

UNIT 1 PART 2

BF232 OUR FUTURE HOPE

Let's review what we just talked about in the last session. God promised that he would bring judgment on the serpent and those who followed the serpent. God also said that this salvation would come through the seed of the woman. Because this promise is made in connection with the fall of mankind, God is showing us that the seed of the woman would be the one to fix the things that were messed up with the fall of mankind.

THE FUTURE HOPE THAT EARLY BELIEVERS HAD, AS EARLY AS ADAM AND EVE, IS THAT THE SEED OF THE WOMAN WOULD COME AND MAKE THINGS RIGHT.

They didn't know how that would work, but their hope was in a person, and that person was the coming seed of the woman. That was the promise that God gave to Adam and Eve.

Now we go from Adam to Noah. In this time period most people followed the lies of the serpent. When you read Genesis 4, Cain killed Abel and his descendants built a city; they developed civilization apart from the Lord. They were a part of Satan's kingdom and they opposed God's rule. But there were some people who believe God's Word about the seed of the woman, that the seed of the woman would defeat the serpent. There were early believers trusting in God's promises, but by the time of Noah, only eight people believe God's promises. Satan's kingdom dominated the earth.

Do you see the problem?

THIS IS DIFFERENT THAN GOD'S PLAN. GOD WANTED HIS KINGDOM TO SPREAD OVER THE EARTH AND NOW SATAN'S KINGDOM HAS SPREAD OVER THE EARTH.

God is going to do something to take this problem away. God determined to destroy mankind and to start all over again with Noah. And so, we know the story. God sends a flood. Noah and his sons and all of their wives come into the ark. There are eight people, and God keeps them safe during the flood when he destroys wickedness on the earth.

When they come out of the ark on the other side, God gives his plan again. Notice that this plan is the same as God's plan.

In the beginning, God said, let us make human beings in our image. They will rule or reign over the fish of the sea.

They're in the image of God and God blesses them and they're supposed to govern the earth. That was the beginning. And so, in the beginning, man has the image of God,

authority over God's Creation, is under God's blessing, and is commanded to fill the earth. God told them what they could eat and what they could not eat.

When God gives his plan in Genesis 9 to Noah, it sounds very much the same as it did in the beginning. God told Noah and his sons to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. God placed them in a position of power or authority over God's Creation. God told them what they could eat and what they could not eat. And God reminded them that mankind is in the image of God. You see the same things again. Man is the image of God, in authority over God's Creation, under God's blessing, commanded to fill the earth, and told what they may eat and what they may not eat

Did Noah bring God's plan to fulfillment? Did Noah and his sons spread out over the earth and fill the world with people who worship God? Did Noah do that? Did mankind live in the presence of God? Did God's kingdom fill the earth? Did mankind rule on God's behalf? Did mankind live under God's blessing?

Just like it was at the fall, Satan fought against God's kingdom once again. Instead of spreading out and filling the earth like God commanded, the people all came together and built a tower. Do you remember this from earlier classes, when you studied about the Tower of Babel? These people did not believe God's Word. They were a part of Satan's kingdom that opposed God's rule.

God is God, and because he is God, he would step in and do something to fix this. The Tower of Babel, by the way, was probably a place where people worshiped other gods. Let's look at the Scripture.

Genesis 11:1-4 At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there.

They began saying to each other, "Let's make bricks and harden them with fire." (In this region bricks were used instead of stone, and tar was used for mortar.) Then they said, "Come, let's build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world."

They wanted to build this city so that the top of it reaches into heaven. They wanted to stay in the same place instead of scattering over the earth like God commanded. So, the Lord came down. That's a funny statement. God sees everything at the same time. But by saying that the Lord came down, he's making fun of their little tower because God had to come down in order to see it.

He says look the people are united and they all speak the same language after this. Nothing that they set out to do will be impossible for them. Let's go down and confuse the

people with different languages and they won't be able to understand each other in that way. The Lord scattered them all over the world and they stopped building the city.



This is the way some artists believe that the Tower of Babel looked. We don't know for sure, but it's very possible that it was what some people would call a ziggurat. This is a building that has a place in the top of it where people could go to worship false gods. It was a place of idolatry and that's probably what the Tower of Babel was.

YOU SEE SATAN WAS FIGHTING AGAINST GOD'S KINGDOM.

It leaves us with the question, Will God's plan be fulfilled? Instead of spreading out over the earth, this is a kingdom of Satan is all in one place. Will God's plan be fulfilled? Will God keep his promises to defeat the serpent through the seed of the woman?

WELL, IF YOU READ GENESIS 11, GOD SCATTERS THE NATIONS IN JUDGMENT.

