



Philadelphia Church International

Light of the Truth

“...whoever keeps
His word, truly the
love of God is
perfected in him.”
(1Jn.2:5)

Agape

Issue 2
March/April 2022

The Christian Magazine

Light of the Truth

The Christian Magazine
of Philadelphia Church International
Issue 2 March-April 2022

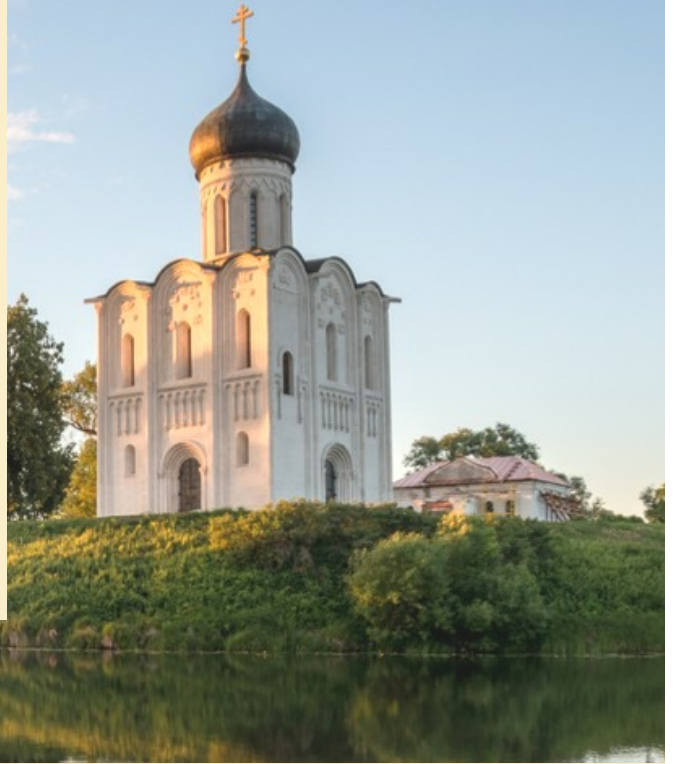
Published in London since 2009 thanks to
the voluntary donations of the readers
Circulation – 50 copies
PHILADELPHIA CHURCH INTERNATIONAL
CHARITY NO 1086729



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We send you our greetings and our love. May you be blessed and your hearts be filled with thankfulness to our Father God for His provision, His love and His mercy to us all. *“Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples!” (Psalm 105:1)*

Let us remember His deeds, the good works He has done in our own lives, how He has delivered us from death into life. Let us remember that with Him is mercy and forgiveness of sins – may the Holy Spirit remind us of His wonderful works, that we may rejoice and give thanks to our God! *“Praise the Lord! Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.” (Psalm 106:1)*

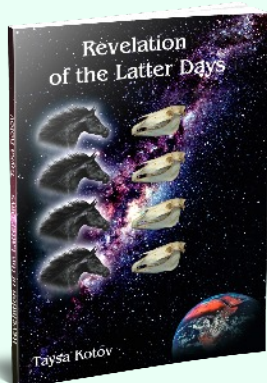


In this issue:

- | | |
|----|------------------------------|
| 3 | Sermon of Pastor Taysa Kotov |
| 5 | Bible Study |
| 10 | Christian poetry |

Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ !

We would be very pleased to receive letters from you and any testimonies about how God is working in your lives, about any miracles and signs you have experienced on the path of following Christ, or while you were searching for Him. Please send your letters to us and we will be glad to publish them in our magazine. The editor has the right to edit all material which is sent for publishing, but the content will not be changed. Unfortunately we are unable to return any originals.

