

Pln03 - **God's Covenant With Abraham - Gen Ch 12,15,17**

We're in our **THIRD** Msg in the series "**God's Plan: Gen To Rev**"
& today we see God's **Plan of Redemption** - Really get started

God had created **Adam & Eve** in Perfect Paradise & Harmony,
but He had **also** created them . . . with a **Free Will**

& then, the **Serpent** came along - & **The Fall**
& **SIN** had entered both **Mankind** and God's **Creation**

& sin has **consequences**, the **biggest** being separation from God,
which was the consequence for Adam and Eve (*as it is for us*)

& that **SIN** - that began in the Garden - Quickly Permeated the Earth
By **GEN Ch 6** - Sin had covered the earth

& we read In Genesis 6:5 (NLT)

5 The Lord observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, . . . everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil.

Sin brings **Consequences** - & the Consequences for sin came -
in the shape of a Flood upon the earth

But God found **Noah** righteous
& He & his family were saved from God's judgment

& thru **Noah** - God could continue His plan for Mankind

& so - **AFTER** the Flood - in **GEN 8:21** God made
a **REDEMPTION** Promise - **To HIMSELF**

Noah had just **finished** offering a **sacrifice** to the Lord - Which is a picture of the ultimate **sacrifice of Jesus** Christ on the Cross . . .

Genesis 8:21 (NLT)

21 And the Lord was pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice and said to himself, "I will never again curse the ground because of the human race, even though everything they think or imagine is bent toward evil from childhood. I will never again destroy all living things.

God is saying - From this point on - There's going to be a **different** way to deal with the sin of mankind - even tho they deserve judgment

From this point on - God would begin a **Plan of Redemption** . . .

A Plan that allows another to pay the full price necessary to free mankind from the justly due consequences of their sin

God was going to **MAKE A WAY** - to **Redeem** us to Himself

REDEMPTION LIT means: ***The buying back of something that has been lost, by the payment of a sufficient ransom*** - [repeat]

Used most often in the **slave trade** - where a slave was "bought back" out of slavery - & then **SET FREE** from that Bondage

& God was beginning a **PLAN** - to **PAY** that Sufficient Ransom to Buy you & I Back - from the **Consequences** of our sin

& God **knew** - Before the Foundation of the World - the only one worthy to pay the price necessary to redeem mankind - was **Jesus Christ**

God said He would never again destroy all of Mankind & the **ONLY** way He would **NOT** have to do that . . .

is to **enact** a plan to pay the full penalty for that sin - **HIMSELF** -
in the **Sacrifice** of Jesus **Christ**

THAT is Ultimately God's **Plan of Redemption**
& today - we see that Plan - Really GET Started

Let's Pray

In our **Last Msg** - we left mankind (again)
in the Grip of Sin - at the **Tower of Babel**

Where God **dispersed** them by confusing their languages

And at **THAT** Point - God's Plan of **Redemption** kicks into high gear

& He starts with just **one man** - A seemingly unlikely man
named **ABRAHAM**, from a Pagan City called Ur

& the **first thing** God does with him, is tell him to leave his city, his land,
& **head out** to a land that God would show him

& along with that **First Command** from God
We also see God's **First Unilateral Promises** to Abraham

When we first **MEET** Abraham - His Name is **Abram**
God will later change it - to Abraham

TURN to Genesis 12:1–3 (ESV)

***1 Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.
2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.***

3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Notice how many times God says - **I WILL**

This is the beg of God's **UNILATERAL COVENANT** W/ Abraham
God is Promising to Do This **HIMSELF** - **THRU** Abraham

& then - in **V.3** God says
and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

HOW is it - that "In **Abraham**" All the families of the earth
will be blessed?

Because **THRU** Abraham - God is going to bring
His **Plan of Redemption** to all the earth

& that **Plan of Redemption** is ultimately fulfilled in God
paying the price for our sin - Thru the sacrifice of Jesus Christ . . .

so that He can **REDEEM US** (Buy us back)
from the Consequences of our Sin

In **Abraham** is the **beginning** of God's plan

to **put right what** went **wrong** in the garden -
& to return man to perfect **harmony** with God and w/ God's creation.

FRANCIS CHAN says here:

[thru Abraham] God launched a plan of redemption that was global: to create a people for Himself who would embody and spread His salvation to every group of people on the planet.