Did you know that the very next story in the book of Genesis is the call of Abraham? And that shows us that out of the nations that God scattered in judgment, God called one man, Abraham. God said to Abraham,

Genesis 22:18 And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed

God's act of judgment at Babel was not his final act. He scattered the people so that he could keep them from spreading their wickedness and getting worse.

WHEN HE CALLED ABRAHAM, GOD LET US KNOW THAT HIS DESIRE WAS TO BLESS THE NATION'S.

Do you know what that reminds me of? It reminds me of Genesis 9, where God wanted Noah and his sons under his blessing to fill the earth. It reminds me of Genesis 1, where God wanted Adam and Eve under his blessing to fill the earth.

GOD WANTS THE EARTH FILLED WITH PEOPLE WHO WORSHIP HIM.

And so, God brought judgment on mankind when he scattered mankind at Babel. But the very next thing that God did was call Abraham. Abraham was a new beginning for God's plan. His story fits into God's story.

I want you to see how Moses, who wrote the book of Genesis, wants us to see that Noah and Abraham were both part of God's plan.

- The Lord said to Noah, "Come out of the ark".
 - The Lord said to Abraham, "Leave your country".
- Noah came out.
 - Abraham left.
- Noah built an altar.
 - Abraham built an altar.
- God blessed Noah.
 - God blessed Abraham.
- God said to Noah, "I will establish my covenant with you. Be fruitful and increase".
 - God said to Abraham, "I will make you into a great nation".
 - God said to Abraham, "To your offspring. I will give this land".

Do you see how they're the same? God is continuing his plan with Abraham. God's plan for Adam shows us what he wanted to do. And that's why you see similarities with Noah and with Abraham.

- God's man to carry God's plan on the earth. Adam, Noah and Abraham.
- Under the blessing of God. Adam, Noah and Abraham.
- Be fruitful multiply; fill the earth, given this special land to live in. Adam, Noah and Abraham.

And God lets us know that all three of these men walked with God. When Moses wrote Genesis, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God moved him to write it this way. He's

showing you that God's plan that started with Adam, continues with Noah, and it continues with Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-2 The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others.

I want to stop there for a second. Do you see how many times he says, **blessing**? "I will **ble**ss you. You'll be a **blessing** to others. I will **ble**ss those who **ble**ss you through you all the earth will be b." This reminds us of Genesis 1, where God's blessing was over mankind.

GOD IS GOING TO RESTORE HIS BLESSING THROUGH ABRAHAM'S DESCENDANT.

We already know that salvation will come through the seed of the woman. We're told that it will also be through the seed of Abraham. And so, the Savior will come through Abraham's family. It's God's plan. Then we see it again through his promises to Abraham. God would place his special people in a special land. He would give them that land forever. God would make Abraham into a great nation. God is going to multiply these people who know him and it's going to extend to all the nations. God is going to fill the earth with people who worship him. And so, God would bless Abraham.

Well, we know that the promises began with Adam, and then to Noah and now they come to Abraham.

Over time, God added to his promises. God told Abraham sometime later he said, "Don't be afraid. I will protect you". And the Lord took him outside and said, "Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have". And God also said, "I will give you this land as your possession".

Now Abraham is expecting that God will give him children and those children will have children. These will be people who know the Lord and they can spread out, and they have a special land to live in, just like God gave a special land to Adam and Eve. In the beginning, God also told Abraham that he would give him this land as a possession. And he said,

Genesis 15:13 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.

Do you see how God knows the future? Only God can tell us what will happen in the future, with accuracy, because only God is God and only God can fulfill his promises. God says,

Genesis 15:14 But I will punish the nation that enslaves them, and in the end they will come away with great wealth.

What God was telling Abraham, we know was fulfilled. When Joseph and the sons of Israel went down into Egypt, they were in a foreign land for 400 years. They were treated as slaves. God told Abraham about this long before it happened. But God also said that after that time period, God would bring them out of slavery and place them in this special land. Abraham would die before those promises were fulfilled, but Abraham knew that God would resurrect him to live in that land. That's why Abraham and Sarah and Isaac and Joseph and Jacob all wanted to be buried in the promised land, because they knew God would raise them back to life to live in that land.

THIS SHOWS US THAT WE MAY DIE BEFORE OUR FUTURE HOPE IS FULFILLED.

But even if we die before our hope is fulfilled, God always keeps his promises. And so that was God's promise to Abraham.

God adds to that promise again.

GOD SAID THAT KINGS WOULD COME FROM ABRAHAM'S DESCENDANTS.

This is important because

GOD'S PLAN WAS TO HAVE A MAN THAT RULED GOD'S CREATION FOR HIM.

