



The Official Companion Book

For

GOD MEANT IT FOR GOOD

By *Chords of a Man*

Written by

Matthew David Fritz

Table of Contents

The Story Behind God Meant It for Good.....	3
Lyrics, Literary and Musical Commentary.....	8
1. Where Were You.....	9
2. Abraham's Song.....	11
3. Isaacs Song.....	13
4. Jacob's Song.....	15
5. Rachel.....	18
6. Ruth's Redemption.....	20
7. The Birthright.....	22
8. Moriah.....	24
9. The Pearl.....	26
10. Severed from This Age.....	28
11. Joseph's Dreams.....	30
12. God Meant It for Good.....	32
Chord Sheets.....	35
1. Where Were You.....	36
2. Abraham's Song.....	37
3. Isaacs Song.....	39
4. Jacob's Song.....	40
5. Rachel.....	42
6. Ruth's Redemption.....	43
7. The Birthright.....	45
8. Moriah.....	46
9. The Pearl.....	47
10. Severed from This Age.....	48
11. Joseph's Dreams.....	50
12. God Meant It for Good.....	51

The Story behind God Meant It for Good



It was a night in the spring of 2011; I was finishing up the last of the recordings for my first album, *Concerning His Son*. I had just one song left to record and I knew that in order to bring out the full feeling of the song, I really needed a female voice featured prominently in the mix. So I asked my wife, Leslie, to sit in front of the mic, put on headphones, and sing along to the vocal parts that I had already prepared and wanted to convert to a female voice. Prior to that, she had never sung for recordings. I wasn't sure if it would work at all, and I was willing to scrap the whole notion if I felt that it wasn't going to work. As soon as she sang a few parts I could hear the lovely tones and noticed how complimentary our voices were (which is quite rare even among professional singers working together). I did a little mixing and knew we were onto something magical. Unfortunately, I had all the other tracks fully recorded and mixed, so for the sake of finishing the album in a timely manner, I reluctantly decided to move on without backtracking to replace my harmonies with hers. However, from that point forward, every song I wrote and recorded was designed to be a duo featuring both of our voices. Essentially, that was the beginning of Chords of a Man, even though we would not assume that name until June of 2015 when we were putting together the album artwork for *God Meant It for Good*.

Right after the release of *Concerning His Son* in June of 2011, I was approached by a producer, whom I became acquainted with around that time. We discussed the possibility of working together on an album of original songs with lyrics adapted from a particular portion of ministry material. We came up with a theme and from that point on I began writing the songs, and eventually recording them with Leslie. We worked on the project off and on for 3-1/2 years. It was during that time that I experimented with many of the techniques that I implemented fully in *God Meant It for Good*. Things like unusual time signatures of 12/8, 6/4, 7/8, and 5/4 were executed along with various instrumentation experiments and complex vocal arrangements. I also learned a lot of technical recording, mixing and mastering techniques that I would later implement as well. That demo project was completed in early 2015, but has not been designated for publishing. Nevertheless, it was during the latter part of that project that I got the itch to start writing all original lyric compositions based on portions of the Bible that were personally touching to me.

It was a morning in March of 2014 when, after having read through the section in Genesis covering the life of Joseph, and having passed through an incredibly difficult personal situation,

I knew I had to write a song about Joseph and how he came to realize that although others intended evil for him, God meant it for good. From that point on I started hearing it all in my head – the melody, the lyrics, and the harmonies. I finished the composition, worked on the recording with Leslie. I wanted to continue writing new songs, I wrote a few more songs from various portions of the word, but they never really did much for me, so I shelved them in hopes for something better. Then about a month later, I was reading articles from the Christian blog site, agodman.com, and I was completely captivated by ministry portions covering the matter of the pearl in Revelation 21:21. The portions were so profoundly experiential and fitting to my own situation, that I immediately began writing about it lyrically. After years of working on lyrical adaptations, it was a real stretching of my ability to create meaningful and fluid original poetry, but coupled with the music that I composed for it, I felt like I experienced a real breakthrough, and the way would be paved for whatever songs were to come.



The finishing of the writing of “The Pearl” coincided with a semi-annual week long seminar training hosted by Living Stream Ministry that my wife and I typically attend in California. These trainings cover particular books of the Bible, and in June of 2014, we were covering the last section of Genesis. We had already covered the

first two thirds in the two sessions prior going back to summer of 2013. But this time, after hearing all the wonderful messages and studying these valuable and heart felt portions, I knew I had to dive into all the top portions in Genesis as the inspiration for a complete album with God meant it for good being the theme of the album. All of what I heard and was studying in Genesis tugged on my heart strings in such a personal way. Getting into these marvelous portions was a real salvation that helped me get through trials and try to make sense of a very difficult time in my life.

Upon returning home, I began to write songs weekly starting with Jacob’s Song, then The Birthright, Rachel, Abraham’s Song, Isaac’s Song, Ruth’s Redemption, Joseph’s Dreams, Moriah, Severed from This Age, and lastly, Where Were You. By December of 2014, all the basic compositions were complete and most songs had video demos for them which I published along the way, posting live performances of each song right after they were substantially written. This gave me something to listen to and consider for studio production which would take the next 6 months.

Many of the songs underwent significant transformations from the demo to the completed studio recording. Much of the transformation work was achieved with the help of Robbie Dickinson of eachonehas.com, who approached me with great interest in the project. His uncanny ability to evaluate, critique, and direct the productions proved to be a huge asset in making the album. It is fair to say that the album would not be what it is now without his production help. I also solicited the help of Eugenia Grant because of enthusiasm about my work in the past. She was instrumental when it came to production evaluations. She also gave thoughtful insight in to literary issues regarding the lyrics and titling. Many of the songs have different titles from what I originally came up with (as one might note if watching the video demos). This was a wonderful contribution of her skills. After each song was recorded, edited, and roughly mixed, I would submit the work to Robbie and Eugenia, and they would tell me what works, what doesn't, and suggest changes. Understandably, it can be difficult for an artist to be willing to drop what he thinks is best and be willing to change any aspect of his work based on outside opinions. However, going back to my years in college where I majored in studio art, I learned the valuable lesson of not holding onto any part of a work of art no matter



The chimney of acoustic instruments used in the album.

how much effort was put into it. Rather, the most profitable way is to listen to constructive criticism, and do whatever is suggested. I applied that to my music and it was the best help I could ever have received. The resulting productions after making changes were well worth the effort it took to go back and re-do the songs accordingly.

Musically, the album, *God Meant It for Good*, attempts to cover a variety of moods and sound textures by utilizing diverse instrumentation, melodic keys, and time signatures. This was a deliberate attempt to prevent the songs from sounding too much alike, and provide diversity for various listening tastes. As a songwriter, it is very easy to slip into habitual inclinations and reproduce the same song over and over in

slightly different forms. I, for one, was guilty of that in the early stages of my songwriting career. When my tendency to do that was brought to my attention by a supportive friend, I decided to force myself to “think outside the box” when compiling songs on an album. I began to set up constraints for myself such as writing only so many songs in 4/4, a few less in $\frac{3}{4}$, and then at least one or two in an unusual time signature such as 5/4, 7/8, 9/8, or 12/8. Another

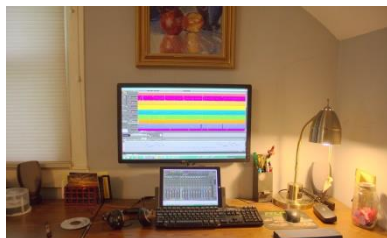
self-imposed constraint was to write at least one song in a minor key, and to make sure that there was an even distribution of which major key I wrote in (as opposed to writing everything in D major which is what I had previously done due to familiarity with that key on the instruments I play). I also was made aware by one of my sons that my songs are "boring," so then I decided to take it up a notch on some of them and hence you have a bit more spunk in songs like "The Birthright," "Severed," and "Moriah" than you would have otherwise heard.



Woodshop by day, recording studio by night.

Many of the choices as to how each song was produced stylistically depended on where I felt it should sit in the order of the album and how well it would interface with the songs adjacent to it. For example, "Abraham's Song" has two versions to it, an upbeat guitar driven version (which is now the bonus alternate version), and the piano ballad that ended up on the final cut of the album. We vacillated on that song 4 times before settling on the ballad version, but the clinching thought was that there were not many piano songs on the album as a whole, and it seemed fitting to follow a powerful and instrument rich song like "Where Were You" (which I knew had to be first) with a slower piano ballad. Especially since I knew that the three songs covering Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob should be in a row and very early in the album song order.