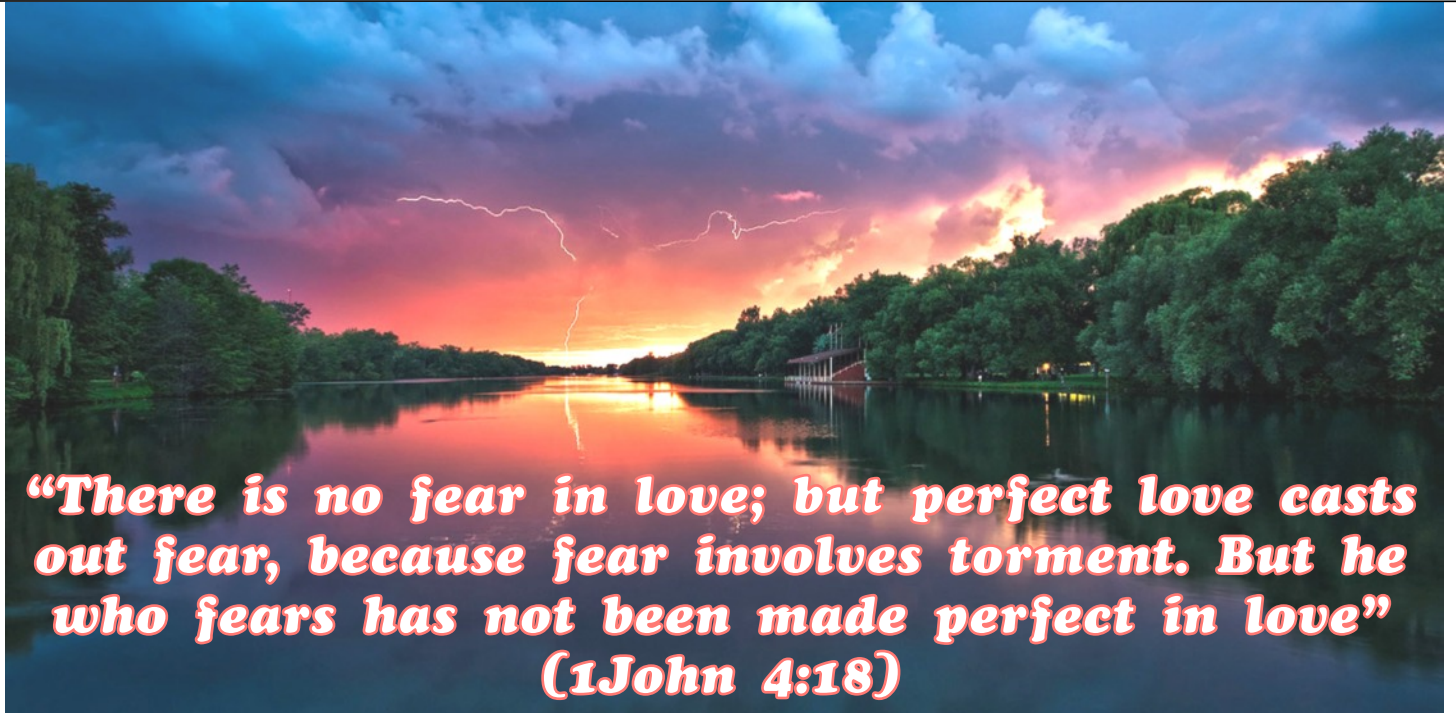


Attention!

Anyone who wants to know what time he is living in, what is happening in the spiritual world and how it is reflected on the earth, about which God wants to warn His people speaking about the last days and the approaching end (Apocalypse) through the Apostle John and Prophet Daniel, can read about this in the book “Revelation of the Latter Days” which was received from God and written down by the pastor of Philadelphia Church, Taysa Kotov.

At the present time the book is available to purchase for the retail price of £5.50 or EURO 7.70. For churches who would like to place a larger order, a discount is available.

You can register your interest by writing to our postal address or e-mail (see back cover) and we will contact you.



As the Apostle of love, John speaks a lot about love; all of his letters are simply saturated with it. He reveals the very essence of love and how love is shown and manifested. The love he speaks of is love AGAPE - the love of God. The love of God was revealed to us in that He gave His Son for us. The nature of God's essence - love AGAPE - came down from heaven in His Son and was expressed in grace. This grace was not only in salvation, but in the fact that through His love, in Jesus Christ, we abide in the Father and the Father abides in us; it is the grace of communion with the divine essence through love AGAPE.

The love of God is the grace of transformation into His image, because love AGAPE is His essence, it is He Himself. In those who do not have Love AGAPE there is no essence of God, there are none of His manifestations, and as a result transformation does not occur: *And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. (1 John 4:16).*

To abide in love means to live a life where God expresses Himself in that one through His love. This condition causes love to reach perfection in that person, meaning that it manifests itself in that person in a perfect way: *Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. (1 John 4:17).* In complete surrender to God, it is possible for one to achieve the perfection of God's love, when God has all of a person and is able to manifest Himself in them, in the fullness of His will and essence. This is what John says: *"...as He is, so are we in this world."* It is only possible for one to have boldness on the day of judgment when the Spirit of

God testifies with one's spirit that one is acting in this world as He is, or living in this world as He is, which is living the life of His love. If God is in us and we are in God, then the Holy Spirit gives courage without fear, waiting with expectation to meet with Him and for the day of judgment: *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. (1 John 4:18).* When the love of God in us can be perfected, we attain within ourselves perfection in love. One cannot achieve perfection outside of the Perfect God. When we attain His love in us as He laid hold of us with His love, then we will attain the perfection of love: *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. (Philippians 3:12).* In perfect love there is no fear of judgment, just as there is no fear of judgment for those in whom God is and who are in God. The presence of AGAPE casts out the fear of judgment from a person: *Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. (1 John 4:17-18).*

Unless one gives themselves completely to God, so much so that God's love begins to control them, so that their life becomes a manifestation of God's love, then there can be no perfect love of God abiding in that person. Consequently, there will be no witness of the Holy Spirit that love has reached perfection within that person, or that the person lives and acts in this world as God would: *Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment.*



ment; because as He is, so are we in this world. (1 John 4:17). There will be dissatisfaction within one's conscience from the unfulfilled obligation and a feeling of fear of His judgment. If one does not receive the love of God and does not live in such a way that love has reached perfection, can one have boldness in the day of judgment? *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love."* (1 John 4:18). We see, then, that the fear of judgment is absent in a believer if one attains perfection in love.

