

## October 1<sup>st</sup>

*"it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 13:11).*

Abraham is called the friend of God in three different places in God's Word (Isaiah 41:8; 2 Chron.20:7; James 2:23). The Lord Jesus Christ said in John 15. v.15 that He wants His disciples to be His friends. He wants us to know all His heart's secrets, for friendship always becomes stronger as friends share the secrets of their hearts. In Genesis 18:17 God said before He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah: "How can I hide this secret from My friend Abraham?" God wants us to be such friends of His as to whom, when we come under His heavenly plan, He can reveal hidden mysteries. Because we enjoy such fellowship with God. (Matt 13:17) God intends that the things that are hidden from the wise and the prudent should be revealed to us. In 1 Peter.1:12 "the things which the angels desire to look into", refer to the mysteries which are hidden from the angels and God's prophets and great men. Yet which are revealed to those who become the friends of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord appeared ten times to Abraham from Genesis 10 onwards. In chapter 12 He appeared twice. At each appearance He revealed a secret of divine friendship. It is a step by step revelation ( Gen 12:1).

## October 2nd

*"Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." (John.15:19).*

To be true friends of the Lord Jesus Christ we must be delivered from all our old friendship and brought into new friendships. In john 15:19, we realize that we have been pulled out by God's mighty hand from the world, and worldly relations and friends, who cannot enjoy this friendship with God.

On many occasions the Lord said one word, or by one touch healed the sick. In the case in Mark 8:23, however, He led out the blind man by the hand, showing us by this example how to be a true disciple or friend. Till that day the blind man had been led by his relations or friends. But the day the Lord led him out, He was saying in effect: 'You must now let Me help you and lead you day by day.' So He took him out from old associations, not because He was afraid to perform the miracle, but for a purpose, the very same purpose for which Abraham had been compelled to leave his kith and kin, and all his friends, and had been given new relations. This is the first thing we have to learn if we want to enjoy God's divine friendship.

The Lord promised Abraham a sevenfold blessing in chapter 12:2-3; " I will make of thee a great nation: and I will bless thee. I will make thy name great. Thou shalt be a blessing. I will bless them that bless thee and curse them that curse thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This sevenfold blessing is intended for any person who desires to be a friend of God.

## October 3<sup>rd</sup>

*"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 them that curse thee, and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed". ( Gen 12:2-3).*

"I will make of thee a great nation." Once you are saved them through you. Many more may be saved; and through them one by one, many more again may be saved. We shall all become part of His family, and through our prayers, testimony, love, service and other means, others may be saved.

"I will bless thee." We begin to receive from God all kinds of eternal and special blessing day by day. Because of the new life and because of His love we have everlasting peace and everlasting joy, love and friendship.

"I will make thy name great." When a man dies he is forgotten completely. No matter how great he may be in this world, but a man who is born again, and all those who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, will, at death be welcomed in heaven as kings and priests.

"Thou shalt be a blessing." Others on earth will be comforted. Strengthened and encouraged through us.

"I will bless them that bless thee" means exactly what the promise says, and "curse them that curse thee," is a promise that He will not allow any weapon of the enemy to prosper against us.

"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." That promise indicates that we have a message to all the nations. Whenever the Lord may take us, we can give the same gospel and the same message. This sevenfold blessing is intended for everyone who is prepared to draw out from the world and worldly associations.

## October 4<sup>th</sup>

*"And the Lord appeared unto Abraham and said: Unto thy seed will I give this land". ( Gen 12:7 ).*

In verse seven, God again appeared to Abraham. Abraham was learning how to worship God. When he first obeyed God and left everything behind, the Lord appeared to him and taught him how to worship. Now by the altar he was learning the simple lesson that somebody had to die in his stead to make him righteous. The altar shows the death and the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He came to the world, to die in our stead, and for our sins, in order to make us righteous. The more we learn to worship God the more we will realize how high a price He had to pay in dying for us in order to make us righteous.

We do not become supernatural when we are born again. We have to face human problems. Our bodies remain as bodies of clay and we are to face trials, sorrow, sufferings, sickness and all kinds of disappointments, yet we find God continues to protect us all the time. ( 1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 2:9; Psa 24:7 ). We need to remember, whenever we find ourselves in great danger, temptations and trials die to human weakness that the Lord knows how to protect us.

