

Progress of Redemption #02

by David Shirley

God's plan for redemption is through a chosen line of people, and He demonstrates His sovereignty in the life of Abraham.

Duration: 1:15:50

Scripture: Genesis 1:1

Topics: "Redemption"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of understanding Genesis 1 through 11 as a foundation for the rest of the Bible. These chapters provide a basic understanding of the origin of the universe, the creation of man, and the consequences of sin. The speaker highlights the brevity of God's record in these chapters, emphasizing the selective nature of the information provided. The sermon also emphasizes the transition from the head of the original race (Adam) to the head of the new race (Noah), and finally to Abraham, who becomes the channel of redemption for humanity.

Transcript

Once again, it is our desire to declare unto you the whole counsel of God and to rightly divide the word of truth. In Act 1, we're going to see God set the stage in Genesis 1 through 11. Then in Act 2, God will select the nation Israel in Genesis 12.

In Act 3, we will see God instruct the nation all the way to Malachi chapter 4. Then in the Gospels, we'll see Act 4, God sending His Son and in the Acts, Act 5, God will establish His church. Then in Act 6, God will instruct His church from Romans to Jude. And finally in Act 7, God culminates history in the revelation of Jesus Christ.

As we begin Act 1, let's look at Genesis 1 through 11 before the drama begins. Genesis 1 through 11 gives a basic understanding apart from which the drama that follows would be meaningless. As far as the subject material is concerned, there's probably not in all Scripture a segment of God's Holy Word that's so incredibly selective in nature as Genesis 1 through 11.

If brevity is the soul of wit, as Shakespeare said, then God has mastered it in Genesis 1 through 11. Just notice the staggering brevity of God's record. In chapter 1 and 2, we have the origin of the universe.

We have the creation of man. We have human sin in chapter 3 and the redemptive revelation of God in chapter 3. Then the human family begins in chapter 4 and we see civilization develop. In chapter 10, we have the beginning of nations.

And yet in chapter 11, after the Tower of Babel, we see the beginning of the Hebrew race. When you look at Genesis 1 through 11, it seems disproportionate, but that very disproportion is the key to God's purpose in writing it. Because God is just setting the stage.

He is starting the theme. His theme. God has no intention of writing a universal history, but only a recording the development of the divine will and purpose for and through the seed to bless all mankind.

So from the creation and fall of man and the destruction of man through the flood to the scattering of man at Babel, it's all connected by the genealogies of chapter 5, 10, and 11. In Genesis, there are 10 complete histories or Teladoc generations because God's purpose of redemption is through a chosen line of people. Genesis 1 through 11 deals with the whole world in the universe and then shifts in chapter 12 down to one man.

And from chapter 12 to 50, 39 chapters are full of details concerning one man and his family. Once again, we observe that God's infinity, his energy, his design, and his personalness is seen in chapter 1. We see male and female being created as man. We see the consequences of sin that it's inherited.

We're given a genealogy from Adam to Noah. And then God judges the world because of its wickedness. And there's a universal flood because of this universal sin.

But Noah is protected because he loves and obeys God. And then the beginning of a new race, the Noahic Covenant, is announced. And it has three important points.

One is there's a command to fill the earth and eating meat is allowed. And then there's capital punishment, life for life. But then in chapter 10, we get a table of nations and then the Tower of Babel.

The nations are scattered by God for the disobedience to God's command. And then immediately after given the genealogy from Shem to Terah, there's a transition down to one man. So it's gone from Adam, the head of the original race, to Noah, the head of the new race, to chapter 12 where Abraham is the head of a family, a chosen line for redemption.

Abraham and his family are the channel of redemption. So how would you sum up what God's doing in Genesis 1 through 11? There are so many things there in Genesis 1 through 11 that I wish God would have gone into more detail about. But he devoted to heaven and earth in general this material.

And he only revealed to us things that were important to set the stage for what he begins to do in chapters 12 through 50 when he shifts to one man. And from Genesis 12 to first Kings 10, God builds a nation through Abraham. The heart of the history, prophecy, and poetry, and the whole drama of the 39 books of the Old Testament are about God's theme of redemption.

The Old Testament is preparation for the Messiah, and the New Testament is the provision of the Messiah. Now we know that whatsoever things were written a fourth time were written for our learning. Romans 15 for first Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 11.

And I wish that the Lord would have revealed more things during those first eleven chapters. I'd like to know more about the fall of Satan because so much stems from that. The time of his fall and how it happened.

And yet Deuteronomy 29 says that the secret things belong to the Lord. All we know is that it worked destruction upon the realm of creation. And we know that man is supposed to subdue all and to serve God.

