

## Deuteronomy 14:1, 2 Sons of the Lord God

Chapter 14 of Deuteronomy is divided into three separate sections, improper mourning, proper adherence to dietary laws, and what to do with – meaning how to properly handle – the blessings bestowed upon the people.

However, each of these three main points is based upon the first words of the passage – “*You are the children of the Lord your God.*” Everything else stems from that first clause, and it is then further defined in verse 2.

What does it mean when the Bible speaks of the sons of God? The first instance of the term is found in Genesis 6:2. There, it is a highly contested phrase among scholars, as if the countless other uses of the term in Scripture have nothing to do with the phrase as it is used there.

This is so much the case that the most fanciful interpretations have arisen to explain it. And, fanciful is both exciting and profitable. So, most people normally hold fast to the most fanciful interpretation, and those who can profit off of them present that most fanciful interpretation, renewing it from time to time, in order to make a bit more off a new book or a new video.

This is not responsible theology, and it edifies no one. The real key to understanding the phrase there in Genesis 6 is actually found in Job 1 & 2. Almost everyone agrees on that, but not everyone has a correct understanding of those verses in Job. I admit, I didn't.

There was a disconnect between my understanding of the term there and my understanding of the term elsewhere in Scripture that was, thankfully, resolved when some marvelous people – Benzer and Sandra – traveled to the US from the UK in order to visit the church, which – ironically – happened exactly one year ago this week.

The first time we were together at the house, Benzer brought up the Nephilim in Genesis 6 and I immediately thought, “Here we go. Another loose cannon.” That lasted about two seconds until he explained why my thought on Job 1 & 2 was incorrect.

The light came on, and I said, “It sounds correct, but there is a lot of work to do before I agree to this.” And so, instead of doing whatever thing we had planned to do, we sat down at the computer and went through every single instance of the phrase *ha'elohim*, or “**the** God,” found in Scripture. We don't form sound doctrine and proper theology any other way.

***Text Verse: "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."  
James 4:7***

Being a son of God is, first and foremost, a mark of humanity. This will be explained as we continue on today. There is, within the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but the Son in that capacity is a term used to indicate a position within the Godhead – God the Father; God the Son; God the Holy Spirit.

When the term "Son of God" is used in the gospels, it is referring to the human Jesus who is God's Son. He is the Son of God who is a Man. Curiously, the term Son of Man that is used so often concerning Jesus is more closely associated in thought with His deity, not His humanity. He is a Man, but He is a Man who is God.

If you doubt this, go read every instance of Son of God and Son of Man in the gospels and see if it is so or not. It is. As this is so, the term "son of God" is one that refers to humanity. How does one become a son of God?

James 4:7, our text verse, gave us an insight into it. In submitting to God and resisting the devil, the devil will flee from us. The implication is that the devil is the problem.

John makes it explicit in 1 John 3:8, where he says, "He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."

Where does sin come from? It comes from a violation of law. Where does the law come from? It comes from God. In violating God's law, sin enters the picture. With sin comes death and separation from God. How is that restored? Not through law! The devil uses law to separate us from God. What is the answer?

It is available, and it is to be found in God's superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

### **I. Translation Matters; Context Matters (½ Verse 1)**

The contents of the previous passage were almost entirely in the singular with just one exception. Moses was speaking to Israel as a collective whole. Now, to open chapter 14, he immediately switches to the plural to address them...

<sup>1</sup>“**You are the children of the LORD your God;**

*banim atem Yehovah elohekem* – “Sons you (all) are of Yehovah your (all) God.” Of these words, Charles Ellicott rightly and poignantly states –

“This fact is made the foundation of all the laws of ceremonial and moral holiness in the Pentateuch, more especially in the Book of Leviticus, where these laws are chiefly to be found.” Charles Ellicott

When he says, “the Pentateuch,” it means the five books of Moses. Although Israel was only introduced later in Genesis, and then the nation of Israel only truly received its calling in Exodus, the entirety of these five books must be considered in this truth.

