

Fourth lesson from Genesis 21-28

Biblical typologies and Elective purposes of God in the life of Patriarchs

What is Biblical typology? Typology is a special kind of symbolism. A symbol is something that represents something else. A Biblical typology is that, a person or a thing in the Old Testament foreshadows a person or a thing in the New Testament. For example, the flood of Noah's day (Genesis 6-7) is used as a type of baptism in 1 Peter 3:20–21. When we say that someone is a type of Christ, we are saying that a person in the Old Testament behaves in a way that corresponds to Jesus' character or actions in the New Testament. When we say that something is "typical" of Christ, we are saying that an object or event in the Old Testament can be viewed as representative of some quality of Jesus.

Scripture itself identifies several Old Testament events as types of Christ's redemption, including the tabernacle, the sacrificial system, and the Passover.

The Old Testament tabernacle is identified as a type in Hebrews 9:8-9: "The first tabernacle . . . which was a figure for the time then present."

The high priest's entrance into the holiest place once a year prefigured the mediation of Christ, our High Priest.

The veil of the tabernacle is said to be a type of Christ (Heb 10:19-20) in that His flesh was torn, (as the veil was when He was crucified) in order to provide entrance into God's presence for those who are covered by His sacrifice.

The Old Testament sacrifices typify Christ's final sacrifice for the sins of the world.

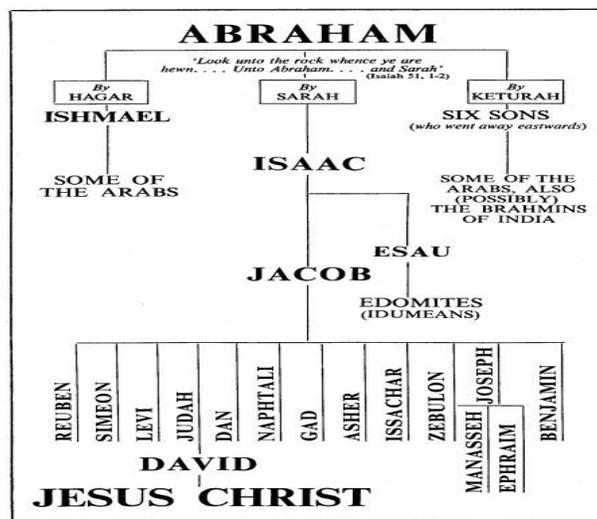
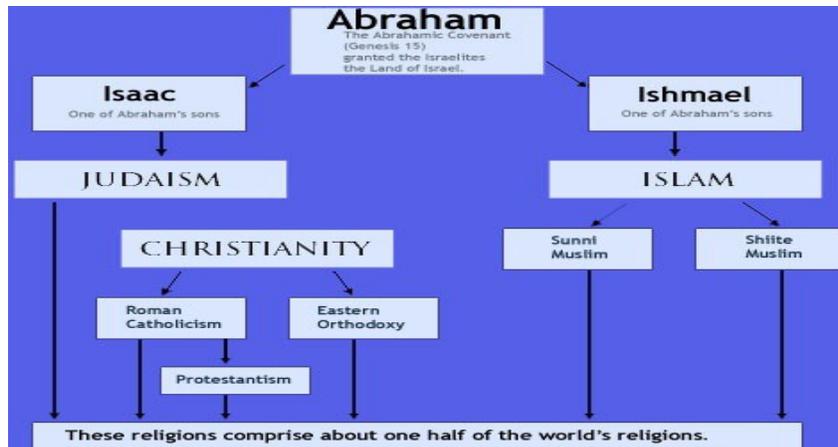
The Passover is also a type of Christ, according to 1 Cor 5:7, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

The Holy Spirit has used the types in the Bible and as bible study students, we need to find correlations and connections between OT story and the life of Christ in NT.