And of course as we go through the Bible we'll see that the God-man, the Theanthropos, Jesus Christ does do that in Revelation 21 and 22. And so Genesis 1 to 11 is different than the rest of the Bible in that it's so fragmentary and selective in its nature. But yet God has clearly shown us there that He alone is God.

And without Him we're dead in the waters. With Him we live. We learn that He's a God to be feared and respected.

He's able to create and to destroy. He's patient with sinners but His patience does have a limit. He's not only loving and kind, that He is, but He's also a God of righteousness and justice and wrath.

He's concerned about what's happening in His world. He has complete control over all of His creation. He has power to interrupt history.

He is the God of new beginnings. He rescues those who really trust in Him. And He makes and He keeps promises.

We learn these things from what God did, the way He acted in Genesis 1 through 11. And now we look at God's shift down to that one man Abraham and in Act 1, as Matthew 1.17 makes so clear as well, that Act 1 is from Abraham to David. There are 14 generations.

And then we'll move on and go from David to Babylon and from Babylon to Christ. But God gives a covenant promise in Genesis 12.2. God says to Abraham, I will make of thee a great nation. And in these seeds here, these promises, we see five things.

God's going to make a great nation. He says, I'm going to bless you. And I'm going to make you a blessing.

And I'm going to bless them that bless you. And I'm going to curse those who curse you. And in other words, God's not going to let anything interfere with His plans.

He will protect Abraham and his family. And in you, all the nations shall be blessed. God has a plan and He's going somewhere.

He's going to build a nation and through that channel, He's going to bring redemption. You may want to take a moment and look at Matthew chapter 28 verses 18 and 20 and discuss how the phrase, all the families of the earth will be blessed, is interpreted in light of what Jesus commanded in Matthew 28. But going on, there are three elements to be found if a nation is to become an official entity.

Any nation on earth has to have these three elements. So God's going to make a nation out of Abraham. And so that nation will have these three things.

There must be a people with a language. There must be government. There must be, you know, constitution, laws, and leadership.

We call that government. And there must be a homeland. So let's begin to study and see how God creates and establishes this nation by providing all three of these elements.

God is first going to start a nation by developing a people. Now notice what God does. Would you do it this way? The first thing God does is He picks a man, Abraham, whose wife, Sarah, is a barren woman.

Why did God pick a barren woman to start His nation? Perhaps a better way to question it would be, what does this tell you about the nation? It tells you exactly what God wants you to know. And that's this. Only God can do it.

God said, I am going to do it. And so that's why God picks a barren woman to start His nation. Now you know the story after God promised Abraham that He would do it, that Abraham waited about ten years, and then he took things into his own hands.

He tried to do what God said He would do. I have certainly made that same mistake. It's a common mistake, trying to do what God said He would do.

Personally, I thought that ten years was a pretty good wait. At least it would be for me. Now does God work this way in your life? He tells you He's going to do something, and you believe Him, and then you kind of wait, and it doesn't look like God's actually doing what He said He was going to do.

And you think, you've waited long enough, and you start thinking, well, you know, maybe He's going to do it this way, and this is something I can see and figure out just how it might work. And then you get involved in that. You get all frustrated with it.

So finally, you just, after a while, you just almost give up on it. And sometimes I just forget God ever said He was going to do it. And then about that time, God will come along later and just do it.

And it's God that's done it. And I'll go, oh yeah, you know, God said He was going to do that. Well, Abraham is waited, and it says in Genesis 17, when Abraham was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to Abram.

That was his name then, which is interesting because Abram means exalted father. Kind of a strange name for a guy that doesn't have any kids. And God said to him, I am God Almighty, El Shaddai.

Walk before me and be blameless, and I will establish my covenant between me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face. God talked with him, and He said, as for me, behold, my covenant's with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.

No longer shall your name be called Abram, exalted father, but your name shall be called Abraham, which is really father of a multitude. And so his name change has Yah right in the middle of it. God says, for I will make you the father of a multitude of nations, and I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you, and I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your descendants, and after you throughout the generations, for an everlasting covenant to be God to you, and to your descendants after you.

And I will give to you, and your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. And so seven times God says, I will. He's complete in Himself as El Shaddai.

And so the strange name of Abraham, exalted father, and Abraham, father of a multitude, is really not that strange, even though he has a barren woman for a wife, because God is insisting that it's something that only God can do. And the barren woman presents no problem to God. In Genesis 21, 1-6, twenty-five years after the promise, we read of the birth of Isaac.