There is another reason, however, for a lack of fear in some, which is foolishness. This is when a person who calls themselves a believer lives carelessly, not thinking about the meaning of their life and not looking for the will of the One who bestowed it. Self-confidence (one having confidence only in oneself) is blindness and an eclipse of the mind. In this case, a person lives without that fear which is the beginning of wisdom and would lead them to the knowledge of the true word of God. The absence of this fear in one who does not have the presence of AGAPE is the presence of foolishness.

However, one should not confuse the fear of a believer who has not fulfilled one's destiny with other fears that are present in a person's life.

The fear of judgment, about which John speaks quite specifically in the previous verses, has nothing to do with the fear that is present in human nature and which was placed into mankind by God as an instinct for self-preservation. The presence of fear in the first man is mentioned in Genesis when God warns Adam not to eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God, addressing Adam, speaks precisely to the fear within him as to one of the elements of the human mind: *"... but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."* (Gen.2:17). Here the Lord addressed the fear present in the mind of man. It is not a fear of God nor a fear of the devil, but a fear for self-preservation. Human curiosity overcame the fear of self-preservation, as often happens in our lives, but this led to the death that God had warned about. The presence of this fear helps a person not to commit dangerous or deadly acts, it helps one to think about eternity, helps to keep one from the evil of this world. The absence of such fear is also a sign of foolishness, or demon possession, when demons throw a person into fire or water and the person does not feel fear when death approaches.

The fear in one's spirit should not be mistaken for fears of the soul and the flesh. Apostle Paul always lived in the fear of the Lord, which is called wisdom, and it was not an indication that he had not been made perfect in love, since he did not live in fear of judg-

ment – he was living in the fear of the Lord. The feelings associated with this fear always arise from love, creating an unwillingness to lose the close relationship with the Beloved, a fear of upsetting Him with one's behaviour, disobedience or non-fulfilment of His will. Such fear helps one to constantly watch over oneself and constantly seek the Lord and His will. However, there were moments in the life of Paul when his life was in danger and the fears of his soul were present, as would be in any normal person. Paul himself tells the Corinthians about one these situations: *"For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears."* (2 Corinthians 7:5).

A human being is made up of a body, soul and spirit. The Bible refers to the body and soul of a person as the outer man, and the spirit of a person as the inner man. One can simultaneously have satisfaction in the inner man and sorrow with bitterness in the outer man. Paul speaks of this division of the outer and the inner man: *"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day."* (2 Corinthians 4:16). When Paul described his presence in Macedonia, he spoke of the condition of his outward man. The battles around him and the fears within his soul did not give rest to his outer man, although inwardly he was abiding in God's peace.

It is more than naive to think that the early Christians did not experience fear during the times of persecution, which are described in the Acts of the Apostles: *"Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison."* (Acts 8: 1-3), *"...and asked letters from him [high priest] to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem."* (Acts 9:2). It is further described that it was difficult for the Christians of that time to accept Paul's repentance and believe that he had changed, as they were so frightened by his fierce persecution: *"And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple."* (Acts 9:26). Is it possible that the first Christians did not experience fear when they were made a spectacle of in the arena in Rome and were given over to torture and death? The outer man will not be afraid only when he has lost

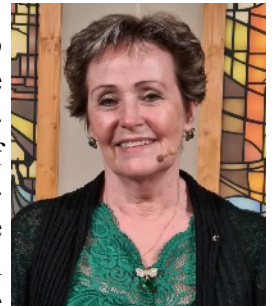
his mind.

The fear of the soul always arises in a person at the sight of an approaching danger and it is a gift from God, given to man for the self-preservation of the body and the life of the body. It has nothing to do with the fear of the Lord and the fear that the spirit of man can experience. However, in Christ, in faith to God and in closeness with Him, the outer man's soul-fear is not controlled by reason but by the spiritual mind. This is why Paul says that they were fools for Christ's sake, meaning that by the understanding of this world one's actions can look like foolishness. Jesus calls mankind to live in the spirit, that is, He calls us to victory over the outer man, with all its associated fears.

