

Why Did God Choose A Dysfunctional Family

Series: Why Did God Create Us?

What Does The Bible Say?

Why Did God Choose A Dysfunctional Family?

Because God created His human family to have free choice.

**God uses dysfunctional people like you and me, to rescue
dysfunctional people like you and me.**

**God's first attempt resulted in a flood, and then He started
over.**

**God's second attempt resulted in Him disinheriting the
nations, and then He started over.**

**This week we will look at God's third attempt to have a
human family.**

12 As the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a terrifying darkness came down over him. 13 Then the Lord said to Abram, “You can be sure that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land, where they will be oppressed as slaves for 400 years. 14 But I will punish the nation that enslaves them, and in the end they will come away with great wealth. 15 (As for you, you will die in peace and be buried at a ripe old age.) 16 After four generations your descendants will return here to this land, for the sins of the Amorites do not yet warrant their destruction.” (Genesis 15:12–16 NLT)

There are no surprises to God.

8 So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt into their own fertile and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live. 9 Look! The cry of the people of

Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abuse them. 10 Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt.” (Exodus 3:7–10 NLT)

God gives us rules to live by, not to earn a place in His family, but God gives us His rules for us to show that we want to be in the family.

25 In those days Israel had no king; all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes. (Judges 21:25 NLT)

The angel of the Lord went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said to the Israelites, “I brought you out of Egypt into this land that I swore to give your ancestors, and I said I would never break my covenant with you. 2 For your part, you were not to make any covenants with the people living in this land; instead, you were to destroy their altars. But you disobeyed my command. Why did you do this? 3 So now I declare that I will no longer drive

out the people living in your land. They will be thorns in your sides, and their gods will be a constant temptation to you.”

4 When the angel of the Lord finished speaking to all the Israelites, the people wept loudly. 5 So they called the place Bokim (which means “weeping”), and they offered sacrifices there to the Lord. (Judges 2:1–5 NLT)

God’s third attempt resulted in Him scattering the Israelites over two different kingdoms.

Did God give up on His family?

No, He spoke through two prophets about the future.

31 “The day is coming,” says the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. 32 This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant, though I loved them as a husband loves his wife,” says the Lord.

33 “But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel after those days,” says the Lord. “I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 34 And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, ‘You should know the Lord.’ For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already,” says the Lord. “And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins.” (Jeremiah 31:31-34 NLT)

22 “Therefore, give the people of Israel this message from the Sovereign Lord: I am bringing you back, but not because you deserve it. I am doing it to protect my holy name, on which you brought shame while you were scattered among the nations. 23 I will show how holy my great name is—the name on which you brought shame among the nations. And when I reveal my holiness through you before their very eyes, says the Sovereign Lord, then the nations will know that I am the Lord. 24 For I

will gather you up from all the nations and bring you home again to your land. 25 “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. Your filth will be washed away, and you will no longer worship idols. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations. 28 “And you will live in Israel, the land I gave your ancestors long ago. You will be my people, and I will be your God. (Ezekiel 36:22-28 NLT)

But there were problems that God had to overcome.

God would physically join the family.

How Can You Obey?

Understand that if we are not careful, we become like the Israelites.

Obedience shows you want to be in God’s family.

God uses dysfunctional people like you and me, to rescue dysfunctional people like you and me.

Additional Notes:

If you would like to use your home to disciple others, check out our training at www.crosswaveschurch.com/host. Cross Waves has produce short videos to train you how to use your home to reach others for Christ. So please check it out.

Explore:

This series comes from the book, What Does God Want?
Michael S. Heiser and Blind Spot Press, 2018.

Explore:

Ezekiel 36:22–28: God is going to work a miracle of his grace. He will change Israel’s heart from stone to flesh, from hardness to softness, from death to life (36:26). The law which was

engraved on stone and so always ‘outside’ people will now be planted within them (36:27). Israel will become a renewed people in a restored land, replanting and rebuilding to the glory of God (36:28–38).

Knowles, A. (2001). *The Bible guide* (1st Augsburg books ed., p. 334). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg.

