

98-01-10a

As we continue our worship this morning, turn with me to Hebrews chapter 11. Our scripture reading this morning is in Hebrews chapter 11. We have just sung the wonderful hymn, Trust and Obey.

And you can tell that one of the major themes in our study this morning is going to be faith. And this is living faith. The sphere of faith is the title of this section in the New King James.

It's called the superiority of the way of faith by whoever invents the subtitles here. But most of us are familiar with the content of Hebrews chapter 11. But it is a wonderful way to begin this morning.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. That alone is enough to give us pause for reflection.

The elders are those whose lives are recorded in the scripture. The men of old, beginning with Adam and coming all the way down to the time of the New Testament. All of those things are in the mind of the author when he says the elders obtained a good testimony by faith.

You think of all the wonderful acts, the walls falling and the armies victorious. And the other deeds that were done in the Old Testament. And yet it is by faith that they obtained a good testimony.

By trusting God in what they did. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. So that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear or things which are visible.

We've just seen that in our first two chapters of Genesis. Then we come to verse 4. By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Through which he obtained witness that he was righteous.

God testifying of his gifts. And through it he being dead still speaks. We'll be obviously returning to this verse a little bit later.

The section goes on. This portion of scripture goes on to talk about Enoch and Noah and Abraham. Sarah.

All of these we will see in our study in Genesis in the near future. But look at verse 13. These all died in faith not having received the promises.

But having seen them afar off were assured of them. Embraced them and confessed that

they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.

And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out. They would have had opportunity to return. We've talked just recently about the fact that we choose what we will think about.

We choose what our mind will dwell on. We have that power. We have that opportunity.

And if they had called to mind. If they had chosen to think about what they had left behind instead of where they were going. They would have had opportunity to return.

But now they desire a better. That is a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God.

For he has prepared a city for them. Goes on to detail Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua and Israel. And down in verse 30 and 31 you have Rahab.

Then look at verse 32. What more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah. David, Samuel and the prophets.

Who through faith subdued kingdoms. Worked righteousness. Obtained promises.

Stopped the mouths of lions. Notice especially that phrase obtained promises. It was through faith that they obtained promises.

You hear a lot about unconditional covenants. And promises of God resting on God's sovereignty alone. But the author here clearly says that these great men of old obtained promises.

Obtained the fulfillment of God's promises through faith. They stopped the mouths of lions. Quenched the violence of fire.

Escaped the edge of the sword. Out of weakness were made strong. Became valiant in battle.

Turned to flight the armies of aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Now those are the positive.

Those are the high points of our circumstances. When good things result in circumstance. But these same people of faith also were tortured.

Not accepting deliverance. So that they might obtain a better resurrection. Isn't that interesting? There is degree of quality of resurrection for believers.

And those who persevered under trial will have a better resurrection than those who did not. Others had trial of mockings and scourgings. And of chains and imprisonment.

They were stoned. They were sawn in two. Were tempted.

Were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins. Being destitute, afflicted, tormented.

Of whom the world was not worthy. You see there the balance. That not all people of faith had the great victories.

And saw the walls fall. And the armies march triumphant. Some of them were tortured and afflicted.

And lived in caves and holes in the ground. They wandered in deserts and mountains. It says in verse 38.

All these having. All these. The ones who had the great victories in life.

And the ones who suffered. And seemed to be the poor and the afflicted. All these having obtained a good testimony through faith.

Did not receive the promise. Even the ones who had the victories. Even the ones who seemed to succeed in human life.

Did not obtain the promise. God having provided something better for us. That they should not be made complete or perfect.

Apart from us. The fulfillment of their promise. Waits for the fulfillment of our promises.

It's a wonderful chapter. It's a wonderful reminder. That the measure of our lives.

Is the measure of our faith. Not how our circumstances turn out. Children can be dismissed at this time.

