

# **Old Testament Survey 03 - Genesis 12–50: The Patriarchs & the Abrahamic Covenant** for the Bible Institute at Gulf Coast Baptist Church **Spring 2026** by Steve Thomas

## **Introduction**

Land - Seed - Blessing. These three themes are seen through the chapters of Gen 12-50. They are the links of the framework of Dispensations and Covenants that God is using to generate momentum to the redemption of man through the promised Messiah. Every time the covenant shows up, listen for land, seed, blessing. In Genesis we can see the promise given to Abraham traced through Isaac and Jacob. God promised Abram that his seed would be like the stars of the heavens. God defines the “seed” in vivid, count-the-stars terms. Abram’s response is faith (“he believed in the LORD”). God counts it as righteousness—a narrative picture of justification by faith.

## **Father of Many Nations- The Call & Promise: Genesis 12:1–3**

God’s promise to Abraham was outlined in chapter 12. Identify the three strands:

- Land: “unto a land that I will shew thee” (12:1)
- Seed/Nation: “I will make of thee a great nation” (12:2)
- Blessing: “in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (12:3)

## **Covenant Tested & Reaffirmed:**

Abram’s expression of faith (which was his conversion) was tested later in Genesis. God had promised that Abram’s descendants were going to bless the earth. This was when he had no children. The son of promise does come, but then Abraham is asked to sacrifice him. Abraham passed this test, and God provided a ram caught in the thicket as a foreshadow of substitutionary atonement. After this test, the covenant was reaffirmed (Gen 22:17-18). The test of Isaac highlights that the promise line is not secured by human control but by God’s fidelity.

## **Promise Reaffirmations: Abraham → Isaac → Jacob**

As we study the passages of the covenants listen for: land (“this land... all these countries”), seed (“unto thy seed”), blessing (“in thy seed shall all the nations... be blessed”). God reaffirmed this same covenant to Isaac (26:3-4) and to Jacob (28:13-15). These reaffirmations show the promise is attached to the line, not to whichever descendant seems strongest at the moment—God preserves the promise-bearing line despite human failure.

## **Joseph: Providence + Preservation**

The account of Joseph takes us through the depths of man’s depravity to how God can use this sin for His own purposes. We can see the picture from its dramatic conclusion in Genesis 50:20.

- Human sin is real (“ye thought evil against me”).
- God’s providence is greater (“God meant it unto good”).
- The covenant line is protected (“to save much people alive”).

Joseph’s story demonstrates that the promise program survives by divine providence, setting up Israel’s move into Egypt—where the next major stage (Mosaic era) will emerge.

## **Conclusion**

The land that God promised to Abraham is the most disputed real estate on planet earth. Much blood has been shed during the centuries, and more will be shed. The faithfulness of God leads us to believe that the nation of Israel will be restored there under the promised dimensions. The attempts to remove Israel from the land has been historic. Famines, enemies, and natural disasters will not keep God from fulfilling His covenant with the people. The promises made to Abraham lay the foundation for the Dispensation of Promise. God elected to use this people for His purposes, and as taught in Romans 9-11, we are taught that He is not done with them yet. The Exodus will chronicle the journey of the Jew back to the land that God promised Abraham, which will be covered in the next lesson.