It's Not About Joseph

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[0:00] Tonight we're beginning a study in Genesis that is going to focus on the life of Joseph.

! However, these lessons are going to be a lot different than the typical Joseph study. At least they'll be different than the typical way that we've been taught Joseph in Sunday school or vacation Bible school. See if this sounds a little familiar to you in the way that Joseph's life is usually summarized. We know that Joseph was the good son. His brothers were the bad sons who were jealous of him. And when Joseph obeyed his father's request to go check on the brothers, the bad brothers saw an opportunity to get rid of him and threw him into a pit. And then they sold him into slavery. Then it goes on to tell us Joseph's story didn't end there. He became a slave for a high-ranking Egyptian official and was soon put in charge of everything in the official's house except for that official's wife. But that wife was a bad lady as well. She wanted an inappropriate relationship with Joseph. And when Joseph refused because he didn't want to sin against God, the sinful lady falsely accused him of rape, and poor Joseph was thrown not into a pit this time, but into a prison. There's still more though. Remember that Joseph found favor with the prison official and was put in charge of everything in the prison. And there he met two prisoners who learned that Joseph could interpret dreams. And one of those prisoners eventually was released from prison back to the service of the Egyptian Pharaoh himself. And when Pharaoh had a bad dream and wanted to know the meaning of it, the former prisoner told Pharaoh that he knew about this other prisoner who could interpret dreams, and Joseph got summoned from prison. We know that Joseph interpreted the dream, and Pharaoh made Joseph second in command over the entire nation of Egypt. Of course, the Sunday school version doesn't end there either. We know that Joseph eventually has a reunion with his brothers and his father. And that's when the teacher often says that the lesson is to be like Joseph. Do the right thing, stay faithful to God, and God will reward you with fortune and fame. And in fact, if you look out there on the internet, a common title for a series on Joseph is From the Pit to the Palace. That's a moralistic Aesop's Fables kind of approach to the story.

But is that really what God wants us to learn? Well, if the answer to that question is yes, then Willard can begin his next study next week, because we've covered Joseph in about three minutes or less here. You probably guessed, though, from the title of this lesson, being It's Not About Joseph, this is not going to be the only thing we can learn about Joseph. We can learn much more from the story of Joseph than what we traditionally get in Sunday school. And the title of It's Not About Joseph also could apply to the entire study. Said another way, Joseph's life and his actions are not the main point of the story. We can learn good moral and faith lessons from Joseph, but if those lessons are all that we get from these chapters, we've missed a lot about what God wants us to see.

This study itself is going to be a different type of study than what we typically do. We normally take a small section of scripture and break it down into a lot of detail. These lessons from the final chapters in Genesis will cover more verses and highlight the major themes.

[3:50] I've already gone out on a limb a little bit by saying that the typical Sunday school summary misses the main point of the story. As we get into these lessons, be like the Bereans and check whether the Bible supports what I'm telling you. We've yet to get to Acts chapter 17 in Pastor Mike's study, but in Acts 17, Paul and Silas arrive in Berea. And Acts 17, 11 says of the Bereans, Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica. They received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

If I say something different than what you've heard concerning the Joseph story, make sure that whatever I say is backed up by scripture. Not only will that hold me accountable, it also makes you at least partly at fault if these lessons aren't any good. So you share in the blame as well. But before we go deeper into the study, I need to acknowledge the main source of this introductory

