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Description automatically generated

Wow, I Want What They Have!

sanctified marriage: heavens above “for better or worse”

I am an Invincible Child of God

no one can hurt me

Prison to Life Abundant

incarcerated or not, we are born prisoners to sin

Pastor K. Bruce Brown

Dedicated to our Abba Father

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# Chapter 4: The Kingdom of God

Chapter 4 Messages

S4M1: our Abba Father

S4M2: Our Abba Father comes to Earth

S4M3: The Glory of our Abba Father

S4M4 The Spirit of Yahweh

S4M5: The Holy Spirit

## S4M1: our Abba Father

### Overview

Note: This presentation dives deep into the existence of our Abba Father and pre-incarnate Jesus in the Old Testament. It is complicated, but I believe it will grow your faith. It involves an effort most believers are not used to. Every believer can benefit from it. We are using NKJV in Chapter 4 to get the “LORD” translation of Yahweh. Burn Yahweh into your hearts when you see LORD.

The first three chapters presented the world we live in, both supernatural and physical. The following two chapters present the Kingdom of God, our world's owner, and ruler. We referenced the Kingdom in S2M6; it has a ruler and the ruler's Family. We can choose to be a subject in the Kingdom with ELB and God the King or an adopted child in the Family with our Abba Father, his begotten Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Please pray on that choice. I choose the Family relationship and strongly recommend you choose it too.

We will walk through the Family features, but first, we look at the question, who do we worship, Jesus or our Abba Father? The answer typically comes from the doctrine embraced by the church we attend and leave it at that. I don't want to step on that, my focus is on the Scripture, and the Holy Spirit will guide us to the answer. Either choice keeps you out of the fiery pit, but only the Family choice provides the full peace, joy, and glory created by our Abba Father. Please pray on that.

ELB tends to focus on God in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament; that is obvious. We often hear that the Old Testament points to Jesus, and then he arrives in the New Testament. But the Holy Three always was and always will be. Pre-incarnate Jesus and the Holy Spirit work closely with our Abba Father in the Old Testament and work together in the New Testament.

We are taught the Old Testament points to the Messiah who is coming, but that is the job, not Jesus himself. And our Abba father is not an Old Testament relic; he is always there. He is there the whole time, and our faith grows to know that.

Also, remember that Jesus came for the first time to do a job and ascended. Scholars put too much emphasis on his past at the expense of the future. The historical focus on Jesus and what he did for us goes too far in ELB and almost completely misses the Holy Spirit. Whether one believes the Holy Spirit is a "person" or not, he still did what the Scripture says he did in all the Holy Bible versions. That is what matters.

Our life is about Jesus coming back with a new world, which must be our focus. Our redemption is in his visit; our life is in his return. When I share this with my flock, it resonates with them. We must focus on that connection today and tomorrow, not the past, to escape ELB. I suggest you think about that and pray on it.

When we base our relationship on the past and what Jesus did, it focuses on this life on earth. My observation does not diminish what Jesus did; it is about lifting our Abba Father to his rightful glorious, majestic position, which is orders of magnitude greater than earth-life. Paul still teaches 1 Corinthians 10:31, "*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God*." He is not talking about Jesus, or he would have said so.

Look at John 17:1-3, "*Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*" Please burn the last line into your heart with the word "both."

When John saw the Revelation of the end time, it was a vision thousands of years into the future, and our Abba Father is still on the throne. Jesus will come, open the scroll, and finish what he started. Until then, our Abba Father is still ruling the throne.

Revelation 1:4-6, "*Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*"

Revelation 4, "*After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven . . . Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne . . . And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God . . . The four living creatures . . . do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, LORD God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come*!"

Our Abba Father and the Son are a team. Jesus is the ruler of "the kings of the earth." Stay with the Scripture; it never leads you astray (as originally written). Bask in it, make it your own, and live it. Doing that for you is not my job. My job is to help you do it for yourself.

#### The Answer

We previously raised the question, "what" is our Abba Father? An answer to the question seems essential to bring him to life in the fullest possible vision. The vision is critical because we need to build it from Scripture and the Holy Spirit. We look at "who" is our Abba Father in the context of our relationship. The word "who" is personal, and "what" is intellectual. This chapter reveals how he uses his names to relate to us, with Yahweh being his relationship name and his migration from there to being our Father, our Abba Father.

I pushed back against the doctrine of the 3-in-1 God in S2M6. ELB wants to conflate "What" is God into one impersonal, unrelatable bundle. That tunes us out of much of what the Scripture says about who and what is our Abba Father.

I only want to know what he is if I can further energize my love and obedience. Notice I said to "energize my love and obedience," not pass a Holy Bible quiz. In Ephesians 4, our Abba Father is our Family's Patriarch, the seat of all knowledge and power. He has a relational name, Yahweh, and an impersonal title name, also a spirit type, elohiym.

The journey from elohiym to God to the "magic 3 in oneness" is an ELB journey that results in weak faith. Our Abba Father gave us the word "elohiym," and he used it for his divine spirit creations. What our Abba Father gave us is fantastic. What man did after that is typical of man, confusing at best, and often misdirected in ELB. Jesus is the Son, given all authority on earth. That requires two beings.

Look at Colossians 2:8, "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the deity bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power." Notice we are complete in Jesus. And yet, Jesus taught us to pray to the Father, and I find that profound.

I leave the Holy Spirit discussion to S4M5, but knowing the Holy Three in the fullness of the Scripture does not leave any room for the magical conflated 3-in-1 doctrine as the answer to "what is our Abba Father?" The Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit, never seen in the likeness of a human. He commandeers a couple of humans, but that is not the same.

#### Imago Dei

"What" are Abba Father is relative to us starts with Genesis 1:26, "*Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.*" ELB wants us to focus on the "image and likeness" and skip the "us" and "our." That passage has puzzled me for a long time because my first question was, who is our Abba Father talking to? The "Us" in Genesis 1:26 is evidence of the Holy Three; they are all part of the creation process. But the "Us" has nothing to do with elohiym being singular and plural, as many say in ELB.

So, who is God talking to? Nowhere in the Scripture do the Holy Three talk to each other, except for human Jesus praying and talking to his Abba Father. Our Abba Father continuously talks through the other two in the Old Testament. Everything comes from the Father; what is there to talk about? John 5:19, "*Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.*” If the Holy Three already know everything; what is there to talk about with each other? Jesus does not know when he is coming; they all do not know everything.

In the previous chapter, we saw our Abba Father's world; his divine spirit family surrounds him. The nahas heard our Abba Father talking to Adam in Eden. The nahas was not happy about the creation of man and woman, and the rest is history. I see the "us" and "our" as the divine spirit world surrounding our Abba Father and to who he is talking. That conversation took place in Eden. Conventional teaching that the Holy Three are only talking to each other completely ignores the divine spirit family we know exists. That is ELB.

My seminary project was the "Imago Dei," as scholars call the "image of God," as if Latin was our Abba Father's language. I thought the Imago Dei had to contain some secret sauce that would change the world if we only knew. I searched high and low and found no secret sauce.

I found attributes and features we share with the Holy Three. The next topic reviews what scholars say and what the Scripture says, but they omit the essential feature in our relationship. Look at 2 Corinthians 4:4, ". . . *that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.* . . ." Christ is the image of God. We are made "in" that image.

Our Abba Father is introducing us to his divine spirit Family in Genesis 1:26, and our image that matters is the divine spirit nature that connects us to him. Our soul, our spirit thing, and our GCS are all ignored by ELB. Please pray on that; it is a huge faith builder. Our divine "spirit only" siblings around our Abba Father don't have what we have, but we have what they have in the spirit connection to our Abba Father. He is talking to them at the moment and to us in the Scripture.

Ancient Hebrew did not have capital letters. The ESV, NIV, and many other translations do not capitalize the "our" as the KJV and ASV do, leading us to "God." The lowercase "our" can easily include the other spirit beings, such as the nahas, the angels, and the bene elohiym, etc., as the audience addressed. That builds my faith.

What that all means to our faith is this book's title, "Wow, I want what they have!" Made in "our image and likeness," means being people others see and want for themselves. The first commandment was against idols because of us. We are his living idols; we are everything an idol pretends, except we are real. And everything we do away from our Abba Father is an idol, not just a sin. Have you ever thought there was no commandment against sin? That is ELB. The first commandment is about our sin, but his cleverness makes it what we do, not who we are.

#### Attributes

ELB strives to minimize our divine spirit image, so it focuses on earthly human "attributes" to define what the Imago Dei means. The attributes of our Abba Father are typical doctrine presentations such as thinking, loving, etc. And they leave me flat with no inspiration at all.

There is one attribute word about our Abba Father that does work, "transcendent." That is useful with minimal ELB. Transcendent means "beyond the limits of ordinary experience." That is an attribute worthy of our Abba Father. When talking about our Abba Father's attributes, they should be worthy of his majesty AND sourced from the Scripture.

#### Immutable

Immutable is a favorite descriptor of our Holy Three. It means they cannot change, not just that they don't. Malachi 3:6, "*For I am the Yahweh, I do not change.*" He doesn't change because he is Yahweh. He already is everything, what is there to change? That means we can depend on his promises for good and punishment, which is also suitable for our good. But when we define our Abba Father with immutable in ELB, believers see it as a sternness without love and miss the transformation from the Old Testament to the New Testament relationship.

While our Abba Father does not change, his plan for us evolves with many changes. The plan starts with a family to birth more people, then a specific family, Abraham and the way of Yahweh. Then a nation of God with priests, judges, kings, and prophets. Then Jesus does his work, and we have the Body of Christ as the church. The law is transformed into love with Jesus' work, and we are brought back into his Family for eternity. That is a lot of change only seen in the entire Scripture and not seen in ELB's attempt to define our Abba Father in ways that minimize him.

#### The Three Omni's

We referenced the set of "omni-" words (omni means "all") in S2M5. The first is omniscient, which means "the state of having total knowledge, the quality of knowing everything." Psalm 139 is our Abba Father's own words. Let's use them instead. "*O Yahweh, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou searchest out my path and my lying down, And art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, But, lo, O Yahweh, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, And laid thy hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*" Hopefully, you can see the difference in our hearts between man's words and our Abba Father's words.

The second word, omnipresent, is a doctrine favorite defined as "present everywhere at all times." It makes sense that with knowing everything, the Holy Three must be present everywhere, including hell. Everywhere means the divine spirit world as well as material earth. Believers in ELB tend to leave the divine spirit world out of this subject .

Colossians 1:15-18 is informative, "*who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*"

That passage talks about Jesus. "All things formed through him" reinforces how our Abba Father works through Jesus, the Word. Gravity is a force between all physical bodies, and it is easy to see how Jesus could hold all things together as gravity does. Please bring that thought to life.

Jeremiah 32:17 belongs with the above verse, "*Ah Lord Yahweh! behold, thou hast made the heavens and the earth by thy great power and by thine outstretched arm; there is nothing too hard for thee*.” That passage also supports the image of our Abba Father working through his Son and Holy Spirit, even though it does not mention them.

Omnipotent is the third common doctrine word. It means "all-powerful," but I cannot even think about that word because I want to experience the full majesty of the Scripture. Look at the creation, look at his Son, look at the Holy Spirit, look at the Revelation, look at our Abba Father's love and patience, look at it all and bask in its glory and how blessed we are to be even a tiny part of it, let alone, to help rule the new world. Thank you, Abba Father, Jesus, and Holy Spirit!

#### Self-sufficient

"Self-sufficient, he has no needs" is on most godly attribute lists. While that may be technically possible, it is not helpful. Our Abba Father cannot praise himself, and he wants praise. Praise is the missing ingredient in our prayer, and praise is when the hair on our arms stands up in prayer. "*Thousands of thousands circle the throne saying, holy, holy, holy*."

The second thing our Abba Father needs is our acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Savior. He also needs us to obey him in love. His definition of love is obedience. He also needs us to build the church, preach the gospel, and help others come to him. The "self-sufficient" doctrine leaves us with an aloof God in ELB, which is not helpful to our faith.

#### Wise

Our Abba Father is "wise," another attribute often listed. He created everything; he is not wise, he is amazing beyond our comprehension. Other attributes often listed are faithful, good, just, merciful, gracious, and glorious. These are all ELB terms designed to bring our Abba Father down to earth. They are all passive to us as we sit and take them in. They do not inspire us to do anything; they maintain a status quo. Our Abba Father is so much bigger than any of these words. Please pray on that.

#### Communicable Attributes

Communicable means something that can be transmitted or communicated. I do not believe scholars understand "communicable" attributes, so I am not going to discuss a list of them as scholars do in ELB. Most studies list 6-10 attributes we then look at and agree with. ELB wants us to feel wrong about weak shared attributes, not weak faith, so we work on attributes, not our faith.

Believers are not called in Scripture anywhere to compare attributes we share with our Abba Father. As believers, we are called to sanctify our lives and glorify our Abba Father. We imitate Jesus, follow him, and learn from him. We do this through our GCS connection. The Holy Spirit and the Scripture will teach us everything we need to know. In addition, we receive gifts, not attributes, to do our job in the Family business.

Our Abba Father provides everything and knits us in the womb as a unique creation for his purpose. A list of attributes we supposedly share with our Abba Father falls flat because they are a variable within people. We all have different attributes to do our job and fulfill our calling. We need to focus on our calling, not random attributes. Please pray on that.

## S4M2: Our Abba Father comes to Earth

This message starts with the image of our Abba Father presented when the people of Israel came up to Mt. Sinai to meet with him. Exodus 19:9 NKJV, "*And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you and believe you forever.*" Exodus 19:18 NKJV, "*Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.*" Exodus 19:21 NKJV, "*And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at the LORD, and many of them perish.*" Exodus 33:20 NKJV, "*But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!*"

That is our Abba Father, beyond containment, beyond description, beyond comprehension. We start there and somehow get to us here on earth, and we need to bridge that huge gap.

Look at John 1:18 NKJV, "*No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*" John 6:46 NKJV, "*Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.*" John 5:37 NKJV, "*And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form*."

The New Testament no longer needs to hide the identity of the Messiah, so the whole truth is expressed. John 1:18 NKJV, "*No one has seen God at any time.*" Got it? 1 John 4:12 NKJV, "*No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.*" 1 John 4:20 NKJV, "*If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.*"

Our Abba Father not being seen is a foundation of our faith. What the people in the Old Testament believe they actually are seeing is not. That is ELB and must be corrected. We must bridge that gap between him and us in the Old Testament to grow our faith. I draw a few conclusions from this dive into the Scripture:

We are explaining the supernatural world we also live in and must embrace. The Old Testament must be somewhat confusing and obtuse about the Messiah to never reveal his true identity.

Any encounter where we see Yahweh on earth in human form is the pre-incarnate Jesus referenced as the Angel of the LORD and the word of the LORD. Ephesians 4 NKJV, "*one God and Father in all and through all*," brings a great deal of understanding to the Old Testament that the 3-in-1 doctrine can never explain with its ELB simplicity. I have said many times, including in seminary, with unanswered questions about the Scripture, that I am content to wait until I meet Jesus and ask him. But the search always build our faith.

### Our Abba Father Talking

We can see that our Abba Father talks to humans in the Old Testament, and a closer look at how that happens will give a deeper understanding of our Abba Father and the Holy Three. We spent significant time in S4M5 presenting the divine assembly and the divine spirit world of our Abba Father to bring to life his world and how it works overall. We will continue in that direction with his interactions with his people in the Old Testament.

In Genesis 2, we see our Abba Father talking to Adam and Eve. He is with them in Eden (they hear his footsteps) and talks to them. Since our Abba Father gave no warning not to look and they heard footsteps, I see the pre-incarnate Jesus there.

In Genesis 4, our Abba Father talks to Cain, no longer in Eden, and in Genesis 6, he talks to Noah, all with no indication of how he does it. Does he shout from Heaven, or is he there with them? Or is he talking through a divine spirit being? (I know, I ask a lot of questions) Up to the flood, there is not much about the Abba Father to work with except disobedience and evil, and I can see an enemy smelling victory. But the enemy was so wrong.

After the flood, Genesis 11:5-7 NKJV is interesting, "*But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. . . Come, let Us go down and there and confuse their language* . . ." Given our journey through Chapter 3, I see the "us" (almost all translations do not capitalize it) as a team of divine spirit beings, the bene elohiym (S3M4) with Yahweh to confuse the language and scatter them. That is divine spirit work. The passage, "But the LORD came down," draws our attention here.

How Yahweh came down is not revealed in more detail, but as we move forward, new revelations are abundant. Our Abba Father cannot ever shrink to a defined form, which is why Jesus and the Holy Spirit must play a role. How does he "come down?" Bridging the gap from infinite God to individual humans is our goal.

The Old Testament is a progressive reveal, and we receive more information as we continue. There is no evidence Yahweh interacted with anyone during the visit to Babylon, and divine spirits would have done the scattering. The encounters after the Tower of Babel story start the launch of the next phase of the plan with Abram and Israel and more about the Holy Three. I see our Abba Father everywhere, there is no “come down” for him, and he works through the Holy Spirit and the other divine helpers.

### The Angel of the LORD

Genesis 12 is the first mention of an encounter between Yahweh and Abram in the Old Testament. Abram is in Haran. Abram had already had an in-person meeting with Yahweh in Abram's home country, Mesopotamia, when Yahweh told him to pick up and go. Abram obeyed and moved to Haran. We need to spend more effort visualizing these encounters because no one teaches us how to see them.

Genesis 12:1-3 NKJV, "*Now the LORD had said to Abram: 'Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.*" Steven referenced this encounter when the Romans martyred him in Acts 7. Now, look at Genesis 12:7NKJV, "*Then the LORD* (Yahweh) *appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants, I will give this land.*" Yahweh appears to Abram again on earth and speaks to him without any verbal response revealed from Abram.

Genesis 16:7-11 NKJV brings us another encounter with a new twist, "*Now the Angel of the LORD* (the Malak of Yahweh) *found her* (Hagar) *by a spring of water in the wilderness . . . And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.*" The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand."

