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Reading: Genesis 13-14 Bro Des Manser

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读经：创世记第13—14章 德斯·曼塞尔 弟兄

As we commence a New Year our daily readings traverse the book of Genesis and at the present time, the life of Abraham.

当我们开始新的一年，我们的每日读经到了创世记这本书，现在正读到关于亚伯拉罕的生活。

Abraham is the most important character in the Old Testament as far as we are concerned because of his central position in God's plan of redemption for mankind and the message of the gospel itself.

我们认为亚伯拉罕是旧约中最重要的人物，这是因为他神对人类的拯救计划中的核心的位置，和福音中的关键位置。

This is clearly shown to be true by Paul's explanation of Abraham's place in the hope of the gospel which Jesus proclaimed, which is found in Galatians Chapter 3:27, 28. Gal 3:27-29: *"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."*

这一点通过保罗对亚伯拉罕在福音盼望中的地位的描述，很清楚的显示了；在加拉太书 3:27, 28 中可以看到：“你们受洗归入基督的，都是披戴基督了。并不分犹太人，希利尼人，自主的，为奴的，或男或女。因为你们在基督耶稣里都成为一了。你们既属乎基督，就是亚伯拉罕的后裔，是照着应许承受产业的了。”

The promises which v29 says we can inherit are in fact the very core of the gospel message which is necessary for us to believe in order to be saved

在第29节中所说的，我们可以承受的应许，其实就是福音的核心，它需要我们去相信，才能被拯救。

Gal 3:8: *"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."*

加拉太书3:8：“并且圣经既然预先看明，神要叫外邦人因信称义，就早已传福音给亚伯拉罕，说，万国都必因你得福。”

The promises which God made to Abraham all depended upon the birth of a son when at the time his wife Sarah was barren and he was old and past being able to produce a child.

当他的妻子撒拉不生育，而且他也很老，过了能够生育的年龄的时候，神对亚伯拉罕的应许却全都依赖于一个儿子的出生。

In the reading for today in Genesis Ch 17 we read of the specific promise which God made about the birth of this child who was called Isaac. At this time God changed his name from Abram, meaning "exalted father" to Abraham meaning "father of many nations" by inserting the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet into his name. In addition to this, God gave to Abraham the covenant of circumcision [Gen 17:10] to impress upon him the fact that the son to be born was not to come

merely by the will of man but by the intervention of God. Of course we can look even further ahead in God's purpose to when the true seed of Abraham was born, Jesus Christ our Lord. In his case there was no human father involved at all. In our case we are in the Truth not because of our own will or merit but because of God's call and we will be in the kingdom because of God's working in us through the effect of his word upon our lives. All these great principles were demonstrated in the life of Abraham.

在今天的读经中，创世记第17章里，我们读到了神的特别应许，就是关于一个名叫以撒的孩子的出生。在这个时候，神在他原来的名字中插入希伯来字母表中第5个字母，而改变了他的名字，从亚伯兰，意思是“尊贵的父”，到亚伯拉罕，意思是“多国的父”。此外，神还给亚伯拉罕立了受割礼之约（创世记17:10），使他铭记这个儿子的出生的，不只是出于人的意愿，而是因着神的介入。当然，在神的计划里我们可以看到更远，当亚伯拉罕的真正后裔，我们的主耶稣基督的出生。在主耶稣基督的情况里，完全没有人的父的设计。在我们的情况下，我们在真理里，不是因为我们自己的意愿，或者我们的功绩，而是因为神的呼召，并且，我们将进入神的国是因为神对我们的工作，通过他的话语在我们的生活中产生的作用。所有这些伟大的原则都在亚伯拉罕的生活中显示了。

In Romans Ch 4:17 Paul argues the fact that circumcision was but a sign of the faith he had already developed when he believed that God was able to perform what was humanly impossible because of the inability of Abraham and Sarah to have a child.

