

Judges Chapter 7 Part 5

Sunday's discussion on why Christians pray to the "Father," and Jews do not, was profound and intriguing. Let me explore this tonight. This lesson is more about relationship than prayer. It has application to the book of Judges, even if tangential.

A person's eternal state is determined by his relationship to God. Those that believe in Jesus as Savior are eternally saved and go to heaven. Those that reject Jesus as Savior suffer the second death and spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. But there appears to be different wording concerning the relationship of believers to God. Christians pray "to the Father," whereas Jews in the Old Testament did not. I am using the term "Jew" for Israelites. I realize that this term is not exactly correct since a Jew is from "Judah." This term seems easier to use sometimes.

What follows is not a detailed doctrine concerning the Jewish relationship to God. It is merely a sketch. It is to illuminate and cause you to think.

By understanding what the relationship of the Old Testament Jews to God was and comparing that to what Christians have in our relationship to God, we have an inkling of how "great is our salvation." We have so many things unknown in the Old Testament. Just considering our relationship to God, we are in the Son of God and call the God of the universe, Father. To paraphrase a Jason Bourne movie quote, for some Christians today, they were given a Ferrari but treat it like a lawn mower.

I. Unbelievers in Adam are dead. This should not come as a surprise to anyone in this church. Herman taught this many times.

1 Corinthians 15:7 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

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II. Christians in Christ call God the Father, “Father.”

This is based upon “position” in Christ, sometimes called “positional truth.” Christians are “in” Christ and as a result share in His inheritance and His relationship with God the Father. Christians are “royal priesthood,” who are to return to earth during the Millennium to aid in the administration of Christ’s kingdom. Christ called God His Father. Hence we call God the Father, “Father.”

Christians are “in” Christ:

Galatians 3:27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Romans 6:3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

Remember this: baptism. This is what caused us to be in Christ. And being in Christ, the Son of God, defines our relationship with God the Father. Again, this should not be anything new for believers in this congregation. We will run across this word, baptism, in relation to Moses later.

Here is another interesting verse on the relationship of Jesus to the Father:

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time; God the only Son, who is in the arms of the Father, He has explained Him.

The “arms” is the Greek word kolpos which can mean bosom or pocket. Biblehub.com explains “...properly, the upper part of the

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chest where a garment naturally folded to form a "pocket" – called the "*bosom*," the position synonymous with *intimacy* (union).” Here is the familiar King James version:

John 1:18 (KJV) 18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

Remember this Greek word, “kolpos.” We will encounter this again, shortly.

III. Jews in Abraham call him their Father.

The line of reasoning starts with the declaration that Abraham is the “father” of the Jews. It then considers Abraham’s relationship to God as vassal under various covenants. Just as Christians are in Jesus and hence call God, Father, so Jews who are in Abraham should call God something based upon Abraham’s relationship to God.

God the Father→ Christ /Son of God→ Christian call God, Father

God → Abraham/?→ Old Testament saved Jews→Who do Jews pray to? This is dependent upon Jewish relationship to God.

1. Abraham was considered the “father” of the Jews.

John 8:39 They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus *said to them, “If you are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham.

John 8:40 But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do.

John 8:41 You are doing the deeds of your father.” They said to Him, “We were not born as a result of sexual immorality; we have one Father: God.”

John 8:42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I came forth from God and am here; for I have not even come on My own, but He sent Me.

John 8:43 Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot listen to My word.

John 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.

John 8:45 But because I say the truth, you do not believe Me.

The dialogue in John 8 has an intricate logic first identifying the Jews as physical descendants of Abraham, but then Jesus denies that they are spiritual descendants of Abraham because they are not acting like a son of Abraham should. At one point, they claim God as their father. But Jesus is the one who has God as His Father and the Jews are acting like the devil. It is

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one of those intense ironies that John portrays in the Gospel of John.

This claim as Abraham as father is found in other places as well.

