but his concern for his own safety seems a little out-of-place in view of the butchering of all the male Shechemites. All of this may have caused Jacob to remember the vow he had made to God at Bethel some thirty years before: "*If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, So that I come again unto my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: And this stone which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.*" Jacob had returned to Mesopotamia ten years ago at this time, and he

had failed to honor the vow he made to God at Bethel. Thus, it was that God directed him to return to Bethel, and there build an altar to the God he encountered some thirty years previously. Jacob's heart must have been moved by all these events, for he directed all his wives and children, and all that were with him to put away their strange gods, to purify themselves. and wash their clothes. And Jacob buried all the strange gods, including Rachel's seraphim, and whatever other gods there were including earrings, which were worn as amulets and charms. This turning to the Lord resulted in a "*terror of God*," that came upon the cities in the area, and kept them from pursuing Jacob's company as a result of the cruelty of Simeon and Levi. Jacob and his company then headed for Bethel, where he erected an altar in remembrance of the manifestation of God during his flight from Esau thirty years earlier.

And God appeared to Jacob a second time confirming that his name was now Israel, and the promises given to Abraham and Isaac He now passed on to Jacob and his seed. And Jacob set a pillar in the place where God talked to him, and poured a drink offering, and oil upon it.

Jacob and his followers then traveled on a short distance to Ephrath, where Rachel travailed with hard labor. As Rachel's soul was passing (for she died), she named the son she was bearing Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin.

Rachel was buried in the way to Ephrath, the name by which Bethlehem was originally known. Jacob then traveled on and spread his tent on the other side of Migdal Edar. It was here that Rueben committed incest with Bilhah, his father's concubine. Surprisingly, the Bible does not mention any judgment of Reuben's actions in Genesis Chapter 35, where the deed is recorded. But later in Genesis Chapter 49, when Jacob was dying, his deathbed prophecy over Rueben was that he would not excel, and in 1 Chronicles it mentions that Rueben's birthright was given to Joseph's two sons.

Jacob left his father's house with little or nothing, but now he was returning as a wealthy man with considerable holdings. More importantly he was the father of 12 sons, who came to be the 12 tribes of the nation of Israel. Jacob's return was as the heir to Isaac's estate, although Isaac did not die for 12 years after Jacob's return. Thus, Isaac lived through the grief of Joseph's disappearance, and died at the age of 180 years, before Joseph was found in Egypt. Esau and Jacob buried him in the cave of Machpelah, Abraham's family gravesite. Esau had undoubtedly been dealt with by God, for he had forgiven Jacob for stealing his birthright, and had dealt kindly with him since Jacob's return as heir to Isaac. Esau had travelled from Seir to join Jacob in burying their father which seems to imply that his feelings for his family were positive. After the

deception of Jacob and Rebekah concerning the birthright had been discovered Isaac blessed Esau and said, “. . . *it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.*” I see this being played out when Jacob encountered Esau for the first time on his return from Paddanaram. As Esau approached with 400 men, Jacob was very frightened, but instead of evil, “. . . *Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.*” Esau also became a man of note: he established the land of Edom, and is considered to be the father of the Edomites.

Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. He loved Joseph more than all his other children, just as Isaac had favored Esau, and Rachel had favored Jacob. As a result of Jacob's favoritism, Joseph's brothers hated him. About that time Joseph dreamed a dream in which his brothers were all making obeisance to him, and it made the brothers even more jealous. Then he had another dream in which his whole family, including Jacob and Rachel, all made obeisance to him, and Jacob rebuked him. Shortly after that, the brothers were feeding the flocks at Shechem, and Jacob sent Joseph to check on them. They were not at Shechem, but Joseph found out that they had gone on to Dothan, so he went there to find them. When the brothers saw him approaching they plotted to kill him, and to tell their fa-

ther that he had been killed by an evil beast. However, Reuben heard it and suggested that he not be killed, but be placed in a pit so they would have no blood an their hands. When Joseph came to his brothers they stripped him of his coat of many colors that his father had given him, and placed him in the pit. About that time the brothers saw a company of Ishmelites coming from Gilead headed for Egypt. Then Judah suggested that they not kill Joseph, but instead sell him to the Ishmelites. So they sold Joseph to the Ishmelites for twenty pieces of silver, and they took his coat of many colors and dipped it into goat's blood so they could tell his father that a wild beast had killed him.

