

## Chapter XXIX

# ISAAC

### My Covenant Will I Establish with Isaac.

(Gen.17:21.)

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac:

And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Pandan-aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian.—

Gen.25:19,20.

Long before he was born, Isaac, the child of promise, was destined to exemplify the idea of divine Sonship in the unfolding of the Trinity, just as Abraham and Sarah had been destined to exemplify the idea of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, the Triune God Himself. Isaac's life as a child was an integral part of the unfolding of the divine completeness in Abraham's and Sarah's lives. His boyhood and young manhood exemplified the nature of divine Sonship which had been revealed to them. But in the divine plan, it was not enough that Isaac should remain the beloved son of Abraham and Sarah. He must grow to spiritual maturity, to that measure of development which embodies and expresses the divine nature of the Son of God. Isaac's life must be a continuing exemplification of the spiritual unfoldment of man's divine completeness, revealed in the Trinity.

Although Isaac's divine adventure begins with the Covenant promise of his conception and continues through his birth, his childhood, his trial on Mount Moriah — all of which was a part of Abraham's and Sarah's spiritual unfoldment — the Isaac saga, as it is called, properly begins with his marriage. In the divine plan, Isaac's marriage, like Abraham's, symbolizes the divine completeness, the union of the male and female of God's creating, revealed in the sixth day of creation, or the sixth period of spiritual unfoldment of the divine nature in man and the universe:

God [*Elohim*, the divine Father-Mother] created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.— Gen.1:27.

In the union of the masculine and feminine qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God there is spiritual strength, completeness, success, fulfillment. In the final analysis, each one must express the compound nature of our Father-Mother God. Each individual embodies all the qualities of the divine Father-Mother and inherits all the glories of the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, both the male and female of the species can and must express the power and authority and dominion of *Elohim*, the Triune God Himself. The Almighty, the All-might of *El Shaddi*, the Motherhood of *Elohim*, will see to that — as the true mother sees to it that her children develop their full potential. But in the metaphor of the Bible and of the unfoldment of the Trinity in Isaac's life, this divine completeness is symbolized by the marriage covenant.

Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife. Twenty years have gone since that joyful day. During this time we have heard nothing from him. The absence of any record of unfoldment indicates that a human sense of well being had literally halted his spiritual development. It would seem that he was satisfied with the status quo. His human goodness was and is unquestioned. But he appeared to have no idea of the tremendous significance of his holy mission. And then we learn that Rebekah is barren (Gen.25:21).

Inasmuch as this is Isaac's story, the record of his spiritual unfoldment, his wife's barrenness is indication of the fact that Isaac's consciousness was barren of the understanding of the nature of God as The Almighty, *El Shaddi*. He did not understand the All-might of the Motherhood of God. Rebekah's barrenness also indicates that Isaac's consciousness was barren of the understanding of his wife's place in the Covenant. Recall that it was the understanding of the nature of the Almighty Motherhood of *Elohim* which had healed the barrenness in Abraham's consciousness, established Sarah as co-equal with Abraham in the Covenant, released her from the sense of barrenness, and revealed to her the power of divine conception.

The temptation which had come to Abraham and Sarah when they feared that Abraham would have no heir had been to follow the custom of the land, that a barren wife give her bondmaid to

her husband, the child of that union becoming the child of the wife by adoption. However Isaac and Rebekah did not succumb to this temptation. They sought divine help. We read that Isaac prayed for Rebekah:

And Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.— Gen.25:21.

Isaac intreated *the Lord*. This primitive concept of Deity as *Lord, Jehovah*, which had led Abraham out of Chaldea, led Isaac to look away from human ways and means to solve what appeared to be an insurmountable problem. Isaac did not yet know God as The Almighty, which knowledge would have revealed to him the power, the All-might, of the Motherhood of God which Rebekah embodied; but Isaac and Rebekah understood in some measure the spiritual fact that God's Covenant promise — that the seed of Abraham would multiply and fill the earth — must be fulfilled by and through the will of God and not the will of man. They had faith that what God promises He is able to perform. And this faith and understanding was sufficient to break the mesmerism of impotence and lack of fulfillment in Isaac's consciousness and to free Rebekah from the barrenness of mortal womanhood. And we read that Rebekah conceived twins:

And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? and she went to inquire of the Lord.

And the Lord said unto 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.—Gen.25:22,23.

*Dummelow (P.32)* suggests this translation or interpretation of the message Rebekah received: "From the womb they shall be at variance." *Dummelow* also suggests that when Rebekah went to inquire of the Lord concerning the struggle going on within her, she inquired of God through Abraham, her father-in-law, who lived nearby in Hebron. It is natural to suppose that this is true, for throughout his sojourn on earth, Abraham was both priest and king unto God — the spiritual leader of his family and titular head

of his clan. Further, Abraham was known as a prophet — he saw through the material evidence to the spiritual fact of whatever was before him.

It is also natural to assume that Isaac accompanied Rebekah. It was most unnatural for a woman of that day to go anywhere unaccompanied. In fact *Josephus* records that it was Isaac who inquired of God to learn what the struggle within Rebekah signified (Book I, Chap.xviii,p.52). So both Isaac and Rebekah heard the message that within Rebekah's womb were two manner of people, two nations, two nativities, who would be at variance from their birth. Further, they were both told plainly that the elder would serve the younger — that not the elder but the younger would have the dominion, or authority, of the firstborn and by divine right have the birthright of the elder son. It would seem, however, that Rebekah, not Isaac, heard, or felt within herself, acceptance of the word of the divine *Ego*. From events which developed later in their story, it would appear that the *I AM* had written its message in the very fiber of her being. And she did not forget it!

### The Birth of Jacob and Esau

And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled,  
behold, there were twins in her womb.

And the first came out red, all over like an hairy  
garment; and they called his name Esau.

And after that came his brother out, and his hand  
took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called  
Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she  
bare them.— Gen.25:24-26.

*Two sons! Two covenants!* Recall St. Paul's words concerning Abraham's two sons — an allegory which half conceals, half reveals, a spiritual truth:

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the  
one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

But he who was of the bondwoman was born after  
the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

Which things are an allegory: for these are the two  
covenants;

But as then he that was born after the flesh  
persecuted him which was born after the Spirit, even  
so it is now.— Gal.4:22-24,29.

These things are still an allegory, and it is as an allegory that we must understand them. Abraham's two sons had different mothers; even so, it was difficult for Abraham to discern or to accept the truth that Ishmael, his first-born son, was not the one chosen of God to establish the new nation of God's appointing. Isaac's sons had the same mother. It was therefore doubly difficult for Isaac to accept the divine decree that the elder son should serve the younger.

The Oriental tradition of favoritism of the elder son must have been so ingrained in Isaac that he either misunderstood or ignored the divine message concerning his two sons. But the word of the Lord, Omniscience itself, which came to Rebekah and to Isaac, shows clearly that the younger was the child of promise, in whom the promises of God could be fulfilled, and the elder was the child of the flesh, in whom the divine nature of man would not come to fruition. Omniscience, the all-knowing divine Mind foresaw the way in which these two sons would develop and knew that the elder son would not accept the strict spiritual discipline demanded of one through whom a divine purpose would unfold.

Never forget: while these things are historically true, they are an allegory through which the pattern of the Trinity is revealed. With the birth of his sons, their development blends with Isaac's and at times seems to overshadow his unfoldment. It would seem that this beloved child of promise was unmindful of the divine purpose unfolding in the birth of his sons, even as God's plan had unfolded in his own birth.

We have evidence that from the time of their birth Isaac was mesmerized by the tempter regarding the character and the mission of the two children. He did not give either of them names which had spiritual meaning. Esau's name means *red*. He was named thus simply because at birth he was "red all over like an hairy garment." According to many Bible dictionaries, Jacob's name means *heel-catcher*, derived from a verb meaning trip up, overreach, grasping for place, because when he was born "his hand took hold on Esau's heel." However, *Harper's Bible Dictionary* adds this pertinent information:

The name *Jacob* — *Yakub* — a later interpretation of *Yaquub-el*, is an extremely old name meaning probably God protects, or May God protect.

And *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible* (p. 420) records:

*Jacob* — an elliptical form of an original *Jakob'el* — God follows (i.e. — rewards), which has been found on both Babylonian tablets and on the pylons of the temple Karnack. By the time of Jacob, this earlier history of the word was overlooked or forgotten, and the name was understood as meaning "one who takes by the heel, and thus tries to trip up or supplant."

In the Hebrew, names of people and places had great significance. The names given to Abraham and Sarah at birth had been *Abram*, meaning exalted father, having a priestly connotation, and *Sarai*, meaning princess, signifying royalty. But even these unusually lovely names were changed to conform with the spiritual change which took place in the natures of Abram and Sarai. And today they are known to all the world as Abraham and Sarah — father of a multitude and mother of nations — names reflecting their understanding of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God and their higher universal concept of their mission. They named her son *Isaac*, meaning *laughter*, signifying their joy at the birth of the child of promise — the miracle birth which was a rebuke to unbelief — and the joy of triumph over the obstructions which a material concept of existence, indicated in the Old Covenant, would have placed in the way of the demonstration of the power of the Trinity to bring forth its representative of divine Sonship.

The fact that Isaac called his two sons by names which merely identified them materially indicates to us that he had not discerned the spiritual significance of the great event which had just taken place. He did not grasp the momentous fact that the new representative of the third aspect of the Trinity had come forth! He did not comprehend that the one through whom the power of the Spirit of God to transform and transfigure the human with the divine had appeared! Isaac's spiritual vision seemed to have been clouded by the picture immediately before him.

And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.— Gen.25:27.

"Esau hunted cunningly." He was literally a man of the field, an outdoor man of a rebellious, restless nature. The following summary of his nature is revealing:

The character of Esau has many attractive features; but he cared only for the pleasures of the moment and was without any lofty spiritual aspirations. . . . He appears plainly as a worldly, irreligious man, indifferent to his parents' wishes, uninterested in the divine covenant, and unmindful of the privileges and responsibilities which were to distinguish his race. (Gen.26:34: 27:46.) His character is summed up in Heb.12:16,17, where he is called "a profane," i.e. unconsecrated or common person. (*Dummelow, p.32.*)

"Jacob was a plain man." The Hebrew word translated *plain* as here used means complete, upright, whole, pious, gentle, dear, undefiled. That Jacob preferred dwelling in tents to being a man of the field is simply a statement of the fact that Jacob was of a quieter, more thoughtful, home-loving nature than his roving twin brother. Jacob was the typical shepherd, a quiet man, who leads a settled, orderly, well-integrated life and has a tent and flocks of his own. The following summary of his nature is thought-provoking:

While craftiness and subtilty, even meanness and deceit, mark many of his actions, on the other hand, his patient endurance, strength of character, and warmth of affection call forth admiration. Long years of suffering and discipline were needed to purify his character from its baser elements, and make him worthier of the divine blessing. And certainly he was worthier than his brother, for he believed in and sought after his father's God, held spiritual things in reverence. . . . These considerations help us to understand why Jacob rather than Esau was selected as heir to the promises. (*Dummelow, p.32.*)

From what we know of these two sons, both of them were fine, good individuals, although exactly opposite in nature. Their parents should have loved both of them dearly. But a note of conflict is sounded between Isaac and Rebekah concerning their children:

Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.— Gen.25:28.

Isaac was a good man, not to be deceived by evil alone. But the tempter, determined that the generations of Seth and the seed of

Abraham were not to accomplish the divine purpose, conjured up a temptation that would find a response in Isaac. Like the temptation in the garden of Eden, the one that came to Isaac partook of the nature of both good and evil.

Isaac was mesmerized by the physical prowess and human goodness of his firstborn and by the Oriental custom of favoring the elder son. Isaac seemed to be impressed by Esau and almost overshadowed by him. The message of God which had come to him and to Rebekah before the birth of the two boys had apparently not written itself in his consciousness as it had in Rebekah's. The Lord had said:

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.— Gen.25:23.

While the struggle in the womb before the birth of the sons prophesied that they would be at variance from their birth, and that from this variance would emerge two nations of people, the struggle was also typical of two conflicting natures struggling for supremacy *within Isaac*. Although this confusion appeared to concern two sons, the problem was in reality a conflict within Isaac himself as to whether the conditions of the Covenant are exemplified by a vibrant nature accompanied by great physical energy or by the quiet vitality of great mental strength. And is not a similar struggle going on within each one of us today?

A commentary in *The Interpreter's Bible* is worthy of our consideration.

Why did Rebekah prefer Jacob? . . . In spite of limitations and glaring faults, Jacob had something which Esau did not have. . . . He had a concept of the spiritual nature of the birthright. . . . Jacob knew that the holder of the birthright would be a shaper of ideas and ideals. . . . Rebekah saw this, and she was determined to protect it. . . . She represents the woman's greatest contribution to the race, vis., the ability to recognize and to cherish those qualities in her child by which the future may be shaped.  
(*IB, Vol. 1, p. 669.*)

Isaac's story appears to be interrupted by a controversy between Jacob and Esau concerning the birthright. But in its



allegorical sense, these happenings are still typical of the conflict going on within Isaac himself and probably also portray something of the struggle between Isaac and Rebekah concerning their sons.

### Esau Sells His Birthright

We do not know at what period in their lives the following incident occurred, but it is evident that Jacob and Esau had grown to young manhood. We read that Esau came in from hunting one day, faint and famished from his strenuous outdoor activity. He was greeted by the aroma of a steaming pottage of lentiles which Jacob was preparing. Almost overcome by hunger and fatigue the carefree hunter said to the careful shepherd:

Feed me, I pray thee, with the same red pottage; for I am faint. . . .

And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me?

And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.

Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.—

Gen.25:30-34.

What was this birthright that Jacob so greatly desired and Esau valued so little? It was a symbol of authority, signifying the rights and privileges of the elder son. He who had the birthright inherited a double portion of his father's estate. Upon the death of the father, he who had the birthright exercised fatherly authority over the household and assumed spiritual, or priestly, leadership of the tribe. In the unfoldment of the Covenant, the birthright is bestowed on one in recognition of his spiritual status, or potential. The bestowal of a double portion of the father's inheritance on the firstborn is symbolic of the two-fold office of priest and king and is an acknowledgment of the son's ability to minister to both the spiritual and temporal needs of his family, or tribe. The firstborn was the representative of the family in its relationship with God, its priestly intercessor.

