

"A Nation for God"

Genesis 12.2 / Romans 4.18-25

WHY DOES LIFE OF FAITH OFTEN SEEM LIKE A STRUGGLE? WAITING?
WHAT IS THE PLAN WHICH GOD IS UNFOLDING IN THIS WORLD?

SERIES "Abraham the Father of our Faith" / LIFE IN DETAIL

IMPORTANCE IN SCRIPTURE - STORY SET IN LARGER CONTEXT
OVERVIEW OF 3 CENTRAL PROMISES - HEART OF BIBLE'S MESSAGE

PROMISE OF THE LAND / INHERITANCE / BLESSING

THREE PROMISES WHICH TRACE PLAN OF GOD THROUGH SCRIPTURE
STORY OF THEIR FULFILLMENT IS STORY OF THE BIBLE / Gen to Revela.

INHERITANCE - great nation from him MOST FREQUENT OF THE PROMISES

1. The Nation Conceived

a. Struggle PAIN OF LABOR IN ANTICIPATION OF THE BLESSING

CALL TO ABRAHAM - 4000 yrs ago - ESSENTIALLY SAME AS TODAY IN X

Genesis 12.1,2 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go

CALL TO LEAVE - mobile American society / HARD TO UNDERSTAND
TODAY - we will pack up and move, better job, schooling, etc.

BEFORE DAYS POLICE, FIRE, AMBULANCE - CANNOT CALL 911 HELP

FAMILY WERE YOUR SECURITY GUARDS - MEDICAL PLAN - SOCIAL
SECURITY & INSURANCE POLICY - "you mess w/ me - answer to my family"

NO BIBLE - CHURCHES - FELLOW BELIEVERS / all alone with God

LEAVE COMFORT AND CERTAINTY OF UR - to the dangers of Canaan

v. 6 At that time the Canaanites were in the land.

KNOWN AS A FEARSOME AND RUTHLESS PEOPLE

COULD ONLY HOLD ON TO NAKED WORD OF GOD
PROMISE OF A GREAT NATION

Gen 12:2 "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

IMPOSSIBLE PROMISE - MARTIN LUTHER - commentary on Genesis
"You should consider that what the Lord promises Abraham here is altogether impossible, unbelievable, and untrue if you follow reason, because it cannot be seen...He was 75 years old, but Sarah was ten years younger and barren at that. How, I ask you, do these facts agree with the promise, "I will make you into a great nation?" Where are the descendants to come from, since Abraham's marriage is childless? These huge masses of unbelief and these high mountains, which could suppress his faith completely, the holy patriarch overcomes and crosses by faith. He simply clings to this one thought: 'Behold, God is promising this. He will not deceive you, even though you do not see the way, the manner, or even the time of the fulfillment.'"

3 X's GOD SAID "I will" / ABE HEARD "we will"
GOD WOULD NEED HIS HELP TO GET THINGS DONE

ALREADY HAD WEALTH / CONNECTIONS / Took - LOT nephew
TENDENCY TO WANT TO HELP GOD FULFILL HIS PROMISES

RUN DOWN TO EGYPT TO GET FOOD / LIED ABOUT WIFE

CH 13 - HERDSMEN OF ABE & LOT QUARRELED / needed more space

"Sure, I believe in God, but I need to help Him out a bit"

Luke 9:23-25 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. {24} For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.

Luke 9:57-62 As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." {58} Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." {59} He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." {60} Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." {61} Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-by to my family." {62} Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

SEEMS TO BE A CRUEL AND HEARTLESS COMMAND OF JESUS

NOT MEAN THAT WE CANNOT FOLLOW HIM AND LOVE OUR FAMILY

WE CANNOT FOLLOW HIM AND LOVE OUR FAMILY MORE

ANYTHING THAT STANDS BETWEEN YOU AND CHRIST IS AN IDOL
even if it is a good thing - family, job, money, spiritual gift

b. Surrender

Chapter 13 ABRAHAM & LOT SEPARATE

ABE GIVES LOT THE FIRST CHOICE OF THE LAND

understood the principle of being a pilgrim on earth

Genesis 13:14-18 The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. {15} All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. {16} I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted.

