



Christ, the LORD, In the Book of Genesis



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CHRIST, THE LORD, IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The believer discovers the sweetness of the Old Testament every time the person of Christ, the Lord, appears before him, for He is the incarnated Word of God, the Human-Lover, the Savior, and the Source of joy, peace and eternal glory. The believers of the Old Testament used to focus their internal sight upon Him. Christ, the Lord, said: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it, and was glad" [John 8:56]; "Moses, in whom you trust... wrote of Me" [John 5:45-46]; "David then calls Him (calls Me) Lord" [Matthew 22:45]; "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" [Luke 4:21]. In His encounter with the two disciples of Emmaus, He spoke with them and "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself" [Luke 24:27].

THE SECRET OF THE DIVINE LOVE

The Holy Book starts with the wondrous phrase: "In the beginning (Elohem) God created heaven and earth. And the earth was without form, and destruction; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" [Genesis 1:1-2]. This opening continues to shake the insides of the believer as it reveals the secret of God, the Entire Love.

"In the beginning (Elohem) God created the heaven and the earth" [Genesis 1:1].

The word "Elohem" came in the plural form, while the verb "created" came in the singular form, because the Creator is the Holy Trinity that is One in His core, nature, and divinity.

Moses reassured his people that God is the Creator, and thus denied the many myths that filled the world at that time regarding the issue of creation. He also denied the idea of some philosophers who proclaimed that the world was created by itself by mere chance.

Why didn't he mention the name of God in the singular form and let us get to know the Holy Trinity when we meet with Him face to face in heaven? He is not a solid being or an abstract thought; rather He holds within Him the secret of love, the eternal non-stopping movement of love among the Trinity!

Nothing was added to God, who loves from eternity, when He created, because He was, still is, and always will be the life moving love that works all the time!

This love was revealed when man was created, for God said: "Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness" [Genesis 1:26]. The word 'said' came in the singular form, while the rest of the talk was in the plural form, for the Holy Trinity, in His love to man, wants him to be in their image after their likeness!

He also revealed the role of the Holy Spirit that moved upon the face of the waters and created a good and beautiful world from the earth that was without form and void. To this day, the Holy Spirit remains dwelling in the water of the baptism to sanctify it and to make a new heaven and a new land out of man, who was putrefied by the sins that made out of him a land without form, void, unseen due to its lack of God's shining upon it, and incomplete. He grants us the new birth in Him so that we would enjoy a sacred soul that is in the image of God, our Creator, and a sacred body, whose organs are God's righteous mechanisms.

The new creation is made through the water and the Spirit, just like the creation of the world as the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

St. Clement of Alexandria

Regarding the expression "moved", St. Basil said: [The Sorians believe that the Sorian language can give a better meaning of the word than the Hebrew, for it is translated as 'embraced'; as if the Spirit was like a bird that embraces its eggs to grant them life through its warm being.]

One of the symbols that came in the Book of Genesis is the tree of life in the midst of Paradise [Genesis 3:22], which refers to Christ, the LORD, who reveals His Kingdom inside the heart as a tree of life in the midst of Paradise, bringing joy to the Father as well as to our hearts. He is the tree that grants life to the entire world [John 3:36].

THE PROMISE OF SALVATION

The Book of Genesis presents to us the earliest prophecies regarding the coming of Christ, the Lord, as a Savior of the world. Right after his fall, God made a promise to man and said to the serpent: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your heel, and you shall bruise his head" [Genesis 3:15].

He didn't say "the seed of man" because Christ, the Lord, came down and was incarnated into the belly of the Virgin, St. Mary, without human seed; and He bruised Satan who was called "the old serpent" [Revelation 20:2; Epistle to Romans 16:20; Epistle of John 1 3:8]. Christ, the Lord, bruised the head of the serpent with His cross, as the apostle said: "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it (the cross)" [Epistle to Colossians 2:15]. But, the serpent bruises every man who descends from the life above that is in the Lord and thus becomes a heel tied to the dust.

After the fall, worshipping started by offering blood sacrifices as a symbol of the blood of Christ, the Lord, who is the unique sacrifice with Whom our worshipping is accepted as a sweet scent and a source of pleasure before the Father.

A GRAVE HERITAGE

After the fall, the entire human race inherited grave corruption that appeared in the behavior of Cain towards his brother Abel. "And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" [Epistle of John 1 3:12]. Man inherited hatred, and envy for he had lost what he was like, where "God said: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" [Genesis 1:26].