The full story of Joseph is well known and will not be repeated here, but a short summary of what happened to him follows. When Joseph arrived in Egypt he was sold to a man named Potiphar, and officer of Pharaoh, and captain of the guard. The Lord was with Joseph, and he became the overseer of Potiphar's house. After that, Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph, and he resisted, and ran from the house minus his garment. Potiphar's wife then accused Joseph, and because she held his garment Potiphar believed her, and had Joseph cast into prison. While Joseph was in prison two of Pharaoh's servants: the chief baker and the chief butler were placed in the prison under his charge. While there they both had dreams which Joseph interpreted, giving the credit

for the interpretations to God. In the butler's dream he was to be restored to his place as chief butler, but the baker was to be beheaded. Both dreams were fulfilled, and the butler failed to mention this to Pharaoh. After two years had passed Pharaoh also had a dream, and the chief butler remembered Joseph and his correct interpretation of his dream while in prison. Pharaoh could not find anyone in the whole land to interpret his dream, when the butler remembered Joseph's interpretation in the prison. Pharaoh then called Joseph out of the dungeon and asked for his interpretation. The dream concerned seven years of plenty and followed by seven years of severe famine, and also suggested a way to minimize the effect of the famine. As a result Joseph was appointed as Ruler over Egypt subject to Pharaoh only.

Joseph managed the next 14-years very effectively, by frugal management during the seven good years, followed by the seven years of famine. It was during this time that he again encountered his brothers. The famine was so severe and widespread that Jacob's family was suffering, so Jacob sent the brothers (all except Benjamin) to Egypt to obtain corn. When they encountered Joseph they did not recognize him, and he played it for all that it was worth: he accused the brothers as being spies, to spy out the nakedness of the land. He further demanded that they go to fetch Benjamin, and return to Egypt as proof

of their truthfulness. He determined to hold Simeon as hostage, to insure their return, and he filled their sacks with corn, and secretly returned their money in with the sacks of corn. When they discovered this they were very concerned, but they returned to Jacob and told him all that had happened, but Jacob refused to let Benjamin return with them. This situation prevailed until they again were out of corn and they refused to return to Egypt without Benjamin. Finally, Jacob relented and allowed them to take Benjamin back with them after Judah offered to be surety for him.

Joseph was still in a playful mood, and he continued to toy with his brothers. When they arrived in Egypt, and Joseph saw Benjamin he was greatly moved, and he ordered the ruler of his house to bring them there to dine with him. When they arrived at Joseph's house the steward talked to them at the door. They expressed considerable fear about the money in their sacks from the last time they were in Egypt. The steward told them not to fear that he placed the money in their sacks, and then he brought Simeon out to them. Then they entered Joseph's house where they were given water to wash their feet and their asses were also fed. When Joseph entered the house and saw Benjamin he was moved to tears, and he hurriedly entered his chamber to weep, so they would not see him. When he returned they enjoyed a bountiful

meal together, but at different tables, since it was unlawful for Egyptians to eat with Hebrews. Afterward, the brothers were sent on their way home, but in addition to the full sacks of corn, their money was again placed in their sacks, and Joseph commanded the steward to place his silver cup in Benjamin's sack with the money and corn. He also told the steward to follow them out of the city and overtake them, and to say, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Ye have taken my master's cup, and done evil in so doing. The brothers responded by saying, God forbid that we would do this thing: in whose sack the cup be found, let him die, and we will be your lord's bondmen. Then, they searched everyone's sack, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. The brothers were very distraught with this discovery, and they repacked their sack and returned to Joseph's house where they fell before him on the ground. Judah spoke for the brothers, and asked what they could say, or do to clear themselves, and Joseph responded the man who was found with the cup would become his servant. Judah pleaded with Joseph to allow him to take Benjamin's place, for if the brothers returned to Canaan without Benjamin, their father would surely die in sorrow. Judah's plea was more than Joseph could take, so he asked everyone but the brothers to leave, and then he made himself known to the brothers. The brothers were so overwhelmed they could not respond to

Joseph, so he began to explain that they need not be afraid because they sold him to the Ishmelites, for what they did for evil, God meant for good. Knowing there was a coming famine, God had sent him ahead to Egypt, to preserve Jacob's family and save their lives by a great deliverance. They had survived two years of the famine, but there were five years yet to come, so Joseph told the brothers to return to Canaan and gather their father, Jacob, and all his household and belongings and return to Egypt to live in the land of Goshen. There Joseph would provide for them during the remaining five years of the famine. The brothers then went to Canaan and told their father all that had transpired. He was overjoyed at the news that Joseph was alive, and he wanted to go to Egypt to see him before he died, but the thought of leaving Canaan to relocate to Egypt was more than he could take in. So he went to Beersheba and prayed. God answered and told him not to fear going to Egypt for He would make of him a great nation, and bring him back again to Canaan. So Jacob, his sons, and wives and all of his holdings made the trip to Egypt. There they were greeted by the Pharaoh, and were given fertile land in the country of Goshen to provide for their livestock, and to feed their large family. All in all there were 70 souls of the house of Jacob which came to Egypt where they grew, and multiplied exceedingly.