Those of us who are alive and remain. Can turn back to Genesis chapter 4. Genesis chapter 4. We have spent the past session or two in Genesis. Reviewing and summarizing the first three chapters.

I think we could probably spend many, many more weeks. There is a virtually inexhaustible mine of treasure in the passage. And I wrestle with myself in staying and digging deeper and deeper.

Or moving forward. And because Genesis is narrative. I would like to move forward.

We will review and return to some of these things. As they find expression later in Genesis. So if you still have unanswered questions.

If there are still things that pique your curiosity. Hopefully these things will come up as we move forward. In particular I would like to point out one thing.

As we leave chapter 3. And that is in verse 24. The final verse of chapter 3 of Genesis. When God drove out the man from the garden.

He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden. And a flaming sword which turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life. And part of the motivation for this is found in verse 22.

Lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever. There is a lot that could be explored in that. Had Adam rushed over to the tree of life.

Right after he partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Would he have then never died and so forth. But the tree of life is always associated with the presence of God.

Whether you see it here or in the final book of the Bible revelation. The tree of life is always associated with the presence of God. The immediate personal presence of God.

We saw either last time or the time before. When we reviewed the passages that refer to the tree of life. That in Proverbs wisdom is a tree of life to those who find her.

And that is a reminder that we experience the presence of God. We come into the presence of God. God indwells us in the person of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All three members. Their presence within us is felt and is a real factor in our lives. Through wisdom.

Through the truth of the word of God. And even though God in a sense is physically distant from us. There is another sense in which we draw near to God.

As we meditate on his word and as it is incorporated into our thinking. But there is now a distance. There is a barrier that comes up between God and Adam and Eve.

They have shared the afternoon walks with God in the past. That is no longer an option. Let me ask you this.

If you were God, of course that opens up a whole realm of possibility if we were God. But think about the situation with Adam and Eve. God says we can't have the man putting out his hand and taking and eating from the tree of life.

Well, you're God. You have omnipotence. What is the easiest way to prevent man from reaching out and partaking of the fruit of the tree of life? I would remove the tree.

I would yank it out by its roots. Make it completely unavailable. If you think about this for a moment, the tree is still there.

The garden of Eden is still there at this point. God does not send a great bolt of lightning to devour the garden and all of the trees. He doesn't remove them.

He doesn't cause them to disappear. A great sea doesn't come and cover them over at this point. The garden and the tree are still there.

Once he drives out the man in verse 24, what does God do? He places cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden and a flaming sword which turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life. Don't you find it interesting? The way to the tree of life is still there. It's not accessible.

Man can't cross that line, but it's still there. And that means something. The fact that the garden is still there, that the tree of life is still there, and that God puts a guard in, why employ the cherubim? Two of these cherubim that are up in the heavenly realms, now they've got guard duty.

And I would assume that they rotated through this. I don't know if it was the same cherub on each side of the gate. Cherubim means that there were two.

The cherubs are the highest in rank of the angels, excepting perhaps the archangels. And I think the archangels such as Michael and Gabriel are probably cherubs themselves. We're not given a whole lot of information about the angels, but these are not rank and file angels that stand at each side of this gate.

And as you will recall when we talked about the elements that characterize the garden of Eden, the gold and the precious stones and so forth, that when you get to the tabernacle, the construction of the tabernacle, and later the temple, you have cherubim associated with the presence of God. There are two cherubs on the lid of the Ark of the Covenant with their wings covering over the mercy seat, stretched above the mercy seat. There are cherubs interwoven into the curtains that line the interior of the tabernacle.

And once again, they represent and are associated closely with the immediate presence of God, his throne, his place of residence in a physical sense, if we can use that terminology. You find over in Ezekiel, when you get to your wheel within a wheel, and the presence of God being visible, you have cherubim associated with God's throne and God's immediate presence. So again, I am so tempted to just stop and spend two sessions talking about the cherubim and the sword here and the entrance to the garden and the way to the Tree of Life.