Isaiah 51:1 “Listen to Me, you who pursue righteousness, Who seek the Lord: Look to the rock from which you were cut, And to the quarry from which you were dug.

Isaiah 51:2 Look to Abraham your father And to Sarah who gave birth to you in pain; When he was only one I called him, Then I blessed him and multiplied him.”

There are two issues here. Abraham is indeed the father of the Jews, and some Arabs, genetically. But there is also a spiritual aspect.

2. Abraham was a friend of God.

James 2:23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called a friend of God.

2 Chronicles 20:7 Did You not, our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land from Your people Israel, and give it to the descendants of Your friend Abraham forever?

**Isaiah 41:8“But you, Israel, My servant,
Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of
Abraham My friend,**

Abraham was a friend of God. But there is no Scriptural definition of this friendship between God and Abraham. We have to understand a normal use of the word friend, other than how it is used to describe the relationship between God and Moses. Wait until we get there for that Scripture.

3. Did the Jews have a “position” in Abraham?

The closest I can come to this is in

Luke 16:22 Now it happened that the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s arms; and the rich man also died and was buried.

The KJV has

Luke 16:22 (KJV) And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

The Greek word is “kolpos” which means bosom or pocket. The concept is that believing Jews went to be in Abraham. Now remember I asked you to remember this word from John 1:18. Just as Jesus was in the bosom of God the Father, so believing Jews, in death, are in the bosom of Abraham.

4. The Abrahamic Covenant was between God and Abraham.

Genesis 15:18 On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying,...

Typically, a covenant was between a sovereign king and a vassal king. So in this illustration, Abraham is the vassal and God is the sovereign or king.

5. Jews genetically, perhaps legally inherit from Abraham. But what did Abraham have to pass on? What was his relationship with God and how could that be passed on to his descendants?
6. Abraham's relationship with God was defined by covenants. Above I said that God was a sovereign as a king to Abraham. Without going into the details of the Abrahamic covenant, one of the promises was land:

Genesis 12:1 Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you;

Genesis 12:2 And I will make you into a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing;

Genesis 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

Genesis 15:7 And He said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the

Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it.”

The Got Questions website has a useful paragraph in this regards: “The Abrahamic Covenant included the promise of land (Genesis 12:1). It was a specific land, an actual property, with dimensions specified in Genesis 15:18–21. In Genesis 13:15, God gives Abraham all the land that he can see, and the gift is declared to be “forever.” God was not going to renege on His promise. The territory given as part of the Abrahamic Covenant is expanded in Deuteronomy 30:1–10, often called the Palestinian Covenant.”

The point is, that as ruler over the entire earth, God is free to give this land to Abraham and his descendants. He is king over all the kingdoms of the earth.

7. The covenant was between God, the sovereign, and Abraham, the vassal. This defined the relationship between God and Abraham and as a result, the relationship of the Jews and God.
8. This relationship was sovereign, king, to vassal. Did I repeat myself? I think this is important to understand because it factors not just into the relationship of Jew to God in the Old Testament, but has implications into the Millennium, the kingdom.

It is interesting to note that the NIV translation of Genesis 15:2 translates “adonai” as sovereign:

**Genesis 15:2 (NIV) But Abram said,
“Sovereign Lord,...**

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This is confirmed in Judges and 1 Samuel. In Judges, three times the author states,

Judges 17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Judges 18:1 In those days there was no king of Israel;...

Judges 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Obviously, the meaning is that there was no king in Israel. The “first” king was King Saul. But we know that this is an oblique reference to Israel’s rejection of God as its king:

1 Samuel 8:4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah;

1 Samuel 8:5 and they said to him, “Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint us a king to judge us like all the nations.”

1 Samuel 8:6 But the matter was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to the Lord.

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1 Samuel 8:7 And the Lord said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people regarding all that they say to you, because they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being King over them.

In Judges, “in those days there was no king in Israel” refers literally to the fact that there was no human king over them. But reading in 1 Samuel we understand that the reference in Judges is a double entendre: There is no physical king but God who is supposed to be their king has been rejected.