在罗马书4:9-11中，保罗辩论说，割礼只是一个亚伯拉罕已经有的信仰的记号，早在他相信神能够做成人不能做的事的时候，他就已经发展了他的信仰；因为他相信了神能够让不生育的他和撒拉有一个孩子。

Rom 4:9 -11: “Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which **he had yet** being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also”

罗马书4:9-11：“这福是单加给那受割礼的人吗？不也是加给那未受割礼的人吗？因我们所说，亚伯拉罕的信，就算为他的义。是怎么算的呢？是在他受割礼的时候呢？是在他未受割礼的时候呢？不是在受割礼的时候，乃是在未受割礼的时候。并且他受了割礼的记号，**作他未受割礼的时候**因信称义的印证，叫他作一切未受割礼而信之人的父，使他们的也算为义。”

Paul is referring to the record in Gen 15 which was at least 15 years before the events of Ch 17
保罗在这里是指创世记第15章中所记载的事件，比在第17章中记录的事早发生了至少15年。

And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. (Gen 15:4-6)

耶和華又有話對他說，這人必不成為你的後嗣。你本身所生的才成為你的後嗣。於是領他走到外邊，說，你向天觀看，數算眾星，能數得過來嗎？又對他說，你的後裔將要如此。亞伯拉罕信耶和華，耶和華就以此為他的義（創世記 15:4-6）。

Paul records in Romans 4:17 that it was the quality of Abraham's faith, not just what he believed, but how strongly he embraced God's hope which had been given him and how it governed how he lived his life

保羅在羅馬書4:17中提到的，是亞伯拉罕的信心的品質，不單是他相信的是什麼，而是他怎樣強烈地融入了神給他的希望，並且這在希望怎樣引領了他的生活。

(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. (Rom 4:17-22)

亞伯拉罕所信的，是那叫死人復活使無變為有的神，他在主面前作我們世人的父。如經上所記，我已經立你作多國的父。他在無可指望的時候，因信仍有指望，就得以作多國的父，正如先前所說，你的後裔將要如此。他將近百歲的時候，雖然想到自己的身體如同已死，撒拉的生育已經斷絕，他的信心还是不軟弱。並且仰望神的應許，總沒有因不信，心里起疑惑。反倒因信，心里得堅固，將榮耀歸給神。且满心相信，神所應許的必能作成。所以這就算為他的義（羅馬書 4:17-22）。

Furthermore in v23-25 Paul says that it was not recorded just for Abraham's benefit but for our benefit as well. We have to believe in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Resurrection is not humanly possible and we have never witnessed a resurrection and yet we believe in faith all that is recorded of the Lord's resurrection. All that God promised Abraham depends upon it and the salvation of all who believe depends upon the fact that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive for evermore.

另外，在第23—25節中，保羅說，這不是單為他寫的，也是為我們寫的。我們必須相信耶穌從死里的復活。復活在人看來是不可能的，我們也從未見證過任何一個人的復活，但是我們忠实地相信關於主耶穌基督的復活的記錄。神所應許的，亞伯拉罕所依賴的，信徒的得救，都起決於耶穌從死里復活並獲得永生。

Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

(Rom 4:23-25)

算為他義的這句話，不是單為他寫的，也是為我們將來得算為義之人寫的。就是我們這信神使我們的主耶穌從死里復活的人。耶穌被交給人，是為我們的過犯，復活是為叫我們稱義（羅馬書 4:23-25）。

Turning to the second chapter of our daily reading which is Gen 18 we learn of the close relationship which God had with Abraham. We read of how the angels who came to destroy Sodom confided in Abraham because of their confidence in the fact that he would not only have children but he would instruct them in the same great truths which God had given him and which motivated him in all aspects of his life

翻到我们今天读经的第二章，就是创世记第18章，我们看到神与亚伯拉罕之间的亲密关系。我们读到，去剿灭所多玛的天使们信赖了亚伯拉罕，因为他们相信，他不仅将有孩子，并且他将会教导他的孩子们神赋予他的伟大的真理，这真理是他生活中各个方面的动力。

And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

(Gen 18:17-19)

耶和華說，我所要作的事，豈可瞞着亞伯拉罕呢？亞伯拉罕必要成為強大的國，地上的萬國都必因他得福。我眷顧他，為要叫他吩咐他的眾子和他的眷屬，遵守我的道，秉公行義，使我所應許亞伯拉罕的話都成就了（创世记 18:17-19）。

This intimacy between Abraham and God which was based on Abraham's faith and trust in God is the reason for Abraham being called "the friend of God" in three passages of scripture