It is significant that these things are left in place but are rendered inaccessible because it tells the man something. It tells us something. This story from the time that it took place is in the minds of people ever since.

The presence of God is still there. The Tree of Life is still there, but it's not available. If

God had evaporated these, if he had removed them from the earth, it might easily be concluded that, well, now there is no Tree of Life.

Now the presence of God, there's no way to approach God anymore. There is an approach, but it is blocked. The cherubim are pictured as the guardians of the holiness of God.

Over in Ezekiel 28, when you have the address to the Woe Song, the Song of Woe to the King of Tyre, and you have these strong links and associations to Satan, the covering cherub who is the guardian of the throne room of God and so forth, you have the idea that this is one of the duties of the guards. In royalty today in England, you have the queen and the princes and the royal family, and this is fresh in our minds from the funeral last year of Princess Diana. But they have the guards.

They're in full regalia. They carry weapons and so forth. Nobody really expects that all of these men are necessary to guard the queen.

It's an honored guard, and it represents the importance that attaches to the queen. If there were an actual threat, they are trained and capable of actually protecting her. But they always accompany her, whether the threat is real or not, because it communicates to people, here is the most special person in the realm in this sense.

She is our queen. This is the Prince of Wales. This is the Princess of Wales or whatever.

So it is a reminder that the presence of the cherubim, the mention of the cherubim in connection with the presence of God is a reminder of His holiness. What happened when Adam and Eve partook of that fruit? They are no longer qualified. They are no longer able to experience the presence of God the way they once did.

And the fact that the garden is left in place, however close or far they move, they know that back west of where they're now living, if they travel westward, they can come to the gate and they will see the whirling flaming sword. They see the cherubim stationed on each side of the way, and they realize what they have lost. It's still there, but they are disqualified from access.

And it's a reminder. It's a memorial. It is a constant fact of two things.

First of all, man is disqualified from the kind of access he had to God before. But secondly, in some sense, it's still there. It's still available.

It hasn't been removed like it will be later on in history. Many of you will remember, especially in connection with the study that we did in the Gospel of Mark, and we have reviewed it a time or two in other connections, in Romans, for example, when you go to Ezekiel and you see the glory of God dwelling over the Ark of the Covenant, and because of the abominations in Israel, because of their disobedience, they eventually even erect

idols in the temple courtyard. God snatches Ezekiel up by the hair of his head and shows him what the people have done.

And he says, I'm leaving. And the glory of God slowly, painfully almost, departs. He moves from over the mercy seat in the Ark of the Covenant to the door of the Holy of Holies.

And then he moves to the door of the Holy Place. And then he moves to the gate of the courtyard. And then he moves to the gate of the city.

And then he pauses and he's moving directly eastward. He's traveling eastward, away from his proper place in the center of worship life in Israel and in the center of the tabernacle or the temple. And he moves slowly, by degrees, regretfully, pointing out all the time why he's having to leave.

And then at last sight he is hovering over the Mount of Olives and then disappears to take up residence among the nations. And then over, when you get into the early 40s, the chapters in Ezekiel 40, 41, and 42, along in there, then eventually you have the prophetic view of the return of the glory of God. And in one swoop he moves back and resumes his rightful place.

But God separates gradually. And you get that sense here in Genesis, that the distance that God has forced to place between himself and man is a gradual thing. After they sin, he doesn't disappear and then send a message in a bottle to Adam and Eve and say, by the way, because you ate the fruit, you're not going to see my face anymore.

He comes and takes his accustomed walk. But it's the last walk. It's the last face-to-face conversation in the garden.

And then he drives the man out of the garden. And once man's out of the garden, then he stations the sword and the cherubim. And before long, the garden and the gate and the cherubim are going to be gone.

There is a gradually increasing distance between God and man. After the flood, you find, and even before the flood, we're going to see when we get to Enoch and when we start looking at the genealogies, there is a day when men begin to call on the name of the Lord. Why is that? Because now you have to call.