"*Then the Angel of the LORD* (the Malak of Yahweh) *said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly so that they shall not be counted for multitude." And the Angel of the LORD* (the Malak of Yahweh) *said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction.*"

The Malak of Yahweh is quite impressive. He gives both orders and promises to Hagar. But who does Hagar see? Genesis 16:13-14 NKJV, "*Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You Are the God Who Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me*?" Hagar believes she is talking to her God and then gives us the descriptive name, El Roi, "the God who sees." S7M3 presents the list of descriptive names for our Abba Father. Since we are spectators to this event in the Scripture, we have more information about what is happening.

Keep going, Genesis 18:1, "*The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre . . . Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my Lord* (Adonai, not all caps), *do not pass your servant by . . . and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. Let me get you something to eat" "Very well," they answered, "do as you say*."

Abraham calls Yahweh "Adonai," a respectful name for Yahweh as master. Yahweh appears on earth looking like a man, AND Abraham recognizes him! All three "men" are embodied divine spirits, malak, that spoke, ate, and washed their feet. Genesis 18:10 NKJV is interesting, "*Then one of them said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.*"

One of the three men is a manifestation of Yahweh through the pre-incarnate Jesus that Abraham recognized. Interestingly, the "one of them" is not identified, but if we jump ahead to Genesis 21:1-2 NKJV, "*And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.*"

Genesis 18:16 NKJV is also interesting, "*When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way. Then the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?*" The LORD sought advice from his companions. Our Abba Father is "all everything," what is he doing asking for advice? Our Abba Father is committed to working with and through his creation. That is consistent with the divine council interactions we saw in S3M4.

Let's keep going with Moses leading Abraham's descendants out of Egypt, our Abba Father's most intensive personal interaction with his people. Exodus 3 is one of the most famous passages in the Scripture when elohiym (God) reveals his relationship name, Yahweh, to Moses to begin the next phase of his plan, to move his people out of Egypt to establish Israel.

Let's get started. Exodus 3:1-3 NKJV, ". . . *And he* (Moses) *came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the Angel of the LORD* (the Malak of Yahweh) *appeared to him* (Moses) *in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So when the LORD* (Yahweh) *saw that he turned aside to look, elohiym called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am*."

God and the bush are what studies teach. In the above passage, the Angel of the LORD (the Malak of Yahweh) appeared, the LORD saw, and Elohiym called from the bush. That is quite a passage with three images that people do not react to in ELB because we know what a burning bush is and that draws all of our attention.

We also do not appreciate the difference between elohiym and Yahweh in our relationship. I can imagine the LORD (Yahweh) seeing Moses with great love in his relationship and "God" (elohiym) seeing Moses in his title name commanding him. The LORD sees what the Angel of the LORD sees. That reminds me of a security camera system and "above all, in all and through all" in Ephesians 4.

The name switch with Yahweh and elohiym often appears in the Scripture to emphasize the full majesty of our Abba Father. We can find great richness in this verse, knowing the meaning behind the two names used so often. Please make that your understanding. The LORD (Yahweh) and God (Elohiym) are the same entity with different relationships, but what is the Angel of the LORD (the Malak of Yahweh)?

Like most Christians, Moses had no idea that the Angel of the LORD existed, and he saw a small fire that talked. My best understanding is that the Angel of the LORD is manifesting the fire, and LORD God is speaking through him. That is consistent with the description of how all the malak serve our Abba Father in S3M5.

God continues from the bush, telling Moses his plan to leave Egypt, and then, we are off to see the Pharaoh. Israel moves out of Egypt in Exodus 13:20-21 NKJV, "*So they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night.*"

The LORD himself is with them, manifested by the pillar of the cloud. It still needs to be clarified how the LORD is in the cloud. In Exodus 14:19-20 NKJV, they arrive at the Red Sea to start the crossing. "*And the Angel of God* (same Malak), *who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them.*" That verse tells us a form of the LORD (the pillar of cloud) AND the Angel of the LORD (the Malak of Yahweh) went with the caravan together and provided a visible presence.

V14:24-25 NKJV, "*Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. And He took off their chariot wheels so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.*"

The LORD looked down through the pillar of fire and cloud. And most likely through the Angel of the LORD (the Malak of Yahweh) with more divine spirit army beings doing the troubling. After three months, Israel makes it to Mt. Sinai, and we have another appearance of the LORD to deliver the commandments and the first expression of the law.

After Moses delivers the ten commandments and the law, Exodus 23 makes a profound statement regarding entering the promised land, v23:20-23 NKJV, "*Behold, I send a Malak before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him. But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. For My Malak will go before you and bring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, and I will cut them off.*"

First, that passage is what Israel lost faith in, and Yahweh punished them with a forty-year walk in the desert. Now notice "Obey his voice" (the Malak) and "all that I speak" (Yahweh). We have an image forming of Yahweh working through the Malek of Yahweh, sometimes with words and sometimes in human form. Please pray on that.

I hunger for all the information I can find about our Abba Father. Not so I can believe, but so I can relate as fully as possible. In S3M4, I presented how the supernatural world of our Abba Father functions through divine spirit beings with different titles and names. I emphasized the word malak above because the English word "angel" has too many conventional thoughts. The Hebrew word malak allows us to recalibrate our thoughts to the highest divine spirit beings.

We saw the Angel of the LORD (the Malak of Yahweh) as one of the three men in Genesis 18, recognized as elohiym by Abraham. In Genesis 18:10, "*Then one of them said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.*" Genesis 21:1-2, "*And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.*"

The Malak of the LORD is a divine spirit being who has the power to appear to us on earth as fellow humans. And this Malak is exceptional and very close to our Abba Father. The above verses show how the creation works in the Old Testament.

In the burning bush, Exodus 3, the Malak of the LORD is in the bush, and our Abba Father speaks. But his words are heard through the Malak. Let's look at John 8:54-56 NKJV where Jesus is challenged in the temple, "*Jesus replied, . . . Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.*" John tells us Jesus was there with Abraham in the Old Testament. But not only that, Exodus 3:14 is the famous (through the Malak of Yahweh) verse, "*Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you*.'" Now, look at John 8:58, "*Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM.*"

That is where it gets tricky. Is Jesus saying he IS Yahweh? We recognize "I AM" as the name "Yahweh," back in Exodus. Some denominations take that position. The 3-in-1 doctrine also touches that position, so I ask its proponents to present their journey path in the Scripture to get there.

I see that the Malak of Yahweh (the Angel of the LORD) is the pre-incarnate Jesus, not Yahweh, our Abba Father. Jesus only said, "I AM," he did not say, as Yahweh said, "I AM WHAT I AM." Look again at Exodus 23:20-23 NKJV, "*Behold, I send a Malak before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him.*"

That confirms Ephesians 4 with God the Father above all, in all and through all. Jesus' name in Hebrew is "Yahshua," meaning "Yahweh Saves." Mathew 1:21 NKJV, "*And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.*"

Now look at Mathew 1:22-23 NKJV, "*So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us*." Hold onto the phrase, "by the Lord (not all caps) through the prophet," for later.

Let's look at more about pre-incarnate Jesus in John 5:36-47 NKJV, "*But I have a greater witness than John* (the Baptist); *for the works which the Father has given Me to finish— the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form." I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me . . . For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words*?"

That is a powerful message about pre-incarnate Jesus being fully active in the Old Testament, as written by Moses. Also, look at Colossians 1:15-18 NKJV, "*He (Yahshua) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.*"

The final glory is in 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 NKJV, "*Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.*"

That is strong evidence that the Angel of the LORD in the Old Testament is pre-incarnate Jesus, who at times appears as a man and speaks the words of Yahweh to people, "*and that Rock was Christ*." Remember, Yahweh cannot reveal who the Messiah is under any circumstances in the Old Testament. And, after Jesus comes, there also must be a trail back to him. We must interpret in that context.

Our Abba Father has a narrative problem with pre-incarnate Jesus because he cannot reveal the Messiah but needs to put down a marker of him to return to later. ELB minimizes all that. All Israel can know is Yahweh. The "Malek of the LORD" is his solution, inserted enough to make his point for us today. That is a huge faith builder that gives me goosebumps every time.

### The Word of the LORD

#### His Words

Our Abba Father’s words created the universe and everything in it, but they are also a metaphor for him and Jesus. We need to dramatically raise our game with our Abba Father’s words in the Scripture because it is all he has to work with. We had to see the stars and the heavens to see his infinite magnificence and we need to see that in his words as well.

Look at Deuteronomy 11:18 NKJV, "*You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead*." Psalm 12:6 NKJV, "*The words of the LORD are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.*"

"The words of the LORD" are meant to guide our GCS and control our lives. In ELB, too many believers let the world guide our lives and add our Abba Father as an accessory. Sanctification (S5M1) is our next life step after being redeemed, and it is seen as a process without a real goal or reward because we cannot achieve perfection.

We miss the goal and reward because it is written in the Old Testament Deuteronomy. That was the law, but it was also a way to love our Abba Father. Loving our Abba Father is first demonstrated by obedience. Israel missed it completely, don't feel too bad. But we miss it too in ELB by cleaving the Old and the New so completely. Jesus transformed the law into love in the New Testament. When we start with Jesus in Mathew, we miss the continuation of his work in the Old Testament. Israel did not have that knowledge. When we see pre-incarnate Jesus at work in the Old Testament, we start Mathew with an existing relationship which strengthens our faith.

Look at Ezekiel 12:25 NKJV, "*For I the LORD will speak, and whatever word I speak will be performed. It will no longer be delayed, for in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it," declares the LORD God.*”

Ezekiel spoke in the time of the exile of the Jews. One prophet's words of our Abba Father still traveled around the world. Daniel speaks of reading Jeremiah's prophecies. It helps to think about those times to bring them to life.

It also helps to see that our Abba Father gave these words to Ezekiel; they were not broadcast from a loudspeaker in the heavens. People had to do their job in the Family business to spread the word. By the time we get to Ezekiel, Genesis is in the past. But I cannot help but also see in Ezekiel, "*God said, let there be light,*" speaking the world into existence. A new plan is coming, and we can now see that our Abba Father's words are in our presence. Please pray on that.

Let's expand on his words. Psalm 119:105 NKJV, "*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*" Jeremiah 23:29 NKJV, "*Is not My word like fire?" declares the LORD, "and like a hammer which shatters a rock*?" John 3:34 NKJV, "*For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure."*

Hebrews 4:12 NKJV, "*For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*" Matthew 4:4 NKJV, "*But he answered, "It is written, "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God*."

John 6:63 NKJV, "*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.*" That is an amazing verse and why I moved out of ELB and into our Abba Father's world. It is also why I disdain man's words in doctrine and creeds. The idea of a man's words that replace the Scripture makes me cringe.

That passage also illustrates how the Holy Three work as a team. Our Abba Father creates his words, Jesus translates them into human language, and the Holy Spirit plants them in us when heard, read, or planted directly. But our GCS still has to choose them. That is what my heart has knitted together from the Scripture for me, the engineer.

I am not writing a doctrine here and telling you to follow it. I am showing you where the Holy Spirit has led me. Talk to him and see where you end up in your understanding. Please don't just read the words in the Scripture to recite them; they are "spirit and life."

Please spend some time in the above verses before continuing. The words of the LORD are his everything. They are Yahweh's words. His words brought everything into existence, and his words are the pathway from this life into his life.

#### The Word

We are still bridging the Old and New with the pre-incarnate Jesus. Look at Revelation 19:13 NKJV, "*He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.*" That is Jesus, as also seen in John 1:1 NKJV, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" John 1:1 means the same as Ephesians 4, "*one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.*"

Let's look at Genesis 15:1-8 NKJV, "*After these things* (Abram rescues Lot) *the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." Previously, we saw the Angel of the LORD coming to Abram. This time, "the word of the LORD came to Abram . .* ." That scene is the only occurrence of the Hebrew word "bam-maḥăzeh," translated as "vision." The "maḥăzeh" means "vision," and the "bam" makes it unique in that the vision is not in our mind like all the other "maḥăzeh" visions; it is outside the body, suggesting more than spoken words in play. (A side note, that verse is the origin of the word "bam." Such as, I was standing there, and "bam," they knocked me over.)

Keep going in Genesis 15 NKJV, "*But Abram said, "Lord God* (Lord is Adonai, Master) *what will You give me, seeing I go childless . . . ?*" The "word of the LORD" is talking to Abram, but who does Abram believe Abram is talking to? The same being as before, his God. Abram believes he is seeing Yahweh, but that is not possible.

We can see the words in the Scripture that describe two versions of the visitor, but Abram can't distinguish them. We should always bring the Scripture to life through the subject's eyes, what we see as the spectator, and what it means to our relationship with our Abba Father. We are again seeing the events of the time cloaked with a message to us in the future. We are establishing pre-incarnate Jesus as fully active in the Old Testament.

Keep going, Genesis 15:4-5, "*And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir . . . Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.* . . ." (side note, it's day time). There is no doubt, the "word of the LORD" is in person and takes Abram outside. But Abram is only aware of his God. Yahweh.

The word of the LORD "coming" and Yahweh speaking through him matches the Angel of the LORD. That is because the "word of the LORD came" is the same being, the pre-incarnate Jesus. In the above verse, he is the shield and reward for Abraham. I have yet to discover how each version was selected but working on it. Our point here is to bring it to life.

#### Samuel

Moses turned over the reins to Joshua, and after Joshua died, Israel worshipped other gods, and our Abba Father punished them with other nations. That would have been through the bene elohiym, the sons of God, assigned to the other nations. Our Abba Father sent the Judges to rescue Israel when they cried out to him. The last Judge before the King period was the profit, Samuel.

Look at 1 Samuel 3:1 NKJV, "*Now the boy Samuel ministered to the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation.*" 1 Samuel 3:10, "*Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears.*" 1 Samuel 3:21 NKJV, "*Then the LORD appeared again in Shiloh. For the LORD revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD*."

Verse 1 Samuel 3:21 is clear about our Abba Father appearing through "the word of the LORD. 1 Samuel 15:10-11 NKJV, "*Now the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, "I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments.*" Our Abba Father’s words were delivered by the pre-incarnate Jesus.

Look at 2 Samuel 7:4-5 NKJV, "*But it happened that night that the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, "Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: "Would you build a house for Me to dwell in*?" Again we see Yahweh speaking through the word of the LORD and making a request to Nathan. Nathan is a prophet in the time of David and Solomon.

Look at 2 Samuel 22:31 NKJV. David is praising our Abba Father in his song, "*As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.*" In proper grammar, the last "He" and "Him" refer to the "word of the LORD." But David does not know the difference between the LORD and the word. I see the majesty of our Abba Father here with one meaning for David and one for those who come after Jesus.

That is what I love about "the word" in the Old Testament. Every time I see it, I think of Jesus first, then sort it out. Seeing Jesus at work in the Old Testament is incredible beyond words for me and my relationship with our Abba Father. Now ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and search him out; I predict your faith will grow dramatically.

#### Jeremiah

The word of the LORD worked closely with most of the prophets, major and minor. The exceptions are Amos, Obadiah, and Nahum, which feature, “thus says the LORD.” Let’s take a look at one prophet, Jeremiah. Jeremiah experiences the “word of the LORD,” who comes to him, talks, and touches him. The others are similar.

It is easy to understand a General making an order and a Colonel delivering it as the order of the General. We can see the difference, but nothing strange happens in Jeremiah’s mind. A careful reading shows “the word of the LORD came,” but all Jeremiah sees and hears is the LORD, or we would expect Jeremiah would have said something about it. The “word of the LORD” delivers the words of the LORD to the people.

Jeremiah 1:1-5, “*The words of Jeremiah . . . to whom the word of the LORD came . . . Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.*” (The “word of the LORD came” and talked to Jeremiah.)

Jeremiah 1:6-8, “*Then said I: “Ah, Lord God*! (Adonai God, my Master, Jeremiah talking) *Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.*” *But the LORD said to me: “Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’ For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces, For I am with you to deliver you,” says the LORD.*”

Jeremiah 1:9-10, “*Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: “Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, To root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant.*” (Jeremiah believes Yahweh is touching him, but that is impossible.)

Jeremiah 1:11-12, “*Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, “Jeremiah, what do you see?” And I said, “I see a branch of an almond tree.” Then the LORD said to me, “You have seen well, for I am ready to perform My word.*” (First the word of the LORD, then the LORD, the same one in Jeremiah’s mind.)

### The Archangel Michael

I placed this message here because I see Michael as the third reference to pre-incarnate Jesus in the Old Testament. It is what I see, and I'm not concerned that others may not; it is my relationship. I encourage you to make yours.

Look at Daniel 10:11-13 NKJV, "*Then he* (angel Gabriel) *said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel . . . I have come because of your words* (Daniel's prayer). *But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.*"

Gabriel was with Persia's kings, but the "prince of Persia" held him up. The prince of Persia would be one of the bene elohiym (sons of God) put in charge after the Tower of Babel. Michael is presented as one of the "chief princes." That appears to be a smoke screen of his real identity.

Daniel 10:20-22, "*Then he* (Gabriel) *said, "And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia . . . But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth.* *(No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince).*" Only Michael defends Gabriel against the other nation's princes. Also, notice the reference to Michael as "Daniel's prince." Remember, our Abba Father kept Israel for "his portion" at the Tower of Babel. I do not see him working with anyone else at this high level of spirit warfare with Israel except pre-incarnate Jesus. Keep going.

Daniel 12:1, "*At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered. Everyone who is found written in the book*."

That is the end time and must be Jesus. The Scripture describes Michael as the "great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people," which is Israel. Hebrews 1:3, "*when He* (Jesus) *had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*" When Jesus returned to Heaven, he sat down on the throne. When he started the end time, he stood up to go to work. (We will see that in S6 with Daniel.) That is strong evidence that Michael is the pre-incarnate Jesus.

Jude 9, "*But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you*." That is one of only two references to an archangel in the Scripture. It is also the only four words uttered by Michael.