Thematically, the album attempts to juxtapose the trials and tragedies of these well-known Biblical historical figures with the glimpses of the realizations that they had concerning God's



The mixing desk.

eternal purpose as a result of their experiences of God during the trials. In a way it attempts to answer the ever present question: Why does God allow bad things to happen to His people, or what is God's purpose in dealing with His people? The real answer to that is found in the New Testament revelation through the apostle Paul. According to First Timothy 1:4, God has an economy. It is a divine purpose or plan to

dispense God's life into his chosen people so that more than anything else, they would gain God Himself. Romans 8:28 is instrumental in understanding this concept. It says the God causes all things to work together for the good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose. Although it is often misunderstood to mean that if you suffer loss, God will replenish you with something better, the true meaning of the "good" here is much more profound than that. Romans chapter eight follows Romans chapter seven. Chapter seven concludes with the experience of death operating in the apostle because of the fallen flesh, whereas chapter eight is the experience of freedom in the spirit as a result of being one with Christ in the reality of His

resurrection. Therefore, in Romans 8:28, the “good” is that we would be brought into resurrection. The “things” in that verse (no matter how painful they may be) exactly match that part of our being that the Lord is trying to resurrect. I’ve heard it said that the Old Testament is a picture book and that the New Testament contains the captions to the pictures. Given that all the experiences of the figures in the Old Testament are types of our experience as New Testament believers, it would seem fitting that the stories presented here in this album are like a picture telling our story, and the caption is, “all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose,” or to paraphrase the immortal words of Joseph, “what was meant for evil, God meant it for good.”



Lyrics, Literary and Musical Commentary



Where Were You

Based on Genesis 1:1-2; Job 38:4-7; Isaiah 45:18

O where were you when I laid out earth's foundations?
Apprise me of all your thoughts can employ.
When morning stars sang together in jubilation,
And the sons of God shouted for joy.

This is the major revelation;
From the beginning of the heavens and the earth we see
Though chaos plagued the old creation,
It's conquered by constructive and divine economy.

He Who formed and established earth and made it
Created nothing empty or vain.
There's no one else but the Lord of all creation,
And nothing higher than his purpose to attain.

This is the major revelation;
From the beginning of the heavens and the earth we see
Though chaos plagued the old creation,
It's conquered by constructive and divine economy.

Tell me if you know.
O where were you? O where were you? O where were you?
Tell me if you know.
O where were you? O where were you?

Where were you when I laid out earth's foundations?
Apprise me of all your thoughts can employ.
When morning stars sang together in jubilation,
And the sons of God shouted for joy.

The Thought behind the Song

“Where Were You” was the last song written for the album, but because of its powerful delivery, and stage setting message, it could not have been anywhere but first on the album. I wrote the song in December of 2014 at a time when Leslie and I were delving into the matter of creation and were considering various passages that clarified what had become a hot topic among certain Christian circles. That topic was the process of creation in relation to the account in Genesis. Through much study, we realized that the major revelation in Genesis 1 and 2 is not the process of creation, but God’s purpose in creation. From that perspective, and with the help of 2 other key portions in the word (Job 38:4-7, and Isaiah 45:18) we can see that the Earth was not waste and empty from its inception because God does not and cannot create anything waste. But rather, Genesis 1:1 shows that in an unspecified time in the past, God created the heavens and the Earth in a wonderful way. Then, according to Gen 1:2, at an undermined point, the Earth was, or became, waste, empty, and vain; evidently due to the rebellion of Satan and his evil angels (See Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-19). So chaos reigned on the Earth until God, in His constructive economy, did a work of restoration and further creation as revealed by the six days in Genesis. G.H. Pembre’s classic book, *Earth’s Earliest Ages*, is the most exhaustive in uncovering the truth revealed in this regard.

The powerful refrain in this song is taken from the verses in Job 38, where God is discoursing with Job about his lack of insight regarding the work of God. The lyric, “Tell me if you know, O where were you?” is a reinforcement of the fact that we as mortal men shouldn’t be so self-assured that our concept of God’s purpose and His ways, even in that of creation, matches God’s divine thought and ways, for there is none higher than Him. For as it is written, “Who can know the mind of the Lord and who has been His counselor?”

Notes on the Music

“Where Were You” hits the sweet spot where diverse movements seem to work in tandem with each other to create a dynamic roller coaster ride of emotion. The two part harmony in the stanzas is more than just a main melody and background harmony. Either path can hold its own as the main melody, which is why the two parts bear equal presence. The vocal shifts come in at the choruses and lastly the refrain broken into two distinct breathtaking parts that drive it home. I used just about every instrument I had in my tool box for this song, but exercised much restraint to not overload it with instrumentation until the refrain. This plays into the dynamics of the song in a way that creates a wide spectrum of audio color and diverse audio texture.

Abraham's Song

Based on Genesis 12-13; Hebrews 11:8-19

Go from your land to a land that I will show;
And to all those who would bless you I will bless;
And to all those who would curse you, know that they will then be cursed;
You're the blessing of the families of the earth.

When we set out from Haran I was seventy five;
We left our homeland never to return.
And I journeyed toward the mountain, pitched my tent above the plain;
Built an altar and I called upon his name.

If I die in faith to realize
All God's promises unsent,
My confession is I live the life
Of the altar and the tent.

In my journey we came to a place my tent had been;
Though the tent had moved the altar still remained.
With my brother's son along the way a conflict did arise.
How can we as brothers live with any strife?

If you take the left, I'll take the right;
Choice is not for what my life is meant.
My confession is I live the life
Of the altar and the tent.

Lift up your eyes, look from where you stand;
To the north and south and west and toward the east.
Rise up and walk throughout this land;
All its length and breadth I'll give you and your seed.

If I long for what I've left behind,
How could my heart be content?
Shame is not in those who live the life
Of the altar and the tent.

In my fullness of age, God gave me a son;
'Twas the only heav'nly promise I received.
Yet the altar still awaited since one's faith is never done
Only God supplies the boldness to believe.

If by faith I never compromise
Sage design and providence,
God my portion would sustain my life
Of the altar and the tent.

If I long for what I've left behind,
How could my heart be content?
Shame is not in those who live the life
Of the altar and the tent.

If you take the left, I'll take the right;
Choice is not for what my life is meant.
My confession is I live the life
Of the altar and the tent.

Go from your land to a land that I will show.

The Thought behind the Song

Abraham is widely considered a man of great faith. This mainly is due to his obedience at Moriah regarding his son Isaac. However, alongside of the faith that he gained by being infused with God through God's revealing Himself to Abraham, we see the particular life that he lived after he was called by God. That life was the life of the altar and the tent. Abraham realized that he was a sojourner in a foreign land even though it was the land that God promised to him. His living in a tent proved that this land was not his real home, but that he longed after the "better country, whose architect and builder was God." He was not tethered down by the world around him and was free to follow God by faith.

Furthermore, his story also reveals in equal fashion that he made altars to God wherever he went. This shows whatever he had was offered to God. His very living was a kind of worship to God. Because of this absolute living to God, God could promise him all the land that he saw and even an inheritance in a son with his wife Sarah at the age of impossibility. Yet even these promises of God were not exempt from passing through the altar. The thought here is that all we have, all we can do, and all that we are is not from ourselves, nor is it merely for ourselves, but rather all that we have, all we can do, and all that we are comes from God and is ultimately for God.

Notes on the Music

"Abraham's Song" is a piano ballad that evokes a kind of introspective reflection. The recurring use of the subjunctive mood in the verses (eg. If I long for what I've left behind..., if I die in faith to realize..., etc.) is a deliberate means to invoke such sentimental reflection as seen in the book of Hebrews, where the writer looks back upon the lives of Abraham and such men of faith in a reflective way to inspire and infuse the believers with the experiences of the fathers of faith so that the New Testament believers would press on toward the goal in the same way of faith. The subjunctive mood also inherently presents the notion of an unknown element. Faith is not according to sight, therefore, this kind of living involves not knowing one's end.