There's that much distance. So that's one of the things that we see here in verse 24 of chapter 3 of Genesis, is that the man is driven out of the presence of the Lord. And the presence of the Lord and the tree of life associated with it are now off limits.

The other thing is, this is the first mention of angels, as we commonly call them, of the cherubim. What on earth is a cherub? The very fact that they exist and that they are present here tells us that angelic creation preceded the creation of man. There has been

some speculation that maybe angels had to have been created during the creation week that we studied in Genesis chapter 1. There are passages over in Job and in the Psalms and so forth that indicate to us that the angels were observers of that creation because they preceded.

And the strong sense that we have that Satan is present in the garden and that he has already fallen, that he is enticing man to follow his course of rejection of God, also would indicate that that fall and a lot of angelic history preceded human history. But the first concrete evidence that there are already angels and that they already have their degrees, they already have their assigned ranks, it doesn't say that God stationed angels. It says He stationed cherubim.

This word for placing, by the way, is a word that literally means to encamp. It's used often in Exodus and so forth, meaning to encamp or cause to encamp in this case. He emplaced might be a good English translation.

He emplaced cherubim. This has sort of a military connotation. They are an honor guard and a literal guard.

It's also interesting, and this, you know, people could say, well, you're really reaching for an application here. But it crossed my mind, and I'll pass this along to you for what it's worth. I have heard a lot of pooh-poohing of the discouraging effect that capital punishment has on crime.

People say, oh, capital punishment doesn't deter crime. It doesn't keep criminals from committing crimes. And my mental response to that at least is, well, I think that properly executed, if I can use that word, properly executed capital punishment is a great deterrent.

The reason capital punishment is not a very effective deterrent in our society is that it is so poorly applied. A person will commit a heinous crime, and if and when he is executed, it's years after the fact. We violate every day the concept of speedy trial, which is not only supposed to be a benefit to the innocent, but is also supposed to associate closely the punishment of the guilty with their crime.

And we take much of the effectiveness even out of capital punishment because we wait so long with the appeals process and so forth. What does that have to do with verse 24? Do we ever have a record of anybody saying, no, I think I'm going to slip on into the garden and get a bite of that tree of life? We have no record that anybody ever tried it. Why is that? Because the threat of death represented by the presence of the sword.

Did you ever think about this? This is the first sword. Does anybody know what a sword is or what a sword does? Has there ever been a human army? Has there ever been a human battle? Has there ever been armor and knives and daggers and swords and

hatchets and lances and axes and all of the other things we use to hack and beat and otherwise dismember one another in warfare in the early days? There's never been. This sword is the first sword that human eyes have ever seen.

What is it for? It is a death threat. It stands in the way to the tree of life saying, if you pass this way, you will die immediately. You're already going to die and return to the dust from which you were taken.

God has promised that as a result of eating the fruit. But you will hasten that process quite a bit if you try to walk back through this eastern gate to Eden. And the presence of the cherubim and the presence of the whirling sword is a threat of capital punishment, immediate consequence for transgression.

And apparently nobody ever tried it. I think that would have been recorded had someone been so bold. But the sure knowledge that to go that way would result in death meant nobody ever tried it.

So I offer you that as a thought. The absolute knowledge that death will follow is a very strong deterrent to transgression, to crime. And it has to be applied rigorously and consistently and effectively in order to work.

And so I personally, and this is an opinion of mine, I personally don't buy the argument that capital punishment is not an effective deterrent to crime. It is evident to me from here and other places in scripture such as the sin of Achan. There were very few Israelites that thought they might pocket some of the plunder after they heaped the stones on top of Achan.

You have many other principles there. It needs to be public. Public hangings and public beheadings or whatever you want to say are a good thing.

They ought to televise electrocutions. They ought to televise lethal injections. And they ought to encourage everybody to watch because that's the biblical principle.

