

OT 6

# THE BIBLE PROJECT 2.0

Genesis 12-50

## VISION TO PRODUCE BLESSING

**THE MEANS FOR DELIVERING BLESSING:**

**GEOGRAPHIC, CULTURAL AND GENEEOLOGICAL EXCEPTIONALISM.**



BLESSING IS A MEANS, NOT A GOAL OR END.

WHAT IS THE GOAL? GOD'S PROJECT

### **BIG IDEA 1: REQUIRED IS AN EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE**

#### **WHAT DOES "EXCEPTIONAL" MEAN?**

To be exceptional means to be different, unique, noticeable, unlike everyone else, HOLY. It does not necessarily mean better or brighter or morally superior. It means those who are exceptional have something (are given something) that others do not have and would benefit from.

So with Abraham, God **blesses** him which is what makes him the exception among his people and the rest of the world. God's blessing does not confer a moral superiority. It does mean that he has something that God wants him to share with the rest of the world.

On what basis was Abraham chosen and his descendants made the history-changers?

“How odd of God to choose the Jews.”

This, too, becomes a pattern: God chooses the “weak and foolish” to confound the wise and prominent.

God clearly means to create a new kind of people: **exceptional**.

They are made exceptional by God's choosing: GRACE



ABRAM DOES NOTHING TO DESERVE GOD'S CHOOSING HIM. THAT'S GRACE.

Genesis 15: Abram asked God how he could have innumerable descendants since he had no children and God promises. Then Abram believed the Lord, and he (the Lord) credited it to him as **righteousness**.

**Faith follows grace, not vice versa. Abram did nothing to deserve God's promise and blessing. Grace produces a response. Faith is a response, not cause of God's blessing.**

## **BIG IDEA 2: GRACE IS ALWAYS GOD'S WAY OF WORKING.**

**That's true in the Old Testament as well as in the NT.**

Why does God bless Abraham and his progeny? Only God knows.

But the certainty of God's choice is not in question: Deuteronomy 7:6, Exodus 19:5-6; Leviticus 20: 26; Numbers 6:26-27; 14:2; Isaiah 51: 15-16.

Deut 7.6: For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

Ex 19: 5-6: Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. ....”

Lev 20.26: You shall be holy to me; for I the LORD am holy, and I have separated you from the other peoples to be mine.

Nu. 6.26-27: Aaronic blessing -→ So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

Deut 14.2: for you are a people holy to the LORD your God; it is you the LORD has chosen out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured blessing.

Genesis 12: 2

“I will make you into a great nation,  
and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.

Genesis 13: 14b-15

“Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. **15** All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever.

Innumerable descendants:

Gen. 15. 5b  
Gen. 22. 17b  
Gen. 28. 14b  
Gen17. 6b

Whatever God’s reason for choosing Abraham, Abraham becomes God’s means for reaching the rest of the world at least in part through Abraham’s response to God.

And Abraham’s response in offering up Isaac is conclusive evidence that Abraham did indeed trust God would keep his promise. Genesis 22. Remember God’s commitment to Abraham in Genesis 15. God promises that if he does not produce a people to bless the world, he himself will be forfeit. Now Abraham shows his willingness to forfeit his son on the basis that God will indeed keep his promise.

Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. So the ram became a substitute for Abraham’s son. But God does not get a substitute on Mt. Moriah. God’s Son must die.

### **BIG IDEA 3: BEING EXCEPTIONAL REQUIRES BEING DISTINCT**

—special, set apart, even strange or odd.

Three boundaries create exceptionalism.

1. Geographic
2. Cultural
3. Genealogical

Go from your home country, from your cultural situation, from even your family.

Abraham sends his servant back to his family to get a wife so that Isaac would not marry a Canaanite.

Genesis 24. **CULTURAL/GENEEOLOGICAL DISTINCTIVENESS.**

LOT AND SODOM & GOMORRAH—lesson in being distinct.

- READ Gen. 18: 17-19
- What is the lesson of Sodom for Abraham?
- What effect did the culture of Sodom have on Lot’s spiritual awareness and practice? What evidence is there in the account that Lot was culturally assimilated?
- Why do you think cultural distinctiveness was essential for Israel to become a BLESSING?

**BIG IDEA 4: GEOGRAPHIC EXEPTIONALISM**—Israel was to have its own LAND:

GENESIS 12: 1,7, 13:15; 15:7, 18; 17:8; 26: 2-3; 28: 4; 35: 12; 48: 4 AND 50:24.

Nomads settling down: new kind of existence. **PLACE forms identity.**

\*Name some places from which people take their characteristics.

AND it was to be a NEW land. Distinct from the “old country.”

So right from the beginning, they were leaving behind the gods of the fathers and being led by the LORD/YAHWEH.



The prospect was to go from total insignificance to the force that changes the world and affects all of history. What quality of development will lead to that?

See: Gen 12.2, 17.4, 35.11, 48.19.

Clear that God called Abram out of Ur and beyond Haran and gave him Israel.

But at the end of Genesis, God makes his people the exception in Egypt by giving them the land of Goshen: See Gen 46: 31-34 and 43: 32.

