

God's Training: Appendices, 17 pgs

GT#1: APDX-1, p.4, 9 TAXONOMY – Organizing by Contexts, Categories, and Vocabulary

Our minds are ordered by **categories**. Both clearly defined **classifications** and their **labels** are necessary for understanding and communication. **Classification is the identification of groups based upon common features**. Each class or category functions as a descriptive label representing a particular grouping. **Theological terms** are categories that carry the concepts. They encapsulate the doctrines in a vocabulary so we may contemplate and communicate them. So, it is necessary to correctly identify the subject matter, whether justification or sanctification for example, as we consider a passage. **Context** has to do with the structure within which the logical flow of thought and progression of story or argument takes place - what situation is being described or subject talked about.

Reading the Bible:

Training Exercise - Approaching Scripture through CATEGORIZING

Deconstruct, compare, and discuss the following:

*The LORD had said to Abram, Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you, **Gen.12:1***

What was God doing & why?

Classify the 1st sentence. cross reference this with a NT verse

Classify the 2nd sentence.

Classify the 3rd sentence. give an example of God's over-watch.

What are the implications?

What principle was involved? example?

Any other observations or questions? What did I leave out and why?

ANSWERS

*The LORD had said to Abram , Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you [see **Heb.11:8-9**] . I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you [personally]; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. [details] I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse [penalize]; and **all peoples on earth will be blessed through you** [larger purpose], **Gen.12:1***

What is God doing & why? Separating Abram from the influences of the pagan culture he grew up in to be retrained for a great purpose [see Dating introduction]

Classify the 1st sentence. **Command:** to go AND SEPARATE from relatives with assurance that God would guide him cross reference this with a NT verse **Heb.11:8**

Classify the 2nd sentence. **Promise:** of personal blessing & greatness

Classify the 3rd sentence. **Promise:** of protection for Abraham, give another example of God's over-watch (pharaoh **Gen.12:17** & Abimelech **20:1-7**); **universal blessing to all people**

What are the implications? An implication is a logical unstated extension of a statement of facts

(or truth), commands, or promises. The most basic one in this case can be expressed in 2 words, “Or else.” If he does not obey and go, God will not bless him or protect him and Abram will not fulfill the larger purpose God has in mind. [That privilege will go to another, see Num. 14:11-12]. Sometimes the warning is stated as a condition of failure to obey commands or believe promises.

What principle was involved? The promise was conditional as are all promises, Gal.6:7, **example?** (Est.4:13-15; Ex.32:10); disobedience would result in a negation of all promises and relieve God of all obligations

Any other observations or questions? What did I leave out and why? How did God speak to Abram? Does God reveal any particulars about what he had in mind? Irrelevant!

APDX-2, p.4 FEAR is a major factor in our lives - fear of Man and fear of death. It is one of the weapons in the devil’s arsenal used to manipulate us. One of the clear lessons in this incident is that being afraid causes us to act irrationally. Jesus became human *so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death (the devil) and free those who all their lives have been enslaved by their fear of death, Heb.2:14-15.*

Paul writes, *when we came into Macedonia, we had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn by conflicts on the outside and fears within, 2 Cor.7:5.*

I had a friend, Mark Graham, who suffered tremendously from bouts with incapacitating, irrational fear and wrote a book entitled *Harnessing the Harassment of Human Fears, 2013*. He didn’t discuss his struggles in terms of a supernatural attack by the devil, but that is my assessment. Here are some excerpts: *he chronicles his journey of panic and fear, p.i ; my high school counselor ... concluded that I was not college material, but off I went on academic probation, p.v ; there is value in the struggle against irrational fear because that is where faith is stretched and strengthened, p.xii ; three realizations how irrational fears became sort of an ally to grace ... this is the way of spiritual growth and maturity, p.xvi ; claustrophobia ... was a secret: a personal battle with raw fear that I struggled with throughout the eight years of my wrestling career, p.1 ; unlike other forms of suffering, the phobic reaction is like an invisible force that grips the heart of human feeling and sense, leaving one stripped, defeated, washed up, and wrung out, p.2 .*

Christians are not meant to live in constant fear or plagued by worry or to always be oppressed by discouragement and regret. There is a place to find relief and put your soul at rest. Take your troubled heart to the cross and there find peace in the finished work of the risen Lord.

Mark’s second book, *The Way of Sonship*, 2022, is about how God trains us to become like Jesus through irritations, suffering, hardship, and all the other things associated with them like rejection, failure, disappointment, and heartache ... *understanding the correction side of rejection is my goal ... The issue lies in what one becomes in the process ... with God’s elect, rejection is essential for sonship, p.3-4*. He also trains us how to handle riches, power, and fame. These two books served as a catalyst for this series of essays [see Journey]. [whispering hope song with lyrics](#)

[All of us have a natural tendency toward self-preservation.](#) We twist, squirm, run away and do all

kinds of gymnastics to get out of, bypass, work-around, deny, or otherwise avoid facing what we fear. That's what Abram did. He thought of an alternative that would both save his life and increase his wealth. It was the only out Abram, the rationalist, could come up with. In his mind, it worked, but it was inconsistent with relying upon God's promises to him which was the goal of his training. It denied God the opportunity to supernaturally provide a solution, [see p.6 below & Dan.1: 11-13 for this approach].

