

THE LIFE OF JACOB

By Titus Chu

MESSAGE THREE: THE HEAVENLY PROVISIONS FOR THE DIVINE COURTSHIP

GOD'S CHOOSING AND PREDESTINATING

We have seen that in God's divine courtship He chose us and predestinated us. We learn this from two verses in Ephesians: "Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love, predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1:4-5). We were chosen before the foundation of the world. Before anything in the universe came into existence, God chose us. Furthermore, He chose us to be holy and without blemish before Him in love. We look at ourselves and think that we are poor and sinful, but God says, "No, you are holy." We say that we are ugly and full of weakness, but God says, "No, you are without blemish." This is because He chose us in His love. He loved us from the very beginning. God looks at us and says, "I love you. You are so marvelous. When I look at you, I don't see what you see. To me you are holy and without blemish."

Who is this God that loves us? In the Bible there are only three verses that say what God is directly. There are many verses that talk about His attributes: God is powerful, God is glorious, God is righteous, God is holy, and many other things. But only three verses express what God truly is in His person. First, God is Spirit. "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness" (John 4:24). This speaks of God's essence. Second, God is love. "He who does not love has not known God, because God is love" (1 John 4:8). "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in Him" (1 John 4:16). This speaks of God's nature. Third, God is light. "And this is the message which we have heard from Him

and announce to you, that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:4). This speaks of God’s operation.

In His Essence, God Is Spirit; In His Nature, God Is Love; And In His Operation, God Is Light. Because God is Spirit, we must worship Him in spirit. Without being in our spirit we cannot touch God. When we touch God, He fills us with love because that is His very nature. As we touch God and worship God in our spirit, God’s love should become our enjoyment. This is like eating food. As we eat our food, the nature of that food should become our enjoyment, our nourishment, and our strength. When the essence of the food we eat is healthy, then the nature of the food becomes our healthy enjoyment. God’s essence is Spirit. When we partake of the Spirit, we enjoy the nature of God, which is love. When we are so much in our spirit we become filled with God as love. We become saturated with His love for us, and we are energized and strengthened to respond by loving Him. In the realm of love, God operates within us as light. When He reveals Himself to us and attracts us subjectively, that is the operation of light. We need this operation for our continual advancement unto maturity.

These three aspects of God’s person - Spirit, love, and light - work together. As we are filled with the Spirit we are saturated with God’s love. In the realm of love, God shines on us and reveals Himself to us. This experience of God’s light gives us the desire for more Spirit. These three aspects work together to bring us onward in our Christian life until we become fully mature as His counterpart. Our God is so wise. God chose us in love and predestinated us unto sonship. This means He predestinated us unto maturity. The more we grow the happier God becomes. God’s essence (Spirit), God’s nature (love), and God’s operation (light) all work together to bring us to maturity. That is the good pleasure of His will.

Many Christians speak about God's will. They talk about God's will for them to go to a certain college, or get a certain car, or buy a certain house. These are actually matters of God's leading, and God's leading always leads to God's will. But God does not have a will for us to get a new house. Because of His will God may even strip us of our house. He may deprive us of whatever is frustrating His romance with us. God's will is only for us to be mature, and the process of maturity is the divine courtship. God courts us and dates us until we are fully mature to be His counterpart.

THE FIRST PROVISION: OUR HEAVENLY ORIGIN

Before we come to the life of Jacob we need to see God's provision for the divine courtship. Jacob is a descendant of Abraham, whose name means "the father of height," or "the father is exalted." Abraham's name is in contrast to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, whose name means "the father of kings." These two names are very significant. According to the Bible there are three dwelling places in the universe. There is the third heavens, where God dwells. Then there is the air above the earth, where Satan dwells. And then there is the earth, where we ourselves dwell. For Abraham to be "the father of height" means that Abraham typifies God as our Father. Our Father God is exalted in the third heavens where He rules everything in the universe. Yet in the air there is another king, Satan, who is typified by Abimelech. We who were born of God live on an earth which is under the rule of Satan.

Even though God is exalted in the third heavens, on the earth we see the operation of Satan. We are here on the earth, living under Abimelech, the "father of kings." On one hand God Himself is the government in the whole universe. On the other hand the rulers of all the nations are actually controlled by Satan. This is hard to understand. God would say, "I am the heavenly king. I rule over everything. Yet I allow the earth to be under the satanic kingdom. There are so many kings on the earth who say they

care for their people's interests. Yet actually because they are under Satan they damage people's interests. But I am the exalted One. I am in control of everything that happens."

As Christians we are by faith the descendants of Abraham, who typifies God the Father. We have the highest genealogy in life because we are the children of God. God Himself is our source. "Behold, what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are" (1 John 3:1). "The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16). We are like Jacob, a descendant of Abraham. Abraham is the "father of height," and by being in his genealogy we also are brought to a high place. We are a heavenly people. Yet on the earth we live under Abimelech, the "father of kings." We have a divine source of life and a heavenly genealogy. We were born of God Himself. But we live on this earth where Satan rules.

