

Orlando Bible Students Newsletter

Volume 18, Number 3

September 2015

A New Administration

From now on, through nearly the next fourteen months, the focus of our country will be centered on the presidential election process. Time, energy, and resources including financial means will be exhausted in an effort to secure new leadership for our country. Promises are being made, change is on the way, and the old failed way of doing things will supposedly give way to much better conditions. Many have great expectations concerning what type of new administration this soon to be elected president and his cabinet will bring. What will they accomplish? Will they indeed bring prosperity to our country? Will they bring lasting peace?

Our interest, as students of the Bible, however, is in the selection of the new administration spoken of in God's Word. It, too, requires an election process that is mentioned by the Apostle Peter when he says, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." (2 Pet. 1:10) This election, or more accurately stated as the "selection" by God, is found applied to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, "Israel mine elect." (Isa. 45:4) Since natural Israel is a type of spiritual Israel, this election applies to spiritual Israel, or the bride of Christ called during the present Gospel Age. The prophet also points to the Messiah saying, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."—Isa. 42:1

In the New Testament we find reference to this election, such as, "Put on therefore, as

the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (Col. 3:12); and "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" (Rom. 8:33) These are being selected by God to be "partakers of the heavenly calling." (Heb. 3:1) They are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." (1 Pet. 1:2) It is God who will complete the election process when, through Jesus, God will "send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven."—Mark 13:27

Thus will the work of election in the two harvests—the one closing the Jewish Age, and the other closing the Gospel Age—be concluded. The work of the new administration, which is the blessing of all the families of the earth, has been described as occurring when "the Sun of righteousness [representing Christ]" shall "arise with healing in his wings." (Mal. 4:2) It will bring joy, peace, and everlasting life to all who wish to live obediently on a restored, perfect earth. In Isaiah 9:6-9, *New International Version*, we read, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders. And he shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this."

To learn more, see our ad for the booklet *God Has a Plan* on the back page. ■

Abraham

Abraham is a key figure in Judaism, Christianity and even Islam. He is referenced more than 260 times in the Bible and over 70 times in the New Testament. He was born in the tenth generation from Noah through the lineage of Shem.

Originally named Abram, which means “high father,” he grew up in Ur of the Chaldees. (Gen. 11:28) When he was grown, God told him to travel to Canaan. Abram, Lot and their wives as well as Terah, Abram’s father, did as God commanded. When Abram was 99 years old, God changed his name to Abraham, which means “father of a multitude.” (chap. 17:5,6) At the same time, God promised that Abraham and his wife Sarah would have a son, Isaac.—vss. 15-19

Abraham was a man of many Bible firsts. He was the man first identified in the Scriptures as a prophet (chap. 20:7), although in Jude 14 Enoch (who came before him) is also identified as a prophet. He is also the first man described as a “Hebrew.” (Gen. 14:13) This is appropriate since he is described as the “father of many nations.” (chap. 17:5) Abraham is also described as the first man who put faith in Jehovah. (chap. 15:6) This is affirmed in Romans 4:11 where he is described as “the father of all them that believe.”

Abraham’s deep faith in God was characterized by his obedience throughout his life. He left Ur to move to Canaan. He acquiesced to God’s will when asked to offer Isaac as a “burnt offering.” (Gen. 22:2) His faith was rewarded when God intervened. Abraham pursued a strong enemy to rescue Lot’s family even though they were outnumbered. He willingly paid tithes to Melchizedek when he met Abraham returning from the victory over Lot’s enemies.