We often find in the beginning of any new path that we are full of fears, but the Lord in his grace and mercy protects and saves us from these fears. We have to be faithful to Him and trust Him and obey Him, and then we discover a step by step growth in spiritual life and faith.

## October 5<sup>th</sup>

*"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me" ( Matt. 10.37,38).*

The Lord Jesus Christ said in John 15 of those who believe in Him, 'I have not called you servants but I have called you friends' because He wants to give us all the things which He received from His Father. As we begin to grow spiritually we will enjoy our friendship with our Lord Jesus Christ and will talk to Him very freely, and tell him all our secrets, and He will also talk to us lovingly and show us many new things day by day. We are reminded in Matt 11:25 that the things that are hid from the wise and prudent are revealed to babes.

Within a period of forty years God appeared to Abraham ten times. At every appearance He revealed a new secret of divine friendship, in fact, these appearances can be regarded as ten steps of divine friendship. We have already seen in chapter 12 how God appeared twice to Abraham. The third time God commanded Abraham to leave the country and go to a new country, but God did not tell Lot to go with Abraham. Only because of human sympathy Abraham agreed to take Lot with him. But after awhile there came a strife between Lot's servants and Abraham's ( Gen 13:7 ). Human affections always lead to strife, and we must remember that every affection must be sanctified by the Lord Jesus, whether it be affection for husband, wife, children, parents, brothers, sisters or relations. Unless it is sanctified, it will one day bring trouble.

## October 6<sup>th</sup>

*"Whosoever shall do the will of my father which is in heaven the same is my brother and sister, and mother" ( Matt 12:50).*

How often we find people who prefer to love their relations than to do the will of God. They think: 'How can we leave so and so? How can we hurt so and so? How can we wound so and so? At the same time they grieve the holy Spirit by going against the will of God.

It is quite clear that Lot had no desire for heavenly things because when Abraham asked him to choose the land which lay before him, Lot chose a good land not far from Sodom and Gomorrah ( V 10 ) Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent towards Sodom. Lot knew the condition of Sodom and Gomorrah at that time. It was not a secret. The cities were well known everywhere for their wickedness and shame. Abraham said to Lot: "If you go to the right, I will go to the left and if you go to the left, I will go to the right."

Lot chose a place not very far from Sodom and Gomorrah. He was attracted by the fertility of the land. He might have thought " I am not inside Sodom and Gomorrah. I am going to live outside." But in chapter 19:1 he was inside Sodom. In those days the elders of that city came to the gate for judgment, and soon he was made an elder of that city. He probably intended to live outside the city, and possibly thought that he could do some good when the men of Sodom and Gomorrah requested him to be an elder.

## October 7<sup>th</sup>

*"Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not". (Jer 45:5).*

We can see clearly what was in the heart of Lot. He desired popularity and when he became more wealthy he also became more ambitious for name and fame. Many believers in the same way become ambitious for name, power and authority. They are also anxious to become leading men in the assembly, not because they have spiritual concern but because they want a name. Please take warning, and do not let worldly prosperity deceive you. What God gives in His own time is far better than earthly riches.

We see in Gen 12:1 that even though Abraham had to make a very big sacrifice in leaving Ur of the Chaldeans, yet God had some other way to compensate him. He did not have to go to Sodom and Gomorrah to get more cattle and money. God in His own way began to supply his need. So we believers should not adopt worldly ways or methods to get more money or income, for God has His own way to give us what we need.

We are told in verse 14 that after Lot was separated from him, God appeared to Abraham. After he had obeyed God and separated from Lot, the Lord gave Abraham further instructions. He said to him, "Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward; for all the land that thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed". (V 14-15). God was showing to Abraham more and more what kind of an inheritance He had for him and for his seed.

## October 8<sup>th</sup>

*"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psalm 16:11.*

It is only as our attention is enlarged that we can understand spiritual things. God told Abraham to look northward, southward, eastward and westward, and to walk through the length and breadth of the land to claim His inheritance by faith. God said in effect: 'I am going to give you an inheritance which can not be measured by any human measurement.

