



## STAGE 3

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# PROMISES TO ABRAHAM: GENESIS 12-50



## PERSONAL PREPARATION DAY 1 - GOD'S CHOICE OF ABRAHAM

Read Genesis 12

The first eleven chapters of Genesis focus on the history of mankind, from creation up until the second millennium BC. Now for the rest of Genesis, the pace slows a bit! The next 39 chapters are all about only four generations of one family—the head of it being a man named Abraham.

The Lord appears to Abram (later changed to Abraham 17:5) and gives him an instruction and some wonderful promises. Are we given any indication why God particularly chooses Abraham?

Because of what happens in Egypt (12:10-20) and also what happens with the servant girl Hagar (read 16:1-6) we realise that that Abraham is no saint! God chooses Abraham simply because he does. We aren't given a reason.

God's grace works like this. His saving of people has nothing to do with any inherent goodness in us. Salvation comes as an undeserved free gift. Read Ephesians 2:1-9. Give thanks that because of grace, anyone can be saved through Jesus Christ.

## GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS - PROMISES TO ABRAHAM, GENESIS 12-50

Review: Pick a willing (!) volunteer in the group to give a review of what we've learnt over the last 2 weeks. Use the 'big pictures' and explain the big ideas of each stage of Old Testament history.



**Stage 3 Big Idea: God takes action to deal with the problem of humanity's sin. He makes a 'covenant' with Abraham. Before there was a curse, now there is a promise for blessing. This promise of blessing continues on through a select line of Abraham's descents. God will not let anything stop this blessing come to eventual fulfilment.**

A pattern has been emerging in Genesis 3-11:

1. Humanity Sins
2. God responds in judgement
3. God also acts in grace (kindness)...

	<b>Humanity Sins</b>	<b>God's Judgement</b>	<b>God's Grace</b>
<b>Genesis 3</b>	Adam & Eve eat the fruit	Pain & death	Promise of a saviour (3:15)
<b>Genesis 4</b>	Cain kills Abel	Cain to wander	Cain protected
<b>Genesis 6-9</b>	Great wickedness	Flood	Noah & family saved
<b>Genesis 11</b>	Tower of Babel	Humanity scattered	<b>Abraham!!</b>

### Read Genesis 12:1-9

1. What does God promise to Abram in these verses?

2. Notice how 'name' is used in Genesis 11:4 and Genesis 12:2. What do these verses tell us about humanity and God?

3. After the Fall, God's judgement speech in Genesis 3:13-19 is dominated by one word, 'curse'. What is the dominant word in these promises to Abraham?

4. If Creation was 'the beginning', in what way do God's promises to Abram represent a 'new beginning'?

### Read Genesis 15:1-6

In this chapter God repeats his promises to Abraham. But what new things do we discover about God and Abram in these verses?

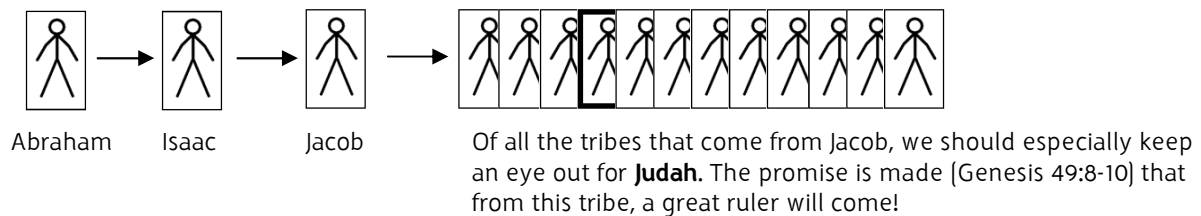
God's relationship with Abraham isn't just another interesting moment in Old Testament history. This is huge! God's good creation of Genesis 1-2 was destroyed by sin in Genesis 3. But now God promises Abraham that his descendent will be:

## God's People in God's Place Under God's Rule

See the below to see how God is working to reverse to the effects of the Fall:

	<b>God's People</b>	<b>God's Place</b>	<b>God's Rule</b>
Creation, Genesis 1-2	Adam & Eve	The Garden	God's Word.
The Fall, Genesis 3			
Genesis 12	Abraham	Canaan	Covenant

The rest of Genesis is all about the descendents of Abraham—Isaac, Jacob and his sons who will end up being the 12 heads of the tribes of Israel. Just like Abraham, these descendents will be far from perfect, their faith will appear to be very weak at times, and they will encounter situations which will threaten their very survival. But through it all, God will show his special commitment to this group of people. God has made some promises and he’s sticking to them!



**Read 2 Corinthians 1:20.** The most exciting thing about the Old Testament is that it prepares us for Jesus Christ. The New Testament depicts Jesus as the ultimate fulfilment of all of God’s promises. How do you think Jesus might bring ultimate fulfilment to God’s promises to Abraham?

**Read Hebrews 11:8-12 & Romans 4:18-25.**

In the New Testament Abraham is considered a very important person. How does the example of Abraham help us better understand how we’re saved by Christ?

We, like Abraham, are saved by trusting in God’s promises. This is quite a surprising way to be saved. What are some other ways that people think they are put right with God?

When it is hard to trust God?

What things can we do to strengthen our trust in God? Be specific.



What can you pray about arising from this study?