God's **Plan Of Redemption** for mankind
STARTS with His Covenant w/ Abraham

The **REMAINDER** of the book of Gen - **39 Ch's** (from Ch 12-50)

Is about God **laying** the Foundation for His **Plan of Redemption**
thru one man & his offspring

The "Primary Players" - in the Remainder of Genesis are:

Abraham

Isaac, Abraham's son

Jacob, Abraham's grandson

Joseph, Abraham's great-grandson

This is incredibly good reading - **From Gen 12 to Gen 50**
Grab an easy-to-read Bible (NLT) & read thru these Ch's

If you'd like the Reader's Digest version - try THE STORY

which is Key Selections from the NIV Bible - with summaries to
connect it together (Gen 12-50 done in two Ch's - 2-3)

But our point today is - God **BEGINS** His **Plan of Redemption**
In His **COVENANT with Abraham** & his **OFFSPRING**

BUT - Abraham was NOT a very likely candidate -
for God to BLESS the World - **Thru his Offspring**

He was already **75 years old** when God called him - & his wife was
already **65** - & had **NEVER** been able to conceive a child

But - when God brought **Abraham** into the Promised Land
He said in **GEN 12:7** - ***"To your offspring I will give this land."***

& then - after years of continuing to be childless
There came a Pivotal Moment for Abraham . . .

To either BELIEVE God By Faith - Or REJECT God's Promise

TURN to Genesis 15:1-6 (ESV)

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

2 But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" (Abraham's chief servant)

3 And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member (servant) of my household will be my heir."

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

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

Now - RIGHT HERE - THIS is the Pivotal Moment for Abraham

Abraham's either going to BELIEVE God - in Spite of Circumstances
Or he's going to REJECT God - By NOT Believing Him

Isn't it interesting - that God STARTED His Plan of Redemption
By giving a Promise to an Individual Man . . .

& then giving that man a CHOICE
to either BELIEVE or REJECT His Promise (same as w/ us)

God KNEW Before Hand - But WE find out in the Next Vs
what Abraham DID in this Pivotal Moment

Genesis 15:6 (ESV)

6 And he (Abraham) *believed the Lord, and he (God) counted it to him as righteousness.*

Abraham's **FAITH** in **GOD'S PROMISE** -
was **Credited** to him as **RIGHTEOUSNESS**

WAIT A MINUTE - that was 4,000 Yrs ago

God was just starting His **Plan of Redemption**

& Abraham himself was **CREDITED** with God's Righteousness
By Putting His **FAITH** in God's Plan - **ALONE**

& today - As far as **HOW** Righteousness is Credited to us
NOTHING HAS CHANGED

Today - we are **CREDITED** with Righteousness
when we put our Full Faith in God's Plan - **ALONE**

The **Abraham** couldn't **grasp** it all - His Faith in God's Plan
was **looking FORWARD** to the Ransom Jesus Christ
would pay on the Cross - to Redeem us to God

& **OUR Faith in God's Plan** is **Looking BACK** to the Ransom
Jesus Christ Paid on the Cross - to Redeem us to God

& what I really need you to see here in **GEN 15:6**

is that God's **WAY** of counting someone as Righteous
HAS ALWAYS Been - BY **FAITH ALONE** !! (*Sola Fide*)

WHY is this **SO important** to us today?

Write this down - & **TAKE** The time - to Read **ROM CH 4**

Rom 4 - DIRECTLY CONNECTS:

Abraham's being **Made Righteous By Faith**
to **OUR** Being **Made Righteous by Faith**

Romans 4:22–24 (NLT) (write down in Gen 15)

22 And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous.

23 And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was recorded

24 for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

God's WAY of "**Counting us as Righteous**" has **NEVER CHANGED**
From **Abraham** - to **Today**

God counted Abraham as Righteous - **BY** His **FAITH ALONE**

& **today** God will Count you as Righteous
By **YOU** putting our **FAITH** in God **ALONE**

True Salvation has always been - by **FAITH ALONE**
However - That FAITH is **CONFIRMED** by our **ACTIONS**

Abraham Put His Faith in God - & tho he made his mistakes -
Abraham **CONFIRMED** His Faith in God - **BY HIS ACTIONS**

So - Back in Gen Ch 15 - The PROMISED LAND
is a Huge Part of God's Covenant with Abraham

& in the next vs's - Genesis 15:7-8 (ESV)

7 And [God] said to [Abraham], "I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess."

8 But [Abraham] said, "O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?"

& what follows - is a very important Covenant Ceremony

During the time of Abraham - when 2 people
wanted to make the strongest possible covenant

They would cut animals in half - & then they would each
"Walk Thru" the cut-in-half animals

& what they were saying is - IF I break this Covenant in any way
May I become like these cut-in-half Animals

In the Vs's that follow - GOD actually performs this covenant ceremony
with Abraham - Which is incredible in itself

BUT - what's even more incredible is God put Abraham to SLEEP -
So He'd have Nothing to do w/ the Covenant

Abraham prepares the Covenant ceremony
Then God Knocks him out - & Speaks to him

& WRITE in your MARGIN - right next to GEN 15:13 - - EGYPT

Because God first tells Abraham - that his descendants
will be SLAVES in Egypt for 400 yrs
& then return to the Promised Land

Which is very cool - cause we'll see that happen next msg

Then, V.17 - God performs this Covenant Ceremony - ALONE
Making this a One-Sided (Unilateral) Covenant

& God is saying - 1st - You have nothing to do with this Abraham -
I'm making this Covenant on my own - No Matter What

And (unbelievably) God is saying - If I break any part of this Covenant
with you - may I be cut in half like these animals

& then we read in Genesis 15:18 (ESV)

18 On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates,

This is Radical TIMES 10 - Not only is God making
a Unilateral Covenant to bring this to pass

But He's guaranteeing it - on His own LIFE

I think that's a pretty sure bet

WHY is God making this Unilateral Covenant So Guaranteed ??