But why is anyone fighting with the devil over the body of Moses? Moses killed a person, and that sin was never atoned for, so the devil has a valid claim. But in Mathew 17, we see Jesus transfigured, and Moses was there. Our Abba Father and Jesus are the only two who give life, so when Michael says, "The Lord rebuke you," he is pre-incarnate Jesus talking, but the Scripture can't reveal it in real-time.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, "*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God*." John 5:25-29, "*Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth.*"

The name Michael means "who is like God." That is another reveal of Michael as pre-incarnate Jesus. There is simply no room in the Scripture for a "Jesus light" that does the things Michael does.

## S4M3: The Glory of our Abba Father

### Let Us Pray

This chapter requires a prayer because we are "walking on hallowed ground." Let us pray. "Abba Father, I believe in you. I believe in your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, and your Holy Spirit. "The heavens declare your glory, and the sky above proclaims your handiwork" (Psalm 19:1 NKJV). "Please, show me Your glory" (Moses in Ex 33:18 NKJV). Abba Father, please fill me with your presence and give me the strength to glorify you with my life. "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are your children, and if children, then heirs—heirs of you, Abba Father and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom 8:18 NKJV).

"I ask that you, our glorious Father, may give me the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that I may know you better. I pray that the eyes of my heart may be enlightened in order that I may know the hope to which you called me, the riches of my glorious inheritance in your holy people" (Eph 1:17-18 NKJV). In your name I pray, Amen." (Notice how the Scripture makes for great prayers. You cannot possibly do better than our Abba Father's words; use them more often in prayer.)

### I**ntroduction**

The centers of traditional teaching are our Abba Father's love, being saved, and his promises to us. S7M1 expands on the covenant of redemption (being saved); it is not just a promise. I offer that every aspect of our Abba Father is contained and reflected in his glory, not just his love and promises. His glory reflects his full majesty; a significant part of his glory is his presence in our lives. Please pray on that.

The relationship focus with our Abba Father is so important. We cannot have a personal relationship with anyone only in our brain; it must also be in our GCS heart. But ELB leads us to salvation, focusing on ourselves and his promises, which minimizes the sanctification process and our relationship.

ELB includes our Abba Father in our lives, but not in the full context of his glory. Primarily just as "the God." Our Abba Father's "glory" is the missing element of weak faith. ELB tells us that the full glory of God is beyond our comprehension. I believe just the opposite.

The Scripture paints a beautiful picture when we embrace the supernatural world. Our Abba Father created believers to understand it enough to relate to it. As believers, our GCS is only complete with our connection to our Abba Father through the Holy Spirit, who will teach us all things, and Jesus.

Our Abba Father's glory is infinite. Glory is one of the few English words that work better for us than the ancient word, which means "heavy." Let's review the dictionary meanings of glory: "Praise, exaltation and honor, something worthy of praise, exaltation, and honor."[[1]](#endnote-1)

Consider David speaking in Psalm 106:19-20 NKJV, "*They made a calf in Horeb, And worshiped the molded image. Thus they changed their glory Into the image of an ox that eats grass. They forgot God their Savior* . . ." "Glory" is used above to emphasize the entire nature of our Abba Father, not just his name. I find that profound.

But also notice that "their glory" changed; they were the loser, not our Abba father. The closer we get to our Abba father in our relationship, the more glorious we become. "They forgot God their Savior" because they did not have a relationship with him. Psalm 106 is David speaking. Our Abba Father chose him to be great and show us how to be great. Israel asked for a king and was still looking for one when their Messiah came.

David was not enough because of ELB. And ELB wants us to be still waiting for our Messiah to return. In our relationship with our Abba Father, he is truly here now. Family members are waiting for the new house, we already have our Messiah.

John 11:3-4 NKJV, "*Therefore the sisters* (Martha, Mary) sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick (Lazarus)."*When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.*"

The above verse is profound. Sickness is not unto death; we have an eternal life spirit. ELB wants us to see the sickness. Our Abba Father wants us to see him and the work of Jesus on the cross to reconnect us with our Abba Father for eternity. We need to light up when we see the glory and bask in it. That was not just another day at the office for our Abba Father and Savior.

I have never understood why believers pray so hard to keep our loved ones from being with Jesus. ELB wants us to hold onto this life as tight as we can. When we live in the glory of our Abba Father, we pray in his will and celebrate his answers. As I say often, what is the point of believing in God if you do not want to meet him?

Hebrews 1:3 NKJV, "*He* (Jesus) *is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.*" That is another profound verse. In ELB, we see Jesus in his human form, not the radiance of our Abba Father's glory. Jesus is "the word of God's radiance; he upholds the universe. (Colossians 1:17 ESV, NIV, "*And he is before all things, and in him, all things hold together*." (A close read of Revelation shows that this universe gets re-arranged, not replaced.)

Now let's go to work. Romans 15:7 NKJV, "*Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.*" When we get together in church or related groups, do we receive each other as Christ received us to the "glory of God?" Or do we see other people in ELB who know God? When Jesus said, "love others as I have loved you," he had his glory and radiance on his mind.

### Mt. Sinai

A new era in our Abba Father's plan started when Israel arrived at the base of Mt. Sinai to meet with our Abba Father in Exodus 19. They came from Egypt accompanied by our Abba Father in a cloud and the pre-incarnate Jesus as the Angel of the LORD leading them and protecting them. Our Abba Father accomplished an enormous amount of work in Exodus. He established a constitution and a codified set of laws for a godly nation to love our Abba Father and each other. Our focus here is still our Abba Father's glory and our relationship with him.

At Mt. Sinai, our Abba Father came down from his heavenly home, Mt. Zion. Exodus 19:3-6, "*And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself* (Please pray on "brought you to myself"). *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*"

Have you ever heard a pastor even once include Exodus 19:3-6 when sharing our Abba Father's promises? That is the covenant I refer to that accompanies the promises. But no worry, now you can add it yourself; you don't need a middleman. It is a huge faith builder.

Moses took the words back to the people. Exodus 19:8-9 NKJV, "*Then all the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do.*" That is still true for the Body of Christ today, the church, and us. We know how shallow the people's agreement was, and that is similar for too many believers today, typically raised in a church that worshipped but paid little attention to our relationships. My point is not to critique but to inspire my readers to reach higher than worship and move into our relationship.

"*So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever*."

Our Abba Father meeting with Israel on Mt. Sinai is a unique experience in the Old Testament. Up to that point, we have seen our Abba Father working through the pre-incarnate Jesus, talking to individual people. Our Abba Father wanted to present himself personally to the people of Israel before heading to the promised land. He came to the people in a thick cloud to personally talk to them. That strongly suggests that he wants a very personal relationship. Please pray on that.

Exodus 19:16-17 NKJV, "*Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled*." (We just experienced his glory.) A*nd Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain*."

That encounter needed some preparation. Exodus 19:11-12 NKJV. "*For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death.*"

The full glory of our Abba Father is beyond our comprehension. We understand material fire and cannot survive it if we come too close. But in Daniel, our Abba Father protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the material fire, likely by pre-incarnate Jesus as the fourth person in the furnace. Nothing can protect us from our Abba Father's fire. And yet, he made a way to form a relationship with us. He bridges that gap to be in us. And ELB says, move along and focus on life down here.

Moses comes back and delivers what he was told on the mountain, the ten commandments. But Israel is not up to the moment. Exodus20:18-19 NKJV, "*Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. Then they said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die*." The people were afraid of God with them. Today is the opposite; too many have zero fear and too much ELB. Please pray on that.

Exodus20:20 NKJV, "*And Moses said to the people, "Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin." So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was.*" Moses explains that we should be too scared to even think about disobeying our Abba Father.

Here is what too many believers completely miss. We see Abraham, Moses, and David as Old Testament heroes, mighty men of God. And we see ourselves as Israel, the flawed people. Moses is not afraid; he has a close relationship with our Abba Father. After Jesus' work on the cross, we are supposed to be like Moses, Abraham, and David, closely connected to our Abba Father with us in him and him in us through the Holy Spirit; citizens of heaven right now, doing our job in the Family business. Please pray on that.

Exodus 21-23 presents more laws and establishes the altar and sacrifices. In Exodus 24, Moses presents the new material, and the people again say, "*All the words which the Lord has said we will do*" (Exodus 24:3). Now we will see our Abba Father's glory presented as Moses goes back up the mountain.

Exodus 24:9-11, "*Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. But on the nobles of the children of Israel, He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank.*" They all saw our Abba Father's feet under the cloud from afar. He is standing in glory on a surface similar to the throne room.

Exodus 24:12-18 NKJV, "*Then the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them . . . Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. Now the glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days." And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.*"

"*The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights*."

Let's stand back and review the above. The glory of our Abba Father is on display. But is that really the only point? No! The people saw from far away the glory of our Abba Father, not an image with a human form, and not as an Angel, nothing but his glory revealed.

We know the creator of all things is beyond comprehension. But glory is a concept we can understand, and our Abba Father brought it to the people in person. Our Abba Father created a way for us to relate to him. That is where our hearts and mind should be, in our relationship with the full glory of our Abba Father.

During the forty days Moses was with our Abba Father, Exodus 25-31 NKJV, he received the plans for the tabernacle, the priesthood, and the tablets of stone written by our Abba Father's finger. But Moses was gone too long for the people of Israel. Exodus 32 is the golden calf story, and it is an amazing exchange between our Abba Father, Moses, and the people as Moses begs for the people's forgiveness and succeeds.

### The Promised Land

In Chapter 33, our Abba Father tells Moses it is time to leave for the promised land. Exodus 33:1-2 NKJV, "*Then the LORD* (Yahweh) *said to Moses, "Depart and go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt . . . And I will send My Angel before you . . . for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people*."

Our Abba Father is not happy with his people. Exodus 33:9-11 NKJV, "*And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the LORD* (Yahweh) *talked with Moses. All the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the tabernacle door . . . So the LORD* (Yahweh) *spoke to Moses, face to face, as a man speaks to his friend*." The "face to face" in the ancient language is a metaphor for the closeness of their relationship; it can’t be a physical interaction.

Because our Abba Father is upset with his people, he offers only his "presence" to go with them, no more clouds. Exodus 33:14 NKJV, "*And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.*" (His presence is pre-incarnate Jesus, and what does Jesus bring in the New Testament? He brings rest!) Moses answers, Exodus 33:15-17 NKJV, "*Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So the LORD* (Yahweh) *said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name*."

Notice the "grace" in Exodus 33:15-17 NKJV. "Favor" is the more common translation. Moses does not mention forgiveness. Sin is not in this exchange; Moses relates to his Abba Father. But Moses wants it all. He wants the glory! Exodus 33:19 NKJV, "*And he said, "Please, show me Your glory.*" And our Abba Father answers Moses' prayer, "*I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD* (Yahweh) *before you.*" We continue with Exodus 33:20 NKJV, "*But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.*" But our Abba Father goes even farther.

Exodus 33:21-22 NKJV, "*And the LORD* (Yahweh) said, "*Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen.*"

This passage is mysterious. How can our Abba Father send only his goodness and glory in bodily form with a hand, a back, and a face? And we saw feet on the mountain. Up to this point, we have seen mostly fire and clouds. What if, when he says, "My glory passing by," he refers to pre-incarnate Jesus? When he said he would send his "presence" with Moses, that is who he was talking about.

Jesus is our Abba Father's hands on earth. What is different here from the Angel and word of the LORD (Yahweh), which people saw, is that our Abba Father's glory is on display.

That is what I see, led by the Holy Spirit. It may or may not resonate with my readers, scholars, or traditionalists; I claim nothing beyond my heart, but it fits and feels fantastic to bask in our Abba Father's glory. No matter what Exodus 33:21-22 says to you, bask in our Abba Father's glory with the Holy Spirit. The reality is nothing satisfied Israel for very long. But after Jesus, we have all we need to bask continuously in all his glory.

My first read is that we must decide whether we are Moses or just a crowd member. Our Abba Father's relationship with Moses is beautiful, as it is with King David. But what does it say about our relationship with our Abba Father? We have a new covenant with Jesus to be a "Moses," but are we still just "walking in the desert" toward the promised land in heaven?

Do we get up every day and mark time toward the end, or pitch in and gather and help as many as possible to make it to the promised land with us? Are we fighting the enemy or closing our eyes in ELB? Can we see our Abba Father's glory with our eyes closed?

### Abba Father Gets Personal

We now move from the Old Testament to the New Testament. In ELB, we see our life down here with the Holy Three are somewhere "out there." We have no vision of them to see them because ELB is keeping us focused on this world and life to weaken our faith.

I love the divine spirit world of our Abba Father because it helps get our minds off ourselves and what he can do for us and onto our purpose in life, the "why" our Abba Father made us. Growing our relationship with him is always a put-off and a put-on process. Put off the ELB and put on the new in Christ as his new creation.

Paul has an incredible prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21. Please read it very slowly, "*For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*"

Paul covers the entire Family in heaven and earth, the Holy Three, and how it works. Let's take a closer look in v3:20-21, "*Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen*."

Our Abba Father calls us to be his glory in the church. Not just act out, but to be his glory. Jesus' one commandment to love others as he loved us is front and center in believers. But our purpose, why we are here, is to glorify our Abba Father in all we do.

Love is only a part of his glory. We can passively love him even in the context of obedience as the core of godly love. But we cannot glorify him passively; we must engage with others to glorify him. Paul said, 1 Cor 10:31, "*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*"

It all starts with recognizing and experiencing our Abba Father's glory and then realizing that WE, as his imagers are our Abba Father's plan and strategy for non-believers to see and experience his glory and want it for themselves. Please pray on that.

It is not rocket surgery to understand the attributes of our Abba Father's perfection, love, grace, power, magnificence, grandeur, abilities, and wrath against sin. I omitted one attribute in the previous phrase that is also simple. The critical attribute of the glory that ELB wants kept from us is our Abba Father's presence with and in us. Please pray on that because his presence is everywhere and in everything for us to experience (i.e., "see"). But too many "eyes" are closed.

Believing to the fullest means seeing our Abba Father's full glory, not just seeing our redemption. With eyes opened in our faith, we become part of and share in his glory! Keep reading and praying until you burn this message into your heart.

John 1:32-34, "*Then John* (the Baptist) *gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One*."

John 1:32-34 is the starting point in ELB for Jesus, and we must change that understanding. Jesus is everywhere in the Old Testament. Israel could not see him, but we can see him. We now know that pre-incarnate Jesus is everywhere in the Old Testament. The Angel of the LORD/the word of the LORD in the Kingdom of God is the Old Covenant, once we figure it out. Jesus is integral to the Old Testament, bringing our Abba Father to his people. He was just as fully present then as he is now. And then, he was transformed in the New Testament into the incarnate Jesus through a miracle birth. We now have the whole story and should recalibrate our thinking. Jesus is not a sub-entity in the Old Testament that becomes full in the New, he was always fully existent, and he is coming again with our new world.

He was sacrificed and conquered death for us as the next step in the plan. And now our life is about the future, his return, not the past. Please pray on that. Stop living this life looking out the rearview window and get to work. Love is only a part of his glory. We can passively love him even in the context of obedience as the core of godly love. But we cannot glorify him passively, we must engage with others to glorify him. Paul said, *“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31).*

But it all starts with recognizing and experiencing our Abba Father’s glory and then realizing that WE, as his imagers are our Abba Father’s plan and strategy for non-believers to see and experience his glory and want it for themselves. Please pray on that.

It is not rocket surgery to understand the attributes of our Abba Father’s perfection, love, grace, power, magnificence, grandeur, abilities and wrath against sin. I omitted one attribute in the previous phrase that is also not complicated. The key attribute of the glory that ELB wants kept from us is our Abba Father’s presence with and in us. Please pray on that because his presence is everywhere and in everything for us to experience (i.e. “see”). But too many “eyes” are closed.

When opened in our belief, we become part of and share in his glory! Keep reading and praying until this message is burned into your heart. Believing to the fullest means seeing our Abba Father’s full glory, not just seeing our redemption.

John 1:32-34, “*And John* (the Baptist) *bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God*.”

We can now see that the pre-incarnate Jesus is everywhere in the Old Testament. But that thinking is backwards. The Angel of the LORD/the word of the LORD in the Kingdom of God come first in the revelation of him, once we figure it out. He is an integral part of the Old Testament, bringing our Abba Father to his people.

He was just as fully present then as he is now. And then he was transformed in the New Testament into the incarnate Jesus through a miracle birth. We now have the full story and should recalibrate our thinking. He is not a sub-entity in the Old Testament that becomes full in the New, he was always fully existent and he is coming again in our new world. He came to be sacrificed and conquer death for us as the next step in the plan and our life is now about the future, his return, not the past. Stop living this life looking at the rearview window and get to work. Please pray on that.

### Our Vision of our Abba Father

I want a vision of the Kingdom in Heaven to finish our relationship and entirely defeat ELB. Look at 1 Timothy 1:17, "*Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*" That verse sets the stage for the invisible Father, who is "honor and glory." 1 John 4:12, "*No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is made complete in us.*" S6M2 explains the word "abide." That verse reinforces how believers are set apart from others and how connected we are for glorifying our Abba Father.

Romans 1:20, "*For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, his eternal power, and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.*" That verse builds our faith in the context of the invisible nature of our Abba Father. What he made reveals his unique attributes to create, but we still need to figure out what attribute can make a thought about the earth, and it becomes the earth.

John 1:18, "*No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known*." Everything we know about Jesus is the best explanation of our Abba Father we will ever get in the context of our earthly life. Where people miss out is in the context of our heavenly life, where the magnificent glory of our Abba Father radiates out to us. Please pray on that.

### The Throne

There is another view of our Abba Father sitting on his throne in Heaven. Combined with the Cherubim, etc., the images of the throne are very complicated. Stephen received a look into Heaven in Acts 7:55-56, "*But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.*" That verse is straightforward with God and Jesus in the throne room.

Our human nature requires words to have a specific source. In that context, a ruler's words would have a seat of power. The temple was a specific place to worship. That concept is our human nature, and our Abba Father appears to create an image of that structure for us to focus on. Beyond that point, the symbology of the throne room seems unrelated to the throne itself and likely applies to more of his glorious characteristics.

When you pray and worship our Abba Father, praying to his image on his throne will lift your faith and affirm your citizenship in Heaven in this life. I go no further because nothing about it has grown my relationship or faith. When the Holy Spirit leads me into the throne subject, I will add it to a future book. It is much more critical that the Scripture resonates with you than any need to crack its codes.