For capital punishment to be effective, it needs to be a graphic reminder of the consequences of transgression. And this has a more immediate application in our lives as well, especially when it comes to the raising of our children and the conducting of our businesses, the exercise of whatever authority we have in whatever area of life. To set a standard and to maintain a standard, we need to be consistent.

We need to be effective. The standard needs to be well known. And the consequences need to always be the same.

As parents, of course, this is always a challenge because, as they say today, we find ourselves conflicted. It's another noun that people try to turn into a verb. But we love our children.

We want the best for them. And at the same time, we are held accountable before God to train them. And we find ourselves in conflict over that.

But God, who is love, he is the very definition of love, is also absolute in the application of his standard and in the consequences for that. And this is one of the first instances of that. We have seen God very compassionately dealing with Adam and Eve in the garden.

And yet here, there is an absolute death threat for crossing the threshold of Eden. And it is doubly emphasized. You have two cherubim and you have this swirling sword.

And these are new things. Adam probably had to ask, what is that? Who are these? Who are these two beings? We had no knowledge that Adam had seen anybody except the Lord walking in the garden. And now there are these two people who are not people, two individuals I should say, who are not mankind at each side of the gate.

And somebody, maybe they had to explain, somebody had to explain, these are the cherubim. These are the guardians of the presence and the holiness of God. They are the honor guard.

And they are here and this sword is here to absolutely prevent access to what lies beyond. But they are visible, aren't they? The sword can be seen. The cherubs can be seen.

The entrance and the way to the garden and to the presence of God and to the tree of life is still visible. And that is a powerful reminder of what is available and what has been forfeited through sin. So with that very powerful image in our minds, we then move forward in chapter 4 to the story of Cain and Abel.

Chapter 4, verse 1. Now Adam knew Eve, his wife. Actually, this would be better translated, now the man knew Eve, his wife. You have the definite article here.

It's Ha-Adam, which has been translated earlier, the man. Later on, this article will be dropped and it will just say Adam and it becomes his proper name. But here it is, now the man knew Eve, his wife.

And she conceived and bore Cain and said, I have acquired a man from the Lord. We will return and do a little work from the Hebrew on this momentarily. Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel.

Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. You have an elapse of time there. They obviously didn't toddle out of the tent flap and begin doing these things.

This is now when they have reached their majority, when they have come of age. Striking out on their own, certainly in their mid to late teens. And in the process of time,

it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord.

Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering. But he did not respect Cain and his offering.

Cain was very angry and his confidence fell. Now this is as far as we need to go for the moment. Back again in verse 1. Now Adam knew Eve, his wife.

This is the Hebrew verb Yadah. And like the word to know in English, it has a range of meanings. In this passage, it is a euphemism for sexual intercourse, obviously.

He was acquainted with Eve beforehand. But this is the use of Yadah as a euphemism for intercourse. Some people have tried to say, well, this somehow is inherent in the word.

That any sort of knowledge has the idea of love accompanying it and so forth. People have even tried to jump from Hebrew into Greek and say that God's foreknowledge implies foreloving. And that is a huge and not valid leap to make.

It's obvious here that intercourse took place. She conceived and bore. You'll see this sequence of knowing, conceiving, and bearing as we go through Genesis.

This is the natural sequence of producing offspring. She conceived and bore Cain. In Hebrew, this is Kayin, Q-A-Y-I-N.

And she said, I have acquired a man from the Lord. This is another place where I could ramble on for quite a while. As I have said before, Hebrew is a very concise and full language.

A few words can say a lot. And this is one of those places. This is also another great Latin phrase, *crux interpretatum*, a crossroads of interpretation.

A place where people have spent years of their lives trying to figure out what this verse means. It looks pretty straightforward in English. But this is the result of people deciding on an interpretation and putting it into their translation.