And from that foundation, all of the rest of the Old Testament finds its basis – both among the people of Israel, but also among the sons of God who are not of Israel, such as Job.

And then from there, the work of the Redeemer is introduced, fulfilling what is stated in this law – and which concerns these “sons of Yehovah” – and how they are brought fully to a right state of sonship to the Lord God.

One cannot look at these words of Moses to Israel now without understanding what it means to be a son of Yehovah, meaning a Son of God, without taking a much more intimate look at the concept – even from the earliest time of man on earth. The idea first goes back to the opening words of Genesis 6 –

“Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup>that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.” Genesis 6:1, 2

There it used the term *bene ha’elohim*, or “sons of **the** God.” The definite article was, and continues to be, expressive. It is used when referring to the one true God in relation to man. But more especially, it is in relation to those who are in a right relationship with Him, or it is used to contrast those who are not in a right relationship with Him.

In the Bible, the term “son(s) of God,” more expressly focuses on one’s humanity. When Jesus is called the Son of God, it is true that He is the divine Son of God, but the term more appropriately is referring to His humanity. He is the true Son of God – the perfect ideal of Man *in relation to* God.

This idea extends to all people who stand in a proper relationship to God. The “sons of **the God**” of Genesis 6:1 refers to this relationship between men and **the God**.

Before that term was introduced, a set division of humanity was carefully laid out so that when the term was given, there should not be a mistake as to what it was conveying. But mistakes do come.

Genesis 4 immediately introduced Cain and Abel. Abel was shown to be right with God through his actions of faith. Cain was not. Cain killed Abel – demonstrating the enmity between the two thoughts.

From there, Chapter 4 carefully details Cain and his line, a line separate from – and at enmity with – God. At the end of the chapter, however, another line was introduced with the words –

“And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, “For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed.” <sup>26</sup> And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the LORD.” Genesis 4:25, 26

Chapter 5 then lists this second line, a line that is right with God. It is the line of sonship, meaning a line of faith in the promises of God. This is why these two divergent lines are highlighted immediately after the fall.

The word of God introduces a subject, it gives details based on that subject, and then the word goes back and fills in more details to more fully flesh out what is being conveyed. The simple example of giving the book of Judges and only later giving the book of Ruth, a book that rightly belongs in the chronology of the book of Judges, shows how this occurs.

This happens time and again in Scripture. The account of Joseph being sold into a life of servitude in Egypt is introduced. Immediately after that, the story of the line of Judah through his relationship with his own daughter-in-law is then given, and only then does the narrative return to Joseph in Egypt.

And so, to understand this idea of being sons of Yehovah – and thus sons of **the God** – from its proper context, the first two uses of the term, *ha’elohim*, or “**the God**,” were provided in Genesis 5 when speaking of Enoch –

“After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with [**the**] God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup> So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. <sup>24</sup> And Enoch walked with [**the**] God; and he was not, for God took him.” Genesis 5:22-24

Enoch was a man who was clearly in a right relationship with “**the** God,” and the article was given to solidify that fact. The next use of the article was twice in Genesis 6 when referring to this line of people who stood in this proper relationship with God. They are *bene ha’elohim*, or “sons of **the** God.”

That this is the correct interpretation of this is first seen when the next use of the article before “God” was found in Genesis 6:9 when speaking of Noah who was in a right relationship with Him –

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

<sup>9</sup> This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with [**the**] God.” Genesis 6:8, 9

Using the same words spoken of concerning Enoch, but in an emphatic form, Noah is likewise said to be of this godly line: *eth ha’elohim hithalek Noakh* – “with **the** God walked Noah.” In other words, Enoch was a son of **the** God, being in a right standing with Him. Noah was likewise.