### Conclusion

Jesus and Peter have an interesting exchange in Mathew 16:15-17, “*He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven.*”

Jesus told Peter the Holy Spirit delivered a divine revelation from “the living God.” Jesus came to earth, and many saw him. But how we relate to him has never been the first reaction for too many believers. I believe the wisdom of our Abba Father is that seeing him in any tangible form would immediately limit him in our hearts and mind. But no image also causes us to minimize him in our lives.

He showed us enough to have a direction to look toward, but we are to “see him” as all that he is, in all his attributes and glory. As I wrote that sentence, I could feel the Holy Spirit saying, “finally!” Please test it for yourselves. We will see what we will see when we are with him, but until then, I have peace and joy in “seeing” the throne image as a “transformer” that connects us to his glory and magnificence through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. In this life, he sees us through Jesus, who acts like Polaroid sunglasses that block the glare of sin and let the pure image through. And only if we believe can we fully “see” him! But what we want even more is to experience him.

John 11:40, “*Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believest, thou shouldest see the glory of God*?” John 14:19-20, “*Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth me no more; but ye behold me: because I live, ye shall live also. In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.*” John 14:21, “*He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him*.”

## S4M4 The Spirit of Yahweh

### Old Testament

The New Testament paints a complete picture of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2 is awe-inspiring and makes it appear that he just arrived. But he is at work the whole time. ELB does not teach that well. The "Spirit of Yahweh" and "my Spirit" are the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, the "Spirit" belongs to Yahweh; he does not act independently. Some see that as evidence that the Holy Spirit is not a third person in the Holy Three. I see it as a strategic revelation that he cannot tell until after the Messiah appears.

There is another distinction in the Old Testament; our Abba Father assigns the Holy Spirit as needed. Israel does not have the privilege of him that believers now have. I attribute that to sin and Jesus' work on the cross. Moses understood the Spirit of Yahweh but could not know his connection to the Messiah. Interestingly, the Holy Three, as we know them were not in the prophecy with the Messiah. Nor is the Messiah seen in Genesis 1.

We see ourselves without our Savior when we understand that the Old Testament describes humans disobeying their Abba father continuously and how that turns out for them. ELB teaches us our Abba Father's forgiveness and the heroes of the Old Testament, but I see the people as we are in our natural state after Eden. The Old Testament studies human nature; please pay more attention to the people and bring them to life. That is the context that reveals the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament is more than history.

Animal life started in Genesis 1:24, "*Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind"; and it was so.*" Human life started with Genesis 2:7 NKJV, *"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being*." Other translations say living soul or person.

Why dust? Why anything? Dust symbolizes the value of this life and its tether to this earth. Being "formed" by our Abba Father is unique and very personal. But the first batch of humans could have gone better. Genesis 6:17, "*And I, behold, I do bring the flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is in the earth shall die*." The breath in Genesis 2:7 is our Abba Father's breath, "nišmaṯ," and the breath in Genesis 6:17 is "rūaḥ," the word most often seen as spirit or wind. Our Abba father created the first man with his breath which created our soul and GCS, which differentiates us from animals. (That is what makes evolution from animal to human impossible.)

Getting from dust to the human body is miracle work. And who did the work? Psalm 104:29-30, "*Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; Thou takest away their breath, they die, And return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created*." Spirit with a capital “S” is the Holy Spirit, sent forth by our Abba Father to get us breathing. Look at Elihu in Job 33:4, "*The Spirit of God hath made me, And the breath of the Almighty giveth me life.*" The Spirit of God (Holy Spirit) and God the Almighty (El Shaddai) are separate beings.

Those passages are essential because they reveal our Abba Father and his Spirit as integral to childbirth. It will grow your faith enormously if you add that to your understanding. ELB only wants us to see the human role in the birthing process and, sometime in the future, maybe involve our Abba Father in our lives. In ELB, the longer it takes, the better. As parents, please remember why our Abba Father chose Abraham.

In Ezekiel, our Abba Father is very upset with Israel. Ezekiel 37:11-14 is the dry bones prophecy, "*Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off. Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Yahweh Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am Yahweh, when I have opened your graves, and caused you to come up out of your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live*."

In Ezekiel, the bones of Israel are being brought back to a new life with the Spirit of the LORD, not birthing new people. Hopefully, you see the metaphor. Ezekiel affirms Genesis that the Spirit of the LORD is integral to the gift of life from our Abba Father. Just as our Abba Father cannot reveal who the Messiah is to Israel, he can't be too explicit about his Spirit until Jesus arrives. I push back on polytheism as a rationale for the 3-in-1 doctrine because our Abba Father went to great trouble to camouflage the Holy Three until he was ready. Polytheism related to the Holy Three makes no sense.

Let's go back to Genesis 1:1-2: "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*"

The Scripture opens with Elohiym and the Spirit of Elohiym, identified and present as two separate spirits. I see a process in the Scripture in which the Elohiym speaks, and the Spirit of God Elohiym moves atoms and molecules as needed for the commands to be manifested. Jesus is in the middle of the process of bringing the words to life. But is the Spirit of God simply a conduit or a source of energy, and does he have free will?

The Spirit of Yahweh has identifiable functions he performs in the Scripture, which we explore, and S4M5 expands on our relationship with the Spirit of Yahweh as the Holy Spirit. The most critical function of the Spirit of Yahweh is his role in life itself.

### Delivering the Words of the LORD

Most believers do not have a mental image of our Abba Father speaking to his people in the Old Testament. Hopefully, my readers now see the pre-incarnate Jesus walking the earth in the Old Testament. After Jesus' work on the cross with the Holy Spirit in us, we have a direct communication channel with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

But in reading the Old Testament, we read the words of the conversations with our Abba Father and do not bring the exchange to life with the Holy Spirit. Why? Because ELB is afraid of the supernatural world in teaching. I have used the analogy that the Spirit of Yahweh is like our Abba Father's cell phone company. No matter where we are in the world, he dials our number, and with billions of people, only one phone will ring. And no matter where we are in the world, when we dial "\*2," headquarters answers. That is one job of the Holy Spirit.

Let's see what the Scripture says. Deuteronomy 30:11-14, "*For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it . . . But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.*"

The Spirit of Yahweh delivers the words of our Abba Father into our hearts and minds. The Angel of Yahweh, pre-incarnate Jesus, did very specific things. The Spirit of Yahweh is more continuous in presence. Look at 2 Samuel 23:2, David speaking. "*The Spirit of Yahweh spake by me, And his word was upon my tongue.*" Look at Isaiah 59:21, "*And as for me, this is my covenant with them, saith Yahweh: my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith Yahweh, from henceforth and for ever.*"

### Indwelling

Look at Numbers 27:15-19, "*And Moses spake unto Yahweh, saying, Let Yahweh, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, who may go out before them, and who may come in before them, and who may lead them out, and who may bring them in; that the congregation of Yahweh be not as sheep which have no shepherd. And Yahweh said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thy hand upon him; and set him before Eleazar, the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight.*"

Here we see the Spirit of the LORD indwelling in Joshua to facilitate our Abba Father's plan. Moses knows our Abba Father is with him but does not know the whole picture as we do. Joshua is Moses's successor, and he gives us a view behind the curtain of how our Abba Father and the Holy Spirit work as a team.

Numbers 11:16-7, "*And Yahweh said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tent of meeting, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the Spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone*."

Look at Judges 3:9-10, “*our Abba Father had been punishing Israel for eight years, "And when the children of Israel cried unto Yahweh, Yahweh raised up a saviour to the children of Israel, who saved them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. And the Spirit of Yahweh came upon him, and he judged Israel; and he went out to war, and Yahweh delivered Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand: and his hand prevailed against Cushan-rishathaim*."

Haggai 2:4-5, "*Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith Yahweh; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith Yahweh, and work: for I am with you, saith Yahweh of hosts, according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, and my Spirit abode among you: fear ye not.*"

That is a remarkable passage. We saw the Angel of Yahweh with Moses in Exodus, and here we see the Spirit of Yahweh as the implementor of our Abba Father's words and commands through the Angel of Yahweh on the journey. Both are there!

Deuteronomy 6:6-15, "*And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.*"

That passage does not mention the Spirit of Yahweh, but you now know that is how life works. There is much to learn about the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. Please pray on that.

Judges 6:34, "*But the Spirit of Yahweh came upon Gideon; and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered together after him*." Psalm 143:10, "*Thou hast beset me behind and before, And laid thy hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence*?" Psalm 51:11-12, "*Cast me not away from thy presence; And take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; And uphold me with a willing spirit.*" Psalm 139:5-7, "*But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it. Where can I go from Your Spirit*?"

Isaiah 63:9-14 NKJV, "*In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the Angel of His Presence saved them* (pre-incarnate Jesus); *In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old. But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit, So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, And He fought against them. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying: "Where is He who brought them up out of the sea With the shepherd of His flock? Where is He who put His Holy Spirit within them, Who led them by the right hand of Moses* . . ."

That passage is another example of the Spirit and the Angel of Yahweh together in an experience other verses omit the Spirit. The "His Holy Spirit," in this case, is "El ruah," not "the Holy Spirit," as referenced in the New Testament. Ezekiel 36:27, *And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them.*"

Zechariah 12:10, "*And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*"

The NKJV adds the capital letters, "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn."

## S4M5: The Holy Spirit

### He Arrives

The Holy Spirit is turned loose in the New Testament. It happened in Acts 2, and it was impressive. Acts 2:1-4, "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues (glossa), as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues (dialekto), as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Don't let the symbols distract you; they are simple. We have all looked at campfires and seen the "tongues of fire" dance around. What is in heaven? Our Abba Father. What is his characteristic? Fire. A sound of a mighty wind filled the house. What is his wind? The Spirit. We see the presence of our Abba Father through the Holy Spirit blasting into the room and filling the disciples with power.

Speaking with other tongues is different languages, not the "speaking in tongues" we do not understand. We can tell by the Greek words used. The crowd spoke languages from around the world to celebrate the Jewish Pentecost. The disciples also received miracle power to heal and drive out demons. Contrast that arrival with the dove image ascending to Jesus. The difference might be due to the amount of work needed by humans.

The Holy Spirit is the power and doer of our Abba Father's manifestation. The Greek word for normal wind, breath, and spirit is "ruach," used throughout the New Testament. But the word used here is "pnoēs," and its only other appearance is Acts 17:25, "*Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath* (pnoēs), *and all things.*" The word "pnoēs" is a blast of breath or wind. A powerful, life-giving breath that gives all things. That is what happened in Acts 2.

Not celebrating that Pentecost event with equal enthusiasm to Paschal Sunday (Easter) is theological malpractice. John 14:12, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.*" Jesus said we would do greater things with the Holy Spirit than with him. Why? Because after ascending, Jesus is about his return. This life is us and the Holy Spirit guiding and teaching us, yet we barely acknowledge him. We added a Pentecost celebration to our church calendar, and the results have been amazing. You do not need the church to celebrate it; invite some friends. S7M10 dives into worship celebrations.

Acts 2:1-4 is about the disciples and their special powers needed to continue building the community and creating the New Testament. Many believers discount the above verses because it doesn't happen to us. That is not what happens to us. Our Abba Father never intended it. That experience was as unique as the Holy Spirit coming to Jesus.

Now let's look at Acts 2:38-39, Peter's first sermon, "*Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.*" Acts 2:41, "*Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.*"

Peter's sermon started the church movement with Jesus ascended. And as usual, Peter got it half right. He was just the first; preachers have been getting it half right ever since. And it all serves our Abba Father's purpose; he will make it work for the good. Mathew 28:18, "*Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*" Peter did not do that. Peter did not "get it" until his encounter with Cornelius, and I find that profound.

Acts 2:36, "*Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do*?" Guilting people into becoming believers is still common today. When the Holy Spirit came to Peter, my question is, did he listen? Was he tuned in? Did he know how his GCS worked? Only you and the Holy Spirit can answer for you.

Acts 10:9-14, "*Now on the morrow, as they were on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour: and he became hungry, and desired to eat: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance; and he beholdeth the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth: wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts and creeping things of the earth and birds of the heaven*.”

“*And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean. And a voice came unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, make not thou common. And this was done thrice: and straightway the vessel was received up into heaven.*" We have to love Peter, "*not so Lord* . . . " Our Abba Father sure loves him. Please pray on that.

Acts 10:19-20, "And while Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. But arise, and get thee down, and go with them, nothing doubting: for I have sent them."

Acts 10:44-48, "*While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word. And they of the circumcision that believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*" Notice the Holy Spirit was already in them. Water baptism has nothing to do directly with the Holy Spirit.

Our Abba Father brought Paul in to make the Scripture right, and there was tension with Peter. Romans 10 holds our redemption, not Peter on that Pentecost Day. Peter started it, and the Scripture grew from there. Peter's message in Acts 2 may be responsible for much of the weak faith in believers. I see that as analogous to "love your neighbor as yourself" and "love others as Jesus loved." Many messages get better as the plan moves forward.

### The body

What I share now is an enormous faith builder with the Holy Spirit. Let's look very slowly at 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, "*For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.*"

The Holy Spirit is what connects us all into one body. Galatians 3:26-27, "*For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as* were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."

Let's look at Jesus' prayer in John 27:20-23, "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word (receiving Jesus); *that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me.*"

That passage tears my eyes because what it describes is so beautiful. If only we could live that way. You can. The next time you go to church, feel a little closer to your brothers and sisters in the Family of our Abba Father around you.

### The Samaritans

This chapter of Acts often leads to confusion. Look at Acts 8:5-8, "*Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.*"

Notice Phillip's power with his infilling, "*and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed*." Remember that the Jews hated Samaria and would not even pass through it to travel between Jerusalem and Nazareth. But part of Jesus' last words were Acts 1:8, "*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*"

Acts 8:14-17, "*Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.*"

People read this and see a different process for the Holy Spirit in the Samaria setting. Redemption and the baptism in the Holy Spirit were separated, and Peter and John prayed him in. But that is a unique situation. We cannot break the promise of the Holy Spirit, so we look for an answer.

If Phillip only goes and preaches, the Jerusalem church will still be at odds with the Samarians. But with Peter and John witnessing that the Holy Spirit even came to the Samarians with their help, the church, the body of Christ, becomes unified at the human level as well when Peter and John bring the news back to Jerusalem. In this case, the Holy Spirit waited to help create unity in the body. Acts 8:45, "*So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.*"

### The Gentiles

Acts 10 is the story of Peter and Cornelius, a Roman soldier and gentile. Please stop and read Acts 10 because Peter's understanding is finally completed and is an essential lesson for reaching the gentiles. Acts 10:43-48, "*To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of si*ns." While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God."

"Then Peter answered, "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days." Notice the Holy Spirit was already in them. No direct connection exists between the Holy Spirit and water baptism. Baptism in the Holy Spirit is discussed in S5M3.

Acts 15:7-8, "*And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us* . . ." That event led to the Jerusalem Council to decide on the issue of circumcision after Christ.

Paul found a small group in Corinth who were baptized by John the Baptist. That event is also unique and does not change the promise of the Holy Spirit with redemption. Acts 19:4-7, "*Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. Now the men were about twelve in all.*"

Laying on hands has no definition in the Scripture except fellowship with believers and fellowship with the body. Typically, Paul or others would put their hand on a person and hear their expression of belief and repentance, which then triggers the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The laying of hands has no direct effect on the Holy Spirit. Or healing, for that matter.

When Jesus gave his Sermon on the Mount, Mathew 5-7, all those gathered around heard him. What about the rest of the world? They heard nothing. But after Pentecost, Jesus in us and us in him through the Holy Spirit and everywhere his disciples go, that would now be us; Jesus and the Holy Spirit can be there to speak as well.

The most important thing to see in Acts is how much the early church depended on the Holy Spirit, spoke about the Holy Spirit, and interacted with the Holy Spirit. Given the troubled nature of the times, it is easy to understand why. Without the Holy Spirit, there would be no Christianity, which is an essential thought. And ELB does all it can to distract us from the Holy Spirit.

Look at the apostle Peter who messed up everything he touched before Pentecost and the Holy Spirit. He did not get it until the Cornelius story in Acts 10. A lot of work went into Peter. Our Abba Father chose a difficult man and brought him to glory to launch the church and the Family.

What baffles me the most in ELB is the minimalization of John 14:12, "*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.*" Too many people worship Jesus like he might be jealous if we get too close to the Holy Spirit.

But Paul defines our real relationship so beautifully in his benediction in 2 Cor 13:14, "*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.*" The word translated as communion is "koi-nonia," which is also translated elsewhere as fellowship, partnership, or intimacy. Paul says, "*may the fellowship, partnership, and intimacy of the Holy Spirit be with you*."

How many believers live life in ELB of daily routine with maybe some happiness and God is a concept that seems right, but the daily routine takes a lot of time? The book of Acts is the go-to book for the Holy Spirit. It is a book to know inside and out, up and down, and over and under.

### Baptized or Filled?

First, forget about the Holy Spirit and the water baptism. There is zero connection to the symbol of our cleansing and resurrection and how the Holy Spirit arrives in us. Two other meanings of the Greek "baptismo" are "to immerse" and "overwhelm," which is closer to reality but not enough to understand fully.

Jesus said in Acts 1:4-5,*"and, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence.*" Our understanding starts with "the promise of the Father." Mathew 3:11. *"I* (John the Baptist) *baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*"

Those verses say "baptize" in or with the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist said Jesus would "baptize" them in the Holy Spirit and fire, which is what happened to the disciples in Acts 2. I associate baptism in the Holy Spirit with the promise, Jesus, and the other definitions, immerse and overwhelm.

But we are not involved in the gift-giving of the Holy Spirit. It is an integral part of the gift of redemption. John 14:26, "*But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.*" We are involved in our awareness of the Holy Spirit and how to work with him, especially in our time spent in the Word. And ELB diminishes our faith and relationships with weak teaching. All our attention belongs on being "filled" with the Holy Spirit whom Jesus said he would send us, promised by the Father. Even at the start in Acts 2:4, we see, "*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit* . . . ."