Jacob lived in the land of Egypt 17 years, and he was 147 years old when the time came for him to die. He called Joseph and made him swear that he would bury him in Canaan, in the family burying place. Before Jacob died Joseph brought his two sons to him so that he could bless them, and “adopt” them as his own, thereby providing both with a stake in the families’ land in Canaan. And Jacob gathered his sons together so he could prophesy over them about the future.

In our narrative thus far we have noted the fact that Judah seemed to be the particular son who was becoming the leader. He saved Joseph’s life when the brothers were about to leave him in the pit without water, and he offered himself as a servant in place of Benjamin when the brothers were dealing with Joseph (before he identified himself). He also seems to have become the spokesperson for the brothers in dealing with Joseph. But there were also some negative occurrences in Judah’s life. He first married a Canaanite woman whose name was Shuah, who bore him three sons: Er, Onan, and Shelah. Er married a woman named Tamar. Er was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord slew him. In accordance with Jewish practice, Judah then told Onan to go in unto Tamar and make her his wife. But Onan realized that any offspring would not be considered his, so when he went in unto his brother’s wife

he spilled his seed on the ground. And the thing which he did displeased the Lord, so He slew him also. Now the youngest brother Shelah was too young for Tamar to marry, so Judah told Tamar to go to her father's house and dwell there until Shelah was older. And in the process of time Judah's wife Shuah died, and after Judah finished his mourning he went to shear his sheep at Timnath. Now Tamar heard this so she disguised herself, and sat along the road to Timnath. When Judah saw her he thought she was a harlot because she had covered her face with a veil. He went in unto her and she conceived, and for surety that he would pay her later with a kid from the flock, he gave her his signet, bracelets, and his staff. Later, when Judah sent his friend with the kid to collect his belongings, she could not be found. When he inquired as to the whereabouts of the harlot by the wayside, those living in the area said that there was no harlot there. Three months later Judah was told that his daughter-in-law was with child by whoredom. He responded and said to bring her forth, and let her be burned. When she came forth she said, By the man to whom this signet, bracelet, and staff belong, I am with child. Judah acknowledged that the articles were his, and he said: She has been more righteous than I; for I gave her not to my son Shelah. And it came to pass in the time of her travail that twins were in her womb. When the twin boys were delivered they

were named Pharez and Zarah, and Zarah put forth his hand first, but drew it back and Pharez came out first. This undoubtedly was God's way of identifying Pharez as the one who would follow Judah in Messianic genealogy even though he was not a king, nor a leader of the tribe of Judah.

After Jacob died, his sons took his remains to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, that Abraham bought for a family burying place. Joseph, his brothers, and all those that accompanied him to Jacob's burial then returned to Egypt. Joseph dwelt in Egypt until he died at the age of 110 years. And he told the brothers to take his bones back to Canaan with them when they left Egypt at God's call (the Exodus). The 70 souls that accompanied Jacob to Egypt grew to 600 thousand men, plus women and children, when they left after 430-years of servitude to the Egyptians.

Jacob's deathbed prophesy over Judah is quoted below:

"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children [sons] shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion [as a lioness]; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering [obedience] of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine; he washed his garments in

wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.”

In this prophecy we begin to note a change: instead of a person who was the leader of the tribe or state being designated as a progenitor in the Messianic Line, the focus is now on the tribe of Judah, which had been designated by the Shiloh Prophecy as the royal tribe (Genesis 49:10). The individual within the nation of Judah who is designated as being in the Messianic Line may not necessarily be the leader. A logical conclusion from this is that Judah will be the governing tribe of the nation of Israel (later just the Southern Kingdom), until Messiah comes, and unto Him will the people respond. We can now continue with our genealogy leading to the ultimate birth of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Chapter 5

Pharez through David

Now Pharez was Judah's first-born by Tamar, Judah's daughter-in-law; and Pharez begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; and Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naason; and Naason begat Salmon; and Salmon begat Boaz by Rahab, the harlot who protected Joshua's two spies in the city of Jericho, and later was saved when Jericho was destroyed. She and her family joined up with the Israelites and she married Salmon. She is included in the book of Hebrews as an example of one who had faith in God. Boaz begat Obed by Ruth, who is the heroine of the book of Ruth, a Moabitess who lived during the time of the Judges. She married the son of Naomi, an Israelite who came to Moab during a great famine. Naomi was a widow whose two sons both died without heirs. Ruth joined Naomi and they returned to Israel, penniless. During the barley harvest in Bethlehem Ruth went to glean in the fields of Boaz, and he gave her protection in acknowledgment of her loyalty to Naomi, who was kin to Boaz through her husband Elimelech. Ruth eventually married Boaz, and their first child was Obed, who they gave to Naomi, to continue the name of Elimelech.