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material, and it's probably going to be the main source of future lessons as well.
Much of this material actually comes from a book by Voddie Bauckham called Joseph and the Gospel of Many Colors, Reading an Old Story in a New Way. The Joseph story actually begins in Genesis chapter 37 and continues all the way to the end of the book in chapter 50. So if the story starts in chapter 37, what do we know?
Well, the simple answer is that there have been 36 other chapters that have happened to get us to this point. And then when you actually get into the story, some people argue that chapter 38 has nothing to do with the Joseph story because Joseph isn't mentioned there. We'll talk about that objection when we get there, but for now, remember that Joseph is not the main point of the story. We're going to break tonight's lesson up into four sections, but they're not the typical sections for a lesson. They're more signposts of how we can look at this study as we go through the life of Joseph. So we really need to look at what's happened in the first 36 chapters to get the context of the Joseph story. And that's the first point on your narrative. That's the context. So now we're going to go ahead and read the verses. Let's look at Genesis 1, 1 to 36, 43.
[6:27] Thank you, Alonda. Took me a little bit too seriously. You know, we're not going to actually read all of those verses in one shot, but we will hit selected verses in that passage to help set the context. Also remember that we covered several of the early Genesis chapters during Tom Holland's comments on the key scripture study. So we have those notes as well. The first and most obvious way to divide Genesis is by taking note of 11 markers that Moses gives us in the book. And those are called toldots. And toldot is the Hebrew word for generations, genealogy, or family line. The English translation that we see most often is these are the generations of. And this phrase occurs 11 times in Genesis. And when we see that, it's alerts us to the fact that we're about to make a pivotal transition. The book of Genesis has a prologue that goes from 1, 1 to chapter 2, verse 3. And then it has 10 episodes. The person named in those episodes is not necessarily the main character, but is the beginning point of that section. And then that section also closes with the person's death. Just in case you're wondering, when we get through all 11 uses of the phrase, these are the generations of, you'll see why we say that Moses used the phrase 11 times, even though he only had 10 sections after the prologue. So we are going to look at all of the verses real briefly that start with, these are the generations of. And after we get through them, you'll also see one of the reasons why we can be confident that Joseph is not the main point of his story. The first of the 11 divisions begins in Genesis 2, 4, and it is the generations of creation. Genesis 2, 4 says, these are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created in the day that the Lord made the earth and the heavens. So this is the only one that references something other than the generations of a person. To see the second one, we have to go to Genesis 5, 1, and that one refers to the generations of Adam. Genesis 5, 1 says, this is the book of the generations of

Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. The third one comes along in Genesis 6, 9, and it covers the generations of Noah. Genesis 6, 9 says, these are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. The fourth begins in Genesis 10, 1, and covers the generations of Noah. That one says, these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood. The next one comes along in Genesis 11, 10, and that's the fifth one, and it has the generations of Shem by himself. It says, these are the generations of Shem. When Shem was 100 years old, he followed Archipashad two years after the flood. The sixth section begins in Genesis 11, 27 with the generations of Terah. And of course, we know Terah as the father of Abram. So here is Genesis 11, 27. It says, now these are the generations of Terah. Terah fathered Abram,
Nahor, Nahor, Nahor, and Haran, and Haran fathered Lot. The seventh section then goes in Genesis chapter 25, verse 12 with the generations of Ishmael. Genesis 25, 12 says, these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's servant, bore to Abraham. The eighth section is just a few verses later in verse 19 of chapter 25, and it covers the generations of Isaac. It says, these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son, Abraham fathered Isaac. The ninth section begins in Genesis 36, 1, and it covers the generations of Esau. And it simply says, these are the generations of Esau, that is Edom. Esau is unique because he's the only person to have his generations mentioned twice. The next time he's mentioned is in Genesis 36, 9, and it says, these are the generations of
Esau, the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir. Esau being mentioned twice is why we can say that Moses used the phrase we translate as, these are the generations of 11 times, even

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though he only had 10 sections. And then the 10th and final section begins in Genesis 37, 2, and it says, these are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being 17 years old, was pastoring the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives, and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. So to recap the 10 sections, the 10 sections are the heavens and the earth, Adam, Noah, Noah's sons as a group, Noah's son Shem by himself, Terah, Ishmael, Isaac, Esau, and Jacob. Do you notice somebody missing from that list? Joseph is not on that list. He is mentioned prominently in verse 2 of chapter 37, but Moses says the section is about the generations of Jacob.
So Moses telling us here by his mile marker that Joseph is not the main point of the story. The second way to divide Genesis is to focus on three themes that Moses uses throughout the book. [12:52] And these themes involve the land, the seed, and the covenant. Vodibachum says, like changing seasons that mark the pattern of time, the themes of land, seed, and covenant appear again and again in the book of Genesis to mark the progression of redemptive history. And just as seasons are sometimes more or less pronounced, so these themes arrive on the scene, sometimes with the fury of a heat wave or a blizzard, and other times with the subtlety of an autumn rain. Nevertheless, they are always there, and they are always reminding us of God's redemptive work. That last sentence is not a throwaway sentence. It's something that we need to keep in mind as we go through the study. The things that we have in Genesis are there to always remind us of God's redemptive work. And if we don't see that, then we miss one of the main points of Genesis.

We're actually going to look at those three other ways to break up the book of Genesis, starting with the land, and the land is your second fill-in there.
We know how Genesis begins. Back in Genesis 1-1, it says, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. So with just that one line, Moses introduces God as the eternal, omnipotent, sovereign creator of all things.
Moses also introduces one of the principal themes running through the entire book. He's already talking about the land in the first verse. And it sounds very basic to say, but the land is where God's creative work takes place.
It's the place where God makes and meets man, and it's also the substance out of which he makes man. Land is extremely important in Genesis and throughout the Bible.
[14:51] As we just saw, the land is the subject of the first of the 11 sections, and the land is the place where the story of redemptive history comes to life.