With respect to their responses to the revelation they had at the time: Sarai's actions were consistent regarding her part in bearing Abram's offspring (until the year before the conception of Isaac, she was never told that she would bear any children); Abram however acted inconsistently as time after time he was promised he would father children, implying he would not be killed, so his fears were groundless, ie he didn't have to try to save himself because his living was assured by God's promises. Abram understood the world of his time and was not wrong to be careful. Potentates of that era did whatever they wanted because there were no restraints or anyone to hold them accountable for their misuse of power. Nevertheless because of God's promises, Abram's fear was needless and the resulting sequence of events unnecessary, but it was not disobedience.

Fearing to not do something implies a fear of facing negative consequences or repercussions for inaction. Fearing not to do something indicates a fear of missing out on a desired outcome - wanting something and being afraid we won't get it for various reasons. Desires are strong motivators to find a way around potential obstacles. The problem is that we tend to ignore the Scriptural emphasis on patience and perseverance for not going the way our desires are driving us. We tend to be in a hurry and are reluctant to give God room to open another way, 1 Sam.13:5-14. In other words, we may trust God in many areas of our lives, but not really here because we don't want to miss or postpone getting what we want. Waiting upon God is most certainly BASIC to our training as it was for Abram and Sarai, [see temptation of Jesus, p.12, Presuming upon God ... Be strong and brave, and wait for the Lord's help, Ps.27:14]

APDX-3, p.2, 3, 5, 11 In pagan cultures, material wealth and children (especially males) were universally considered to be a blessing from the gods. Land and possessions were considered as primary sources of wealth and barter was typically practiced along with exchange for gold and silver measured by weight in shekels, Gen.12:16; 13:2. The book of Job tells us how very costly spiritual warfare can be. He suffered the loss of everything that was his, including his health. His friends could not conceive of any reason for his bad fortune other than blaming him for angering God. But we know differently because in that book, God revealed to us what was really going on. Though he didn't know it, God had chosen Job as his champion in a contest with Satan before the angels of heaven, and Job prevailed, Job 1:1-2:10.

THE PROBLEM WITH RICHES

The NT warns us about the power riches have over us. A certain ruler asked Jesus ... what must I do to inherit eternal life? ... [Jesus looked at him and loved him, Mk. If you want to be perfect, go, Mt.]. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me. When he heard this, [The man's face fell, Mk.] he became very sad [and went away, Mt.], because he was very wealthy [IMPLICATION: and unwilling to share his bounty with

others] ... **How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!** [The disciples were even more amazed, **Mk.**] Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle [an impossibility] than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God. Those who heard this [The disciples were greatly astonished, **Mt.**] asked, **Who then can be saved?** [riches were commonly believed to be a blessing from God, but here we see it is related to temptation and testing. See **GT#4, p.6**] Jesus replied, **What is impossible with man is possible with God.** [this reminds us of Sarah's reaction, laughter, when she heard that next year she would bear a son and was mildly rebuked for it, Is anything too hard for the LORD? **Gen.18:14**], **Lk.18:22-27 (Mt.19:16-26; Mk.10:17-27).**

BEWARE THE PURSUIT OF AFFLUENCE: This CATEGORY represented by the acquisition of riches includes the pursuit of fame, power, status, control, and influence. **Those who want to get rich** [or famous, or to wield power, or to achieve a high status, or a position of influence] **fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires** [Gk, lusts] that plunge people into ruin and destruction. **For the love of money is a root of all [kinds of] evil** [lit, the evils]. **Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.** But you, **man of God, flee from all this** [Don't make the accumulation of wealth or any of the other things in this category a goal] ... **1Tim.6:9-12** ... Command those who are **rich in this present world** not to be arrogant [think too highly of themselves, proud of their achievements] nor to put their hope in wealth ... **17-19**, see also **Jas.2:5-7**.

Abram was a materialist and as such was constantly **concerned with accumulating more**. His entourage included women, children, teenagers, trained fighters, and the elderly. It probably numbered over a thousand people. The number of trained fighters in his household tells us something about his wealth. **After he became a bonafide supernaturalist, Abraham's values changed.**

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, **obeyed and went** [his faith expressed itself in obedience], even though he did not know where he was going. **By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents** [transitory shelters] ... For he was looking forward to the city with foundations [a permanent abode], whose architect and builder is God ... **He did not receive the things promised;** he only **saw them and welcomed them [by faith] from a distance**, admitting that he was a foreigner and stranger on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own ... **he was longing for a better country—a heavenly one.** Therefore God ... has prepared a dwelling place for him, **Heb.11:8-16** ... here **we** do not have an enduring city, but **we are looking for the permanent abode that is to come, 13:14.**

APDX-4, p.2, 7 Abram was a man of his times, **embedded** in the **patriarchal culture** [based on a supposedly inherent superiority of men over women] he was raised in and lived in (**Jos.24:2-3**). Sarai was a woman of her times as well, raised in and **enculturated** in the same **patriarchal society**. This seems to have been pretty much the norm for all peoples that developed after the Fall until the modern era. The **dynamics between husbands and wives** was obviously different in those days. They didn't have the NT to guide them, but we do. **Women are not inferior to men.** The only difference is not intrinsic in their gender or a class distinction (as in the word "betters") but results from **the office or position they occupy in a given chain of authority.** **Structure is necessary for the function of an ordered society**, government, business, home, club, gang, or church. In any sphere

besides homes and churches, women often outrank men and are due the respect their position merits.