Let's look at Peter and John with Annas, the high priest, and Caiaphas in Acts 4:7-8, "*And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, By what power, or in what name, have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders .* . ."

Acts 4:31. "*And when they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness." Acts 6:8, "And Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people." Acts 7:55, "But he (Stephen), being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God* . . ."

Acts 9:17, “*So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul* (Apostle Paul), *the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.*"

Let's watch the Holy Spirit work and then open your Holy Bible and read all of Luke 1. Bible study in Luke 1 typically overshadows the Holy Spirit with Jesus and Gabriel, which is unfortunate. Luke 1:39-45, "*And Mary arose in these days and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah; and entered into the house of Zacharias and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.*" (And John the Baptist.)

Switch to the dad, v1:59-68, "*And it came to pass on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, what he would have him called*.”

“*And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, blessing God. And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. And all that heard them laid them up in their heart, saying, What then shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord was with him. And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit* . . ."

Now, let's get practical. S3M1 presents our GCS. The Holy Spirit comes to us and connects us to our Abba Father through Jesus and connects us in the body of Christ, the ecclessia. That is the vertical and the horizontal of the cross. What we do with those connections starts with our free will.

Our GCS heart is like a faith tank with a gauge that reads empty to full. The Holy Spirit can fill the faith tank but not if we fill it with ELB idols. Ego, lust, intoxication, adrenaline, greed, anger, sloth, etc., do not leave room for the Holy Spirit to do his will in us. Remember, Jesus knocks, and we have to open the door, our heart. Revelation 3:20, "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*" Romans 8:9, "*But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*" More than anything, that is what I look for and teach my incarcerated flock Galatians 5:16, "*But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*"

The Holy Spirit typically does not clean out our heart tank idols. We are supposed to do that in our sanctification process. But few understand because ELB focuses so much on our salvation. 1 Corinthians 6:19, "*Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own.*" John 6:63, *"It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life*."

When we repent and receive Christ as our Lord and Savior, we are justified, which means we are declared righteous in the eyes of our Abba Father. But Jesus blocks out the real us, washing our vision clean for our Abba Father. That is my conclusion based on what I see and reconciling it with the Scripture. Luke 11:13, "*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him* (the Father)?"

The "helper" nature of the Holy Spirit gives us the strength we need for our job in the Family. But we have to ask for help, not ask for the Holy Spirit; he is already there. That is the confusion. Please pray on that. Acts 4:31, "*And when they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness.*" Galatians 5:22, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.”

We see the first ecclesia in Acts 2:44-47, "*And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people*."

What about us today? Please pray on that.

### Who is the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit never appears in human form. It is easy not to see him in ELB, a great tragedy of Christianity. Those denominations that believe he is not human enough to be God (Please pray on that) still have all the verses in their Holy Bible, and he still does all those things the Scripture says he does. I am good with that. I am a big fan of the Holy Spirit and see him as what the Scripture says he is, which is fantastic! So let's look at what it says. This subject will help us tune into the Holy Spirit.

**His mind**. Romans 27:28, "*and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose.*" Love our Abba Father and be called to his purpose.

**Free Will**. 1 Corinthians 12:11, "*but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will.*" Many wonder if the Holy Spirit can act on his own. His previous feature, the Mind, "acts to the will of God." This verse, 12:11, follows the list of gifts of the Holy Spirit and reveals the Holy Spirit has free will with his gifts to help the body.

1 Corinthians 12:4-9, "*Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal. For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit: to another faith, in the same Spirit; and to another gifts of healings, in the one Spirit* . . ."

Note the gifts are for the profit of all; the whole body of Christ and his Family. Think back on the first church presented above and their togetherness. That should be the heart of all of us for the body and Family of Christ. Perhaps even our church buildings!

Please read all of chapter 12. I stopped where I did because those apply to us today for sure. The extra miracle gifts given to the apostles appear to have ended with them as their purpose was to get the attention of Israel and complete the New Testament writings. That does not mean the Holy Spirit does not cause us to do things for his purpose in his will. The point is to see that we are individuals, not "cookie-cutter" people. We are the only ones who can find our purpose and call. Please pray on that.

**Leadership**. Galatians 5:16-18, "*I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*" Please read all of Galatians 5, but v5:19-25 are critical to our journey.

"*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law. And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof. If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk*."

**Teacher**. John 14:26, "*But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you*." Parakletos translates as a helper, comforter, and advocate. Another possible choice is "refresher." I can see how the references to the Holy Spirit as a "helper" or "comforter" can lead one to think the Holy Spirit might be a lesser being. Teaching and remembering are not as exciting as creating and resurrecting. But John 16:8 works for me.

**Convicter**. John 16:7-8, "*Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:* . . ." The Holy Spirit makes us aware of our sins, but we miss him if we do not know how he works.

**Our Guide**. John 16: 12-13, "*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come*." The Holy Spirit's "will" applies to his gifts. Otherwise, he is carrying out our Abba Father's plan for us. That clarification helps us better understand our Abba Father, his Son, and the Holy Spirit as the kingdom in one accord.

**Our Comforter**. Acts 9:31, "*So the church throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied*." Please read Acts 9 for the full context of this verse to see the Holy Spirit's work more clearly. It is a real faith builder.

**Our Helper**. Romans 8:24-26, "*For in hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*." We opened this chapter with the next verse, Acts 8:27, "and his mind which follows the will of our Abba Father." As our Helper, the Holy Spirit will help us pray "himself. "

**Our Witness**. Romans 8:15-17, "*For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him*."

Now you know why I use Abba Father. As I write this, I have tears in my eyes; the verses contain a special message for us. We are not alone in this world. Please stop and spend some time on these verses and ask the Holy Spirit to teach you about them.

**God**. Acts 5:3-4, "*But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land . . . How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.*"

Scholars say this exchange establishes the Holy Spirit as God. I agree he is God, but not because of that verse. Father God heard the lie through the Holy Spirit. I see Peter explaining the connection between us, the Holy Spirit, and our Abba Father. But I am not looking for proof like the scholars are. I am looking for faith. The totality of the Holy Spirit and his eternal presence as the implementer of our Abba Father's power defines him. He is likely the actual omnipresence of our Abba Father; the Holy Spirit is everywhere.

Faith does not require a perfect understanding of the Scripture; let the Holy Spirit lead you. Continuing in Acts 5, "Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him."

Many people misunderstand that passage and think our Abba Father punished Ananias. Our Abba Father judges no one in the New Testament; even Judas committed suicide. Everyone has a chance to repent until they die. That passage says, "*Ananias breathed his last.*" A verse can never mean what it never said, and the verse does not mention our Abba Father taking the life of Ananias.

A panic attack makes sense, but Peter's "bedside manor" is not the greatest. Remember Mathew 16:23, "*But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me: for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.*" Jesus did not blame Peter then. Peter's question, "why has Satan filled your heart," blames Ananias. Peter could have prayed with him to drive Satan out and heard Ananias' confession; it might have saved the wife too. It is helpful to learn from Peter what not to do.

I find this passage a compelling argument for the Holy Spirit as God. Mathew 12:31-32, "*Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.*"

### Other Names of the Holy Spirit

Seeing all the names for the Holy Spirit and his integral nature as God is a faith builder. Hebrews 9:14, "*how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God*?" Job 33:4, "*The Spirit of God hath made me, And the breath of the Almighty giveth me life." Psalm 51:12, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; And uphold me with a willing spirit.*" Psalm 143:10, "*Teach me to do thy will; For thou art my God: Thy Spirit is good; Lead me in the land of uprightness*."

Isaiah 11:1-2, "*And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of Yahweh shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Yahweh.*" If there was ever any doubt of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, Isaiah ends it. John 14:16-18, “*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you*.”

Romans 1:3-4, "*concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord*," Luke 1:35, "*And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.*"

### Last Point

Let's look at Luke 1:14-15, "*And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.*" That is John the Baptist, and he received the Holy Spirit in the womb. There is nothing our Abba Father, the Son, nor the Holy Spirit cannot do if they choose to. Please pray on that.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is not miracles, outbursts in tongues, going crazing like King David, etc. It is peaceful; it is gentle; it is keeping the tongue you have under control. It is the fruit Paul described in Galatians 5. That is not to say an extraordinary experience with the Holy Spirit can't be crazy; it just is not the definition of the norm. The primary experience of daily life with the Holy Spirit in you is peace.

### Prayer is Essential to the Holy Spirit

#### Let Us Pray to Receive Christ

The Holy Spirit comes into us when we receive Christ as our Lord and Savior. I pray to receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, to be saved and redeemed. "Beloved Jesus, Lord and Savior, I believe in you. I believe you are the son of God, you came to planet earth, and died on the cross to pay for my sins. I confess to you now, I am a sinner. I ask you know, to forgive me for all the things I have done wrong. I know I have messed up pretty bad. Please help me Lord, come into my heart and show me how to live my life for you. I accept you as my Lord and savior now and forever. In your name I pray, Amen."

#### Let Us Pray for the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is in us as believers and does not leave unless our heart hardens against our Abba Father. But how do we know when a container is full? The answer is simple; a container is truly full once it overflows. Then we can see it. Let us now pray to be filled to overflowing by the Holy Spirit, i.e., use him until our life overflows with his presence. This prayer increases our awareness of his presence and overflow as a believer. It does not mean waking or bringing him back; neither is possible. Again, please repeat after me:

"Holy Spirit, you are God. I praise you because you are holy, and I thank you for dwelling in my heart. Thank you for working in my life. You guided me into redemption, renewed my dead spirit, and opened my eyes to the Truth. Thank you, Holy Spirit.

Help me to see you more clearly – to recognize your movement in my life. Make me more sensitive to you so I can follow you more closely. Still, I know that I am selfish and rebellious. I ask you to help me be obedient and recognize your leadership. I need you, Holy Spirit.

I ask you for your help and comfort today. You know my pain and anxieties very well. Thank you for praying over me. Please help me to rest in your comfort today. Help me to walk in you, the Spirit of God. Grow good fruit in my life. You are the one who produces these in me: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. I cannot live without these things alone; I need you, Holy Spirit. Amen."

# Chapter 5: The Words of our Abba Father

Chapter 5 Messages

S5M1: Words of Redemption

S5M2: Words of Sin

S5M3: Words of Our Relationship

S5M4: the Scary Words

## S5M1: Words of Redemption

### Repentance

In Acts 2:38, Peter tells the crowd to repent. Acts 26:20, "*that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.*" In the old language, repent was a marching order to reverse direction. Our reverse in direction is from sin to "he who is not sin," Jesus Christ. The Christian life begins with receiving Christ as our Lord and Savior and believing he raised from the dead for each of us. We discussed the "justification" that happens at that moment. Our human spirit becomes declared "not guilty" by our Abba Father's grace, and we have promised nothing to him. But that is just the beginning of our life with our Abba Father.

Typically, when someone plans a trip, they look at the destination and plan what they need to get there. Our journey is to our Abba Father. It is lifelong and therefore needs lifelong planning. The first step is a change in direction. Conventional teaching defines repentance as "changing one's way of life as the result of a complete change of thought and attitude regarding sin and righteousness."

Repentance is our first step in the right direction, our "about face" from sin to our Abba Father. Peter tells us that accepting Christ requires us to change direction away from sin. ELB life is a wavering journey regarding sin. Most people do not see typical human behavior like losing our temper, holding grudges, being annoying, greedy, or self-centered, etc., as sins because they cannot quote the law. They are sins because they are not loving, the final law Jesus gave us.

Preaching, study, and the Holy Spirit teach people how to change their minds, thoughts, behaviors, and actions toward our Abba Father and each other, but that is not repentance. Repentance is the significant change we are supposed to make when accepting Christ. When the march commander tells the troops to repent, they reverse and march on. Sanctification is the name for the ongoing change in people's hearts in our lifelong journey. Repentance is the complete change in direction away from sin.

### Redemption

Redemption is a concept that we need to think about more; if we did, ELB would be less of an influence. Conventional preaching focuses on the salvation that comes when we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and that is something we do. Yes, it is a gift we cannot earn, but we must receive it out loud with our lips; Romans 10:15, it does not just happen by itself.

We then follow being saved by becoming more like Jesus, sinning less, and fighting the enemy. That is called the sanctification process, where we put in the work. When we receive Christ, we are justified or washed clean by our Abba Father, but then we have the lifelong work to do in sanctification.

Scripture also tells us that faith comes from our Abba Father, and faithfulness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, but the spotlight is still on us and our actions with it. I love the concept of redemption because no other word captures what our Abba Father did for us, like the word redemption.

Redemption means regaining possession of something by paying for it. We had something, we lost it, and we got it back. Our Abba father created us in paradise; he expelled us and paid for us to return.

I now emphasize the word redemption for salvation in my walk and work with our Abba Father. When I say I am saved, it means I received Christ. When I say I am redeemed, it means my Abba Father paid the price for me to be a member of his Family. Redemption paints the entire picture in one word and puts us in our Abba Father’s world as holy along with him, no longer anchored in ELB.

When I approach a non-believer, I do not ask them if they would like to be saved; I ask them if they would like to be redeemed and adopted into our Abba Father’s Family. Redemption completely changes the narrative of our relationship with our Abba Father; it is not just the binary true-false decision the word “believe” connotes.

As a jail and prison pastor, I spend a great deal of time with people who have messed up their lives severely, and many more have messed up their lives without breaking man’s codified laws or not getting caught. The gift of redemption begins restoration like nothing else.

Also, consider when someone has hurt us very badly. There is a message about forgiveness and finding our agape love for that person (S7M7), but it is still hard to find peace with that person. But when we remember that we are redeemed by our Abba Father when we do not deserve it, and he forgives our trespasses, that releases us and brings us the peace we are looking for. The parable of the unrepentant slave in Matthew 18:21-35 illustrates that. Please pray on it.

### Justification

Hopefully, you all understand by now that being saved means receiving Christ as our Lord and Savior. But what happens after that is a big blur for too many believers, especially new ones. "Just" means to behave morally correct. Our Abba Father was “just” in giving us the law to describe sin. Sinful man is not only "not just" in our Abba father's eyes; he is separated from our Abba Father, who cannot be in the presence of sin. Since it is his world and his plan, only he can fix it. And the good news is, he did!

Jesus' sacrifice on the cross cured our lack of "justness" that we experience when born again. When we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, at that moment, our Abba Father judges our new spirit life and declares it "not guilty," sin free. Our spirit becomes "justified" in his eyes but being "made righteous" is a better translation. Romans 4:5, "*But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness.*" There is another word used, "holy." 1 Peter 1:15-16, "*but like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy*."

Justification is more than being made righteous or holy in our Abba Father's eyes. Romans 5:1, "*Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" People tend to see the "not guilty" or the "pardon" more than the peace with our Abba Father that should come with being born again. "Not guilty" doesn't change us, but being born again should change us completely. Please pray on that.

When we receive Christ, the "not guilty" declaration that comes with it should give us peace of mind, and we should be basking in inner peace as believers. I see many inmates receive Christ and be overwhelmed at the moment. They stay motivated to change their lives with our Abba Father. Too many believers don't see the change because they are not looking for it and struggle needlessly.

Romans 5:2, "*through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*" The Greek in this verse presents "wherein we stand" as a safe harbor or refuge, and the glory of our Abba Father is closer to the word "triumph." With justification, we gain access to our Abba Father in our lives and have hope! Hope to partake in his glory.

Romans 5:3-4, "*And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh stedfastness; and stedfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope.*" That passage is profound. With the access that justification gives us to the full glory of our Abba Father, we not only endure tough times but rejoice in the tough times as well, finding satisfaction with our ability to endure. Please pray on that.

The power of the fleshed-out view of justification or being made righteous opens a new view of our relationship with our Abba Father. As we can see, justification means infinitely more than "being made righteous or holy." It is still up to us in our faith to use the gift in our lives.

### Sanctification

Sanctification is the lifelong process that follows our justification when born again and the missing ingredient in ELB. Scholars identify three phases of sanctification to keep us focused throughout our life. Scholars often leave me uninspired, but in this case, they help.

Born again means our Abba father declares our spirit righteous, holy and justified. Hebrews 10:14, "*For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*." That is "past sanctification" because it has already happened. We also call it "positional sanctification" because it comes from our position in Christ. Acts 26:18 describes Paul's mission, ". . . *to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me.*" The words "sanctified by faith" are past tense.

Philippians 2:12, "*So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear (of the fiery pit) and trembling*." 1 Peter 1:15-16, "*but like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy.*" That is "present sanctification" because it is what we do in and for our earthly life while living. It is "progressive" because we make progress in our lives, constantly working to be more sanctified. We may backslide and catch up again with confession and forgiveness, all in the present.

1 John 3:2-3, "*Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*" That describes "future sanctification" that occurs when Jesus returns. We receive our new, perfect, heaven-worthy body that is free of sin. That is "perfect sanctification" because we become perfect in our sin-free new creation.

### Confession

Confession is a mandatory requirement in present/progressive sanctification. Look at 1 John 1:9, “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*” I want to add one thing to confession and forgiveness that is my own take to grow our faith and relationships. Do not ever ask our Abba Father for forgiveness in confession. That connotes doubt that he might not. I see too often the doubt that needs removed when people ask for forgiveness. Clearly disclose your sins in your confession conversation with our Abba Father and then say, "thank you, Abba Father, for sacrificing your Son to wash me clean in your eyes. I am not worthy, yet you love and are patient with me. Thank you, Abba Father for loving so much." That is what Jesus died for. I also use the analogy that Jesus paid for our sin by putting the money in the bank, and confession is our check. Confession is one of two things that will make the hair on your arms stand up when talking to our Abba Father. (The other is praising him.)

## S5M2: Words of Sin

### Free Will

Everything we do starts with our free will. This life is not worth anything to our Abba Father without it. I doubt this life would be worth much to us, either. In heaven, there is no pain, sorrow, enemy, or ELB. Does that mean the enemy is involved in all pain and sorrow; without him, does that all go away?