The actual meaning of the Hebrew here is not nearly so clear. Everything is fine here. Adam knew his, or the man knew Eve, his wife.

She conceived and bore. Kayin is where we first start running into trouble because we don't know the original meaning of that word. Q-A-Y-I-N in Hebrew, the etymology of it is obscure.

We don't know. And I think one of the reasons is that the word has no etymology. It doesn't have a history.

Etymology means what is the history of the word. Well, Cain is the first child born in the

human race. There's not going to be a big history to draw from when you're picking a name.

I think it is more likely that some of the words in Hebrew and Aramaic and Arabic and the cognate languages probably draw their meaning from Cain and from the early days of civilization rather than the other way around. So commentators are scratching their heads saying, you know, we can't find an etymology for this word. Well, stop and think.

Where is it going to come from? So Q-A-Y-I-N, here is Cain's name. Now we have a statement, and this is common in Genesis, an explanation of the name. Eve's quote here upon giving birth is, I have acquired a man from the Lord.

That isn't really what she says at all. The verb here translated, I have acquired, or I have gotten, I think it says in the Old King James, is from the Hebrew verb kanah, Q-A-N-A-H. You can see that there seems to be a superficial resemblance between Cain and kanah.

But remember, most Hebrew words have three consonants and then you kind of fill in the vowels. Well, the consonants for Cain are Q-Y-N. The consonants for this verb are Q-N-H.

And they're not as closely linked as it might appear. The name Cain doesn't mean someone who has been gotten, necessarily. The verb kanah is used in Hebrew.

It's quite a common word. It means to acquire, to come to possess. In many cases it means to purchase, to buy, to gain possession of something.

It was used of land, it was used of sheep. It has the idea of coming to possess. It is the point of coming into possession of something.

Whether you purchase it, you buy it, you inherit it, you gain it somehow, you gain something. You didn't have it before, now you do. That's the locus of meaning of the verb in Hebrew.

Now, where would that verb come from? I think, rather than trying to find an etymology for Cain's name, that verb kanah probably has its origin in Cain. What is one of the first things that Adam and Eve gain outside the garden? They gain a son. Cain comes in, there's a new man.

The other thing that's very interesting here is the word man. It's the word ish. It's not another adam, meaning human race or mankind.

It's ish. Earlier on we had ish and ishah. Man is ish and Eve or the woman is ishah.

This is a very strange statement. Nowhere else in the Hebrew Scriptures is the word ish, man, used of a child or used of a newborn. It is a very unusual thing to say.

So Eve says, I have come into possession, I have gained, I have gotten, I have acquired ish, a man. And then we have this prepositional phrase in the English, from the Lord. From, of or from in Hebrew is signified by the letter M or main, prefixed to the object.

So, or from the source. So to make that prepositional phrase in Hebrew, you would have main and then you would have Yahweh, which is the word translated Lord here. But we don't have a main here.

We have a word made up of two letters, Aleph, the first letter in the alphabet, and Tav, or the last letter, E-T in other words, or a guttural stop and T. Now that construction is used three different ways depending on how it is pointed, on what vowels go with it. When you have Aleph and then a T, it can be the sign of the direct object. You say, if you were going to say, I hit the ball in Hebrew, you would use the word for I, the word for hit, and then you would say et, and then the word for ball.

And that's the sign of the direct object. That's how you know in Hebrew what it is that received the object of the verb. So if this were the sign of the direct object, and of course in the original there were no vowel points to tell you the difference, then she would be saying, I have acquired a man, the Lord.

Renaming man, Ish, the Lord. I have acquired a man, and that man is the Lord. Well, that doesn't make any sense.

It doesn't work, so we can pretty well eliminate this Aleph-T construction here as being the sign of the direct object. Well, the next way that it is used is to mean with. It's the word with.

So, and that's when you put an E with it. So, et Yahweh, I have acquired a man with the Lord. And that is the derivation of the English translation you have before you.