This song was revised more than any other song on the album. We changed the tempo and instrumentation drastically four times before settling on the version that is on the album. The up-tempo version exists as a bonus track. It holds up well on its own, but the sentiment of the lyrics flows out more in a slower ballad form. Plus, it meshes better with its sister songs, "Isaac's Song" and "Jacob's Song," and follows "Where Were You" with a more graceful distinction between the two songs.

Isaac's Song

Based on Genesis 26

Dig up the wells my father made;
Call them by the same names.
His portion was a life of faith;
Mine, inheriting grace.

Stake out the camp within the dell;
There we'll find a springing well.
Theirs is the claim that leads to strife;
Mine, inheriting life.

Richer and great I grew to be;
Such gave rise to enmity.
Destined for joy, yet this I know;
God will not let me go.

Though wells availed in all the land,
Still I came to doubt my stand.
Blessings divine can ne'er replace
God's appearing in grace.

I, in Beersheba, will remain,
Build an altar, call his name;
Draw from the well that flows so free
By the tamarisk tree.

Dig up the wells my father made;
Call them by the same names.
His portion was a life of faith;
Mine, inheriting grace.

Stake out the camp within the dell;
There we'll find a springing well.
Theirs is the claim that leads to strife;
Mine, inheriting life.

The Thought behind the Song

Although the story of Isaac's life doesn't take up as much real estate in Genesis as does his father's and son's life stories, his experience is nonetheless important and applicable to our own experiences in our walk with God. Isaac was one who simply received all that his father had gained and provided for him. This is a wonderful picture of how we as believers in Christ simply receive our portion from the Father's hand. The way of grace, the way of blessing was paved by Christ and we are just the receivers or inheritors of life and grace. There is no need to strive to achieve this. If we strive to achieve joy and peace by our self-efforts, then we will miss the inheritance. This does not mean we will never have struggles in our daily walk, but rather we would know that our portion is not joy, peace, nor outward blessings by themselves, but rather our portion is God Himself, and with that comes joy, peace, and all the blessings of our inheritance.

Furthermore, Isaac's experience shows us that we may actually attain certain blessings that God provides generally to all His children, yet for Isaac to get God's appearing, he had to be in the place that God was calling him to and not to stray off according to his own personal preference (as seen with his experience of going back to Beersheba). As Isaac strayed and came back to the place of God's calling, we also have hope that even if we stray, even if just inwardly, we can still come back to the place of God's calling to experience His appearing to us again. Once in the proper place of God's calling, we see the abounding blessing of God's appearing as well as the enjoyment of the well by the Tamarisk tree (typifying the tree of life) and the altar. Such an enjoyment was realized by his being the best receiver of God's provisions.

Notes on the Music

"Isaac's Song" is a delicate yet moving song with very personal vocals which are made more prominent by the noticeable lack of accompanying instrumentation. Adding to its sparse and intimate feel is the $\frac{3}{4}$ time signature which provides for even more minimalism. The song is essentially 4 tracks. A lightly plucked, finger picked classical guitar on the right side of the stereo spectrum, a mandolin on the left, and the lead melody vocal down the middle with the background harmony vocals slightly behind and flanking the lead vocal. It is one of the few songs on the album without thick instrumentation, but it was nonetheless intensive when it came to recording, editing, mixing and mastering the production. Because every note was laid bare and couldn't hide behind another instrument sharing the same aural location, every note had to be played (or at least edited) to perfection. I did attempt this again with "Moriah," but it proved to be too much a challenge to replicate. Also worthy of note is the use of rain in the introduction. This was actually not originally intended, but while recording the guitar parts, we kept getting thunderstorms that would pass through and clear up. The rain was loud enough to get printed onto the original recording (something that I try my best to avoid), but instead of scrapping the recordings, I got the idea to rather incorporate it into the song's introduction. I recorded more rain (and birds chirping) as it passed through, and pasted it in as a lovely, melancholy introduction which coincided with the accidental rain on the guitar track.

Jacob's Song

Based on Genesis 25-48

I was known as a quiet man;
Made my dwelling in tents;
Second of sons, known as the one,
Struggling without relent.

Blessing gained by supplanting ways,
Spurred the fury of Edom's
Anger to slay; I fled away;
Yet dreams awaited from God.

The God whom my fathers walked with,
The Angel who has redeemed me,
The One who sustained me when
All I could do was pray;
Lord You're the One I walk with,
You're the One Who redeemed me,
You are the God Who shepherded me
All my life to this day.

Exiled, sojourning with no home;
Stone for my head to rest;
A vision I saw, a ladder so tall,
Through which Earth would be blessed.

Years I labored for one I loved,
Only to be deceived;
Unrighteousness led me in distress;
God of Bethel to see.

Jacob's Song (continued)

The God whom my fathers walked with,
The Angel who has redeemed me,
The One who sustained me when
All I could do was pray;
Lord You're the One I walk with,
You're the One Who redeemed me,
You are the God Who shepherded me,
All my life to this day.

How I prayed for deliverance
From him who would pursue.
I, in that place, saw God face to face;
There my strength was subdued.

Through the loss of the ones I loved,
Emptied now I confess,
Few were my days, evil my ways;
Now with fullness I bless.

The God whom my fathers walked with,
The Angel who has redeemed me,
The One who sustained me when
All I could do was pray.
Lord You're the One I walk with,
You're the One Who redeemed me,
You are the God Who shepherded me
All my life to this day.

The Thought behind the Song

“Jacob’s Song” is the third autobiographically written song in the triad of songs on the experiences of the patriarchs. It is meant to be a reflection on the life of Jacob within the context of what he spoke to pharaoh at the end of his life regarding his God being the one who shepherded him all his life to this day. As troubled as Jacob was either due to his circumstances or his own manipulating, he eventually realized that all the dealings in his life were clearly used by God to transform him from a supplanter (as the name, Jacob, implies) to the prince of God (Israel). Not only did he experience being transformed by God through his being dealt with and broken, but he ultimately was matured later in his life through the loss of his natural choices and preferential love. Such a person was then used to bless others. Even the highest ranking person on earth at the time was blessed by this lowly herdsman who experienced God to such an extent that his very existence was a blessing to others and was fully seen through the reign of his beloved son Joseph.

Inherent in this story, as well as all the others on this album, is the notion that the experiences of persons such as Jacob are really our experiences today. Most of us can identify with being a Jacob, in that we don’t have anything special going for us, and we seem to try to manipulate our way through difficult situations to try to come out on top. But God has a purpose for us, and that is to not just to deal with us, but to transform us and mature us for his satisfaction and to bless and be a blessing to all people.

Notes on the Music

“Jacob’s Song” was the first song I successfully wrote that is entirely in a 5/4 time signature. As such, it has a longer dramatic build-up than most songs due to the rather loosely defined and unfamiliar rhythmic boundaries in the beginning of the song until the bass comes in at the first chorus. The bass in that first line of the chorus is 5 distinct and sequential quarter notes which make the timing very punctuated. Then, with the addition of the piano alongside the acoustic guitar, mandolin, and viola, the full instrumental form allows the rhythm of the song to take control and bring the listener along for the ride even through the dramatic shifts of tempo, instrumentation, and volume which occur later in the song. The ending features a dramatic pause and solemn vocal phrase followed by an outpouring of lyrical sentiment matched by the “open floodgates” of instrumentation. This is where the underlying rhythmic pattern really takes hold and grabs the listener’s attention to drive the main point of the song home.

Rachel

Based on Genesis 35:16-20

The way from Bethel should have been most joyous;
Our second child would come forth anytime.
The labor that befell was hardest;
Don't be afraid for you brought forth a son thereby;
As my natural choice would die.

The sun that sets and rises every morning;
It never holds on to its former light.
So your soul which dims and fades away,
Will yield its light to him who's born from you to shine;
As my natural choice would die.

Rachel don't fear, your sorrow weighs, though not withstanding.
Our son shall not be Ben-oni.
Letting go—it proves to be the deepest dealing.
Our gain required a last goodbye,
As my natural choice would die;
As my natural choice would die.

The pillar on your grave abides unto this day;
A testimony of both death and life.
And though the path we tread remains unchanged,
Its sojourners are ne'er the same and such as I;
As my natural choice would die;
As my natural choice would die.