The scriptural mandate for all of us is to love one another by serving each other in humility, even to the point of disregarding our own preferences by *offering our bodies as living sacrifices* and *being transformed in our thinking*. For by the grace given to me *I say to every one of you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think*, but to think with sober discernment, as God has distributed to each of you a measure of faith. For just as in one body we have many members, and not all the members serve the same function, so *we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually we are members who belong to one another*. And we have different gifts according to the grace given to us. If the gift is prophecy, that individual must use it in proportion to his faith. If it is service, he must serve; if it is teaching, he must teach; if it is exhortation, he must exhort; if it is contributing, he must do so with sincerity; if it is leadership, he must do so with diligence; if it is showing mercy, he must do so with cheerfulness. Love must be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil, cling to what is good. Love each other with brotherly affection and take delight in honoring *[taking the lead in deferring to]* each other. Never be lazy in your work, but serve the Lord *enthusiastically*, **Rom.12:1-11**.

Instead of being motivated by **selfish ambition or vanity**, each of you should, in humility *[lit. lowliness of mind]*, be moved to treat one another as more important *[lit. above, higher ranking]* than yourself. Each of you should be concerned not only about your own interests, but about the interests of others as well *[both]*, **Phil.2:3-4**. Practically this means **taking a support role** to restore others and help them with their heavy burdens.

Brothers and sisters, if a person is discovered in some sin, you who are spiritual restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness. Pay close attention to yourselves, so that you are not tempted too. **Carry one another's burdens** *[heavy loads]*, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ, **Gal.6:1-2**.

Likewise, you **younger ones**, submit yourselves to **the elders** *[the church community is urged to accept the authority of their leaders]*. And all of you, *clothe yourselves with humility toward one another*, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble, **1 Pt.5:5**.

Husbands, love *[I prefer the older word cherish in this context]* **your wives**, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ... in this same way, *husbands ought to love [cherish, treasure, care for] their wives as their own bodies*. He who loves his wife loves himself, **Eph.5:25-28 ; Col.3:19**.

There are many passages that address how people ought to speak to and relate to one another. The NT specifically says ... **deferring to one another** in the fear of Christ. **Wives, defer to your own husbands** *as you do to the Lord*. For the husband is the head of the wife *[occupies a position of authority over his wife]* as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also **wives should defer to their husbands in everything**, **Eph.5:21-24; Col.3:18**.

Wives, in the same way defer to your own husbands ... Your beauty ... should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For **this**

is the way the holy women of the past [living in the patriarchal societies of their times] who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master [lord]. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear [that would discourage this course of action], 1 Pt.3:1-6.

This passage refers to **Sarah's demeanor** as she accompanied her husband in his travels. She **accommodated** him by doing what he wanted no matter how foolish or scary. Twice she was taken by kings into their harems until God rescued her. **The NT Scriptures are balanced and relationally consistent with all issues pertaining to legitimate authority:** **wives** respecting and **deferring to** their husbands, and **husbands** loving their wives and refraining from being harsh with them, **Eph.5: 22-33; Col.3:18-19**; **children** obeying and honoring their parents, and **fathers** avoiding embittering or exasperating their children, **Eph.6:1-4; Col.3:20-21**; and **slaves** obeying their masters with respect, fear, and sincerity of heart, and **masters** treating their **slaves** in the same way without mistreating them and providing them with what is right and fair, **Eph.6:5-9; Col.3: 22-4:1**.

Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong ... Col.3:25.

[slaves submit yourselves to your masters, even to those who are harsh [GT#1, p.7; Gen.16:4-9] ... endure suffering for doing good] To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps ... 1 Pt.2:18-21.

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution ... 13-17; Tit.3:1. [This assumes the legitimacy of the establishment and authorized exercise of that authority.]

Such is the word of God to the captives from Israel and Judah, who because of their unfaithfulness to God were conquered by foreign nations such as the Assyrians and Babylonians, and relocated to distant lands as exiles, **Jer.27:6 ... the God of Israel says, to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and settle down ... carry on with your lives [submit to your captors, do not rebel against them] seek the [welfare] of the city to which I have brought you ... Pray to the LORD for it because if it prospers, you too will prosper, 29:4-7, 28 [see Dan.1:11-13 for insights on creative alternatives].**

Joseph's attitude was to make the best of the situation. At 17 he was sold into slavery by his own brothers (**Gen.39:1-6**). Years later things were going well for he had been given charge of his master's entire estate. But because he refused the advances of the master's wife, she falsely accused him and he was falsely imprisoned (**v.20-23**). Once again **he made the best of his situation** and rose to the status of trustee in charge of everything related to care of the inmates. He was 30 at the time God gave him another position of prominence over the entire kingdom of Egypt. When he revealed himself to his brothers, he said ... *I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt ... God's purpose in sending me ahead of you was ... to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance ... He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt ... Gen.45:4-7. You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish ... the saving of many lives, 50:20.*

He faithfully and competently served each master in performing the duties entrusted to him, and he understood God's purposes for ultimately bringing him to power. I wonder how much he understood

about God's training him for that position through the trials he endured through the 13 years he was a slave before being appointed to a high office. Whether he understood or not, his attitude was one of submission and dedication to each master in turn, and God blessed him for it.

DISCUSSION

*You will want to control your husband, but he will dominate you, **Gen.3:16, NET**. In this judgment oracle, the Lord announced a struggle, a conflict between the man and the woman expressing the **erosion** of [harmony between man & woman] from that which God intended. Division, distrust, and sexism entered the world [through their disobedience]. This is misunderstood as a command ... It is actually describing what the world would be like as a result of their sin and alienation from God ... [Uncompromised Faith by S. Michael Craven, 2009, p.158]. However, as with the other [degenerative] results of the fall ... the appropriate human response is not resignation but resistance [Mardi Keyes, Feminism and the Bible, 1995].*

Organization is clearly necessary in the world, whether fallen or ideal. The English translation of certain words in Scripture doesn't always convey the right idea of the meaning. **Submission, subject, and subordination** [same Gk word] refer to a command and control structure which carries with it the idea of forced compliance – obey or else. The same idea is inherent in references to obedience to someone as **father, master, or lord, 1 Pt.3:6**. This translation may be appropriate for certain societal situations: the military, civil authorities, employment, businesses, etc. Most words [except for narrowly defined technical terms] are more or less **flexible** in usage depending on their context, subject, and nuances of their definitions and connotations. This variation is one aspect of language that makes it so useful and colorful.