Now Obed begat Jesse; and Jesse begat David, the King, who the Bible identifies as the father of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Now David was the youngest son of Jesse, and he had eight brothers who were jealous of him, possibly because of the talents that God had given him. He was brought up to be a shepherd, and the courage he manifested in battles later in his life was probably developed in protecting his flock from wild animals. He also developed a tenderness in caring for his flock that would become a great asset in his quest for becoming King of Israel. His first encounter with notoriety came about from his confrontation with Goliath, the Philistine giant, who had cowered Israel's army. The Israeli army, led by Saul, the first King of Israel, could find no one who would stand up to battle with Goliath until David, who was delivering rations to his brothers who were with the army, appeared on the scene. When he heard what was going on he immediately approached Saul and offered to confront Goliath. After considerable deliberation about David's age and lack of experience as a soldier, Saul allowed him to represent them in the battle. David knew that God would be with him, so he took his sling with a stone from his bag, and using the skill he had developed as a shepherd, slung the stone directly to Goliath's forehead, killing him instantly. Then he used Goliath's sword to cut off his head. As a result, the

Philistine army was completely demoralized, and the Israeli Army easily conquered them. As a result David gained great admiration from the people of Israel, and a saying developed over time that, "Saul has killed his thousands, but David has killed his ten-thousands." This greatly displeased Saul, and his jealousy of David grew. Now Saul had great success in fighting his enemies, but he failed to follow God's commands when he conquered the Amalekites. So Samuel the prophet came to Saul and told him that God had rejected him as king, and that He would give the kingdom to someone better. The fact that the someone better turned out to be David caused Saul to hate David and try various ways to slay him. Now David was a skilled musician, and after he had proved himself as a warrior, Saul had made him his chief musician. With the hatred that had taken over Saul's heart he would even try to kill David when he was playing for him. Saul also gave his daughter Michal to David as wife, thinking that she would be a snare to him, but Michal loved David. As dowery Saul told David to bring him a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, thinking that they would slay him, but David and his men slew two-hundred Philistines, and brought the foreskins to Saul. As a result Saul became David's enemy continually, and he pursued him relentlessly for a lengthy period. During that entire time Saul was not willing to recognize that God had removed him as King

of Israel, while David never failed understand that Israel was a theocracy, with God in control through his prophet Samuel. On several occasions during this time David caught Saul unawares, and could have killed him, but he believed that Saul had been God's anointed and he refused to take his life even though Saul was bent on slaying David anyway he could. Saul's pursuit of David only ended in a battle with the Philistines in the plain of Esdraelon, a battle of historic renown. Under the darkness of night Saul stole away for a visit with the witch of Endor. At his command she called up the dead Samuel, who confirmed Saul's defeat and death in the battle. The Israelites were completely defeated, and Saul and three of his sons were among the slain. For the brief period of seven and one-half years the house of Saul (although dead) continued to reign while David was King of Judah (the Southern Kingdom), alone. Israel (the Northern Kingdom), then proposed a union of all the tribes, and David became King of all Israel (both the Southern and the Northern Kingdoms). He assumed the throne when he was approximately thirty years old, and died when he was seventy, thus he reigned for forty years.

David was a skilled and effective leader of Israel's army, and his prowess led to the subjugation of his enemies, including the Philistines, Canaanites, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Aramaeans, and Amalekites. His leadership

led to great expansion of his influence, and he overcame the Jebusite control of Jerusalem, and made it his capital. A palace was built, highways opened, trade routes reopened, and the material prosperity of the Kingdom was secured. He brought back the Arc of the Covenant from Kiriath-jearim and placed it in a special tabernacle prepared for it in Jerusalem. It was during the Arc's return that a man named Uzzah tried to support the Arc, which was seemingly about to tumble, and he fell dead immediately. God's presence to Israel was on the Arc of the Covenant, and no one could touch it except the High Priest, and that only once each year, on the Day of Atonement. In addition to its strategic and political importance, Jerusalem acquired great religious significance, with which its name has been associated ever since.