And what's the point? It's God, not Abraham, who's going to build the nation. Isaac becomes the key to the fulfillment of God's promise. And so if you compare Genesis 22, where Abraham had his test of faith, with Hebrews chapter 11, verses 17-19, you see the reason why Abraham could do as God said.

It says, by faith, Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son. It was he to whom it was said, in Isaac your descendants shall be called. He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.

So Abraham was counting on God's ability, the one who had promised. And because of it, he received a fuller revelation of God's plan and where God was going. And received him back as a type, which points forward to Mount Moriah, to Mount Calvary, where God received back his son, Jesus Christ, from the dead, through the resurrection.

And so it's the ability of the one doing the work. And God's doing the work. He's building the nation.

I guess you could say, or use the old phrase here, like father like son, because Isaac receives a wife, Rebecca, and we notice that Rebecca also was barren. And so in Genesis 25, 21, it says, And Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren. And the Lord granted his prayer.

This is now 85 years from the original promise that God made to Abraham. And Isaac and Rebecca have Jacob and Esau. And you can read the story of that in Romans chapter 9, where God chose Jacob.

And then through Rebecca's suggestion, Jacob goes to Paddan Aram, to Laban, and he gets Leah. Well, he wanted Rachel. He got Leah, and then he also received Rachel.

You know that story. Somebody said he didn't want to break in a new mother-in-law. So then we find out that Jacob is in the same situation.

Jacob's wife, the one he loved, Rachel, was barren. But before it's all over, Jacob has Leah, and Leah bears him Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judas, Car and Zebulun. And he has Zilpah bears him Gad and Asher.

And Bilhah bears him Dan and Naphtali. And Rachel bears him Joseph and Benjamin. And so Jacob had 12 sons, which become the 12 tribes that were developed from these four wives of Jacob.

Now, the Bible honors these three men, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as his founders of the nation. I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But you know, what was their most common ground? It was that Sarah was barren, Rebecca was barren, Rachel was barren.

They were not able to produce the promise of God. And yet, in chapter 17 of Genesis, we see that all the man-made attempts at producing God's promises turn out to be what is coined an Ishmael. But God keeps

saying, no, I know you want Ishmael to live, but that's not what's happening.

I'm going to do things the way that only I can do things, because I'm the one building this nation. And so that's our first scene in Act 1. In scene 2, there's a tribal framework formed by the 12 sons of Jacob. You must have a foundation or structure on which to build a nation.

In Genesis 49-28, we see that the state framework for the nation was the 12 sons of Jacob. Genesis 46-27 says, and all the persons of the house of Jacob that came into Egypt were 70. We've got a patriarchal family tree, but there's no nation yet.

Joseph is the preserver of God's people, as God prepares a place for them, and then sends them down into Egypt. And God creates the nation by first obtaining a people, and then he's going to give them leadership. One of the interesting things about Joseph is that though he was Jacob's 11th son, he was Rachel's firstborn.

And so because Rachel was Jacob's best loved or favorite wife, Joseph was his favorite son, it says in chapter 37 verse 3. But once again, we see God's doing what only he can do, and through Joseph being sold into slavery into Egypt, God is going to work. Joseph's imprisoned. God brings him out, and it makes him the ruler of Egypt.

And so because of a famine, and because of the relationship they have with Joseph, Jacob and his family end up coming and settling in Egypt. Up to this point, they're just a tribal framework, and so they don't have the necessary ingredients for a nation. They're not really a people with a language.

They don't have their own government leadership. They don't have their own homeland. But in scene 3, we see that God takes these people and multiplies them while they're in Egypt.

Seventy people go down into Egypt, and well over a million come out of Egypt. And so for 400 years, they're basically just making bricks and babies. But God's at work through procreation.

God is building a nation by developing a people. The Egyptians tried to eliminate the Jewish problem. They tried oppression.

They tried infanticide. But nothing works. Why? Because God's at work building his nation.

And so now after hundreds of years in slavery in Egypt, making bricks and babies, we have a people with a language. Besides a people with a language, what other ingredients do we need for a nation? We need a leader, and we need government. Scene 4 is found in Exodus chapters 2 through 4. God is going to give them a leader.

He's going to provide Israel with Moses, who is raised in Pharaoh's house. God does it in such a way that there's no doubt that it is the sovereign hand of God who places Moses into Pharaoh's palace. God gives him his initial training, his education, probably included everything from athletics to art and writing and music, geometry and literature, astronomy and medicine and philosophy.

He could have chosen a career in official life or literary life or he could have been a soldier. And yet God was working through Moses, training his leader, and using a pagan nation to do it. Now in Exodus chapter 2, Moses tries to take leadership of the nation, but it's not God's time, and he doesn't try to do it in God's way.