For us also, it is only by our spiritual enlargement that we can know and measure the inheritance God has given us. God was showing Abraham that it was only through fellowship with God, that is, with the living God, that he could understand God's ways. It is different to spend time with the living God, because your feelings and thoughts trouble you, or they are wandering here and there. Yet it means refreshing and blessing to have time with the living God ( Isaiah 40:31) , and by true fellowship with the living and loving God you become stronger and stronger.

The Lord met Abraham at Hebron. There he was building an altar by which he began to thank God for making him righteous. The more we worship God the more we enjoy true fellowship. Say to Him : ' Oh Lord I have no request other than I want to be with thee and thy presence. I want to stay in thy presence just to feel that thou art with me. Such a fellowship will inspire you and God will be able to show you what He wants you to do, according to His own will.

## October 9<sup>th</sup>

*"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends". ( John 15:15).*

The Lord wants us to enjoy His friendship and to share His secrets just as two friends who are very close to each other are able to share each other's secrets. To be able to do this we must learn to speak to Him freely and hear His voice clearly every day. We must be led by Him in every detail of our life. If day by day we spend our quite time prayerfully we will find the Lord Jesus Christ speaking to us from His Word, and showing us many secret things, which are hidden from the wise and prudent. But to gain friendship our response to Him must be a true one.

Now in chapter 14 God revealed Himself to Abraham for the fourth time, this time in Melchizedek as a type. At that time Abraham was returning from fighting and defeating the enemies of the King of Sodom. Abraham rescued Lot and his family and his goods and the people with him ( V 16). At the same time he rescued the King of Sodom and his men.

The king of Sodom was extremely thankful to Abraham for rescuing his men and all his property. He came to Abraham and said generously: "Give me the persons and take the goods to yourself." This could have been a very big temptation to Abraham but God had prepared him for it, when he spoke to him through Melchizedek.

## October 10<sup>th</sup>

*"Jesus Said unto them: I am the bread of Life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger: and he that believeth on me shall never thirst". ( John 6:35).*

As we see from Hebrews 7:13 Melchizedek was a high priest of the most high God, " Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning nor end of life but made like unto the Son of God. He abideth a priest continually". Melchizedek brought bread and wine with him and blessed Abraham. This was a spiritual food which Abraham needed to overcome temptation. In this way Melchizedek becomes a type of our Lord Jesus Christ who has become both our bread of Life, and our great high priest.

The thought that our Lord Jesus Christ is our bread of Life is repeated seven times from John 6:48 onwards. Just as we drink water when we are thirsty and eat food when we are hungry so also we eat and drink our Lord Jesus Christ when we are spiritually hungry and thirsty. In this way we can conquer any temptation. All of us are subjected to many temptations every day and God has made for us a loving provision of victory by making our Lord Jesus Christ our daily bread and drink.

Abraham was tired and wary after his long march finally to overtake the enemy and fight with them. Abraham did not refuse the goods because he was rich and did not need them, but because he wanted to show that he was holly and solely dependent on God for all his needs. This is the first thought.

## October 11<sup>th</sup>

*"My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus". (Phil. 4:19).*

Abraham refused to defile himself with the defiled things of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. This is the second thought. That is why he refused to take thread or shoe-laces or even a piece of bread. It is when we are very hungry and thirsty that we have many temptations. We get doubts about trusting God for all our needs.

Some servants of God say that they serve God but, by means of letters and photos. They beg for money. For this reason they send reports of their work. They want more and more money. They are not satisfied. So they remain in want and remain barren spirituality. But if you just trust God he will provide you with all your wants even to your shoelaces. Don't go to the King of Sodom for help, for this is how many believers lose their faith. To get a job or promotion they go to worldly people and use worldly methods, or trust their aunts and uncles for money for their marriages.

It was to enable Abraham to withstand the temptation of accepting the offer of the King of Sodom that he received spiritual food, and, being strengthened he was able to conquer temptation when it came. In these days of food shortage in India there is the temptation to send reports to America or other countries. What hypocrisy! Such deceive themselves and others, and lose faith in God. But if we honor God as did Abraham, God will honor us, and supply all our needs.