There is a fear that is greater than the fear of death, this is the fear of God and His judgment: *"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."* (Mt.10:28). God has the power to cast both soul and body to hell or to give both the body and the soul to Satan for torture. The fear of God is greater than the fears of the outer man and greater than the fear of the death of the flesh. We see two instances in Paul's ministry when, under the authority of the Holy Spirit, he delivered the body and soul of a person to Satan in order to save the spirit of the sinner. The first case was a member of the Corinthian church who committed fornication with his father's wife: *"For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord*

Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1Corinthians.5:3-5). The second case with the persecutors of Paul, during his ministry: *"...of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme."* (1Tim.1:20), *"Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works. You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words."* (2Tim.4:14,15). In order for the person to be saved from the hands of Satan, in both cases, the requirement was repentance which is the fear of God – no other fear could have saved them from the hands of Satan.

One who has the fear of God already lives in victory over other fears that are present in one's flesh, in one's soul, or that arise from the attack of dark forces: *"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith."* (1John.5:4). Faith in Jesus Christ leads us to the knowledge of love and the desire to be perfected in it. Without faith there can be no fear of the Lord. Therefore, the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord, which is born from faith and conquers the fear of the world.



Pastor Taysa Kotov (translated from Russian)



Lesson №20. Genesis. Chapter 20.

Verse 1. *And Abraham journeyed from there to the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar. (Gen.20:1).*

The twentieth chapter begins with the fact that Abraham decides to move to the south, the Hebrew text says in the land of "Negeb", the southern steppe region of Palestine. It is said that he settled between

Kadesh and Shur. Kadesh, later renamed Mishpat, lay in the southeast corner of Syria, and the desert of Shur was located opposite, in the southwest corner, and it turns out that these were the borders of the country of Negeb.

Verse 2. *Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent*



and took Sarah. (Gen.20:2).

Here, we see that Abraham again resorts to his pact with Sarah, which he made with her before leaving Ur of the Chaldees. Obviously, Sarah was still so good that age did not affect her. And Abimelech, king of Gerar, decides to take her for himself. The name "Abimelech" is of Simite origin and means "father king". It was the general title of the Philistine kings, just as the Egyptians had "Pharaoh" and the ancient Persians had "Padishah."

Verses 3,4. *But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife." But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also?" (Gen.20:3,4).*

God intercedes for Sarah and Abraham this time as well, and warns Abimelech in a dream that Sarah has a husband. The Hebrew text says "Elohim", that is, the Creator of the universe, as He was known to the pagan Semites. Here you can see the attitude of God to such a sin as to covet your neighbor's wife.

A frightened Abimelech, who has not yet touched Sarah, intercedes for his people. He refers to God with the word "Adonai", the root of which is "dan", that is, a judge. He calls God the Judge, calling for justice and mercy. This is very reminiscent of the place when Abraham calls on God as a righteous Judge, saying that He cannot destroy the righteous with the wicked, being the Judge of all the earth.

Verse 5. *Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she, even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this." (Gen.20:5).*

Abimelech began to justify himself before God, because he took Sarah, wanting to honour her, and not out of criminal motives, like a rapist using his status. He himself was deceived because Abraham and Sarah told him that she was Abraham's sister.

Verses 6,7. *And God said to him in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours." (Gen.20:6,7).*

From the sixth verse we can see that God knows absolutely everything, even the intentions of a person's heart: '...I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart...', therefore He warns Abimelech of the consequences that await him if he takes Sarah for himself, someone else's wife. God tells him to return Sarah to her husband and, moreover, calls Abraham a prophet. The Hebrew text contains the word "nabi",

which means "a person who speaks with God", or "with whom God speaks", that is, has a close relationship with God.

In order to show the significance of Abraham in God's eyes, He says that Abraham must also pray for Abimelech so that he stays alive, otherwise, not only he himself will die, but all who are his. Since "nabi" also means a person who intercedes for people before God, this is the service of a prophet: "...if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

I would like to recall the words of the prophet Zechariah: For thus says the Lord of hosts: "He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the [a]pple of His eye. (Zech.2:8). The glory of God is always manifested where a person who trusts in the Lord is in a hopeless situation. And through this situation with Abraham and Sarah, the glory of God was witnessed by Abimelech.

Verses 8,9. *So Abimelech rose early in the morning, called all his servants, and told all these things in their hearing; and the men were very much afraid. And Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I offended you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me that ought not to be done." (Gen.20:8,9).*

The dream had such an effect on Abimelech that from early morning he called all his slaves and told them about what he saw. Fear then attacks everyone, as they understand the seriousness of the situation. Further, Abimelech calls Abraham in order to understand what prompted him to do this to him: "What have you done to us? How have I offended you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin?" It can be seen that Abimelech, being a pagan Semite, had an idea of sin and decency, and he also calls taking someone else's wife a sin, and a great one, and does not seek justification for this.

