

An Appeal to Heaven

I. A Door Standing Open 2024

Revelation 4:1 ESV

After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.”

A. Year of Invitation to Engage

B. Seeking the Kingdom — An Appeal to Heaven

- *an earnest call for help with expectation of response*
- *a request to a higher jurisdiction with expectation of reversal*
- *a quality of being attractive or interesting*

C. 3 Appeals — Chutzpah, Conversation, Collision

II. Chutzpah - cheek, guts, nerve, gall

Hebrews 4:15–16 ESV

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Let us then with **confidence** draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

A. Abraham - Pioneer, Unprecedented

Where are the indicators?

Number the stars

Genesis 15:1–6 ESV

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.”

But Abram said, “O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?”

And Abram said, “Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir.”

And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir.”

And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Assurance & Conviction

Hebrews 11:1 ESV

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

How shall I know

Genesis 15:7–8 ESV

And he said to him, “I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess.”

But he said, “O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?”

Revelation of judgment

Concern for prodigal nephew

Genesis 18:22–23 ESV

So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the Lord.

Then Abraham drew near and said, “Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?”

Genesis 18:24–25 ESV

Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city. Will you then sweep away the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous who are in it?

Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?”

Genesis 18:32–33 ESV

Then he said, “Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak again but this once. Suppose ten are found there.” He answered, “For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.”

And the Lord went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

We are left to ponder... Abraham boldly challenged God's judgment. This is chutzpah! Impunity. He stopped when he was convinced that there were no further grounds to contend.

Standing in a Prayer

Genesis 19:27–29 ESV

And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord.

And he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the valley, and he looked and, behold, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of a furnace.

So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, *God remembered Abraham* and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow when he overthrew the cities in which Lot had lived.

B. Friend at Midnight - Shameless Audacity

Luke 11:5–9 NIV

Then Jesus said to them, “Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.’

And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’

I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your *shameless audacity* he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.

“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

C. Widow and Judge - Audacity, Persistence

Luke 18:1–8 NIV

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought.

And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’

“For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think,

yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’ ”

And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says.

And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?

I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

III. Meditation and Conversation

A. Isaac

Genesis 24:62–63 ESV

Now Isaac had returned from Beer-lahai-roi and was dwelling in the Negeb.

And Isaac went out to *meditate* in the field toward evening. And he lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, there were camels coming.

The miracle child

The sacrifice

The blessing

Psalms 102:1 ESV

Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry come to you!

Meditation, rehearsing, praying a complaint

His future arrived

Appeal for Family

Genesis 25:20–21 ESV

and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife.

And Isaac **prayed** to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren. And the Lord granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

Barrenness — The promised blessing is not obtained merely by human effort.

Fulfillment — only possible at turning point because of a specific act of God.

Promise and Struggle

Genesis 25:23–24 ESV

And the Lord said to her, “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger.”

When her days to give birth were completed, behold, there were twins in her womb.

[Cain & Able; Sons of Noah; Ab. and Lot; Isaac & Ishmael; Jacob & Esau; Rachel & Leah; Jacob & Laban; Joseph & Brothers]

Promise to Isaac

Genesis 26:1-5 ESV Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines.

And the Lord appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; ***dwelt in the land*** of which I shall tell you.

Sojourn in this land, and ***I will be with you*** and ***will bless you***, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and ***I will establish the oath that I swore*** to Abraham your father.

I will ***multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven*** and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring ***all the nations of the earth shall be blessed***,

because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”

Genesis 26:12–14 ESV

And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The Lord blessed him,

and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy.

He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him.

B. Cornelius

Acts 10:1–4 ESV

At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort,

a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God.

About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, “Cornelius.”

And he stared at him in terror and said, “What is it, Lord?” And he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God.

IV. Collision with God

A. Jacob

Running From Esau

Genesis 27:41 ESV

Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

That Night

Genesis 28:10–11 ESV

Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran.

And he came to a certain place and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep.

Ladder - Access into a Higher Realm

Genesis 28:12–15 (ESV)

And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it!

And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, “I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. ***The land*** on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring.

Your ***offspring*** shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall ***all the families of the earth be blessed***.

Behold, ***I am with you*** and will keep you ***wherever you go***, and will bring you back to this land. For ***I will not leave you*** until I have done what I have ***promised*** you.”

Genesis 28:16–17 ESV

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and ***I did not know it.***”

And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the **house** of God, and this is the **gate** of heaven.”

Bethel, Gate of Heaven

Transformed — God is here, I knew it not.

Jesus - Access

John 1:51 ESV

And he said to [Nathanael], “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

Running From Laban

Genesis 32:7 ESV

Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps,

Genesis 32:21 ESV

So ... he himself stayed that night in the camp.

Wrestled all night

Genesis 32:24 ESV

And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day.

Genesis 32:26–28 ESV

Then he said, “Let me go, for the day has broken.” But Jacob said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

And he said to him, “What is your **name**?” And he said, “Jacob.”

Then he said, “Your name shall **no longer be called Jacob**, but **Israel**, for you have **striven** with God and with men, and have **prevailed**.”

Transformed — Limp and a New Name

V. Release: More Grace For

Chutzpah

Conversation

Collision

Holy Spirit COME

Let's Worship

JOY TO THE WORLD