## October 12<sup>th</sup>

*"The Lord came unto Abraham in a vision, saying: Fear not, Abraham: I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great reward". (Gen 15:1).*

In Genesis 15 we have the fifth appearance of our Lord to Abraham, when the Lord appeared to Abraham in order to test his faith. In "the whole armor of God" we are given a shield of faith ( Eph 6:16); for it is only by a strong living faith that we can defeat the enemy. In Mark 11:11 the Lord Himself calls it the faith of God, as we can see in the margin. In Galatians 2:20 it is described as the faith of the Son of God. It is only as we are indwelt by God Himself that we can have strong faith. God said to Abraham in this vision in Genesis 15; 'Abraham, believe Me and My Word'.

God said further: "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward". In Psalm 84:11 God is described as a "Sun and Shield". The reward depends on faith. Without real active faith, we cannot receive a reward. The Lord uses suffering and trials to give us faith (I Peter 1:7). God had spoken so clearly to Abraham, yet it was childless he went about to make his will leaving his property to his chief steward. God appeared to him to save him from making a mistake. Because of our limitations we often have many doubts. Sometimes we may have strong faith but doubts return to trouble us, and God in His love and mercy intervenes again and again.

## October 13<sup>th</sup>

*"Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom 4:3).*

God Himself appeared to Abraham at the right time. He called him outside and said to him: "Look heavenward, Abraham. Don't look at yourself, or your wife, or your limitations, or your wife's limitations. Don't look at circumstances but look upward, and then your faith will become strong. Look heavenward and count the number of stars. So shall your seed be".

Till today nobody knows the number of stars. They are so many and so far away. God knew he could not count the stars, but He purposed to strengthen his faith, and it is only by looking upward that we can have faith. The enemy will make us look downward, upon our limitations, our shortcomings, or our failures. Our eyes should be constantly on Him, and we must take hold of His promises by faith(V 5-8).

Jeremiah 34:18 throws some light on this passage. In those days when two parties had to make an agreement, they would take an animal and slay it and divide it into two parts. Both the parties would pass between the parts of the animal, thus making a promise that could not be broken. In the same way God was making a covenant with Abraham; He told him to take three animals and two birds (V 10,15,17) and slay them, and cut them into two parts. Then the Lord caused a burning lamp to pass between those pieces, thus making an unbreakable covenant with Abraham (Vs 13-17).

## October 14<sup>th</sup>

*"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God" (Rom 4:20).*

Abraham was listening to God, and God was able to tell him beforehand how his seed as a nation would be in Egypt for four hundred years and would return to the land in the fourth generation. God was thus giving the Amorites and Hittites, the people of the land, four centuries in which to repent of their sins. If they would not repent of their sins, they would be judged. Leviticus 18:23,25 is a description of the defilement of the land, when the children of Israel returned to it out of the land of Egypt. God had waited for four centuries for the nations living there to repent, but because they did not repent they had to be judged. God told the children of Israel to destroy all the cities utterly, and their inhabitants.

The Lord Jesus Christ today has made a covenant with us through His own blood, and by that covenant we possess His inheritance. At the same time we will be used by Him to judge other powers (I Cor 6:2,3). For such a privilege we must be given a strong active faith, a faith that overcomes doubts, and listens and obeys when He speaks to us.

## October 15<sup>th</sup>

*"And being not weak in faith he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb... being fully persuaded that What He had promised, He was able also to perform".(Rom 4:19,21).*

At each appearance God revealed to Abraham something of the tenfold secret of divine friendship a step by step revelation. If you have steps in your home you will not jump over them, but climb them step by step. So it was with Abraham. God appeared twice to him in Genesis 12, then in chapters 13,14 and 15. chapter 17 records the sixth time He appeared to Abraham when he was 99 years old and past the age when a man could expect a son. Both he and his wife had become like dry trees. At that time he had to believe that through he was old and his wife equally old, God was able to fulfill his promise ( Romans 4:19-24).

It was only at this time Abraham got real faith, and for this kind of faith in him God had been waiting for 25 years. When God first appeared to him he had faith, but it was not a strong faith, (Heb 11:8). He obeyed God and straightaway left his country, kith and kin, and went away to a strange and new country. Even though it required much sacrifice and faith to obey like this, God was not satisfied. Step by step He was preparing Abraham for a stronger faith till he and his wife had become too old for child-bearing. Until God put new life into their bodies they could not have a child. That was the great secret of faith through which they understood something of the power of resurrection; and by that same power we can also conquer our temptations.