Because of historic precedent and modern connotations, I have elected to change certain words above referring to wives' responses to their husbands from **"submit, subject, and obey"** to **defer** because the connotation of the literal translations do not comport with the relationship being referred to. For Adam and Eve in the Garden, **Deference** is more appropriate: yielding oneself to, acquiescing to, or adapting to the expectations and wishes of another by restricting one's own freedom and ambitions to harmonize with them, **Lk.2:41-52**. This is an **expression of meekness** (to be non-assertive of one's own self-interests) and **humility** (serving others by assuming a lower status) that maintains peace and order (unity and harmony) while preserving structure in the family. It is the opposite to vying for dominance and competing with one another. Compliance minimizes the friction that arises from resistance. The mutual characteristics of these attitudes leaves room for honest nonthreatening discussion and disagreement when matters of rightness or appropriateness are involved.

Historic Precedent: There is an emphasis in Scripture on the fact that Man was formed FIRST, **1 Cor.11:8; 1 Tim.2:13**, but to be alone was NOT GOOD, men & women were made to be together, united as a couple. Scripture reinforces the fact that Woman was created FOR, a **support** role for her husband [see **Prov.31:10-31**, The Wife of Noble Character in her time and culture] **1 Cor. 11:9**. Eve was made to be a COUNTERPART, a HELPER who corresponded to Adam. She was a suitable PARTNER and COMPANION who complimented him, **Gen.2:18, 20b-24** [see Adam's Song]. After The Fall, Scripture reiterates that Adam sinned. He was not deceived but the woman was, **1 Tim.2:14; 2 Cor.11:3**. The husband occupies a position of authority [headship], your hus-

band will rule over you (**Gen.3:16**) and ought to be honored by his wife's **deference** toward him, the man is the head of the woman, **1Cor.11:3; Eph.5:22-23**. There is no demeaning or denigration of wives or women here. For the sheer joy of matrimony see The Tailor's Song in Fiddler on the Roof <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvVeJJ-TnK4>

However the writings of some of the early church fathers ... contained in the very works from which pastors and teachers frequently quote ... are downright revolting ... these men consistently wrote about women in the Bible and women in general in horribly demeaning ways ... steeped in assumptions about the inferiority of women ... which shaped the dominant thinking in the centuries leading up to and following the time ... of Christ. The misogynistic ideas that are articulated in these bodies of work ... continue to haunt our approach to biblical passages that involve gender.

APDX-5, p.8 CLARIFYING SCRIPTURE: An example of how Scripture is to be interpreted

from **AFS**, **apdx.4** [see Children of Abraham, **p.1-7**; **AFS Theological Notes**, **p.12, 28-33**] For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, **Acts 2:39** [Peter's address to the crowd at Pentecost, **Acts 2:14-40**] Peter understood the gospel promise of whosoever in Joel to include three distinct groups. **Clarify who is included in the promise that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved [from God's judgment (wrath), p.19-20] Acts 2:21.**

1. *To you*, [interpretation: unconverted convicted sinners who repent and believe];
and the same promise is *to* [understood]
2. *Your children*, [interpretation: themselves, not by proxy] if they repent and believe [understood];
and likewise the same promise is *to* [understood]
3. *All who are afar off* [interpretation: in heathen Gentile lands],
if they also repent and believe the same gospel [understood]

Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21	Acts 2:38-40
<i>And it shall come to pass</i>	<i>The promise is unto</i>
<i>that <u>whosoever</u> shall call upon the Lord</i>	<i>(1) <u>You</u>, and to (2) <u>your children</u>, (3) and to <u>all that are afar off</u></i>
<i>v.28-29 shall be saved there will be deliverance</i>	<i>shall receive the gift of the Spirit (v.38) shall be saved (v.40)</i>
<i>among <u>the remnant</u> whom the lord shall call.</i>	<i>even <u>as many as</u> the Lord our God shall call.</i>

objections to using **Acts 2:39** as a proof text for infant baptism:

a. Who was Peter speaking to, unbelievers or Christian parents? Was he telling convicted sinners how to be saved, or giving believing parents the assurance that their children are in the covenant?

The *you* in the phrase *the promise is unto you* are unbelievers asking what they must do to be saved. In the very next verse (**v.40**) Peter exhorted these unsaved people to *save yourselves from this corrupt generation*. Can an exhortation to lost sinners to trust Christ be interpreted as a promise to Christian parents that their children are in a special covenantal relationship with God? Of course not.

b. How can the promise in Joel that Peter quoted, *whosoever shall call on the Lord shall be saved*, be connected to infant baptism? (Cf. **Rom.10:13** where Paul also quotes **Joel 2:32** and shows that the promise spoken of in Joel and quoted by Peter is the promise of the gospel to all unbelievers whether they are Gentiles or Jews.) Peter declaring the promise of the gospel of grace to unbelievers cannot be turned into God making a covenant of grace with Christian parents, yet this is exactly what **covenant theologians** have done with this text.

c. Do the children of believers have more unique promise in this text than do *those who are afar off* (the heathen), **Acts 2:39**? Peter understood the gospel promise of *whosoever* in Joel to include **three distinct groups**. Clarify who is included in the promise that *everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved [from God's judgment (wrath), 19-20] Acts 2:21.*

1. Notice how clearly Peter interprets the words *whosoever* in **Joel** and *as many as* in **Acts**. What Peter is declaring is this: **Just as all people** without exception (covenant children included) **are guilty lost sinners who need to be saved, so all men** without exception **are freely invited in the one gospel of grace to believe and be saved**. Under the NC, can there be unregenerate pagan children and unregenerate covenant children with different promises for each group? No - Peter is showing that the gospel message is for all lost sinners without distinction or exception. There is now only one category of lost people before God. No one is physically either inside or outside of a special covenantal category by birth.

