

Turning Point in God's Dealings (Part 2)

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Preacher: Willard Lyons

[0 : 0 0] Last week in Genesis, end of chapter 11 and chapter 12, we were talking about the delay that Abraham had going into the land of Canaan, the land that God was going to take him to.

It was because of his father Terah going with him, and that was against God's command to Abram. Again, it wasn't until Terah died that Abram was able to go into the land.

Again, speculation, don't know for sure how long they were in Haran, but there was quite a lengthy time. You can see something in the passage tonight that gives us more indication of that.

And so now Terah has died, you remember. Abram's now ready to go into the land of Canaan. So in verses 2 and 3 then of chapter 12 of Genesis, remember Scripture said in verse 1, Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.

And verses 2 and 3 now. And I will make of thee a great nation. I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, curse him that curseth thee, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

[1 : 3 9] So now, after that lengthy time of waiting in Haran, Abram's now departing to go into Canaan with the idea of trusting God to guide him, do with him whatever it is God desires to do, and give Abram the ability to follow what God says and where he shows him to go.

And that was going to be what happens now. And so in consequence of that, God gives Abram direction and shows him where he was to go. Now, also, Abram now has re-announced all physical ties, if you will, all natural ties of family, country, and so forth, except for his wife and close family. Now, so as a result of that then, God does something else. Again, here's a good picture for us to always remember. God speaks, we respond.

God shows us something else, we respond. God will not show us anything new until we respond to what he's already said or told us or shown us.

Amen? Okay, that's a principle to always keep in mind. Now, so if we want to follow God completely, we want God's complete will satisfied in our life, we've got to respond to him when he speaks to us or when he shows us what he wants us to do and so forth.

[3 : 1 0] So, he now gives Abram tremendous promises again in verses 2 and 3. Now, he began by saying to him, I will make of thee a great nation.

I will bless thee, make thy name great, thou shalt be a blessing. Now, I want you to take notice of something here. In the first aspect of that, the first part of the promise, I will make of thee a great nation.

A great nation. Singular. All right? Important there because we see what God is beginning to develop here through what he's going to do with Abram.

Four elements to the blessing now. He's going to increase Abraham to a numerous people. That's the great nation, if you will. And, of course, we know that great nation becomes the nation of Israel. Now, secondly, he said, I'll bless thee. I'm going to give to you blessings, both material and spiritual blessings or prosperity, if you will.

[4 : 1 3] Now, there's the first prosperity gospel, but it's given by God. Okay? All right. Yeah. Now, so material and spiritual prosperity.

I will make thy name great. Now, always remember, anything God does, he has a purpose in doing. All right? He has a purpose for doing that.

I'm going to make your name great, Abram. Now, it's not for Abram's sake. It's because of what he's going to do through him.

He's going to exalt the name of Abraham. In other words, to a place of honor and glory. And then he was to be the appointment, to be the possessor and dispenser of blessing.

Notice what he says. I'll make your name great. Thou shalt be a blessing. So, he was not only to receive the blessing of God, as he mentioned in the first part of the verse, but he was to be a source here, if you will.

[5 : 17] That element through which God would bless. He'll be a blessing. So, the medium of God to bless others. Now, notice if you will.

You will be a blessing. There's something else that that shows us here. All right? Talking to Abram. What does it show?

Let me ask you. What do you see in that? What do you suppose he's showing Abram and showing us as well here? Not only will you be blessed by God, but you will be a blessing.

You'll be the source of blessing. Realize when he says that. Abram, you're the one that's going to be the blessing.

All right? Everything from this point forward, everything that God does is all tied up in Abram.

[6 : 18] Think of that. Everything he does here that we see in Scripture is all tied up in Abram. That's what he is.

Now, so, the blessing and cursing of men, which he goes on to say in verse 3, I'll bless them that bless thee, curse them that curse thee.

What God does with each of those is dependent upon their attitude toward Abram. All right? Everything's tied up in Abram.

And when people deal with Abram from this point forward, however they respond to him, whatever their attitude is toward them, will depend upon what God does with them or to them.

All right? Yeah. Even to this day. Amen? Amen? I think down deep inside in the earthiness of my life, there is a sense of vengeance.

[7 : 36] Amen? So, don't do anything to me. No. Now, what I mean by that is, you know, you see what God's going to do here. You look at how people, nations, kingdoms are treating Israel today.

All right? What's God going to do with them and to them? So, what do we preachers do when we see them? We'll have a ringside seat, by the way.

Yeah. When we go to be with the Lord. We'll just look down over heaven and sing, na, na, na, na, na, na. Told you so. Amen? That's my vengeance part. Yeah. Yeah.

No. But that's the thing. However God deals with nations, people, churches, kingdoms, whatever, is all dependent upon their attitude and response to Abram and his seed, if you will.