The human birthright could be sold by the elder son to any of his brothers for certain considerations, and this transaction was considered binding. But the spiritual birthright is divinely bestowed and cannot be transferred from one individual to another. Esau could sell his birthright, for it was a human one, and belonged to him only by right of Oriental custom and his father's preference. But Jacob had the promise of the spiritual birthright; his were the rights and privileges of the Son of God. And this divine birthright, by God's promise, carried the rights and privileges of the human birthright. But Jacob had yet to earn the divine birthright.

The fact that Esau had the birthright instead of Jacob tells us plainly that Isaac regarded Esau as his heir, having all the rights and privileges of the elder son — and all the responsibilities. Esau appeared not to care too much about the birthright, for when he was hungry and wanted food, the food became more important to him than the birthright. The birthright, which should have meant more to him than food or drink, was so lightly regarded that he did not hesitate to sell it. That he did not see the spiritual significance of the birthright is plain. To him the material circumstances and conditions immediately before him were the reality. His sense of values was completely material. When he was challenged as to the value in which he held the birthright, he was willing to forego it for a momentary gratification of appetite. There was nothing within him to rise to the challenge and hold to his birthright, regardless of the sacrifices it entailed. Though strong physically, Esau lacked the sinews of spirituality. Without a moment's regret, "He did eat and drink, and rose up and went his way." He went his own way, not God's way — a way which bound him to the Old Covenant and its conditions. And the Bible says simply: "Thus Esau showed how little he valued his birthright" (Gen.25:45 NEB).

Esau was a good man, but he was not a godly man. There is little doubt that Esau would have been chosen above Jacob in a popularity contest. He was a man of the world, of athletic build and habits, physically attractive, the type of man that the world admires and accepts as its own. He is typical of those sons who excel at material activity but who rebel at mental discipline and spiritual development, who are good-natured, eager to please, indulgent with themselves and with others, to whom physicality is vitally important, but to whom the things of Spirit are dim and little thought of.

*Scotfield's* summation of Esau's character is worthy of note:

Esau stands for the mere man of earth (Heb.12:16,17). In many respects a nobler man, naturally, than Jacob, he was destitute of faith and despised the birthright because it was a spiritual thing, of value only as there was faith to apprehend it. (*Scotfield's Reference Bible, P.38*).

The description of the controversy between Jacob and Esau for the birthright is so vividly portrayed we are apt to forget that this is still Isaac's story — a story prophetic of the struggles of the child of promise in all ages as he wrestles with the question: How to gain the dominion of heaven on earth — the double blessing which the spiritual birthright bestows?

The birthright of the firstborn does not always go to the one whom the world believes should have it, but to the one in whose heart a divine purpose can be inscribed. The double blessing which the birthright bestows is given to those who are willing to wear the heavenly title, *Priest and King unto God* — to those who are willing to accept the divine responsibility of being spiritual leaders among men and willing to exercise heavenly dominion over themselves and their earthly affairs. Such do indeed "reign on the earth" and wear the metaphorical crown of dominion of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek (Rev.5:10).

Frequently the birthright is bestowed on a Jacob who, in his youth, does not seem to be worthy; but in maturity "a soldier of God" comes forth, willing to wrestle with a mortal nature until *Israel*, the divine nature, wins the battle with self and "reigns with God." Or, he may be a youthful, proud Saul of Tarsus, whose zeal lacks wisdom, humility, and love, but in whom is a divine spark that can burst into great light and reveal a Paul, eager and willing to put off the old sense of himself for spiritual maturity and to serve God and man with great wisdom, humility, love, and spiritual strength.

Isaac has not yet seen or felt the power of the divine nature within himself; hence he does not see it within Jacob. But the nature of divinity is there in both Isaac and Jacob, and it will come to light in fulness of time.

At the time Rebekah came to Isaac as his wife, Isaac was dwelling in the south country by the well Lahai-roi (Gen.24:62). About thirty-five years later he still dwelt in the same place. It was here

that Jacob and Esau were born. Recall that Lahai-roi is the well at which Hagar found water when she fled from Sarai. It is known as "the well of the living one who sees me," or "the well of the Living One of Vision" (NEB), because there God had revealed to Hagar the spiritual fact that divine help is always at hand if we but open our eyes to see (Gen.16:7,14).

Does Isaac's long stay in this region indicate that his concept of God had not progressed beyond that of the bondwoman! Was his lack of spiritual unfoldment the result of the mesmerism of organized occultism, attempting to hold Isaac's spiritual progress on the level of Ishmael's, the son of the bondwoman? Or was this beloved child of promise reluctant to grow to spiritual maturity?

The fact that Isaac dwelt all these years by the well Lahai-roi indicates to us that for him there had been no spiritual journeying during those years. Apparently he had not been stirred to rise higher spiritually. There is no indication that the Spirit of God had moved upon the waters, or elements, of his consciousness. Without spiritual progress it is little wonder that there was a famine in the land, or consciousness, in which he lived.

In the metaphor of Scripture a famine indicates a loss or lack of spiritual vision, the faculty through which one discerns the ever-present goodness of God. Famine follows confusion, materialism, stagnation, disobedience, and lack of spiritual progress. We read:

And there was a famine in the land, beside the first  
famine that was in the days of Abraham.— Gen.26:1.

Isaac's long stay in the simple, childlike understanding of God as "the Living One who seeth me" — in the concept of Deity as the Eternal God who cares for me whether or not I understand Him — had stultified his spiritual development. To stand still, even in a good place, is not enough. God demands progressive unfoldment of thought and action.

This young man had become satisfied with a sense of material wealth and luxury. In Lahai-roi he lived like an Oriental prince, rich in gold and silver, in flocks and herds, in servants and herdsmen. Isaac, like Abraham, moved in what today might be called the highest social circles. Recall that Abraham had been at home in the courts of the Egyptian Pharaoh and the Philistine king. His son enjoyed similar contacts with royalty and nobility as well as

with notable people from many lands who traveled the Great Trade Route of the Fertile Crescent. On this much traveled highway came people from all over the then known world on their way down into Egypt, which was the center of world culture at that time. The son of Abraham did not live in isolation from nor in ignorance of the world around him. Isaac was no "country bumpkin." Nor was he a desert nomad. Though he had not attained the towering majesty of Abraham, Isaac was established in the land in which he lived and had dominion there. While he did not dwell in a great stone or brick house like many that have been excavated in recent years, his great tents, like those of Abraham, were luxurious and bore no resemblance to the tents of the wandering desert tribes.

Isaac was a good citizen, an honest man, and he had the respect of all who knew him. But, like the sons of many wealthy men, Isaac had not needed to strive to earn a living. His wits had not been sharpened by experience in the market place. Certainly he had not cut his metaphorical wisdom teeth. He seemed to be mesmerized by a state of material well-being. Hence, until famine ravaged the land, there was nothing to bestir him to seek a higher concept of God and of the life which is spiritual.

It is supposed that about this time Abraham departed earth's scene. And we read:

And it came to pass after the death of Abraham,  
that God blessed his son Isaac.— Gen.25:11.

Isaac accepted God's blessing as a child accepts favors from its parents. This child of promise had not been forced to come to grips with any of the problems which usually confront men as they go forward in development, unfoldment, and progress. But the time had come when he must grow up — grow into some realization that his life was to be, like his father's, a divine adventure. Although he seemed to be unaware of the divinity of his blessing, the power of God's blessing was at work in him. And it is this period in Isaac's unfoldment which is now before us.

Recall the power of God's blessing on man. (See pp. 63, 64, 76.) The blessing of God assures the recipient of divine favor, of fruitfulness, of both spiritual and material prosperity. God's blessing protects one from the curse of materialism. It causes one to be at

peace with man and beast and with one's environment — with everything in God's universe. Each one who has a divine mission has God's blessing — that is, when one accepts that divine mission. We have evidence that Isaac had begun to feel the power of divinity that God's blessing bestows. Perhaps the famine had been the catalyst which shocked him out of a sense of complacency. He moved from his old dwelling place, mentally and physically. And we read that "Isaac went unto Abimelech, king of the Philistines unto Gerar" (Gen.26:1).

## Chapter XXX

### ISAAC SOJOURNS IN ABIMELECH'S COUNTRY

Abimelech might well have been the same king who had been Abraham's friend. Or he might have been his son. In either case, Isaac's stop in Gerar was probably a courtesy call on the king as he passed through Abimelech's country. His intention was to go on down into Egypt, where there was plenty of food. But God warned him against this course of action. In fact, the Spirit of God, the voice of the Trinity, commanded him to change his plans:

And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of.— Gen.26:2.

This is the first record we have of the Lord appearing unto Isaac. Or, rather, this is the first time Isaac was spiritually aware of the divine presence and receptive to the divine voice speaking to him. How do we know this? Note carefully God's words: "Dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of." This is the *I AM* speaking! And the *I AM* found a response in Isaac. He began to feel the power of the divine *Ego* within himself. The divine "I" that performs great things for man became the motive power within him. He did not question the divine directive that changed his plans. The "I" of his being was at one with the Great *I AM*. It was therefore natural that he should immediately be at one with God's will for him.

Why did the Lord demand that Isaac not go down into Egypt where food supplies were plentiful? For the same reason Abraham had not permitted him to go to Haran to seek a wife. In both Egypt and Haran the mesmeric influences of soothsayers and magicians, with their highly developed carnal mind-power, would have been as injurious to Isaac's spiritual unfoldment as the same influence in Ur of the Chaldees had been to Abraham's spiritual unfoldment. In Egypt Isaac would have become like-minded with the Egyptians, and his divine adventure would have turned into a

material venture. Isaac had not yet attained the spiritual maturity that would have made him master of any situation in which he might find himself. Further, a wonderful experience was awaiting him in Gerar. Here Isaac would discover and prove the divine law which causes the earth to bring forth abundantly food for man's use, and that too in a land where famine ravaged most of the countryside. So he dwelt in Gerar.

In almost all of Isaac's divine adventure we see him as the son of Abraham or the father of Jacob and Esau. But in Gerar we see Isaac as himself — as the child of promise, in whom divine promises are fulfilled. Here he expresses the divine nature of the Son of God. Here the light of his Christliness shines brightly. Here he has dominion.

The name *Gerar* means *dwelling place*. It was in Gerar, the land of the Philistines where the kind and noble king Abimelech reigned, that Abraham and Sarah had found a dwelling place while awaiting the birth of Isaac. When Isaac came into Gerar his concept of Deity was the Lord, Self-existent Being. It was this understanding of Deity which enabled Abraham to hear and be receptive to the divine message assuring him of his possession of and dominion in the land. This understanding grew in him until he learned to know God as the Creator, and creation like the Creator. (See Gen.13:14-17.)

Now Isaac hears the voice of the Creator, demanding that he come into the understanding of the spiritual nature of the universe so that he might understand the spiritual nature of his inheritance or possession. This understanding is the beginning of all spiritual journeying! We hear an echo of God's words to Abraham in this message to Isaac:

Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father;

And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.— Gen.26:3-5.



Again the *I AM* speaks. And we hear the words through Isaac's response to them: "*I will be with thee; I will bless thee; I will give all these countries unto thy seed; I will perform the oath I swore unto Abraham; I will make thy seed to multiply.*" The *I AM* wrote its message in the very fiber of Isaac's being, unfolding within him a larger, more dynamic sense of his abilities and capabilities — his God-being.

The reiteration of God's promise to Abraham, that his seed would have dominion in the land and that through his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed, is a subjective experience, indicating that some realization of the tremendous spiritual import of the Covenant blessing had dawned in Isaac's consciousness — that he was indeed the child of promise, the one in whom the divine promises would be fulfilled. He seemed to realize that it was because of what his father was that God had made His Covenant with Abraham. And so Isaac strove to be like his father. He attempted to do what he had seen his human father do, thinking in that way perhaps to reach the understanding of God which Abraham had gained and to be able to exercise the spiritual authority Abraham had expressed. Deep within himself Isaac realized it was what he knew of God that determined his life experience.

Isaac's first step in the right direction was to dig again the wells Abraham had dug and to pasture his flocks where Abraham had pastured his great herds. It was, of course, natural that Isaac should redig the wells his father had dug — wells which the Philistines had filled in with earth. And it was natural that he should call the wells by the names by which his father had called them (Gen.26:15,18). But metaphorically, the redigging of these wells symbolized Isaac's search for the wells of salvation and the water of Life which had flowed through every avenue of Abraham's being.

It was commendable that Isaac should attempt to pattern his life after Abraham's life — to do what he had seen his great father do. But this was not God's plan for him. Isaac had his own mission to fulfill in the pattern of the Trinity. The great demand now upon him is to learn that God is his Father, and that his mission in life is to exemplify the character of the Son of God, not the son of Abraham. Then, by the law of reflection, he would be able, as was Christ Jesus, to know God aright and to do what he saw his

Father-God do (John 5:19). Then would his human activity pattern the divine and his life show forth the nature of the Son of God. Then would he be himself and accomplish his own divine mission.

St. Paul explained this law of reflection, in some measure, in his second letter to the Corinthians. He wrote of seeing God as in a mirror and seeing one's self as the mirrored reflection, or mirror-image, reflecting the image, or likeness, of Spirit:

We all mirror the glory of the Lord with face unveiled, and so we are being transformed into the same likeness as himself, passing from one glory to another — for this comes of the Lord the Spirit.—

II Cor.3:18 (JM).

It is not good to compare Isaac's faltering footsteps with Abraham's at the height of his dominion. Nothing is more frustrating to a son than to be told that he is not the man his father was. In comparing Isaac with Abraham, we are prone to think of the majesty Abraham attained at the height of his spiritual unfoldment instead of remembering the many mistakes he made in his spiritual journeying before he reached the climax of his communion with God. Yet some comparison between the two is needful because Isaac strove so valiantly to be like his father. He continued to try to do the things Abraham had done.

Abraham was a dynamic figure and always had been. Isaac, on the other hand, is not a dynamic figure. He is quiet, and appears almost timid at times. But it must be remembered that Isaac's divine mission is quite different from that of Abraham's. Together the lives of Abraham and Sarah, reflecting the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, exemplified in some measure the divine completeness indicated in the first aspect of the Trinity — God, *Elohim* the All-in-all Creator, or divine Principle of the universe. It is Isaac's mission to exemplify the second aspect of the Trinity — the nature of the Son of God. Isaac and Rebekah together have the task of presenting in their lives the idea of the compound nature of man, expressing the nature of the divine Father-Mother in the masculine and feminine qualities of manhood and womanhood.