NOAH BUILDING AN ALTAR UNTO THE LORD (GENESIS 8)

Noah's ark was a symbol of Christ, the Lord, the Granter of renewal of the world, not through the water of the flood, but through the water of Baptism; and His wooden ark was the cross that embraced the believers and kept them from destruction and perishing [Epistle of Peter 1 3:20-21].

When Noah got out of the ark, he built an altar unto the Lord on the new earth that was washed off by the water of the flood; as if the church is unable to give the sacrifice of Christ (Eucharist) until after baptism. For this reason, also, we find that the Holy Book mentioned the building of an altar here for the very first time, although undoubtedly sacrifices were offered unto the LORD ever since man got out of Paradise.

God stated that He was content with man after smelling the sweet scent of the reconciliation sacrifice and assured him that He will not perish all mankind again because of its weakness. God is wondrous in His forgiveness and his forgiving! The new life started with the worshipping through sacrifice, as if through the cross, and thus the curse was lifted from upon the earth; and then man started to work for satisfying his daily necessities.

What Noah has offered was a symbol of the sacrificing work of Christ in His church, as the pastor says: [He, who has offered Himself as an acceptable sacrifice on the cross for the salvation of our kind, which His Righteous Father has smelled by the evening at the place of Golgotha].

THE TOWER OF BABEL AND THE CONFOUNDING OF THE LANGUAGES

After the flood, when the ark rested on the mountain of Ararat, people traveled east to the land of Shinar and made slime brick by burning the brick after drying it in the sun. Their plan for humanity was to build a city and a high tower to find shelter for themselves from God's harsh wrath if He sent another flood. It was said about the cities of Canaan that: "the cities are great and walled up to heaven" [Deuteronomy 1:28]. The evil was not in the act of building the city itself or in wanting to build a high tower, but in the purpose of this act, which was: "let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth"; as if they didn't trust in God's covenant with Noah, their father, but took Him to be dishonest in His promises. This and even further, instead of this kind of thought, they should have returned to God with love, where they would've found their heavenly city and a true shelter in Him; in Him they could have gotten a name not just on the face of this earth, but even in heaven!

FROM THE SEED OF ABRAHAM, THE FATHER OF THE FATHERS

The fulfillment of the promise was fulfilled in the seed of Abraham: "And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" [Genesis 22:18; Acts 3:25; Epistle to Galatians 3:16]; and Jacob declared that He will come from the seed of the tribe of Judah, as he said: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" [Genesis 49; Matthew 2:6; Luke 1:32-33].

ABRAHAM'S ENCOUNTER WITH MELCHIZEDEK

Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek after his victory over Chedorlaomer is still an unresolved mystery for the Jews, for how could Abraham, the father of the fathers from whose seed the priesthood of Levy descended, give tithes to a strange man? And why did this king and

priest appear in the Holy Book and then just disappear all of a sudden, while no one knows his father, mother, or family? And why didn't he offer a blood sacrifice as it was the custom at this time?

The apostle revealed this secret by stating that Melchizedek, as a symbol of Jesus Christ, surpassed the person of Abraham, who bears the priesthood in his seed (the tribe of Levy); and one can go back to the commentary of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Chapter 7). The offering of Melchizedek [Genesis 14:18-20] is a symbol of the offering of Christ, the Lord, through the bread and the wine that are turned into His flesh and His blood that grant sanctification [Epistle to the Hebrews 8:5-8].

Who is the priest of the highest God more than our Lord, Jesus Christ, who offered a sacrifice to the Father with the same things that Melchizedek offered the bread and the wine, i.e. His flesh and His blood? As for Abraham, the blessing that he took was for his people.

St. Cyprianos

This is our Melchizedek, who offered the sacred sacrifice that is ours. He is the One who said: "He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood" [John 6:56], and gave us His sacrament after the order of Melchizedek.

St. Jerome

A BRIEF COMPARISON BETWEEN CHRIST, THE LORD, AND MELCHIZEDEK

1. Regarding the name, "Melchizedek" means "The King of Righteousness" [Epistle to Hebrews 7:1-2; Isaiah 32:1].

2. Regarding the occupation, "The King of Salem" means "The King of Peace" [John 16:33; Isaiah 9:6-7].

3. He was a king and a priest at the same time, which is something that does not exist among the Jews, because the kings descended from the tribe of Judah while the priests from the tribe of Levy; but in Jesus Christ the two converged in truth.