The Thought behind the Song

“Rachel” is the heart-wrenching account of the death of Jacob’s beloved wife, Rachel, during the birth of their second son, Benjamin. The story marks yet another dealing in Jacob’s life, this one coming shortly after the death of Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse. During that time, God appeared to Jacob as the All-sufficient One and blessed him. God re-affirmed his name change to Israel, showing the transformation that he had attained through his dealings, but the deepest dealing yet was still forthcoming. On the way from Bethel, where he had such an experience of the All-Sufficient God, Rachel began to give birth, but while she was in labor, she was dying. Rachel was the love of his life for whom he suffered the unrighteous dealings of his uncle, Laban, for many years. God in His sovereignty arranged that Jacob would be joined in marriage to her sister Leah, but Rachel was clearly Jacob’s natural choice. Jacob labored for years for the right to marry Rachel due to his strong natural choice. Therefore, the death of Rachel symbolized the death of Jacob’s natural choice.

In the midst of this deep dealing, we see the maturity of Jacob being manifested in that while Rachel named their child “Ben-oni” (meaning son of my affliction), Jacob would not permit it and re-named him “Benjamin” (meaning son of the right hand). This is a clear reference to Christ who at first was a man of sorrows and affliction, but in resurrection was exalted to be the Son at the right hand of God.

All this is to show us that God allows us to pass through deep dealings, suffer loss, and even take away our natural choice, in order to bring forth Christ from us for God’s expression. His goal is not to make us suffer, but rather to bring forth Christ. As we go on in our journey of maturity, our loss becomes true gain. Outwardly, our life may go on the same and the path we travel may not change based on what we passed through, but inwardly we are never the same.

Notes on the Music

“Rachel” is a solemn tune with heart-felt vocals. The background vocals play the most important role in conveying the touching sentiment. This song, although light in its instrumentation, provides quite a bit more depth than most of the other songs on the album. With careful attention, one can hear the dark undertones of the contrabass, juxtaposed with the light plucks of the high pitched mandolin strings, making for a subtle and diverse tonal spectrum.

With no true chorus, the bridge in this song functions as a climactic turning point. Musically it carries the story line to a tense moment and then releases that tension in the apparent continuation of the song, yet with a slightly different melody in the ending of the stanza which parallels the lyric itself in that even though the way remains unchanged, its sojourners are never the same.

Ruth's Redemption

Based on Ruth 1-4

Rest had vanished from your former home;
Gone was the life that you knew;
Hopeless and helpless, your trust had come
To a God you would choose.

Gleaning in the fields of grain you were found,
Refuged under God's great wings;
Secretly you came in and there laid down;
Selfless kindness did you bring.

All you lost, I will redeem;
Your kindness I have esteemed;
Stay and you will receive
My compassion toward you.
Your rest shall ever be
My compassion for you.

All that you've done, my attention caught;
How you left your land of birth;
Came to a people you kneweth not;
God shall recompense your worth.

All you lost, I will redeem;
Your kindness I have esteemed;
Stay and you will receive
My compassion toward you.
Your rest shall ever be
My compassion for you.

May Jehovah make you as the ones
Who built the house of Israel.
May our house be as the chosen son's;
Bringing in Emmanuel.

All you lost, I will redeem;
Your kindness I have esteemed;
Stay and you will receive
My compassion toward you.
Your rest shall ever be
My compassion for you.

The Thought behind the Song

“Ruth’s Redemption” is a marvelous love story taken from the entire book of Ruth. In the Old Testament, this book is situated between Judges and the rest of the books of history. Most of which depict Israel’s deplorable situation of forsaking God. However, the book of Ruth is a true diamond in the rough. In it we see Boaz as a type of the redeeming Christ, and Ruth as a type of the church, his bride. Ruth was a widow who lost her birthright, which is valuable in the sight of God as seen by the experiences of Jacob and Esau. But most importantly, the love story here shows in type how Christ’s compassion for us caused him to pay the price to redeem us and restore our birthright.

One of the striking factors in the book of Ruth is the deliberate mentioning of Ruth’s needing to find rest (1:9 and 3:1). Ruth lost her security when she lost her first husband. She stood with God’s people and came to the good land; however, she still needed a home, a resting place. Her rest was found when she encountered Boaz and eventually took him as her husband in marriage. Furthermore, her rest was made full by their home and family, mentioned in chapter 4, which became part of the lineage of Christ. Likewise, we as believers find complete rest when we take Christ as our Husband and the church as our home.

From the onset of the book of Ruth, we see how Ruth, a Moabitess, one who was part of a condemned lineage due to its incestuous beginning, simply trusted her mother-in-law and chose to forsake her past and follow God and God’s people. This was such a powerful act of faith that news of it spread even unto the ears of Boaz who became attracted by her virtues even before meeting her. Later in chapter 3, Boaz acknowledges her selfless kindness. Interestingly enough, the virtues he admires in Ruth reflect his own. Boaz was very generous, kind, and appreciative of others. He was one who left the corners of his field and gleanings for the poor, the sojourners, the orphans, and the widows according to the ordinances in the law and for God’s blessing. Through his own generosity, he gained a wife in Ruth; and the two of them became co-heirs of blessing. Ruth was blessed by the people and elders in chapter 4 with blessings related to her being like Rachel and Leah, who built the house of Israel. Their household was blessed to be like that of Perez, who was the twin son of Judah, the son chosen by God and not man (cf. Genesis 38). Like Perez, Boaz and Ruth were blessed to be part of the lineage of Christ as Emmanuel.

Notes on the Music

“Ruth’s Redemption” is sweet yet rhythmic song implementing a 3+5 beat structure. The strong bass lines in concert with the delicate picking of the high pitched mandolin (especially in the solo) reflect the thought of the story of the strong Boaz matching the lowly Ruth with tender compassion to have one harmonious expression.

The Birthright

Based on Genesis 25; Romans 9; Hebrews 12

Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated;
Is there unrighteousness with God?
The lesser would be served by the greater,
And his portion would allot;

Blessed privilege lost, rooted in profaneness,
Breeded tears of deep regret.
Time will tell the cost of what we forfeit,
Warn us Lord, lest we forget;

The birthright I would not despise,
No matter what the earthly prize;
For God is seeking those who honor it.
It's not of him who wills nor runs,
But His mercy on the one
Whom He selected by his sovereignty.

Every man is sold under sin's slavery;
Stolen is our joy and peace.
How can we be bold with condemnation?
Who will grant us full release?

Jubilee has come, freedom from oppression;
Bonds are broken, blind have sight.
The all-inclusive One is now our portion;
We've come back to claim our right;

The birthright I would not despise,
No matter what the earthly prize;
For God is seeking those who come back to it.
It's not of him who wills nor runs,
But His mercy on the one
Whom He selected by his sovereignty.

The Thought behind the Song

“The Birthright” is a song that juxtaposes God’s promise with His warning, and man’s choice with God’s selection. Yet within it also lies the hope that the portion we’ve lost through the fall of man is now found in Christ as our jubilee.

The promise is that as God’s selected people, we have a portion allotted to us by virtue of our spiritual birth as the firstfruits of His creatures—the church of the firstborn. This portion includes the inheritance of the earth, the priesthood, and the kingship as typified by the Old Testament double portion of the land, the priesthood, and kingship handed down through the generations of the patriarchs. Despite having such a valuable portion, in Genesis 25, Esau gave up his birthright because of his lust in eating. This story served as a warning spoken to the believers in Hebrews 12 in that they should not despise the birthright like Esau did, indulging even in “one meal” of their old religion lest they miss out on the full enjoyment of their portion today.

At this point, bringing in the word in Romans 9 about God’s selection, we see that according to Malachi’s word, God loved Jacob and hated Esau. This is a strong word that apparently contradicts God’s nature as love itself, but actually shows God’s omniscience and foreknowledge in His selection. He knew Esau was a profane person who would choose to disregard God and the things granted by God. His loving selection of Jacob and hatred toward Esau was based on this foreknowledge (see 1 Peter 1:2).

Even under such a strong warning concerning despising our birthright, we have the marvelous matter of the jubilee. In the Old Testament, the jubilee was a year of liberation after every 49 years in which those who lost their portion due to hardship had their portion restored to them by law. When Christ came, He told us that this jubilee was fulfilled in Himself. His miracles of healing and restoration were signs of his liberating work. All who believe into Him receive God as their portion which can never be lost eternally. The only prerequisite is to come back to Him, turn our heart to him and be freed from condemnation by the Spirit of life who operates within man.