The knowledge of all things good to evil is in our hearts today, thanks to Adam and Eve. With our free will, we can dishonor our Abba Father on our own in this life. Heaven is different; Isaiah 65:17, "*For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.*" Until then, our Abba Father calls us to glorify him in this life.

Free will is the most annoying gift of our Abba Father possible. He allows us to destroy our lives with our own decisions and actions in an ELB world. That was Israel’s choice and the Old Testament is full of lessons believers ignore today. Please learn those lessons. He also gave us our GCS to make decisions and one effortless, fantastic choice: to live in a relationship with him in his Family. Please pray on that.

When we look at our Abba Father's plan in the Scripture, we first see the law established to help us make godly decisions. Then the priests were added to expand on the application of the law. The law is not there to punish us for bad choices; the law is there to help us know and make godly choices. The law was all our Abba Father had to work with at the time. He paid a colossal price to give us free will (evil), and he had no other choice but the law to start.

I want to limit our work here to the human thoughts and human nature that form our decisions because that is how ELB influences our lives so completely if we let it. Free will is the choice between "feel good at the moment" or 'feel the joy, peace, and glory for eternity" our Abba Father provides. In ELB, the choice is to feel good at the moment.

Just because our Abba Father knows everything does not mean he does everything. Free will is the very definition of intelligent life, both material, and divine spirit life. It has no meaning if we do not actually have it. Our GCS is there to make choices, and free will puts 100% of the final responsibility for our choices on ourselves. Our Abba Father did not accept the blame game with Adam and Eve in Eden.

My focus on our relationship with our Abba Father is that we get a real taste of the joy, peace, and glory in this life that our GCS longs for. That longing is built into our hearts to seek our Abba Father, and if not filled, it will quickly turn to sex, drugs, and rock 'n roll because it really wants to be filled. My number one tool in defeating addiction is teaching people to see that the desire they are feeding is our Abba Father calling them, and the enemy is saying, "no, the drug is better." We know the enemy lies. Please pray on that; I see it work wonders.

Look at Joshua 24:14-15, "*Now therefore fear Yahweh, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt; and serve ye Yahweh. And if it seem evil unto you to serve Yahweh, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh.*"

And the people answered, Joshua 24:16-17, "*And the people answered and said, Far be it from us that we should forsake Yahweh, to serve other gods; for Yahweh our God, he it is that brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and that did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the peoples through the midst of whom we passed.*"

Joshua 24:14-15 has an interesting verse, "*And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord* . . ." Joshua is leading the Entrance Generation into the Promised Land with the giants. Israel must kill all the giants and their families, the embodiment of evil, as the flood killed all the giants' predecessors. (That is evidence they were not fully human, more were born, but Noah had no giant blood.)

Israel chose not to destroy all the giants in the beginning, and it shaped the world to come. Our Abba father burdened Israel with killing the giants to serve our Abba Father. Was that evil? Please step out of the intellectual here and shape your answer in your heart with prayer and the Holy Spirit. No human can answer it for you.

In this life, people question taking life as ever being just except in self-defense. I shape my answer by what glorifies our Abba Father. He is the judge and punisher, and I am quite content to leave taking life in his hands.

Back to Joshua, Israel chose in free will the God who did something for them to feel good. He freed them from the awful bondage and kept them safe, which feels good in comparison. Israel and our Abba Father use that as the reason for their responses going forward. Our Abba Father repeatedly says, "I am the God who brought you out of slavery." When life challenged Israel, they cried, "you are the God that got us into this." That was an amazing relationship that revealed human nature.

None of our Abba Father's miracles, promises, or forgiveness ever phased Israel. All our Abba Father's glory never phased Israel; that has always shocked me. But it showed me human nature. It also shaped my preaching to find verses that feel good. Not the ones that tell us how to feel good in our mind, but feel good in our GCS, the verses about our relationship with our Abba Father.

The emphasis placed on our Abba Father's promises to make this life feel better in our mind fall short in me. The Scripture is not about Jesus visiting 2,000 years ago but about his future return to stay. That is what we need to focus this life on. Please pray on that.

Look at Deuteronomy 28:1-4, "*And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of Yahweh thy God, to observe to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that Yahweh thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth: and all these blessings shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of Yahweh thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy beasts, the increase of thy cattle, and the young of thy flock*."

Deuteronomy 28 is a covenant. We do our part, then our Abba Father does his part, and we choose in free will what we do. And it did not work. Look at Deuteronomy 30:15-16, "*our Abba Father raised the stakes, "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love Yahweh thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, that thou mayest live and multiply, and that Yahweh thy God may bless thee in the land whither thou goest in to possess it.*" It still did not work.

Look at the New Testament. Romans 8:28-31, "*And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose. For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren: and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us*?"

That verse implies we are pre-chosen to believe or not believe, which contradicts free will but look again. The key phrase is "For whom He foreknew," which means he knew who would receive him. That is his "all-knowing" attribute on display. Then, for those he knew would, in free will, receive him, he states his promises.

We cannot discern that, so we must keep doing our job. But something is wrong in this life because so much of the Scripture does not inspire us as it should. And the answer is the cunning, talking nahas and his army in ELB keeping us focused on our mind and this life. That is why we must escape ELB, not just be redeemed. Most of my readers have chosen to receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior in this ELB world. This book helps believers escape ELB and experience the full joy, peace, and glory our Abba Father delivers. Please pray on that.

Chapter 6 takes a deep dive into Daniel, and it is a life changer. Daniel 9:24, Gabriel is speaking to Daniel, ". . . "*Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy*."

Daniel wrote that several hundred years before it happened. Focus on these three words, sin, transgression, and iniquity. ELB conflates the three into one word, sin. Sin means "missing the mark," and ELB hopes that a simplistic reaction is all we have. After all, our Abba Father forgives us for all three. But transgression and iniquity are too deep in meaning to our faith to leave hanging.

### Law

Let's jump to Moses and the law, more lessons on behavior knowledge. Our confusion about choosing the law in the Old Testament or Jesus in the New Testament weakens our faith. The law is knowledge, period. But, its first purpose was to express love to our Abba Father. Obedience to the law is love to our Abba Father. Jesus converted the law into the obedient love that the law substituted for in the Old Testament. Jesus is the law, but the Old Testament could not reveal him.

Mathew 5:17-18, "*Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.*"

"All is fulfilled" is when Jesus returns, and life becomes love. This life is not about Jesus' business trip over 2,000 years ago but about his return for eternity.

Stop and think; if we love our neighbors, we do not kill them, steal from them, covet their stuff, sleep with their spouse, or gossip about them. Add love to our father and mother and love our Abba Father, and we covered the ten commandments. All converted to love; it is that simple.

Our Abba Father gave his first law in Eden, Genesis 2:17, *"but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" Adam and the woman revealed their sinful nature when they succumbed to temptation and ate from that one tree.

Remember, the sin came before ingesting the fruit. Man's sinful nature comes from the inborn free will, which picked the fruit, brought it to the mouth, and told the jaw to bite down and swallow. That was the sin. The sin did not come in with the fruit.

Now, back it up, take away our Abba Father's command to not eat the one fruit and replay the scene without it. The nahas offers the woman the fruit, and then our Abba Father comes in and punishes them. Is that fair and just of him? To punish them for something they did not know? Of course not. Now we see two purposes of the law; to know what sin is and justify punishment. The law's primary purpose in Scripture is to teach us what sin is, to make us aware of the very thing keeping us from our Abba Father. And in turn, it makes his punishment righteous and just.

Please make sure you "get" that paragraph. We view the law in the Scripture in ELB as the same as in our justice system, a standalone thing that we live with, and the law stands in its own words. With our Abba Father, he and the law are inseparable. Our Abba Father is the law, and Jesus is the law. Please pray on that. When we break the speed limit while driving, is our state governor insulted? He doesn't even know. When we sin, we sin against our Abba Father, not his law.

Romans 7:7, "*What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*"

We went from one law in Eden to ten laws with Moses, and then Leviticus and Deuteronomy brought the Torah, Pentateuch, or the first five books, up to 613 expressed laws. The more they wrote, the more Israel sinned. But Israel always knew what the sin was. Also, file for future use that the surrounding nations did not know what sin was. They sacrificed to pay their pagan gods for favor.

It is common to ask, do the Old Testament laws apply to us today? Jesus' Sermon on the Mount confuses us in Mathew 5:17-18 above.

The bottom line is, "does the law apply" is the wrong question. The law is there to teach us what sin is. The question is not does the law apply to us; it is how do we stop sinning because Jesus expanded the law in Mathew 5:21, "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire."

Mathew 27-28 adds, "*Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."*

Jesus is teaching the Sermon on the Mount, the new covenant with Jesus to be like him. His plan is for us to become more like him, in other words, loving all people. Jesus brought us one commandment, "love others as he loved us" (John 13:34). If you are not loving, you are sinning, period. Everything in the world that is not "love" cannot be codified into law, but love is the universal solvent. Please pray on that.

### Transgression

Cain murdered his brother back in Genesis. Genesis 4:5-7 NKJV, "*And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.*" Our GCS with the Holy Spirit is how we rule over sin.

Genesis leaves us to understand that Cain's emotions got the better of him. Look at 1 John 3:8, "*he that doeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*" Now, look at 1 John 3:11-12, "*For this is the message which ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another: not as Cain was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous.*"

Please notice, "*not as Cain who was of the wicked one . . . Because his works were evil,*" No explanation is provided for what made Cain killing Abel so normal in Genesis. It seems as easy a decision for Cain as his parents eating the forbidden fruit. But 1 John clarifies that evil is the work of the devil, the wicked.

Have you ever heard the Cain story in Genesis coupled with 1 John and presented as the wicked one's next move after Eden to defeat Jesus? The enemy captured Cain, and Abel died; no one could crush the serpent's head. Victory for the nahas! So few couple the two works of the enemy in Genesis, the Woman in Eden and Cain later, because our Abba Father cannot reveal in the Old Testament that Jesus is the one to destroy the enemy. But we can see it now.

The Hebrew word for transgression is "pescha," an extraordinary word in the Scripture. It means to break a trust, not just do something sinful. Transgression is willful disobedience against our Abba Father's moral law, such as the Ten Commandments. We need to see it as a trust violation, not just a law violation. But Cain did not have the law, so he was allowed to live. We have it all, there are no excuses.

I cannot emphasize the broken trust element enough. The Jews broke their trust in our Abba Father. That moves my heart every time I think of it. It is much harder to transgress when we have a robust relationship with our Abba Father, trust him, and glorify him with our lives.

### Iniquities

Iniquities are deliberate transgressions, but they pervert the law, not just disobey it. Intentional false belief for our benefit is a good description. For example, thinking it is ok to sin because our Abba Father forgives us. Our Abba father sacrificed his Son to pay for our sins. Please pray on that because believers live in weak faith because of weak understanding.

When we embrace our relationship, our faith will grow. It is the perfect example of how our Abba Father re-programs our minds and hearts with the Scripture if we look for it. Intentionally eating the fruit makes "the Fall" in Eden much more severe than missing the mark. I presented previously that sin is not mentioned in Eden. And look at the punishment. Just saying "sin attached" is ELB minimizing the reality of the power and damage promoted by the enemy, starting in Eden and ruling much of the world today.

But even more, the woman re-wrote the law. Genesis 3:4, "*And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.*" The woman did not just sin in Eden; she committed an iniquity. She perverted the first law and broke our Abba Father's trust. And it destroyed our relationship with our Abba Father. Only in our close relationship with our Abba Father can we genuinely glorify him and have the best life in this phase. But we must escape from ELB.

Consider David in Psalm 51, known as the "sinner's prayer." Please read it so we can feel the power of Daniel's prophecy above. In Psalm 51:2-3 David combines all three types of sin as the actual human condition, including David, "*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions; And my sin is ever before me.*"Psalm 34:5, "*I acknowledged my sin unto thee, And mine iniquity did I not hide: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto Yahweh; And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.*"

A better understanding of the full spectrum of sin grows our faith because transgression and iniquity are attacks against our Abba Father, not just disobedience. Please pray on that.

### Basic Sin

When living in the redeemed state, we must understand what we are being redeemed from because ELB is remarkably cavalier about sin. "Trust breaking" sins were presented above, but the everyday sins are a significant weight on our faith. Jesus paid for them; he forgives believers; what is the big deal? It is just missing the mark, i.e., being human.

No one but Jesus can meet our Abba Father's standard of perfection. We all miss that mark, even Job. But in ELB, sin is part of our Bible life, not our earthly life, and I have long thought that conventional teaching missed the mark regarding everyday sin (some will see the irony in that statement).

Most everyone thinks they know when sin started, but I beg to differ, and it matters. Look at Genesis 3:1, "*Now the nahas was more subtle than any beast of the field which Yahweh God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye, shall not eat of any tree of the garden*?" And, in Genesis 3:4-5, "*And the nahas said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.*"

The first "Fall" is the nahas, also with free will, calling our Abba Father a liar. The nahas started sin, not Adam and the woman. The nahas did not need the fruit for sin, nor do we; it comes with free will. The woman and Adam are the second Fall. The essential lesson there is the opened eyes, not their Fall. The third significant Fall is in the divine spirit world, the bene elohiym mating with the women of earth leading to the flood.

The fourth significant Fall was the Tower of Babel story about Noah's children. That led to our Abba Father giving all the nations to the bene elohiym except Israel, which our Abba Father kept for himself. He immediately chose Abram to start the new Family of our Abba Father. From that point forward, the family unit became the center point of earthly life. The first appearance of the word love in the Scripture is Abraham sacrificing Isaac, “the child that he loved.” (The second one.)

Back to Eden. The woman disobeyed our Abba Father by accepting her tempter's lies. Why? Because the lie sounded like it felt good. Then Adam joined her, and God's children were punished and human life changed forever. For the moment, stop your mind from seeing the devil in this story. I used the ancient word, nahas, to steer you away from the English. It is okay to wonder about the cunning, talking nahas as you should, but he is not revealed as the devil yet.

Eden is an extraordinary place; it is our Abba Father's home on earth, created to be with us. And yet, a cunning, talking nahas created by our Abba Father knew what our Abba Father said to Adam. The nahas was in Eden to pervert our Abba Father's home on earth. And he succeeded.

Now, look at the body of Christ as the bride in our sanctified marriage relationship with Jesus. What is sanctified marriage but a trust covenant with our Abba Father? Sinning is adultery, betraying our betrothal in marriage with Christ. The word "sin" may be simple in meaning, but in the context of being the betrothed bride to Christ, it also breaks the trust. Anything less than glorifying our Abba Father in our lives, and we miss the full joy, peace, and glory our Abba Father created. I pray that you will see that with God only added as an accessory to this life, it weakens our faith in ELB.

Sin can feel really good, or there would not be much of it. Of course, it is the tool of the enemy. In ancient times, pagan gods were worshipped with sex and delivering pain. I am surprised that no group has started a "sex as worship" church in our postmodern era. Worshipping Baal that way is in the Scripture. Perhaps that will be the last move of the Progressive Movement, officially announcing itself as the religion they treat it as in their life. And it will be protected by our COTUS. (And see the mark of the beast coming.) Please pray on that.

So let's conquer sin in us right here. The first thing to notice in Genesis 3 is that the word "sin" is never used in the entire "cunning, talking nahas story. I find that profound. We often hear the phrase "sin attached" when referring to the Fall, but that makes no sense if it never mentions sin. We also now understand that the woman's actions were an iniquity, not just missing the mark. The punishment never seemed to fit the crime as just disobedience. But the trust with our Abba Father was broken; they defiled the marriage.

Our emotions will lead us to sin (bad menu choices) if we let them. Anger, greed, jealousy, lust, etc., can all lead to sins. Given that Jesus left us with only one commandment, "love others as he loved us," if we are not loving, we are sinning. As you can see, the battlefield of sinful behavior is inside ourselves, and the destructive bombs are already there. The enemy can try and influence our menu choices, but he does not have to plant the bombs; he need only suggest that we detonate them, which is a far easier task.

Adam and the woman had the first law (do not eat from one tree) in their mind. All the cunning, talking nahas had to do was say, "God lied to you," They believed it because it sounded good to them without a better compass. The result is a message to us, but it is far more complex than ELB wants us to know.

Now pay attention because this can change your life. "*And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it*." We rule over it in our GCS but do not react to "the door" reference like we should. We see Jesus at the door of our house. We must see him at the door of our heart, our GCS.

We go to the end of the Scripture for more understanding. Revelation 3:20, "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and eat with him, and he with me.*" The door referenced is our heart, not our house, and we need to open it to Jesus.

Let's return again to "sin lies at the door if we do not do well." The "do well" is another English fail. ELB focuses on Cain's "doing," but the ancient word is more about the thought behind the "doing," the heart in our GCS. That is another ELB victory in English, focusing on the behavior, not the power behind it. When we do not focus on our GCS connected to our Abba Father, there is no natural conscience to provide the sense of bad feelings that come with bad decisions. We cannot truly understand the Old Testament without understanding our GCS and Israel missing its connection without the Holy Spirit. Please pray on that.

It served our Abba Father's purpose not to take Cain's life at the moment, there was no law, and it would have been unfair. Genesis 4:18-24 list the many accomplishments of Cain's family; he was quite productive. Scripture then moves onto the birth of Seth, and people "*began to call on the name of the LORD*." (Gen 4:26.) In other words, the plan is back on track to call on the name of the LORD, so we move on in the Scripture.

### Eating the Fruit

So what did eating the fruit do to Adam and the woman? The fruit opened their eyes. Genesis 3:5, *"for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.*" But she had to eat it first. Genesis 3:7, "*And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons*."

Our Abba Father created them naked, and it was good. Genesis 2:25, "*And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*" But knowing they were naked was not good. Why? I believe that the spectrum of knowledge gained by eating the fruit that opened their eyes included the feelings and concepts of lust and sexual depravity that were not there before. In other words, the knowledge of everything from good to wrong (a better translation) is like a menu or catalog of things to do placed in our minds.

But free will, the ability to disobey our Abba Father (sin) was there when created. Opening their eyes to the knowledge catalog gave us options to choose from and still does to this day. The earth became so evil without any direction to guide God's children's choices that our Abba father had to destroy everyone but Noah's family.

