

## Blessed be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

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“Here I am.”

Lost in the chatter of the tapping and thumping, He worked. She approached his work table, with a bewildering smile.

“Wow!” She said.

He looked up.

“Here I am,” she repeated.

He turned around and leaned against the bench. He smiled and she tilted her head to the side, spying through the corner of her eye.

“You’re alone,” he whispered.

“Yes—”

“I have returned again to my place, until **they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face, and in their distress earnestly seek me**” (Hosea 5:15), he said.

She nodded. “Well,” she knelt down on one knee. “We’ve been far away for so long—tell me again what we need to do.”

“If they will **confess their sins** and the **sins of their father**—their treachery against me and their hostility toward me, which made me hostile toward them so that I sent them into the land of their enemies—then, when their **uncircumcised hearts are humbled** and **they pay for their sin**, I will remember my covenant with Jacob and my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. For the land will be deserted by them and will enjoy its Sabbaths while it lies desolate without them. **They will pay for their sins because they rejected my laws and abhorred my decrees. Yet in spite of this**, when they are in the land of their enemies, **I will not reject them or abhor them so as to destroy them completely breaking my covenant with them.** I am the Lord their God. But for their sake **I will remember the covenant with their ancestors** whom I brought out of Egypt in the night of the nations to be their God. I am the Lord” (Leviticus 20:40).



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“I know we are without excuse.” She pushed up against the floor and stood up. Their eyes met—a man of his word, the message clear and simple spelled out for a child. She dropped her head and glanced away.

“I know—we have so much today—Your Holy Spirit, access to more information than any other time in history, the internet, concordances, digital Bibles, free Bibles, translations in many languages, interpretations, digital translations and companions, your word is everywhere absolutely everywhere at the tips of our fingers.”

He returned to his work with just a quick nod.

She sighed. Her voice dropped into a painful plea. “We are today so—so very lost—still. We don’t understand our enemies. Christians generalize and call them ‘Satan and the demons,’ but I know our enemies are more than we understand. There are many principalities, powers, rulers and authorities in heavenly places. We were divorced, sentenced to wander—redeemed—thank you, but still we struggle. So much has been forgotten. Forgive me, forgive us for our sins.”

He put down the chisel and held out his arms. “Precious—you are to me.”

She strolled towards him, her arms crossed as she leaned into him. “If only, if only,” she whispered.

“If only, what?”

“Oh—you know our story—I wish it wasn’t so, that fateful day—” She pushed away and paced the floor.

“Which fateful day?”

“When everything began to unravel for us—when our house split and King Jeroboam set up those golden calves at Dan and Bethel. ‘After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves. He said to the people, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt”’ (I Kings 12:28). He wanted to keep us from re-joining the southern kingdom and returning to keeping your Sabbaths in Jerusalem. These celebrations are a sign between you and us—the visible sign that set us apart from the rest of the nations. You had it written to remind us: ‘Say to the Israelites, ‘You must observe my Sabbaths. **This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come**, so you may know that I am the LORD, who **makes you holy**’ (Exodus 31:13). We have forsaken your Sabbaths. My people do not keep any of them.”

She stood in front of the workshop window, rubbing the glass with the corner of her sweater.

“Thinking about it—things were not good even before then,” she muttered leaning into the window, scraping off the old paint that obstructed her view.

“King Solomon initiated the downfall. You said—” she stopped watching him work, as if he had a schedule to meet. Possibly, she was talking to herself; the interaction was unclear.

Never-the-less, she was not deterred and continued, “I was saying that you said, ‘But for the sake of my servant David and the city of Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, he will have one tribe. **I will do this because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Molech the god of the Ammonites, and have not walked in my ways, nor done what is right in my eyes, nor kept my statutes and laws as David, Solomon's father, did.** But I will not take the whole kingdom out of Solomon's hand; I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of David my servant, whom I chose and who observed my commands and statutes’ (I Kings 11:32). **And again, “The sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, served the Baals and the Ashtaroth, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the sons of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; thus they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him”** (Judges 10:6). **We’re guilty! Still guilty of worshiping those rogue gods. They appealed to our vanity and craving for self-elevation, power and our desire for greatness in exchange for their worship and detestable demands—might I add.”**

She began rubbing in a circular motion, straining to see out. “Look, it’s a nice day outside. How does your creation elude this?” She mumbled to herself, “It’s beautiful.”

