

## *Building on the Foundation*

### Chapter 13

God has opened a door of opportunity for you and me to leave Adam and gain passage into the fullness of Christ. We must begin this passage by being born again, for that is the point of access into the power of the age to come. Jesus said, I am the door; I am the way out of the spiritual limitation of the kingdom of this age. I am the truth; I am the spiritual understanding of coming to the full purpose for which you came through the door by new birth. And I am the life; I am the proof that if you live as a son you cannot fail to fulfill God's purpose for you. Having entered into Christ, we have the opportunity of relating to the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

Matthew 24 has historically been viewed as Jesus speaking about the last days of this age. I would not expend any energy debating this issue. I do know that all men who live by faith live according to what Jesus said here. Beginning in Matthew 24:15, Jesus said to them, When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place. That instruction is followed by an exhortation at the end of the verse where it says, Whoso readeth, let him understand. Usually if there's something that is easily understood, you don't have to put a parenthesis like that in the verse. As important as Daniel is in the scripture – not only having a book that tells his story but referred to twice in Ezekiel when it says that if Daniel, Job, and Noah were in a city, they would only save themselves; they would not save the city – Jesus referred to Daniel one time. Of all the stories Jesus could have referred to out of the book of Daniel, he pulled out one thing and talked about the abomination that makes desolate.

Let's go back and take a look in Daniel and see what Jesus was referring to. Daniel 8:11 – 13 and Daniel 9:24 – 27 refer to the story of Daniel's encounters with an angel. I want to look at this from the 12th chapter in the 11th verse, And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up... It's evident from this verse that you do not set up the abomination that makes desolate until you take away the daily sacrifice. What that should give us understanding about is that the daily sacrifice is the only thing that has power to keep the abomination that makes desolate from having influence. This is the same truth on the basis of which Paul exhorted the church when he said, I beg you by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice. If you want to know what worship is, worship is to bring yourself as a daily offering to the work of the spirit of God so that you have a full experience of all that salvation is designed to bring to you, not just being blessed by what is done for you

by the sacrifice of another, but being gathered into Christ in order to have full experience of all that God has for his children.

Before we go back to Matthew, I want to go to Psalms 50, starting in the 4th verse. God shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. This is also an expression of gathering that which is in heaven and earth into himself. The 5th verse says the same thing, Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. Our first experience of covenant with God by sacrifice was an atoning sacrifice made for us by God when he offered his son on Calvary. We traced through scripture, starting with Cain and Abel and coming all the way through Paul's exhortation to us as the saints of God to offer ourselves to God as living sacrifices. Just making a covenant with God based on the sacrifice of Jesus is not a complete covenant. If we want a complete covenant, we also have to sacrifice. So, we're going to do the opposite of what the children of Israel did in the wilderness. They said, All that God has said, will we do. And God said, You drew nigh with your lips but you held your heart far from me.

So, this is my confession: Lord, I cannot do what you require of me; I cannot change my heart; I cannot out of myself put on incorruptibility; I cannot cause myself to walk in immortality. All that I can do is cease from my ability to do and humbly present myself to your mercy. Scripture is very clear; it says, A broken spirit and a contrite heart, God will not despise. This is us learning to live not out of ourselves but out of our father.

I want to look again at Matthew 24:15 where Jesus said, When you see the abomination that makes desolate stand in the holy place. Reading through the 22nd verse, Let them that are in Judaea flee into the mountains; let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day. This next part refers back to the 15th verse, so I'm going to read it this way, When the abomination that makes desolation stands in the holy place, then there shall be great tribulation such as has not been seen since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be again seen. And except the season of those days should be shortened, there would be no flesh saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

I mention this passage of scripture not to get into all the small details of what it speaks of, but it's evident that Jesus is speaking to them and saying that you better be prepared when this happens. There's no time to take heed for what you don't have with you; there's no opportunity to have time to get clothed with what you're

not clothed with already; you better not still be in the beginnings of that life; you better not still be on milk. You had better be on strong meat. What he is saying is that by the time it is obvious, you had better already be prepared. We have already discussed that we have the opportunity today, if we move by the spirit of God, to live at the end of this age by the power of the next age. We have the opportunity to have done in us by the spirit of God what is going to open the door for the next age for others.