9. Indeed, the culmination of this concept is found in the Millennium when Jesus Christ becomes their king in the kingdom. So, the Jews should be referring to Jesus Christ, Yahweh, their God as king. Listen to one of my favorite prophets:

Zephaniah 3:15 The Lord (Yahweh) has taken away His judgments against you, He has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord (Yahweh), is in your midst; You will no longer fear disaster.

Zephaniah is referring to the kingdom which we call the Millennium. He calls the ruler, “The King of Israel, Yahweh.”

IV. Jews in Moses

This lesson started out as a focus on Abraham as the father of the Jews. They were “in” Abraham in death. Believing Jews were in “Abraham’s bosom” after death.

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But there is another man along with Abraham that dominates Jewish theology, Moses.

1. Jews were baptized into Moses.

1 Corinthians 15:1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our fathers were all under the cloud and they all passed through the sea;

1 Corinthians 15:2 and they all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

So in life, Jews were in or associated with Moses. God gave Moses the Law by which the Jews were to order their lives. I asked you to remember the word, baptize. It was used of believers in the Christian dispensation to be placed into union with Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Here this word is used of believers in the Old Testament Jewish Age being placed into Moses.

2. Moses, like Abraham, was a friend of God

Exodus 33:11 So the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

This indicates that friends can speak face to face. And you know your friend's name. Strangers may not know your name. I know a man who is John Mark. That is his first name and middle name. I will not use his last name. His friends call him Mark. If someone calls him on the phone and calls him John, he knows that person is not his friend.

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3. God's Name is Yahweh

Exodus 3:13 Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?"

Exodus 3:14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "This is what you shall say to the sons of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

Exodus 3:15 God furthermore said to Moses, "This is what you shall say to the sons of Israel: 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is the name for all generations to use to call upon Me.

A stranger could not call upon someone by his name. Here God gave Moses, his friend, His name, Yahweh. So, in life, Jews are in Moses ordering their lives according to the Mosaic Law/Mosaic Covenant.

V. Old Testament Prayers

1. Read 2 Chronicles 20:5-13.

Note that Jehoshaphat addresses his prayer to Lord God (Yahweh Elohim). Yahweh is God's name. Jehoshaphat is not a stranger. He

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knows God. He can address Him by name, as a friend, even if that friend is ruler over all the kingdoms of earth.

1 Chronicles 20:6 6 and he said, “Lord (Yahweh), God (Elohim) of our fathers, are You not God (Elohim) in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You.

2. Read Psalm 51.

When David goes to God repenting of his sins. He addresses god as Elohim. He had been out of fellowship, status quo sinning. Now he approaches God in humility. The intimacy of friendship has been broken, but not lost.

3. Read Psalm 142.

David is asking the Lord (Yahweh) for help. He is a friend asking for help.

VI. Summary

As Christians, in Christ, we pray to God as Father in the power of the Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus. We are family, royal family.

The Jews were baptized into Moses, living their lives according to the Mosaic Law given as part of the Mosaic covenant. Moses was a friend of God. In death, Jews were placed in Abraham’s bosom at death. Abraham was a friend of God.

The conclusion, then, is that the Jews could pray to God as friend. God gave them His name as Yahweh. So when addressing prayers in fellowship, Jews called upon God using His name.

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As an addendum, here is a brief application to the book of Judges.

1. Gideon initially had little idea who his God was. He worshipped Baal, not Yahweh.
2. God revealed Himself to Gideon as the Angel of the Lord. Similar to Abraham and Moses, God talked to Gideon face to face.
3. This would suggest that God was a friend of Gideon. Certainly, God blessed Gideon way more than he ever expected.
4. At one point at least, Gideon took advantage of faith and trusted his friend God. Gideon is in the Hebrews Chapter 11 hall of faith heroes.
5. But subsequent to victory, Gideon slowly started to stumble.
6. So with us also. After a faith victory, we are susceptible to attack in the Angelic Conflict.