

WEEK 8

BIBLE PROJECT

VISION TO PRODUCE BLESSING

Genesis 12-50

BIG IDEAS: TOOLS OF BLESSING involve the identity of the BLESSED PEOPLE.
Those tools are GEOGRAPHIC, CULTURAL AND GENELOGICAL EXCEPTIONALISM.



THOSE TOOLS ARE A MEANS, NOT A GOAL OR END.

WHAT IS THE GOAL? GOD'S PROJECT

BIG IDEA: 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.

BIG IDEA: Required is a people set apart: an EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE

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.**



Why? Only God knows.

But the certainty 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
Gen 17. 6b

BIG IDEA: Being **EXCEPTIONAL** requires becoming different and being distinct—special, set apart, odd.

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/GENEOLOGICAL DISTINCTIVENESS.**

LOT AND SODOM & GOMORRAH—lesson in being different.

- 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: Three boundaries create exceptionalism.

1. Geographic
2. Cultural
3. Genealogical

1. Geographic

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

But even 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.



2. Cultural: it is essential not to get mixed into the other peoples because the distinction in spiritual and moral practices will be lost.

Intramariage v intermarriage

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^[b] 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 Beeri 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.

3. 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

ABRAHAM	LOT
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 Mel; gives bread	
Gn 14.21-24 refuses booty of Sodom king	
ISAAC	ISHMAEL
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
JACOB	ESAU
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	
JUDAH	OTHER SONS
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, 28 _____

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 and all creatures therefore live in blessedness/paradise and in fellowship with their Creator.*

Assignment for week 8—

Read Exodus 21-40.

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

Read again Gen. 18: 16-19:29

Carefully review Genesis 12-50

As you re-read make lists in writing of the following themes. This is to be a written assignment and will be collected next week or the following week.

- Promise of a land, eg. Gen 12: 7
- Promise of blessing, eg Gen 12:2
- Promise of future generations/offspring, eg Gen 15:5
- Insistence to be an exceptional people, eg. Gen 24: 3-4

MARKERS:

Leviticus 1	Offerings/substitution pictured
Leviticus 10	Priests under discipline
Leviticus 11	Kosher food
Leviticus 16	Day of Atonement/scapegoat
Leviticus 17	Life is in the blood
Leviticus 25	Sabbatical year and year of Jubilee

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