Notes on the Music

The composition of “The Birthright” underwent drastic changes musically from inception to completion. It started out more acoustically introspective, repetitive, longer and slower, with little rhythmic drive. The changes to it better reflected the content of the song in the more positive sense by introducing a more defined rhythm, consolidating the lines in the stanzas, implementing a stronger presence of the mandolin in the solos and strumming sections, and adding descant vocals to the ending refrains. All of which tailored the song to be more jubilant in keeping with the positive meaning behind the concept of the song.

Moriah

Based on Genesis 21-22; Hebrews 11:8-19

Endless blessings ever receiving
All to realize just by believing
Free to receive, freely we give.

Offering only what is not costly
Ne'er could appease His asking so softly
Of the things most dear to us.

Of His chosen, God had spoken;
Visitation was His token;
Sarah would conceive a son.

And at the time of trial when I'm called could I not say, here am I.
The vision seen at Moriah gave me strength to have the faith—He provides.

Tested was the one counted faithful;
Tested by the One who is able
To raise men up from the dead.

Take your son, your only begotten;
Whom you love, I have not forgotten
That he is the promised seed.

Rise up early in the morning;
At Moriah the burnt offering
Will your only son be to Me.

And at the time of trial when I'm called could I not say, here am I.
The vision seen at Moriah gave me strength to have the faith—He provides.

The Thought behind the Song

“Moriah” takes an intimate look at the experience of Abraham in his being brought to offer up Isaac in Genesis 21-22. It starts out with the very profound concept that God gives and God also requires. His giving is free and His taking is not by demand but by free will offering. However, what he requires are the things that we love more than Him. This is so that God Himself would be everything to us, even more than the things that God Himself has given to us. When we offer to God what was given to us, He returns it to us in resurrection for our blessing and for the fulfilment of His purpose. This is basis for understanding the confounding story of God asking for Isaac to be offered to Him.

Abraham was promised a son through his wife Sarah at an age of impossibility. His personal visitations of them, both at the time of the promise and at the time of the miracle, were a token that He would fulfill His word. This was proof that Isaac was absolutely a gift from God and not produced by natural man.

Even though Abraham had failures in his following God by faith, this particular experience was one that truly qualified him to be considered a man of faith. Never once did he balk in this particular trial, but rather, he was very cooperative, always responding to God with “here I am.” His faithfulness was being tested, but Abraham confided in the knowledge that God was the One who could raise men from the dead.

It is interesting that the mountain to which God directed him to go to was Mount Moriah. This became Mount Zion, the site of the temple that David vowed to build. Incidentally, when David secured this site, he refused to take it for anything less than full price saying that he would not offer up burnt offerings that cost him nothing. This shows that what God requires at such a transaction is costly to us. Moriah literally means *the vision of Jah*. Yet after God provided a substitute for Isaac, Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh, saying, “on the mount of Jehovah it will be provided.” Jehovah-jireh means *Jehovah will provide*, or *Jehovah will see [to it]*. All of this points to the notion that true faith in following God comes not from our natural strength, but from seeing a vision of God as the unique One who provides.

Notes on the Music

“Moriah” is a most peculiar song in that it includes some of the rarest features in popular music combined together. It is written in a 5/4 time signature, and switches from major to minor keys from verse to chorus. It includes peculiar combination of instrumentation such as: world percussion (bongos, cajon, shakers, and tambourine), lightly picked ukulele, bass, flute, viola, classical guitar, and haunting contra-bass. Yet with such a hodgepodge of features, it still has a very captivating overall feel to it.

The Pearl

Based on Revelation 21:21

My Savior's wound met on the cross inflicted by my sin,
Became the stripes whose healing power secreted life within.
The balm embracing the contrite heart is scarce met in the world;
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.

He came not for the whole in heart but for those who are ill;
Through broken sinners touched by grace is ministry fulfilled.
Those mended share in the mending art—a rare trade in the world;
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.

Through His great love the wound of Christ a prison thus became;
At home imprisoned in his wound I'd ever thus remain.
To death conformed is a sacred lot, though foreign to the world;
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.

To know Christ's resurrection power and suffering's fellowship,
Supply abundant is required; by Spirit so equipped.
No mortal frame can crucify the self, sin, nor the world,
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.

Jerusalem has an entry port unknown among this world;
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.

The Thought behind the Song

“The Pearl” is based on Rev 21:21 and heavily inspired by Witness Lee’s extensive ministry on the significance of the New Jerusalem. The awe inspiring thought that he presents in his writings is that the twelve gates of twelve pearls are intrinsically connected to the suffering of Christ to produce the church as the pearl of great worth. Furthermore, it is related to the fellowship of sufferings that the believers share in for their experience of Christ’s resurrection life. This causes them to be transformed into pearls which are built into the entrance of God’s eternal dwelling place composed of God with his redeemed elect.

While the symbolism is deep, the picture of how an oyster produces a pearl helps us to get a visual understanding. An infectious particle (typically sand) intrudes and wounds an oyster. The oyster then begins the process of secretion around that infectious particle which makes the wound tolerable. The longer it abides in the confines of the shell, the greater and more precious it becomes. We as sinners can be likened to the wounding element to Christ in causing Him to die for us, but by His resurrection life secreted around us, we became the precious pearl. To take the metaphor a bit further, we also experience our own kind of being wounded during our walk with Christ, but by remaining in the death of Christ (ie. staying in the “prison” or mold of His death), by the Spirit, we experience a healing balm that envelopes us and causes us to come forth in resurrection as precious pearls for the New Jerusalem.

Notes on the Music

“The Pearl” is a musically dark composition in B minor. The second line of each stanza features an augmented 4th/diminished 5th chord and resolves to a minor. This classical tritone is the notorious “diabolus in musica” or “the devil in music”. At least from the early 18th century, it was considered to be the most dissonant musical interval and was even designated as a “dangerous” interval. In Western cultural convention it has historically carried an “evil” musical connotation. As it is used in “The Pearl,” one cannot help but notice the dark, brooding atmosphere that it carries. Likewise, the diminished 3rd in the introduction and toward the end of the third line in each stanza further accentuates an ominous mood.

The dark feel of the composition was deliberate for a dual purpose. Firstly, in a very superficial way, it was for the purpose of bringing variety to the album as a whole (every other song except for the chorus of Moriah) is in a major key. Secondly, in an effort to match the lyrical content with musical form, the dark tones highlight the fact that producing a pearl (both physically for the oyster and metaphorically in the spiritual sense) is a deep, dark, and sometimes painful process which has an exceedingly valuable and rare outcome.

Severed from This Age

Based on Genesis 6-9; Philippians 2:12-15; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 11:7;

Wicked is the heart and the thoughts are so evil, I repent
On my part that I sought to make man, and My
Spirit will not strive with them any longer
Lest wickedness continue forever.

But Noah was a man in the sight of Jehovah who found grace
For his stand, with a life that would change the age;
Shining in a godless generation
Working out with fear his salvation.

Severed from this age and its lure
Let Jehovah shut the door.
His salvation here we find
We will leave this age behind.

Violence fills the earth and the end of all flesh has come.
Because of its dearth of righteousness, I do bring the flood.
Make yourself an ark for preservation
Reconciling all of creation.

Severed from this age and its lure
Let Jehovah shut the door.
His salvation here we find
We will leave this age behind.

From the day the springs from above coalesced
Until the wings of the dove found their rest, never to return,
Eight souls brought safely through by water
Passed through the flood and earth's slaughter.

Severed from this age and its lure
Let Jehovah shut the door.
His salvation here we find
We will leave this age behind.

As the earth remains, winter's ice, summer's heat, and harvest time;
Seed time's rain, day and night shall not cease; and my
Bow is for a covenant forever;
And I look upon it to remember.

Severed from this age and its lure
Let Jehovah shut the door.
His salvation here we find
We will leave this age behind.

The Thought behind the Song

“Severed from This Age” is the account of the Noah’s flood from both God’s perspective and from a narrator’s perspective alternately. Stanzas 1, 3, and 5 are God’s speaking, stanzas 2 and 4 (the bridge) are narration, and the chorus is in the first person plural. The lyric links together many passages from the Old and New Testament, making deep inferences to Christ and His work of reconciliation being typified by the ark, as well as references to the New Testament believers as today’s “Noahs.”