Because this is the Beginning of the Plan - Thru Which
God is going to REDEEM all those who will put their FAITH in Him

This is the FOUNDATION - For God's Plan of Redemption
& God is guaranteeing it - WITHOUT Abraham's involvement

Which is a really good thing . . .

Because if you'll **study** the **life of Abraham**

You'll find out - he was Just like Us . . .

He **BELIEVED** in God - He put his **FAITH** in God - But he made his **FULL SHARE** of Mistakes & Misjudgments (just like us)

& it is an incredible study - to **SEE** God systematically bringing His Plan to pass - in the **Midst** of Abrahams poor choices

We **did** this study last year on Wed nights (17 wks) - & we saw how **GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY** & **MAN'S FREE WILL** work together

The entire **Plan of Redemption** - from Here to Revelation is God Fulfilling The Covenant He made with Abraham

In **GEN CH 17** - When Abraham is **99 years old** - God again comes to Abraham - to **Re-Confirm** His Covenant

Genesis 17:4–8 (ESV)

4 “Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.

5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.

6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

8 And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”

Still - at this **3rd time** around of God's Promises -
Abraham **STILL** hadn't had a child **with Sarah**

Now - back in **Ch 16** - Abraham & Sarah Tried to "**Help God Out**"
& Abraham had a child with **Sarah's maid**

But **this son** would become known as "**The Son of the Flesh**"
Because it was a moment of **LITTLE FAITH** for Abraham

But **God** would **continue** to Promise **Abraham & Sarah** a Son
& they were to name him **ISAAC**

& Finally - in Genesis 21:5 we read (ESV)
5 Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.

& - after **MANY** interesting Ch's -
ISAAC would have a son named **JACOB**

& God would build the Nation of Israel out of **Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob**
& thru them - God would **bleess all the Nations** - In **Jesus Christ**

Thru **God's Covenant** with Abraham - Came the people of Israel
& thru Israel came - The **Messiah** - The **Savior** of the World

Thru-Out the Bible - & still today in Israel -
God is called - The God of **Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob** (Patriarch's)

Dave Shirley - in His book "**The Drama of Redemption**"
points out an interesting fact . . .

ALL three of the **Patriarch's wives** - were **ALL initially**
UNABLE to have children - They were all initially **BARREN**

Abraham's wife Sarah was Barren for 15 years after God's Promise to give them offspring too numerous to count

Isaac's wife Rebekah was Barren, until Isaac prayed in Faith that the Lord would give her children

Jacob's wife Rachel was Barren - until the Lord also answered Jacob's prayer, that She would have children

WHY would God use 3 women who were **BARREN** to **Birth** the **Nation** of Israel - & **Bring Forth** His Plan of Redemption

For the **Exact same reason** that God works **within YOUR** Weaknesses - & **YOUR** Shortcomings

1 Corinthians 1:29 & 31 (ESV)

29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God . . .
31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

What **GOD** has Done

BOTH in the Nation of Israel **AND** in His Plan of Redemption
God **ALONE** has done !!

Thru Abraham - & the Nation of Israel - God is going to make a way to **REDEEM** mankind from the consequences of Sin

& He **started** it all by **Promising offspring** too numerous to count - to **3 women** who could **NOT** even have children

THAT'S our God - **THAT'S** how He works

As Paul says again - in 2 Corinthians 4:7 (ESV)

7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

God's Plan of Redemption - is **TREASURE** in This **JAR** of Clay

& when we "**Take Advantage**" of God's Plan of Redemption
& we **Receive BY FAITH** - God's Offer - to **REDEEM us**

We must **know** - for certain - that this **Surpassing Power** to Save us -
Is **ALL** from God - & **NONE** from **US**

We've reviewed **3 KEY CH's** in **Genesis** today - 12, **15, 17**
& I would **encourage** you to **read them** carefully on your own

& in **these Ch's** Really begins the **Scarlet Thread of Redemption**

& as we **cont** to **Follow**
God's Plan of Redemption - From **Gen to Rev**

I **Promise** you'll see this **SAME Scarlet Thread**
Running thru every stop we make

& - if you **HAVE already** put your **Faith** in Jesus Christ . . .

I Pray you would be in **AWE** of God's **4,000 yr Plan** of Redemption -
that has Saved **YOU** from the Consequences of **YOUR** Sin

& If you have **NOT** put your **faith** in **Jesus Christ** -
RECEIVE God's Plan of Redemption - **BY FAITH** - **TODAY**

Let's Pray