It was during this time of prosperity and religious fervour that David committed his most grievous sin, referred to in the scriptures as "the matter of Uriah the Hittite" (2 Samuel 11). The fallout from this sin, due to its intrinsic heinousness, cannot be overestimated. Even though David tried his best to keep his adultery with Bathsheba hidden by arranging to have Uriah slain, God was not going to let him off the hook, and He arranged for Nathan, the prophet, to confront David about his great sin. Nathan trapped David into condemning himself. After this David was very sorrowful, and he repented

deeply. God knew David's heart, and He obviously granted the repentance, but the consequences of David's act followed him the rest of his life. In spite of the seriousness of David's sin we need to see it for what it is: a stain on an otherwise outstanding life. David's accomplishments were many and varied; a man of action, poet, tender lover, generous foe, stern dispenser of justice, loyal friend, he was all that men find wholesome and admirable in man. It is to David that Jewish people look back with pride and affection, and consider him to be the father of Jesus, the Messiah.

David had nine wives and several concubines, and sired nineteen sons, and one daughter by his wives in addition to those he sired with his concubines. Only two of these (Soloman and Nathan) are included in the genealogy lists in Matthew and Luke. Solomon was king over Israel after death of David. He prayed for wisdom in guiding the nation and God answered his prayer: Solomon was recognized as the wisest man on earth at that time. He led Israel to becoming a nation to be reckoned with for having a large army and navy with a lucrative sea trade. But his reign was one of lavishness and extravagance. He is said to have had 700 wives and 300 concubines, but his lavishness caused considerable discontent, and it later contributed to the disruption of the kingdom. Solomon was the author of 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs, but

he later lapsed into idolatry; certainly not one worthy to carry on the Messianic Line.

It is in the Psalms that the true nature of David appears. It is here that we see him on his knees pouring out his soul to God, in pertinance, in thanksgiving, in faith, assurance, for strength, deliverance and instruction. Seventy-three of the Psalms are attributed to David: he has been called “the sweet singer of Israel.” Certainly some of the greatest literature of all times is expressed in many of the psalms written by David. Psalm 51, in which David cries out about his sin with Bathsheba, and Psalm 139, that describes the all-knowing nature of God about mankind, stand out in my mind, but there are others that bring you to tears. There is no question but that David was chosen by God for great things, but undoubtedly his involvement in the life of Jesus stands out as the greatest. By my count there are 42 scripture verses that refer (in one way or the other), to David’s connection to the birth and life of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: Jeremiah 23:5, 33:14-15; Psalm 89:3-4, Isaiah 9:6-7, Jeremiah 23:5, 30:5, 33:17; Ezekiel 34:23, 37:24-25, Hosea 3:5, Matthew 1:1, 9:27, 12:23, 15:22, 20:30-31, 21:9,15, 22:42; Mark 10:47-48, 11:10, 12:35; Luke 1:32, 69, 18:38-39, 20:42,44, John 7:42; Acts 2:25, 30, 13:22-23, Romans 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:8; Revelation 5:5, 22:16. I particularly like this quote from Jamison, Fausset, and

Brown's Commentary: "David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son?—There is but one solution of this difficulty. Messiah is at once inferior to David as his son according to the flesh, and superior to him as the Lord of a kingdom of which David is himself a subject, not the sovereign. The human and divine natures of Christ, and the spirituality of His kingdom—of which the highest earthly sovereigns are honored if they be counted worthy to be its subjects—furnish the only key to this puzzle" (Mark 12:37).

CONCLUSION

Our Lord Jesus Christ was born of the regenerated seed of David, joined to an egg within Mary's body, that would begin a period that would end nine-months later in a stable in the town of Bethlehem. When the Holy Spirit came upon Mary, the power of the Most High brooded over her as He did when creating our world, to bring about the initiation of a process leading to the birth of our Lord and Savior. Thus, Jesus was born of His father David, and His mother Mary, who was a descendant of David through His son Nathan (see Luke 3:23-38). Mary was espoused to Joseph, who was also a descendant of David through his son Solomon (see Matthew 1:1-16). Thus, Jesus' earthly step-father and His mother Mary were both descendants of David. In spite of his frailties David was a man after God's own heart, and this is paramount in God's eyes, for He judges a man by his heart (1 Samuel 16:7). Genesis 6:5 says that He destroyed all mankind, except Noah and his family, after He saw that men's hearts were only evil continually, and He chose a man after His own heart as a father to Jesus, who came into this world to save it.

PRAISE YAHWEH!

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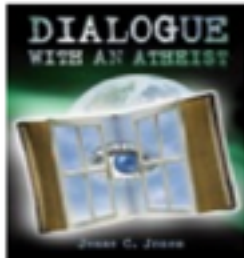
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