

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN OVERWHELMED AT THE WONDER AND GOODNESS OF GOD?

HAS YOUR HEART EVER REALLY FATHOMED THE DEPTHS OF HIS LOVE?

LAST OF SEVERAL INTRODUCTORY MESSAGES TO OUR STUDY OF
"Abraham - the Father of our Faith"

The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. {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. {3} I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

3rd OF GOD'S GREAT PROMISES TO ABRAHAM - Land, Inheritance

v. 2 "I will bless you"

ED CLOWNEY "Our understanding of blessing has faded with our awareness of the presence of God. Blessing is the pronouncement of God's favor. It includes the gifts that God gives as the evidence of His love and favor, but blessing is more than what God gives. It is the bond of favor that joins God's people with Him"

1. The Promise

a. Received

ALREADY INCREDIBLY BLESSED - Promise of LAND / DESCENDANTS

MORE TO COME - 5 times in 2 verses - word BLESS is used

PROMISE GOES FAR BEYOND ANY MATERIAL BLESSING

REACTION OF ABRAHAM NOT RECORDED HERE - left to our imagination

PERHAPS GET IDEA IN REACTION OF DAVID - everlasting kingdom

2 Samuel 7:19 O Sovereign LORD, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant. Is this your usual way of dealing with man, O Sovereign LORD?

JOB REALIZED GOD IS GREATER THAN HIS QUESTIONS & IMAGINATION

Job 42:2-6 "I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted...{5} My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. {6} Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

PETER WHO SAW JESUS BRING IN A HUGE CATCH OF FISH IN THE DAYTIME

Luke 5:8 he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!"

b. Revealed

UNCONDITIONAL GRACE OF GOD - "I will bless you"

whether you stop 25 years at Haran - whether father Terah dies
whether you run to Egypt and scheme for food
whether you try to have a promised child through promiscuity

UNCONDITIONAL GRACE OF GOD - "I will bless you"

SOME PEOPLE DO NOT BELIEVE SALVATION IS ALL OF GRACE
MAN HAS SOME KIND OF FREE WILL, DECIDES ON HIS OWN TO BELIEVE

LOOK EVEN AT CHRISTIANS - WHOSE WILL IS MADE ALIVE IN CHRIST
CANNOT EVEN CHOSE RIGHT - SLEEP IN DURING PRAYER MEETING
GO TO PLAY INSTEAD OF WORSHIP - WATCH TV INSTEAD BIBLE STUDY

UNCONDITIONAL GRACE OF GOD - "I will bless you"

FROM PREDESTINATION IN ETERNITY PAST
TO PERSEVERANCE IN ETERNITY FUTURE

1) Name

v. 2 I will make your name great,

NAMES MEANT SOMETHING / SIGNIFICANCE OF NAMES / ABRAM

"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,

ABRAM = "Exalted Father" or "he loved the Father" FRIEND OF GOD

AS SIGN OF GREAT NATION HE'LL SIRE - Abraham "father of multitude

NOT MANY GREAT NAMES TODAY - TEAR PEOPLE DOWN - FIND DIRT
Abraham had plenty of dirt - Name still was great
LOSS OF HONOR RESPECT / ONE ANOTHER / LEADERS

GREAT NAME - number of Abraham's and Ibrahims - 4000 yrs

NAMESAKE OF JEWS, CHRISTIANS, AND MUSLIMS

Genesis 17:5} No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.

2) Blessing and you will be a blessing.

BLESSING NOT RESTRICTED TO ABRAHAM / OVERFLOWED TO OTHERS

ABRAHAM HIMSELF WAS A BLESSING - FRIEND OF GOD AND FOR GOD

ABRAHAM HAD 3 STRANGERS VISIT -

18:16-22 When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom... Then the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?"

FRIEND OF GOD -SHARES HIS SECRETS WITH HIM

{18} Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. {19} For I have chosen him...{20} Then the LORD said, "The outcry against Sodom & Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous... {22} The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD.

ABRAHAM BOLDLY INTERCEDED FOR SODOM - PLEADING TO JUDGE OF EARTH

ABRAHAM PRAYS FOR GUY WHO WANTED TO SEDUCE HIS WIFE

Genesis 20:17 Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimilech, his wife and his slave girls so they could have children again,

FULFILLED GOD'S PROMISE - and you will be a blessing.