As she turned, she found him staring at her. “My forefathers gave you up for those rogue gods! They did detestable things—sacrificed their firstborn to—that Baal!” She shook head in disgust.

He released a sharp gasp. “O house of Israel, while you were sacrificing your firstborn children in the fire as gifts—I **would NOT let you inquire of me!** I let you become defiled through your gifts—the sacrifice of every firstborn—that I might fill you with horror...” (Ezekiel 20:26).

She cringed and returned to scraping the window.

**En.Wikipedia.org:** “Child sacrifice is the ritualistic killing of children in order to please, propitiate or force a god or supernatural beings



in order to achieve a desired result. As such, it is a form of human sacrifice. Child sacrifice is thought to be an extreme extension of the idea that, the more important the object of sacrifice, the more devout the person giving it up is.”

**Ancientdestructions.com:** “In the mysterious tablets of Ugarit, discovered by Claude Schaeffer, Baal is the god of rain, thunder, and extraordinary bolts of lightning. The worship of Baal extended in this region to the Jews, Canaanites and the Phoenicians. But Herodotus informs us the god was also known under many other names such as Jupiter of the Romans, Zeus of the Greeks, Mazda of the Persians and Amon of the Egyptians.”

“Priests instructed the people that the bright sky god Baal was responsible for droughts, plagues, earthquakes and other calamities. People were often worked up into great frenzies at the prospects of displeasing Baal. In times of great turbulence human sacrifices, particularly children, were made to this father of the gods!”

**“Kings and other royalty of the ten Biblical tribes worshiped the god.** The god’s images were erected on many buildings. The religion spawned numerous priests and priestesses with their ceremonies including the burning of incense and offering burnt sacrifices, occasionally consisting of human victims. The officiating priests danced around the altars, chanting frantically and cutting themselves with knives to inspire the attention and compassion of the god. The Bible places Baal as Beelzebub, one of the fallen angels of Satan.”

“Beginning with the founding of the Phoenician colony of Carthage in about 814 BC, mothers and fathers buried their children who were sacrificed to Baal. The practice was apparently distasteful even to Carthaginians, and they began to buy children for the purpose of sacrifice or even to raise servant children, instead of offering up their own. However, in times of crisis or calamity, like war, earthquakes, drought, or famine, their priests demanded the flower of their youth. Special ceremonies during extreme crisis saw up to 200 children of the most affluent and powerful families slain and tossed into the burning pyre. During the political crisis of 310 B.C., some 500 were killed. On a moonlit night, the body was placed on the arms of an effigy of Baal made of brass. The Priests lit fires that heated the effigies from its lower parts. The victims were placed on the burning hot outstretched hands. **As they were burned alive they vehemently cried out. The priests beat a drum sounded flutes, lyres, and tambourines. This drowned out the cries of the anguished parents. The father could not hear the voice of his son, and his heart might not be moved.**”

<http://www.ancientdestructions.com/baalbek-temple-human-sacrifice-worship-baal/>

“I am so, so very sorry,” she whispered. Taking both corners of her sweater with two hands, she pressed against the glass, polishing until a well-formed crystal clean circle appeared. “There!”

He turned away and picked up a sheet of course-grit sandpaper.

“I know you gifted us with so much,” she added.

He pressed with intensity to smooth the sharp corners, while she worked to prompt a response.

“We’re your inheritance! Of all the nations, you chose *us*—and, I am sorry for that.”

He remained hard at work.

“And—I remain hopeful,” she added. “And—I think a lot of blame should go to my forefathers,” she snapped searching for a reaction from him.

Still, he remained hard at work.

“They robbed truth and true worship from their children, grandchildren and distant grandchildren. They didn’t care for us,” she grumbled.

He looked up with a befuddled smile.

“I am not making this up. I read what you said to Ezekiel about us, “I am sending you to the Israelites, to a **rebellious nation** that has rebelled against me; **they and their fathers have been in revolt against me to this very day... obstinate and stubborn people... a nation of briers, thorns and scorpions... the whole house of Israel is hardened and obstinate**” (Ezekiel 2:3,4, 6, 3:7). **And I know that “rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry”** (I Samuel 15:23).

With a long sigh, she leaned back against the window. “I’m really *bitterly* disappointed.”