We know that like man, the land suffers the effects and the consequences of the fall. But also like man, the land is subject to God's mercy, promise, and providential care.
As God redeems man, he is also going to redeem the land. And moreover, there's a special relationship between the men God redeems and the land that God restores.
After Adam's fall into sin, we know that his relationship with the land changed. Listen to these verses from Genesis chapter 3. These are verses 17 through 19 of that chapter.
God said these words to Adam. Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, you shall not eat of it.
[15:52] Cursed is the ground because of you. In pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the plants of the field.

By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken, for you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Staying in that same section, but going down to verses 22 through 24, we see that Adam and Eve are no longer welcome in the Garden of Eden. Starting with verse 22, it says, Then the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.
Therefore, the Lord God sent him out of the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the very east of the Garden of Eden, he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.
So just like that, the perfect, pristine environment that Adam knew was gone. And from the point of his eviction from the Garden of Eden on, he would strive to recreate that which he had known, but the land would be against him at every turn.
[17:12] The theme of the land continues in the generations of Noah, this time both negatively and positively. Negatively, the land is seen as the location of mankind's great sin.

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And the idea of man's multiplying on the face of the land is a positive expression that's carried over from the dominion mandate in Genesis chapter 1, but as a direct result of the fall, even the multiplication is sinful.
Listen to Genesis chapter 6, verses 5 through 8. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals, and creeping things, and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.
But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. We know that God used the flood to wipe out everybody from the land except for Noah's family.
[18:26] And after the flood, the land plays a significant role in the life of the patriarchs. Listen to the call of Abram in Genesis chapter 12, verses 1 through 3.

Starting with verse 1 of Genesis 12, it says, Now the Lord said to Abram, Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.
And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse.
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Abraham eventually claims a portion of his inheritance whenever he purchases land in the promised land to bury Sarah.
And Abraham later joins his wife in their burial place, and Isaac and Rebekah join them, as does Jacob. But they are there after they die.
[19:29] They, or at least their remains, are certainly in the land God promised, but their descendants still aren't. So that's some of the ways that we see the theme of the land running through Genesis.

Now let's talk about how we see the theme of the seed running through Genesis. So the seed is your next blink. The means by which everything in the earth multiplies, including man, is the seed.
Just to look at a few occasions of that seed, look at Genesis 1, verses 11 through 13 to start. And God said, Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind and it was so.
The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good, and there was evening and there was morning the third day.
Then we mentioned Genesis 1, verses 28 and 29 earlier, but let's look at those verses. They say, And God blessed them, talking about Adam and Eve, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.
[21:00] And God said, Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.

The command to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it assumes the role of the seed in multiplication. And the very next verse reiterates that principle, but the real significance of the seed comes into play two chapters later when we see the interaction between man and fruit, the one that leads to the most important statement about seed in the entire Bible.
When Eve, tempted by the serpent, eats the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil and gives the fruit to Adam, the entire biblical narrative changes forever.
God curses the serpent and promises that the serpent's demise and man's redemption will come about through a process that relies on the principle of multiplication and seed.
I'm sure you knew where we were going even without the reference on your handout, but look at Genesis 3.15. Speaking to the serpent, God says, I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring.
[22:16] He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel. As you just heard, the English Standard Version translates the Hebrew word there as offspring, but if you have the ESV, you'll notice a footnote stating that the word literally is seed.

So we could read that verse as I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.
And we know that's really the first summary of the gospel in the Bible. So the promise here sets in motion a conflict that we're going to see starting in the next chapter of Genesis and all the way

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through the rest of redemptive history.
For proof of that, here are just a few examples. In Genesis 4, Cain is identified as the seed of the serpent and he kills Abel, the seed of the woman.
Moving on to Exodus, even, Pharaoh orders that Hebrew boy babies be killed trying to stop the seed. Skipping to the New Testament, King Herod tries to extinguish the godly seed by ordering that Hebrew boy babies and young boy toddlers be killed.
[23:28] And then, even into Revelation, we find these words in Revelation chapter 12, verses 3 and 4. In Revelation 12, 3 and 4, it says, Another sign appeared in heaven.