The same could apply to Cain in that thoughts of killing were present, and the enemy exploited that. Our task is to manage our thoughts, but Cain had no faith guide. We know from 1 John that the talking, cunning nahas did influence Cain, but that was revealed long after Jesus' work on the cross. ELB prospered and continues to prosper. It is time to realize that this life is about our relationship with our Abba Father, period. Without the Holy Spirit to connect Israel to their GCS and our Abba Father, the enemy had a much easier time competing with our Abba Father.

We already know how to sin; we do not need the enemy to inform us. Sin itself is simply exercising our free will to define our behavior. And the Holy Spirit is in us to guide us to the godly decisions our Abba Father expects believers to live in. The reward is amazing! Revelation 22:12, "*Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is*."

## S5M3: Words of Our Relationship

### Relationship

The starting point with our Abba Father should be building our relationship with him and doing our job in the Family business. Chapter 7 covers that in detail. But what kind of relationship is it? The words used reveal their nature, and we need to be clear in our understanding of those words. ELB strives to keep us focused in the rearview mirror when our life should point to the future. There is no point in a relationship focused on the past.

Another essential feature is the covenant nature of our relationship. ELB conflates and confuses salvation and blessings; the two are separate covenants. We cannot earn redemption, but we step into a quid pro quo once redeemed. Deuteronomy 28:1-2, "*And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of Yahweh thy God, to observe to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that Yahweh thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth: and all these blessings shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of Yahweh thy God*."

That covenant has not changed. We earn blessings by doing our job in the Family business. If you doubt, Revelation 22:12, “*Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is*.”

Mathew 26:26-27, "*And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.*" We call Holy Communion the only ceremony prescribed in the New Testament. Our Abba Father promised eternal life in paradise. What did we promise in return? Jesus took it for granted that his entire teaching to the disciples, the four Gospels, was included in his blood covenant. The fact is your relationship with our Abba Father is YOUR side of the covenant. Only you can decide what that is. All I can do is shine a light to help you see.

Our relationship is up close and personal. Psalm 139:13-14, "*For thou didst form my inward parts: Thou didst cover me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Wonderful are thy works; And that my soul knoweth right well*." Psalm 139 is David pouring out his heart to our Abba Father; please read it. David is our model for our relationship with our Abba Father. I give David a lot of print because we want to copy his relationship, not be a spectator in ELB.

My incarcerated flock needs a lot of change, and their recidivism gives me a precise measure of their relationship. When I see the Holy Spirit working in a person, the relationship grows; when I don’t, it doesn't. That is why trying to "do God" in our brains does not work. Our relationship is not an intellectual exercise, it is an experience, and all I can teach is what it looks like and how to raise our antennae to receive it better. After that, it is the Holy Spirit's job.

John 17:24, "*Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world*."

Romans 8:16-17, "*The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him* (in relationship)."

### Love

This message is a start because we did not want to leave love out of this chapter. S7M5 brings “love” home for us. S2M3 mentioned the difficulty of understanding “love” in English in the Scripture. I have wrestled with the subject of our Abba Father’s love for a long time because of the way teachers present it as the be-all and end-all of him. He loves us; end of the story as if ELB does not want us to know more. Finally, what I was looking for came to me. The human perspective in understanding love in ELB was too shallow. And how do we, as humans, love him back?

Chapter 7 presents how we relate to our Abba Father with thirteen subjects; it is that complex. The New Testament is quite clear in Greek, if not in English. The Old Testament Hebrew for love is unprecise in either language, but the New Testament makes up for it. S7M5 presents the primary message of “love” in the Scripture, but the love words need a review first.

#### Old Testament

The key Hebrew word is “hesed.” Psalm 23 is the most famous. It starts with, “*Yahweh is my shepherd; I shall not want.*” It ends with what I learned growing up, v23:6, “*Surely goodness and loving kindness* (hesed) *shall follow me all the days of my life; And I shall dwell in the house of Yahweh for ever.*” The NIV says, “*Surely your goodness and love* (hesed) *will follow me all the days of my life.*”

Nehemiah 9:17 NKJV, “*But You are God, Ready to pardon, Gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, Abundant in kindness (hesed), And did not forsake them*.” ESV, “*But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love* (hesed), *and did not forsake them*.” NASB, “*But You are a God of forgiveness, Gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger and abounding in mercy* (hesed); *And You did not abandon them.*”

Hosea 6:6 NKJV, “*For I desire mercy* (hesed) *and not sacrifice*.” ESV, “*For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice*.” NASB, “*For I desire loyalty* (hesed) *rather than sacrifice*.”

Isaiah 54:10 NKJV, “*For the mountains shall depart And the hills be removed, But My kindness* (hesed) *shall not depart from you*.” ESV, “*For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you*.” ESV, *“The mountains may be taken away and the hills may shake, but My loving-kindness will not be taken from you*.” NASB, “*For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, But My favor will not be removed from you*.”

Scholars translate Hesed as love, steadfast love, kindness, mercy, loyalty, and favor. When we put it all together, we get a picture of an Abba Father that cares as we want our God to care. Not as an emotional connection as we see human relation love, but a love we can count on, a love that gives, and a love that has our best interest at heart. That is what we want in our heart, his words, not ELB reactions.

The Scripture uses the same word for our “love.” Deuteronomy 6:5 NKJV, “*You shall love* (hesed) *the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength*.” Leviticus 19:18 NKJV, “*you shall love* (hesed) *your neighbor as yourself.*” What is interesting here is that all translations used ‘love” for our love. But again, it is not emotional love.

#### New Testament

Agape love is an eternal attribute of our Abba Father. John 17:24, ". . . *for you* (our Abba Father) *loved* (agape) *me* (Jesus) *before the foundation of the world.*" Many believers have heard of "agape" as the Greek for "godly love," but the general understanding is that it must be a really amazing love. Look at two particular verses, John 3:16, "*God so loved the world,*" and John 15:12, "*This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*" Love is the central theme of our relationship with our Abba Father and each other; all are "agape" love.

The Greek language uses seven words to present love's whole dimension; it is that complex. The Scripture uses three Greek words, but we use a fourth not in the Scripture, which requires significant clarification for our understanding of love. "Agape" is more straightforward as love than the Hebrew word "hesed." And “eros” is the Greek word believers know best – the feeling of love from sexual attraction or intimacy. Eros is never used in the Scripture but is usually our first thought for love. Hopefully, you can see the problem.

Eros is not our love of our Abba Father; it leads to great destruction in ELB. We are also confused about love by loving ice cream, so we must go to the Greek to truly know our Abba Father. What is essential about agape love is that, like the Hebrew hesed, it has no feelings associated with it. Agape is love because of what it does, not how it feels.

John 3:16, "*God so "loved the world (agape) that He gave His only son.”* It did not feel good for our Abba Father to do that, but it was the agape-loving thing to do. Christ was so agape loved that he gave his life. He did not want to die, but he agape loved, so he did what was required. A mother who loves a sick baby will stay up all night caring for it, which is not something she wants to do; it doesn't feel good. But it is an act of agape or "doing" love.

The point is that agape love is not simply an impulse generated from feelings. Rather, agape love is an exercise of the will, a deliberate choice, and behavior. That is how our Abba Father can command us to "love" our enemies (Matt. 5:44). He is not commanding us to "have a good feeling" for our enemies but to be kind and helpful if needed.

Agape love is related to obedience and commitment, not feeling and emotion. "Loving" someone is to obey our Abba Father on that someone's behalf, seeking their long-term blessing and profit. The way to know that we agape love our Abba Father is to obey him and "do love." John 14:21, Jesus said, "*He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.*" That is not about earning love but about expressing our love with obedience. Please pray on that.

Many Christians say they love God, but their lifestyle is contrary to his will. Those people mistake their feeling of affection for agape love. John 14:24, Jesus clarified this, *"He who does not agape me will not obey my teaching.*" Agape, obedient love, should be the distinctive character of believers in relation to our Abba Father, other believers, and all humanity. John 13:35, "*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*"

Our Abba Father does not obey us; how does he agape us? By keeping his promises and making all things for the good. We can bask in the promises and know they are good. Where believers go so wrong with the promises in ELB is that they are part of a covenant, and we have our end of the agreement to uphold. Our Abba Father's promises start with, IF you . . ." Trust me when I tell you, our relationship with our Abba Father is worth trying to do every "if you" he presents. It is better than any drug, stimulant, alcohol, or thrill that ELB can come up with. And in sanctified marriage, the intimacy our Abba Father has created for us will keep us excited and together to the end.

### Believe

We start our life's journey with our Abba Father by "believing." Most believers know John 3:15-16, ". . . *that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life*."

But few believers notice John 3:14 that comes right before, "*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man* (Jesus) *be lifted up.* . ." The serpent story referenced in John 3 is in Numbers 21; please stop and read it. The fiery serpents tormenting Israel in Numbers 21 are a metaphor for sin, and the bronze serpent held up by Moses was to be looked at, i.e., "to be seen," and is a metaphor for Jesus. "Seeing Jesus to be saved from sin," is not just believing in Jesus, but seeing him. We need to see the full glory of our Abba Father, whose Son is the radiance of his glory.

"Believe" appears in John 90 times and 40 times in Acts, so we must understand how it cements our relationship with our Abba Father. In English, "believe" generally means we think something is true. In other words, it is true that Jesus was here 2,000 years ago and did his work. That is a common understanding. But once again, English fails us.

The Greek word for believe is "pisteuo," a very loaded word. It means to be convinced that something is real or true, not just think about it or hope for it. (Even "hope" does not mean what we think in the Scripture.) We must accept the truth, of course, but we must also trust the object of our belief, obey it, and surrender to it. That is the whole ancient word meaning, and it is much closer to a king and his subjects of the time except we see the King’s Family.

Mathew 3:1-2, "*And in those days cometh John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" When we see the kingdom of our Abba Father referenced, we should see our relationship with him as his Family, not subjects or spectators of the Scripture. Non-believers are his subjects. Remember, the devil "believes" our Abba Father is real and is at war against him.

It is not enough to merely accept as true that Jesus died and arose; we must acknowledge that he did it for each of us to bring us into the Family as our Father. Jesus took the punishment we deserved; he suffered for us and redeemed us by dying for us. On the third day, he arose, proving that he conquered both sin and death for us.

The Old Testament verb for "believe" is "āman." It means "to be certain, sure" or "to be assured." We understand being sure of something. Look at Genesis 15:6, "*And he* (Abraham) *believed in Yahweh; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness.*"

Abraham picked up and left his homeland and started to sacrifice his son because he believed our Abba Father AND acted it out. Let's look at Jonah 3:5, "*And the people of Nineveh believed God; and they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them*. . . ." (they acted on their belief). Numbers 14:11, " *And Yahweh said unto Moses, How long will this people despise me? and how long will they not believe in me, for all the signs which I have wrought among them*?" (It took a new generation to enter the promised land.)

"Āman" is also where we get "amen." Amen is an affirmation of truth like 'so be it,' 'it is so,' or 'it is true.' Amen means we believe it is true that all those things we asked for in prayer, praised our Abba Father for, all the questions, all the pain, and the joy we express in prayer. Many Christians think "amen" means we can open our eyes now.

So when John 3:16 says that "*whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*," John is saying that whoever believes in him, trusts in him, relies on him, and obeys him, will be redeemed; not whoever believes he was here 2,000 years ago and did his thing. Please pray hard on that.

We "believe," and that is our redemption. I use the moniker "believer" and not "Christian" because "believer" is an action word. It is also ecumenical without denomination. As a believer, I affirm my relationship and covenant with our Abba Father every time I use it, purchased for me by believing in Jesus' work on the cross.

Christian is a respected name, I intend no offense, but I am not sure what it means, especially in others. As a "Christian," I feel like a person wearing a label in ELB, and I don't feel the Family connection. I see that all the time in my flock, shaping my reaction. Sometimes a change of view works wonders.

Acts 11:26, "*So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.*" The name "Christian" came from people, not our Abba father, and it does not say who called them Christians, themselves or non-believers. That may seem subtle, perhaps even silly, but I am here to share that what we call ourselves makes a huge difference.

### Righteousness

The previous message referenced righteousness with Abraham in Genesis 15:6. All the "faith" words seem familiar, and we are comfortable with them. But we need to be more than comfortable; we need to be energized by them. That means we put off Noah Webster in ELB and put on our Abba Father. It is his meaning we want to live in.

Isaiah 33:20-22, "*Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities (high level feasts): thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there Yahweh will be with us in majesty, a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For Yahweh is our judge, Yahweh is our lawgiver, Yahweh is our king; he will save us*."

My main point is the last phrase, but it is prefaced with a beautiful vision of Mt. Zion and heavenly Jerusalem to complete the vision of our citizenship in Heaven. ELB likes to add only the last verse to this life when it is the entire package we need to see in our hearts. "Yahweh is our Judge, our Lawgiver, and our King." And our Father.

Our understanding of righteousness in our Abba Father's eyes is the laws given to us to live by. Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy are their presentations. Jesus transformed the law into godly love, which is often misunderstood but here is the point, we can never meet our Abba Father's standards of perfection. We live with common phrases like "close, but no cigar," or "close is only good in horse shoes or hand grenades" and accept that position.

I learned to play golf and tennis, ski, and eat sushi at different times. The more I took lessons and practiced, the more I enjoyed the experience. With our Abba Father, "getting closer" is his standard. Learning to be righteous in the eyes of our Abba Father is no different. We never gain perfection, but we keep trying to do better.

Righteousness applies to every aspect of our lives; who we are, how we behave, and how we relate to others, all controlled through our GCS connection. It is also how we glorify our Abba Father. And in that context, he partners with us. Jesus says his yoke is light, and an animal yoke is a partnership in which the leader side will never pull the load alone. The weaker side, us, must pull our share of the load. Please pray on that.

### Abide

"Abide" is a crucial word in Scripture that is the handlebar we are looking for in our relationship with our Abba Father. John uses the word “abide” ("meno") 53 times. The common meaning of "abide" is "to live in" or "to tolerate," but in the Scripture, it has a deeper meaning.

1 John 2:24, "*As for you, let that* (Jesus) *abide in you which ye heard from the beginning. If that which ye heard from the beginning abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father.*"

Let that verse define "abide" for you. Is Jesus only in us and us in him part-time? Does he ever leave us? The answer is no. Does Jesus or our Abba Father ever die? No. Are the Holy Three connected in spirit? Yes. Do they ever change? No. Is the relationship intimate? Yes. That is "abide."

I live in California, but I may move to Florida and live there. We live with our spouses, but that may change for too many married people. The earthly word "to live in" isn't deep enough because it has no attachment or commitment. The Scripture says first abide in Jesus and then walk the way he walked righteously. 1 John 2:6 "*he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked." When we are redeemed, we are "in Christ,*" which means we abide in him permanently. That is the closest possible relationship with him.

1 John 2:25:27, "*And this is the promise which he promised us, even the life eternal. These things have I written unto you concerning them that would lead you astray. And as for you, the anointing which ye received of him abideth in you* . . ."

The "anointing" mentioned is in 1 John 2:20, "*But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.*" Now, we have a choice. We can walk around in ELB trying to "be more like Jesus" or permanently abide in a relationship with him, our Abba Father, his Word, and his promises, all anointed by the Holy Spirit, who will guide us in all things. Please pray on that.

Let's keep going, v2:27-29,". . . *and ye need not that any one teach you; but as his anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you, ye abide in him. And now, my little children, abide in him; that, if he shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If ye know that he is righteous, we know that every one also that doeth righteousness is begotten of him*."

When we abide in Christ, we have confidence in our faith because we connect to our Abba Father. And when does this all begin for us? 1 John 4:15, "*Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.*" Let's look at how much we are being held securely in our permanent relationship with our Abba Father, John 10:28–29,"*and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who hath given them unto me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.*" That is where we want to live, in our Abba Father's world, not in the ELB world.

In John 15:4–5, Jesus tells His disciples that drawing life from him is essential, using the image of branches on a vine, "*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*"

Also, If we do not abide in Christ, John 15:6, "*If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.*" Yikes!

### Faith

Faith is not a synonym for belief. Believers often use the word "faith," but we misunderstand it and misapply it in ELB. Our Abba Father gives us faith; we do not grow it ourselves. That is the disconnect. People often tell others, "have faith, and everything will be ok." That implies we can turn it on and off or let it come and go. Why would we ever do that? I can tell you why; it happens when we willfully step into sin. We have to disconnect our GCS from our Abba father to sin willfully. Understanding faith may help overcome willful sin and the damage it causes in our lives. Please pray on that.

The primary reason we don't understand faith is that the Scripture cannot fully develop it until the completion of the promise of the Messiah. As a result, the Old Testament skips much of what becomes the glorious faith or translates it as "belief." There actually is no Hebrew word for faith that compares to the New Testament Greek. ELB conflates faith and belief in usage to weaken our faith because faith is a connection to our Abba Father. To "believe" is an action made by us, and "faith" is about and from our Abba Father. Never conflate the two. Believe is something we do; faith is something our Abba Father does.

The New Testament Greek word "pistis" is faith and carries a deep meaning. In the secular world, "pistis" means a guarantee. The guarantee comes from the manufacturer, not the buyer. Faith is our guarantee from our Abba Father, our manufacturer, that he will fulfill all his promises. Galatians 3:24, "*So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.*" We saw justification in S5M1. "Justified by faith" means it is by our Abba Father. Justification is the start of our faith, performed by our Abba Father. Christ coming is just a sample; wait until he comes back! His promise of the Messiah is so mind-blowing it is not possible to reveal it in the Old Testament without giving it away. Now that we know it, we must fully embrace its glory. Please pray on that.

Romans 10:17 tells us the Scripture reveals our guarantee. KJV, "*So faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*" NIV, "*Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ*." ASV, "*So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*" A few old translations use belief instead of faith, do not make that mistake.

The root of pistis is peithô which means persuasion or to be persuaded. That connotes there is a persuader. Our Abba Father persuades us to have faith, his guarantee. When our car needs gas, we pull into the gas station. The oil company delivers the gas. We do not make our gasoline, and we do not make our faith. We need it, and we go where it is to get it. In the Word, the Scripture.