4. The offering of Melchizedek was unique in its kind and it was an example of the sacrifice of Christ, the Lord.

5. We know nothing about his father or his mother, nor when his kingdom began or ended, which is an example of Christ, the Lord, who has no biological father, or mother regarding His divinity, no start of days and is eternal.

6. Christ, the Lord, came to be a priest on the order of Melchizedek, as if the priesthood of Levy has ended and a new priesthood has begun.

7. Abraham, from whose seed Levy who collects the tithes came, gave the tithes to Melchizedek, the symbol of Christ; thus what could this symbol be? And who is the one it refers to?

THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC

Isaac's obedience to his father, Abraham, his carrying the wood, and his offering himself to death [Genesis 22] is a declaration of the obedience of the incarnated Son to His Father and His carrying the cross to death [Epistle to Philipians 2:8].

Abraham walked for three days [Genesis 22:4] till he saw the place from far away. The erudite Oregon argued that the third day refers to Christ's resurrection; as if Abraham has entered the tomb with God and lived His pains with Him till the light of His resurrection was shining on the dawn of Sunday (the third day), and thus he lifted up his eyes and saw the place from far away. It was also an example of the children of Israel, whom God asked to offer Him a sacrifice after a three days' journey [Exodus 5:3], for no sacrifice is accepted outside the circle of Jesus Christ's resurrection. Accordingly, on the third day, Abraham saw the sign of the resurrection, one way or another, and thus he lifted up his eyes and beheld the place from far away. What is this place but Christ the Lord Himself, in whom he beholds Isaac, his son, rising from the dead!

THE MARRIAGES BY THE WATER

The marriages that occurred by the water of the wells, like the choice of Rebecca and Rachel, was a symbol of the choice of the church as a bride of Christ, the Lord, through the water of baptism.

THE HEAVENLY LADDER [GENESIS 28]

In the midst of distress, Jacob put his head on a stone and lay down to sleep; he dreamed and beheld the heavens open and a heavenly ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and the angels of God ascending and descending on it, which refers to the cross of Jesus Christ through which He reconciled heaven with earth [Epistle to Corinthians 2 5:18; Epistle to Ephesians 2:16; Epistle to Colossians 1:20-21]. The ascending angels refer to the sacred church that ascends with Him to His Father's embrace, while the descending angels refer to the Jews who rejected Him and thus descended to hell by denying the cross.

St. Jerome says: [The stone, on which he put his head, refers to Christ. He had no stone beneath his head before, but now he came to have one when he escaped from his persecutor. When he was physically relaxed in his father's house, he did not enjoy having a stone beneath his head, but now that he left his house as a poor person and became alone with nothing but a

stick in his hand, he found a stone to put beneath his head in the same night. As he came to have a pillow of this kind, his head rested through the vision that he saw that night]. He also said: [I believe that the ladder that Jacob saw was the cross of the Savior. On this ladder, the angels of God descended and ascended. On this ladder, i.e. the cross, the Jews descended and the Gentiles ascended]. Furthermore, he said: [He beheld angels ascending as he saw Paul ascending to heaven; and he beheld angels descending as he saw Judah, the traitor, descending to hell. He beheld angels ascending as he saw saints ascending from earth to heaven; and he beheld angels descending as he saw Satan and all his army falling from heaven].

Father Ceasarion, bishop of Arles, believes that Jacob refers to Christ, the LORD, and that his father, Isaac who asked him not to take a wife from the daughters of that area, refers to the Father who asked Him to leave the Jewish Council and to go to a far place where He would acquire the church of the Gentiles to be His bride. This was fulfilled when the two apostles told the Jews: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles" [Acts 13:46].

As we behold the ladder, we do not feel that it's hard to ascend through it, for God is standing on top of it to support us and to lift us up to Him. St. Jerome said: [Do not look at the steps, but look up to where God is standing]. He encourages us to keep on ascending without stopping, by saying: [If one of us was standing on the first step, let he not despair from reaching the second; and if one was standing on the second step, let he not lose hope of reaching the third. O, how happy were the myrtles that ascended to the very last steps, to the very top. We, who dwell in the world, are unable to ascend all the steps all at once from bottom to top, but let us not suffice to stand on the first step, but rather it is proper for us to fight to ascend to higher steps]. He also said: [The lesson we all should learn from the ladder is that it is neither proper for the trespasser to despair from salvation nor for the righteous to rest or feel safe about his virtues].