If you read Acts chapter 7 verses 23 through 29, you find out when Moses was approaching the age of 40, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel. And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian. And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him, but they did not understand.

And on the following day, he appeared to them as they were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another? But the one who was injuring his neighbor pushed him away, saying, who made you a ruler and a judge over us? You do not mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you? And at this remark, Moses fled, became an alien in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons. And those two sons we know were Gershon, which means a stranger here, and Eleazar, God is my help. And verse 30 says, and after 40 years had passed, that's when God, through an angel, appeared to Moses 40 years later.

God's going to deliver his people, but he first must have a man who will cooperate. That's always the key, to obey, to submit, and will rule for God. And yet Moses probably thought he was ready.

He had good intentions, and he tries to take the leadership there in Exodus 2. But as has often happened in my own life, and I'm sure in your life, we think we're ready sometimes. And that might be just a good indication that we're not quite ready yet. And God has a plan for us.

But he will reveal very clearly when it's his time to use us. Now, after spending this time and learning much from God in quietness, and on the back side of the desert, we get to Exodus 3, and God's ready for Moses to lead. We see that Moses is a very reluctant leader.

He says, who am I? And what shall I say? They're not going to believe me, and I'm not eloquent. And so the self-confidence that Moses once had is gone. He's reluctant to go now, but he makes all kind of excuses.

But when God assures him that he'll be with him, and give him his power to work the miracles, then Moses goes. And as many people like to do, we divide Moses' life up into 40 years as a dignitarian Egypt, 40 years as a desert shepherd in Midian, and 40 years as the deliverer of Israel. And so now we've got a people with a language, but we also have a leader.

We have God's leader. And a very unique leader in that he was a deliverer, a lawgiver, a builder, a commander-in-chief, a judge, an author, and was the intermediary between God and Israel for so long. But what's going to happen next? We know that to be a nation, you've got to have a people with a language, and you've got to have leadership and government.

Well, you also have to have a land. And so they must get out of the land. Why? You can't have a nation within a nation.

So the people must be brought out to function as an entity on their own. And that probably has a lot to do with why we read in the New Testament that we're not to be unequally yoked together. Because God wants to be the Lord, the ruler, the sovereign director of all the functions of our life.

So in scene 5 from Exodus 5 to 15, they're going to get out so that they can get into the land. God told Abraham that they would be in Egypt for 400 years. And now God begins to deliver them from Egypt.

Pharaoh increases the pressure, and yet God's still going to deliver them. Moses repeatedly asked Pharaoh to let his people go. Pharaoh repeatedly agrees, but then he refuses.

God shows his power in turning the water into blood, and with the frogs and the lice or gnats, the flies, the death of the cows, the boils and sores, the hell and fire, the locusts, three days of darkness, and finally the death of the firstborn. In each of these, God is attacking the objects of Egyptian worship, showing how powerless they really are. And so God accomplishes their deliverance through the Passover in Exodus chapter 12.

And we notice how the details of this Passover parallel the events that surround the death of Christ. The sacrifice must be a lamb. Christ was the lamb.

The lamb must be without spot. Christ without spot or blemish. The lamb's blood was shed so Israel could have life.

Christ's blood was shed so that men might have life. And so when I see the blood, and it's God's estimate of that blood that really counts. God says, I see the blood, then I pass over.

And so they're delivered out of Egypt. But in scene 6, they're going to get the Constitution for the nation. In Exodus 19 and 20, God gives the law.

No nation has ever had a constitution like this one. They have a great people. They have a leader.

And of course, God's been unifying the tribes around worship in that he gave them the tabernacle to focus on. But God's going to give them this constitution, this law. And since the law primarily deals with what God said, rather than with what God did, we're going to cover the law later.

And so we have people with a language, and we've got leadership, and we've got law. And now, what do we have left? We need a homeland. And so in scene 7, we're going to see the land.

God brings them to the land, but they fail to enter the land. Moses sends out the spies, and you know the story. They come back, and the spies report simply, for the most part, the majority of them, we can't do it.

Was that a true report? Of course it was. They spoke the truth. They were untrained.

They were unequipped. They were going to go against a walled city. They couldn't do it.

They couldn't figure out how to make it work for themselves. But they must trust in God. And it was their unwillingness to trust God that was their sin, not the fact that they didn't have the ability to do it.