亚伯拉罕和神之间的亲密关系，是建立在亚伯拉罕的信心和对神的信赖之上，这就是为什么亚伯拉罕在圣经的三个经节里被称为“神的朋友”的原因。

1] 2 Chron 20:7 In this passage king Jehoshaphat is praying in circumstances which were out of his control or ability to handle. Faced by a massive military invasion of the land which threatened Israel's very existence. In his prayer he places his confidence in the promises which God made to Abraham about the land and his seed, and calls Abraham "the friend of God

1) 历代志下 20:7 在这一经节中，约沙法王正在他没有能力控制局面的情况下祷告，当时他们正面临被大军攻击的危险，威胁着以色列的生死存亡。在他的祷告中，他把他的信心放在了神给亚伯拉罕的关于这片地和后裔的应许之上，并称亚伯拉罕为“神的朋友”。

Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? (2Ch 20:7)

我们的神啊，你不是曾在你民以色列人面前驱逐这地的居民，将这地赐给你朋友亚伯拉罕的后裔永远为业吗？（历代志下 20:7）

2] Isa 41:8 This passage is in a context about God's great purpose with Israel and includes a challenge to the nations to produce their arguments and attempt to refute God's ability to foresee the future and fulfill his purpose

2) 以赛亚书 41:8 这一经节是在神对以色列的伟大目的的情况下，包含了对列国的挑战，使他们产生争执和企图，想要驳倒神的预知未来和实现预定计划的能力。

But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. (Isa 41:8)

惟你以色列我的仆人，雅各我所拣选的，我朋友亚伯拉罕的后裔（以赛亚书 41:8）。

3] James 2:23

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. (James 2:21-23)

3) 雅各书 2:21-23

你们蒙召原是为。因基督也为你们受过苦，给你们留下榜样，叫你们跟随他的脚踪行。他并没有犯罪，口里也没有诡诈。他被骂不还口。受害不说威吓的话。只将自己交托那按公义审判人的主。（雅各书 2:21-23）

Again the context of this chapter is very instructive. It tells us that Abraham was called the friend of God because he was prepared to act upon his faith not just confess it. He was prepared to believe that God could raise his son Isaac from the dead. All of the promises depended upon the birth of Isaac and so Abraham correctly reasoned that God would raise him from the dead if he had to sacrifice him. As we know from Gen 22 it was not necessary for Abraham to put his son to death, but this incident pointed forward to the time when God would be prepared to offer his own son for our salvation

再一次，这一章的上下文非常有教育意义。它告诉我们亚伯拉罕被称为神的朋友是因为他遵行了他的信仰，而不只是简单地承认他的信仰。他相信神会使他的儿子以撒从死里复活。所有的应许都有赖于以撒的出生，所以亚伯拉罕正确地推想，如果他必须让以撒献祭的话，神一定会让他从死里复活的。正如我们从创世记第22章所知道的，后来亚伯拉罕不必要让他的儿子死，但是这件事预指了将来神为了我们的得救而给出他自己的儿子。

So we have seen from the scripture that Abraham was called the friend of God because he was prepared to act upon his faith and to obey God, and to instruct his family and those around about him in the great truths of God's purpose

所以我们已经从圣经中看到，亚伯拉罕被称为神的朋友，是因为他预备好了去行出他的信仰，遵循神的旨意，并教导他的家庭和他周围的人关于神的目的的伟大真理。

It is instructive for us to learn that on the night before his death Jesus called his disciples his friends in Jesus being nailed to the cross the night before, he called his disciples his friends, this is instructive for us.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. (John 15:14-15)

你们若遵行我所吩咐的，就是我的朋友了。以后我不再称你们为仆人。因仆人不知道主人所作的事。我乃称你们为朋友。因我从我父所听见的。已经都告诉你们了（约翰福音 15:14-15）。

So we are his friends if we obey him and live the life which he has commanded us to live.

所以如果我们遵循他，并且按照他的戒命来生活，我们就可以称为他的朋友。

A friend can be relied upon, they are loyal, they are prepared to sacrifice their own will for us and above all they can be trusted and we trust our friends. Jesus taught and demonstrated all these qualities and we need to follow his example and live our lives the same way as he did.

一个朋友是可以倚靠的，他们是忠实的，他们预备好为我们牺牲自己的意愿，最重要的，是他们可以被信赖，而我们总是相信我们的朋友。耶稣教导并示范了这些所有的品质，我们需要跟随他的例子，像他那样生活。

Moses is another character who God called a friend.