Behold, a great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and on its head seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth.
And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child, he might devour it. The principle of the fall and the seed is also the message of redemption. The promised seed is not the product of the fall. He is the answer to the fall. Because of the promised seed, we have hope. And as we trace the promised seed's line throughout Genesis, we see the first glimpse of that hope as God restores the godly line through Seth.
He then preserves it through the flood in Noah and his sons, and then he expands it to a nation through the patriarchs. To copy Pastor Mike's style, we could really summarize the main idea of this lesson like this.
[24:42] Throughout Joseph, including the account of Joseph himself, or throughout Genesis, including the account of Joseph himself, God shows that he is faithful to preserve the line of the seed who will redeem his people.

So once again, God shows that he is faithful to preserve the line of the seed who will redeem God's people. The promise of the seed also shows us another reason why we can be confident that Joseph is not really the main point of the Joseph narrative.
The seed ultimately comes from the tribe of Judah, not from Joseph. Listen to Revelation 5, verses 1 through 5. John says, Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals.
And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it.
And I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or look into it. And one of the elders said to me, Weep no more. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.
[26:03] And of course, who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah they're referencing there? Obviously, we know that is Jesus. And before we leave the theme of the seed, check out an interesting pattern that Moses left behind when he traced the Lion of the Seed through the eleven generation statements we looked at earlier.

In some cases, multiple sons of the same father have their own toldot. Noah's sons are mentioned as a group, but then Shem alone has a generation statement.
Then two sons of Abram are mentioned, Ishmael and Isaac. And then finally, two sons of Isaac are mentioned, Esau and Jacob. So, do you see a pattern there?
Each time Moses gives multiple sons their own generation statements, the son through whom the line of the seed passes gets listed last. So, Moses is cluing us in on which son is going to be the one that's the most important, at least in terms of passing on the seed throughout all the generations.
The last theme we see throughout Genesis is the theme of the covenant. So, the covenant is your next fill-in there. In its simplest form, a covenant formally binds two parties together in a relationship on the basis of a mutual personal commitment, and it includes consequences for breaking the commitment.
[27:33] God makes this kind of covenant with a group of people by covenanting with one who represents them. And we see several covenants throughout Genesis. The first covenant is the covenant that God makes with Adam, and this covenant is often referred to as either the Adamic covenant or the covenant of works, and it comes along in Genesis 2.

Verses 15 through 17 of Genesis 2 say, The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, You may surely eat

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of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.
You may not have thought about this before, but the word covenant is never mentioned there, and some theologians argue that because the covenant word itself is never mentioned, it really doesn't qualify to be a covenant.
Others say that no covenant exists here because covenants only have to deal with redemption. But listen to how John MacArthur answers these objections. He says, The thing itself can be present even if the ordinary word identifying it is not.
2 Samuel 7, verses 4 through 17 say nothing about a covenant, but several verses in Psalm 89 all use the term to describe God's promise to David.
[29:03] The same happens with Hosea 6-7 which refers to a covenant with Adam. Also, Genesis 9, verses 1 through 17 describe Noah in terms that clearly echo earlier verses explicitly using the word covenant.

Noah is a kind of new Adam, a covenant representative. And then he says, Finally, there is no evidence that biblical covenants are limited to the sphere of redemption.
The term simply describes the formal binding together of two parties in a relationship on the basis of mutual personal commitment with consequences for keeping or breaking the covenant.
So getting back to our text itself, we already know that Noah was the victim of how Adam broke that first covenant in Genesis 3. So let's go back to Genesis 3 and look at how Adam broke that covenant.
We're going to look at verses 1 through 7 of Genesis 3. It says, Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.
[30:08] He said to the woman, Did God actually say, You shall not eat of any tree in the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.

But the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.
So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate.
Then the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. That's bad news, but we'll soon see some good news.
In fact, we'll soon see the good news and we already know what that is because we've looked at verse 15 of this chapter already. Adam's sin gives God an opportunity to demonstrate an equally important principle related to the covenants God makes.
[31:23] Although the breaking of covenants with God results in God's judgment, God always provides hope. We already have covered the hope that Genesis 3.15 provides and that hope comes just a few verses after Adam's sin and like we mentioned, Genesis 3.15 is the first summary of the gospel.