Verse 10. *Then Abimelech said to Abraham, "What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?" (Gen.20:10).*

The question was put very interestingly: "What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?" So there were no selfish or lustful intentions in him that he was at a loss, why did Abraham do this to him?

Verses 11-13. *And Abraham said, "Because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will kill me on account of my wife. But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said to her, 'This is your kindness that you should do for me: in*

every place, wherever we go, say of me, "He is my brother." ' ' "(Gen.20:11-13).

And Abraham began to justify himself, telling about the agreement with Sarah when he left Ur of the Chaldees, and that she, indeed, was his half-sister. And the justification for his action was that he thought that there was no fear of God in this place. And if the fear of God is absent, then murder and violence are possible. From his justification, Abimelech could see that Abraham did not mean to harm the person of Abimelech, that even before his wandering he secured the word of Sarah to do this for the purpose of self-preservation.

Verses 14-16. *Then Abimelech took sheep, oxen, and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham; and he restored Sarah his wife to him. And Abimelech said, "See, my land is before you; dwell where it pleases you." Then to Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; indeed this vindicates you before all who are with you and before everybody." Thus she was rebuked. (Gen.20:14-16).*

Just as once Pharaoh, in the position of Abimelech, endowed Abraham with gifts, Abimelech too gives Abraham small and large cattle, male and female slaves, and returns Sarah to her husband. The only difference between Pharaoh and Abimelech is that Pharaoh immediately offered Abraham to leave him, and Abimelech, on the contrary, offers him friendship and a place on his land for settlement: *Then to Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother*

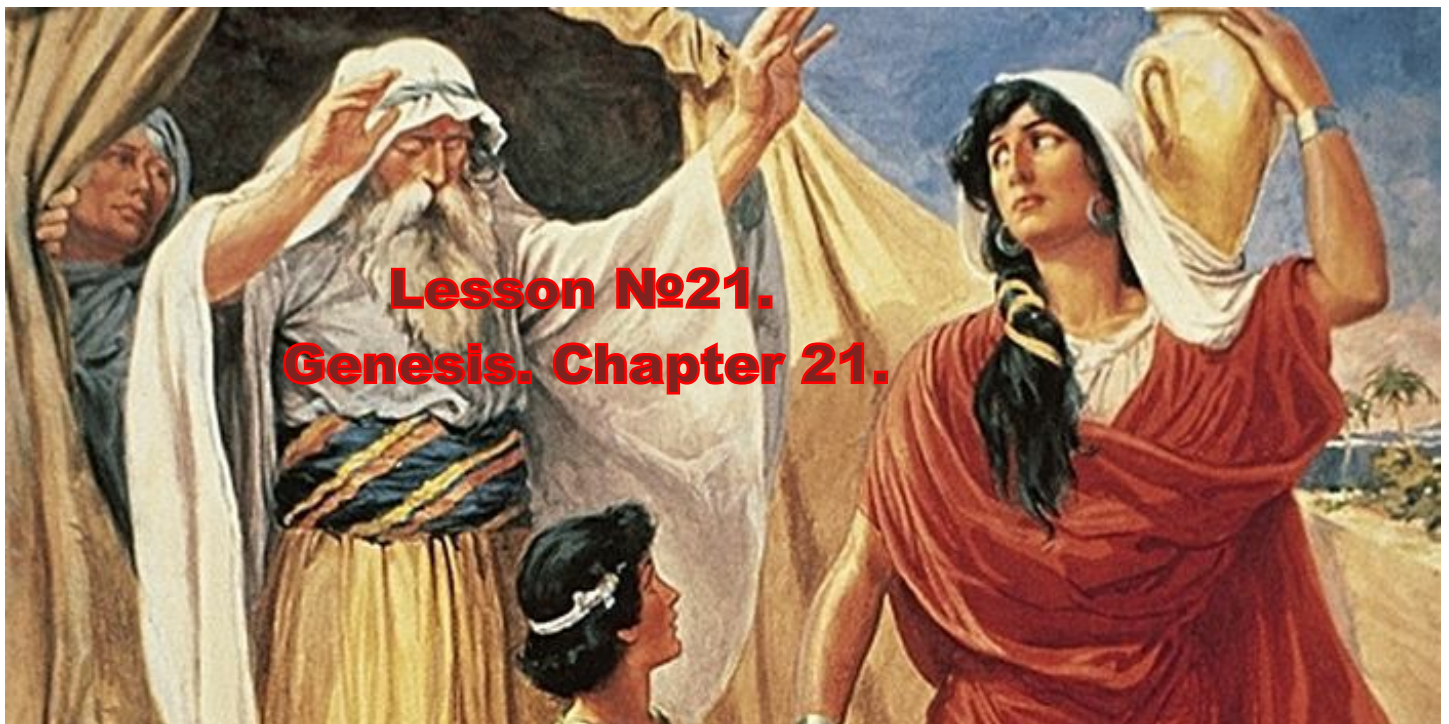
a thousand pieces of silver; indeed this vindicates you before all who are with you and before everybody."