摩西是另一个神称之为朋友的人。

And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. (Exo 33:11)

耶和华与摩西面对面说话，好像人与朋友说话一般。摩西转到营里去，惟有他的帮手，一个少年人嫩的儿子约书亚，不离开会幕（出埃及记 33:11）。

In Numbers 12:3 we are told why Moses was also called a friend of God (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) (Num 12:3)

在民数记 12:3中，我们被告知摩西也被称为神的朋友（摩西为人极其谦和，胜过世上的众人）（民数记 12:3）。

It was his meekness which commended him to God. The word has the meaning of being debased in ones own opinion of self. In other words not being exalted in our own mind and opinions and hence teachable, this is another meaning applicable to the word meek. This is how we should be. Jesus quotes Psa 37:11 in his discourse on the mount in Matthew 5:5 to show that such people will one day inherit the earth which is exactly what God promised Abraham.

正是因为他的谦和，使他归向了神。“谦和”这个词有“低看自己”的意思。换句话说，就是在我们的思想里不自我得意，因而能虚心接受教导，这是“谦和”这个词的另外的意思。耶稣在马太福音 5:5的登山宝训中，引用了诗篇37:11以显示这样的人将来有一天会承受地土，就是神应许给亚伯拉罕的。[在圣经原文中，“谦和”和“温柔”是同一个词。]

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. (Matt 5:5)

温柔的人有福了，因为他们必承受地土（马太福音 5:5）。

Returning again to the qualities of Abraham's faith which made him the friend of God we are told in Rom 4 that his life can be a pattern and example to be followed in our own lives. Commenting on Genesis 17 which we have read the apostle says

我们再回来思考亚伯拉罕的信心的品质，因为正是这样的品质使得他成为神的朋友。罗马书第4章告知我们，他的生活可以作为我们效仿的典范。在评述我们刚刚读过的创世记第17章时，使徒保罗说：

And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: And the father of circumcision to

them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. (Rom 4:11-12)

并且他受了割礼的记号，作他未受割礼的时候因信称义的印证，叫他作一切未受割礼而信之人的父，使他们的也算为义。又作受割礼之人的父，就是那些不但受割礼，并且按我们的祖宗亚伯拉罕，未受割礼而信之踪迹去行的人（罗马书 4:11-12）。

So then we are asked to walk “in the steps” of Abraham. When God gave him the promise of the land of Israel he was in fact asked to do exactly that he was told to walk upon the land thus giving substance to his faith

所以我们被要求接着亚伯拉罕的“踪迹”去行。当神应许给他以色列这片地的时候，他也被要求完全按照神吩咐的去做，就是在那片地上行走，从而表现了他的信心的实底。

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

创世记 13:17 我也要使你的后裔如同地上的尘沙那样多，人若能数算地上的尘沙才能数算你的后裔。

We need to also make a reality of our hope. Make it like something solid beneath our feet
我们也同样需要使我们的盼望称为现实，使它成为我们脚下的坚实的东西。

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the only life which can really be a pattern for us to follow because his was the only perfect life. However the scripture invites us to look at what Abraham did in response to God’s promises to him and to walk in the steps of that faith. We have much to learn from his total belief and trust in what God had told him. We see him like us at times, in weakness, failure and even fear but he always maintained his hope and trust in God. He was God’s friend and we can be Christ’s friends if we also maintain our faith in what we believed when we made our decision to be baptized and follow our Lord.

我们的主耶稣基督的生活是唯一能够真正成为我们跟随的典范，因为他是唯一完美的人。然而，圣经却邀请我们去仔细思考，亚伯拉罕对神给他的应许是怎样做出反映，并行出信的踪迹。从他的全部信心、和他对神所吩咐的事的完全相信中，我们可以学到很多功课。他是神的朋友，而我们可以成为基督的朋友，如果我们也保持我们的信心，这信心是当我们决定受洗并跟随我们的主的时候相信的。

Let us remember his perfect example and his willingness to give his life for “his friends” as we take the emblems this day and model our lives upon his, so that we can stand approved before him in the day of his return.

当我们今天掰饼喝杯，并努力使我们的生活以主耶稣基督的生活为榜样的时候，让我们纪念他完美的例子，和他为了“他的朋友们”愿意给出他的生命，以使我们在他回来的那天能在他的面前站立得住。