Starting with the wickedness manifest by man in Genesis 6, we see that God actually repented that He made man. However, there was one man on the earth who was righteous, and found favor, or grace, with God. This grace enabled him to live a righteous life in the midst of such a corrupt generation. Through this one righteous man, God could end the age and start afresh in a new age without ending Adam’s lineage. Much of the thought concerning the working out of this changing of the age comes from chapter 2 of Philippians, where we see the contrast between God’s people, likened to luminaries, and the crooked and perverted generation. In such a scene, Paul’s says that on one hand, it is us who work out our own salvation (in Noah’s case, building the ark), on the other hand, it is God who operates in us for His good pleasure (Noah simply cooperated with God for His purpose). In Noah’s time, Noah’s work caused him to leave the wicked age behind, yet it was God who shut the door to the ark implying that God did the cutting off or severing from that age.

Another striking and mysterious point related to this subject is the matter of reconciling all of creation. On one hand all of creation was destroyed (with the exception of the aquatic world). On the other hand, eight souls of men were saved along with pairs of all the animal kingdom. This typifies the redemption accomplished by Christ in which not only people, but everything created by God was reconciled through Him. Hebrews 2:9 says He tasted death on behalf of everything. Colossians 1:20 says that He reconciled all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross. The mentioning of “things” being reconciled in these verses show how profoundly effective Christ’s redemptive death was in that it reconciled, or cleared up, the entire problem in the entire created universe. The death waters in Noah’s flood were a righteous judgement, but the preservation of the men and created beings through the ark was a testament of God’s promise of life. All of this can be seen in Christ’s redemption. His death reconciled us to God regarding our sin, His life imparting resurrection reconciled us to God by means of a full and organic salvation. Therefore Christ is the reality, the fulfilment of Noah’s Ark.

Notes on the Music

The most notable feature of “Severed from This Age” is that it is written in the atypical 7/8 time signature (mostly in a 3+4 construction with one line in the chorus being 4+3).

Joseph's Dreams

Based on Genesis 37-41; 2 Corinthians 4:13

Heavenly dreams came at the time of my life
When I thought I knew what was right.
Visions of sheaves of life;
Sun and moon and stars of light;
Stars of light.

Words that I said with the best intention
Fell prey to sin's deception.
Yet revealed was how God viewed such ones
As His living, shining sons;
Shining sons.

And when my hope begins to fade away from me;
And dreams aren't fulfilled right away as it would seem;
Such visions would sustain my faith so I could be
In perfect peace and governed by the heavenly dreams.

Imprisoned within the walls of uncertainty;
In this dungeon dreams never cease.
I believe, therefore I speak
Not what I feel but what I see;
What I see.

And when my hope begins to fade away from me;
And dreams aren't fulfilled right away as it would seem;
Such visions would sustain my faith so I could be
In perfect peace and governed by the heavenly dreams.

The Thought behind the Song

“Joseph’s Dreams” is a song that portrays how the dreams that Joseph had as a seventeen year-old became his governing vision for the rest of his life, even under the most troubling circumstances. His dreams concerning the sheaves of wheat, sun, moon, and eleven stars, on the surface seem to be a foreshadowing of the time when his not-so-loving brothers and even his parents would eventually bow to him. But if one looks deeper at it, it actually shows God’s view of His people in the most positive light, no matter their behavior.

Joseph’s first dream had to do with his brothers’ sheaves of wheat bowing down to his. This shows that in God’s eyes, all his people are full of the life that is bountiful and satisfying. Even the Lord Jesus likened Himself to a grain of wheat in John chapter 12. Joseph’s second dream was that of the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowing down to him. His father rebuked him for such apparent pride, merely understanding that the dream referred to him and Joseph’s mother and brothers. Yet in this dream we see God’s view of his people as stars full of light, shining luminaries in the midst darkness.

When Joseph encountered his family after about 23 years of being deprived of them due his brothers’ acts of rage from jealousy, he didn’t hold it against them. It seemed that God’s view of them became Joseph’s view of them—persons of life and light. This vision must have governed Joseph throughout his entire life.

Furthermore, when Joseph, a master of dreams, was in prison due to others unrighteousness, he interpreted dreams for others. The persons for whom he interpreted had their dreams fulfilled while Joseph was forgotten about and left in the dungeon for years while his own dreams from God were not yet fulfilled. Nevertheless, he didn’t stop speaking interpretations of dreams. When Pharaoh needed interpretation of his dreams, they remembered Joseph and called upon him for help. His faithful speaking according to God not only freed him from the dungeon but brought him straight up to the sit enthroned as governor over Egypt second in command to Pharaoh. This experience matches what the apostle Paul quoted in 2 Corinthians 4:13 where he said within the context of his own limitation, “I believed, therefore I spoke.” This shows that despite our apparent imprisoning circumstances, we should never shrink back from believing and speaking the truth concerning that which we know regarding God’s eternal economy. This speaking will usher us from the pit to the throne in our spirit.

Notes on the Music

“Joseph’s Dreams” displays unusual chord progressions played out in a unique and hypnotic alternate picking of the guitars. The left channel classical guitar is picking in a 3+5 beat rhythm while the acoustic guitar on the right is picking in standard 4/4. The background vocals add a nice ethereal sound that fleshes out the ending of each line.

God Meant It for Good

Based on Genesis 37-50

Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his other sons,
He loved him as the son of his old age;
And by his love he made for him a coat of many colors;
But through envy, animosity had fueled his other sons' rage.

Then Joseph had a dream one night and told it to his brothers;
Your sheaves had gathered round and bowed to mine;
And still another dream I had the sun, the moon, and stars
Bowed down to me, yet all could see that Joseph knew not why.

His brothers grew in jealousy, his father contained all he could;
Father contained all he could
What they meant for evil, God meant it for good.

Then Israel told Joseph, come, I'll send you to your brothers;
His coat of many colors then they stripped;
Let's see what comes of this master of all dreams with no one to deliver;
His life they spared, but without care they threw him in the pit.

They spied a band of Ishmaelites en route to Egypt going down;
They lifted up devising eyes to gaze.
We'll sell him to the Ishmaelites, and dip his color coat in blood.
His father saw, couldn't bear it all, and mourned for many days.

Now Jacob couldn't understand what God intended that he would;
God intended that he would
What they meant for evil, God meant it for good.

Jacob had to now withstand such pain he never knew he could;
Pain he never knew he could
But what was meant for evil, God meant it for good.

God Meant It for Good (continued)

When dreams of fate unto him came, Joseph confided in his God;
With wisdom unsurpassed, by God he reigned.
His storehouse blessed the earth with grain 'midst famine and amidst affliction.
On Israel distress befell, to Egypt down they came.

Recalling dreams he'd dreamt of them, he saw and recognized his brothers;
They pleaded humbly recognizing not.
Through tests of love their hearts declared their guilt and love unto their father;
Cried he fervidly, I am Joseph! He who sent me here was God.

His brothers couldn't understand, what Joseph now understood;
Joseph now he understood
What they meant for evil, God meant it for good.

It's often hard to understand, far more be misunderstood,
Far more be misunderstood
What is meant for evil, God meant it for good.
Although intent be evil, God meant it for good.

The Thought behind the Song

“God Meant It for Good,” at face value is a narrative story of Joseph’s life. Deeper than that, it attempts to unfold the mysterious notion of how God’s purpose can be fulfilled even through obviously evil intent and the consequences thereof. This matter is most notably brought to focus through the experiences of Joseph culminating in his realization that although his brothers intended evil for him, God meant it for good.

It was truly a perfect storm that brought Joseph into the trials that he had to endure. His father’s preferential love toward him coupled with his openness concerning his divine dreams which were inappropriately received all came together to stoke the jealousy and anger of his brothers. It is reasonable to say that all parties lacked maturity in this case. Jacob exercised preferential love, the brothers concocted a devilish plan hastily out of their anger, and Joseph was not particularly adept at taking care of how the others might receive his special attention and even the divine dreams he had. There are examples of persons in the Bible, such as Mary, the mother of Jesus, whose emotions were under the control of their spirit, and who were able to hide the deep and mysterious matters of God in their hearts. This was something that Joseph would eventually learn over many years as seen in his experience of being reunited with his brothers. The good news is that through this long, dark part of their family history, they all matured to be God expressing persons. The brothers eventually showed remorse for what they had done and love for their father. Jacob showed his maturity in how he reacted when finally submitting to the arrangement for Benjamin to be brought to Egypt, considering it God’s will even if he was to be bereaved again. Joseph shone forth his maturity in how he handled himself in every pressing situation, from false accusation, to faithful dream interpretation, to governing the entire land with justice and wisdom, leading up to the ultimate task of handling his brothers after all the hardship they put him through.