GOD USES LANGUAGE OF SIMILE "like dust / stars / grains of sand"
TO STRESS THE MAGNIFICENCE OF THE PROMISE

MORE ABE GROWS IN TRUST / FAITH - CLOSER HIS WALK WITH GOD

GREAT STRUGGLE IN LIFE OF Grandson JACOB - MADE ISRAEL OF GOD

AFTER WRESTLING THRU THE NIGHT - ANGEL OF GOD TOLD JACOB

Genesis 32:28 "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome."

Genesis 35:11-15 God said to him, "I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. (FRUITFUL = promise to Adam & Noah)

A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will come from your body. {12} The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I also give to you

Romans 4:18-25 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations...{19} Without weakening in his faith...he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, {21} being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

c. Substitute

GOD DOES NOT TAKE AWAY WITHOUT REPLACING IT
WITH SOMETHING FAR BETTER

WHEN I CAME TO CHRIST AT AGE 17 - struggle to "leave"
NOTHING MEANT MORE TO ME IN THE WORLD THAN MY FRIENDS

LOVED FAMILY - GREAT FAMILY - much closer to friends

PROBLEM - NONE OF MY FRIENDS FOLLOWED JESUS
GONE TO CAMP TOGETHER - THEY RAN OFF FROM CHAPEL
AT THE EXPENSE OF THEIR MOCKING I WENT TO CHAPEL SERVICES

HEARD LIFE CHANGING MESSAGE OF GRACE IN JESUS CHRIST
received the Lord as Savior - Born Again to a Living Hope

1 Cor15:33 Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character

LEFT MY FRIENDS - who encouraged me to sin - HARD THING TO DO

GOD BROUGHT ME INTO A GREAT FELLOWSHIP - life, long friends
KEN TUCKER WAS PART OF THAT FELLOWSHIP - 20 YEARS AGO

HOLY LIVING IS NOT JUST FROM SIN IT IS FOR CHRIST

GOD DOES NOT TAKE SOMETHING AWAY WITHOUT GIVING
SOMETHING BETTER

Mark 10:29-30 "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel {30} will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields--and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.

100 TIMES BETTER TO FOLLOW CHRIST / ALL GAIN FOR THE GOSPEL

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS ALL OVER THE WORLD - name of Jesus opens doors

VISIT PEOPLE IN UGANDA - NEVER MET BEFORE - FAMILY IN JESUS
if had one chair/ sat in it // if had one ceramic cup/ drank from

MY FRIENDS SAW WHAT GOD DID IN MY LIFE - THEY WANTED IT TOO!!
several have committed themselves to Jesus

PLAN OF GOD - CHOOSING ONE NATION TO REACH ALL THE NATIONS

GOD WAS CONCERNED FOR ALL CREATION - Gen ch. 1

GOD WAS CONCERNED FOR ALL NATIONS - Gen ch. 10

"Table of Nations" descendants of the sons of Noah

Genesis 10:32 These are the clans of Noah's sons, according to their lines of descent, within their nations. From these the nations spread out over the earth after the flood.

NATIONS THAT WERE SCATTERED IN JUDGMENT AT BABEL - Gen 11

PLAN OF SALVATION for All NATIONS - SET INTO MOTION WITH 1 MAN

GOD CHANGES NAME OF ABRAHAM'S WIFE TO SARAH = PRINCESS

Genesis 17:16 I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

2. The Nation Created

a. Chosen GOD DID NOT USE AN EXISTING NATION - MADE NEW ONE

OUT OF ALL PEOPLE ON EARTH - GOD CHOSEN ONE MAN - ABRAHAM

Nehemiah 9:7} "You are the LORD God, who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and named him Abraham. {8} You found his heart faithful to you, and you made a covenant with him

SOVEREIGN DECISION OF PREDESTINATING GOD

Genesis 48:3-4 ABRAHAM'S GRANDSON Jacob said to HIS SON Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me...in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me {4} and said to me, 'I am going to make you fruitful and will increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.'

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION / UNCONDITIONAL PROMISE

Abraham may have said - "Suppose I misunderstand your leading or rebel against your plan?"

God responds "I will make you into a great nation"

"Suppose my descendants, after you give them your Law, make an idolatrous calf out of gold and worship it?"

God responds "I will make you into a great nation"

"Suppose when they should be entering the Promised Land they doubt your Promise and drop dead in the wilderness in judgment?"

God responds "I will make you into a great nation"

"Suppose after becoming a Monarchy, our kings build temples for other gods?"