God even tells Jacob: Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt FOR THERE I WILL MAKE OF YOU A GREAT NATION. So God uses the Egypt experience to multiply and create a distinction for his people. See Gen 46:2-3.



The Conquest later maintained the distinctiveness of Israel because it did not include the coastal and river lands used by the rest of the world and particularly the Philistines. And Judah's geographic isolation—relatively—enabled it to hold out against world empires longer than the Northern Tribes. See the topology of ancient Israel. Ridge route inaccessible.



## **BIG IDEA 5: CULTURAL DISTINCTIVENESS:**

**It is essential not to get mixed into the other peoples because the distinction in spiritual and moral practices will be lost.**

Intra-marriage v inter-marriage

Isaac—Gen.24

Jacob—Gen. 28

See also: Ex. 34:10-16, Num. 25. 1-8,

Deut. 7: 1-5 When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you— **2** and when the Lord your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally.[a] Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy. **3** Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, **4** for they will turn your

children away from following me to serve other gods, and the Lord’s anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you. **5** This is what you are to do to them: Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones, cut down their Asherah poles and burn their idols in the fire.

Esau intermarries with Hittite women:

Gen 26: 34ff: When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and also Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite.

His mother Rebecca knows better:

Gen. 27: 46: Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I’m disgusted with living because of these Hittite women. If Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, my life will not be worth living.”

*See also the entire book of Obadiah which is a prophecy against Edom and therefore, Esau.*

## **BIG IDEA 6: GENEALOGICAL EXCEPTIONALISM**

Distinctions are made within families on the basis of \_\_\_\_\_

Abraham v Lot

Isaac v Ishmael

Jacob v Esau

Judah v the others of Jacob’s sons

<b>ABRAHAM</b>	<b>LOT</b>
Gn 13.8-9 No strife; take it	Gn 13. 10-13 takes the well-watered now
Gn 13.14-18 Prom: whole land	Gn 19.15-16: disposed; Lot lingers; ends up in a cave drunk: produces Moabites and Ammonites
Gn 14.18-20 Blessed by Melchizedek; gives bread	
Gn 14.21-24 refuses booty of Sodom king	
<b>ISAAC</b>	<b>ISHMAEL</b>
Gn 15.2-5 Count the stars	Gn 16.7-12 wild ass of a man; against everyone
Gn 17.19-21 Cov-bearer	Gn 17.18 Ab’s wish for Ish
Gn 24.1-6 Get separate wife but do not go back to Haran	Gn 21.15-21 Egypt wife; wilderness upbringing; bow
<b>JACOB</b>	<b>ESAU</b>
Gn 27.28-29 Blessing of Isaac	Gn 25.29-34 sold birthrite
Gn 28.1-5 wife Laban’s daughter	Gn 26.34 married Judith and Basemath—Hittites
Gn 28.16-22 ladder; fear; tithe; land	Gn 27.41 hates Jacob; murder in heart
Gn 32.24-30 Peniel	
Gn 35.2-4 Puts gods away; returns Bethel	
<b>JUDAH</b>	<b>OTHER SONS</b>
Gn 37.26 Don’t kill Joseph	Gn 34. 25-26 Simeon & Levi – Dinah’s revenge
Gn 43.8 Protects Benjamin	Gn 35.22 Reuben & Bilhah
Gn 44.33 Protects Benjamin	Gn 49.1-7 Cursing of Levi & Simeon
Gn 49.8-12 blesses Judah	

## Exceptional character of Abraham

Gen 12: 4,7,8 \_\_\_\_\_

Gen. 13: 2-4, 18 \_\_\_\_\_

Gen. 15: 1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Gen. 17: 1-3, 22-23 \_\_\_\_\_

Gen 22: 15-18 \_\_\_\_\_

Gal. 3: 6, Heb. 11: 8-10 \_\_\_\_\_

**Exceptionalism and distinction are not ends in themselves.** The reason to be exceptional is to be able to deliver the blessing of God's reclamation of his creation to achieve *a world where God's will is done, all creatures live in joyous concert and all fellowship fully with their Creator.*

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**BIG IDEA 2: GRACE IS ALWAYS GOD'S WAY OF WORKING.**

**BIG IDEA 3: BEING EXCEPTIONAL REQUIRES BEING DISTINCT**

**BIG IDEA 4: GEOGRAPHIC EXEPTIONALISM—Israel was to have its own LAND:**

**BIG IDEA 5: CULTURAL DISTINCTIVENESS:**

**BIG IDEA 6: GENEALOGICAL EXCEPTIONALISM**

**Consider the following if you choose to prepare for OT 7**

Read Exodus 1-25.

Memorize the order of the 10 Commandments—not verbatim from Exodus 20:

- 1 No other gods.
- 2 No idols
- 3 No misuse of God’s name
- 4 Remember the Sabbath
- 5 Honor your father and mother
- 6 You shall not murder
- 7 You shall not commit adultery
- 8 You shall not steal
- 9 You shall not lie
- 10 You shall not covet

**MARKERS:**

Exodus 3	Burning Bush, “I Am”
Exodus 11	Firstborn stricken
Exodus 12	Passover
Exodus 20	Ten Commandments
Exodus 24	Blood of the Covenant Confirms Israel