God had arranged every circumstance for Joseph’s maturity for a period of 23 years from his captivity to his reuniting with his family. This length of time shows that maturity is a long process, not an overnight matter. But the fruit is shown in that Joseph didn’t hesitate a moment to declare that God had sent him to Egypt once he was unveiled to his brothers. Forgiveness was worked into him to the point that it was his spontaneous reaction. Furthermore, almost 20 years later, after his father’s death, he reassured his brothers, who were not so reassured in themselves, that although they intended evil against him, God intended it for good to preserve people alive. What compassion and insight he had! Such a person is a beacon of hope, and today this hope is Christ in us, the hope of glory in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.

Chord Sheets

Where Were You

4/4 150bpm

C Em Am F
O where were you when I laid out earth's foundations?

C Em Dm G
Apprise me of all your thoughts can employ.

C Em Am F
When morning stars sang together in jubilation,

C G C
And the sons of God shouted for joy.

C F C G
This is the major revelation;
C F Am G C
From the beginning of the heavens and the earth we see
 F C G
Though chaos plagued the old creation,
C F Am G C
It's conquered by constructive and divine economy.

He Who formed and established earth and made it
Created nothing empty or vain.
There's no one else but the Lord of all creation,
And nothing higher than his purpose to attain.

This is the major revelation;
From the beginning of the heavens and the earth we see
Though chaos plagued the old creation,
It's conquered by constructive and divine economy.

C G F G
Tell me if you know.
 (O where were you?)
C G F C
Tell me if you know.
 (O where were you?)
 (repeat)

Where were you when I laid out earth's foundations?
Apprise me of all your thoughts can employ.
When morning stars sang together in jubilation,
And the sons of God shouted for joy.

Abraham's Song (The Altar and the Tent)

4/4 145bpm

C CM7 Dm G C
Go from your land to a land that I will show;
Am Em F G
And to all those who would bless you I will bless;
Am Dm G F C
and to all those who would curse you, know that they will then be cursed;
F C Dm G
You're the blessing of the families of the earth.

When we set out from Haran I was seventy five;
We left our homeland never to return.
And I journeyed toward the mountain, pitched my tent above the plain;
Built an altar and I called upon his name.

C G F C
If I die in faith to realize
C G F C-G
All God's promises unsent,
C G Em F
My confession is I live the life
C G C
Of the altar and the tent.

In my journey we came to a place my tent had been;
Though the tent had moved the altar still remained.
With my brother's son along the way a conflict did arise.
How can we as brothers live with any strife?

If you take the left, I'll take the right;
Choice is not for what my life is meant.
My confession is I live the life
Of the altar and the tent.

Am G C F
Lift up your eyes, look from where you stand;
Am G C
To the north and south and west and toward the east.
Am G C F
Rise up and walk throughout this land;
Dm7 G
All its length and breadth I'll give you and your seed.

If I long for what I've left behind,
How could my heart be content?
Shame is not in those who live the life
Of the altar and the tent.

In my fullness of age, God gave me a son;
Twas the only heav'nly promise I received.
Yet the altar still awaited since one's faith is never done
Only God supplies the boldness to believe.

If by faith I never compromise
Sage design and providence,
God my portion would sustain my life
Of the altar and the tent.

If I long for what I've left behind,
How could my heart be content?
Shame is not in those who live the life
Of the altar and the tent.

If you take the left, I'll take the right;
Choice is not for what my life is meant.
My confession is I live the life
Of the altar and the tent.

Go from your land to a land that I will show.

Isaac's Song

$\frac{3}{4}$ 120bpm

G D Em C
Dig up the wells my father made;
G D Em C
Call them by the same names.
G D Em C
His portion was a life of faith;
Em D G
Mine, inheriting grace.

Stake out the camp within the dell;
There we'll find a springing well.
Theirs is the claim that leads to strife;
Mine, inheriting life.

Richer and great I grew to be;
Such gave rise to enmity.
Destined for joy, yet this I know;
God will not let me go.

Though wells availed in all the land,
Still I came to doubt my stand.
Blessings divine can ne'er replace
God's appearing in grace.

I, in Beersheba, will remain,
Build an altar, call his name;
Draw from the well that flows so free
By the tamarisk tree.

Dig up the wells my father made;
Call them by the same names.
His portion was a life of faith;
Mine, inheriting grace.

Stake out the camp within the dell;
There we'll find a springing well.
Theirs is the claim that leads to strife;
Mine, inheriting life.

Jacob's Song

5/4 190bpm

A D F#m E
I was known as a quiet man;
A D F#m E
Made my dwelling in tents;
A E F#m D
Second of sons, known as the one,
A D F#m7 E
Struggling without relent.

Blessing gained by supplanting ways,
Spurred the fury of Edom's
Anger to slay; I fled away;
Yet dreams awaited from God.

A D
The God whom my fathers walked with,
E A
The Angel who has redeemed me,
D C#m Bm Bm7
The One who sustained me when
E A
All I could do was pray;
F#m Bm
Lord You're the One I walk with,
E A6
You're the One Who redeemed me,
D C#m Bm Bm7
You are the God Who shepherded me
E A
All my life to this day.

Exiled, sojourning with no home;
Stone for my head to rest;
A vision I saw, a ladder so tall,
Through which Earth would be blessed.

Years I labored for one I loved,
Only to be deceived;
Unrighteousness led me in distress;
God of Bethel to see.

The God whom my fathers walked with,
The Angel who has redeemed me,
The One who sustained me when
All I could do was pray;
Lord You're the One I walk with,
You're the One Who redeemed me,

You are the God Who shepherded me,
All my life to this day.

F#m E A D
How I prayed for deliverance
F#m E A E
From him who would pursue.
F#m E A D
I, in that place, saw God face to face;
F#m G E E7
There my strength was subdued.

Through the loss of the ones I loved,
Emptied now I confess,
Few were my days, evil my ways;
Now with fullness I bless.

The God whom my fathers walked with,
The Angel who has redeemed me,
The One who sustained me when
All I could do was pray.
Lord You're the One I walk with,
You're the One Who redeemed me,
You are the God Who shepherded me
All my life to this day.

Rachel

4/4 120 bpm

G Am C D
The way from Bethel should have been most joyous;
G Am CM7 Em D
Our second child would come forth any time.
G Am C D CM7D
The labor that befell was hardest;
G Am C D
Don't be afraid for you brought forth a son thereby;
C D G
As my natural choice would die.

The sun that sets and rises every morning;
It never holds on to its former light.
So your soul which dims and fades away
Will yield its light to him who's born from you to shine;
As my natural choice would die.

C G Em Am
Rachel don't fear, your sorrow weighs though not withstanding;
C G Em D
Our son shall not be Ben-oni.
C G Em Am
Letting go--it proves to be the deepest dealing;
C G Em D
Our gain required a last goodbye
C D G F C
as my natural choice would die
C D G
as my natural choice would die

The pillar on your grave abides unto this day;
A testimony of both death and life.
And though the path we tread remains unchanged;
Its sojourners are ne'er the same and such as I;
As my natural choice would die;
As my natural choice would die.

Ruth's Redemption

4/4 114 bpm

A C#m D A
Rest had vanished from your former home;
A C#m D E
Gone was the life that you knew;
A C#m D A
Hopeless and helpless, your trust had come
A E A
To a God you would choose.

Gleaning in the fields of grain you were found,
Refuged under God's great wings;
Secretly you came in and there laid down;
Selfless kindness did you bring.

E D F#m E
All you lost, I will redeem;
E D F#m E
Your kindness I have esteemed;
A Bm
Stay and you will receive
E A
My compassion toward you.
A C#m Bm
Your rest shall ever be
E A
My compassion for you.

All that you've done, my attention caught;
How you left your land of birth;
Came to a people you kneweth not;
God shall recompense your worth.

All you lost, I will redeem;
Your kindness I have esteemed;
Stay and you will receive
My compassion toward you.
Your rest shall ever be
My compassion for you.