Explore:

God’s transformation of His people (Ezek. 36:24–38). In the last days, when God brings His chosen people back to the Promised Land (v. 24), He will change them spiritually; for, after all, only a transformed people can enjoy a transformed land. The spiritual experience described in this section illustrates what happens to every sinner who trusts Jesus Christ.

First, God will cleanse them from their sins, and this is pictured by “sprinkling” (vv. 25, 29; 37:23). According to the Mosaic

Law, every Jew who became defiled had to be cleansed before he or she could return to the camp and the blessings of the covenant community. This was accomplished either by bathing in running water or by being sprinkled with water prepared for that purpose (Lev. 14:1–9; Num. 19; 8:5–7; Heb. 10:22). Of course, water can never change the heart, but this is only a picture of the gracious forgiveness we have through faith. God forgives trusting sinners because of the death of Jesus on the cross (Eph. 1:7). When believers confess their sins to the Lord, they are cleansed because of Christ’s blood (1 John 1:9).

Second, the Lord will give them a new heart (Ezek. 36:26). Ezekiel had already spoken about this inward change (11:18–20; 18:31), the kind of change that the Lord yearned for Israel to experience before they entered the Promised Land. “Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments” (Deut. 5:29, nkjv). The Prophet Jeremiah shared the same promise that Ezekiel gave:

“Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God” (Jer. 24:7, nkjv). Jeremiah spoke about the New Covenant God would make with the Jews, a covenant not written on stones but on their hearts and in their minds (31:31–33; 32:29; see Isa. 59:21; Heb. 8:8–13). A “stony heart” is a hard heart, one that doesn’t receive God’s Word and nurture spiritual growth (Ezek. 2:4; 3:7).

Third, the Lord will give them the Holy Spirit within (Ezek. 36:27). It is the Spirit who accomplishes these divine miracles in the hearts of those who trust the Lord for salvation. He gives us a new heart and a new spirit and also a new desire to love the Lord and obey Him. The Holy Spirit is given like refreshing water upon parched ground, and this produces the “fruit of the Spirit” in our lives (Isa. 44:3; Gal. 5:22–23). The witness of the Spirit in the heart is proof that the person has been born of God (Rom. 8:9, 14–17; Eph. 1:13–14). Because you have God’s Spirit within, you share in the divine nature (2 Peter 1:1–4) and

therefore want to obey the divine will. It is nature that determines conduct. Dogs act like dogs because they have a dog's nature, and God's people act like they belong to God because they have God's nature within (1 John 3:9). Ezekiel will deal again with this gift of the Spirit in Ezekiel 37:14 and 39:29.

Fourth, the Lord will claim them again as His people (Ezek. 36:28). It will be like a renewal of the covenant, for they will live in the land, He will be their God and they will be His people. This will be a permanent arrangement, for they will no longer rebel against the Lord and disobey His will.

Fifth, the Lord will cause the land to flourish (vv. 29–30, 33–35). Under the covenant God made with Israel before they entered Canaan, He agreed to bless them and meet their needs if they would obey Him (Lev. 26:1–13; Deut. 28:1–14). When you read these promises, you are amazed at what the Jews gave up when they turned from serving God to serving idols. But when

Israel enters into the promised kingdom, God will bless them and make the land like the Garden of Eden (Ezek. 36:35). The land will yield its harvests and the people will be enriched by the blessing of the Lord. The cities will be rebuilt and the ruins removed. It will be a wonderful new land for the new people of God. The beauty and fruitfulness of the land will be a testimony to the nations (v. 36).

Sixth, the people will abhor their sins (Ezek. 36:31–32). When some people remember their sins, they enjoy them again in the dirty depths of their imagination. This is evidence that they really haven't judged them and repented. When true children of God remember their past disobedience, they're ashamed of themselves and abhor themselves because of what they have done to the Lord, themselves, and others. "You who love the Lord, hate evil" (Ps. 97:10, nkjv). "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9). One of the evidences

of the Spirit's presence within is a growing sensitivity to sin and a strong desire to turn away from it.

A seventh blessing will be fellowship with the Lord (Ezek. 36:37). In Ezekiel's day, the people couldn't inquire of the Lord or pray and be heard because they had sin in their hearts (14:1–5; 20:1–3, 30–31). God even told the Prophet Jeremiah not to pray for the people (Jer. 7:16; 11:14; 14:11). But under the New Covenant, the people will have fellowship with the Lord and be able to pray to Him.