## October 16<sup>th</sup>

*"The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, through it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ". (I Peter 1:7).*

We find the apostle Paul in Philippi saying with desire, "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection". Even though he had seen many miracles performed through his ministry during the past years, and though God had worked through him mightily, yet he was saying here in his old age "I count all things but loss... that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection," which is the highest power available to believers. Many believers go on scheming and planning for many years, seeking to have power in their lives. They think that by seeing dreams, or by having certain experiences and visions they will obtain power. But they still remain weak. They do not realize that the power of resurrection is at their disposal. If we believe that our Lord Jesus Christ died on our stead for our sins, and also believe that He rose again for our justification and to live in us by his Holy Spirit, then by faith we can receive into us day by day the power of resurrection for every situation, every temptation and every need.

To give us such a faith the Lord will take us through many painful situations and trials. We see that thought in I Peter 1:7,11. Gold has to be refined by fire. It cannot be cleansed by soap and water. The gold is brought to the refining fire again and again till every little impurity is burnt away. In the same way to deliver us from doubts and unbelief we have to go through refining fires.

## October 17<sup>th</sup>

*"That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings being made conformable unto His death". ( Phil 3:10).*

Unless we have faith to appropriate the power of His resurrection day by day, the Lord is not satisfied. Paul said in Galatians 2:20, "Christ liveth in me", because He is the living Christ who conquered that lives in us to conquer our temptations every day, by faith in the power of His resurrection. Even though the Ephesians were taught by Paul and Apollos and Timothy, yet Paul prayed for them (Eph 1:16-20) that they might know the exceeding greatness of God's power, even the same power that God wrought in Christ when He was raised from the dead. In Ephesians 1:3 he says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." For such a blessing we must know how to receive into us the power of His resurrection, and to gain that knowledge and faith, the Lord will take us through trials, and sufferings, hardships and difficulties.

Just as God appeared ten times to Abraham, so the Lord appeared ten times to His disciples after the resurrection. He first appeared to Mary at the sepulcher, then to the men, and then to Peter, then to the disciples on the way to Emmaus and in the evening to all the disciples in the upper room. Then He appeared to five hundred, then to James, then to Thomas, then at the sea of Galilee, then at Bethany when He went to heaven.

## October 18<sup>th</sup>

*"Is anything too hard for the Lord". (Gen 18:14).*

We find it very helpful if we study these appearances together, that is the appearances of God to Abraham and the appearances of the Lord to His disciples. In Genesis 17:1 the Lord said: "I am the Almighty God". This He said to enable Abraham to enjoy God's mighty power. "I am the Almighty God; there is nothing too hard for Me". Nothing is impossible with God; He can do all things. The God of love and mercy wants us to have the faith that can experience and enjoy the power of Christ's resurrection.

God was saying as it were: "I am the Almighty God and I am going to pour power into you" (Vs 2 and 6). Abraham was asking for one son at the most. But the Lord said to him: "I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee." Apart from this experience Abraham would never have known what was in the heart of God for him. Even so in our sufferings we will never know what God has in His heart for us, how much God wants to give us. It is only by faith we can realize our blessings. The devil tries to weaken our faith again and again. Rather than trust God we look to man for everything, and that is why we find servants of God suffering everywhere.

## October 19<sup>th</sup>

*"Strengthened with all might according to His glorious power". (Col 1:11).*

We have got to prove that our God is an Almighty God. The one whom we believe and preach is a living Christ, and one who is willing to give us everything. Because God wanted to reveal the power of resurrection in Abraham He came to make a covenant with him (V 11). Colossians 1:11 says: "strengthened with all might;" Abraham did not get a child by human strength, for he and his wife were very old. God had to put new life into both their bodies. That is the power of resurrection, the death-conquering power of divine life. It is by that power they were able to get a child. By faith we receive that power by appropriating it for every trial and temptation and test. The same Lord who died for us, and who comes to live in us, can give us that power.

All of us have the same problems. The enemy creates in our minds doubts in many circumstances, but God lovingly keeps on rebuking and helping us, God knows our human limitations (Gen 17:17), so He sends messengers again and again to give us strong faith and to take away our fears and doubts ( Psalm 103:4).