No human exemplification of Divinity is perfect. It is always symbolic — typical of, but not exactly like, the perfect idea. Both Abraham and Isaac struggled against the prevailing gross

material mental concepts of the people of the land in which they lived — concepts which denied and opposed the spiritual concepts of God, man, and the universe which they were striving to express. It is not easy to move against the strong tide of the era in which one lives. But both of these individuals were willing to let their lives be examples of the mighty nature of the Infinite. God inscribed in their human experiences the pattern of unfoldment of the divine nature. And through them God has shown us how to let our lives exemplify the divine nature instead of imaging forth a wholly material concept of existence.

But Isaac still walked in Abraham's footsteps. Hence he had experiences similar to those Abraham had — both good and bad. One such experience concerned the fear Abraham had that someone, seeing the beauty and desirability of his wife, would slay him in order to possess her (Gen.12:9-20; 20:1-18). When Isaac and Rebekah came to Gerar the same fear overtook Isaac which had bedeviled Abraham. We read:

And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, she is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.— Gen.26:7.

Isaac, like Abraham, saw his wife as very beautiful and desirable. But he did not at this time see her as his partner in the Covenant; thus he did not comprehend God's protection of Rebekah. In denying his marriage, he was really denying his divine completeness which his marriage covenant symbolized. This fear shows clearly Isaac's spiritual immaturity and lack of understanding of the divine authority God gives to those who express the qualities of spiritual manhood and womanhood. It is little wonder that the thing he greatly feared came upon him. We read:

And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting [flirting] with Rebekah his wife.

And Abimelech said, What is this that thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lain with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.

And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death. — Gen.26:8,10,11.

In Isaac's spiritual unfoldment, as in Abraham's, Abimelech symbolizes a type of human goodness which gives sanctuary to seekers after righteousness; and in the mystery of godliness, serves the divine purpose even while not understanding it. The king issued an edict which gave sanctuary to Isaac and Rebekah, even while he rebuked Isaac for the deception. But what is more significant, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, forced Isaac to acknowledge his marriage covenant and to give Rebekah the place of honor which, as his wife, was her due.

Did Isaac at this time glimpse the divine completeness of spiritual maturity which the spiritual Marriage Covenant signifies? It would seem not. Although Isaac loved Rebekah, and unlike other Orientals of his day, he had only one wife and no concubines, there is no record that he understood Rebekah's place in the Covenant. This indicates to us that Isaac had not yet learned to know the God of Abraham and Sarah, *El Shaddi*, the Almighty Motherhood of God, nor did he yet realize that Rebekah was co-equal with him in the Covenant relationship with God.

### Isaac's Spiritual Journeying Begins

In Gerar Isaac worked diligently to establish a name for himself and succeeded gloriously. His first departure from following Abraham's footsteps was to sow in the land and thus cause the earth to yield her increase. His success in his first individual venture brought to him abundance of good, as the record indicates:

Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundred-fold; and the Lord blessed him.

And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:

For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants.—

Gen.26:12-14.

“Isaac went forward” in his spiritual journeying and came into some understanding of the law of fruitfulness revealed in the third

day, or third period, of spiritual unfoldment in the original statement of the Covenant of Godlikeness, in which the earth brought forth abundantly at God's command. Recall that God said:

Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.— Gen.1:11,12.

In Gerar Isaac realized his potential. Here he began to feel and to manifest the power and authority of the Son of God. The Biblical account of his divine adventure in Gerar is short. However, the record stating that God blessed him — caused him to prosper in that land — tells us more than these few words might reveal to the casual reader. To feel the power of the divine blessing is to hear the *I AM* — the inner voice of divine wisdom and scientific skill — telling us not only what to do and how to do it, but also demanding that we do it!

In our mind's eye we can build on the simple statement: "He waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great." In Gerar Isaac found a sense of establishment and success. The fact that he sowed in the land and received in the first year an hundred-fold — an unheard of agricultural yield — tells us plainly that the divine power was at work in the child of promise, bringing his new venture to fulfillment.

In Gerar God had provided for Isaac a *dwelling place* while he grew — both spiritually and humanly. We do not know how long he remained in Abimelech's country. But we do know that he was there until the experience accomplished its divine purpose in the unfoldment of his divine adventure. Certainly he remained there where his abundant crops fed his family, his great retinue, and his flocks and herds until the famine in his own thinking was healed, and until the land of Canaan once more brought forth the fruit of the ground abundantly.

Although Isaac prospered greatly in Gerar and remained on friendly terms with the king and the people of the land, after some time, we know not how long, we learn that "the Philistines envied him" (Gen.26:14). The English word *envy* comes from the Latin *in-*

*vidia*, or *invidere*, meaning: to see against, or not to see; chagrin, mortification, discontent, or uneasiness at the sight of another's excellent or good fortune, accompanied with some degree of hatred and a desire to possess equal advantages; malice.

Isaac had glimpsed something of the spiritual fact voiced centuries later by the Psalmist: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (Ps.24:1). But he had not been obedient to the heavenly law recorded by the wise man in Proverbs: "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase" (Prov.3:9). And there is no record that he had given tithes of all that he possessed to help feed the hunger caused by the famine. His lack of understanding of the spiritual nature of his wealth, and his failure to give God the glory for his increase opened the door for envy to invade his experience and threatened to reverse his success. The Philistines sought to rob him of his riches by striking at his water supply, the source of life to his large herds and to his crops. Not only did the people of the land envy Isaac. The king himself turned against him. We read:

And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.— Gen.26:16,17.

Isaac lived like a prince in the land of the Philistines. He was probably the wealthiest and the most influential resident in Abimelech's country. Although an alien in the land, his large herds and his herdsmen had been free to wander far and wide throughout the countryside in search of pasturage. His great tents, besides sheltering his family and personal servants, also housed hundreds of other servants, herdsmen, and men trained to guard his family and possessions. His settlement, if it may be called that, must have resembled a large village. Further, we may imagine the vast acreage he planted in Abimelech's country that yielded fruitage so plentifully. There is no doubt that his presence was felt in the land. The king saw with dismay that Isaac was mightier, more powerful, than he. It is little wonder he feared that so great a company of foreigners within the borders of his kingdom might turn against him and usurp his crown. Hence his demand that Isaac depart.

We note, however, that Isaac was not forced to leave the land of the Philistines. "He pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there." This area was near the boundary of the land of Canaan (Gen.10:17). We do not know how far this valley was from Abimelech's capital city, but the king must have given Isaac permission to dwell there, for it was within the borders of his kingdom.

Although the record states that Isaac's forced move was at the King's command, in the unfolding of his dominion the move indicates a lack of spiritual authority within Isaac himself. His material identification of himself and of what God had given him robbed him of his spiritual dominion in the land. According to the pattern of spiritual unfoldment revealed in the first chapter of Genesis, man's dominion begins with the acknowledgment of God as the only Creator, thence to the understanding of the universe as spiritual, reflecting the nature of God, Spirit, and rises to full expression in the recognition that man is spiritual and has dominion wherever he may be. All spiritual journeying must follow this pattern of unfoldment. This is the pattern of the unfoldment of the Covenant of Godlikeness, revealing the nature of God, man, and the universe, and their relationship to each other, recorded in the first chapter of Genesis.

When Abraham learned this great lesson, he felt and expressed the divine authority which comes from such spiritual identification. And when he felt this inner dominion, others felt his divine authority also. Recall that Abimelech, sensing that Abraham's dominion was from on high, had said to him, "God is with thee in all that thou doest" (Gen.21:22). We do not read that anyone envied Abraham of his great possessions. Why? Because he knew that his real wealth was his spiritual understanding of God, and that what appeared as great abundance of flocks and herds and other possessions was but the visible evidence of his spiritual possessions. His true estimate of all things gave him divine authority and an honored place in whatever land he pitched his tents.

For a long time Isaac had expressed dominion in Abimelech's country. But because he failed to identify his gain spiritually, he lost, for a while, his dominion in the land. However, he began again to establish himself. His first step was to dig a new well, symbolically again searching for the water of Life — spiritual in-

spiration and nourishment. His servants found in the valley "a well of springing water." But the herdsmen of Gerar descended upon Isaac's herdsmen and drove them away, claiming the water as their own. His servants dug another well, and the herdsmen of Gerar strove for that well also. Isaac gave names to these wells. He called the first *Esek*, meaning *contention*; the second he called *Sitnah*, meaning *enmity*. Both names reveal Isaac's sense of helplessness before vicious physical attacks. Why? Isaac was a peaceful man, but his sense of peace included an element of timidity that recoiled from contention, enmity, and strife. Instead of resisting the Philistines when they claimed the wells he had dug, Isaac quietly moved to another place and dug another well. (See Gen.26:9-21.)

On one occasion the Philistine herdsmen had striven with Abraham's herdsmen for a well of water which Abraham had dug. Abraham, feeling divine authority within himself — the authority of his divinely royal priesthood — went directly to the king and reproved him. And Abimelech rebuked his herdsmen and made a covenant with Abraham to dwell in the land and forbade his people from interfering with the great man's work. (See Gen.21:25-32.)

But Isaac did not go to the king when the Philistines strove with his herdsmen. Instead, he moved from one place to another, hoping to find a place for which they did not strive. He did not express his divinely royal dominion. He did not yet realize that only as he saw the spiritual nature of the land could he have dominion therein, for he had no material title to any land. This basic lesson we, like Isaac, must learn.

The Philistines who continued to strive with Isaac for the wells are typical of the forces of materialism which challenged his spiritual authority. They were also typical of the forces that were struggling for supremacy within Isaac himself. It was the Old Covenant versus the New Covenant — the old concept of life, of progress, and success versus the new spiritual concept of Life and its unfoldment. Finally Isaac dug a well for which the Philistines did not strive. His spiritual senses prevailed and gave him divine authority, before which the forces of materialism faded away.

And he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.— Gen.26:22.



The Hebrew word translated *Rehoboth* is from a primitive root meaning: to broaden, to enlarge, to make room; breadth, enlargement. At Rehoboth Isaac learned something of the spiritual and infinite nature of the universe wherein each one has his own sphere of activity which does not intrude upon another's rights. Isaac was at last learning the true nature of the real land which God had given him. He was learning that his possession, or inheritance, was not a material location in time and space, but the realization that God possesses every place. When he realized this fundamental truth, he was conscious of his spiritual dominion, wherever he was. And immediately —

He went up from thence to Beer-sheba.—

Gen.26:23.

## Chapter XXXI

### ISAAC RETURNS TO BEER-SHEBA

Beer-sheba! What remembrances this must have brought to Isaac. For Beer-sheba was the land of his boyhood, the place where he had lived with Abraham and Sarah for many years. It was in Beer-sheba that Abraham had built an altar and dedicated it to *The Everlasting God*, and in his priestly role as spiritual adviser and teacher, had gathered his family and all those under his leadership into the sanctity of this new revelation of the nature of the Supreme Being. And it was in Beer-sheba that Isaac received his spiritual education from his beloved parents — an education which lifted his concepts of life above the low level of the materialistic concepts of existence in the world around him and established him in the straight and narrow way of true morality and spirituality.

#### Isaac Glimpses His Place In The Covenant

And the Lord appeared to him the same night [of his return to Beer-sheba], and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.— Gen.26:24.

The tremendous significance of God's enunciation to Isaac may be glimpsed in a commentary in *The Interpreter's Bible* (p.674):

Here for the first time appear the words which are to echo and re-echo in the Bible — *the God of Abraham*.

"*I AM* the God of Abraham, the Almighty God! *I AM* with thee! *I WILL* bless thee! *I WILL* multiply thy seed!" The *I AM* has spoken and identified the divine nature as Almighty. And Isaac heard! He heard the mighty voice of the God of Abraham and felt within himself the dynamic power of the Motherhood of God calling him into the holy relationship of the Covenant, demanding of him, as She

had demanded of Abraham: "Walk before me and be thou perfect." Walk ever in my presence and be completely operative in this higher concept of the Supreme Being. "Walk in the Spirit" — in the spiritual dimension — and "and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh" — your lower nature will not have dominion over you. (See Gen. 17:1; Gal.5:16.)

In recognition of the holiness of his communion with God at Beer-sheba, Isaac determined to establish his home there:

He builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.— Gen.26:25.

First, Isaac built an altar in confirmation of his communion with Deity — an altar dedicated to the worship of the God of Abraham — the Almighty God. He put down his first stake claiming the land in the name, or nature, of the Great *I AM*, the Almighty God, *El Shaddi*, thus indicating that he had come into some understanding of the spiritual nature of his inheritance. Isaac made no claim to the physical land. His claim was a spiritual one which gave him dominion wherever he was. In his acknowledgement of God as The Almighty, Isaac quietly affirmed his dawning understanding of the nature of God's Motherhood and of the tender relationship of God to man indicated in the name *El Shaddi*. There he pitched his tent. Symbolically he gathered his household — his family and all his possessions — into this higher understanding of God. There he digged a well. He had begun to dig for his own understanding of the Infinite. In searching for his individual spiritual inspiration and understanding directly from God instead of trying to find it by retracing Abraham's footsteps, Isaac found his spiritual establishment in the land.

Let us pause for a moment and consider the significance of the order of the three separate steps Isaac took on that memorable day — the day when the God of Abraham appeared unto him declaring: *I AM* with thee, *I WILL* bless thee, *I WILL* multiply thee. Thus the *I AM* declared its nature as *Immanuel*, *God-with-us* the divine nature expressed in and as man's being. *This* is what appeared to Isaac. The nature of the Trinity is glimpsed in Isaac's response to the enunciation of the *I AM*. He was impelled to do three things — three things separate but united as one in divine unfoldment:

He first *built an altar* at which to worship God. God was of first importance in his life. While he could commune with God in any place, there must be a place of prayer where he and his loved ones could assemble to praise God together.

Then he *pitched his tent* — a dwelling place for himself, his family, and his many servants and herdsmen. A sense of establishment was important. He was not an itinerant, a nomad. He was a dweller in the land God had given him. He took possession of and dwelt in the new understanding of God, man, and the universe which had appeared to him.

Finally he *dug a well*. Throughout the Bible water symbolizes life-giving inspiration. Isaac's new well is symbolic of the water of Life springing up within himself, giving life a new meaning for him. This well and the wells of his father provided water — the life of the desert — for his family, for his great herds, and for the irrigation of his extensive "sowing in the land."