However, immediately after that, the article is again used to define the state of Nephilim, or “fallen ones,” already referred to in the chapter. The word Nephilim is not referring to a hybrid product of men sleeping with angels – something the Bible never refers to nor hints at. Rather, it is speaking of those who are not in a right standing with “**the** God.” Rather, they are fallen –

“The earth also was corrupt before [**the**] God, and the earth was filled with violence. <sup>12</sup> So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.” Genesis 6:11, 12

In other words, the use of the article is expressing the contrast between the two lines that exist in the presence of **the** God. Noah is of one line; the others are not. This is why the definite article is so meticulously and precisely used in these accounts. In following this term, we follow the thought of Scripture as it presents to us man’s status before God.

The next time the article is used is not until Genesis 17. It is at a time when it is necessary to define those who are, or who are not, in this right “son” relationship –

“Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, ‘Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?’ <sup>18</sup> And Abraham said to [the] God, ‘Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!’” Genesis 17:17, 18

The implication is that Abraham was petitioning for Ishmael to define the line of right standing with God. But that was rejected. Another son would come who would be in that position.

When a possible interruption of that promise came about in Genesis 20, the article is used twice to confirm the right standing of Abraham before God to Abimelech who had Abraham’s wife, Sarah.

Following that, in Genesis 22, in the great test of faith of this man of faith, the definite article is used three times, confirming Abraham’s right standing before “the God.”

Carefully following the use of the article before *elohim*, or “God,” in the Bible consistently reveals the relationship between man and the true God. This means either a right relationship or the lack of it. This is true in the more than 370 uses of the article.

When it is necessary to define the true God, the article is used. An example of this, and which defines this relationship, is found in 2 Chronicles 35. In that chapter, the word *elohim*, or “god,” is found five times. The first use in verse 3 defines God as the true God by identifying Him as “Yehovah,” saying to the people of Israel, “Now serve the Lord [Yehovah] your God.”

The second use, in verse 8, refers to *beth ha’elohim*, or “house of the God.” Thus, it clearly defines the house – meaning the temple – as that pertaining to the true God. However, the final three uses of *elohim* in the chapter are when Pharaoh Neco is referred to –

“But he sent messengers to him, saying, ‘What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I have not come against you this day, but against the house with which I have war; for God commanded me to make haste. Refrain from meddling with God, who is with me, lest He destroy you.’ <sup>22</sup> Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself so that he might fight with him, and

did not heed the words of Necho from the mouth of God. So he came to fight in the Valley of Megiddo.” 2 Chronicles 35:21, 22

In all three instances there, the article is lacking, thus signifying that it is not the true God that Pharaoh communicated with, but rather his own false god or gods.

One must carefully evaluate each instance of the use of the article, and also maintain the proper context of the passage, or errors in theology, such as the misrepresentation of who the Nephilim of Genesis 6 are, will inevitably result.

This is especially true when considering the only other uses of the full term, *bene ha'elohim*, or “sons of the God,” found in Scripture. The uses are in Job 1 and Job 2 –

“Now there was a day when the sons of [**the**] God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. <sup>7</sup>And the LORD said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’

So Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.’” Job 1:6, 7

&

“Again there was a day when the sons of [**the**] God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. <sup>2</sup>And the LORD said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’

Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.’” Job 2:1, 2

The error of analysis made in these verses by many is that the “sons of **the** God” are angels, and that they are presenting themselves before the Lord. This is incorrect.

This is not speaking of angels but of men presenting themselves before the true God, just as Enoch did, just as Abraham did, and just as all other uses of the article demonstrate – a right relationship of man before the true God or the lack thereof.

This becomes perfectly evident from the reference made in Job 38:7 which all scholars who incorrectly identify the Nephilim as angels use to justify their position on this matter –

“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. <sup>5</sup>Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who

stretched the line upon it? <sup>6</sup>To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, <sup>7</sup>When the morning stars sang together, And all **the sons of God** shouted for joy?" Job 38:4-7

In this passage, the term used is *bene elohim*, "sons of God," not *bene ha'elohim*, or "sons of **the** God." The article is left off because it is not speaking of men in relation to the true God. If this is even speaking of angels, which is probably not the case, there is no need to include the article because both angels and demons know who the true God is.