I think most of the Bibles probably say, from the Lord, or some of them say, I have acquired a man, or gained a man, with the Lord, or with the Lord's help, a lot of them will say. I have had this son with the Lord's help, et Yahweh, with Yahweh. The only problem with that is, that construction is never used in Hebrew to mean with the Lord's help.

There is a perfectly good word for help. It's the word Eben. Remember Ebenezer? We've got a great old hymn, Here I raise my Ebenezer.

Well, Etzer means stone, and Eben means help. And when you raise an Ebenezer, it's the stone of help. It's the stone that commemorates or memorializes the fact that here was the place where God helped me.

So she could have very easily used the word Eben here, and said with the Lord's help, or with the help of the Lord. To say with the Lord, it's never used in that sense. It never means with the Lord's help I have done this, or I have done this with the Lord.

No place in Scripture. You think about the volumes and volumes of Hebrew that we have, it's never used that way. It's not a legitimate translation.

There's no precedent, there's no comparison, there's no parallel for that translation. So as you can see, the water is getting murkier and murkier here. What on earth is Eve saying? She's calling this newborn baby by the word that's used for a full grown man, and then she's saying I got him something Yahweh.

Yahweh is somehow involved here. He's not Yahweh, he's not the Lord, and it isn't with the Lord. The only way that would make any sense is if somehow the Lord were the father of the child along the lines of the virgin birth of Christ, and that is obviously not the case.

So what are we left with? Well, the third use of this two consonants, Aleph and the T there, is pointed with an O. You put a little dot over the Aleph, and you have Ot. Ot in Hebrew, O-T, is the word that means sign. Remember in Isaiah where you have the prophecy that's quoted in the New Testament with regard to the birth of Christ, this shall be a sign unto you, behold a virgin will conceive and bear a son.

This was a sign to an Old Testament king, and it's quoted in connection with the birth of Christ. We will in the not too distant future in Genesis see, I'm sorry it's not in Genesis, but you think about 1 Samuel for example where Eli and the sons of Eli are wicked before the Lord. When I say we're going to see it soon in Genesis, we're going to see it soon today, because we're going to go look at that passage.

But God tells Eli through Samuel, this will be a sign to you. Your sons, Hophni and Phinehas, will both die in the same day. This is going to be an Ot for you, a sign.

So coming back here, and by the way it's a very common use, this shall be a sign unto you is not an uncommon phrase in the Old Testament. What is Eve saying here? I have acquired a man, the sign of the Lord. What did God say back in Genesis chapter 3 verse 16 to the woman? I will greatly multiply your sorrow in your conception, in pain you will bring forth children.

That was the prophecy of God. Think about this. Nobody has ever had a baby.

Nobody's ever been pregnant. No one has ever had that whole process. And you think about the graphicness of it, how little bloodshed had ever been seen in the human race.

And you think about the normal course of human childbirth and all of the associated sites that go along with that and the incredible physical pain associated with it. What is Eve going to say when she sees that man-child, that ish that is configured like Adam? It's the first one that nobody's ever seen a baby before. It's been speculated that nobody's ever seen a navel and there's never been an umbilical cord before either.

But here you have this man-child and she says, I have acquired a man. Here's another little Adam here. This is the sign of Yahweh.

This is what God was talking about. He said it in the garden and I didn't really understand it and now I do. This is the sign.

This is what he was talking about when he said there's going to be pain and sorrow associated with reproduction and child raising and so forth. So this has been the subject of great debate. Of the three choices, I choose to take number three.

This is Ot. It's not original to me. It goes back to Jerome and some of the early commentators.

Don't quote me that it was Jerome. I just know that it was early. But anyway, I have acquired a man.

I have come into possession of a man or a man-child. This is the sign of Yahweh. Well, that's something to pause and reflect on and this is a good place to pause and take our break.

When we come back, we're going to move forward and see the birth of the younger brother and what that signifies. Let's pause and take a break.