This orderly threefold expression of his activity is a reflection of the dawning in Isaac's consciousness of the threefold nature of the Infinite, of the Triune God Himself. His *altar* — typical of his worship of the Almighty God, the *I AM*, the God of his father Abraham; his *tent* — typical of his dwelling "under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps.91:1), in God's loving care — the divinity of his divine worship embracing and caring for his humanhood; the *well* — typical of divine Life springing up within himself and flowing out, like a river, through every avenue of his divine adventure, healing, nourishing, and enriching everything it touched, and assuring fruitfulness in all his endeavors.

When Isaac first heard the voice of the *I AM* and felt the power of the divine *Ego* as the very "*I*" of his being, he went forward and accomplished great things. This was a necessary part of his divine adventure — *to do* something well. And he did it! But when the *I AM* identified Himself as "the God of thy Father Abraham," he felt the Covenant demand to fulfill his part in the unfoldment of the Covenant — not just *to do*, but *to be* the very expression of the *I AM* in its Almighty nature. In other words, Isaac began to see what his real mission in life was: to exemplify the nature of divine Sonship in the unfolding of the Covenant, which is the unfolding of the threefold nature of the Triune God Himself. He came into some realization of his own spiritual nature as the expression of the Son of God. He saw himself, as in a mirror, reflecting the

qualities of Godlikeness, mirroring the divine authority of the Almighty.

And immediately Abimelech, king of the Philistines, who had ordered Isaac away from Gerar, saw him in the same light! The king came to Isaac, as he or his father had come to Abraham in the same place, to make a covenant of peace with him.

### Isaac Makes a Covenant of Peace With Abimelech

Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army.

And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

And they said, We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;

That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the Lord.— Gen.26:26-29

Abimelech recognized that Isaac had grown in spiritual stature and authority and had become a ruler of his own experience. Further, the king acknowledged that Isaac was indeed “blessed of the Lord,” a spiritual leader among his people. Though he knew it not, Abimelech recognized in Isaac’s ascendancy the divine authority of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek.

But there was a further acknowledgment from the king that is of tremendous significance. He declared: “We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee.” Is not this an acknowledgment of *Immanuel — God-with-us — Christ, the presence of God!* And does not this acknowledgment indicate to us that Isaac has indeed grown into some understanding of his place in the exemplification of the second aspect of the Trinity — the Son of God!

Abimelech’s acknowledgment of Isaac’s ascendancy is also indicated in the terms of the covenant he begged Isaac to make with him: “Let us make a covenant with thee; That thou wilt do us no hurt.” He recognized Isaac’s dominion and spiritual authority. He

knew that Isaac had defenses which he could not penetrate. So he desired a covenant of peace.

Isaac received Abimelech and his friends graciously and made a great feast for them, and they made a covenant with each other, "and swear one to another . . . and they departed from him in peace" (Gen.26:30,31). This covenant might well be called a covenant of "Peace on earth, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).

Of profound interest to us is the meaning of the Greek word translated *peace*. From a primitive verb, *eiro*, to join, *eirene*, or peace, means: to set at one, to harmonize. It is abundantly clear that Isaac felt and expressed the divine authority this peace gave him in his covenant with Abimelech. This inner peace gave him dominion. It harmonized his relationship with the king and gave him a sense of oneness with everyone and everything in his world.

When Isaac had sent Abimelech and his attendants away in peace, a message was brought to him that was a kind of *Amen*, or benediction, to the *Covenant of peace*:

And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water.— Gen.26:32.

Isaac called the name of his well *Sheba* — the well of the oath, typical of his *covenant of peace* with man (Gen.26:33). Actually Isaac called his well *Shibah*, the feminine form of *sheba*. And so, in his divine adventure, his well takes on greater significance. It is typical of more than a *covenant of peace*. Giving his well a feminine name might have been Isaac's way of acknowledging the power of the Motherhood of *Elohim*, the Almighty God, "who appeared unto him" — *El Shaddi*, the Nourisher, who gives life and nourishment to all people and things.

### Isaac Finds His City Beer-sheba

Around Isaac's settlement a veritable city arose which took its name from the well:

Therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba unto this day.— Gen.26:33.

The name of the city, *Beer-sheba* — the masculine form of the word. The name of his well, *Beer-shibah* — the feminine form of the word. What does this tell us? Even this: Some understanding of the compound nature of *Elohim*, God, as the Father and Mother of man and the universe, and some comprehension of his own compound nature reflecting both the masculine and feminine qualities of his divine Father-Mother, had dawned in Isaac's consciousness.

The union of the masculine and feminine qualities of Divinity in one individual consciousness is a powerful combination which unites such contrasting but complementary qualities as humility and majesty, gentleness and strength, simplicity and profundity, joy and poise, love and principle — qualities that give one spiritual equipoise, perfect balance, success — qualities that enable one to chart a steady course and to remain undisturbed by exterior forces.

So Isaac came to his city — *Beer-sheba*, as Abraham had come to his city — *Hebron*. In their spiritual journeying, in their divine adventure, each found a city, or spiritual abiding place, that was typical of St. John's vision of the Holy City, the holy consciousness of the New Heaven and the New Earth, the spiritual dimension of thought wherein dwelleth righteousness — right thinking, divine completeness.

## Chapter XXXII

# INTRUSION OF THE OLD COVENANT

Sometime after Isaac moved his large retinue from Gerar to Beer-sheba, we know not how long, Esau, at the age of forty years,

Took to wife Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite:  
Which were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.— Gen.26:34,35.

The Hittites did not control the land of Canaan, but their influence was felt throughout this part of the world. They were pagans in every sense of the word. They were famous, or should we say infamous, for the practice of witchcraft, divination, spiritualism, necromancy, and child sacrifice, which were an abomination unto the Lord. (See Deut.18:10-12.) In the spiritual progress of the generations of Seth and the seed of Abraham, Esau's Hittite wives, which he brought into Isaac's and Rebekah's household, stood for the unholy occult carnal-mind influence, typified by Ham and Canaan, on the generations of Shem.

It is little wonder that the Hittite wives of Esau were a grief of mind to Isaac and to Rebekah. Esau's marriages to these daughters of the land reveal to us that he was mesmerized by the occult influences they represented — influences which stultify free thought and rob it of its natural and essential spiritual vitality. He seemed to be in agreement with the beliefs of the people about him. There was no spiritual stamina in his thinking to resist the downward trend of materialism of the land. With his usual impetuous and careless nature he followed the open road of self-gratification instead of hewing to the line of self-discipline. His was the unredeemed human goodness that was unaware of its spiritual lack and was not roused or stirred to seek the divine guidance that would have led him step by step to the summit of Abraham's unfoldment. He seemed to know nothing of the de-



mand of the Covenant: "Walk before me" — live ever conscious of the divine presence, "and be thou perfect" — be blameless and be completely operative in doing God's will.

The apparent intrusion of Esau and his Hittite wives into Isaac's story at this time serves to alert us to the fact that Esau had not changed during the years we have heard nothing about him. He is still the care-free young man with no sense of responsibility to his family — not because he didn't love them, but because he loved himself more. He still goes his own way with no apparent thought about what might be God's way. There is no reason to believe that Esau intended to grieve his parents by marrying Hittite women. But his head-strong thoughtlessness in doing only what pleased himself, regardless of the feelings of others or of the effects of his selfish actions, reveal the nature of a self-centered little boy who would not grow up. It probably never occurred to him that bringing pagan wives into the household of his God-fearing parents would add nothing to their happiness. Nor did he give a thought to the fact that the offspring of such a marriage could not and would not do anything to forward the worship of the God of Abraham, nor could they become participants in the unfoldment of the Covenant of God with men. Yet this is the elder son who was confident he was going to inherit the rights and privileges, both spiritual and material, of the firstborn — "the representative of the family in its relationship to God, its priestly intercessor."

### A Historical Lapse

Except for the incident of Esau's marriages, we have no Biblical or secular record of Isaac and his family after their return to Beer-sheba for about thirty-five years. It is generally assumed among Bible scholars that much of Isaac's history, even traditional stories or sagas, has been lost. It is regrettable that we know so little of Isaac's sojourn on earth. It is sad that we have no record of his spiritual unfoldment or of his communion with God during the years after he returned to Beer-sheba. We are inclined to feel a sense of disappointment, even sorrow, that we could not walk with this child of promise in his footsteps of spiritual unfoldment as he went forward in his divine adventure. And it is cause for deep regret that Rebekah's place in the Covenant has been obscured. It

is as though a curtain had been drawn across Isaac's path, blotting out an important era in his life.

However, this we know: Through the cohesive force of the marriage covenant which bound them together as one, Isaac and Rebekah exemplified the compound nature of the Son of God, embodying and expressing the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*. It is important that we know them as representatives of the second aspect of the Trinity. Their unfoldment is essential to the unfoldment of the Covenant.

Although we have no written record of many years of their lives, through our faith in the power of the Spirit of God to finish what The Almighty has inaugurated, we know that Isaac and Rebekah continued to exemplify that for which they had been chosen of God. They could not do otherwise. For their lives were ordained to unfold according to the pattern of the Covenant under the irresistible power of the Spirit of God. They had no choice but to be a part of that pattern of unfoldment. The influence of a pagan environment, the presence of human desires, the actions of their sons — this might for a time seem to deter or defer their spiritual progress. But the unfoldment of the Trinity took them with it as it swept majestically through the current of their lives and the history of their times.

### An Unholy Influence

While we have nothing historically or metaphorically to draw on to account for the years between Esau's marriages and the dramatic events which are now rising on the horizon, it is evident that some sinister influence has been acting upon the pattern of Isaac's thinking. At this time, thirty-five years after Esau brought his pagan wives into his household, Isaac appears to be declining in age, activity, and in mental power. And what is also apparent is the tragic fact that he has lost sight of the power of his Covenant relationship with God. What has happened to Isaac? The answer is plain:

... His eyes were dim, so that he could not see.— Gen.27:1.

Isaac's *spiritual* vision had been dimmed by the influence of the occultism of the land which Esau and his Hittite wives had

brought into the household. His thinking had sunk to the level of their thinking. He no longer wore the spiritual crown of his divinely royal priesthood. He had literally been put to sleep — mesmerized, his mind swallowed up. He seemed to be held in a kind of mesmeric inertia. His spiritual scientific senses were dormant. His vision — both mental and spiritual — was dimmed. He seemed to have lost sight of the Covenant at Beer-sheba when, through the revelation of the nature of Deity as The Almighty, the God of Abraham, he had found his dominion in the land and was made Priest and King unto God — the spiritual leader of his people and ruler of his human experiences on earth.

Why has Isaac lost his vision? Why has he become feeble? Why has his mind become weakened? The occult mental influence Esau and his Hittite wives exerted upon him does not fully account for the mental condition in which we now find Isaac. The main reason, not easily detected by the casual reader, is the fact that Rebekah's influence in Isaac's life has been weakened by Isaac's intense, almost idolatrous, love of Esau. As a result, Isaac was influenced by this beloved son. Consequently, Esau, not Isaac, became the dominant figure in the household — the crown prince eager to take over the temporal authority exercised by his father. Esau's strong influence weakened rather than strengthened Isaac, with the result that Isaac became so feeble he thought he was at the point of death.

One might ask: How could Isaac, who loved Rebekah dearly, become so completely mesmerized by his parental adoration of a son, that he could forget it was his wife's strength that had made his gentleness great? Why could he not see that Esau's human goodness was not a divine quality? Why could he not comprehend that the children of Esau's Hittite wives could not fulfill the conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness? The tempter, the abortive ego, had drawn a veil over his mind's eye, causing his vision to become blurred and his thinking confused. All the tempter had to do to dim Isaac's spiritual intuition and vision was to keep it focused on physicality, even though the form was that of a beloved son. Esau was first in Isaac's affections. What Esau stood for had become first also in Isaac's affections. Isaac, who was quiet, gentle, unemotional, enjoyed vicariously Esau's physical prowess and accomplishment, his lusty love of the world, his impetuous indulgence of human whims, his quick forgiveness of wrongs — fan-

ced or real. These qualities made of Esau an attractive figure and a lovable son. Isaac probably wished, secretly, that he could be like Esau. His love of Esau became a kind of idolatry, for he could not have preferred Esau so completely had he loved spirituality most.

### Isaac Loved Esau — Rebekah Loved Jacob

A note of inharmony and misunderstanding between Isaac and Rebekah is indicated:

Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.— Gen.25:28.

Isaac loved this lusty son who was hearty in appetite and in friendliness, who satisfied Isaac's fondness for food and friendship. And of course, Esau was lovable and Isaac should have loved him. But Isaac's love of Esau was so all-absorbing he seemed not to have enough to embrace Jacob also. Perhaps that was one of the reasons that Rebekah loved Jacob.

Edith Deen writes thus of Rebekah's insight concerning her sons:

Records do not furnish actual historical details, but we can be sure that Rebekah was a mother who pondered deeply over her sons' destiny. She recognized the secular bent of her first-born, Esau, and the priestly mold of the last born, Jacob. Had she not also observed how Esau's associates were the Hittites, known to be a less religious race? He had even married two Hittite women, Judith and Bashemath, and in that marriage had returned to the polygamous ways of life which she and Isaac had abandoned. Had she not observed how Esau spent his time in hunting and other such pleasures while Jacob worshipped at the altar of God? Had she not seen how Esau lived for today and how Jacob, like herself, looked into the future? Had she not seen in Esau's face a love for a mess of pottage and in Jacob's a dream of divine glory? (Edith Deen, *All the Women in the Bible*, p.25.)

Rebekah remembered what Isaac had forgotten, namely, that God had chosen Jacob to be the heir of the Covenant. God had told her so. And she did not forget the words of the *Oracle* which spoke to her when she sought divine help before the children were born (Gen.25:23). The message of God that the elder shall serve the

younger is plain. In the language of their times, this meant that God had appointed the younger son to have the inheritance of his father, the blessing of the firstborn. In the language of Spirit, this means that Jacob, like Isaac, was the child of promise in whom God's promises would be fulfilled, and that the firstborn of heaven takes precedence over the firstborn of earth. *This was what Isaac had lost sight of. He was mesmerized by the sense of physical dominion which Esau expressed. And remember — Isaac was mesmerized.* He was not thinking clearly.

Spiritual vision would have shown Isaac what his material senses did not perceive, namely, that Jacob was the son in whom the spiritual promises of God could be written, the one who would be responsive to divine guidance, the one who could hear the voice of God, the one whose nature could be transformed by the renewing of his mind, the one who would become a soldier of God and win the battle with a mortal sense of selfhood.