2. To whom does the *even as many as the Lord our God shall call, Acts 2:40*, apply? All three categories mentioned in the text. Peter is saying, as many as God shall call from among you, from among your children, and from among the heathen. **It is the sovereign effectual call of God in all three categories that determines the true objects of the promise**. The one and only thing that determines whether a person is in Christ or under grace is the eternal election of God, and the only thing that proves it in time is the effectual call of the Holy Spirit. Being under a covenant of grace has nothing at all to do with physical birth. There is not a special spiritual category in Scripture for the physical children of believers to be in before God through physical birth and baptism. The promise in **Acts 2:39** was given equally to the pagans, to the hearers, and to their children.

3. The people addressed in **Acts 2:39** were still unbelievers in **v.40**, many of whom were converted and baptized in **v.41**. Can one think and speak in terms of covenant children and non-covenant children and not wind up with **two different gospels** - one for the covenant child that includes God loves you for sure, and one for the pagan child that cannot include God loves you until we are first sure that they are one of the elect? One of the major problems created by using **Acts 2:39** as a proof text for infant baptism is that it confuses the message of the gospel of grace to all men.

Acts 2 is about our Lord Jesus Christ of whom prophecy and promises were made. The message, especially **v.39**, is that the promise has been fulfilled — the Messiah Redeemer has come — believe

in Him and be saved whoever you are. There is only ONE status before God — GUILTY, regardless of who your parents are, and there is only ONE gospel message to every guilty sinner — REPENT and BELIEVE. This is the one message to the children of believers as well as the children of unbelievers. Ceremonies (such as baptism) depict realities. **God's Kingdom is spiritual in nature. It can only be entered through spiritual regeneration**, rebirth, which cannot be accomplished by a ceremony. *God ... made His light to shine in our hearts ... 2 Cor.4:6).*

Compare Joel 2:32 with Acts 2:21, Peter's inspired interpretation is an example of how to read the OT Scriptures in the light of its interpretation by inspired NT apostles. **The new age of the Spirit is the gospel age** predicted by Joel. Peter was stating the following facts about the kingdom.

1. WHEN would this kingdom be established?

Joel's prophecy concerned the time in which you and I live **today** and not just the future.

2. To WHOM was this kingdom promised?

The promise is equally applied to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. According to Peter's interpretation of Joel's prophecy, the promise is to **whosoever** and not just the Nation of Israel.

3. HOW were the blessings of kingdom to be received? Deliverance was to be given on the basis of faith in the gospel message and had nothing at all to do with physical birth.

4. WHAT did Joel mean by deliverance? Peter says that **Joel's deliverance was spiritual salvation for Jews and Gentiles in the gospel age** (cf. **Lk.1:68-79**) [not national, political freedom for the Jews in a future earthly kingdom, see **AFS, Apdx 4**].

V.22-24 - Jesus had all of the credentials necessary to prove that He was the Messiah; but, in spite of all the evidence, the Jews still crucified Him. However, God raised Him from the dead. Peter's emphasis proves that the Man they crucified had fulfilled the prophecies concerning the Messiah King.

V.25-28 - This resurrection of Christ from the grave was also clearly **propheesied by David**.

V.29-36 - Peter's application of the fact of the resurrection and the ascension of Christ reveals that David understood exactly what was being promised to him in **2 Sam.7**. Peter's sermon also shows that David understood both when and how the covenant promise to raise up His Son to sit on His throne would be fulfilled. **This very clear time reference is often missed when discussing the establishment of David's throne.**

Compare **2 Sam.7:12 & 1 Chron.17:11** with **Acts 2:29-31** to see how a New Testament apostle understood and applied an Old Testament prophecy concerning the Davidic kingdom.

2 Sam.7:12 & 1 Chron.17:11	Acts 2:29-31
	<i>Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David,</i>

<i>And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt go to be with thy fathers [die],</i>	<i>that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.</i>
<i>I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels,</i>	<i>Therefore ... being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh,</i>
<i>and I will establish his Kingdom.</i>	<i>he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;</i>
	<i>David seeing this beforehand, spoke of the resurrection of Christ ...</i>

The following facts are established by comparison of the actual words in the prophecy and Peter's inspired interpretation of them.