How often we do the same thing, and even in our prayers, we express how that we don't see how it could be done. And so the people end up murmuring against Moses and Aaron, and actually God was going to destroy the people, except for the fact that Moses prayed. Moses and Aaron prayed, and Joshua and Caleb tried to persuade the people to go into the land.

Still, they didn't have the faith or the trust in God's ability to do it. So in Numbers 14, God sets them aside, and they are defeated because God's really not with them. And yet, what's implied here in this principle is that if you won't do it, God will find somebody else who will do it.

The summary, perhaps, of what was going on in their hearts is found in Psalm 106 verses 24 to 27. It says, "...and they despised the pleasant land. They did not believe in his word, but grumbled in their tents.

They did not listen to the voice of the Lord. Therefore he swore to them that he would cast them down in the wilderness, and that he would cast their seed among the nations, and scatter them in the lands." So we have this great nation of people, and we have leadership, we have law, and we're right at the land. We're at the front door.

We're at the gate. We're almost in the driveway to getting into the land. And God sets them aside and chooses another generation to do it.

And so in the book of Joshua, we see the victory. Joshua was a servant before he was a leader. And God's told him to be strong and courageous.

And so they begin to go into the land. And who goes first? Well, the priests go out carrying the ark, and the people follow at a distance. Because, like God said, you've not gone this way before.

So they let the ark get out in front. God parts the waters at the Jordan for them. God has parted the Red Sea.

He performed a miracle to get them out of Egypt. But now God's going to part the Jordan and perform a miracle to get them into the land. And so if you read in Micah chapter 6 and verse 5, they remembered that there were 12 stones placed in the Jordan when they ended their pilgrimage.

And there were 12 stones placed over the Jordan as they began their possession of the land. Now there were two things that were necessary before they began engaging the enemy in the land. They needed to be purified, which they were by circumcision.

It spoke of the covenant relationship and their responsibility to God as well. And the Passover was observed, which reminded them of their deliverance from bondage. And when they got to Gilgal, the manna that had been supporting them all along their journey through the desert and the wilderness there, the manna ceased and the people began to eat the corn of the land.

They began to feed themselves. And the Lord is revealed as the captain of the Lord of hosts. And the symbol now is the sword, the Word of God.

And Jericho was taken in chapter 6. Tremendous victory. But very soon in the next chapter, chapter 7, we see that there's sin in Achan's tent. And in Joshua 7 verse 20 and 21, it says, I saw, I coveted, I took, I hid.

And that's an interesting comparison here with Adam and Eve's sin. These are Achan's words of confession and they show and expose how terrible sin is. And we've all experienced it at some point in our life.

But once the sin is dealt with, then in chapter 8, we begin to move forward and we see the strategy for holy warfare. And we learn that the spiritual soldier's first building is not a fortress, but it's an altar. And things go well for a while, but once again in chapter 9, the Gibeonites outwit the Israelites because they didn't ask counsel at the mouth of the Lord.

They learn their lesson and in chapter 11, we have the battle of Beth Haran where the sun stands still at Joshua's request. And again, God is doing things that only God can do. And so when you get to chapter

12 of Joshua, you get the final score, the kings that are destroyed.

Joshua scores 31, the kings zero. So are they a nation yet? Well, not totally because they don't really possess the land and they don't have unity. As a matter of fact, in Joshua 13 through 21, we see the division of the land and into the east, you have the half-tribe of Manasseh and Reuben and Gad and the west, the rest of the tribes.

And there's no unity. There's an east and a west. Joshua gives his farewell address and then from Judges chapter 1 up to 1 Samuel chapter 7, the tribes are taking their inheritance, but they're incomplete.

They're lacking the unity that is needed. They're not a nation, but they're 12 separate states. And you can see that because of this, they're constantly hounded by the other nations around them.

The whole book of Judges portrays clearly the disunity and how everyone was doing what was right in their own eyes. Moses had given the people three commands for the time when they entered the land. He first said destroy all the inhabitants of the land.

You can read in Judges chapter 1 what they did. They didn't do it. Moses secondly said shun all the false gods.

You can read in Judges 2 that they didn't do that. And then he said don't intermarry with your pagan neighbors. Don't be unequally yoked.

And in Judges 3 you can see they disobeyed that too. And so the whole book of Judges is just a time of rebellion and disregard for any authority. And so what's the need? The need is for deliverers.

And so God uses these nations surrounding them to discipline the people. And then he raises up a judge during a time of crisis. And after raising up many judges to deal with their sin, like Othniel and Ehud and Shemgar and Deborah and Gideon and Tola and Jer and Jephthah and Esban and Elan and Abedin and Samson.