Rebekah did what Isaac failed to do: She fostered Jacob's spiritual education, as Abraham had fostered Isaac's. She gave to him the spiritual heritage and individual instruction through which he might attain the understanding of the Covenant of God with man. This was Jacob's spiritual birthright. And this birthright could not be given to Esau, no matter how much Isaac loved him, for Esau's concept of life was wholly physical and material. He was not spiritually prepared to accept and to carry out the conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness and spiritual perfection. But this Isaac could not see.

Isaac was asleep — the *deep sleep* of occult mesmeric influences — in the Adam dream, in which materialism is the reality and the things of Spirit are only visionary. How to rouse him out of this stupor? How to restore to him the *God-vision* that had been Abraham's great bequest to his beloved son? These must have been questions Rebekah asked herself many times. But she could find no answer.

To break a mesmeric spell requires scientific know-how. Rebekah was not versed in the art of occultism. She knew what the influence was that was robbing her husband of his mind and obscuring his vision. But she knew of no way to counteract it. The real enemy in this battle for Isaac's mind was the serpent, the adversary, the carnal mind itself, determined that the child of promise would not fulfill his mission. But the willing tools, or

agents, of this adversary were Esau's Hittite wives who were determined that *they* were going to be the dominating influence in Isaac's household. These shrewd Hittites knew that Rebekah saw through them. They also knew that as long as Isaac and Rebekah stood together in all things, Isaac could not be mesmerized by their influence. Hence their purpose in turning Isaac away from Rebekah. Isaac's great love of Esau was the only wedge they needed to cause Isaac to turn from Rebekah to Esau for companionship and enjoyment, and then to shut her out from his confidence completely.

Isaac's inordinate love of Esau caused him to be susceptible to the hidden occult influence of Esau's Hittite wives, who were determined that their husband would be named heir apparent of his father so that their own status would be elevated. And their scheme seemed to work. Isaac, separated from Rebekah, was separated from the power of The Almighty, the Motherhood of *Elohim*, which Rebekah reflected so gloriously.

The union of the masculine and feminine qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, symbolized by the marriage covenant, gives power and strength to both parties of this covenant. Under the unholy Hittite influence, Isaac began to go downhill, mentally and physically.

### Isaac and Esau

At this time in Isaac's experience the conditions of the Old Covenant, in which a material sense of existence is exalted, seemed to overshadow the glorified sense of God and man revealed in the New Covenant. His scientific senses, which would have broken the mesmeric spell that dimmed his spiritual vision of himself and of his divine mission in life, seemed to be dormant. The fact that he had not utilized his scientific senses nor claimed his spiritual dominion consistently through the years is evidenced by the fact that he succumbed to the ravages of age. But let us read the account in the Bible:

And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I.

And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death:

Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison;

And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.— Gen.27:1-4.

Although Isaac appeared to be courting death, what was actually going on at this time was the beginning of the demise of *the old man*, the mortal concept of himself. But the evidence of the senses was that death was nigh. The material concept of existence, the Old Covenant, had so clouded Isaac's vision and depleted his energy that he looked to savoury meat to strengthen him and to inspire him that he might give to Esau the blessing of the first-born. Isaac was not mentally equipped at this time to give a spiritual blessing to anyone, for he seemed unable to discern the difference between materiality and spirituality. It was as though he was endeavoring to endow Esau with a divine blessing that would empower his son to fulfill the mission which had been entrusted to him.

Isaac had not yet completely fulfilled the exemplification of divine Sonship, the second aspect of the Triune divine Principle. He might have believed he was near death. But he could not leave the scene until his mission was completed. He could not pass on his responsibility to another. Not even to a beloved son who was not spiritually qualified or God-appointed to fulfill that mission.

There is little doubt that through the years there had been many discussions between Isaac and Rebekah concerning the destiny of their sons. Rebekah had probably dreaded the time, which she knew would come, when Isaac would call Esau and bestow upon him the promised blessing of the Covenant and thereby attempt to endow him with the spiritual authority which was the heritage of the heir of the Covenant. The mission of the heir of the Covenant was, and is, to exemplify in his own life the spiritual scientific relationship between God and man. This had been and still was Isaac's heritage, a heritage which could not be bestowed upon Esau, no matter how much Isaac loved him; for Esau's concept of life, though humanly good, was physical and material. He was not spiritually prepared to abide by the conditions of the Covenant.

Further, it must be remembered that Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob. Yet he had not relinquished his claim on it and was willing to accept the blessing of the firstborn which he had bargained away. It is evident that his father knew not that Esau had sold his birthright to his brother for a mess of pottage. But it is also evident that in purposing to give the blessing to Esau, Isaac was acting in opposition to the expressed decree of God.

There must have been something within Isaac that told him he was not acting in accordance with God's expressed decree. Otherwise he would not have been secretive about his proposed actions. He would have called the whole family, all the servants, his friends and neighbors, to witness the sacred event — an event that would give Esau both spiritual and temporal authority over the family and over Isaac's entire estate. And certainly he would have had Rebekah by his side to witness their son's blessing. However, the evidence is clear that Isaac was planning to confer the Covenant blessing on Esau without Rebekah's knowledge or consent. But —

### Rebekah and Jacob

Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son.  
And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it.

And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying,  
Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying,

Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the Lord before my death.

Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee.

Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make thee savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth:

And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.— Gen.27:5-10.

Isaac was presumptuous in assuming the prerogative of bestowing the Covenant blessing on either of his sons. Only God blesses man. Man can only acknowledge this divine blessing. Even Abraham did not presume to bestow the Covenant blessing on his



son. "God blessed Isaac (Gen.25:11). And no matter what Isaac did or did not do, God would bless Jacob. Both Rebekah and Jacob should have known this. And certainly Isaac should have known it. But because Isaac claimed the right to bless Esau, both Rebekah and Jacob were mesmerized by his claim and tried to circumvent his actions — not trusting God to take care of it in His own way.

Rebekah's action was not that of a frustrated wife, nor of a mother who wanted to push her favored son into an important position. She knew that the blessing was to be Jacob's. God had told her so before his birth. Rebekah had come to know the God of Abraham. She knew the conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness. She knew the Word of God concerning Jacob and Esau. And she knew that Isaac, blinded by a finite sense which focused all the love he had to give on a favored son, had lost his spiritual vision. She knew that she was co-partner in the Covenant with Isaac. When his vision of his mission failed, the full responsibility was hers. She tried humanly, with such means as she had, to carry out that responsibility and to be obedient to the word of the Lord which had come to her concerning the children.

Rebekah was fighting the battle between the Old and the New Covenants. This was a kind of warfare which is not evident to the casual reader or observer. It was a warfare between the will of God and the will of man, between spiritual clear-sightedness and material stubbornness which blinds one to righteous action. In warfare it is considered good strategy to outmaneuver an enemy. Rebekah outmaneuvered the mortal, material sense which seemed to possess Isaac and which would have caused him to be disobedient to the will of God, and she thereby kept him from committing an offense against God. Rebekah was fighting desperately, *alone*, that the Covenant of Godlikeness be preserved for the Godlike, that the blessing of spiritual perfection be kept for the righteous, and that the dominion of spiritual authority be given to the child of promise — the child promised of God to establish the nation through whom the knowledge of God would come to the world, even to that child who would give a nation his new name, *Israel*, a soldier who prevails, having power with God and with men. (See Gen.32:28.)

Rebekah was fighting for Jacob's rights as Sarah had fought for Isaac's. But there is one vast difference: Sarah fought in the open. Rebekah fought in secret. Further, Abraham acknowledged the

rightness of Sarah's demands; he listened for God's direction and the divine voice told him that Sarah was right. But Isaac had not listened to Rebekah, nor is there any record that he talked with God about what he intended to do.

As a strange example of the way in which lofty ideas may be made a motive for low acts, it may be that Rebekah told herself she was carrying out the will of God. (*IB*, Vol.I., Expos. p. 681.)

Rebekah is not to be complimented or excused for the means she used to circumvent Isaac's determined disobedience to the word of the Lord concerning the place of these two sons in the divine plan. She should have had faith in God's disposal of events. She should have known that what God ordains, the Spirit of God brings to pass. But Rebekah's action was the lesser of two evils. The far greater evil would have been for Esau to have been chosen to perpetuate a nation of people through whom knowledge of God should come to the world. Esau knew nothing of the God of Abraham, and his Hittite wives knew less. And it is a fearful thing to contemplate that the willful stubborn blindness of Isaac caused Rebekah to stoop to action wholly unlike herself in order to stay evil that would have been far greater than her own misguided action.

When Rebekah unfolded her plan to Jacob, he did not question the rightness of the proposed plan, possibly because he felt he was claiming what was his own. The blessing of the firstborn was his by divine right and by human right. God had decreed it and he had bought the birthright from his brother, including all the rights and privileges that went with the birthright. But he did question the feasibility of the plan:

And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man:

My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.

And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.— Gen.27:11-13.

The curse of an Oriental father was a fearsome thing and not to be taken lightly. It would deprive a son of his inheritance and a

wife of her place. Rebekah had nothing to gain and everything to lose by her plan. Hers was not a selfish or willful act, but a determination that the child of promise should not be robbed of his inheritance. She used the weapons of *the cunning hunter* to gain the blessing for *the plain man*.

And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son:

And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck:

And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, unto the hand of her son Jacob.— Gen.27:15-17.

### Isaac and Jacob

And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son?

And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau, thy firstborn.— Gen.27:18,19.

If Isaac had been spiritually alert, he would have known that it was Jacob. But then, if Isaac had not been mesmerized by his all-absorbing worshipful affection for Esau and Oriental pride for his first-born son, he would have been obedient to the word of the Lord and acknowledged that Jacob was the rightful heir of both the birthright and the Covenant blessing.

And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.

And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. . . . So he blessed him.— Gen.27:21-23.

But Isaac still questioned:

Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am.— Gen.27:24.

With this assurance, Isaac asked that the feast which had been prepared be brought to him "that my soul may bless thee."

### The Birthright Blessing

Fortified by his favorite meal, Isaac pronounced the birthright blessing — the blessing of the firstborn which belonged to Jacob by both divine and human right. But this blessing was *not* the Covenant Blessing. It was the blessing of an Oriental father upon a favorite son:

And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now and kiss me, my son.

And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed:

Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:

Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.— Gen.27:26-29.

The blessing which proceeds from God has no curse in it. The Apostle James saw the incongruity of the duality of thought which sends forth both blessing and cursing:

Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.— Jas.3:9,10.

Jacob has yet to receive the Covenant Blessing of the God of Abraham. The Covenant Blessing of divine Sonship cannot be bestowed upon man by man. This blessing is bestowed by the Almighty God upon those who deserve it. It can only be recognized and acknowledged by man.

And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my

father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau.

And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? Where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.— Gen.27:30-33.

“Isaac trembled very exceedingly.” Isaac was shaken! The mesmerism which had dimmed his vision was dissolving. The Spirit of God had finally touched a responsive chord. The child of promise was maturing quickly. Often human goodness, which Isaac expressed so abundantly, needs to be shocked out of its complacency before it is ready to change its mind. Isaac was beginning to see that *God had chosen the plain man to be blessed*, and that he had power to bless only when his will was in agreement with the divine will. He saw the hand of God in the blessing and had no word of reproof or condemnation of either Jacob or Rebekah. He had been forced to do what he should have done voluntarily — to give the blessing of the firstborn to the son whom God had chosen, *The Spirit of God had moved upon the waters!*

And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.

And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing.

And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?— Gen.27:34-36.

Isaac was grieved, not only because he saw the divine hand in the blessing of Jacob, but also because the son he loved so fiercely had lost the blessing. Although both Isaac and Esau blamed Jacob for his subtilty, Esau is not without blame. For he claimed the blessing of the birthright he had sold to Jacob. This claim to something he had sold to another reveals an aspect of his character not detected by the casual reader. Do not forget that Esau fully intended to accept the birthright blessing from his father, knowing full well that it belonged to Jacob.

## Esau's cry —

... Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?  
... Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me,  
even me also, O my father.—Gen.27:36,38.

has been repeated down through the ages. In our own day the cry of those who have been unwilling to seek the kingdom of heaven within is heard again and again: "Why do we not have the blessing of the dominion of the sons of God?" In the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, Christ Jesus brought home the lesson that without spiritual illumination one cannot behold the bridegroom and go in with him to the marriage feast, and thus be wedded to spiritual life (Matt:25:1-13).

Esau's cry brought from his father the response:

Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;

And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.— Gen.27:39,40.

According to several translations of the Bible, the correct rendering of this passage should be: "Far from the fatness of the earth and of the dew of heaven shall be thy dwelling." This prophecy is in agreement with the general barrenness of Edom, or Seir, where the descendants of Esau dwelt. The fulfillment of Isaac's prophecy, that Esau would live by his sword, would not change Esau's mode of life, for he was thoroughly familiar with the quiver and bow and was a cunning hunter, not a shepherd. The fulfillment of Isaac's blessing for his beloved son was conditioned only upon Esau's receptivity of divine good.

Esau craved the blessing of lordship over his family, but not spiritual oversight of them. He could have neither. Why? Because, as the record explicitly declares, he despised his birthright. When he was hungry, he valued the priceless heritage of the firstborn so little that he could sell it to satisfy his appetite. If there had been within him any response to the human and divine responsibilities of the birthright, he could never have bargained it away. Esau thus laid a judgment on his life which could not be altered.

The writer of the book of Hebrews (12:16) calls Esau "a profane person," irreverent, more or less contemptuous of the spiritual values of life. Bible historians agree that Esau himself made possible the success of Rebekah's and Jacob's plot. The method they contrived happened to be the particular means through which the Covenant blessing passed away from Isaac's firstborn. A commentary in *The Interpreter's Bible* confirms this:

The tragic lesson of the O.T. story is that some lapses are fatal. Isaac could give to Esau, when Esau woke in bitter realization, the blessing of affection; but he could never give now the full blessing of the destiny which Esau had denied. Esau had laid a judgment on his life which Isaac could not alter. (*IB. Vol. I, Expos. p.685.*)

Some commentators have said that, having blessed Jacob, Isaac could not revoke the blessing. But as the absolute ruler of his house, Isaac could have revoked the blessing of the firstborn bestowed on Jacob. There was no spiritual or temporal law which forbade his doing so. That he did not is proof positive that he was at last spiritually awake, that he had been shaken out of the mental miasma which had blinded him to God's will and had stopped for a time his own spiritual unfoldment. Human will was silenced, and Isaac was able to see that God's plan was in operation. At long last he realized that the vibrant physical dominion expressed by Esau was not spiritual strength which inherits the Covenant Blessing and has dominion over all the earth.