I want to take a look at Abraham as an example of this, and we're going to spend the rest of this chapter in Hebrews. We all know how that Abraham was called of God, and God said, We need to go on a journey. Abraham asked, Where are we going to go? God said, I'll show you one day at a time. In the 8th verse of the 11th chapter of Hebrews, this is an example of somebody who was living by what wasn't obviously necessary at the time. It says, By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should afterward receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. The next verse jumps at least 25 years forward because it doesn't talk about the journey. It says that when he got to the land of promise, he lived there as in a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.

There's something about these two verses that is curious to me because the 8th verse says that Abraham did not know where he was going and that God purposed to give him the land as an inheritance when he got there. That means that the land belonged to Abraham. God gave him the land that he journeyed to, but this is what happened to Abraham when he was walking: there was an appetite for God that began to develop, and the consideration that he had toward God was not limited to just getting his directions for that day's journey, but he was having fellowship with his maker. There was something in Abraham that was being satisfied by that, but there was also a hunger in Abraham that developed for that relationship. It says that when he got to the land of promise, he lived in tents, that although the land was his, there was still something that was unsatisfied in him. The next verse tells us what it was. It says, For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. In other words, it was a dwelling place that was not of this creation; he wasn't satisfied with inheriting dirt. There was a hunger for God that was established. Although he didn't need the daily directions for his journey any longer, he still had a desire to journey on with God, no longer geographically but in a spirit to spirit relationship.

The testimony that James gives concerning Abraham is that the proof of Abraham's faith, the evidence of Abraham's faith was that he held onto the God who promised, and he did not hold onto the son of promise. He had a preference for God over Isaac. He had counted God faithful, that somehow if he retained faithfulness to

God – the God who for 25 plus years he had become a friend to – that God would reconcile the impossibility of him killing his son and yet walking back down the hill to his servants with the same son that he had just killed. This, to me, is an incredible testimony. Abraham did not have the scriptures; he did not have the testimony of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He did not have the testimony of Elijah raising the widow's son. He did not have the testimony of Elisha's bones raising a dead man after Elisha had already died. We do not even know if there was a word in the language that Abraham spoke that was the word "resurrection". He lived by a fellowship that he had with God that was a daily thing, and he came to the place where he counted God faithful and that the faithfulness of God exceeded the laws of nature. No law of nature says if he had drawn the knife across his son's throat, as he was about to do, that God would somehow bring life back to that son. It's an incredible testimony of trust.

This now comes to you and me. We have the responsibility of ceasing from that which is of the earth, both in ourselves and around us. I cannot have a hope of inheriting eternal life if I'm going to stay sourced in my own ability. It is clear from Hebrews 3 and 4, that if I don't cease from my own effort, if I do not withdraw my confidence in my own abilities, I cannot join God in his rest. One of the most important things that is the result of "sitting until," one of the things that is the most important part of having things put under our feet by God himself is not just being freed from unforgiveness and unbelief, but a relationship of confidence developing in our father's capacity so we can look at what is naturally impossible with a positive anticipation of a good result.

I want to look at the 13th chapter of Hebrews in the 9th and the 10th verses. It says, Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace. One of the reasons we see difficulties in the church is that people are more concerned with doctrine than they are with grace. Paul said that is not a good priority. Here's the primary reason: it's found in the 10th verse. It says, We have an altar. That means we have a sacrifice to make. If we are going to be those who are gathered together and have made a covenant with God by sacrifice, we see clearly in the book of Hebrews that a son is called to be a priest, and this is not a priest who offers substitutionary sacrifices. This is a priest who offers himself. We are not called to offer ourselves by dying physically, but if we are going to live by the power of the next age at the end of this age and if we are going to have an expectation of receiving a glorified body to bring others across the world into that age, we are not going to be able to continue to live unto ourselves.

We can no longer afford to be offended. If we see the evidence of the work of the flesh, we must learn to immediately repent, not to linger in condemnation, but to

put things under the blood of the sacrifice that was made for us and move forward to continue our offering. This is the one thing; this is what Paul spoke of saying, This one thing I do. This is what Jesus referred to when he said, Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. We have an altar.