

## Now hear this

Now hear this you heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, who abhor justice and pervert equity, who build up Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with iniquity: Her heads judge for a bribe, Her priests teach for pay, and Her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the Lord, and say, "Is not the Lord among us? No harm can come upon us." (Mic 3:9-11)

Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding.  
(Pro 23:23)

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give." (Mat 10:8)

Then he (*John the Baptist*) said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?" He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you." Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages." (Luk 3:7-14)

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.  
(Jam 1:27)

What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe – and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*" And he was called a friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (Jam 2:14-26)

How did Abraham become righteous and how did he know Melchizedek?

Haran was forty-two years old when he had Sarai, which was in the tenth year of the life of Abram; and in those days Abram and his mother and nurse went out of the cave, as the king and his subjects had forgotten the affair of Abram. When Abram came out from the cave, he went to Noah and his son Shem, and he remained with them to learn the instruction of the Lord and His ways; no man knew where Abram was, and Abram served Noah and Shem his son for a long time. Abram was in Noah's house thirty-nine years, and Abram knew the Lord from three years old; he went in the ways of the Lord until the day of his death, as Noah and his son Shem had taught him, and all the sons of the earth in those days greatly went contrary to the Lord, and they rebelled against Him and they served other gods. They forgot the Lord who had created them in the earth; and the inhabitants of the earth made to themselves, at that time, every man his god; gods of wood and stone which could neither speak, hear, nor deliver, and the sons of men served them and they became their gods. (Jasher 9:4-6)

All that generation were wicked in the sight of the Lord, and they thus made every man his god, but they turned away from the Lord who had created them. And there was not a man found in those days in the whole earth who knew the Lord (for they served each man his own god) except Noah and his household; and all those who were under his counsel knew the Lord in those days. Abram the son of Terah was becoming great in those days in the house of Noah, and no man knew it, and the Lord was with him. The Lord gave Abram an understanding heart, and he knew all the works of that generation were vain, and that all their gods were vain and were of no avail. (Jasher 9:9-12)

When Nimrod had built these cities in the land of Shinar, he placed in them the remainder of his people, his princes and his mighty men that were left in his kingdom. Nimrod lived in Babel, and there he renewed his reign over the rest of his subjects, and he reigned securely, and the subjects and princes of Nimrod called his name Amraphel, saying that at the tower his princes and men fell through his means. (Jasher 11:5-6) {Amraphel = 'Powerful people'}

In the fiftieth year of the life of Abram, son of Terah, Abram came forth from the house of Noah, and went to his father's house. And Abram knew the Lord, and he followed in His ways and instructions, and the Lord his God was with him. Terah his father was in those days still captain of the host of king Nimrod, and he still followed strange gods. (Jasher 11:13-15)

Eliezer, Abram's servant whom the king had given him, was at that time in the presence of the king, and he heard what Anuki had advised the king, and what the king had said to cause Abram's death. Eliezer said to Abram, "Hasten, rise up and save your soul, that you may not die through the hands of the king, for thus did he see in a dream concerning you, and thus did Anuki interpret it, and thus also did Anuki advise the king concerning you."

Abram listened to the voice of Eliezer, and Abram hurried and ran for safety to the house of Noah and his son Shem, and he concealed himself there and found a place of safety; and the king's servants came to Abram's house to seek him, but they could not find him, and they searched throughout the country and he was not to be found; they went and searched in every direction and he was not to be met with. And when the king's servants could no find Abram they returned to the king, but the king's anger against Abram was stilled, as they did not find him, and the king drove from his mind this matter concerning Abram.

Abram was concealed in Noah's house for one month, until the king had forgotten this matter, but Abram was still afraid of the king; and Terah came to see Abram his son secretly in the house of Noah, and Terah was very great in the eyes of the king.

Abram said to his father, "Do you know that the king thinks to kill me, and to annihilate my name from the earth by the advice of his wicked counselors? Now whom have you here and what have you in this land? Arise, let us go together to the land of Canaan, that we may be delivered from his hand, that you do not perish also through him in the latter days."

"Do you not know or have you not heard, that it is not through love that Nimrod gives you all this honor, but it is only for his benefit that he bestows all this good on you? And if he does to you greater good than this, certainly these are only vanities of the world, for wealth and riches cannot avail in the day of wrath and anger."

"Now therefore listen to my voice, and let us arise and go to the land of Canaan, out of the reach of injury from Nimrod; and serve the Lord who created you in the earth and it will be well with you; and cast away all the vain things which you pursue."