Finally the last judge is Samuel. And we read in Judges 21-25 that in those days there was no king in Israel. Every man did what was right in his own eyes.

And so they haven't really possessed their land and become established as a nation. And the need is unity. We have twelve separate states, but we don't have a nation.

They need a king. They need a leader. And so we see one of those interesting transitions in Scripture toward a monarchy.

At this point Eli had been a priest who judged. And now we're going to have Samuel who is a prophet who judges or a judge who was a prophet. And I'm sure you're familiar with Here We Go Again.

There's a woman named Hannah. And Hannah's problem is that she's barren. And so she prays to the Lord and says, if you give me a son I'll commit him to you.

And she did when he was born. And so God speaks directly to Samuel. He was the first of the prophets and the last of the judges.

What's God doing? God is establishing a channel through which he can speak to his people. And so Samuel did something that hasn't been done up to this point. He united Israel for the first time since, of course, Joshua died.

And he rebuilt the nation both politically and spiritually. And so God has a channel through which he can speak and he can work. God's building a great nation through which he's going to provide salvation to the whole world.

And so in scene 10, in 1 Samuel 8-31, we see the reign of Saul. Israel's demanding a king. They want a monarch like all the surrounding nations.

And immediately you want to ask, well, what's wrong with this demand? The answer is that simply this a monarchy leaves God out. A monarchy is when man does it. God wants a theocracy.

A theocracy is where God does it. And the only real difference in the setup structure is that there is no real difference in the setup structure. So where's the difference? The difference is in the leader's relationship to God.

Now, God's going to give them a king. But you remember in Genesis 17-6, God promised kings to Abraham. He said, I'll make you exceedingly fruitful and I'll make nations of you and kings shall come forth from you.

And so it is important that they have kings because God is promised kings. Yet God wants kings who will rule for him. In Deuteronomy 17 verses 14-20, we read the conditions for the establishment of the throne and the theocratic office in Israel.

God says in verse 14, when you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you and you possess it and live in it and you say, I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me. You shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses. One from among your countrymen, you shall set a king over yourselves.

You may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the Lord has said to you, you shall never again return that way. Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn to run away, nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.

Now, it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priest. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by carefully observing all the words of this law and the statutes, so that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or to the left, in order that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel. We see that the king is to be the Lord's choice, the man of his choosing, and that the king is to write his own copy of the law, and then spend his life meditating on the word of God.

The primary mission was to be a faithful witness to God's word, and the Lord's kingdom, glory, and power. So God gives him Saul. He wasn't all bad, but he did rebel against God and made two mistakes.

He intruded into the priest's office, sort of like when Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, lifted themselves up. Sometimes we just take more on ourselves, and we lift ourselves up beyond what we should be or

what we should do. So he wasn't supposed to intrude into the priest's office, but in 1 Samuel 13, we see he did.

And then in 1 Samuel 15, he didn't fully obey the Lord and the Lord's command to destroy the Amalekites. So Saul's disobedience rendered him fruitless, and God's judgment came upon him. So what problem does the nation face now? Well, there's a man on the throne, on the throne of Israel, who has cut himself off from God.

And he's done so because he's ruling for himself instead of ruling for God. So God selects David to be king, and has Samuel anoint David, who is a man after God's own heart. David has a faith that purposes to honor God and to glorify God's name.

And we see that when he defeats Goliath in 1 Samuel 17. Now what God really wants is a theocracy, where God is ruling the nation through a man. And the only one that's existed is the one that we read about here in 2 Samuel, from 2 Samuel chapter 2 through 2 Kings chapter 10.

There's one thing required to succeed in a theocracy, where God rules through a man. And that is, the one essential is a heart after God. It's the one thing needful to rule for God, is to have a heart after God.

And that's what David has. There's no doubt that David has sin in his life, and there are irrevocable consequences of that sin. And then we finally get to the place where Solomon, in 1 Kings chapter 8, we see the glory of the Lord fill Solomon's temple, just as it filled the tabernacle.

So, is this God's goal? Has it been reached? Is this the whole earth filled with the glory of God? No. God is omnipresent. He is an infinite spirit.

But He manifests His presence in a tangible manner, called the Shekinah glory of God. But He didn't dwell in the temple in totality. And so, as glorious as it is to see the nation established and expanded and glorified, and to read of how the Queen of Sheba came and checked Him out and verified the reality of God's blessing on Israel, and that there never was a man as wise as Solomon, and Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth.

And yet, the whole earth is not filled with the glory of God. But we do see that Act 1 ends on a glorious note. Israel is a theocratic nation.