However, these words in Job 38 are probably not speaking of angels. Instead, it is more probably referring to the early formation of stars as detailed in the Genesis account harmonically resonating as the word of God was spoken forth in the act of creation.

In other words, the Lord is speaking in parallelism in Job 38. Parallelism is a literary device where something is stated, and then it is repeated in another way to make the point more poignant –

#### Job 38:4-7 in parallelism

Where were you (JOB) when I laid the foundations of the earth?  
Tell *Me*, if you (JOB) have understanding.

Who determined its measurements? – The size of the earth  
Or who stretched the line upon it? – The size of the earth

To what were its foundations fastened? – the underpinnings  
Or who laid its cornerstone – the underpinnings

When the morning stars sang together, – the early star formation  
And all the sons of God shouted for joy? – the early star formation

The questions of the Lord continue in parallelism throughout the passage, and so there is no reason to assume that the morning stars are being poetically equated to angels, but rather to actual stars. The lack of the article in this verse demonstrates this because the article is specifically used to express the nature of the true God in relation to man.

Man was not yet created in that section of Job, and so the article is left off. However, the article is used in Job 1 and 2 to expressly set those verses apart from the notion that God is speaking of angelic beings.

This, then, obviously invites the question, “Then what is Satan doing there, walking among the sons of **the** God?” The answer is clearly expressed elsewhere in Scripture. Satan is explicitly said to be the accuser of the brethren in Revelation 12 –

“Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.’” Revelation 12:10

In both Job 1 and 2, it is not referring to angels at all. Rather, it is referring to humans who anticipate the coming Messiah – thus they are sons of **the** God – who have presented themselves before the Lord. Satan, then, has come among them in an attempt to sift them, exactly as he sifted Christ’s followers as is recorded in Luke 22 –

“And the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. <sup>32</sup> But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.’” Luke 22:31, 32

Peter later says exactly this concerning believers in 1 Peter 5 –

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. <sup>10</sup> But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. <sup>11</sup> To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” 1 Peter 5:8-11

The idea presented in Job 1 and 2 is not that Satan has come before the Lord with other angels. Rather, it is that the sons of **the** God, meaning those – like Job – who are those who “fear God and shun evil,” have come before the true God (see Job 1:1, 1:8, etc.).

Though not being in the line of Messiah, they are faithful believers in the promise of the coming Messiah. They have presented themselves before **the** God, and Satan has come among them to sift them. This is exactly the premise of Satan’s testing of Job with the approval of the Lord that is conveyed in the surrounding passage.

To further confirm this, the word used in Job that says they came to “present” themselves before “**the** God” is *yatsav*. It is used in exactly the same way concerning men presenting themselves before the Lord in Numbers 11 –

“So the LORD said to Moses: ‘Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may **stand** there with you.’”  
Numbers 11:16

But, more importantly, this is seen again in Joshua 24:1 –

“Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel, for their heads, for their judges, and for their officers; and they **presented** themselves before God.” Joshua 24:1

There, it says they presented themselves *liphne ha’elohim*, “before **the** God,” just as those in Job do. Such instances clearly define what is later referred to in Job. The same word, *yatsav*, translated as “present” is again used in this same context in 1 Samuel 10 –

“Then Samuel called the people together to the LORD at Mizpah, <sup>18</sup> and said to the children of Israel, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all kingdoms and from those who oppressed you.” <sup>19</sup> But you have today rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations; and you have said to Him, ‘No, set a king over us!’ Now therefore, **present** yourselves before the LORD [Yehovah] by your tribes and by your clans.”  
1 Samuel 10:17-19

In this passage, the article before “God” is unnecessary because He is defined by the name of the true God, Yehovah.

To fully appreciate this connection of the use of the article before *elohim*, or “God,” to the relationship of human beings toward the true God, one must go through all 370+ instances of the term *ha’elohim* expressed in Scripture.