God responds "I will make you into a great nation"

Suppose when you send your Son as Messiah we reject & crucify Him

God responds "I will make you into a great nation"

GREAT NATION??

MORE NUMEROUS??

Deuteronomy 7:7 The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples.

GREAT PHILOSOPHERS? - not compared to the Greeks

GREAT SYSTEM OF LAWS AND ADMINISTRATION? - not as great as Rome

GREAT OBEDIENCE?? - God spoke to Israel through Moses

Deuteronomy 9:6 it is not because of your righteousness that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stiff-necked people.

**ABRAHAM NOT DESERVE IT - ISRAEL DID NOT - WE DO NOT EITHER!
THAT IS WHAT UNCONDITIONAL GRACE IS ALL ABOUT**

**WHAT MADE THEM GREAT WAS THEIR GREAT GOD - HE LOVED THEM
GREATLY BLESSED - GREAT OBJECTS OF MERCY - GREAT SAVIOR**

b. Countless GOD KEPT THE PROMISE / ULTIMATE PROMISE KEEPER

ON EVE OF ISRAEL'S ENTRY INTO THE PROMISED LAND - MOSES SAID

Deuteronomy 1:10-11 The LORD your God has increased your numbers so that today you are as many as the stars in the sky. {11} May the LORD, the God of your fathers, increase you a thousand times and bless you as he has promised!

AS YOUNG SOLOMON TOOK THE THRONE OF DAVID

2 Chronicles 1:9-10 LORD God...you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth.

Hebrews 11:11-12 By faith Abraham, even though he was past age--and Sarah herself was barren--was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. {12} And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

PROOF OF THE CERTAINTY OF FAITH

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

c. Crowned

WITH DAVID / NEW ASPECT OF THE COVENANT PROMISE

1000 yrs after Abraham / 1000 yrs before Jesus

DAVID DESIRES TO BUILD A HOUSE FOR GOD / TEMPLE

GOD BLESSES HIM FOR HIS RIGHTEOUS DEDICATION

2 Samuel 7:9 Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men of the earth.

2 Samuel 7:12 When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom.

2 Samuel 7:16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me ; your throne will be established forever."

GOD FAITHFUL TO THAT FOREVER PROMISE- 100's of yrs after David

Isaiah 9:6-7 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given...Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace...He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom

Jeremiah 23:5-6 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.

Amos 9:11 "In that day I will restore David's fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be,

Ezekiel 37:24" My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees.

d. Consecrated NOT ALL ISRAEL WAS REALLY ISRAEL

PROPHETS OF ISRAEL MADE CLEAR BIRTH ALONE WAS NOT ENOUGH
REQUIREMENT OF FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

Isaiah 65:11-15 "But as for you who forsake the LORD and forget my holy mountain...I will destine you for the sword, and you will all bend down for the slaughter; for I called but you did not answer, I spoke but you did not listen. You did evil in my sight and chose what displeases me." {13} Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "My servants will eat, but you will go hungry; my servants will drink, but you will go thirsty; my servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame. {14} My servants will sing out of the joy of their hearts, but you will cry out from anguish of heart and wail in brokenness of spirit.

Malachi 3:16-18 A scroll of remembrance was written in GOD'S presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name. {17} "They will be mine," says the LORD Almighty, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. {18} And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.

3. The Nation in Christ

THE PROMISE IS WIDE / THE PROMISE IS NARROW

a. A Person

THE SON IN VIEW WAS NOT ULTIMATELY ISAAC - SON OF GOD

PROMISE NOT TOTALLY NEW - GOD MADE SIMILAR PROMISE IN EDEN

Genesis 3:15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

IN ABRAHAM - PROMISE IS RENEWED AND MADE MORE PARTICULAR
HUNDREDS MORE MESSIANIC PROMISES THRU OLD TESTAMENT

UNTIL THE FULLNESS OF TIME - GOD SENDS FORTH HIS SON - NT OPENS

Matthew 1:1 A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham:

CHARLES ERDMAN "With Abraham began a new chapter in the divine plan of redemption. A man was chosen to be the head of a family from which issued a favored race...They were...often apostate, and unfaithful; but through them was preserved for the world the knowledge of God which finally reached its climax in the person and work of Christ. This knowledge is the supreme concern of each individual and of the human race, for, as the Savior declared, "This is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

AFTER HEALING THE MAN AT THE TEMPLE GATE
PETER PREACHED TO THE CROWDS OF JEWS IN JERUSALEM

Acts 3:25-26 And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.' {26} When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

Gal 3:16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ.

b. A People

THOSE WHO TRUST IN CHRIST BECOME CHILDREN OF PROMISE

ABRAHAM'S SON ISAAC BLESSED HIS SON ISRAEL

Gen 28:3 May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples.