May Jehovah make you as the ones
Who built the house of Israel.
May our house be as the chosen son's;
Bringing in Emmanuel.

All you lost, I will redeem;
Your kindness I have esteemed;
Stay and you will receive
My compassion toward you.
Your rest shall ever be
My compassion for you.

Your rest shall ever be
My compassion for you.

The Birthright

4/4 128 bpm

C F C G
 Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated;
 F G C G
 Is there unrighteousness with God?
 C F C G
 The lesser would be served by the greater,
 F G C
 And his portion would allot.

Blessed privilege lost, rooted in profaneness,
 Breeded tears of deep regret.
 Time will tell the cost of what we forfeit,
 Warn us Lord, lest we forget;

 C G
 The birthright I would not despise,
 F C
 No matter what the earthly prize;
 Dm F G
 For God is seeking those who honor it.
 C G
 It's not of him who wills nor runs,
 F C
 But His mercy on the one
 F Dm G C
 Whom He selected by his sovereignty.

Every man is sold under sin's slavery;
 Stolen is our joy and peace.
 How can we be bold with condemnation?
 Who will grant us full release?

Jubilee has come, freedom from oppression;
 Bonds are broken, blind have sight.
 The all-inclusive One is now our portion;
 We've come back to claim our right.

The birthright I would not despise,
 No matter what the earthly prize;
 For God is seeking those who come back to it.
 It's not of him who wills nor runs,
 But His mercy on the one
 Whom He selected by his sovereignty.

Moriah

5/4 180bpm

G Am D G
Endless blessings ever receiving
G Am D G
All to realize just by believing
G Am D G
Free to receive, freely we give.

Offering only what is not costly
Ne'er could appease His asking so softly
Of the things most dear to us.

Of his chosen, God had spoken;
Visitation was His token;
Sarah would conceive a son.

Em Am D Em Bm C
And at the time of trial when I'm called, could I not say, here am I.
Em Am D Em CM7 D
The vision seen at Moriah gave me strength to have the faith, he provides.

Tested was the one counted faithful;
Tested by the One who is able
To raise men up from the dead.

Take your son, your only begotten;
Whom you love, I have not forgotten
That he is the promised seed.

Rise up early in the morning;
At Moriah the burnt offering
Will your only son be to Me.

And at the time of trial when I'm called, could I not say, here am I.
The vision seen at Moriah gave me strength to have the faith, he provides.

The Pearl

$\frac{3}{4}$ 128 bpm

Intro: Bm G Em C#dim Bm

Bm Em A Bm G Bm F#m
My savior's wound met on the cross inflicted by my sin,
Bm Gaddb5/D Em A D Em A-A7
Became the stripes whose healing power secreted life within.
Bm G A Bm7 Em C#dim A
The balm embracing the contrite heart is scarce met in the world;
Bm G Em A7-A6 Bm G A Bm
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.

He came not for the whole in heart but for those who are ill;
Through broken sinners touched by grace is ministry fulfilled.
Those mended share in the mending art--a rare trade in the world;
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.

Through his great love the wound of Christ a prison thus became;
At home imprisoned in his wound I'd ever thus remain.
To death conformed is a sacred lot, though foreign to the world;
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.

To know Christ's resurrection power and suffering's fellowship,
Supply abundant is required; by Spirit so equipped.
No mortal frame can crucify the self, sin, nor the world,
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.

Jerusalem has an entry port unknown among this world;
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.
Of the grains of sand found in the sea, only from the wound comes forth the pearl.

Severed from This Age

$\frac{7}{8}$ (3+4) 100bpm

C Dm Em F G F C
 Wicked is the heart and the thoughts are so evil, I repent
 Dm Em F G
 On my part that I sought to make man, and my
 F Em G
 Spirit will not strive with them any longer
 F Am G
 Lest wickedness continue forever.

But Noah was a man in the sight of Jehovah who found grace
 For his stand, with a life that would change the age;
 Shining in a godless generation
 Working out with fear his salvation.

F C G
 Severed from this age and its lure
 F G F C
 Let Jehovah shut the door.
 G F
 His salvation here we find
 G C
 We will leave this age behind.

Violence fills the earth and the end of all flesh has come. Because
 Of its dearth of righteousness, I do bring the flood.
 Make yourself an ark for preservation
 Reconciling all of creation.

Severed from this age and its lure
 Let Jehovah shut the door.
 His salvation here we find
 We will leave this age behind.

F Am G Am
 From the day the springs from above coalesced
 F Am G C
 Until the wings of the dove found their rest, never to return,
 Dm Am G
 Eight souls brought safely through by water
 F Am G
 Passed through the flood and earth's slaughter.

Severed from this age and its lure
Let Jehovah shut the door.
His salvation here we find
we will leave this age behind.

As the earth remains, winter's ice, summer's heat, and harvest time;
Seed time's rain, day and night shall not cease; and my
Bow is for a covenant forever;
And I look upon it to remember.

Severed from this age and its lure
Let Jehovah shut the door.
His salvation here we find
we will leave this age behind.

Heavenly Dreams

4/4 120 bpm

C Gm F Am G C
 Heavenly dreams came at the time of my life
 Gm F Am G C
 When I thought I knew what was right.
 Gm F Am G C
 Visions of sheaves of life;
 Gm F Am G Dm F G
 Sun and moon and stars of light;
 Am G F
 Stars of light.

Words that we say with the best intention
 Fall prey to sin's deception.
 Yet revealed is how God views such ones
 As his living, shining sons;
 Shining sons.

C G F Am G C
 And when my hope begins to fade away from me;
 CM7 F Am G C
 And dreams aren't fulfilled right away as it would seem;
 G F Am G C
 Such visions would sustain my faith so I could be
 CM7 F G F G C Am G F C
 In perfect peace and governed by the heavenly dreams.

Imprisoned within the walls of uncertainty;
 In this dungeon dreams never cease.
 I believe, therefore I speak
 Not what I feel but what I see;
 What I see.

And when my hope begins to fade away from me;
 And dreams aren't fulfilled right away as it would seem;
 Such visions would sustain my faith so I could be
 In perfect peace and governed by the heavenly dreams.

God Meant It for Good

4/4 115 bpm

D Em A G D
 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his other sons,
 Bm Em A
 He loved him as the son of his old age;
 D Em A G D
 And by his love he made for him a coat of many colors;
 Bm Em A D
 But through envy, animosity had fueled his other sons' rage.

Then Joseph had a dream one night and told it to his brothers;
 Your sheaves had gathered round and bowed to mine;
 And still another dream I had the sun, the moon, and stars
 Bowed down to me, yet all could see that Joseph knew not why.

Em F#m G A
 His brothers grew in jealousy, his father contained all he could;
 Father con-tained all he could
 D Bm Em A D
 What they meant for evil, God meant it for good.

Then Israel told Joseph, come, I'll send you to your brothers;
 His coat of many colors then they stript;
 Let's see what comes of this master of all dreams with no one to deliver;
 His life they spared, but without care they threw him in the pit.

They spied a band of Ishmaelites en route to Egypt going down;
 They lifted up devising eyes to gaze.
 We'll sell him to the Ishmaelites, and dip his color coat in blood.
 His father saw, couldn't bear it all, and mourned for many days.

Now Jacob couldn't understand, what God intended that he would;
God intended that he would
 What they meant for evil, God meant it for good.

Bm G F#m Bm
 Jacob had to now withstand such pain he never knew he could;
pain he never knew he could
 G Bm Em A D
 But what was meant for evil, God meant it for good.

When dreams of fate unto him came, Joseph confided in his God;
 With wisdom unsurpassed, by God he reigned.
 His storehouse blessed the earth with grain 'midst famine and amidst affliction.
 On Israel distress befell, to Egypt down they came.

Recalling dreams he'd dreamt of them he saw and recognized his brothers;
They pleaded humbly recognizing not.
Through tests of love their hearts declared their guilt and love unto their father;
Cried he fervidly, I am Joseph! He who sent me here was God.

His brothers couldn't understand, what Joseph now understood;
Joseph now he understood
What they meant for evil, God meant it for good.

It's often hard to understand, far more be misunderstood,
far more be mis - understood
What is meant for evil, God meant it for good.

Although intent be evil, God meant it for good.

Copyright © 2015 MDFritz Records