“I looked on them with pity,” he said, succumbing to her antics and added, “and did not destroy them or put an end to them in the desert after coming out of Egypt. I said to them to follow the statutes of your fathers or keep their laws and not defile themselves with their idols (Ezekiel 20:17-18). **But they wanted to be like the nations.**”

He folded the sandpaper and pressed down, pushing his weight over the splinters and sanded feverishly. At intervals, he brushed his hand across the surface to feel his progress. When all was thought to have been said, he added, “My eyes are on the **sinful kingdom**. I will destroy it from the face of the earth” (Amos 9:8). **I will destroy it—** he repeated. “Evil will be sentenced and crushed—”

She interjected, “And—Israel will **be saved—all of Israel** (Romans 11).

“I promised Abraham and I will NOT go back on My Word.” His words echoed out like thunder.

“Thank goodness! Blessed be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!” she said, placing stress on each word. “We have been given GRACE! WE WILL REPENT—in a time of distress, Jacob’s trouble. ‘In those days, at that time, the **people of Israel** and the **people of Judah together** will go in tears to seek the Yahuah, their God. They will ask the way of Zion and turn their faces

toward it. They will come and bind themselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten" (Jeremiah 50:4-5).

He chose a fine, very fine-grit sheet. Applying tempered pressure, he rubbed removing only the unwanted, the ugly. "Is **Ephraim** my dear son?" he asked.

She stood perplexed, grappling with the notion to reply.

"Is he a delightful child?" he added.

She remained in limbo, waiting for a suitable moment to respond, if it should even arrive.

"Indeed, as often as I have spoken against him, I certainly still remember him; therefore, **my heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him**" (Jeremiah 31:18-19).

"Oh! Blessed be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!" She cried. Resting against the wall, she watched him smooth out the imperfections.

He gently wiped a cloth over the shiny surface. Something beautiful was taking shape. "How can I give you up, **Ephraim**? How can I hand you over, **Israel**? How can I make you like Zebouim? My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is aroused. **I will not carry out my fierce anger, nor devastate Ephraim again.** For I am God, and not man—the Holy One among you. I will not come in wrath. They will follow Me; I will roar like a lion. **When I roar**, my children will come trembling from the **west**" (Hosea 11:8-11).

"And—we will say, 'You have chastised me, and I was chastised, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the Lord my God. For after I turned back, **I REPENTED.** And after I was instructed, I smote my thigh; **I was ashamed and also humiliated** because I bore the reproach of my youth" (Jeremiah 31:18-19).

He reached up bringing the light down to study his handiwork. "O Israel," His voice softened into a painful murmur, "for a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion **I will bring you back.** In a surge of anger, I hid my face from you for a moment, but **with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you.** To me, this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the water of Noah would never again cover the earth. **So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again.** Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed. All your sons will be taught by the Lord, and great will be your children's peace. In righteousness you will be established" (Isaiah 54:6-13).

"I know, I know," she whispered. "Moses said, '**When you are in distress** and all these things have come upon you, **in the latter days you will return to the Lord your God and listen to His voice**'" (Deuteronomy 4:30).

Splattered in weary colors, an old paint tin held a variety of natural bristle brushes balanced

one against each other. He reached for the one-inch brush. "I will fight for you!" He said.

Dipped in wood stain, he moved the brush over the surface and the colors came alive. "I will rescue you *again!*" He avowed.

"The **people of Israel** will be oppressed, and the **people of Judah** as well. **All their captors will hold them fast, refusing to let them go. Yet the Redeemer is strong; Yahuah Almighty is MY name.** I will vigorously defend their cause so that I bring rest to their land, but unrest to those who live in Babylon" (Jeremiah 50:33-34).

"**Blessed be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!** If we confess our sins, you will be faithful and just, forgive us our sins, and purify us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

She selected a tin of high-gloss varnish, "Here," she said, "here I am; I want to help."

"I will build you up again and you will be rebuilt, **O Virgin Israel**" (Jeremiah 31:3). "**O Jacob, O Israel**, fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, **you are mine... you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you**" (Isaiah 43:1).

She watched him work with pride and passion. Relentless and with enduring determination, he completed his work: a repentant, humble people with a willing heart to keep His commandments and serve their Creator.

## **Blessed be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!**



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