HOW ABOUT US? ARE WE A BLESSING TO OTHERS?
GOOD TO HAVE AROUND?

DOES OVERFLOW GOD'S BLESSING IN YOUR LIFE ENCOURAGE OTHERS

DO OUR WORDS BLESS OTHERS? - or open mouth to change feet?

HAVE WE GIVEN IN TO SECULAR PRESSURE?
we say "Good Luck" instead of "God Bless you"
"I wish you well" instead of "I will pray for you"
"I hope so" instead of "God's will will be done"

IF THIS PROMISE IS PROVEN BY 4000 yrs. / FULFILLED IN CHRIST
THEN WE ARE ALL THE MORE RESPONSIBLE TO BE A BLESSING

TO BLESS OTHERS TO SEE THEM RECEIVE THE BLESSING OF ABE IN X

3) Curse "and whoever curses you I will curse"

AMAZING PROGRESSION OF THE BEATITUDES

BLESSED ARE poor in spirit, mourn, meek, hunger & thirst for
righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers
WONDERFUL DESCRIPTION OF PEOPLE WHO BLESS OTHERS

LEADS TO CLIMAX - Blessed are those who are persecuted because of
righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. { 11 } "Blessed are you when
people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because
of me.

CURSING OF OTHERS BRINGS MORE BLESSING TO GODS FAITHFUL

JESUS PROMISES HIS DISCIPLES

John 16:2 a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a
service to God.

John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this
world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

BLESSED ABRAHAM HAD ENEMIES / GOD PROTECTED & INTERVENED

CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM WERE CAPTIVE IN EGYPT - MADE TO SUFFER
Exodus 15:4-5 Pharaoh's chariots and his army he has hurled into the sea. The best of Pharaoh's officers are drowned in the Red Sea. {5} The deep waters have covered them; they sank to the depths like a stone.

PAGAN PEOPLES IN LAND OF CANAAN OPPOSED JOSHUA & ISRAELITES
Joshua 21:44-45 Not one of their enemies withstood them; the LORD handed all their enemies over to them. {45} Not one of all the Lord's good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.

Psalms 18:25-26 To the faithful you show yourself faithful, to the blameless you show yourself blameless, {26} to the pure you show yourself pure, but to the crooked you show yourself shrewd.

MANY HISTORIANS HAVE TRACED RISE AND FALL OF NATIONS
SURE WAY TO FALL IS TO MISTREAT JEWS - PHARAOH TO HITLER

NO ONE TODAY CAN CURSE ABRAHAM & RECEIVE BLESSING OF GOD

THEOLOGICAL DISPUTE – Who are the children of Abraham today?
Israelites – Modern Nation of Israel – PHYSICAL DESCENDENTS
NT EMPHASIS – Blessing of Abraham – comes to even Gentiles in Christ

c. Repeated

PROMISE GROWS MORE EXCITING WITH EACH NEW TELLING

AFTER BEING WILLING TO SACRIFICE PROMISED SON OF LAUGHTER

Genesis 22:17-18 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, {18} and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

MATERIAL BLESSINGS BRAGGED ABOUT BY ABE'S SERVANT
Genesis 24:35 The LORD has blessed my master abundantly, and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, menservants and maidservants, and camels and donkeys.

Genesis 35:9-12 After Jacob SUBMITTED TO THE LORD, God appeared to him again and blessed him. {10} God said to him, "Your name is Jacob, but you will no

longer be called Jacob; your name will be Israel." So he named him Israel. {11} And God said to him, "I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. 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, and I will give this land to your descendants after you."