1. Peter identifies the seed as Christ so there is no question as to whom the prophecy refers. Christ is the seed that was raised up (or resurrected clearly pinpoints the time of fulfillment) to sit on the throne in fulfillment of the covenant promise to David.
 2. Peter shows that David understood these words to be more than just a promise of the bodily resurrection of Christ. He connected the resurrection and ascension of Christ with the establishment of the kingdom promised to David. **The setting up the seed and establishing the kingdom are the same thing as raising up Christ to sit on David's throne and all of this was to happen at the same time.** David was speaking of the resurrection and ascension of Christ that had just taken place (v.30-31). **Peter's words mean** that David's greater Son was to begin sitting on the promised throne at the time of Jesus' resurrection and ascension. There is not the slightest hint of a postponed future earthly throne in Peter's words. **Taking Peter's words literally, proves that the Holy Spirit deliberately spiritualized the OT prophecy of the Davidic kingdom.**
 3. Christ would sit on David's throne at the same time that David was still sleeping with the fathers or before David's resurrection. This is why Peter deliberately mentions that *David is both dead and buried and his sepulcher is with us unto this day*. **Peter is saying**, The promise to David has been fulfilled in the exact manner and at the precise time it was prophesied to David. **The throne was to be established at the time of the resurrection and ascension of Christ, and it would happen while David was dead awaiting his own resurrection.** (cf. **Acts 13:35-36**)
- It is impossible** to fit Walvoord's statement that resurrected David will reign under Christ as a Prince over the house of Israel into Peter's inspired interpretation of God's covenant with David. Recent Progressive Dispensationalists admit that Walvoord is wrong in expecting David himself to be raised from the dead and rule in Jerusalem. However, **they insist that substituting Christ for David is not to be understood as spiritualizing prophecy.**
4. **The words *I will establish his kingdom* in the promise to David becomes *raise up Christ to sit on his throne* in the inspired interpretation by Peter,** an event that took place at the ascension of Christ. Is there any hint in Peter's words of any expectations of a future Davidic throne or kingdom that has

temporarily been postponed? **No**. When would David be raised from the dead if this enthronement of David's Seed were to take place during a future earthly millennium? **After that millennium was over**.

David's Seed is sitting on David's throne right now and that the kingdom promised to David has, in some sense, already been established at the ascension of Christ (cf. **1 Chron.17:11-14**). The NT does not allow us to say that Christ now sits in heaven on a throne as Lord of the church, but He will later sit on a physical throne in Palestine as King of Israel. **The days of the manifestation of both the glory and the power of Christ began at the Ascension**. No NT writer ever thinks or writes of such a manifestation of Christ's glory and power as being totally future.^a

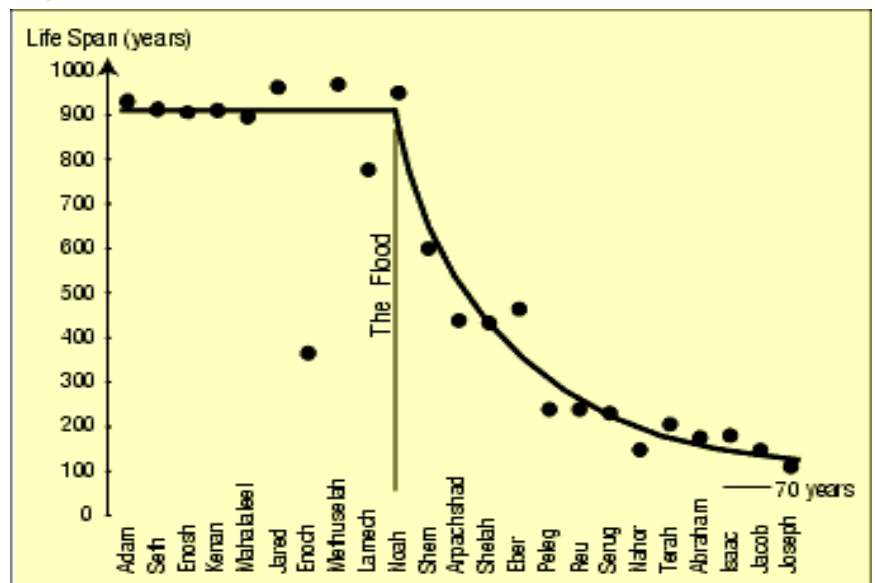
a. Nothing I have said disqualifies historic Premillennialism. The Psalmist was not denying God's present sovereignty when he prayed for God to manifest His sovereign power. Likewise, it is not a denial of the present Lordship of Christ to believe there will also be a future visible revelation of that Lordship over the whole earth. **We need not be forced into an either/or, or into a present or future kingdom**. It may well be that both are true.

The gift of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost is the evidence of Christ's ascension to David's throne as promised in **2 Sam.7**. *Pentecost is also a visible expression or exercise of Christ's earned Lordship or present Kingship (cf. Joel 2:28-29). The gift of the Holy Spirit was the direct and earned response to the victorious work of the enthroned King, and it was also the full proof that the Father was perfectly satisfied with that work.*

APDX-6, p.9 **Today, mankind's average life expectancy is 70–80 years**. The chart shows the decline in ages after the great flood. Sarah was still beautiful at 90 and she lived another 37 years, **Gen.23:1**

Declining Post Flood Longevity - The sudden downward trend in life spans after the flood: This type of declining curve (exponential decay) strongly suggests that man's environment underwent a drastic change which reduced human life spans.

APDX-7, p.11 *Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did [his obedience]. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend. You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone, Jas.2:21-24*



Abraham was fully persuaded that God had the power to do what he had promised, **Rom.4:21** because you ... **have not withheld ... your only son** [uniquely begotten; same phrase connects Isaac's birth with the incarnation of Christ, **Jn.1:18; 3:16, 18**], I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars ... **Gen.22:15-17**

... Abraham's **faith was credited to him as righteousness**, **Rom.4:9**

Rom.4:16-25, describes **true faith** in terms of Abraham's obedience to the command to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering. **Isaac serves as a type of Christ, an only son born of promise destined to be sacrificed**. The 2nd part of this story is the representation of Christ as the goat that God provided to be sacrificed in Isaac's place. **We who believe are the children of promise**, Abraham's seed who have been rescued by the sacrifice of Christ. We believers constitute that great nation of Abraham's descendants through which all other nations will be blessed.