The eighth blessing will be the multiplication of the population (Ezek. 36:37–38). As in chapter 34, God pictures His people as a flock of sheep, and every shepherd wants to see his flock increase. The Jewish population was greatly reduced during the Babylonian invasion, but the Lord will bless His people and cause them to be fruitful and multiply (see 36:12–13). The picture here is of the men going to Jerusalem for the annual

Passover feast, bringing animal sacrifices with them. The number of animals in Jerusalem would increase greatly, and that's the way the Jewish people will increase in their kingdom.

Finally, as the result of all these blessings, the Lord will be glorified. Israel didn't glorify God in their land or the temple, nor did they glorify Him in the countries to which they were scattered. But the day will come when God will be glorified by His people and the glory of the Lord will return to the land.

Every born-again believer sees a parallel here with his or her own experience of faith in Christ. The Lord has washed us (1 Cor. 6:9–11), given us new hearts and His Holy Spirit within, and because of this, we should have a holy hatred for sin. We have the privilege of communion with God and prayer for our needs, plus a desire within to do His will. God wants to make our lives abundantly fruitful so we will glorify His name. The Lord has made us a part of His New Covenant (Heb. 8; 10) so

that our union with Him through Christ is eternal and unchanging. Hallelujah, what a Savior!

Wiersbe, W. W. (2000). Be reverent (pp. 161–164). Colorado Springs, CO: Chariot Victor/Cook Communications.

Explore:

Jeremiah first promised this reconciliation at the beginning of his book:

“At that time they will call Jerusalem The Throne of the Lord, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the name of the Lord. No longer will they follow the stubbornness of their evil hearts. In those days the house of Judah will join the house of Israel, and together they will come from a northern land to the land I gave your forefathers as an inheritance.” (3:17–18)

He would repeat it at the end of his book:

“In those days, at that time,”

declares the Lord,

“the people of Israel and the people of Judah together

will go in tears to seek the Lord their God.

They will ask the way to Zion

and turn their faces toward it.

They will come and bind themselves to the Lord

in an everlasting covenant

that will not be forgotten.” (50:4–5)

Jeremiah’s promises were fulfilled with the coming of Christ.

There is only one New Covenant people of God. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). In the New Covenant community there is no black, no white, no brown.

There is no rich, no poor. There is only one New Covenant people in Christ.

Second, the New Covenant promised regeneration, the transformation of God's people from the inside out:

“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,”

declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.” (Jeremiah 31:33a)

The problem with the Mosaic Covenant was that it was written on tablets of stone (Exodus 31:18). If anything was written on the hearts of God's people, it was only their sin:

“Judah's sin is engraved with an iron tool, inscribed with a flint point, on the tablets of their hearts.” (Jeremiah 17:1; cf. v. 9)

With the New Covenant, however, God solved the problem of the sinful heart by giving his children new hearts and new minds. According to Calvin, the New Covenant “penetrates into the heart and reforms all the inward faculties, so that obedience is rendered to the righteousness of God.”

It must be emphasized that the New Covenant did not abolish the Old. Christ did not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17). Thus, “the new covenant is not so called because it is contrary to the first covenant.” Both covenants demand obedience to the Law. The difference is that the New Covenant brings the law from the outside to the inside. “The distinctiveness of the ministry of law under the new covenant resides in its inward character. Rather than being administered externally, the law shall be administered from within the heart.”

Ryken, P. G. (2001). Jeremiah and Lamentations: from sorrow to hope (pp. 468–470). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Question 1 of 5

If you are a follower of God, how does the Holy Spirit help you understand the Bible?

Question 2 of 5

Do we have to earn God's love to be in His family? Explain your answer.

Question 3 of 5

Why did the Israelites, during the time of the judges, do whatever seemed right in their own eyes?

Question 4 of 5

Why did God promise to choose one of King David's heirs to be the future eternal king when he had so many moral failures?

Question 5 of 5

What does the statement, "God uses dysfunctional people like you and me, to rescue dysfunctional people like you and me," mean to you?