**ABRAHAM AND DESCENDANTS WALKED BY FAITH - TRUST PROMISE
TOOK 2000 YEARS FOR PROMISED BLESSING TO COME - JESUS CHRIST**

d. Reward

ABRAHAM HAD OBEYED - WOULD BE BLESSED FOR OBEDIENCE

v. 1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

**GOD'S COMMANDS ARE NOT ALWAYS ACCOMPANIED BY REASONS
BUT THEY ARE ALWAYS ACCOMPANIED BY PROMISES
ABRAHAM OBEYED BECAUSE HE BELIEVED THE PROMISES**

SAME CHALLENGE 700 YEARS LATER BY MOSES TO DESCENDANTS

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. {16} For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess... {19} This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live {20} and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

SAME PRINCIPLE - Blessing for Obedience - SPOKEN BY JESUS

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. {29} Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. {30} For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

TO THE RICH YOUNG RULER HE SAID

Matthew 19:21 "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

2. The Purpose

a. Salvation

EDMUND CLOWNEY "The symbolism of God's dealings with Abraham can find their ultimate resolution and fulfillment only with the coming of Christ"

MARTIN LUTHER POINTS OUT - this is really
PROMISE OF THE INCARNATION - OF THE SAVIOR TO COME - 2nd Promise

FIRST PROMISE OF MESSIAH GIVEN IN GARDEN OF 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."

3} I will bless those who bless you, and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

ABRAHAM NO SPIRITUAL DUNCE - KNEW HOW FANTASTIC THIS WAS!

KNEW HE WOULD NOT LIVE TO SEE ALL FAMILIES ON EARTH
HE NEEDED TO RECEIVE THE BLESSING - ONLY GOD COULD DO IT!

BLESSING COME FROM A MAN BORN FROM LINE OF ABRAHAM

HE MUST HAVE THOUGHT "Promise will come from one born of my posterity, yet only God can fulfill the promise - God and man?!"

MESSIANIC PROMISE - blessing only from God, beyond Abe

MARTIN LUTHER "this promise should be written in golden letters and should be extolled in the languages of all people...for who else has dispensed this blessing among all nations except the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ?"

2000 YEARS AFTER ABE - JESUS CAME - SON OF ABE TO SONS OF ABE

John 8:48-58 The Jews ACCUSED him, "Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?" {49} "I am not possessed by a demon," said Jesus, "but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. {50} I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. {51} I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death." {52} At this the Jews exclaimed, "Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you

say that if anyone keeps your word, he will never taste death. {53} Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?"

JESUS TIRED OF THESE GUYS TRYING TO PULL RANK ON HIM

THEM - JESUS, UPSTART, TROUBLEMAKER, NO OFFICIAL STATUS

THEM - ENFORCE THEIR AUTHORITY - all the way back to Abe

WHERE DO YOU COME FROM? WHERE DO YOU GET AUTHORITY?

JESUS - you guys don't know Abe like I do?

REMEMBER THOSE THREE VISITORS - sat in his tents & ate
GAVE PROMISE SARAH WOULD HAVE SON - HEARD HER LAUGH?

That was Me?

REMEMBER - angel of the Lord who stopped him from sacrificing Isaac? –
MY hand held back the knife - IT WAS INTENDED FOR ME

{54} Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. {55} Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and keep his word. {56} Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad." {57} "You are not yet fifty years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!" {58} "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

Galatians 3:6-14 Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." {7} Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. {8} The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." {9} So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. {10} All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."...{13} Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." {14} He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

AMAZING LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST AND HIS CROSS
IN THE CROSS BOTH THE BLESSING AND THE CURSE ARE REVEALED
CURSING - to Him who is innocent substitute / SACRIFICIAL LAMB
BLESSING - to ALL whom God has ordained to put their faith in Him

JOHN STOTT "In the Book of Revelation we glimpse this final fulfillment in a future eternity of that ancient promise of God to Abraham. All the essential elements of the promise may be detected. For here are the spiritual descendants of Abraham, a "great multitude which no man could number," as countless as the grains of sand on the seashore and as the stars in the night sky. Here too are "all the families of the earth" being blessed, for the numberless multitude is composed of people from every nation. Here also is the promised land, namely all the rich blessings which flow from God's gracious rule. Here above all is Jesus Christ, the seed of Abraham, who shed his blood for our redemption and who bestows his blessings on all those who call on him to be saved."

b. Service BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

PROMISES TO ABE - REVEAL A FUNDAMENTAL SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE
BLESSING IS A MEANS TO AN END