Who is Abraham? The sacrifice of Issac prefigures the sacrifice of Jesus

Abraham is one of the most important figures in the New Testament. Matthew traces Jesus' genealogy back to him (Matt 1:17). Faithful Jews are called "sons" or "daughters" of Abraham (Luke 13:16, Luke 19:9) A summary of his accomplishments occurs in Acts 7 and Heb 11. When God called him, Abram moved out in faith from Ur to Haran and finally to Canaan. God then established a covenant with Abram, telling him that he would found a great nation. Not only would this nation be blessed but the other nations on the earth would be blessed through Abram's descendants. Israel, the nation that

would come from Abram, was to follow God and influence those with whom it came in contact. Through Abram's family tree, Jesus Christ was born to save.



Issac's sacrifice prefigures Jesus' sacrifice on the cross

Issac's sacrifice	Jesus' sacrifice
Abraham (Father) and Isaac (Son)	God the Father and Jesus the Son
Abraham is called the father of many nations. (Genesis 17:4)	God is called the Father of all. (Ephesians 4:6)
Issac had a miraculous conception. When he was conceived, his mother was an old woman and his father was an old man (Gen18)	Jesus was conceived in a miraculous fashion. His mother was a virgin and she was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Lk 1:34-35).

<p>Issac was an only son, greatly loved by Abraham. God said to Abraham “Your son, your only son, whom you love...” (Genesis 22: 2)</p>	<p>God the Father said “This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased!” (Matthew 3:16, 17)</p>
<p>Mount Moriah: Gen.22:2 He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."</p> <p>2Chr.3:1 Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite</p>	<p>Jesus went to mount Calvary to be sacrificed (Jn 19:17). On Mount Moriah, Jerusalem was built up later on</p>
<p><u>Donkey:</u> Issac rode on a donkey (Gen 22:3)</p>	<p>Jesus rode on a donkey to Jerusalem (Luke 19:30-36)</p>
<p><u>3 days:</u> Isaac took 3-days to walk up to Mt. Moriah (Gen 22:4)</p>	<p>Jesus had 3 days from the cross to the grave to the resurrection (Lk 24:7)</p>
<p>Abraham told his companions that where they are going his companions could not follow (Gen 22:5)</p>	<p>Jesus told his disciples that where he is going they cannot follow (Jn 13:36)</p>
<p><u>Both accompanied by 2 men:</u> Isaac by two servants (Genesis 22:3)/</p>	<p>Jesus accompanied by two thieves (Matthew 27:38)</p>
<p>Abraham also told his companions that they would return to them. So even though Issac was going to his death, still he said that Issac would be returning (Gen 22:5)</p>	<p>Jesus also told his companions that even though he was going to his death, he would still return to them (Jn 16:22).</p>
<p><u>Wood:</u> Isaac carried the wood on his shoulder for his own sacrifice (Genesis 22:6)</p>	<p>Jesus carried his own cross (John 19:17)</p>
<p><u>Lamb:</u> Issac asked here are the fire and the wood, where is the sheep for the holocaust? Finally ram was sacrificed. (Gen 22: 7).</p>	<p>Jesus said, “I am the lamb of God” (Jn 1:29, 10:15)</p>
<p><u>submission to the father’s will:</u> Isaac willingly laid down , submitting to his father (Genesis 22:9)</p>	<p>Jesus submitted to his Father’s plan and will (Luke 22:42)</p>

Abraham proved his love by willing to sacrifice his son Issac. Abraham's descendants were blessed because of his obedience.	God loved the world so much that he gave his only son to sacrifice (Jn 3:16). Jesus death on the cross was his obedience to Father and because of it, all the nations of the earth receive salvation
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The Doctrine of Divine Election in the Bible (God's elective purposes)

Abel and Cain/ **Shem**, Ham and Japheth/ **Abram**, Nahor, and Haran/ **Issac** and Ishamael/ **Jacob** and Esau

12 tribes of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, **Judah**, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin. These are the 12 sons of Jacob and among them **Judah** was blessed because from the tribe of Judah, the messiah would come and **Joseph** was loved by Jacob because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him" (Gen 37:3)

12 Apostles: **Peter**, Andrew, **James**, **John**, Philip, Bartholomew(Nathanael), Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas the Greater, and Judas Iscariot Barsabbas and **Matthias** (Replacement for Judas Iscariot)

7 Deacons chosen: Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas

Barnabas and Paul: One day, when the Church was praying and fasting, the Holy Spirit ordered that **Barnabas** and **Paul** should be set apart for a special job he had for them. This was a direct instruction that the two people should be sent out to preach the good news about Jesus Christ to the Gentiles