Father Ceasarion justifies the timing of this vision by saying: [Why did this happen on the road before Jacob acquired his wife? It is because our God –the true Jacob- bowed first on the ladder, i.e. the cross, and then afterwards formed the church for Himself; and at the same time He offered her His blood as a marriage gift for His Kingdom!]

JOSEPH, THE SYMBOL OF CHRIST THE LORD

- ❖ Joseph's father gave him a colored coat, as if the Father gave the Son the church of the New Testament that is filled with spiritual gifts.

- ❖ Joseph saw visions and had dreams, while all the prophecies and revelations came true in the person of Jesus.
- ❖ Joseph was a shepherd with his brethren, while Jesus is the Chief Shepherd.
- ❖ When his father sent him to seek his brothers, they saw him coming from afar and planned to kill him; and when the Father sent Jesus to seek His brethren, they said: "This is the heir! Come, let us kill him" [Matthew 21:38].
- ❖ Joseph was persecuted by his brothers; but then he was glorified and his persecutors kneeled before him so that his dreams came true.
- ❖ The casting of Joseph into the pit and selling him according to Judah's advice was a symbol of Christ's descent to hell and Judah's betrayal.
- ❖ When his brothers sold him, he did not answer them with one word; also Jesus did not utter a word, neither did He answer the judges that sentenced Him.
- ❖ Joseph came out of the pit, and Jesus rose from the dead.
- ❖ Joseph's falling under slavery in Egypt without having committed any fault except for his brothers' hatred demonstrates how Christ, the LORD, became a Slave for our sakes.
- ❖ Joseph gave up both his coats, one to his brothers and the other to his master's wife; while Jesus gave up His clothes to the soldiers who divided them amongst them.
- ❖ He left his clothes in the hands of the Egyptian woman as a symbol of leaving behind the linen clothes in the tomb without death seizing Him or preventing Him from the resurrection that dwells in Him.
- ❖ His master sent Joseph to prison without any fault; and Jesus was convicted by His people without any fault also.
- ❖ His encounter in prison with the chief of the butlers who got out of prison and with the chief of the bakers who was sentenced to death, referred to His resurrection and His death.
- ❖ By saving the lives of his brothers he symbolized the glorified Christ, the Savior of all mankind and the Granter of life.
- ❖ After ascending from the pit, Joseph had power over his brothers; and after dwelling amongst the dead, His Father gave Jesus a great and glorified name which is above every name [Epistle to Philippians 2:9], so that His brethren would serve Him and His enemies would fall under His feet.
- ❖ When his brothers knew Joseph, they were ashamed, afraid and surprised of his greatness; and when Jesus will come at the end of times and declare His greatness, His brethren will be terrified and ashamed of Him for they have crucified Him.

- ❖ When Joseph was 30 years old, he stood before the Pharaoh and became the master of Egypt; and when Jesus was 30 years old, He came to Jordon to be baptized and to accept the Spirit, and then He went to preach.
- ❖ Joseph supported Egypt with bread; and Jesus supported the entire world with the bread of life.
- ❖ Joseph took the daughter of the evil and putrid priest to be his wife; and Jesus engaged Himself to the church of the putrid Gentiles.
- ❖ His brothers took Joseph's bones out of Egypt; and His Father raised Jesus from the dead, put on His body, and ascended with Him to heaven; thus both tombs remained empty.

JACOB CALLING UNTO HIS SONS AND PROPHESYING THEIR FUTURE [GENESIS 49]

After a life filled with struggle, through which Jacob robbed the blessing and the birthright, and despite his frequent weaknesses, he deserved to receive the divine promise that the saving Messiah will come from his seed. He, then, lived for 17 years in Egypt in silence and quietness. Now, that he will be crossing over from this earth, he looked at his sons as the tribes from whose seed the people of God will come and enjoy the Promised Land, and from whose seed the saving Messiah will come. His mouth, then, opened to utter what he saw in the spiritual prophecy through the shadow. He was like Moses, who ascended on the mount of Nebo to behold the Promised Land from far away, and his heart rejoiced for the sake of his people who will enjoy the fulfillment of the promise, from which he was deprived. He saw the twelve tribes as the church that enjoys the salvation of Christ and that grows in the spirit.