The prophecy that Esau would serve his brother is not a decree of servitude of one brother to another. Esau wore no yoke of bondage or servitude to Jacob. In fact Esau became very prosperous and his descendants were the first of Abraham's offspring to establish a temporal kingdom with a royal family. (See Gen.36.)

The yoke of servitude Esau wore was the same yoke all mortals wear to some extent. It was a yoke of bondage to the conditions of the Old Covenant through which we serve materialism in all its forms. The brother we must really serve is the Son of God! When he, the Christ, shall have the dominion in us, we shall break the yoke of servitude that holds us in bondage to a mortal material concept of life and of ourselves.

It is not surprising that Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing which his father bestowed upon him. He did not look within

himself for wrongdoing. He vented all his frustrations on his brother:

And Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning  
for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother  
Jacob.— Gen.27:41.

Esau was not a murderer at heart. This was an impulsive statement made in the heat of anger and despair. Esau was not willing to admit his wrongdoing in being ready to accept something he had bargained away. His disappointment at not getting something he wanted, even though not rightfully his, vented itself in fierce anger. Rebekah, fearing for Jacob's life, persuaded Isaac to send Jacob to Haran to her brother Laban, under the guise of securing a wife for him, for, said she:

I am weary of my life because of the daughters of  
Heth: if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth,  
such as these which are the daughters of the land,  
what good shall my life do me?— Gen.27:46.

Isaac was immediately in accord with Rebekah's counsel. It is significant that for the first time he was willing to listen to his wife, his co-partner in the Covenant.

### The New Covenant Blessing

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and  
charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take  
a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel,  
thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence  
of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruit-  
ful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a  
multitude of people;

And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee,  
and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit  
the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave  
unto Abraham.— Gen.28:1-4.

“Isaac called Jacob.” With patriarchal authority Isaac gave Jacob specific instructions concerning his choice of a wife. He in-



voked the Covenant Blessing on Jacob, the blessing which The Almighty God had bestowed upon Abraham and upon Isaac. At long last Isaac recognized that it is not the prerogative of man to bless man. His acknowledgment that it is The Almighty God, *El Shaddi*, which blesses man indicates that he had come into some understanding of the Covenant relationship of God and man, which had been revealed to Abraham.

The blessing which Isaac, as a human father, gave to Jacob when he thought he was blessing Esau, and the Covenant Blessing which Isaac acknowledged as Jacob's divine heritage are entirely different. The blessing which Isaac first gave to Jacob and for which Esau had wept was a promise of material abundance — plenty of corn and wine, instead of the understanding of ever-appearing fruition. This blessing, which Isaac believed he was bestowing upon Esau, was a blessing of accretion rather than the blessing of unfoldment. In it no mention was made of the divine birthright, which involved spiritual leadership and dominion over one's earthly experience, even that dominion of which the royal priesthood of Melchizedek is typical.

But now, with the scales fallen from his eyes, Isaac sees clearly the true nature of the Covenant blessing, even the wondrous blessing of continuous, uninterrupted spiritual unfoldment in which the glories of heaven appear abundantly on earth:

And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee.— Gen.28:3.

This blessing says naught of corn and wine and of abundance of material possessions. The blessing of The Almighty Motherhood of God makes one fruitful, and multiplies, or increases, one's capacities and accomplishments, and gives one dominion wherever one is. The blessing of the Covenant of Godlikeness does not teach one to *acquire* greatness but demands that one *express* greatness. For the blessing of The Almighty is like "leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened" (Matt.13:33). This leaven of the Christ had been dormant in Isaac's consciousness, but now it has been released, enlarging his concept of himself, expanding his views out of former limitations, and rending the veil of occultism which had dimmed his vision. No longer was he blinded by the belief that the

vibrant physical dominion expressed by Esau was spiritual strength which inherits the Covenant Blessing and has dominion over all the earth.

Isaac's new concept of the Covenant Blessing blessed not only Jacob but Isaac himself. For it opened his eyes to his relationship with the Almighty and to his own life as the expression of the divine Life. This understanding enabled him to lay aside the old garment of decrepitude which had bound him and to throw off the heaviness of death which had led him to the brink of the grave.

Allegorically, Isaac's recognition of Jacob's place in the Covenant indicates that Isaac himself has come into the realization of his Covenant relationship with God and has found that dominion implied in the title *King and Priest unto God* (Rev.1:6). He has found his place as ruler of himself and spiritual leader of his people. He has found the kingdom of heaven within himself. He has come into the understanding of the nature of God as Father-Mother. The child of promise has grown to the full stature of manhood in Christ Jesus — to full spiritual maturity (Eph.4:13).

The struggle between Jacob and Esau for the birthright has ended, and with it the struggle that it typifies, the one going on within Isaac himself. He has learned that the plain man, unsure of himself, but willing to give up all for the spiritual birthright and the Covenant Blessing, and not the man of the world, sure of himself but in doubt of God's way, shall have the dominion of heaven on earth. The victory is in accord with God's will and in conformity with the Covenant of Godlikeness.

Those who might be inclined to condemn Jacob and to say that he was not worthy of so high a mission as that entrusted to him, need to remind themselves that God's ways are not our ways, and that God sees not as mortals see, but God looketh on the heart. God saw in Jacob one who could be instructed in the things of Spirit, one in whom the power of the Spirit of God to transform and transfigure his life could be exemplified.

When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;

And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram;

And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father;

Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.— Gen.28:6-9.

At long last Esau came face to face with the fact that his marriages to the daughters of Canaan displeased his father and mother greatly and in some unexplained way, he associated his loss of the birthright and its blessing with his heathen wives. Seeking to regain the favor of his parents he courted and married a member of Abraham's family, the daughter of Ishmael. And whether or not Isaac and Rebekah approved is not known.

## Chapter XXXIII

# REBEKAH

### A Dynamic Force In Isaac's Divine Adventure

We find no record which tells us whether or not Isaac acknowledged Rebekah's place in the Covenant. But there is abundant evidence of her oneness with and support of her husband in his divine adventure. Although she is not mentioned in the Biblical account of his success in Gerar, her presence is felt there in Isaac's expression of divine completeness, evidenced in his exceeding fruitfulness in that land. Rebekah, like Sarah, was strong. But unlike Sarah, Rebekah apparently stayed in the background of Isaac's human life as a powerful influence felt rather than seen and heard. Could it be that she deliberately refrained from asserting herself so that Isaac would not appear inferior to her? Like many strong women, Rebekah stood behind her man. Had she stood beside him, she would have overshadowed him.

We do have a record of Isaac's great love for his wife. Recall that when it was thought Rebekah was barren, Isaac did not even consider taking a second wife who could give him an heir. He prayed for Rebekah. And his prayer was so fervent it was answered. The mesmerism, whether it was Rebekah's barrenness or Isaac's impotency, was broken, and Rebekah conceived and brought forth twins. Isaac's love for his wife was so constant that after fifty years of married life, he couldn't resist "flirting" with her in Abimelech's court, even though he had introduced her as his sister. The only time the power of their togetherness was weakened was when, some years later, Esau brought two Hittite wives into the family, who exerted an ungodly influence on both Isaac and Rebekah. But when Isaac acknowledged Jacob's right to the birthright and to the Covenant Blessing, the unholy influence which had dulled his spiritual senses and separated him from Rebekah's strength was broken. And we see Rebekah, no longer

in the background of Isaac's divine adventure, but standing side-by-side with her husband.

Recall too that Isaac did not rebuke Rebekah when she circumvented his determination to confer upon Esau the birthright blessing. This was certainly the acid test of his love of and respect for his wife. It is evident that Isaac did not regard Rebekah's action as sinful or unforgiveable. Rather, he admired her intelligence and daring. In the Orient, even today, one who can outwit another is admired rather than censured. This does not justify either Rebekah or Jacob in the eyes of divine justice, and each paid dearly for their deception. For although husband and wife found their spiritual and human togetherness, mother and son never saw each other again.

There is no record in the Bible of the time of Rebekah's death. Apparently, she left earth's scene while Jacob was on his way from Haran to Hebron, about 30 years after Jacob had left home. (See pp. 527-528.)

There is no doubt that Isaac recognized Rebekah as a dynamic force in his life. Their life together is a real love story — something unique in the ancient east. And we learn that at the end, as at the beginning, of their life together, *he loved her!*

## Chapter XXXIV

# THE CLIMAX OF ISAAC'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

Isaac was about 136 years old when Jacob departed from Beer-sheba. At that time he thought he was ready to die. But when Jacob returned from Haran some thirty years later, Isaac was still living. When he had let God's will be done, instead of stubbornly clinging to what he thought was right, he took a new lease on life. Reaching forward into Jacob's story, we read:

### Isaac in Hebron

And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre,  
unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where  
Abraham and Isaac sojourned.— Gen.35:27.

We know not how long Isaac had made his home in Hebron, the city typical of the exalted state of mind which characterized Abraham. But metaphorically, Isaac's abode in the city of the Covenant is indicative of the fact that he had come into some understanding of the spiritual nature of the universe — the understanding which had come to Abraham and which had led him to Hebron. For Isaac, like Abraham, knew the city by its holy name *Kirjath-Arbah, the fourfold city* — symbolic in some measure of their foursquare understanding of the fourth dimension of Spirit, which transcends the finite sense of a limited material world. (See pp.334-335.)

Rebekah must have accompanied Isaac to this climax of his spiritual journeying. For Hebron is typical of the wondrous citadel of spiritual understanding of the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God — the understanding which had caused Abraham to recognize and to acknowledge Sarah's place in the Covenant.

So Isaac came to the city, or citadel of spiritual understanding to which Abraham had come and to which we all must come — to

spiritual maturity, “to that measure of development which is meant by the fulness of Christ” (Eph.4:13, JBP).

The Child of Promise learned to know God as the Father and Mother of all, who blesses the Sons of God according to their receptivity.

He learned that even the child of promise cannot remain forever a child, but must grow to the full stature of manhood; and through his faithfulness to his marriage covenant with Rebekah, he learned to express the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim* — the power and presence, the strength and the gentleness of the Almighty.

And he learned to yield to the power of the Spirit of God — to let this mighty divine energy transform his humanhood with the divine — in accordance with the law of the human and divine coincidence through which the dominion of heaven is expressed on earth.

The Child of Promise fulfilled his mission!

Isaac and Jacob dwelt together at Hebron for about twelve or thirteen years. Here, at the age of an hundred and fourscore years, “Isaac gave up the ghost,” and rose into a new divine adventure, unseen by the material senses. Jacob and Esau, having made their peace, laid him beside his beloved Rebekah, near Abraham and Sarah in the Cave of Machpelah in the field of Ephron, which is before Mamre in Hebron. (See Gen.23:19,20; 25:8-10; 35:29.) But Isaac lives on as an essential link in the exemplification of the human and divine coincidence through which the dominion of the New Covenant radiates the power, presence, and science of The Almighty.

Isaac’s recorded history is brief. Between Abraham and Jacob, two of the most towering figures in the Bible, Isaac seems almost obscure. In most of his record he is pictured either as the son of Abraham or as the father of Jacob. Only in the story of his marriage with Rebekah and in his prosperity in Abimelech’s country does he appear as his own man. Here he expresses his divine nature.

Although not as majestic as was Abraham, nor as dynamic as Jacob grew to be, Isaac’s gentleness, a priceless divine attribute, made him great. But what Isaac did or didn’t do humanly is not im-

portant. What he stands for as the exemplar of the second aspect of the threefold divine nature of *Elohim* places him on the same high plane of unfoldment with Abraham and Jacob. As *the child of promise*, Isaac is the pre-figurement of the Son of God. In the Covenant relationship of God with man, he is vitally important as *the essential link between Abraham and Jacob* — Abraham who, together with Sarah, exemplified the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, and Jacob, who exemplified the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, to redeem the human with the divine through the human and divine coincidence. This threefold nature of the Triune divine Principle, God, describes the individuality of the Infinite, enunciated by the Master Christian as *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. No link in this chain or pattern of unfoldment is weak, obscure, secondary, or unimportant. Gentleness is an essential link between majesty and dynamism in the unfolding of the threefold nature of the Infinite through which divine authority, the dominion of heaven on earth, is expressed.



## Chapter XXXV

# JACOB

## HIS MISSION

Come ye, and let us go up to the  
mountain of the Lord, to the house of the  
God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways,  
and we will walk in his paths.  
(Isa.2:3; Micah 4:2)

The Trinity needed yet another witness. The exemplification of the threefold nature of God was not complete. Abraham and Sarah exemplified the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God. Isaac and Rebekah exemplified the compound nature of divine Sonship — the male and female of the sixth period of spiritual unfoldment of the New Covenant, in which the completeness of man in God's image and likeness is revealed. Now the Holy Ghost must have an exemplar. The Holy Spirit of God must be exemplified — even the Spirit of the New Covenant which moved upon the face of the waters, scattered the darkness, and brought to light the spiritual nature of the universe and man in God's likeness.

In Jacob's life we find the descent of the Holy Ghost in abundant measure. Each spiritual touch of the Spirit of God brought to light in Jacob's human consciousness more of the divine nature which prevailed over what had appeared to be an unyielding material sense of self.

In Jacob's story we see more clearly than in any other story in the Bible the individual human footsteps leading from a material concept of existence up to the spiritual understanding of life. In Jacob's life experience is plainly written the record of the intense struggle between the Old Covenant of godless materialism and the New Covenant of Godlikeness and spiritual perfection — the struggle which is to determine whether a dominant material nature shall triumph in man or whether the divine nature of man

shall have dominion. In this struggle is written a prophecy which shall surely come to pass, namely: the divine nature in man *shall* triumph over carnal mindedness and its gross nature in all the earth.

The story of Jacob is the story of every individual who has believed that his struggles for happiness, success, completeness, and dominion lie outside himself — with persons and things, with circumstances and conditions, with the world at large — only to learn that every struggle begins and ends within one's own consciousness. Jacob learned that no matter what the outward problem might seem to be, the answer lay within himself.

There is a law involved in this truth: When spiritual dominion is felt within, spiritual authority is expressed without; when the kingdom within us is governed by God, the city around us expresses the same harmony. This is the law of spiritual dominion, the dominion of the New Covenant — dominion which always begins within one's own heart and expands to include and govern everything within the radius of individual consciousness. We see this law in operation in every experience in Jacob's life. When his divine nature governed him, he was in command of outward conditions. When a mortal, material sense dominated him, he was enslaved by persons and circumstances. The outcome of his every struggle with the adversary was determined by this law.