Romans 12:2-3, "*And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith."* Notice "God hath dealt."

Hebrews 10:36-38, "*For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. But my righteous one shall live by faith: And if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him.*" Notice "live by faith." Live in the confidence of the guarantee. Also notice, "if he shrink back." Our Abba father is disappointed but still the prodigal Father.

John 16:13-14, "*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you*."

Faith is the building block in our relationship with our Abba Father. It is not a test of the sincerity of our redemption. When we receive Christ as our Lord and Savior, we are a child in our faith because we do not have much Scripture. Faith is always the gift and work of our Abba Father, which comes from our being in the Word and learning.

Where believers fall short is reading the Holy Bible with our minds, intaking the facts and history, and being smart. If we do not embrace the Holy Spirit and his role in our relationship connecting us in the Family, it just falls flat because the faith has no way in. Unless our Abba Father has his purpose and forces it in, that is how he and I reunited.

Think about the people of Israel and how they repeatedly disobeyed our Abba Father and rebelled against him. He needs to intercede to help us, or heaven would only have a few hundred people on judgment day. Also, think about the Spirit of Yahweh, the Holy Spirit. The people in the Old Testament did not connect through him, and we could not connect until after Jesus' work on the cross. The concept of faith cannot mature until the New Testament.

Galatians 5:22, "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness*." John 16:13, "*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come*." That is how faith is delivered.

Let's look at the Old Testament. In Deuteronomy 32:20, "*And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: For they are a very perverse generation. Children in whom is no faithfulness.*" That is from the Song of Moses, where he unloads on the people of Israel for rejecting our Abba Father, calling them unfaithful because they turned away from him. That passage means the people had no belief because it refers to Israel's rejection. Belief comes before our Abba father can gift faith to us.

In Habakkuk 1:1-2 NKJV, the prophet whines to our Abba Father, "*The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw, "How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen*?" But he recovers in v2:4, "*See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright— but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness.*" Again, this is a reference to the people's beliefs. Paul converts Habakkuk to faith in Galatians 3:11, "Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for 'The righteous shall live by faith.'" (In his promises.)

Deuteronomy 7:9, "*Know therefore that Yahweh thy God, he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and lovingkindness with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.*" That verse is our covenant with him. Believe it or not, that is about it for faith in the Old Testament. Without the work of Jesus on the cross and the Holy Spirit, our Abba Father has no way to deliver faith to his people.

Let's explore Hebrews 11, called "the faith Hall of Fame." It goes back and adds the faith omitted in the Old Testament. Once you realize how much the New Testament embellishes the Old, your relationship will grow even more.

V11:1, "*Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.*" That sounds very circular; it is like saying faith is faith. And it never did much for me right up until it did. One day v11:3 lit me up, "*By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear.*" God made the world with his power and majesty. Seeing the world is proof he made it. There is no other way to get from nothing to the world except the Holy Three.

Hebrews 11:4, "*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts: and through it he being dead yet speaketh.*" That is subtle, but our Abba Father reinforced Abel's belief, "God testifying of his gifts." Our belief becomes faith when reinforced by our Abba Father.

V11:5-6, "*By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him: for he hath had witness borne to him that before his translation he had been well-pleasing unto God: and without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.*"

We start with our belief and seeking our Abba Father, "and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." Now read the entire Hebrews 11 and notice that our Abba Father contributes to the hero referenced in each entry.

I speak of "our faith" and "building faith" throughout this book as we learn and grow. It includes our Abba Father's role in helping us learn, especially with the Holy Spirit. I never mean to grow our faith ourselves. Now let's test ourselves, Daniel 3:9-10, "*They answered and said to Nebuchadnezzar the king, O king, live for ever. Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image;* . . ."

Most believers will recognize that story as a spectator and watch Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah enter the furnace and come out. Most of you know the three as Shadrach, Meshach; and, Abed-Nego but given their faith, they are worthy of their Jewish names. Thank you, Jesus. Isn't he amazing?

My first question is, was their faith strengthened in the fire event? My second question is, have you ever thought about what you would do in a similar situation? Are you ready to do that? That story is there to get ready, not to tell you how great our Abba Father is. Please pray on that.

p.s. Is there a level of faith greater than being thrown into a furnace?

### Hope

1 Peter 3:15, "but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you . . ." Faith, hope, and love are the Big Three of godly words, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13:13, "*But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.*" Notice that faith and hope make the Big Three, which is why fully understanding our Abba Father's design with these words is essential. Knowing what abide means helps understand that verse.

In common usage, we interchange faith and hope with each other and often even interchange hope with wish. But in our Abba Father's eyes, faith and hope are different, not only from each other but mainly from our everyday usage. The difference between our Abba Father's use and our everyday use for hope and faith is a certainty. Our everyday use of hope carries uncertainty, often stifling our relationship with our Abba Father. I hope I get X for my birthday. If I get X, it will make me happy, but I know I might not get X, as in, I wish I were taller.

But hope abideth in us, and abide means permanent residence or indwelling. And what are we hoping for, or in other words, what are we sure of? The answer is our redemption! And what is redemption? Redemption is living in a relationship with our Abba Father spiritually now and then for eternity.

Jesus tells us in Rev 21:3-5, "*And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away. And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new*."

Our hope is the inheritance when we die in the flesh. 1 Peter 1:3-5, "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*"

Our hope is "a living hope;" Christ lives, and those "in Christ" are being called to live, beyond resurrection, in glory with Him. Redemption is not just avoiding hell; it is living with our Abba Father on earth and in heaven! Jesus tells us to live now beyond resurrection. In other words, with Christ in us and us in him, live now with his Family and see the future paradise coming. Raise our game, my friends, and whenever the word hope is heard or said, may our first thought be our life in heaven with all our Abba Father's Family.

Now let us make sure we separate hope and faith. In its simplest form, faith is similar in many ways to hope in its certainty, but faith is the past and present plus our earthly future, while hope is a synonym for our future with our Abba Father in paradise. Romans 15:4-5, "*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope.* *Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus:*"

Romans 15:4-5 talks about prophecy. ELB favors our Abba Father's promises and minimizes his assurances in prophecy and our part in the covenant his promises include. Faith is necessary to have hope, just as oxygen is necessary for fire. If there is fire, we know there is oxygen. But there can be oxygen without fire, and it is possible to have faith without hope. That happens all the time in our earthly life when we believe in our Abba Father but close our eyes to the afterlife because it is too surreal. It is easier to close our eyes and wish for it.

Why do we opt so quickly for earthly pleasure and are so slow to opt for the hope, the heaven which is our inheritance? It is because we do not believe in the heavenly realities. The people who believe in the heavenly hope and are fixed on it that can have a loose grip on earthly pleasure and are energized for heaven.

Hope is never just an escape from reality or earth's problems and does not leave us idle or drifting. Our hope is powerful and dynamic, brings us joy and peace, and has rewards and blessings. Romans 15:13, "*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit.*"

Our Abba Father has planted hope in the heart of every believer so that we can build a strong relationship of love and trust with Him. Our hope in him reveals to us that he is in control and uses everything for our good. The hope is our call to action and our unbounded energy to answer that call until we inherit the Kingdom.

To summarize, our Abba Father starts with entering into a relationship with him. We then express our love for him by obeying him as he keeps his promises. He then helps us build our faith with the Word, which reveals our inheritance of life with him in heaven, also known as our hope and certainty from our Abba Father.

### Grace

Grace fills in all the blanks in our relationship. It is a great word and another "from Abba Father to us" word. In that respect, grace is closer to filling our desire for love than the word love itself carries. We cannot "grace" our Abba Father back, only bathe in it. I get my joy and comfort from his grace more than his love because of the obedient nature of the Greek word for love.

ELB likes to tell us the key element of his grace is that we do not deserve it. I strongly reject that position. I am not saying we deserve it; I am saying his grace is his true goodness, the one who tells us we are holy, and to add by man the "we don't deserve it," pollutes it. The sin lessons and verses more than deliver that message. The whole point of his grace is to lift us.

1 Corinthians 15:10, "*But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*" Titus 2:11-14, "*For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works*."

Grace will deliver the feeling we are looking for in our relationship with our Abba Father, do not let ELB pollute it. 1 Peter 5:10, "*And the God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, shall himself (a)perfect, establish, strengthen you.*"

Ephesians 2:4-10, "*but God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus: for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.*"

Apostle Paul pleaded to our Abba Father three times to remove a thorn he was experiencing. 2 Corinthians 12:8, "*Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me*." Many interpret our Abba Father's answer as "suck it up, Paul." 2 Corinthians 12:9, "*But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness.*" His power and our weakness, the perfect team!

Our Abba Father refuses to remove the thorn that the devil causes and ordained by our Abba Father (like Job?), in this case, to keep Paul humble. But what is our Abba Father's grace that is enough? It is all the abilities, help, provision, and strength given to us by him. Too many people see grace as love and move on in ELB. That is weak faith.

Our relationship radar tells us that prayer should start with asking for revelation, wisdom, and strength in our relationship with him to get through a situation together. One might infer from 2 Corinthians 12:9 that Paul still has delusions of grandeur in ELB that need work, giving a reason to keep reminding Paul of the thorn. I see ELB as parallel to conceit in the eyes of our Abba Father, i.e., this world is more important than his. Please pray on that. The grace of an infinite God is not defined by any words that would only serve to limit him in our hearts.

## S5M4: the Scary Words

### Wrath of God

Is there anything scarier than the wrath of God? He is the God of love and goodness; why is he scaring us with his wrath? One thing we know for sure, he is not afraid to make it known that vengeance and fury belong to him. Deuteronomy 32:39-42, "*I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; And there is none that can deliver out of my hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven, And say, As I live for ever, If I whet my glittering sword, And my hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine adversaries, And will recompense them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, And my sword shall devour flesh; With the blood of the slain and the captives, From the head of the leaders of the enemy.*"

Psalm 7: 11, "*God is a righteous judge, Yea, a God that hath indignation every day*." Our Abba Father is angry against sin because sin is a rebellion against his authority and sovereignty. He must make it known that he is the Almighty God. Could God be perfect without hating sin? No because it would be a weakness in his character. He must hate sin to love us. See his wrath as an extension of his love. He is infinitely holy; how could he disregard sin and refuse to put his wrath against it?

There are more references to God's wrath and anger in Scripture than to his love. That is our fault, not his. And understanding his wrath grows our faith because of its seriousness, yet he has time for us. ELB goes in two directions with God's wrath to minimize our awareness. One is Elmer Gantry's[[2]](#endnote-2) fire and brimstone raining down on us sinners. Most believers are not seeking that. And the other, nothing to see here until the end-time mystery when fire and brimstone rain down on the world. Most believers ignore that as too difficult.

The key to understanding and building faith is what is God's wrath directed toward and what its magnitude is. Deuteronomy 32 above, "*I will render vengeance to mine adversaries, And will recompense them that hate me*." God directs his wrath toward his sworn enemies, and its magnitude is greater than his enemy's power. The enemy wants the entire human world; in our eyes, that is huge.

Believers are not his target with his wrath, but believers are the prize for both sides. Believers must understand how much the enemy needs us and how hard he will work to keep us from God. God even has one hand tied behind his back because we are born into the enemy's world and must choose our God to escape captivity.

When cavalier about sin, we play into the enemy's hand. Unforgiven sin, transgression, and iniquity keep us from the fiery pit on judgment day, and we have until our last breath to avoid the fiery pit. But we can't do our job and glorify God in ELB, which means our sin produces victims we do not even know. The more we study and ponder God's hatred of sin and his frightful vengeance upon it, the more likely we realize how damaging to ourselves our sin is.

God swears his wrath against the Exodus generation in Psalm 95:10-11, "*Forty years long was I grieved with that generation, And said, It is a people that do err in their heart, And they have not known my ways: Wherefore I sware in my wrath, That they should not enter into my rest*." The Exodus generation refused to enter the Promised Land because of the giants. But God did not wipe them out; they died of old age walking the desert until the Entrance generation was ready.

Romans 1:18, "*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness*." The key words are the last six, "who hinder the truth in unrighteousness." God's wrath is for his sworn enemies.

The wrath of God was revealed from heaven when his Son came down to show us his divine character. God displayed his wrath in Jesus' sufferings and death in a manner more awful than all the examples God had given Israel before their Messiah. Jesus had the skin ripped off his back with the scourge. They pulled a crown of thorns down his head. They nailed him to a cross to suffocate and pierced him with a lance. That is from his grace which is equal to his wrath. Please pray on that.

And here is what builds our faith so magnificently. How badly was Christ's heart troubled with his thoughts of God's placing the iniquities of his people on him? Luke 22:41-44, "*he kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.*" Jesus took that punishment for us. Please pray on that and raise your game right now.

Hebrews 5:7-9, "*Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation*."

And his last cry, Mathew 27:46, "*And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying . . . My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*?" But the greatest miracle in the world may be God's patience and love for his ungrateful children. God makes us perfect in our resurrection so that his creation becomes his perfect family, with him in his perfect new world. Our life needs to be about the future and seeing this world as helping God finish his plan by serving him, spreading the Word, being God's billboard, and helping those in need.

We need to set our hearts against sin. We must serve God with reverence and godly respect, for our God is "*a consuming fire*," Hebrews 12:28-29. But life is not about living in dreadful fear of the consuming fire. Life is about being confident in our redemption. Confess our sins, do not hide them; be repentant and love God. If you know him, you know he wants you, and no one can snatch you away. You can only turn yourself away in ELB.

We must see both the wrath and the grace to know God fully. We need to get comfortable with both because it is the perfection of God. But also understand that it is sin that God directs his wrath toward, not believers. True believers do not fear God's wrath; that is his grace. Fearing God is the next subject.

In the end, God will make a most glorious display of his wrath by taking vengeance upon all who then oppose Him. If we do not rejoice in God and despise sin as he does, it is proof that our hearts are not committed to him, and we are still in our sins in ELB. Also, I did not use our Abba Father name with this subject because wrath is God’s work. Please pray on that.

### Fear of God

The Wrath of God message goes ahead of this message because the "fear (yirah) of God" is another English failure, possibly another theological malpractice. Chapter 4 presented the glory of our Abba Father as part of his existence. In this chapter, the words are about us and our reactions to him. We must drive the ELB image of the "scary God" in the Old Testament out of our minds. Never be afraid of our Abba Father in our relationship with him. He is love and forgiveness with a great future, and we put in the work in this life.

We have a choice, eternity in paradise or the fiery pit. That is not a hard choice, be afraid of the fiery pit. We can't blame our Abba Father for not creating a middle option for the indecisive. ELB promotes the angry God because fear weakens our faith. The angry God perspective hurts believers, and that view is nothing I enjoy sharing or living with. Believers should image our awesome Abba Father because "awe" is the better translation of "yirah."

The Hebrew word "yirah" is translated as "fear" across all translations. But it means "awe." An "awe" worthy of our Abba Father, a total, mind-blowing awe. The wrath of God is pointed 100% at his sworn enemies, not believers, which is why the "fear of God" fails in English. Exodus 19:16-17, "*And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud; and all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.*" That is "awe" (and glory), not fear.

Did it scare Israel at first? Yes, but Proverbs 1:7, "*The fear* (awe) *of Yahweh is the beginning of knowledge; But the foolish despise wisdom and instruction.*" Proverbs 9:9-10, "*Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: Teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.” The fear (awe) of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*"

Being amazed at our Abba Father and his incredible creation is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge in us. That concept lifts us out of ELB and points us toward the heavens and the divine spirit world. It is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge because it draws us to know more. If you want to see "awe" in action, look at Job 37-38. You will also see it in many of David's Psalms. I will sample Job 37:1-7 here but go take it all in. "*Yea, at this my heart trembleth, And is moved out of its place. Hear, oh, hear the noise of his voice, And the sound that goeth out of his mouth. He sendeth it forth under the whole heaven, And his lightning unto the ends of the earth. After it a voice roareth; He thundereth with the voice of his majesty;”*

“*And he restraineth not the lightnings when his voice is heard. God thundereth marvellously with his voice; Great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend. For he saith to the snow, Fall thou on the earth; Likewise to the shower of rain, And to the showers of his mighty rain. He sealeth up the hand of every man, That all men whom he hath made may know*."

### Baptism

I put baptism in this chapter because many adult believers shy away from it and it turned into a great ending to the chapter. My view of baptism is simple; it is like the Sabbath after Jesus. Our Abba Father does not judge us for what we do with it; it is an opportunity to glorify our Abba Father in our lives. It symbolizes washing away our sins and re-birth into the Family of our Abba Father. Jews used baptism as a symbol of washing away sin; John the Baptist did not invent it. Baptism symbolizes our repentance and justification. (Compared to circumcision, hallelujah! We do not thank Paul enough for that decision.)

Ephesians 4:4-6, “*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism* . . .” “One baptism” in that verse means our actual redemption, not the ceremony. Ceremonies and feasts etc., are used by our Abba Father to remind us of his glory. What we call Holy Communion celebrates the same miracle baptism celebrates, emphasizing what Jesus did for us. Has anyone ever connected the two for you? When we add the communion ceremony before baptism, it builds our faith.

I have thought of even making baptism part of confession. It would be easy for married couples to do it for each other. Young people or any group could have baptism parties. A pastor is not needed for baptism any more than for communion, but the dunker symbolizes that we do not cleanse ourselves. I was baptized twice in two different churches, one at 13 and one at 16. At 18 years old, I forgot all about it in college. I would like to see adults do the baptism ceremony again if baptized as a youth. And keep doing it. This world would be a better place.

So let’s get holy about baptism, Romans 6:1-10, *“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin; for he that hath died is justified from sin. But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him. For the death that he died, he died unto sin once: but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus*.”

Mathew 28:19, “*Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*”

## References

### End Notes

1. 4 Merriam-Webster.com. 2011. https://www.merriam-webster.com (8 May 2011). [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. 5 Elmer Gantry, credits seen at: https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0053793/ [↑](#endnote-ref-2)