God's ruling His people. There's a great house of worship that has been built for God, and God has filled that house. And yet, this is not the fulfillment of Numbers 14, 21, or of Habakkuk 2. We also know that Solomon was not the king that was going to rule for God, because God had said, back in Deuteronomy 17, not to multiply horses, which were normally used for war, nor to multiply wives to Himself.

And Solomon did both of these things, and greatly multiplied also silver and gold to himself, accumulating great wealth. And it doesn't seem as though Solomon, or if he did write out a copy of the law and keep it before his eyes, he soon forgot it. But God is looking for a king who will sit on an earthly throne with God's word constantly before his eyes and in his heart.

It's interesting what we read about in 1 Kings 2, verses 2 and 3. It says that David gives the charge to Solomon. David says, I go the way of all the earth, but be thou strong therefore and show thyself a man, and keep the charge of the Lord thy God to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes and His commandments and His judgments and His testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that

you do, and with this whoever you turn yourself. So from the time that God chose Moses to mediate Him, to be the leader, and to give Moses the law, so that God could have a theocracy and God could rule through a man, and rule the people, and needed a man to rule for Himself.

All the way down to the time of Solomon, God has been still looking for this man. And as far back as Genesis chapter 49 verse 10, we read as Jacob was on his death bed, he made the promise that the scepter, the rule, shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come. And so God was planning from the beginning to give them the ruler, the one that was His choice, the one that would rule for Him.

But the people kept demanding a king like all the nations, and a king like all the nations would not rule for God. And you know throughout all history it seems like we keep making this same mistake over and over again. We want to be like the nations.

And it doesn't really matter which nation you choose. We might want to be like a communist nation, or we might want to be like an imperialistic nation, or we might want to be like a republic, or like a democracy. But when you read the word of God, the way God describes the eternal and perfect state of mankind and the ways to be ruled is as a kingdom.

If you take time to read Daniel chapter 2 all the way to Daniel chapter 6 and verse 28, you see that what the Gentiles learned during the times of the Gentiles and when man is governing is that the rule of man during this time is going to come to an abrupt end. And all their pride and all that we boast about is going to be destroyed when the stone cut out without hands comes from heaven and hits this image on the feet and crushes it. And it's God's will and it's God's intention that we be different from the world and from the system of the world.

That we be not like all the other political systems of the world. And he raised up prophet after prophet and as Nehemiah says in chapter 9 verse 30, yet many years did you bear with them and testified against them by thy spirit through the prophets. God had to raise up the prophets to speak because God had to have someone that would speak for him, someone that would rule for him because the rulers weren't doing it.

And so that's why we read like in Ezekiel 34 verse 2 where he says, Woe to the shepherds of Israel, they feed themselves. Should not the shepherds feed the flock? And woe to the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pastures says the Lord, they speak a vision of their own heart and not out of the mouth of the Lord. I've not sent these prophets yet they run.

I haven't spoken to them yet they prophesied. I've heard what the prophets said that prophesy lies in my name saying I've dreamed a dream. Yea, they're prophets of deceit, the deceit of their own heart.

Jeremiah says it so well in chapter 23. The prophets continually kept trying to call the nation to come back to God and to his rule and to his law. Now there's one real assurance that has in it the kind of peace that just passes understanding.

We find it in Jeremiah 33 where God's been talking about the new covenant in Jeremiah 31. And he explains at the beginning of chapter 33 how he's going, you know he says to Jeremiah call unto me and I'll answer you and show you great things, great mighty things that you don't know about. And he does, he explains how he's going to destroy these people and break them down but he's going to build them back up.

And he's going to put his spirit in them and cause them to return and he's going to fill them with prosperity and make them a joy in the earth. But God says through Jeremiah there in verse 17 for thus says the Lord, David shall never lack a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. If you can break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night and that there should not be day and night in their season.

Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne. In spite of everything we may see and in spite of all the failure of men, God will never fail in his purpose or in his promises. And so along with the calling back of the people to God the prophets always have a promise about the future and of the coming kingdom.

I like what Zechariah says in chapter 14 verses 7 and 9 he says it shall come to pass that at evening time it will be light. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth and in that day there shall be one Lord and his name one. And so before we move on to the next section of the scriptures in act 2 of our progress through.

We're going to see the end and we're going to see God leave the people. And Ezekiel is going to watch God just get up and walk right out of church so to speak. And the nation is going to be turned over.

But we still have God's promise and he will fulfill that promise. Now Ezekiel chapter 21 verse 26 and 27 says thus says the Lord God remove the diadem. Take off the crown.