In the struggle between Jacob and Esau for the birthright, we saw a struggle to determine whether The Spirit of God in man or the spirit of the world shall have dominion on earth. Esau, in whom the spirit of the world was dominant, lost in this contest. Jacob won, not because of deceit, but in spite of it; and not because of human goodness, but because the Omniscience of the Almighty knew that Jacob's gentle, teachable nature could be regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost, that his mortal sense of self would yield to the holy influence of the Spirit of God, and that he would continue to grow in this understanding and exemplification of the divine nature until he reached the goal of spiritual maturity.

Jacob's new birth or regeneration was not easy. The physical travail of giving birth to a child is not to be compared with the mental travail of being born again. A mortal nature does not yield easily to the transforming influence of the Spirit of God; it will always be found justifying its indulgences and weaknesses. The travail goes on and on until the human yields to the divine.

Jacob learned that the struggle with Esau was as nothing compared with the struggle within himself between the divine nature, with its spiritual ways and means of accomplishing success, and a mortal nature, with its occult methods of bringing about a desired end. However, the renewing of his mind was a continuing process, for the Spirit of God had taken hold of him and would not let him go until he was transformed — until his human life conformed with the divine pattern of unfoldment. Though he knew it not, his was the task of building within himself the temple of the Holy Ghost and of fathering the progenitors of the nation in which the Covenant of God with man would be fulfilled — a nation that would bear his new name. He had no choice but to follow divine directions.

Jacob's spiritual journeying did not really begin until he left his parents' home. Prior to this time Jacob's experiences were, metaphorically, a part of Isaac's unfoldment. Even though the experiences were Jacob's, they showed forth the trials and triumphs going on within Isaac's own consciousness. But Jacob has left his father's house and his individual unfoldment has begun.

Let us accompany him and participate in his divine adventure — an adventure in which the *Seven Periods of Unfoldment of the New Covenant*, revealed in the first chapter of Genesis, are illustrated — periods of revelation of the nature of God and of his (Jacob's) relationship with God, periods of unfoldment of his divine mission and of his place in the Covenant, periods in which the old man, the old mortal sense of himself, is put off and the new man, his divine nature, is put on.

Throughout his journey we may see how the Spirit of God moves upon the waters, the elements of his consciousness, and brings to light the spiritual ideas that lead him into and through every period of unfoldment. But let us return for a moment to Isaac's house, that we may walk with Jacob as he departs from thence and goes forth on his holy pilgrimage.

Chapter XXXVI  
JACOB'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

THE FIRST PERIOD

Bethel

The Spirit of God moved upon the face  
of the waters.  
(Gen.1:2.)

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Arise, go to Padan-Aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee: that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.— Gen.28:1-4.

With the Covenant blessing of the Almighty God, the All-Sufficient One, who nourishes, enriches, and makes fruitful, Jacob went forth from his father's house. The understanding of the nature of God as *El Shaddi* — a loving Mother whose All-might chastens, comforts, and strengthens Her children and makes them fruitful in good works — is the understanding of Deity through which the Covenant relationship of God and man was established with Abraham. And it is this understanding of God's Covenant with man which is beginning to dawn in Jacob's consciousness.

No colorful Oriental caravan accompanied Jacob in his journey as he went out from his father's house such as the one provided by Abraham when he sent to Padan-Aram to bring Rebekah from thence to be Isaac's wife. Why would Isaac send Jacob on such a journey without provisions for his well-being? Why would Isaac not have sent his chief steward to bring a wife for Jacob, as Abraham had done for him? We do not know. But we do know that in the divine plan there was a reason for it.

It is unlikely that Jacob set out on foot on this journey from Beer-sheba to Haran — a distance of several hundred miles. Travel by camel was so customary in those days it is not unusual that no mention is made of it. Jacob's only possession was his shepherd's staff (Gen.32:10). He had neither escort, companion, nor servant. But Jacob was not alone. The Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, was with him, leading him into the first lessons of the New Covenant.

Jacob's first day's journey — the First Day in his divine adventure — brought him to the place where the pattern of his mission was revealed to him. He had traveled far both mentally and physically in this period of spiritual unfoldment. He traversed a distance of about sixty miles through time and space, but there is no way of measuring his spiritual journeying, for this gain is invisible to the material senses.

Before Jacob left his father's house his repentance had already begun. He did not claim the material inheritance of Isaac, which was obtained through deceit. All that he took from Isaac when he left was the promise that Almighty God, the God of Abraham, would bless him and make him fruitful. This mighty blessing was already at work in him. When Jacob left his father's house he thought he was fleeing from Esau's wrath, and that he was going to find a wife. But it was the Spirit of God that was even then leading him out of a mortal material sense of himself and of his mission into the realization of his divine completeness and his universal mission.

To one uninstructed in the ways of the Holy Spirit, this point in Jacob's journeying might seem to be retrogressive rather than progressive. Although he had been given the blessing of the first-born, which made him Isaac's heir, and he had received the Covenant Blessing, which gave him spiritual authority on earth, yet he was being sent away from the land which had been promised him as his inheritance. He was literally going into exile. But spiritual vision reveals this low ebb to be, not depression, but humility — one of the most precious and priceless qualities to be found in the human consciousness.

When one discovers humility within one's self, one is ready for progress, for the high road of humility leads away from the low road of self. And Jacob had found humility. This divine virtue had been awakened in him at the time Isaac invoked the Covenant

Blessing of The Almighty upon him. Now he *felt* the power which humiliates the mortal sense of self and elevates the spiritual concept of man in God's likeness. The Spirit of God within was leavening his consciousness, lifting his meditations from thoughts of self to thoughts of God.

And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. —

Gen.28:11.

Here Abraham had built an altar soon after coming into the land of Canaan. Here God had revealed to Abraham the spiritual nature of the universe and of his dominion therein. Doubtless Jacob knew this — knew the sacredness of Abraham's communion with God in this *well-known place*, and he felt safe there — it was *sanctuary* to him.

And he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. — Gen.28:11.

### Jacob's Vision of the Ladder of Heaven

Jacob's sleep was *not* the deep sleep of the Adam dream. It was the sleep of restfulness in which a material sense of existence fell away, leaving him free to commune with God without interference from the troublesome material senses. Often individuals hear God's voice while they sleep because then their thoughts are quiet and less self-assertive. The Spirit of God lifted Jacob's sleeping or unresisting thought to behold the majesty of *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of the universe. And in this vision Jacob began to understand his place in the infinitude of God's unfolding plan. Let us read the holy record of Jacob's first awareness of God's presence:

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it. —

Gen.28:12,13.

The angels of God's presence are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb.1:14).

Angels are not winged creatures clothed in white. They are God's holy thoughts, guiding, guarding, and made manifest in whatever form they are needed.

The way in which Jacob became conscious of his unchanging relationship with Deity was revealed through God's angel system — God's thoughts ascending and descending upon the ladder of life. This method of communication between God and man is familiar to all of God's faithful witnesses and is known as *communion*, not a religious ceremony, but uninterrupted communication, or oneness, with the Infinite — a conscious sense of God's presence. The vision which came to Jacob comes to those who have glimpsed something of their relationship with Deity, even the relationship of Parent and child — the holy relationship revealed in the first two statements of The Trinity in which the nature of the Infinite is defined in its Creative and its Self-revealing aspects. Christ Jesus often referred to this relationship of God and man. His statement: "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30), was a declaration of his absolute at-one-ment with his Father-God, with his divine source. To one who acknowledged his divine Sonship, he said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.— John 1:51.

Jacob's dream and Christ Jesus' words describing the uninterrupted communication, or communion, between God and man, are declarations of the same spiritual truth. The Master's words give a new dimension to Jacob's dream. Christ Jesus — the Son of God made manifest as the Son of Man — is himself the ladder of life, the connecting link between heaven and earth, between the divine and the human.

For the brief space of this holy vision, Jacob saw himself as a ladder whose feet rested on the earth even while his consciousness reached heaven. In this vision he was able to comprehend, in some degree, how the angels, God's thoughts, could ascend and descend upon him, keeping him ever mindful of God's presence, guiding and guarding his human footsteps and leading him in the way that he should go. Thus the true meaning of communion was revealed to him — conscious communication with the Infinite. The angels of God's presence — powerful and comforting thoughts sent to

minister to us — ascend and descend our ladder of life and bring to us, as they brought to Jacob, a conscious sense of the presence of God — of Immanuel, or God-with-us.

Notwithstanding all that Jacob had done, communication between earth and heaven was not broken. The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac — the God of his fathers and of all the inheritance of his home — was with him still, and would go with him on the way ahead. . . . Even on the rocky slopes where Jacob was alone there rose the shining stairway that brought the heavenly glory, with angels going up like prayers of men to God and angels coming down like the grace of God to man. (*IB, Vol.I, Expo. pp.689-690.*)

“The ladder set up on the earth, whose top reached to heaven,” was the beginning of Jacob’s realization of the *link* between God and man, between heaven and earth, between the divine and the human. He was beginning to understand, in some measure, that earth was not a material sphere, isolated from heaven, but that it was indeed the sphere of heavenly harmony where the ideas of God, thoughts of God’s presence, were constantly communing with him.

Truly, the Spirit of God was moving forcefully on the waters, or elements of Jacob’s body of consciousness. The Interpretive aspect of the divine nature, revealed in the third aspect of the Trinity, was bringing to light in him some comprehension of his holy mission. The power of the Holy Spirit to regenerate, redeem, and transform mortals was to be exemplified in his human experience. And the vision of the ladder revealed the way in which this was to be done.

The Hebrew word *cullam*, translated *ladder*, or *stair-case*, carries the meaning of step *upon* step, not in the sense of material climbing but of spiritual ascendancy or exaltation. This word is not used in the same sense elsewhere in the Bible. The angels ascending and descending the ladder, God’s thoughts ever communing with Jacob, revealed to him that the way before him was to be not a step *by* step, but a step *upon* step of overcoming a mortal concept of himself, of resisting the earthward gravitation of materialism, and of nullifying the stultifying influences of Oriental occultism. Or, as the prophet Isaiah stated it centuries later:



Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.— Isa.28:10.

The promise of the vision was that the angels of God would accompany him in his spiritual journeying and lead him *step upon step* in the unfoldment of his divine adventure; that holy thoughts of God's presence would inspire him and turn his thoughts and his footsteps from earth toward heaven.

"The ladder reached to heaven . . . and the Lord stood above it." We may see in Jacob's vision a pre-vision of Jesus' experience at the time of his baptism when —

. . . the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God [the Holy Ghost] descending like a dove, and lighting upon him;

And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. —

Matt.3:16,17.

Let us in thought ascend the ladder with Jacob, and stand with him in silent adoration before the open door of heaven and behold the unfolding glory of the divine presence. A voice speaks, and we listen reverently as the *I AM* inscribes its message in Jacob's sleeping consciousness:

I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac.— Gen.28:13.

This is the first time *El Shaddi*, The Almighty God, has so identified Herself to Jacob. What does this dynamic declaration — *I AM* the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac" — mean to Jacob? Even this: the All-knowing, Almighty *I AM*, who revealed the creative nature of *Elohim* to Abraham as the Father and Mother of man and the universe, and who revealed this compound nature to Isaac through the idea of divine Sonship, was ready to reveal the Interpretive aspect of the divine nature to Jacob. Or rather, that Jacob's thought was receptive to the revelation.

The revelation of God as Father-Mother (identified in the Bible as *the God of Abraham*) and of God made manifest as His image and likeness, man (identified in the Bible as *the God of Isaac*) was preliminary to the revelation of God in His Interpretive aspect,

known as the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God active in individual human consciousness, interpreting the relationship of God to man and ruling out everything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God (identified in the Bible as *the God of Jacob*).

At this time Jacob, not fully understanding his predestined part in the unfolding of the Covenant, calls his holy concept of Deity *the God of Bethel*, because it was at Bethel that the *I AM* revealed to him the triune divine Principle of the universe in its essential threefold nature.

The vision continues to unfold in Jacob's sleeping consciousness as the *I AM* proclaims:

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.— Gen.28:13,14.

We cannot remind ourselves too often of this fact: When in the Scripture we read that God says "I" — this is confirmation that the voice of the divine *Esse*, the *I AM*, has been heard, whether or not it had been consciously accepted or heeded. Jacob's unconscious thought heard the voice of the *Ego* confirming the Covenant promise of divine blessedness made to Abraham and to Isaac. In this promise we may hear the echo of God's words to Abraham at the time of his communion with God at Bethel:

Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place  
where thou art northward, and southward, and  
eastward, and westward:

For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give  
it, and to thy seed for ever.

Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it and  
in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto  
thee.— Gen.13:14,15,17.

A faint comprehension of the infinite spiritual nature of the universe and of his dominion therein dawns in Jacob's sleeping thought. He senses the spiritual dimension of his world. And we glimpse something of the majesty awaiting unfoldment in Jacob's consciousness. The *I AM* has begun to reveal its transcendent

message: The First Day, or first period of spiritual unfoldment of The New Covenant, dawns in Jacob's unresisting thought. And we are witnesses of this glory.

The divine *Ego* becomes Jacob's conscience and demands that he understand that his inheritance and dominion are not locations in time and space. He must let the comprehension of his possession *spread abroad* to the north, east, south, west — as far as his eye can see, to the borders of his spiritual comprehension. The promise is that wherever he is, *that* is his holy land which he possesses and where he has dominion.

The *I AM* continues to inscribe its message in Jacob's sleeping thought:

And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.— Gen.28:15.

This message leaves no doubt that the Great *I AM* is speaking and has been heard. *I am* with thee, *I will* keep thee, *I will* bring thee, *I will* not leave thee, until *I have done* that which *I have spoken* unto thee of. This iteration and reiteration of the *I AM* inscribed indelibly in Jacob's mind, is the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, which embraces the human in the divine. It is the revelation of *Immanuel* — *God-with-us* — not a God afar off, but God made manifest as Jacob's own Christ-consciousness.

The coming of the Christ as Jacob's consciousness in his communion with God at Bethel, is comparable to the coming of the Christ in Abraham's consciousness when Melchizedek went forth to meet him with bread and wine, to confirm with holy communion Abraham's new understanding of the divine presence — Christ with him and in him. (See Gen.14:18-20; p.260.)

Unlike Abraham, who was wide awake when the revelation of the Christ came to him, Jacob was asleep. The revelation became a part of his unconscious thought. Later, when this idea matured in him, it sprang forth gloriously. But now the assurance of God's promise — "I am with thee" — was enough. The divine *Ego*, the *I AM*, was a living presence in Jacob's conscious thought when he awoke. With the holiness of the vision full upon him —

Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful [awesome] is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.—  
Gen.28:16,17.