And Abram ceased to speak when Noah and his son Shem answered Terah, saying, "True is the word which Abram hath said to you."

And Abram listened to the voice of his son Abram, and Terah did all that Abram said, for this was from the Lord that the king should not cause Abram's death. (Jasher 12:59-70)

The Lord appeared to Abram when he came to the land of Canaan, and said to him, "This is the land which I gave to you and to your descendants after you forever, and I will make them like the stars of heaven, and I will give to your descendants all the lands which you see for an inheritance."

And Abram built an altar in the place where God had spoken to him, and there Abram called on the name of the Lord. At that time, at the end of three years of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan, in that year Noah died, which was the fifty-eighth year of the life of Abram; all the days that Noah lived were nine hundred and fifty years and he died. Abram lived in the land of Canaan, he, and his wife, and all belonging to him, and all those that accompanied him, together with those that joined him from the people of the land; but Nahor, Abram's brother, and Terah his father, and Lot the son of Haran and all belonging to them lived in Haran. (Jasher 13:7-10)

*Noah was born in 1056AM, Shem was born when Noah was 502y = 1558AM. Abram was born in 1948AM; when Noah died at 950y, Abram was 58y and Shem was 448y = 2006AM. Abram died at 175y in 2123AM and Shem died at 600y in 2158AM, so Shem lived another 35y after Abraham's death!!!*

It was the fifteenth year of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan, which is the seventieth year of the life of Abram, the Lord appeared to Abram in that year and said to him, "I AM the Lord who brought you out from Ur Casdim to give you this land for an inheritance. Now therefore walk before Me and be perfect and keep My commands, for to you and to your descendants I will give this land for an inheritance, from the river Mitzraim to the great river Euphrates. And you shall come to your fathers in peace and in good age, and the fourth generation shall return here in this land and shall inherit it forever."

And Abram built an altar, and he called on the name of the Lord who appeared to him, and he brought up sacrifices on the altar to the Lord. {see Gen 15:1-21}

At that time Abram returned and went to Haran to see his father and mother, and his father's household, and Abram and his wife and all belonging to him returned to Haran; Abram lived in Haran five years. And many of the people of Haran, about seventy-two men, followed Abram and Abram taught them the instruction of the Lord and His ways, and he taught them to know the Lord.

In those days the Lord appeared to Abram in Haran, and He said to him, "Behold, I spoke to you twenty years ago saying, 'Go forth from your land, from your birth-place and from your father's house, to the land which I have shown you to give it to you and to your children, for there in that land I will bless you, and make of you a great nation, and make your name great, and in you shall the families of the earth be blessed.' Now therefore arise, go forth from this place, you, your wife, and all belonging to you, also every one born in your house and all the souls you have made in Haran, and bring them out with you from here, and rise to return to the land of Canaan."

And Abram arose and took his wife Sarai and all belonging to him and all that were born to him in his house and the souls which they had made in Haran, and they came out to go to the land of Canaan. Abram went and returned to the land of Canaan, according to the word of the Lord. And Lot the son of his brother Haran went with him; Abram was seventy-five years old when he went forth from Haran to return to the land of Canaan. (Jasher 13:17-26) {see Gen 12:1-9}

At that time Chedorlaomer king of Elam sent to all the neighboring kings, to Nimrod, king of Shinar who was then under his power, and to Tidal, king of Goyim, and to Arioch, king of Elasar, with whom he made a covenant, saying, "Come up to me and assist me, that we may strike all the towns of Sodom and its inhabitants, for they have rebelled against me these thirteen years."

These four kings went up with all their camps, about eight hundred thousand men, and they went as they were, and struck every man they found in their road. And the five kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboyim, Bera king of Sodom, Bersha king of Gomorrah, and Bela king of Zoar, went out to meet them, and they all joined together in the valley of Siddim. These nine kings made war in the valley of Siddim; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah were smitten before the kings of Elam. (Jasher 16:1-4) {Gen 14:1-9}

Abram heard this, and he rose up with about three hundred and eighteen men that were with him, and that night he pursued these kings and struck them; they all fell before Abram and his men, and there was none remaining but the four kings who fled, and they each went their own road. Abram recovered all the property of Sodom, and he also recovered Lot and his property, his wives and little ones and all belonging to him, so that Lot lacked nothing. And when he returned from smiting these kings, he and his men passed the valley of Siddim where the kings had made war together. Bera king of Sodom, and the rest of his men that were with him, went out from the lime pits into which they had fallen, to meet Abram and his men. And Adonizedek king of Jerusalem, the same was Shem, went out with his men to meet Abram and his people, with bread and wine, and they remained together in the valley of Melech. Adonizedek blessed Abram, and Abram gave him a tenth from all that he had brought from the spoil of his enemies, for Adonizedek was a priest before God. (Jasher 16:7-12)