Only in doing this will one see that every use follows the same contextual pattern. In this, one can then appreciate the error in thinking that has resulted from accepting the view that angelic beings are sleeping with humans and producing aberrant hybrids of mutants.

Such fanciful analyses are dramatic, sensational, and they sell well, but they improperly analyze Scripture, they introduce contradictions into Scripture, they fail to consider the use of the definite article preceding *elohim* as it is intended, they neglect the context of

the surrounding passages, and they fail to take into account the whole body of Scripture that is necessary to properly and rightly divide the word concerning what is being said.

Satan did not sleep with Eve in order to cause man to fall. Rather, he deceived the woman through a manipulation of Scripture and Adam accepted his presentation over the word of the Lord. This is how he attempted to lead Christ astray as well.

The devil misuses the word of God, meaning law, in order to introduce sin. Through the introduction of sin, the devil gains his foothold over man. It is through deceit, temptation, affliction, opposition, and accusation that he works out his plans.

This is how he operates, not by having his fallen angels, which are spirit beings, sleep with human beings – something not possible for spirits, by the way.

To understand more on the misanalyses of who the Nephilim are in Genesis 6, you can go back and watch that sermon. The Bible is written for man about man's right or wrong relationship with God. That is clearly expressed in Scripture. When one is in a right standing with Him, he is termed a son of God through faith.

This is the case in both testaments, and it is the case with the first clause of this first, most important, verse in Deuteronomy 14 – *banim atem Yehovah elohkem*, "Sons you are of Yehovah your God."

*Sons of God through faith in His promise  
This is how the deal is sealed  
One cannot be a doubting Thomas  
And expected the title "Son of God" to him be dealed*

*But if we just trust in what God has done  
If we hold fast to the promise  
Believing in the word concerning God's Son  
And not continuing as a doubting Thomas*

*Then all good things will come to us  
God will be pleased with the faith we possess  
Yes, if we place our trust in the Lord Jesus  
And Him as Lord we do confess*

*This is what God would ask of you  
This is what God expects you to do*

## II. A Holy People; a Special Treasure (verses 1 con't & 2)

The sons of God are those who live life in relation to Messiah. In the Old Testament, it is those who anticipated the coming of Messiah. Enoch did, Noah did, and Abraham did – among others in that select line. But Job also did, and he lived his life according to that promise.

How do we know this? It is because the hope of Messiah is the hope of restoration and life. Job's words clearly indicate that he possessed this hope –

“For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth;  
<sup>26</sup> And after my skin is destroyed, this I know,  
That in my flesh I shall see God, <sup>27</sup> Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” Job 19:25-27

It is this that made him a son of **the** God – faith. For Israel, that term, son of **the** God, is more fully defined using the divine name, Yehovah. This more precise relationship was established in Exodus 6 –

“And God spoke to Moses and said to him: ‘I am the LORD. <sup>3</sup> I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name LORD I was not known to them.’” Exodus 6:2, 3

The name translated both there in Exodus and here in Deuteronomy as “Lord” is Yehovah. The people of Israel are called sons of Yehovah because this is how God had revealed Himself to them. With this in mind, Cambridge notes –

“But when all the O.T. references to God as the Father whether of Israel or Israelites and to them as His children have been reckoned up, how few are they in comparison to the number of times that sons, and children, of God occur in the N.T. God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying Abba Father (Galatians 4:6); joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17).”

Their somewhat dismissive note doesn't change the fact that Moses now calls them the sons of Yehovah. It is a truth and a calling that is set forth by him, and thus it is to be accepted as such.

It is for this reason that they were to apply the moral and holy laws of the Lord carefully to their walk before Him. Understanding this, Moses continues addressing the people in the plural with...

**1 (con't) you shall not cut yourselves**

*lo titgogedu* – “no shall you (all) gash yourselves.” It is a new word in Scripture, *gadad* signifying to penetrate or cut. It comes from *gud*, meaning to invade or attack. Thus, it signifies to crowd, or to gash. The idea is that of pressing into oneself like a crowd presses in to form a break in a line.