Now Abimelech addresses Sarah, calling Abraham her brother, as she introduced him to him. For his involuntary sin, Abimelech also pays with silver, and the Russian translation suggests that he also gives Sarah a veil for prying eyes, which served as her justification. This could have been the custom of that time and of the people of Gerar, speaking of her innocence and purity, and the veil was supposed to keep her from prying eyes so, there is, as it were, a double meaning.

Verses 17,18. *So Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore children; for the Lord had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife. (Gen.20:17,18).*

The word of God, even if it came out as a warning, is already an action. God had already shut up every womb in Abimelech's house, so Abraham's prayer was necessary for God to heal them. And through the prayer of Abraham, the house of Abimelech was delivered. This once again indicates that God listens to the intercessory prayers of His slave-prophets: *...Who confirms the word of His servant, and performs the counsel of His messengers... (Is.44:26).*

We see a repetition in the case of Job, he also had to pray for his friends so that God would forgive them and accept their sacrifices. God shows by this how much He values friendship and committed relationships on the part of man.



Lesson №21. Genesis. Chapter 21.

Verses 1,2. *And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken. For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a*

son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. (Gen.21:1,2).

This place clearly indicates the miracle of the



birth of Isaac from the dead and aged bodies of a hundred year old and a ninety year old.

Who has performed and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? 'I, the Lord, am the first; and with the last I am He.' " (Is.41:4), – this is how Isaiah describes the miraculous birth of Jesus. God, from the beginning, causes childbirth, that is, He gives life when He wills and to whom He determines, and according to His word, Sarah received the baby, because the Lord said so, and He did it.

Verses 3-5. *And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him – whom Sarah bore to him – Isaac. Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. (Gen.21:3-5).*

We see that Abraham gives his son, born of Sarah, the name "Isaac", as he was told by the Lord, that is, he shows absolute obedience in this matter in the same way as before, obeying the words of the Angel of God, Abraham named his son, born of Hagar, Ishmael. And already on the eighth day he circumcised Isaac, as God commanded him.

The fifth verse reminds us that Abraham was a hundred years old when his promise of a son was fulfilled, in order for it to be more clearly seen that God manifested His omnipotence in this promise.

Verses 6,7. *And Sarah said, "God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me." She also said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have borne him a son in his old age." (Gen.21:6,7).*

The very name "Isaac", which translates as "laughter", refers to what the Lord created. Laughter - not in the sense of "mocking", but joy with surprise, because it was hard to imagine that in old age Sarah would have a baby. And she exclaimed with joy what the Lord had done for her, and everyone who hears about it will speak of it as a miracle.

Verse 8. *So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned. (Gen.21:8).*

In the East, breastfeeding could last up to five years. And it certainly didn't end for two years. This is how Samuel's breastfeeding is described: Hannah is said to have finished nursing when he became a child: *Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh. And the child was young. (1Sam.1:24).*

So, after Sarah finished feeding Isaac, Abraham, according to the custom of the East, arranged a feast, as they always celebrated such an event.

Verses 9,10. *And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoff-*

ing. Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac." (Gen.21:9,10).

Of course, in this place you can see that it was at the feast that Sarah saw Ishmael mocking Isaac. However, I think it happened more than once, which made Sarah similarly indignant. Perhaps Ishmael belittled Isaac, making himself the first-born and the main heir, since over the years, before the birth of Isaac, Ishmael had already become accustomed to this idea. And his mother told him about this more than once and raised him as the only heir. This was reflected in his attitude towards Isaac, which is why Sarah says that the son of a slave will not inherit with her son, Isaac, although we see that the children of Jacob receive blessings from their father on an equal footing, both born from his wives and from his concubines. And yet there is a difference. It was from Jacob that God promised to produce a people who would be heirs of Abraham's promise.

Ishmael was not the son of promise sent from God, so although he received a blessing from his father, he did not become a partner in the promise. All the children of Jacob are heirs of the promise on an equal footing, so everyone heard a blessing from their father for their kind. The Father, in essence, simply announced to them what was written on each generation by the hand of God: *And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days..." (Gen.49:1).*

So we see Sarah suggesting to Abraham that Hagar and Ishmael be driven out, and Abraham must have been greatly embarrassed by her unexpected decision.