## October 20<sup>th</sup>

*"And he lift up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him; and when he saw them he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground".(Gen 18:2).*

In Genesis 18:1 the Lord appeared to Abraham for the seventh time, this time in the plains of Mamre. According to Genesis 13:18 Mamre is Hebron, and Hebron means fellowship. Now Abraham had learned the privilege of enjoying that fellowship with God. In chapter 18:1 we see Abraham sitting in his tent door with great expectation. He is not happy exactly, but expectant. He is looking forward to something. As you grow spiritually you may be given admonition of coming events. There is something in the heart that will warn you to be on the lookout. In this way we are prepared beforehand.

When God began to talk to Abraham alone, Abraham recognized that he was talking to God, though He had disguised Himself as an angel. Though they came as ordinary men Abraham welcomed them with great joy. In genesis 18:6, with what great joy Abraham ran to the herd and brought in a young calf. He told his wife to take three measures of fine flour. Now one measure of flour is enough for ten people, but they prepared food for nearly thirty people. Though he had but three guests, his joy was so great that he wanted his whole family to have fellowship together. Whatever he could prepare he prepared in abundance, and they came to him with great joy.

## October 21<sup>st</sup>

*"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb 13:2).*

Though the two men appeared to Lot as angels, yet what a half-hearted welcome he gave them. Lot knew that these men were angels, but he stood where he was to welcome them. He gives them no mention of food, though he gives them water to wash their feet. He told the angels. "You stay here and go away in the morning" (Gen 19:2).

However, the angels said: "We will abide in the street" (Gen 19:2). They were quite willing to stay in the street all night because of the half-hearted welcome given by Lot. They knew that the wife and children of Lot were not of one mind with him, and therefore the angels were not willing to go inside, so Lot had to press them to do so.

We read that Lot himself "baked unleavened bread, and they did eat." Lot had chosen to stay very near Sodom. The result was that his own people became full of worldly pleasures. Many believers lose their joy and happiness because they are attracted by worldly honor and wealth and glamour. Abraham received those guests because he thought they were God's messengers. He received them as strangers at first. That should be our attitude also: to receive even strangers in His name with great joy.

## October 22<sup>nd</sup>

*"And the Lord said: shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" Gen 18:17.*

The Lord appeared to Abraham to strengthen his faith. The Lord said: "Sarah, thy wife, shall have a son". Sarah laughed within herself saying: "After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my Lord being old also?" The Lord asked: "Why did Sarah laugh?" God knew beforehand that doubt would come into their minds, so He came lovingly to take away their doubts.

In Genesis 18:16 Abraham walked with the men. Then the two men went on to Sodom and the Lord stayed behind to talk with Abraham personally. He said: "Abraham is my friend. I know him and I cannot hide any secret from him. I have watched him and I know how he looks after his family. Now I am going to tell him My heart's secret. My time has come to judge the men of Sodom and Gomorrah". Abraham stood before the Lord while the angels went on to Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Lord Jehovah talked to Abraham alone. As the friend of Abraham He talked freely with him. He did not send His angels to speak to Abraham but came in person to do so. Here God is saying, "I will talk to Abraham myself. I have an important matter to talk with him."

## October 23<sup>rd</sup>

*"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you". John 15:14.*

What a privilege we have, what a great honor to be His friends. Just imagine, the Lord Himself coming to talk with us. But first we have to be tested and approved to be worthy of this privilege. In Genesis 18:19 the Lord said: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him". So the Lord had been watching Abraham and his household all this time; how he had been giving God's message to the whole family faithfully. Every family should have family prayer regularly. If we will teach our children God's Word regularly and faithfully we too can become God's friends and that which is hidden from the angels will be revealed to us. When God told Abraham about the coming events, Abraham interceded for the men of Sodom and Gomorrah. He gained boldness as God's friend. We can also have boldness and liberty to intercede for others, and to claim grace and mercy for those who are in darkness. Thus we can become God's co-workers. (V.33).

The Lord had no desire to share His secret with Lot, because Lot had grieved Him by preferring to stay near Sodom and Gomorrah. If any one of us, like Lot, prefers worldly pleasure and honor, the Lord will not come to us nor reveal to us His secrets. Let us take warning, lest the things of this world are more to us than the promises of God.