Broader understanding of the Bible: God does what He wants and what He does is true and right because He does it. Who can question God's intention? There are many things we cannot understand in this life. Asking questions is, hence, a natural response when we are faced with unexpected circumstances. It is okay to question God and He is neither surprised nor intimidated by our questions. We have some difficulties in understanding the plans, motifs, ways, and intentions of God in the choices or elections of some people in the Bible who are really characters yet very much justified by God. In order to understand the doctrine of divine election, we need to have a broader understanding of the Bible. In the broad sense, election refers to the fact that God chooses (or elects) to do everything that He does in whatever way He sees fit. When He acts, He does so only because He willfully and independently chooses to act. According to His own nature, predetermined plan, and good pleasure, He decides to do whatever He desires, without pressure or constraint from any outside influence.

The Bible makes this point repeatedly. In the act of Creation, God made precisely what He wanted to create in the way He wanted to create it (Gen. 1:31). And ever since Creation, He has sovereignly permitted everything in human history, in order that He might accomplish the redemptive plan that He previously had designed (Jer 29:11). In the Old Testament, He chose a nation for Himself. Out of all the nations in the world, He

selected Israel (Deut. 7:6; 14:2; Pss. 105:43; 135:4). He chose the Israelites not because they were better or more desirable than any other people, but simply because He decided to choose them. The nation of Israel was not the only recipient in Scripture of God's electing choice. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is called "My Chosen One" (Luke 9:35). The holy angels also are referred to as "elect angels" (1 Tim. 5:21). And New Testament believers are called "God's chosen ones" (1 Cor. 1:27; 2 Thess. 2:13;), meaning that the church is a community of those who were chosen, or "elect" (Eph. 1:4).

When Jesus told His disciples, "***You did not choose me, but I chose you***" (John 15:16), He was underscoring this truth. Ephesians 1:4–6 notes that God "chose us in [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved." The ninth chapter of Romans also reiterates the elective purposes of God. There, God's electing prerogative is clearly displayed in reference to His saving love for Jacob (and Jacob's descendants) as opposed to Esau (and Esau's lineage). God chose Jacob over Esau, not on the basis of anything Jacob or Esau had done, but according to His own free and uninfluenced sovereign purpose. To those who might protest, "That is unfair!" Paul simply asks, "Who are you, O man, to answer back to God?" (v. 20).

We have difficulty accepting the doctrine of election. The reason is that we allow our preconceived notions of how God should act (based on a human definition of fairness) to override the truth of His sovereignty as laid out in the Scriptures. Frankly, the only reason to believe in election is because it is found explicitly in God's Word. No man and no committee of men originated this doctrine. Like the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and the miraculous birth of our Savior, the truth of election has been revealed by God and so it must be embraced with simple and unquestioning faith.

In several contexts Paul describes how God is sovereign and involved in the process of people being justified. In Rom 8:29 Paul explains that we can learn some important things about God because of His election: "***For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers***"

Just before he mentions the fact that God predestined those He foreknew, Paul makes the striking statement "For we know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose (Rom 8:28). This statement gives us confidence that, even when circumstances are discouraging, we can know that God is in control and has a plan. We learn a couple key points about God here. First, we discover that God has foreknowledge of us before we even exist. Jeremiah records that God knew and consecrated him before he was born (Jer 1:5). David wrote that God had written all of David's days in a book, ordaining them before they began (Ps 139:16). Second, we learn that God does indeed predestine certain people. In Eph 1 Paul explains that God the Father chose believers to be in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4)

and predestined believers to adoption as sons of God (Eph 1:5). Predestination is a theological fact and it is God's choice.