Verses 11-13. *And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son. But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called. Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed." (Gen.21:11-13).*

During these years, approximately 15-20 years, Abraham cleaved his heart to his son Ishmael, and Sarah's request seemed threatening to him. Perhaps he was very upset that he himself noticed the wrong attitude of Ishmael towards Isaac and expected that one day this question would come up. But the Lord turned to Abraham with a comforting speech, although He supported Sarah in this ultimatum. Of course, Abraham could not then understand the whole spiritual meaning, which, for example, Paul reveals to us in his Epistle to the Galatians: *For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the*

other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar – for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children – but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written: “Rejoice, O barren, you who do not bear! Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children than she who has a husband.” Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free. (Gal. 4:22-31). Abraham only had to obey and, in this case, act in faith that God would not leave Ishmael for the sake of being from the seed of Abraham. However, the fact that he is from a slave will leave its mark on him.

Verses 14-16. So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting it on her shoulder, he gave it and the boy to Hagar, and sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba. And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy under one of the shrubs. Then she went and sat down across from him at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, “Let me not see the death of the boy.” So she sat opposite him, and lifted her voice and wept. (Gen. 21:14-16).

Having received a revelation from God, Abraham immediately, in obedience, does as the Lord commanded him. He does not start bargaining, looking for a compromise, he simply sends Hagar and his son, lets them go. Obviously, she will go to her country Egypt, but all he provided her, putting it on her shoulders, was a skin of water and bread. Here it is seen that he did not give her a beast of burden and did not give her a share of his wealth; to her, as a slave, none of the inheritance of Abraham belonged. Obviously, the words of Sarah were confirmed by the Lord, and Ishmael received nothing from the inheritance: Therefore she said to Abraham, “Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac.” (Gen. 21:10). But God Himself promised to take care of him, so Abraham let them go with faith in the Lord.

Now we see how Hagar's journey through the wilderness of life begins dramatically: Then she de-

parted and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba. And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy under one of the shrubs. Then she went and sat down across from him at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, “Let me not see the death of the boy.” So she sat opposite him, and lifted her voice and wept. (Gen. 21:14-16). She got lost and ran out of water. This can be observed in the descendants of Ishmael: how they strayed, and how they do not have the water of life. But the promise of God stands firm. Even when Hagar expected death for herself and her son, the hand of God reaches out to her in mercy.

Verses 17-21. And God heard the voice of the lad. Then the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, “What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation.” Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. So God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. He dwelt in the Wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt. (Gen. 21:17-21).

This is the second appearance of the Angel to Hagar in the desert. However, it is interesting to note that God heard the voice of the boy and turned to Hagar. God's promise was not to take care of Hagar, but of the boy, the seed of Abraham, and God strictly keeps His word. I think that before releasing Hagar, Abraham told her that God promised to take care of Ishmael, so the Angel turns to Hagar with the question: “What ails you, Hagar? Fear not...”. Further, God repeats the promise given to her about Ishmael and opens her eyes to a well of water.

‘So God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.’ Here it is indicated that God did not leave him, and Ishmael grew up. He became an archer, that is, with a militant and wild character, the ancestor of the Bedouins. He lived in a mountainous area that separated Edom from Egypt. The Faran Desert got its name from the many caves found in these mountains. Today, this area is called El-Ti.

It goes on to say that ‘...his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.’ First of all, we see that his offspring will be closely connected with Egypt, and also here one can see parental authority, highly valued in those days, even in such a matter as marriage.

Verses 22-24. And it came to pass at that time that Abimelech and Phichol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, “God is with you in



all that you do. Now therefore, swear to me by God that you will not deal falsely with me, with my offspring, or with my posterity; but that according to the kindness that I have done to you, you will do to me and to the land in which you have dwelt.” And Abraham said, “I will swear.” (Gen.21:22-24).

Abimelech, taking with him two chief dignitaries, decides to conclude an alliance with Abraham. It is said that Abimelech saw that God was with Abraham in everything and did not dare to go against him. The most correct decision for him was to remain in alliance with him, so he demanded an oath promise from Abraham that he would not touch him or his children and would treat him as well as Abimelech treats Abraham. Abraham immediately gave him an oath. Over time, we will see that the land of the Philistines will be given into the possession of the Israelites, but, obviously, because the independent existence of the Gerar kingdom has ceased, the agreement has lost all meaning.

Verses 25-27. *Then Abraham rebuked Abimelech because of a well of water which Abimelech’s servants had seized. And Abimelech said, “I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, nor had I heard of it until today.” So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a covenant. (Gen.21:25-27).*

After some time, there was a dispute between the shepherds of Abraham and Abimelech over a well of water, since watering is one of the serious issues for nomadic herds, and the shepherds often quarreled over this. But here we see that the issue has risen to

the level of masters, and has not ended in a simple dispute between shepherds. And Abraham rebuked Abimelech because his shepherds took away the well and did not allow Abraham’s sheep to drink from it. Abimelech was not aware of these events and did not challenge the correctness of his shepherds. Apparently, this well belonged to Abraham, because he dug it himself.