... **not all who are descended from Israel are Israel**. Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. In other words, **it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children**, but it is **the children of the promise** who are regarded as Abraham's offspring. For this was how the promise was stated: At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son, **Rom.9:6-9**.

Abraham's faith serves as a paradigm for all believers. The words it was credited to him **were not written for him alone**, but for us as well to whom God **was going to credit righteousness** — for us who believe in him who raised Jesus from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification. Therefore, **since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, **stage 4, Rom.4:23-5:2**.

----- Appendices GT#3 -----

APDX-8, p.6 **The foundation of classical logic consists of three laws**. I'll use the second, Non-contradiction, nothing can be both A and Not-A, to represent all three. Practically these mean: if something is true, then the opposite is false (correct/incorrect, good/bad, right/wrong, real/fictitious). If an animal is a cat, the same animal cannot not be a cat. It is EITHER one OR the other, but not both. **This is the language of cause and effect**. We cannot think logically or rationally in any other way. This classical logic applies to the classical laws of science governing **macroscopic phenomena** are well-understood and time-tested.

Exception: Antinomies exist when a pair of principles that stand side by side seem logically irreconcilable, yet are undeniably true. They **exist in Scripture and in nature**. Therefore when we find Bible passages that speak of **God's sovereignty** [or providence, see **note 2 Both-And**] and others that speak of **man's responsibility or accountability**, which we do, man's freedom of choice is validated as is God's sovereignty. They are both true concurrently and we cannot logically, understand or explain it. The three in one of the Trinity, the humanity & deity of Jesus, and the mystical union between Christ and his people are examples of antinomies in the Bible.

Atomic and subatomic objects in quantum physics are both **particles and waves**; they are a strange illogical combination of both. Many experiments over the years have confirmed this. The pro-

pagation of some forms of **Light** is an example of an antinomy in nature. **Quantum theory** is intrinsically non-logical. It deals with the nature and behavior of matter and energy on atomic and subatomic levels.

Newtonian or Classical mechanics applies to phenomena **on a macroscopic scale** and operates according to the cause and effect rules of classical logic. Classical non-contradictory physics and nonlogical **Antinomies** are both part of **the reality of the universe**. Since antinomies exist, we must incorporate them in our conception of reality [for a more extensive discussion, see my essay **Both-And**].

From **Ex.3-14** we see an **interplay** between God's working to free the Hebrews and Pharaoh's resistance to it. We can discern four categories: **(1) God is identified as the cause.** I will harden Pharaoh's heart, v.4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 27; 14:4, 8, 17 ; **(2) no cause is given for the condition.** Pharaoh's heart became hard, 7:13-14, 22; 8:19; 9:7 ; **(3) it is an exercise of free will.** Pharaoh hardened his own heart, 8:15, 32; 9:17, 34-35; 10:3; 14:5; **(4) God forced Pharaoh to let Israel go.** The king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him, Ex.3:19-20 ; 6:1. This is an antinomy and our only option is to accept the reality of it.

APDX-9, p.12 Classification of Irritations

There are 2 types of **frustration inducing developments**: **1** - those disturbances we can and should take care of & remove: grinding car disc brake pads should be replaced; personal habits can be changed; toothaches can be cured. **2** - There are other disruptions, irritations, or heart-aches over which we have little or no control: inconsiderate neighbors; flooding; chronic back pain; etc.

Major Sources of Irritation

We can be annoyed and frustrated by **(1) other people**, **(2) inconveniences in our environment**, **(3) personal defects** and weaknesses, **(4) unmet expectations** in the way things are going, and **(5) unforeseen difficulties** with and disruptions of our normal routines or status quo.

Wrong Reactions to Sources of Irritation

(1) Self-defense is used to excuse your culpability; **(2) Blame** it on the circumstances or someone else diverts responsibility to someone or somewhere else; **(3) Allow frustration** to morph into anger. Hold Anger in and Nurse it into something dangerous and ugly; **(4) ignore** it and fail to get the lesson and address the problem.

Right Responses to Sources of Irritation

Thank God for the Irritation. Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing ... Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him ... Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights ... Of his own will he [supernaturally] brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures [new creation], Jas.1:2-18.

Identify Possible Causes. Ask *did I in any way cause this or make it worse?* If you are even partly responsible for the difficulty, take the appropriate corrective actions [see **Beyond David, Forgive-**

ness].

Determine Ultimate Objectives. Ask what is God's purpose for this irritation? Is it to address something that needs to be attended to. Is it a cry for help to bring to our attention to someone's needs that gives us the opportunity to partner with God in coming along side of them? [see **Acts 16:16-18; p.9, GT#6**]

*God uses **all things** to accomplish his purposes in the world and for the benefit of his people and you who love God become his agents for that very purpose, **Rom.8:28**.*

*Consider carefully, then, how you walk ... as wise people. Make the most of your time, because the days are evil. For this reason ... understand what the will of the Lord is ... **be filled by the Spirit**, speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (singing and making music [Lit, psalming] with your hearts to the Lord), **always giving thanks for everything** to God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **Eph.5:15-20** .*

*The things God showed me [Paul referring to his vision] were so great, to keep me from being too full of pride because of seeing these things, I have been given trouble in my body [Lit. a thorn in the flesh]. It was **sent from Satan to hurt me**. **It keeps me from being proud**. I asked the Lord three times to take it away from me. He answered me, I am all you need. I give you My loving-favor. My power works best in weak people. **Therefore, I am happy to be weak and have troubles so I can have Christ's power in me**. I receive joy when I am weak. I receive joy when people talk against me and make it hard for me and try to hurt me and make trouble for me. I receive joy when all these things come to me because of Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong, **2 Cor.12:7-10***