The first born in the Bible: "Firstborn" is a term that appears quite frequently in Scripture. Jesus was Mary's firstborn (Mt 1:25). In Col 1:18 and Rev 1:5, He is called "the firstborn from the dead." The Bible uses the term "firstborn". This term has more spiritual meaning than literal meaning. Clearly, in the earliest parts of the Bible, "firstborn" indicates the eldest son. Within the Hebrew culture, it indicated a position of strength and the son to whom leadership of the family would pass when the father died. Thus, firstborn was a position of distinction and a fair measure of sanctity. However, as we continue through the Bible, we begin to find that "firstborn" does not always mean that the person so named is literally the first born. Abraham passed on this right to Isaac, not Ishmael, who was the actual firstborn. Jacob was not Isaac's firstborn ("the older shall serve the younger"), but God certainly esteems him above Esau ("Esau I have hated"). Joseph, son of Jacob from Rachel, was not literally Jacob's firstborn. When the true eldest son, Reuben, disqualified himself, the right of firstborn did not automatically pass on to the second born, Simeon. Instead, Jacob passed that title of prominence and its prerogatives on to Joseph (I Chr 5:1-2). Surely, God had a hand in this transference. This clearly shows that God Himself does not necessarily follow the traditions of Israelites culture but awards this prominence to the one prepared for the responsibility.

A great deal of further evidence of the use of the term "firstborn" flows directly from God Himself. Ephraim was not Joseph's firstborn, as Gen 48:13-22 clearly shows. Jacob gave him that prominent position and title by God's inspiration. God commanded Moses to say to the Pharaoh of Egypt, "Israel is My son, My firstborn" (Exodus 4:22). Many nations were "born" long before Israel, but God gave the title of preeminence, "firstborn," to Israel. Later, in Jeremiah 31:9, God says, "*For I am Father to Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn.*" The firstborn means having preeminence, special quality, or being close to God. When it refers to Jesus Christ, it implies a preferential status, priority, dignity, sovereignty, and oneness with God. His relationship with God is unique, of the highest and greatest significance and quality. His relationships to creation, man, and especially to His brethren are also unique.

The younger-brother motif in the book of Genesis reflects tension and conflict in a family. The younger brother in some cases becomes an object of hatred to his siblings but is loved by the parent and this has devastating consequences for the family. Five texts from the book of Genesis in which we find the younger-brother motif with tensions and conflicts among family members are the stories of Cain and Abel in Gen 4:1-16, Isaac and Ishmael in Gen 16 and 21:1-21, Jacob and Esau in Gen 25:20-34; 27:1-45, Joseph and his brothers in Gen 37:1-11 (37-50) and Ephraim and Manasseh in Gen 48:7-19

The Image of God in Cain and Abel: God accepts the offering of Abel and does not accept that of Cain and that becomes the bone of contention between the two brothers.

This act can depict God as being partial towards the younger brother. The non-acceptance of the offering of Cain, does not however, imply God's rejection of him. In other words, the acceptance of the younger brother's sacrifice did not imply the absolute rejection of the elder brother. Although Cain's act of killing his brother called for punishment and was banished from the ground, in the rebuke after the death of his younger brother, he was not denied God's protection. It is clear from the narrative that Cain was assured of God's protection after he had received his judgement for his crime against his brother. Though Cain was to depart from God and deserved death, he received a seal/sign from God that was meant to protect him. Thus, in Cain's rebuke and the judgement against him after the fratricide, we recognize God's care for him. Cain's response to the rebuke in Gen 4:13-14 in a form of a complaint is responded with God's mercy.

The image of God in Ishmael and Issac: In Gen 16:2 Sarah attributes her inability to give birth to God. God intervenes through his angel to advise Hagar to return to her mistress, Sarah, when she ran away from her due to the harsh treatment she received from her. He promises and assures her that her offspring will be great. The conflict among Abraham, Sarah and Hagar is resolved through the intervention of God in Gen 21:11-12. It is God who affirms Abram's decision to chase his son Ishmael and his mother away. Although it was very difficult for Abraham to carry out Sarah's desire to chase Ishmael and his mother away from the family, it was God who encouraged him to do so assuring him of Isaac's ability to continue his lineage. Despite the fact that the role of God in the narratives seems to be in favor of the younger brother, both brothers receive the divine promise of becoming great nations. Although Hagar and her son Ishmael were driven away from the house through the intervention of God, they were not driven away from him. God continued to be with the son, Ishmael, as attested in Gen 21:20.