EVEN THO THEY WERE DESTROYED IN EXILE PROMISE STILL GOOD

Hosea 1:8-10 PROPHET HOSEA SYMBOL OF GOD'S FAITHFUL LOVE WIFE A PROSTITUTE NAMED GOMER / SYMBOL OF UNFAITHFUL ISRAEL THEY WERE TURNED OVER TO THEIR SINFUL DESIRES

Gomer had another son. {9} Then the LORD said, "Call him Lo-Ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God.

NEVERTHELESS, THE PROMISE OF GOD STILL STOOD

{10} "Yet the Israelites will be like the sand on the seashore, which cannot be measured or counted. In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'sons of the living God.'

Galatians 3:29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

MATTHEW WAS GOSPEL FOR JEWS - MANY OLD TESTAMENT QUOTES SHOWED HOW THIS JESUS OF NAZARETH WAS MESSIAH AND LORD JEWS DID NOT NECESSARILY LIKE MESSAGE - BUT THEY GOT IT

Matthew 3:7-9 Pharisees and Sadducees MOCKED REPENTANCE BEFORE JOHN THE BAPTIZER {9} And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.

GREATEST ENEMIES OF JEWS WERE ROMANS – HOPED MESSIAH WOULD SLAY JESUS COMES AS MESSIAH AND SAVES THEM - HEALS THEIR SERVANTS SEES FAITH OF ROMAN CENTURION - A MAN UNDER AUTHORITY

Matthew 8:10-11 Jesus...said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. {11} I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

EXPLAINS HOW WICKED TENANTS WILL KILL THE LANDOWNERS SON

Matt 21:43 I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

NOT ALL ISRAEL IS REALLY ISRAEL - GOD WILL RAISE A NEW PEOPLE

Matt 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations

DISCIPLE IS A FOLLOWER OF JESUS / obedient student of Master

FOLLOW HIM IN THE NATIONS / NOT FOLLOW NATIONS
NOT CONFORMED TO NATIONS / TRANSFORMING THE NATIONS

DANGER OF AMERICAN CHURCH / AMERICAN MISSIONARY EFFORT
FOLLOWING THE NATIONS STANDARDS AND METHODS -
save the world w/ our money & machinery / not prayers & preaching

MORE INTERESTED IN TECHNIQUES THAN OBEDIENCE

OFFENDED BY THE SCANDAL OF THE CROSS / MAKE JESUS MORE
PALATABLE

SEEKER SERVICES - MAKE WORLD FEEL AT HOME IN CHURCH
MAKE THE WORLD FEEL CONVICTED IN THE CHURCH - or a WORLDLY
CHURCH

c. A Promise GOD WILL NOT FORSAKE HIS PEOPLE

HE HAS 4000 YEARS INVESTED IN THE FULFILLMENT OF HIS PROMISE

NOT A PROMISE TO PRESERVE A NATION / human empire, kingdom
ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THIS EARTH WILL RISE AND FALL

WE ARE CITIZENS OF A KINGDOM WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN
A NATION FOR GOD

Isaiah 41:8-10 "you descendants of Abraham my friend, {9} I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you. I said, 'You are my servant'; I have chosen you and have not rejected you. {10} So do not fear, for I am with you; do not

be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

PETER WRITES TO ALL THE BELIEVERS - SCATTERED THRU WORLD

1 Pet 2:9 you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God

AFTER A LONG HIKE FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION
GOD'S PROMISE GIVEN 4000 YRS AGO - faithfully kept by God Himself

RATIFIED AND RENEWED TO MOSES & DAVID / CLIMAXED IN CHRIST
REVEALED IN THE CHURCH OF JESUS - we are sons & daughters of God

WHAT FITTING RESPONSE CAN WE GIVE TO SUCH A GREAT
SALVATION??

1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.