The words here are similar to that stated in Leviticus 19 –

“You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the Lord.” Leviticus 19:28

Gashing oneself had varying purposes. One of them was to petition one’s god in an almost mournful way. Such is found of the worshippers of Baal in 1 Kings 18 –

“And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.” <sup>28</sup> So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. <sup>29</sup> And when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.” 1 Kings 18:27-29

The worshippers of Baal were in great distress because there had been no answer to their petition and Elijah was have fun poking at them over that fact. Likewise, the implication here in Deuteronomy is that this is intended as a sign of mourning as is further seen in the next words...

**1 (con't) nor shave the front of your head for the dead.**

*v’lo tasimu qarekhah ben enekem lamet* – “and no shall you (all) place baldness between your eyes to *the* dead.” In other words, they were not to shave the forehead. Our friend Rhoda noted that this may be a pun based on the previous verse.

In verse 13:18 it said the people were to do what is right in the eyes of the Lord. Now, it says not to place baldness between their eyes, implying it is an act that is not right in the eyes of the Lord. Both acts were a defilement of the body as a sign of mourning.

These were pagan practices that defiled the body created in the image of God. They were for superstitious reasons in relation to the gods of the people, and as a sign of exceptional mourning that the person was forever lost due to the end of his life.

To gash oneself would release blood. But the Lord has said that the life is in the blood. To shed one's own blood would be a way of demonstrating, through mourning for the dead, that the life was lost and there was no hope.

To shave one's forehead was equally objectionable because the forehead is the place of conscience and identification. To shave the hair from the forehead was an acknowledgement that the conscience and identification of the dead was forever lost.

These were forbidden firstly because there is one God, and it is not the false god of one of these nations. The second reason was for exactly the reason that was talked about earlier – the hope of Messiah. Israel was not to mourn in such ways because they were the people of God through whom this hope was promised.

It would be inconsistent to grieve in such a manner, as if all hope was lost, when considering that Yehovah had called them as a people for exactly the opposite reason. They were the people of God, and it is through them that Messiah would come. Because of this, the hope was assured. This is the reason why this thought now is expressly tied to the first thought, meaning that they were the sons of Yehovah.

Through Him is the promise of life, meaning Messiah, and there was to therefore be no such mourning as if all hope had perished. This is exactly what was so beautifully expressed by Martha at the grave of Lazarus –

“Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. <sup>21</sup> Now Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup> But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.’

<sup>23</sup> Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’

<sup>24</sup> Martha said to Him, ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.’” John 11:20-24

Martha mourned for her brother, but it was a mourning of separation, not hopeless loss. Jesus commended her for her faith and then received acknowledgment from her of how great that faith actually was –

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. <sup>26</sup> And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?’

<sup>27</sup> She said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.’” John 11:25-27

We read such verses as this one in Deuteronomy in the Old Testament, and we think they are completely disconnected from faith in Christ. In fact, exactly the opposite is true. They are intimately tied into the idea of Messiah. Martha’s words clearly demonstrate this. “No hope? On the contrary! Great is my confidence in the promises of the Lord!” This is in accord with Paul’s words which say –

“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 4:13, 14

With this understanding, Moses continues...

<sup>2</sup> **For you *are* a holy people to the LORD your God,**

The words of this clause are identical, word for word and letter for letter, to Deuteronomy 7:6. They are similar to the words of a portion of Exodus 19:6, but the meaning between them is vastly different. To grasp that difference and how important it is, one should go back and review the comments of that Deuteronomy 7 sermon.

If Israel was to demonstrate whether they were truly sons of the Lord or not, they were to conduct themselves as a people holy to the Lord. Thus, the statement that opened the passage must be taken as a conditional one.

It is certain that the Pharisees of Jesus’ time minutely abided by the tenets of this chapter. And yet, Jesus – when speaking to them – said that they were of their father the devil. Therefore, there is for Israel a positional sonship that all of the people enjoyed, and an actual sonship that only those of faith participated in.