***We are to love God enough to say, "thank you" even for the difficult things** . Thanking God in every situation frees our spirit to be creatively objective in evaluating whatever is impacting our lives and discovering the ultimate benefits of every source of irritation.*

*Do not worry about anything, but **in everything** , by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God , which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus, **Phil.4:6-7**.*

TS has a **tremendous** section (**p.9-13**) on contentment and giving thanks. **A quiet disposition and a heart giving thanks at any given moment is the real test of the extent to which we love God at the moment** , **p.9** [and understand his ways] . We are to love God enough to be contented and to love man enough not to envy , **p.119** ... So people are without excuse [an apologetic] . For although they knew God, they **did not glorify him as God or give him thanks** [and what were the consequences for their neglect or refusal?] ... **Rom.1:18-21; 1Thes.5:16-19; Col.2:7; 3:15-17**.

----- Appendices GT#5 -----

APDX-10, p.6, 8, 9, 11, 13 COMPLICATIONS: Briefly, these cultural conventions arose after the great flood of Noah's day. Since genealogies are not chronologies, this period cannot be known with certainty. Bible chronologies give us a time of 427yrs, so it was likely longer, between Noah & Abraham; 430yrs between Abraham & Moses; 300yrs between Moses & David. During that period and because the scattering of mankind at the tower of Babel, many customs and cultures developed

along the same general lines. We find common elements in the 3 GT stories.

Throughout the 40 year period of David's reign over Judah & then all of Israel there are hints of things that will cause problems. For example **nepotism**.

Psalm 101 is titled "A Psalm of David" and may have been composed for Solomon's coronation. The first four verses express the king's personal contempt for evil. The second four verses proclaim his refusal to permit evil doers in his presence and to surround himself with the faithful and blameless. He pledges to remove the wicked from the kingdom.

However, king David did not live by these standards. He, just like all kings at that time, practiced two cultural norms that conflicted with them: **nepotism**, the practice of favoring relatives with appointments to prominent positions; **dynastic succession**, family line continuation of occupation of the throne. Besides the general requirement of faithfulness to God for his blessing, these practices have one basic qualification: competence to fulfill the duties of their offices [Joab's brother Abishai was a son of Zeruiah, David's sister; Abishai, Joab, and Asahel their brother were David's nephews (**2 Sam.2:18; 2 Chr.2:16**) and trusted military leaders]. Joab, though not a godly man, competently commanded David's army. He was a pragmatist who took advantage of situations to serve his own ends. After Saul's death Abner the commander of Saul's army [**2 Sam.3:27, 30**] had gone over to David and was on a mission to reconcile the two houses under David [**2 Sam.3:12**] when Joab ruthlessly murdered him. David's weakness in holding Joab accountable for his crime [**2 Sam.3:39**] set in motion a series of events that ultimately cascaded, ruining his good reputation and again splitting the united kingdom, **GT#5, p.6**. Joab, a man without regard for God's law, murdered other men [ie, Absalom, David's third son, **2 Sam.18:14-15**; Amasa, **20:8-10**] and was complicit in Uriah's death. **David knew him to be such a man** which is the reason he depended on him to carry out that despicable deed.

[Priestly succession & apostolic succession have been plagued by similar problems. Superior practices were utilized by the early church for choosing men for serving the church **Acts 1:20-26; 6:1-6; 13:2-3**] Sir Walter Scott wrote, *oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive!* When people act dishonestly, they are initiating problems and a domino structure of complications that will eventually run out of control. What they do in the dark (try to hide) will eventually come to light. A tangled web refers to a complex, difficult, and confusing situation often involving conspiracy and intrigue that is released upon the land.

Privileges of Firstborn Males

There was another practice that became normalized in those days, **primogeniture**, the custom by which at least double share of the father's property was given to the firstborn son along with his blessing when the father was about to die, **Gen.25:5; 29-34**. This can only create sibling rivalry, **27:32-38; Heb.12:16-17!** Like all of the other customs described in this appendix, it lends itself to the encouragement of fleshly vices rather than spirituality. Nevertheless, God used them for his own purposes.

Foreign Wives, Concubines, & Polygamy

The Bible, particularly Proverbs, emphasizes the role of parents in raising children. Who raised the children in the kingdom of David? The father, tutors, Hebrew wives, foreign wives, or concubines

[see Dating, 1st intro]? In the Bible, a concubine was a legitimate wife holding a lower status than a first-rank wife but still having a recognized relationship with the man, not as a mistress. Though sometimes a slave or servant, a concubine was treated as a lawful wife under the institution of polygamy. Their children were not primary heirs and their role was often to provide a male heir in the case of a barren wife, to provide more children in general to enhance the family's workforce and wealth, and to satisfy the man's sexual desires. A woman living as a concubine was more common in Israel during the patriarchal period of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob than in later periods, but it still happened among the wealthy and especially with royals like King David and King Solomon.

Although he provided rights and protections for concubines in the Law of Moses, God did not introduce or approve of this marital model. The Hebrew word for concubine is a non-Semitic word borrowed to refer to a phenomenon not indigenous to Israel. **Concubinage** is considered a sin and is ranked with fornication and adultery in the NT which emphasizes the sacred institution of marriage and restores it to its original character as a symbolic reflection of the relationship between God and his people.