He saw Reuben, his firstborn and the natural fruit from Leah, as the man who trusted in his physical birthright -or in the acts of the Law- and, thus, lost the spiritual birthright, for he defiled his father's bed by defiling the church, the bride of Christ, through his self-righteousness.

He saw Simeon and Levi, from whose seed the scribes and the priests came, fighting against Christ, the Word of God, and thus symbolizing the sin of evil conspiracies and sinful assemblies, which distort the ministry and the work of God.

He saw Judah symbolizing the crucified "Lamb"; but, at the same time, he symbolized the lion that triumphed through the cross. He saw Christ coming from the tribe of Judah, granting the power of His resurrection to all His believers. It is as though it is not enough for us to leave out self-righteousness (Reuben) and to reject the evil assemblies (Simeon and Levi), but we should draw near unto the true Judah to enjoy the power of His resurrection that works in us.

Next, he came to Zebulun, who refers to moving unto the sea towards the direction of the gentile nations to preach them; because he, who carries the resurrected Judah inside him, cannot bear to see the nations dwelling in their disbelief, and thus seek the salvation of every soul.

He resembled Issachar to a strong ass that carries the heavy weights of others. Thus, if we were accused of being dumb for joyfully bearing the pain and for our service to others, we shall not run away, rather we should work without despair, for He said: "Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" [Matthew 11:28].

As long as God's Kingdom is spread amongst the nations, the devil will continue to resist until the "Anti-Christ" comes from the tribe of Dan, as a serpent by the way that bites to kill.

Afterwards, he talked about Gad, who will be defeated by a troop, but he shall overcome at the end. He is a symbol of the believer who was fought against, so many times, but who triumphs at the end.

Afterwards, Asher came with his fat bread, i.e. his many crop yield, for even if the spiritual fights reveal our weaknesses, they still give us strength and make our souls more fruitful.

After Asher, he spoke of Naphtali, who is speedy as a hind, and whose words are sweet with everyone.

As for Joseph, who carries two tribes (Manasseh and Ephraim) in his seed, his name means "growth", which comes true by forgetting the anxiety of the world "Manasseh" and by enjoying the many fruits "Ephraim".

Finally, he spoke of Benjamin, whose name means "the son of the right," and who enjoys participating in the eternal glory.

In brief, we can say that Jacob, with the spirit of prophecy, saw in his sons the life image of the church that struggles in Jesus Christ.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS IN A FEW LINES

1. Man in the Garden of Eden: it was mentioned that "they (Adam and Eve) heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden" [Genesis 3:8].

2. When man chose to follow Satan's advice, his nature got defiled and he was sentenced to the verdict: "you shall surely die" [Genesis 2:17]. His soul died at once that he couldn't feel the sweetness of living with the Word of God any more. As for myself, I didn't benefit much from the lesson that my first parents have taught me, for I fall in the same mistake so many times.

3. God gave man the promise of salvation: "it (the woman's seed) shall bruise your (the serpent) head, and you shall bruise his heel" [Genesis 3:15]. It is a personal promise for me that I would enjoy it.

4. Mankind was in great need for the renewal of its nature; thus Noah and his family entered the ark and the flood came upon the old world in order to build a new one. This was an example of the work of Christ that carries me in His church (the ark) and washes me in the water of baptism. "The like figure whereunto even baptism does also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" [Epistle of Peter 1 3:21]. With Noah and his family, I enter the church of Christ, get buried in the water of baptism, and enjoy the new life in Jesus Christ.

5. A covenant with the man of faith –Abraham: God called him "my friend" [Isaiah 41:8] and entered into a covenant with him [Genesis 15], where He promised him to make his seed as great as the stars of the sky and the sand of the seas, and to make them the chosen people of God.

God rejoices His children and enters with them into a covenant despite their small number! This is what happened at the age of the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and with the twelve sons who became the seed of the people of God (the old Israel).

But unfortunately, the Book of Genesis ended with the coming of the sons of Jacob, along with their father and their men, to the land of Egypt, where they were seeking bread due to the killing famine. The Book of Genesis started with the man in the Garden of Eden, as if in a royal palace, where he used to enjoy the voice of God walking in the garden. His entire being used to joyfully rejoice his Creator, who created the entire world for his sake. But, the book ended with the man that sought the bread as death has entered his soul and is catching unto his body as well. Due to the famine, he entered the land of Egypt, where he fell under bitter slavery! But, does the Word of God stand still in silence?! Impossible!

Await what God will do for the sake of man to liberate him from slavery and death in the Book of Exodus!