The image of God in Esau and Jacob: God granted the prayer of Isaac for his barren wife Rebekah and she conceived Esau and Jacob. The struggles among the unborn babies made Rebekah to inquire the Lord. God assures Rebekah that the elder brother will serve the younger brother, which might have influenced her role in the narrative. Isaac blessed Jacob in the name of God.

The image of God in Joseph and his brothers: God plays both active and passive roles in the Joseph narrative. In Gen 39:2-5, Joseph's success is attributed to God. This blessing of God was to extend to the whole of Egypt. Joseph became an instrument to save Egypt and his family and this is attributed to God's providence. God intervened to encourage Jacob to move down to Egypt with his family in Gen 46:1-4.

The image of God in Ephraim and Manasseh: Jacob took the initiative to bless the sons of Joseph at his knees: Ephraim and Manasseh. Joseph placed them in such a way that the father would bless the elder brother Manasseh with the right hand and the younger brother Ephraim with the left hand. However, Israel used the left hand to bless the elder brother and the right hand to bless the younger brother. In so doing, the

grandfather changed the position of the recipients of the blessings, thus changing the order of seniority. This act displeased Joseph and consequently he wanted to change the father's right hand to bless Manasseh, the elder brother. Joseph wanted to hinder the father for the simple reason that Ephraim was not the firstborn son. He ordered the father to put his right hand on Manasseh instead. Right hand signified "the position of strength, honor, power, and glory." By implication, the elder brother was the one deserving such a position and changing the position could be a cause of conflict. The grandfather preferred the younger grandson than the older one although both were blessed by him. Jacob responded Joseph that both would prosper though the younger one would be greater. The narrative ends with Jacob blessing both of them, even though it puts Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.

Looking at the above texts critically, we can recognize the love of God being exhibited more in favor of the younger brother than the elder brother. At face value, these narratives may imply that God is partial and unfair to the elder brother. This is however not the case. The narrator had reasons for using the motif in order to draw the attention of his audience to certain truth. **From human point of view**, we can view God's favor towards the younger brother thus: The younger brother is more vulnerable and fragile than the elder brother. In other words, the younger brother is weaker in terms of vulnerability in relation to the elder brother. God's involvement in the personal lives of the patriarchs in the younger brother motif reflects his encounter with Israel. Thus, Israel, weak among the powerful nations, is likened to the younger brother who is raised and becomes the firstborn of God. **From theological point of view**, we can see God's mercy for the weaker ones in human society. Among the ancient Israelites, there were the rich and the poor, the kings and subjects, the mighty and the weak. In some cases, the rights of the weaker ones were trampled upon by the mighty ones. The rich, kings and the mighty were seen in some contexts as oppressors while the poor, subjects and the weak were depicted as the oppressed. Injustice was committed against the marginalized. Examples are seen in the incidents between David and Uriah, Ahab and Naboth, and the rich and the poor in the book of Amos. God, seen as delivering the weak, is echoed by the psalmist in 35:10: "O LORD, who is like you, Who rescue the afflicted from the powerful, the afflicted and needy from the despoiler? Thus, the younger-brother motif shows the image of God in favor the weak for His eternal purposes and plans.

Sibling Rivalry: Sibling rivalry goes back to nearly the beginning of time, starting with the first two brothers mentioned in Scripture, Cain and Abel. We find other sibling rivals in the Bible, including Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Leah and Rachel, Joseph and his brothers, and Abimelech and his brothers. In each case, the sibling rivalry led to one or both siblings taking ill-advised, sinful action.

God desires that siblings live in harmony and love with each other (Psalm 133:1). Brotherly love is used as an example of how believers should treat each other (Heb

13:1; 1 Pt 3:8). We know, though, that in the real world sibling rivalry exists. Brothers and sisters argue and fight each other, lie and trick each other, and generally treat each other horribly at times. A parent's job is to raise children to be Christlike, so we should look to Jesus to see what He said was important about how we behave and how we treat others. Jesus said the two most important commandments were to love God and to love our neighbor (Mt 22:36–40). We know Jesus intended neighbors to mean those in proximity to us, and no one is in closer proximity than our own brothers and sisters. The home should be a place where children learn to love each other. "Love covers over all wrongs" (Prov 10:12), including the causes of sibling rivalry.