So, consequently, the nation of Israel. So, that's what makes me cringe whenever I see parts of our own country rebelling against what we're wanting to do to help Israel.

[8 : 46] So, it all lies in Abram. I bless them that bless thee. Curse them that curse thee. All right? Now, and in thee, Abram, all the families of the earth will be blessed.

Take notice of something here. Someone has made a note of this. Said, when he said, I'll bless them that bless thee, curse them that curseth thee. Two different words. All right? Curseth.

Him that curseth thee. The word curseth is a word that means to treat as light or little or to despise. So, it's the idea of blasphemous cursing on the part of a man.

Anybody that does that toward Abraham, God will curse. A different word, curse here. This curse is a judicial cursing on the part of God.

Now, something significant here. Take note with me, if you will. I will bless them that bless thee. I will curse him that curseth thee. When it comes to the blessing, notice he phrases it in the plural.

[9 : 51] I will bless them that bless thee. But when it comes to God cursing them, it is, I will curse him that curseth thee.

The idea here is grace seems to see more that would receive grace than the cursing. All right? It's the picture there. So, that's good to know, is it not? It doesn't look like it from where we sit in the generation today. But that's what we see there. And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

In thee, Abram. He was not just to become a mediator, if you will, but the source of the blessing for all. Now, when he says all the families of the earth, literally it's all the families of the ground, points to something here.

Go to Genesis chapter 10, just a moment. Period of history is beginning after the flood of Noah's day. Genesis chapter 10.

[11 : 00] Verse number 1. Now, these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And unto them were sons born after the flood.

All right? So, you see the one family here, the family of Noah and his son, Shem, Ham, Japheth. Now, God talks about here to Abram, in Abram, all the families of the earth, of the ground, will be blessed.

In verse 5 of Genesis 10, you know, between verse 1 and verse 5, you kind of get a genealogy of the guys. All right? But verse 5 said, but these, in that genealogy, by these were the isles or the coasts of the Gentiles divided in their lands.

Everyone after his tongue, after their families, in their nations. So, it pictures the idea of God dividing, splitting up, if you will, that one family.

All right? Become the nations. Now, in that then, he said, all of these will be blessed in Abram.

[12:21] Now, we'll see what he's going to do there in just a minute. Now, when he said, all the families of the earth, the earth is the ground that was cursed by God. Genesis chapter 3, verses 17 and 18.

Unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, of course, this goes back to the Garden of Eden, and has eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it, cursed is the ground for thy sake.

In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.

Now, here's another question for you. With those things in mind here, the ground being cursed, the earth being cursed, if you will, families that were one, now divided, split apart, and everything lying, everything that's going to transpire, lying in Abram.

And God said to Abram, it's through you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. What's God going to ultimately do through Abram? When it's all said and done, God will do and complete what he originally began in the Garden of Eden.

[13:54] Man without sin, earth without a curse. Okay? And that's what we're going to see in eternity. All right?

We're going to do it in the new heaven and new earth. You can look at it there. Again, bringing unity to the families of the earth that have been now divided, and removing the curse from the earth, from the ground.

All right? Now, so all of this, all of this work that God's going to do, bringing the nations together, the times and places designed of God for the salvation of man, all lie in the call of Abram.

And that's because it's through him that Messiah is going to come, Redeemer is going to come. Verses 4 and 5.

So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him. And Lot went with him, and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

[15:01] And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran.

And they went forth into the land of Canaan, into the land of Canaan they came. Notice the phrase here. They're going into Canaan with all the substance they had gathered, and the souls they had gotten in Haran.

So they've been there a while. They've garnered some things. So they've been there a while. That's just a picture we see there. All right? Now, so Abram now is finally fulfilling the call of God.

I told somebody, a pair of partners we had years ago at the association, we'd meet together every week. We would talk and discuss things beforehand.

And I'd always use the phrase incomplete obedience. Okay? You know, especially when you look at Abram here. He left Ur the Chaldees, went to Haran.

[16:03] So his 500-mile trip, we see that he's on his way there, but Dad was there. So he didn't leave his dad. Dad took him. And so we see that as incomplete obedience.

And one of the guys just scratched his head and said, wait a minute. Obedience is obedience, and anything other than that is disobedience. Realize something.

The gateway to God's blessings is obedience. If you want God's blessings, you have to obey him.

And so Abram here obeys the Lord as he now has gone into Canaan, or is on his way into Canaan, and letting God do what he wants to there.

Go into 1 Samuel chapter 15 with that thought. That the gateway to God's blessing is obedience. 1 Samuel chapter 15. This is the passage where Samuel is dealing with King Saul of Israel.

All right? And Saul's incomplete obedience. You remember what happened here? He was going to go and fight Amalek and all of his people, and God told him, when you go do that, destroy them.

[17:23] Destroy all of them. And so when they went in there to do that, what happened here? Saul noticed how nice the sheep were.