*This is the first mention of tithing and people constantly refer to this example, but is this text viewed in the correct context?*

Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all. (Gen 14:18-20)

*Genesis calls Shem, 'Melchizedek king of Salem', but look at what happened later in the Book of Joshua.*

Now it came to pass when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai and had utterly destroyed it – as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king – and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, that they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were mighty. Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon, saying, ... (Jos 10:1-3)

*This king of Jerusalem has the same name as Shem's title in the Book of Jasher.*

Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself." But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich' – except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion." (Gen 14:21-24)

*I've heard people preach that Melchizedek wasn't a real person! I've heard people preach that Abram gave a tithe, thus we must honor the church with tithes, but did he really? Abram gave the rest to the king of Sodom, was the king of Sodom 9x more righteous than Shem, of course not! Abram gave everything away and kept nothing for himself. If anything he fulfilled the text in Galatians. As Shem was also Abram's teacher of many years.*

Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches. (Gal 6:6)

*This was definitely a shadow of the Levitical practice of tithing, which was introduced through Moses, to support the Levites and Temple ministry; but can we enforce it today, when we are living under the New Covenant? To understand Abram's heart let us look at the account in Jasher.*

And all the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah who were there, with their servants, approached Abram and begged him to return their servants whom he had made captive, and to take to himself all the property. Abram answered the kings of Sodom, saying, "As the Lord lives who created heaven and earth, and who redeemed my soul from all affliction, and who delivered me this day from my enemies and gave them into my hand, I will not take anything belonging to you, that you may not boast tomorrow saying, 'Abram became rich from our property that he saved.' For the Lord my God in whom I trust said to me, 'You shall lack nothing, for I will bless you in all the works of your hands.' "

"Now here is all belonging to you, take it and go; as the Lord lives I will not take from a living soul down to a shoetie or thread, excepting the expense of the food of those who went out with me to battle, as also the portions of the men who went with me, Anar, Ashcol, and Mamre, they and their men, as well as those also who had remained to watch the baggage, they shall take their portion of the spoil."

And the kings of Sodom gave Abram according to all that he had said; they pressed him to take of whatever he chose, but he would not. He sent away the kings of Sodom and the remainder of their men, and he gave them orders about Lot, and they went to their respective places. And Lot, his brother's son, he also sent away with his property, and he went with them, and Lot returned to his home, to Sodom, and Abram and his people returned to their home to the plains of Mamre, which is in Hebron. (Jasher 16:13-19)

*So what Abram really did was to deny the offer of the worldly goods, which the kings of Sodom tried to make him accept. Abram gave everything away.*

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Gal 6:7-10)

*Abraham sowed people and material goods, and guess what he reaped?*

Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood." (Mar 12:41-44 also Luk 21:1-4)

*So are New Covenant Christians limited to a tenth of their income? Who decides what is appropriate amount for each person? I suppose it all depends on the size of the required harvest, and what type of harvest, one is sowing for!*

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace," without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually. Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better. Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so as to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him. (Heb 7:1-10)

So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You." As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek", who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, called by God as High Priest "According to the order of Melchizedek," of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. (Heb 5:5-11)

*These two texts confuse many people, but what Paul is saying, is that the order of High Priest of Righteousness goes on forever, as one high priest was replaced by another. But now Jesus has become our High Priest, and He will occupy this role until His 'second coming'. Paul calls Melchizedek a man, and who could have been more righteous than Shem, who had been teaching Abraham and many other men about righteousness for centuries!*

Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. And inasmuch as He was not made priest without an oath (for they have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him who said to Him: "The Lord has sworn and will not relent, 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek'"), by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant. (Heb 7:11-22)

*Now because Jesus Christ has become our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, tithing is no longer required to sustain the levitical priesthood of the earthly sanctuary. I am not saying that tithing is wrong, but telling people that they must tithe is wrong; as all gifts given with a joyful heart, to orphans, widows and the poor, are blessed by the Lord. There are no limits to giving!*

He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." (Luk 12:15)

He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. (2Co 9:6-7)

Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. (Heb 13:5)

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