Do you remember how Adam ruled God's Creation for God? And later on, Noah was supposed to rule God's Creation for God. God's going to bring kings from Abraham's family. The promises would be passed down to Isaac. God says, "In Isaac, I will confirm my covenant". Then later, when Abraham offered Isaac, God prevented him from killing his son. There was a Ram caught in the bushes. God said to Abraham, "Because you have obeyed me. I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants like the stars in the sky". Those are reminders of God's promise.

But then notice this part, "Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies". And so, there's going to be victory for God's people. This is looking ahead to the coming of Messiah, when he conquers the nations.

God's promises later on were passed down to Jacob. It was Abraham and then Isaac and then Jacob. God said to Jacob,

Genesis 28:13 "I am the Lord, the God of your grandfather Abraham, and the God of your father, Isaac."

I'm going to stop there for a second. When God appeared to Jacob it was a reminder that God's promises go beyond death. God's promises last for many generations and God is passing this on now to Jacob. God says to him,

Genesis 28:13-14 The ground you are lying on belongs to you. I am giving it to you and your descendants. Your descendants will be as numerous as the dust of the earth! They will spread out in all directions

God's going to have a kingdom on the earth and it's going to be a kingdom where God's blessing is found. All the families of the earth will be blessed through Jacob and Jacob's descendants. Well, when Jacob was old and ready to die, God gave Jacob a prophecy of the future for his people and the fulfillment of God's plan. This prophecy is found in Genesis 49. It is focused on what God said about Judah

*Genesis 49:8-9 “Judah, your brothers will praise you.
You will grasp your enemies by the neck.
All your relatives will bow before you.
Judah, my son, is a young lion
that has finished eating its prey.
Like a lion he crouches and lies down;
like a lioness—who dares to rouse him?”*

And so, Judah will have a descendant, who is like a lion in his power. Not only that, but God said, “The scepter will not depart from Judah until the coming of the one to whom it belongs”. A scepter was stick, a rod and it represented kingship. It would kind of be like saying that he would have a crown. In some countries a king wears a crown, and the crown represents their authority to rule over their kingdom. And so, this scepter speaks about the coming kingdom of the lion, from the tribe of Judah. And when this one comes, we are told that the nations will honor him.

THIS MEANS THAT GOD PROMISES A TIME WHEN A KING WILL COME, THAT THE NATIONS WILL WORSHIP.

So, the world will be worshipping this king, but not only that. When this king comes, “He ties his foal to a grapevine, the colt of his donkey to a choice vine”.

Imagine that you take a lot of time to plant a vineyard. You plant grapevines because you want the grapes to grow, and you make sure that the weeds are pulled. You make sure that insects cannot damage the plant. You make sure that it gets water and sunshine so it can grow. After you put all this work into it, how would you feel if a donkey came and started eating the grapes off of that vine? That would be so sad. What if a goat came and the goat was eating the flowers that you planted or the vegetables that you've planted?

We're told that when this king comes, he will tie his donkey to the best vine. Why would a king tie his donkey to the best vine? If he ties it to the best vine, that's the vine that it's going to eat. You know what this picture is saying? It's saying that when Messiah's kingdom comes, his blessing will be so amazing that it won't even matter if a donkey starts

eating the best of vines because his blessing is so plentiful. It is so rich; there are so many vegetables.

So, this is a picture of Messiah's kingdom and he restores the paradise of God; it is so rich in blessing. It's just like it was in Genesis 1 and 2. And so we read in Genesis 49, about God's plan to Jacob. Over time, God added to his promises through Jacob's prophecy, God was revealing how his plan would be fulfilled. In fact, if we look at the whole book of Genesis, God's plan would be fulfilled through the seed of the woman who is also a descendant of Abraham, a descendant of Isaac, a descendant of Jacob, a descendant from the tribe of Judah. And when this one comes, he restores God's blessing; He restores God's kingdom, and he defeats the serpent. A king would come from the tribe of Judah and restore God's blessing to the earth and the nations would obey, obey him.

As Genesis closes, we see that God has not forgotten his promises. God's promises tell us how he will fulfill his plan. The reason why we started in Genesis is that future hope is based on Genesis. Because we expect God's plan to be fulfilled. God wanted his kingdom to spread over the earth and fill the earth with people who worship God alone as God, living in perfect fellowship with him. God is showing us he will restore that blessing, that he will remove the curse; he will remove death, and mankind will rule the earth for God. The seed of the woman will defeat the serpent.

This sounds so good. It reminds me of Genesis 1 where God said it is very good. When God restores things and when God fulfills his plan, which we first saw in Creation, it's going to be very good again. It'll be the paradise of God all over again.