Again, we will not dwell on the meaning of this clause because it was minutely analyzed in Chapter 7.

**\*2 (fin) and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who *are* on the face of the earth.**

Note: the Hebrew says, *mikol*, “out of (or from) all,” not “above all.” Here the words are very similar to the final two clauses of Deuteronomy 7:6. Taken side by side, this can be seen –

and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth.

Despite some translational differences that don't exist in the Hebrew, the only substantial differences between the two are that this verse includes the word “and,” and it leaves off the word “your God.” Other than that, they are almost identical.

For this reason, I am not going to reevaluate the words for you today. Rather, when you go home, please be sure to re-watch or reread what is outlined there. The main point is that Israel is set apart as holy, even if they do not act as such. In other words, they are holy to the Lord as a people, even if the people are unholy before the Lord.

In this state, they are a special treasure to the Lord who are “out of all,” not “above all,” the peoples on the face of the earth. This is an important distinction in translation that must be made. Israel is not “above all” the nations but has been taken “out of” all the nations.

This was for the Lord's own purposes and it sets them apart as distinct, but it also bears a very heavy burden. It is a burden that they have failed to bear up under, and it has – because of their own lack of faith – brought them much grief and sorrow.

For now, we will close with the thought that it is through Jesus that one becomes a true and forever son of God. And that only comes about by faith. It cannot come apart from it. The law has been given to show us this, and Israel has been the means by which that demonstration has been made.

This is true both in the lives of the individual people who come from that body, and it is true in God's giving of us His Son, the promised Messiah, through them. Where they failed, He prevailed. Where they sinned, He remained sinless.

Even if some were people of faith, like David or Martha, the people of Israel were expected to live out their lives under law. The sad fact of the matter, however, is that not

one of them was able to do this perfectly. The testimony to this is that all of them (minus Elijah who was taken alive to heaven) are dead.

This does not mean that they are forever lost. If they were people of faith in the promise of Messiah, they shall rise again – just as Job knew that he too would rise, and just as Martha knew that Lazarus would rise. However, they – meaning the people of Israel – were given as examples to us that the law could never save anyone. Every one of them is just as dead as Job is.

They did not prevail over the law that was given to them... well, not until God did the miraculous and accomplished all things Himself through the giving of Christ Jesus. It is through faith in Him – whether looking forward to Him or looking back on Him – by which the people of faith have that promise realized.

The righteous requirements of the law are now fulfilled in us through Jesus Christ, if we will simply accept that it is so. In this, God reckons us as justified. Paul says that Abraham stood justified before God, but Abraham came before the law. He also says that by deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in God's sight, but rather that a man is justified apart from the deeds of the law. If that is so, then it is solely by faith.

God in His bountiful grace gave us the Gift of life when He gave us the Gift of His Son. And it is through faith in that, and faith in that alone, that we become full and complete sons of God. Enoch walked with **the** God, Noah walked with **the** God, and you too can have a close and personal walk with **the** God when you walk in faith with Jesus Christ. And so today I would ask you to do so.

Reach out to Him, believe that He died for your sins, have faith that He was buried, but that He rose again according to Scripture to bring you back to full and complete restoration with God.

**Closing Verse:** *“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.*

*<sup>20</sup> And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.” 1 John 5:19, 20*

**Next Week:** Deuteronomy 14:3-21 *It is a responsibility not to be ignored...* (A Holy People to the Lord) (45<sup>th</sup> Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

### **Sons of the Lord God**

“You are the children of the LORD your God  
Just as the Lord to you has said  
You shall not cut yourselves  
Nor shave the front of your head for the dead

For you are a holy people to the LORD your God  
And the LORD has chosen you to be a people for Himself  
-----such is your positional worth  
A special treasure above all the peoples  
Who are on the face of the earth

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word  
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You  
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard  
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone  
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise  
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown  
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...