## October 24<sup>th</sup>

*"Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." Gal 4:30.*

When Sarah saw Ishmael mocking Isaac she told Abraham (Gen 21:10) "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." This was grievous to Abraham. Because of his natural affection for Ishmael, Abraham felt hurt and wounded when he heard these words. Then God appeared to him again, for the eighth time.

In chapter 21:10 we see Abraham being governed by human affection. Having learnt her own bitter lesson Sarah says, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son". Not all who are called Christians have part in the inheritance of the saints in light. Nominal Christians no matter how good they may be outwardly, have absolutely no share in it. They depend upon their own righteousness for salvation.

Even though Abraham had a great love for Ishmael, Ishmael had no share in God's kingdom. He was born of the flesh but Isaac was born of the Spirit. The Lord had put new life into the body of Abraham before Isaac was born. So Isaac is a type of the power of resurrection in the Bible. Unless we receive by experience the power of resurrection we have no share whatsoever in God's kingdom. Make sure to which group you belong: whether to that of Ishmael or to that of Isaac.

## October 25<sup>th</sup>

*Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. <sup>22</sup> And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. Mark 10:21, 22.*

A man of God was staying in a certain place for a Gospel Campaign. He was staying with a very nice Christian family. When he was going away from that place he prayed, "Lord, give me a message for my host and hostess. They have been so good to me, so please give me a very nice message." God gave him the message and it was, "One thing thou lackest". The man of God said, "Lord, they have been so good to me. How can I give them such a message?" the more he prayed the more the same message was given to him again and again: "One thing thou lackest" (Luke 18:22). He did not have the courage to say this directly to his host and hostess. So he wrote it on a piece of paper and pinned out on to the window curtain. Then he came downstairs, and thanked his host and hostess, and went away; after he had left the lady of the house went up the window curtain. She read the words, "One thing thou lackest" and called her husband. "These are the final words of the man of God to us," she exclaimed. So they both knelt down by the window and prayed, "O God; show us the meaning of these words left for us by the man of God".

When they prayed like this God showed them the meaning, how till that day they were not born again, but were depending on their own good works for their righteousness. They had not yet received by experience the Lord Jesus as their Savior.

## October 26<sup>th</sup>

*"Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die. <sup>10</sup> But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips". Job 2:9:10.*

Now Abraham was in great spiritual danger at that time because he was being governed by human affection for Ishmael. So God appeared to him and told him to hearken to his wife for whatever she said was very important. Many parents, wives, husbands and children disobey God because of love for someone else. This human affection must be brought under subjection to God's affection. Though this subjection is very painful it is very safe. Abraham had to send his son away from him and God would not have appeared to him if he had not obeyed him. Though it was very grievous to Abraham, yet he obeyed God. It is very painful at times to obey God's word and God's command, but Abraham was open to God's rebuke. The purpose for which God appeared to Abraham in chapter 21 was to show us how to be governed by the Spirit at all times and never by the flesh.

It you want to be God's friend never allow anyone to come in the way of obeying God, not father, mother, brother, sister, children, friend or wife. In a subtle way the enemy will bring before you these objects of affection, and sometimes cause a wife or child to start weeping to hinder you from doing God's will.

## October 27<sup>th</sup>

*"And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. <sup>3</sup> And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him." Gen 22:2, 3.*

Tell me honestly and truthfully, have you not disobeyed God on occasions when your loved ones began to weep as they heard that you wanted to obey God? This is why many have not obeyed God's call for service. Similarly many have refused to go when God wanted them to go somewhere else. Some have refused to take baptism. Others have not given God what He demanded from them. Tears of loved ones have been the cause of disobedience, and the Lord has had to speak to you and rebuke you. However loving and lovable that person may be, you cannot love anyone more than God. God's Word says, "Whosoever loveth father and mother, husband and wife more than me is not worthy of me".

Having passed the test, Abraham was able to go through another test. He had been on the point of making a mistake in connection with Hagar and Ishmael, but God spoke to him and he obeyed. Then came a very severe test in chapter 22. So God appeared to him the ninth time, in the same year as the happening in Genesis 22. These were also a temptation for Sarah anything about God's demand of Isaac.

Abraham knew by experience the danger of telling his wife Sarah certain things. He knew that if he told Sarah that God had asked him to sacrifice Isaac she would immediately start weeping and say: "O my son Isaac, my only son, surely God won't ask such a thing from us". So, guided by the Holy spirit, Abraham took Isaac away without saying anything about the whole matter to Sarah."