PEOPLE OF FAITH AT STRATEGIC JUNCTION OF EARTH'S X ROADS
WHERE CONTINENTS OF EUROPE, ASIA, AND AFRICA CONVERGE
PROMISE DOES NOT JUST CONFER PRIVILEGE –
BUT ALSO RESPONSIBILITY
NOT JUST SAVED FOR THEIR OWN SAKE –
FOR THE SAKE OF THE WORLD

AFTER THEIR DELIVERANCE THRU RED SEA - COVENANT AT SINAI

Exodus 19:4-6 GOD TELLS THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. {5} Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, {6} you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'

GREAT HISTORY OF MISSIONS MOVEMENT AT HAILI CHURCH
TITUS COAN WAS PASTOR IN 1830's - TREMENDOUS HARVEST OF SOULS
BETWEEN 1837 / 38 - MORE THAN 5000 IN HILO RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST
ONE DAY ALONE BAPTIZING 1700 PEOPLE - JUST OVER THERE

1 SUNDAY EVERY MONTH PREACHED SERMON ON FOREIGN MISSIONS

HAWAIIAN CHILDREN GAVE MONEY TO BUY THE SHIP "Morningstar"
CARRIED MISSIONARIES TO REACH PEOPLE OF MICRONESIA FOR X

BEING A BLESSING IS BEST WAY TO CONTINUE IN GOD'S BLESSING

AS JUDAH FACED THREAT OF ATTACK - THEY DOUBTED THEIR FAITH
GOD'S PURPOSE FOR HIS PEOPLE WILL NOT FAIL - BE A BLESSING

Isa 49:3-6 "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will display my splendor." {4} But I said, "I have labored to no purpose; I have spent my strength in vain and for nothing... {6} THE LORD says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

CHURCH OF JESUS IN THE USA TODAY - \$ 40 Billion a year Enterprise

326,000 local churches / outnumber McDonalds 40 to 1

YET WE HAVE NOT MADE THE IMPACT OF McDONALDS

50% of Americans DO NOT know who preached the Sermon on the Mt.

60% of Americans cannot name one of the 4 NT Gospels

70% believe saying "God helps them that help themselves" in Bible

6 out of 10 American Pastors say -

"the Church does NOT have a positive impact on society"

LESS than 1% of America's churches grew even 1% this year

HOW MANY PEOPLE DID YOU TALK TO ABOUT JESUS IN 1995 / INVITE
HOW MANY BROCHURES DID YOU HAND OUT /
HOW MANY BIBLE BOOK MARK??

GOD HAS BLESSED HAILI CHURCH FOR OVER 170 YEARS
AS WE GATHER AS CONGREGATION TOMORROW NIGHT TO SEEK HIS
BLESSING

UNLESS WE DEVOTE SELVES TO BE A BLESSING- NO PROMISE FOR US

AS CHILDREN OF ISRAEL RECEIVED THE MANNA FOR THEIR FOOD GOD INSTRUCTED THEM TAKE JUST ENOUGH FOR DAY - DAILY BREAD

Exodus 16:19-21 Moses said to them, "No one is to keep any of it until morning."
{20} However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell.

CALL OF ISRAEL AS A MISSIONARY NATION

Psa 96:3 Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

Luke 12:48 From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

c. Security GOD WILL NOT BREAK HIS PROMISE OF SALVATION

SECURE STANDING OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD - according to the Psalmist
Psalms 105:42-45 For THE LORD remembered his holy promise given to his servant Abraham. {43} He brought out his people with rejoicing, his chosen ones with shouts of joy; {44} he gave them the lands of the nations, and they fell heir to what others had toiled for-- {45} that they might keep his precepts and observe his laws. Praise the LORD.

Luke 16:19-31 JESUS TELLS STORY OF a beggar named Lazarus...

"The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. THERE WAS A rich man WHO also died and was buried. {23} In hell, where RICH MAN was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side...ABRAHAM SAID between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

ABRAHAM OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW - "great chasm has been fixed"

GREAT PROMISE HAS BEEN KEPT - "I will bless you"

TEMPORAL BLESSINGS OF LIFE ON EARTH

ETERNAL BLESSINGS OF COMFORT AT ABRAHAM'S SIDE