All right? So he took them back with him. And took Agag as well. And Samuel meets him.

And Saul says to him, I've done everything that God told me to do. And I love this. Samuel then said, Well then, what's this bleeding of the sheep I hear?

Yeah. What is that? And he said, Oh, the people. The people brought them, because they thought they were good. They brought them to offer sacrifices unto the Lord. All right? To justify all of that. But notice what he says in verses 22 and 23. Samuel tells Saul that God is now rendering the kingdom from him because of his disobedience.

[18:23] All right? And then he says in verses 22 and 23, Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?

Behold, behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken unto the fat of rams. Now catch that again. God called for sacrifices.

All right? But he tells Saul here to obey as better than any sacrifice you can bring, and to listen to what I say, even better than the fat of rams that burn on the altar.

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Now, because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he also hath rejected thee from being king.

Now notice, rebellion, of course, rebellion we could label as the opposite of obedience. All right?

Rebellion refers to the stubbornness from which rebellion comes.

[19:39] You think about that. Rebellion stems from stubbornness. And so, God says, it's worse to be that.

And God will honor obedience rather than rebellion. All right? Now, so, rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, stubbornness as the sin of iniquity, and idolatry.

Now notice something here, if you will. Witchcraft, divination, incantations, familiar spirits. All right? Those type things.

Now, look with me if you will. In Deuteronomy chapter 18, verses 10 through 14, God says to Israel, I'll let you get there.

There shall not be found among you anyone that maketh his sons or his daughters to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consultant with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

[21:00] For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord. Now notice that. Anybody that does that is an abomination to the Lord.

Because of these abominations, the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God. For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearken unto observers of times, and unto diviners.

But as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee to do so. No familiar spirits. Why is that?

It's all demonic. All right? There shall be no Ouija boards in heaven. Amen? Oh, come on now, preacher. Yeah, you think of that.

Think about that a minute. I know we used to play that as kids. You know, some adults did. But in reality, if any of that works, which some of it may, it's got to be demonic.

[22:03] All right? It's got to be. And so, anything other than what the Spirit of God directs is not of God.

It's satanic. All right? Yeah. We walked according to the course of this world, according to the Spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.

Disobedience. And the whole picture there was that before we got saved, our lives, our minds were controlled by Satan. All right? Now, maybe not Satan directly, but the influence of the nature of sin, which has its control.

All right? So, that's the reason that God says that. Isaiah chapter 1, in verses 11 through 20, to what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord?

I am full of the burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs or of he goats.

[23:12] When you come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to tread my cords? Bring no more vain oblations. Incense is an abomination unto me.

The new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot await with. It is iniquity, even the solemn meetings. Your new moons, your appointed feasts, my soul hateth, they are troubled unto me.

I am weary to bear them. When you spread forth your hands, that's in prayer, I will hide mine eyes from you. Yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear.

Your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

[24 : 18] Aren't you glad for that verse? Amen. Now, if God appointed sacrificial offerings as a means of worship, it's a picture of worship.

Why is it here that he says, I don't want any more of that? Why is that? They are being disobedient. All right? Any form of worship without a life and heart of obedience is unacceptable to the Lord. Amen? That's why our obedience is so important. Obeying what God says, what he shows us in his word, living the word of God.

If we do that and we're obedient to God in that, he'll accept our worship. But if we're not, he won't accept it.

[25 : 20] He will not accept that. All right? Now, so, Abram carefully now follows the call of God.

Now, note, gentlemen, he was 75 years old when he started this journey. Are you ready? Now, so he leaves with his wife, with Lot, with all that they possessed of the servants and cattle.

Verse 6, and Abram passed through the land under the place of Shishim, under the plain of Morah, and the Canaanite was then in the land.

Now, notice that God's taking him in here to show him the land. the Canaanite was in the land. So, Abram cannot and does not immediately possess the land.

He just travels through that that God had promised to show him in verse 1 of chapter 12. Now, this land was not uninhabited and not without a possessor because the Canaanite was there.

[26 : 38] So, Abram was only a wanderer but he was a wanderer in faith in that land that God will now in just a few moments in the next verse give to him.

Now, with that in mind, we don't have time to open the door here but next week we'll go to Hebrews chapter 11 to see what the writer of the Hebrews says about Abram in Canaan.

Amen? Let's pray. Father, we are grateful and thankful to you for your love and grace and your goodness to us and for what you've shown us in your word tonight.

Father, I just pray that you will continue to impress upon our hearts the seriousness of obedience to you that nothing else in our lives will be acceptable by you unless we're obedient unless we obey.

So, Lord, enable us by the power of the Spirit of God to make that application to our lives of that particular need and so we know then we can enjoy your promises your blessings as we continue to be obedient to you.

[27 : 57] Thank you again for these that are here this evening for your continued blessing upon them and your love for you and your word and we'll thank you for it in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.