Our heavenly birth is God's first rich, heavenly provision to us for the divine courtship. We were born and live on the earth, but our life is a heavenly life. This is like the experience of a foreigner immigrating to this country and becoming an American. For example, I was born in China, but I have spent most of my life in America. My origin is Chinese, but my citizenship is American. My logic is Chinese, but my life is conducted in America. But the difference between China and America is nothing compared to the difference between the heavens and the earth. The frustration of living in a foreign country is nothing compared to the frustration of being a heavenly person born of God, living on this earth under Satan's rule. Our source is heavenly, but we live in the earthly environment. That is why we are frustrated so often, because we are always caught in between. We know that we should be heavenly, but in practicality we are usually earthly. By our nature, by our origin, and by our genealogy we are heavenly. But for some reason we live an earthly life all the time. This becomes a big struggle throughout our life. We should not be discouraged,

because this struggle proves that we have received a heavenly provision from the Lord in His courtship of us. The struggle we feel between a heavenly and earthly life proves that the Lord is dating us. It is actually quite healthy. Why are we frustrated? Why do things which should be simple become so complicated in our experience? It is because God is dating us in His divine courtship.

God's heavenly provision for us, our heavenly genealogy and life, does not match our environment. We are heavenly because we are descendants of Abraham, but our environment is earthly because we live under Abimelech. For example, the conversation of the people around us is earthly. The interests of our schoolmates are all earthly. When we turn on the TV we see something earthly. Even if we only watch the news, it is still earthly. And within us there is a life that constantly reminds us we are heavenly. God has provided us with the divine life. We are from a divine source, and we have a divine genealogy. We are so marvelous, our life is so high, that we can't even comprehend it. Yet God allows us to live on this earth surrounded by earthly things. These earthly things can become normal to us. Even our family and our friends do their best to make sure we're earthly. They make us feel that to be earthly is normal. Isn't it normal to watch TV? Isn't it normal to go to movies? Yet there is always something heavenly within us reminding us, "You don't belong to this. You have a different source. You have a different life." Earthly people can talk about earthly things, but inwardly we have the feeling, "Something's wrong." They may not even be discussing anything sinful or improper, yet our divine and heavenly source tells us we can't participate.

We are the descendants of the "king of height." Our Father is in the heavens. This is the first provision God has given to us in His courtship. We have a marvelous source, a divine and heavenly life. We live on this earth, yet our life is not earthly, but heavenly. This will often lead to struggles and frustrations in our practical daily living. Such a struggle is normal. It is a good sign that the Lord is courting us. This struggle will be with us all our

life until the Lord comes back. We will always walk on the earth, yet with a heavenly life.

Even though we often struggle, we should be very joyful. It is the heavenly life, not the earthly life, that gets the most reward. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all received the most reward. For example, when a person in the world gets to a certain age, he retires. Then he discovers that his life is over. Everything he gave himself to was vanity. Everything he has lived for is now in decline. Which life is better, the earthly life or the heavenly life? When you are heavenly, your life is always just beginning. Even when you reach the age of retirement, you feel, “The Lord is so real! I still have so much to live for! I’m still pursuing my lovely Lord Jesus!”

The heavenly life gives us the ability to have a heavenly living. The earthly people can never have the joy that we have. Whatever they attain makes no difference. Their lives become common, boring, and without value. An earthly person pursuing the things of the world lives a common life. Such a person is no better than a worm, surviving by God’s provision yet denying the existence of God. An earthly person’s life has no lasting value. But our life has the highest value because we are the descendants of a heavenly Father. We may be despised by the world, but our lives are filled with joy in the midst of all our struggles. Our lives are not common, but filled with romance. This doesn’t mean we always feel that we doing okay. Instead we are often struggling. Yet we know we have a heavenly origin. We have a heavenly source and a heavenly life. We are the descendants of Abraham.

We should never be bothered by our “ups and downs,” by our successes and failures. We should not be bothered by the struggles in our environment. Our daily life often has the feeling of confrontation because we are learning to live a heavenly life on this earth. The life we received from God is a heavenly provision for His divine courtship, which is bringing us to maturity. Because we have a heavenly source, our living on this earth will become more and more heavenly through the process

of the divine romance. This realization will cause our whole person to become so different. We may often be frustrated, but after each frustration we will quickly find happiness. The things that bring us frustration also cause us to enjoy the Lord's presence. It is so sweet to be with the Lord, it is so sweet to be with the saints, and it is so sweet to be in the church meetings. We have many frustrations and struggles, yet so much happiness.

Many times our frustration is with the Lord Himself. We get bothered by the Lord's personality. Sometimes it seems like the Lord treats us unfairly and illogically. But when we complain to the Lord, He often says, "Okay, I'll stop treating you that way. I'll submit to you and do whatever you want. I'll give you what you ask for. I'll be like a little baby and let you treat Me however you want." Yet when this happens, the romance disappears. The Lord answers our prayers, yet the sweetness is gone. The Lord would then say, "While you live on this earth I don't want you to live by yourself. I want you to be one with Me. I want you to live with Me and to live for Me." If we say, "Okay, Lord, I want to continue in the divine romance," then we will experience more frustrations. We will be frustrated with our environment, frustrated with ourselves, and frustrated with the Lord. Many times we will tell the Lord, "Lord, this is no fair." But it is often when we are frustrated and struggling that we truly begin to enjoy our precious, marvelous Christ.

God's first provision for us in the divine courtship is our wonderful heavenly origin. We are descendants of Abraham, the father of height. God allows us to live under Abimelech, the father of kings, so that we can be brought to maturity. We should pray, "Father, thank You that I am Your heavenly descendant. My source, my origin, and my life is so high. You chose me in love, and You predestinated me unto sonship. Your will is to bring me to maturity in the divine romance. As I live on this earth I will often be frustrated, yet my life will be filled with happiness. You will become so sweet to me in the midst of all my

struggles. Thank You for Your rich and heavenly provision.”

This series of messages was given during
the 2001 college summer training.

This article is available online at
MinistryMessages.org

© 2002 Titus Chu