Keep in mind that one sentence there, although the breaking of covenants with God results in God's judgment, God always provides hope. And we'll see that as we go through these lessons.
The next covenant is God's covenant with Noah and it's a deadly covenant. Once again, though, we see the hope after judgment. Listen to what God says shortly after the worldwide flood subsided. These are verses 8-17 of Genesis 9. Starting with verse 8, it says, Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark.
It is for every beast of the earth I establish my covenant with you that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.
[32:46] And God said, This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you for all future generations. I have set my bow in the cloud and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again

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become a flood to destroy all flesh.
When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth. And God said to Noah, This is the sign of the covenant that I establish between me and all flesh that is on the earth.
Did you notice how many times God uses the word covenant in these verses? It almost feels like I read the verses twice because they're repetitive.
But he wanted to make sure we got the point. Do you think that just perhaps covenants are important to God? Vodibachum says this, he says, The most infamous, awesome, and terrible expression of God's wrath against man in the entire Bible is followed by one of the most explicit promises or covenants in Scripture.
[34:08] How dare we attempt to understand Genesis or the life of Joseph without taking this into account? As a side note, the verses we just read about the covenant with Noah and his sons show that the flood was indeed a worldwide flood.

God says in several different ways, Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth. We know that localized floods happen nearly every day.
Global floods do not. This brings us to the most famous covenant in Genesis, and it's the one directly related to Joseph. It's the covenant with Abram.
So flip over to Genesis 12, 1 through 3 again. We read it once already in the context of the land, but now let's look at it in the context of the covenant.
It says, Now the Lord said to Abram, Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you, and I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing.
[35:17] I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Now we've looked at it in terms of the context of the covenant and the land, but we actually have all three elements of the main points that Moses uses to hang some of the story on.

We see the land, the sea, and the covenant in all of these verses. God sends Abram to go to a land. He promises to bless him with seed or offspring, and he does so by way of making a covenant with him.
So this is why we can say it's a key to interpreting Genesis. As we come to the life of Joseph, we can't forget that his significance is really tied up in the Abrahamic covenant.
covenant. We're going to have to ask ourselves how the Joseph narrative figures into the concept of the covenant that runs so deeply throughout the book of Genesis. And if we understand the themes of the seed, the land, and the covenant, we're going to see Joseph's story through an entirely different light than perhaps we're used to.
More importantly, when we do it this way, when we view Joseph according to the threefold lens that Moses is giving us here, we don't just get a different perspective. It gives us the perspective that God through Moses wants us to have.
[36:41] So as we end tonight's study, let's look again at the Abrahamic covenant and just dig into it a little bit more. Looking at Genesis 12, 1 through 3, notice what God says he will do to fulfill his side of the covenant.

God is speaking to Abraham in these verses and everything God promises to do is preceded by God saying to Abraham, Abraham, I will. And actually, Abraham is still Abram at this point.
So check out all the I will statements. God promises to make Abram a great nation. God promises to bless Abram and to make Abram's name great.
God promises to do that so Abraham will be a blessing and God says that he will bless those who bless Abram or Abraham and curse those who curse Abraham or dishonor him.
So God promises a lot to Abram and in return, what does God expect Abram to do? He really just expects him to go or said another way, I heard somebody say it out there, God simply expects Abram to obey.
[37:51] And that's really where we get to the application point of this lesson. Think about how similar that is to what God expects from us. Consider the Great Commission passage in Matthew 28 verses 18 through 20.

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Starting in Matthew 28, 18 it says, And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.
And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. We can be confident in Jesus' words there because of several reasons, some of which we've touched on tonight.
We've already seen a glimpse of how God worked in Genesis to preserve the line of the promised seed. We know that Jesus is that promised seed. And despite the shortcomings of God's people, he did preserve that seed.
And we've also seen the first instance of the gospel summarized in the Bible. Starting next week, we'll dig deeper into the life of Joseph to see in greater detail how God used Joseph to preserve the line of the seed.
[39:09] Throughout Genesis, including the account of Joseph, God shows that he's faithful to preserve the line of the seed who will redeem God's people. In the meantime, we need to hold fast to the promise of the gospel.

We live in a fallen world now, but for the believer, living in a sinful world is only temporary. If you need proof of that, just remind yourself of these words from the promised seed himself.
I'm going to John 3, 16-18 where Jesus said, For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believed in him should not perish but have eternal life.
For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.
Because we serve a covenant-keeping God, the God who created the land and who preserved the line of his promised seed, we have reason to rejoice and we should be motivated to tell others that good news.
[40:19] And of course, that good news is what we just looked at. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. And starting next week, we'll see how Joseph fits into that picture.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this glimpse tonight of how from the very beginning of time, you've used the land and the seed and the covenant to work your redemptive plan among your people.
open our eyes as we go through this study to have us see what you intended us to see and let us be mindful that when we know the good news, we have an obligation to share it.
Thank you again for what you have done for us. We thank you for the seed that ultimately came to redeem us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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