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Sitting Down With Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

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One of the first prophecies the Lord made relative to the restoration of the Kingdom of God on earth is recorded in Matthew 8:11-12 where we read the following: "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

It stands to reason that if we are to understand what the Lord had in mind in this statement, we must know what was promised exclusively to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob relative to the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

In the 17th chapter of Genesis, and verse 18, we read: "And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee." This was before the promised Isaac was born. And though Ishmael born of Hagar of Abraham, he was not the promised son of Sarah; Ishmael became the father of the Arabs.

God's answer to Abraham's request is recorded in verses 19, 20, and 21 where we read: "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael I have heard thee . . . and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year."

In Romans 9 the Apostle Paul deals with God's selection of the Isaac sons — Saxons, as they are now called — to fulfill his earthly promise to Abraham. We shall read verses 7 through 9 of Romans 9: "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." Ishmael and his descendants are the children of the flesh of Abraham, but Isaac and his descendants are the children of the promise of God.

Let us now read what Paul wrote concerning Jacob and Esau in verses 10 through 14 of this same 9th chapter of Romans: "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved (chosen), but Esau have I hated (rejected)."

It is self-evident the Apostle Paul is not here writing concerning personal salvation; neither is he teaching that Ishmael and the Arabs, nor Esau and the Turks, are rejected and excluded from personal salvation, and that only Abraham's children through Isaac and Jacob were elected to receive personal salvation. Personal salvation, throughout the Scriptures, is for whosoever will without regard to race or ancestry.

The Apostle Paul, in the verses we have read from Romans 9, is not dealing with personal salvation; he is quoting from the Old Scriptures to show that God's earthly kingdom people were to come through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and not through Ishmael and the Arabs, nor through Esau the father of the Mohammedans.

Let us turn back to Genesis and read verse 23 of chapter 25 where God spoke to Rebecca, the mother of Jacob and Esau: "And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." You see, there is no reference here to personal salvation. This statement deals with the earthly destiny of two nations and two manner of people; namely, the Anglo-Saxons and the Turks (Mohammedans).

There are well-meaning Christians who imagine that the death and the resurrection of the Christ canceled these old racial covenants that God made with the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The fact of the matter is that just the opposite is true. In Romans 15:8 we read: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a