Jacob's waking thought, transfixed by the radiance of the divine presence, found expression in one spontaneous exclamation: "The Lord is in this place!" This simple statement, destined to be the Comforter for countless millions in centuries to come, reveals the glory of the vision of the Christ, the divine ever-presence of the divine *Esse*, Supreme Being, the *I AM*, which had been gathered into a focal point in Jacob's human consciousness. Jacob's utterance, acknowledging the holiness of *this place*, acknowledges the holiness, or spiritual nature, of all places. For *this place* is not a material location. It is a divine state of Mind, the consciousness of the *I AM's* ever-presence and of man's oneness with that divine presence.

At Bethel, *the God of Bethel*, who is in truth the All-knowing God, the Almighty, *El Shaddi*, who had appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and now to Jacob, revealing three specific aspects of the divine nature, now pronounced the name by which the threefold nature of the Infinite was to be known throughout the Bible: *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*. "These three are one," as the New Covenant declares (1 John 5:7). Not three different gods, but three statements representative of three essential aspects of the *I AM* expressed in man and the universe.

Recall that these three definitive aspects of the divine nature were revealed in the very first day, or first period of unfoldment of the New Covenant (Gen.1:1-5; pp.39-40), and show clearly the threefold nature of the Infinite — the pattern through which all revelation comes to light and through which God gives a full expression of Divinity:

*The God of Abraham:* So called because Abraham and Sarah exemplified the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, the Creator. (Gen.1:1.)

*The God of Isaac:* So called because Isaac — the child of promise — exemplified the idea of divine Sonship, the Son of God, which is the Christ, "the light of the world." (Gen.1:3.)

*The God of Jacob:* So called because Jacob exemplified the power of the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, to regenerate and redeem the human concept of life and thus bring the human into conformity with the divine. (Gen.1:2.)

While each of these individuals exemplified a distinct aspect of the Trinity, each one expressed in his individual life the three essentials of the divine nature:

Each learned to know the nature of God as the Creator; each learned to express the qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God.

Each learned to know the nature of the Son of God; each learned to express both the masculine and the feminine qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God in his individual life; each learned to let the Light of his Divinity, his Christliness, shine wherever he was.

Each learned to know the nature of the Spirit of God and to feel the power of the Spirit to regenerate the mortal sense of life and to transform and transfigure the human with the divine; thus each learned to bring his human life into conformity with the divine; and each learned to say *I AM* with divine authority.

In the degree that each individual expresses this glorious threefold divine nature, he wears the crown of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek and is made both priest and king unto God — made a spiritual seer and leader and is king, or ruler, over his earthly experiences.

It must be remembered that neither Abraham, Isaac, nor Jacob chose for themselves to be representatives of the divine Trinity. God chose them and wrote His allegory in their lives for all to see and understand. They had no choice but *to be* what the *I AM* declared them to be.

Jacob's words — "How awesome is this place" — pronounce a holy benediction to the revelation. For the vision at Bethel reveals a transcendent truth, not seen by the casual reader, namely, that in our own Christliness, or Godlikeness, the fullness of the Godhead, the Divinity of The Almighty, is individualized. Hear St. Paul's confirmation of this truth:

For it is in Christ that the complete being of the Godhead dwells embodied, and in him you have been brought to completeness.— Col.2:9 (NEB).

The word *Godhead*, used in the Bible to define the threefold nature of Deity, has nothing to do with corporeal personality. The term has been translated variously: Divine Nature, Divinity, Divine Being, Fullness of Deity, A full expression of Himself, Divine Completeness. Truly, how awesome, how full of awe, reverence, and wonder is this place, this consciousness in which dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily — in which the divine completeness, a full expression of *Elohim*, is embodied, or individualized. Truly “This is none other than the house of God!” This is none other than the temple of the Holy Ghost, where the divine completeness finds expression. (See I Cor.6:19; II Cor.6:16; Acts 17:29; Rom.1:20; FF, NEB, JBP, JM.)

In the night vision at Bethel God revealed to Jacob, and makes plain to us, that the consciousness in tune with the Infinite is the house of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, the place where God is manifesting a full expression of Himself — even the place of communion with God, where man becomes conscious of his Covenant with The Almighty.

“The Lord is in this place!” The acknowledgment of God’s presence in any place presupposes the spiritual nature thereof and secures the spirituality, the divinity, of everyone and everything dwelling therein. This truth dispels the popular belief that man and the universe are material and that man is at the mercy of matter, material circumstances, or of a material environment. The degree of one’s understanding of this fact determines his demonstration of its truth and insures his divine authority on earth.

The vision is indeed *awesome*. But Jacob’s thought was not prepared to take in so infinite a view. Like Abraham, Jacob had to return to Bethel a second time before he could comprehend the magnitude of the vision which had come to him there.

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.— Gen.28:18,19.

According to many scholars, *Luz* means separation. Both Abraham and Jacob may well have felt a sense of separation from God when they reached this place in their divine adventure. But neither Abraham nor Jacob accepted the Canaanite name *Luz* for this place. They saw the meaning of the place in their spiritual journeying, and *their* concept of it changed the name of the place, even unto this day. *The Interpreter's Bible* records this commentary:

In the tradition which came down from Jacob, this neighborhood was no longer merely what men had called it; it was what God had made it. Bethel means The House of God. So the whole suggestion widens. One's imagination dwells upon the fact that frequently in the O.T. and in history generally, a place which originally was ordinary has become exalted because some great spiritual experience was associated with it. (*IB, Vol. I, Expos., p. 693.*)

So Bethel, the House of God, or place of communion with God, was and is its name, and here Jacob erected his first altar. The building of altars was one way in which Abraham, on entering the land of Canaan, had taken possession of the land in the name of his God. And like an explorer, surveyor, and homesteader going into a new country, he staked out his claims to this holy land with altars of worship to the one God. Jacob, though leaving the land of Canaan, anticipated his promised return and put down his own first stake, claiming the land in the name of *the God of Bethel*, which is *the God of Jacob*.

Jacob's first altar was the stone upon which his head rested when, in the dream-vision, the *I AM* revealed to him the triune divine nature of the Supreme Being. He poured oil on this altar, a symbolical act of consecration in acknowledgment of the holiness of the experience. The real altar which Jacob erected was within his own temple, or body, of which Bethel, the House of God, is the symbol. Jacob's outward act of hallowing the place of his communion with God is typical of his inward consecration.

The Covenant which God made with Abraham and established in

Isaac has been confirmed in Jacob. Now Jacob gives his word that he will live in accordance with the terms of this holy agreement:

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and will 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 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.— Gen.28:20-22.

There may be many who interpret Jacob's words in these verses as bargaining with God. But this is not true. *Dummelow* interprets the Hebrew text thus: "Jacob vows that in return for God's protecting care, if he is spared to return, he will regard this stone as a holy spot." Jacob promises that if he is spared to return to his father's house, he will continue to serve God — *the God of Bethel* — and live in accordance with the terms of the Covenant.

### Jacob's Tithes

"Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." Whence came the idea of tithing? We first heard the word *tithe* at the time of Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek. Recall that Melchizedek, who was king of Salem and priest of the Most High God, went forth to meet Abraham on his return from his victory over the kings of the East. The royal priesthood of Melchizedek prefigures the dominion of the Christ, which makes all men kings and priests unto God — a title used in the Bible to denote complete dominion (Rev.1:6). His meeting with Melchizedek confirmed Abraham's comprehension of his own Christliness, his divine nature, which embodies and expresses the dominion of heaven on earth. The blessing which Melchizedek invoked upon Abraham was the blessing of Christliness — the Christly understanding that God is the source of all supply and dispenser of all blessings in the earth. This Christly understanding was and is a blessing of perpetual fruitfulness, sufficiency, prosperity, well-being, and dominion. Abraham's faith and understanding that all things emanated from God was so firmly established in him that he refused to accept a reward from the king of Sodom for rescuing



his people from the invading kings of the East, lest the king or anyone else should say, "I have made Abram rich." (See p.263; Gen.14:18-23.) In recognition of this advanced understanding of Deity and of his own Christliness, Abraham gave to Melchizedek, the royal priest of the Most High God, tithes of all that he possessed. What is the spiritual significance of this act?

It is of more than passing interest to note that the idea of tithing, in both Abraham's and Jacob's spiritual journeying, followed immediately a higher recognition of the nature of God and the revelation of their own Christliness. What inference may we draw from the action of these two patriarchs that will help us in our divine adventure?

There is a law embodied in their action — the law of demand and supply. The divine authority of the Christ, indicated in the dual office of priest and king, bestows on man the power of the Spirit of God to bring to light the unseen spiritual realities of God's creation, so that "the visible comes forth from the invisible" (Heb.11:3, NEB). The royal priesthood of the Christ confers upon man the power of the creative *let*, revealed in the first chapter of Genesis. Instead of *letting* a finite sense of good limit our receptivity of God's blessings, we should give the divine *let* free rein. Our absolute faith in God as the source of all supply and the dispenser of all blessings in the earth, enables us to *let* the Spirit of God bring forth in our consciousness the specific ideas we need every moment out of the vast elements of infinite Mind. Since "Faith gives substance to our hopes, and makes us certain of realities we do not see" (Heb.11:1, NEB), our absolute faith enables us to *let* ideas translate themselves into forms we can see, understand, and utilize. In this way we find all our needs cared for. The source being infinite, the supply is also infinite.

Abraham's gift of tithes to Melchizedek was in acknowledgment of his understanding of God as the source of all supply and the dispenser of blessings in the earth, and of the revelation of the power of his own Christliness — the realization that he too expressed the divine authority of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek to invoke the law of the tithe and call forth the visible from the invisible — to *see* good flowing from its invisible infinite source. The understanding of God as *El Elyon*, the Most High God, source of all supply, and dispenser of all blessings in the earth, was so firmly fixed in Abraham's mind, or consciousness,

that it became to him a law of supply, a law of blessedness, a law of fruitfulness. This law of increase he interpreted as the law of the tithe, which, activated by gratitude, made him rich — rich in ideas, rich in health, rich in peace, rich in ability, rich in supply, rich in strength, rich in righteous activity, rich in companionship — rich in all good.

To Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, it was natural that his first acknowledgment of the great blessing bestowed on him at Bethel should have brought to mind Abraham's tithe to Melchizedek. He knew that tithing — the symbol of gratitude — was the key to prosperity, the key to spiritual riches and their evidence in human experience, the key to success in every department of life. And so, following Abraham's example, Jacob pledged tithes of all that he received from God. In his experience at Bethel, Jacob has touched the law of tithing, and the unfoldment of his greatness has begun.

The pattern of divine unfoldment established in the original Covenant of Godlikeness is the pattern of unfoldment we discover in Jacob's spiritual education. The First Day of his divine adventure, the first period of unfoldment of his divine nature, follows this pattern:

In the beginning God created [caused to appear, made visible] the heaven and the earth— Gen.1:1.

The God who made heaven and earth appeared to Jacob at Bethel and revealed to him the spiritual nature of the universe. The vision of the ladder set up on the earth, whose top reached unto heaven, symbolized to Jacob the connecting link between heaven and earth, and revealed to him the wondrous fact that earth and his earthly experience were not separate from heaven but were embraced in heavenly harmony.

And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.— Gen.1:2.

The vision of the spiritual nature of the earth was at first dark — Jacob could not comprehend it. But the darkness upon the face of the waters, or elements of his thought, was dispersed as

the Spirit of God moved him to contemplate thoughts of God — angel thoughts — instead of thoughts of self. And the invisible spiritual realities came to light in his consciousness. He *heard* the divine assurance: *I AM with thee, I AM present in all places. No matter where you go I AM there. You cannot go out of my presence.*

And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.— Gen.1:3.

This light is the radiance of God's own presence, the glory of God shining out from the Infinite. It is Godlikeness. It is the Christ, the divine manifestation of God, which is the light of the world. This light, or spiritual enlightenment, began to dawn in Jacob's thought when *the God of Bethel* identified Himself as *The God of Abraham* (revealing the Creative aspect of the Triune divine Principle of the universe) and *The God of Isaac* (the Self-revealing aspect of the Trinity). And in this light — the light of his own Christliness, his own Divinity — he glimpsed something of the nature of *The God of Bethel*, later known as *The God of Jacob* (the Interpretive aspect of the Trinity).

And God saw the light that it was good.— Gen.1:4.

The radiant unfoldment of the Triune nature of the divine Principle of the universe which had come to light, enlightened Jacob's understanding. And God saw, and by reflection Jacob saw, that it was good — Godlike.

And God divided the light from the darkness.—  
Gen.1:4.

Light and darkness, good and evil, spiritual enlightenment and mental darkness! God divided these opposing forces in Jacob's thought, giving him to know what is good and what is evil as certainly as one can distinguish between light and darkness. And giving him to know how to overcome the darkness of ignorance, fear, malice — all the elements of the carnal mind — with the light of intelligence, the science of the divine Mind.

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.— Gen.1:5.

In the Day, in the Light of his Christliness, the radiance of his divine nature, Jacob could see the wonders of God's spiritual universe and his place therein. But in the Night, when mental darkness — a mortal, personal concept of himself and of others — overtook him in his divine adventure, the way seemed rough and frustrating. But he had seen the Light of Heaven, and that Light continued to shine in him. The darkness could not put it out.

And the evening and the morning  
were the first day.  
(Gen.1:5.)

And the evening (the mistiness of comprehension) gave way to the morning (the dawning of spiritual understanding) in this first period of Jacob's divine adventure. The pattern of the Trinity began to unfold in Jacob's life. And though he knew it not, in this first period of his divine adventure, his body of consciousness embodied the revelation of *The God of Bethel* and became *the house of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost*, in which the power of the Spirit of God to redeem and to regenerate his humanhood was to be exemplified.

Jacob's First Day in the unfolding of the divine nature revealed in the Trinity has been accomplished. The revelation of Jacob's place in the Covenant has been clearly stated. But this is just the beginning of Jacob's divine adventure. Immediately he is led by the Spirit of God into the second period of unfoldment and into a series of events which force him to prove the power of the spiritual facts which had been revealed to him in the first period. Until spiritual facts are put to the test and show forth their vital evidence, or proof, they remain theoretical and fragmentary. Hence the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of God within him, led Jacob into the experiences where he would learn to make his spiritual education practical.