During his life, Abraham became a very wealthy man. He had great flocks, much silver and gold, and hundreds of servants. Despite his wealth, he was not materialistic, but he focused on doing God’s will. Abraham forbade idolatry within his household. Because of his faith in God and obedience to God, Abraham was described as a “friend of God.” (James 2:23) Truly, Abraham is a father figure in the Bible and is an example of faith down to our day. ■

Offering Isaac and God’s Oath

Genesis 22:1-9

God tested Abraham as to his faith while also picturing the sacrifice of His own Son. Isaac was Abraham’s loved and long-promised son through Sarah even as Jesus is God’s beloved and only begotten Son. Abraham was to offer his son in sacrifice. He had split the wood for the fire but took no animal with him for the burnt offering. Naturally, Isaac would ask his father, “Where is the burnt offering?” Abraham replied that God would provide the burnt offering. So it is, God provided Jesus as our burnt offering, just as in the account God provided a ram caught in the thicket by his horns. Isaac carried the wood, picturing Jesus carrying the cross. Abraham bound Isaac and placed him on the wood. His son did not resist even though he was a young man by this time. His sacrifice was voluntary just as was Jesus’.

Abraham would have killed his son had God not sent an angel to stop him. However, God did not prevent the death of His own Son for it was necessary for man’s redemption. Abraham
(Continued on next page)

The Patriarchal Age

When Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden for disobeying God's Word, all of mankind, Adam's progeny, from that moment on was cursed with sin and death. But all was not lost. God had a plan for the redemption of the human race, and the Scriptures say that he planned it even before the foundation of this world.—1 Pet. 1:20

However, during the period of sin and death, the world became very corrupt and full of sin and evilness continually. Angels came down and married women creating a hybrid race of giants. Genesis 6:6,7 says, "It repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." We see in verse 8, though, that a man named Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. We read that Noah and his family were saved by obeying God in building an Ark to protect them from the flood. We read in 2 Peter 3:6, the "world that then was" and every living thing was destroyed by that flood. When the flood waters receded, Noah and his family left the ark, and from this time a new age began, the Patriarchal Age.

Why was it called this? The word patriarch literally means "chief father," or head of a family. The patriarchs were favored ones that the Lord God dealt with individually to bring about his plans and purposes. As for Noah and his family, they became the second progenitors to multiply and replenish the Earth.—Gen 9:1,19

Along with Noah, other patriarchs include Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These three are recognized as the forefathers of the nation of Israel. Jacob's death brought an end to this Patriarchal Age which lasted for 659 years.

It was a very unique period of history when the Creator of this universe not only dealt with these individuals but made a covenant and an oath to Abraham to make of him a great nation (Israel), and through him and his "seed" bless all the families of the earth. Abraham's seed would be both spiritual, "stars of heaven" or Christ and his church, and earthly, "sand of the seashore" or Israel and all mankind. (Gen. 22:18) What a wonderful Heavenly Father! ■

Offering Isaac and God's Oath *(continued from previous page)*

called the place "The-Lord-Will-Provide." (vs. 14, *New King James Version*) God did provide His own Son to die on the cross.

Abraham's faith as exercised in obedience was rewarded by God. He was promised by God's oath that his descendants would be as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the seashore—a large number but also of a heavenly nature (stars) and of an earthly nature (sand). This oath was a reassurance of the promise that through Abraham all the families of the earth would be blessed.—Gen. 12:3

The seed pictured by Isaac is Christ Jesus. Paul writes that if we be Christ's then we also are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. (Gal. 3:16,26-29) For those who hope to be of the heavenly nature, God's oath is a strong encouragement. (Heb. 6:13-18) Those who have not the heavenly hope will have opportunity in the Millennium to become part of Abraham's earthly seed. "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." ■

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Calendar of Events

Orlando Bible Students Convention

October 24-25, 2015

South Seminole Lodge
122 Triplet Lake Drive
Casselberry, FL 32707

[Free admission, no collection]
For further information contact:

Orlando Bible Students
PO Box 180216, Casselberry, FL 32718-0216

Or contact us at our website:
www.orlandobible.org

The Orlando Bible Students is a non-denominational group that meets for Bible studies and devotions on Sunday mornings at the South Seminole Lodge, 122 Triplet Lake Drive, Casselberry, FL and in area homes during the week.
For further information call: (407) 695-6815

Special Offer

We would like to send you a complimentary copy of the booklet,

God Has a Plan

This booklet describes God's plan of salvation—a comprehensive plan for all mankind which will not fail! For your FREE booklet, call (407) 695-6815 and request a copy, or fill in your address below and mail this coupon to:

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