I'm going to overturn, overturn, overturn it. And it shall be no more until he whose right it is comes. And I'll give it to him.

And so though the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city. And though the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king. Hosea says in chapter 3 verse 4. There is still that comfort and that promise that comes through Amos in chapter 9 verse 9. Where he says I will sift the house of Israel among all nations.

Yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. And what a joy it is to read when you get to the end of the book of Ezekiel in chapter 43. Just as Ezekiel seen God leaving by the way of the door on the east in chapter 10.

But Ezekiel goes on and describes the return of the glory of the Lord. And in verses 2 and 4 he says that the glory of the Lord came into the house by way of the gate. Whose prospect is toward the east.

That is the same situation this temple. God's been there. His glory.

His Shekinah has been in the house of the Lord. In the temple of the Jews. And we see that the glory of the Lord will return to the temple by the east gate.

The kingdom of God will be established on earth. The temple will be there in the city of Jerusalem. The Lord says in verse 7 here in chapter 43 that here the place of my throne.

This is the place where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. Where? Right here. The place of my throne in Jerusalem.

And so as we look at Ezekiel and we see in chapter 11 verse 23 that it's upon the mountain. Which is on the east side of the city where we see the glory of God departing out of the city. We see that in Zechariah chapter 14 verses 4 and 9 that in that day when Christ returns.

When the true king returns his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives. Which is before Jerusalem on the east. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth.

And so throughout history we've had an imperfect situation and it's because we have imperfect people. But there's coming a day as Jeremiah 31 makes clear in verse 33. Behold days are coming declares the Lord when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

Like the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. My covenant which they broke although I was a husband to them declares the Lord. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days declares the Lord.

I will put my law within them and on their heart I will write it. And I'll be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach again each man his neighbor and each man his brother.

Saying know the Lord for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more. And so in chapter 32 in verse 37 he says behold I will gather them out of all the lands to which I've driven them in my anger in my wrath and in great indignation.

And I'll bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety. And they shall be my people and I'll be their God and I'll give them one heart and one way. That they may fear me always for their own good and for the good of their children after them.

And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them to do them good. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from me. And I will rejoice over them to do them good and will faithfully plant them in the land with all my heart and with all my soul.

Now as we've gone through we see that this is something God's going to do. Just like when he told Abraham, Abraham I'm going to do this. And Abraham would attempt to help but he couldn't help because it's something only God can do.

And yet it's something God wants to do and God's going to do it with all of his heart and with all of his soul. I think Isaiah captures a picture of this when the perfect king with the perfect character and the perfect wisdom ruling for God is here. In chapter 11 of Isaiah when he says that a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse and a branch from his roots will bear fruit and the spirit of the Lord will rest on him.

The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And he will delight in the fear of the Lord and he'll not judge by what his eyes see nor make a decision by what his ears hear but with righteousness. He will judge the poor, decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth and he will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips he'll slay the wicked.

Also righteousness will be the belt about his loins and faithfulness the belt about his waist. And the wolf will dwell with the lamb and the leopard will lie down with the kid and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together and a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze, their young will lie down together and the lion will eat straw like the ox and the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra and the wing child will put his hand on the viper's den.

They will not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Then it will come about at that day that the nations will resort to the root of Jesse who will stand as a signal for the peoples and his rest in place will be glorious. And so as we continue to go through the progress of redemption we see that God is going with purpose towards a goal and as truly as God lives all the earth is going to be filled with the glory of the Lord.

And back at 2.14 he agrees with Isaiah for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. I believe that God will be glorified when the earth is filled with people who live like Jesus Christ. And as Peter said we according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Don't you just love what Paul said in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 13 and 14. He says we are bound to give thanks to God always for you brethren beloved by the Lord because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the spirit and belief in the truth to which he called you by our gospel. For the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From the very beginning God has intended that you obtain the glory of Jesus Christ. The full potential of the life of God's Son Christ in you the hope of glory. For whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom he predestined these he also justified and whom he justified these he also glorified. So where is God going with his program of redemption and what is he going to do? He is going to fill the earth with his glory with his people who have been transformed and changed into the very image of his only begotten firstborn Son Jesus Christ our Lord and our Savior. To him be the glory both now and forever more.

Amen. Now for next week read from 1 Kings chapter 11 to 2 Chronicles 36. And read as much of that as you can and by the time we get through next week you will certainly understand and appreciate more of what is expressed in Psalm 122.

From the perspective when they said I was glad when they said unto me let us go to the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is built as a city that is compact together where the tribes go up the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.

For there are set thrones of judgment the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions sakes I will now say peace be within thee because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good.

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