Sibling rivalry can stem from jealousy, selfishness, and parental partiality (real or perceived). The sibling rivalry between Cain and Abel seems to have been caused by Cain's jealousy over the acceptance of Abel's sacrifice (Gen 4:3–5). The murderous sibling rivalry in Gideon's family was caused by Abimelech's selfish desire to rule as a king (Jud 9:1–6). The sibling rivalry among Jacob's sons was fueled by Jacob's favoritism of Joseph (Gen 37:3–4).

The causes of sibling rivalry can be overcome by kindness, respect, and, of course, love (1 Cor 13:4–7). Parents should insist that their children treat each other with kindness, respect, and love—and the parents should model the same. Scripture teaches us how to relate to one another. Eph 4:31–32 addresses several negative behaviors to avoid and positive behaviors to cultivate: "All bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, and reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ" Also, Phil 2:3–4 is helpful: "Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but [also] everyone for those of others"

The story of Joseph and his brothers initially involves sibling rivalry based on jealousy and hatred, and some horrible things happen to Joseph. But the story has a happy ending. In fact, the story of Joseph turns out to be about brotherly love, forgiveness, and God's goodness and sovereignty (Gen 37–50). Joseph's treatment of his brothers in the last chapter of Genesis is a good example of kindness, humility, and love

Symbolism of Jacob's stairway (ladder): Gen 28:10-12 first mentions "Jacob's Ladder" when it says, "Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway/ladder resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it."

In this passage God reveals Himself to Jacob and reaffirms the covenant He made with Abraham, promising Jacob (who will later be named Israel) that his offspring will be many and that the Promised Land will one day belong to his descendants. In this vision Jacob sees a stairway which signifies a connection between God and man. The angels

were going up and down the stairway that stretched between the heavens and the earth. The stairway that Jacob saw is the type of Jesus. How? John 1:51 reads: And Jesus said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you will see the sky opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." Jesus is the connection between heaven and earth. As Christians we see this dream of Jacob's as highly symbolic, representing the Mediator, Jesus Christ, who came to earth and became that ladder or stairway for us to reconnect the relationship with God that was severed because of sin. According to the Bible, Jesus was our ideal "Jacob's Ladder" who came to earth, from the line of Jacob, through the provisions of God, and redeemed us so that we may live in heaven for eternity.

My ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts (Isaiah 55:9): A loving parent does things for a child that the child doesn't understand. Likewise, the Lord loves, guides, protects, and provides for us in ways we don't understand. His thoughts are higher than ours. As an infinite Being with infinite wisdom, God knows and understands things we cannot comprehend. We are wise when we bow to that knowledge rather than demand that He do things our way. We live in a material world, so our natural focus is primarily on our physical needs. But when our thoughts are centered on mundane matters, we miss what God wants to show us. He is beyond time and space. His thoughts are always on the big picture. Our thoughts are earthly; His are heavenly. Our thoughts are limited; His are unlimited and unsearchable.

When God promises that "all things work together for the good to them who love God and are called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28), His definition of *good* may not match ours. We may not see our struggles as leading to anything good because we can't see into the future. We cannot know how God's work in our lives will impact ourselves and countless others. He sees the whole picture; we see only the frame. Lost in our lowly thoughts, we cannot fathom **the higher plan of God**. That's why we have to trust His character when we don't understand. In Jer 29:11 God expresses some of His higher thoughts toward Israel: "*For I know the plans I have for you, . . . plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*" In this verse, God promised that the Israelites, exiled in Babylon, would one day return to their homeland. He encouraged them not to give up or think that the Lord had abandoned them. His thoughts toward them were higher than they could imagine, and they had to put their faith in His promises, even while enduring His discipline. As God's children today, we can also claim this verse, knowing that God's thoughts toward each of us are on a higher plan than our own. When God allows sorrow and pain to enter the lives of His beloved children, it is because His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. He intends to use our difficulties to produce the character of Christ in us (Rom 8:29). His goals for us are higher than our goals for ourselves because His thoughts always have an eternal dimension. When we surrender to His plan, we set aside our earth-bound thoughts and allow His higher thoughts to direct our paths (**Proverbs 3:5-6**).