## October 28<sup>th</sup>

*"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." Gen 22:18.*

The ram in chapter 22 was brought there by God Himself. There was no fear that the ram would run away. God had brought it there, and Abraham found it caught in a thicket by its horns. Why did God ask Abraham to sacrifice the ram? For a purpose that ram was caught in the thickest. God was telling Abraham as it were: "Now Abraham, you have obeyed My voice fully. Without any question or hesitation you offered your son on the altar. So like the ram caught in the bush I am caught to you and bound to you. You will now command Me and I will obey you". What a mystery! God bound to Abraham! You don't realize what a privilege it is to obey God; that it is your right to do so. As we obey God whole-heartedly we can command God. "Command ye Me," He says in Isaiah 45:11. Then He will listen to you.

This is the tenth and last time that God appeared to Abraham. See the blessing God gave to Abraham this time. "Since you have heard My voice and obeyed Me I am bound to you and you can command me. I am at your service". It is a heavenly mystery. As we obey God fully we become worthy of God's whole kingdom (Gen 22:17 last part): "And thy seed shall possess the gate of thy enemies." It is God's purpose to give us the whole kingdom, victory over our enemies, and dominion over His works. "Fear not little flock, it is the father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

## October 29<sup>th</sup>

*"Thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac" Gen 24:4.*

Abraham gave a solemn warning to his servant, when he put him in charge of finding a wife for his son (Gen 24:3). "I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of the heaven and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife fir my son of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell."

This is the first warning to believers. You cannot be joined with unbelievers (2 Corin 6:14), and this is the first thing you must keep in mind. Abraham gave his servant a very solemn warning against the daughters of the Canaanites. He was to be guided step by step by divine wisdom. We see from the scriptures that Abraham's servant depended upon God for every detail. He did not set about this business by going to this person and that person in this matter (V.12). He applied a big test to make sure of God's will. If he had depended on human wisdom he would have first made sure that the girl belonged to a suitable family.

But he did not have any such considerations in his mind. He thought only of God's will in this matter, and prayed with great faith, which goes to prove that he was a man of prayer and very spiritual. He knew how to make sure of God's will. He was not governed by his own judgment or feelings.

## October 30<sup>th</sup>

*"And they called Rebecca, and said unto her; Wilt thou go with this man? And she said I will go". (Gen 24:58).*

Eliezer put a very big test to the Lord (Vs 13, 14). "Behold I stand at the well of water.... And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say: Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink, and she shall say: drink and I will give thy camels drink also; let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac." The servant had ten camels with him. Camels drink five large pots of water each: and the girl had to undertake to draw water for ten camels. What a big task! Only God could make such a test a success.

Now we can see the divine wisdom given to Eliezer. A girl who could draw water for ten camels would have to be a girl with a large, willing and tender heart. Eliezer was in search of a girl who was both humble and willing. Being a spiritual man he was looking for a spiritual girl. Rebecca was such a girl. When her parents wanted her to stay for a longer time with them before going to Abraham's house, she refused and was willing to go with the servant immediately (V.59). When she knew from him how the Lord had led him step by step, she knew that she was God's choice for Isaac, so she went with Eliezer without questioning.

## October 31<sup>st</sup>

*"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor 6:14).*

Rebecca was a spiritual woman. She knew how to find God's will. These things show that God gave divine wisdom to Eliezer to make the proper choice. If you want to find a partner for your daughter, your son, or yourself, please ask for divine wisdom, grace and help. Apply every test to know God's will, and don't be governed by your feelings or wisdom or judgment.

In Genesis 24:63 we read that Isaac went out to meditate or pray, in the field. While Eliezer was looking for a bride for him, Isaac was praying about the matter in the field. He must have been praying. 'O Lord, guide Eliezer so that he is able to make the right choice for me.' Abraham prayed. Eliezer prayed and Isaac prayed, and this is how they found God's will. Let this be your example. Do not make any mistakes in this matter, for the question of choosing the right partner is a very important and big matter. Many believing parents, as well as the young people themselves make mistakes in this, and when it is too late, they suffer. Look around at the many unhappy homes and take warning.