Verses 28-34. *And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. Then Abimelech asked Abraham, “What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs which you have set by themselves?” And he said, “You will take these seven ewe lambs from my hand, that they may be my witness that I have dug this well.” Therefore he called that place Beersheba, because the two of them swore an oath there. Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba. So Abimelech rose with Phichol, the commander of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines. Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there called on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God. And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines many days. (Gen.21:28-34).*

Abraham enters into an alliance and, as evidence of an agreement with Abimelech, gives him seven lambs, therefore the well began to be called Beer-Sheba, which means “the well of the oath”, or “the well of seven”. Abraham planted a grove in this place and called on the name of the Lord, the eternal God, as he always did wherever he went and wherever he settled. He always dedicated this place to God, called Him to live before His face.

The Bible study session is led by Pastor Taysa Kotov
(translated from Russian)

Mother’s Day

**I’m sending a parcel to Heaven,
If possible, to Your throne,
Filled with thanks and gratitude
For the women I have known.**

**For those you placed in my life
Especially for me,
To give me warmth, love and support,
A motherly hug, a cup of tea!**

**In each I saw the thread
Of Your constant love and care.
You didn’t leave me alone,
You have always been there.**

Katey Ignatovich



About our Church



Philadelphia Church International was established in London in 1995 by the wonderful and powerful prophetic word of God which spoke about its beginning. Members of the church are from different countries all around the world, but mainly from the former republics of the Soviet Union.

Philadelphia Church follows a charismatic path, or the path of the first apostles. The type of our ministry and its characteristics are described in the Revelation of Apostle John: *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens": "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie – indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. He who has an ear, let*

him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (Revelation 3:7-13)

Each of the churches described in the Revelation of John has an Angel of God at its head who defines the anointing - the type of ministry. The ministry of the church depends on its development in the Spirit of God. Our church is called "Philadelphia" upon the revelation of God, because in the basis (foundation) of our church lies the Love of our Father God, which fulfils the new commandment of Jesus Christ: *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.* (John 13:34,35)

The word 'philadelphia' is translated from the Greek language and means 'brotherly love', so the name 'philadelphia' itself speaks of our ministry. Just as the disciples of Jesus Christ, we try to fulfil His commandments of love for others with our lives and deeds. Brotherly love is shown through the support, help and sincere understanding of the needs and sorrows that close ones are going through. Everyone who comes into our church soon begins to feel that they have found a Christian family.

The church began with just nine people who became the living stones of its foundation. During the time of its existence the church has grown and widened. Today the church continues to be filled with new believers who are dedicating their lives to our Lord Jesus Christ. And God testifies by His Spirit that it is only the beginning of His plan about us.



***He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward...
(Matt.10:41)***

Dear brothers & sisters in Christ!

By the great mercy of our Lord God we have all been given the opportunity to be a part of the missionary ministry in Israel, Belgium and Ukraine where by the will of God our brothers and sisters are working for Him.

A missionary fund to support this ministry has been opened and is successfully working in our church. If the Holy Spirit places on your heart to be part of this mission then you can send your donations to the church address.

Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28)

Today God is calling you to become part of His family. This is a call to salvation which is also for you, our dear reader. We will be glad to see you.



Our Services:

- **Su – 13:30** – main service, lunch, question & answer time on spiritual subjects, Sunday School
- **Mo – 19:00** – youth services (house groups)
- **Tu – 19:00** – prayer service
- **Fr – 19:00** – prayer and Bible study



How to find us:

We meet at Seven Kings United Free Church which can be found on the corner of Meads Lane and Norfolk Road, Seven Kings, Ilford, Essex IG3 8NU

Nearest underground station:
Newbury Park (Central Line)

Nearest mainline station:
Seven Kings

Buses:
364 (stops on request on Meads Lane)
86 (stop at Seven Kings station)



Postal address:

Philadelphia Church International
PO Box 1405, Ilford, Essex
IG2 7GR, UK
Telephone: 020 8590 7854

E-mail:
info@PhiladelphiaChurch.co.uk

Website:
www.PhiladelphiaChurch.co.uk

Our Branches:

Israel:

Philadelphia Church
Pastor Albert Solodkin
Sderot Dgania 77/29
Kiriath Haim, Haifa
26217 ISRAEL
(00972) (0)50-571-3068
(00972) (0)722125791
www.philadelphia.ucoz.com

Belgium:

Philadelphia Church
Pastor Violetta Bagdasarian
1020 Laeken, rue Emile Wauters 110,
Bruxelles
BELGIUM
Bus 240,241,242,243,245,250,251
Tram 19, 51
Metro Stuyvenbergh
(0032) 2424-3307, (0032) 486-389-907