

Session Three – PATRIARCHS



GOD'S EVERLASTING PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

Sacrifice of Isaac by Caravaggio

Session Three Talk Notes

- I. Introduction: Patriarchs on the Chart
- II. God Calls Abram Out of Ur (Genesis 12)
 - A. Significance of the land
 - B. God's promise to Abraham
 1. Three promises (Genesis 12:1-3)
 2. Problem: childlessness (Genesis 15)
 3. Abraham's faith
 - a. Abraham: our father in the Faith (Galatians 3:7)
 4. The meaning of covenant
- III. Isaac and Ishmael (Genesis 16–22)
 - A. Abraham prepares to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22)
 - B. KEY: Looking for God's lamb
- IV. Jacob and Esau (Genesis 27–36)
 - A. Birthright and blessing

1. Esau sells his birthright
 - a. Esau is a “profane” man (Hebrews 12:16, NAB)
 - b. What is your “lentil soup”?
2. Jacob steals the blessing

B. Exile and marriage

C. Wrestling and name change: “Jacob” to “Israel”

1. **KEY:** Twelve sons become twelve tribes

V. Joseph and Judah (Genesis 37–50)

A. Joseph is sold into slavery

B. Joseph in prison

C. Joseph is raised to power

1. *al ha-bayit*, “over the household”
2. New Testament connection: Peter

D. Judah’s story (Genesis 37): contrast with Joseph

E. Two visits to Egypt

1. Judah’s transformation
2. What they mean for evil, God means for good

VI. Jacob Blesses His Sons (Genesis 49)

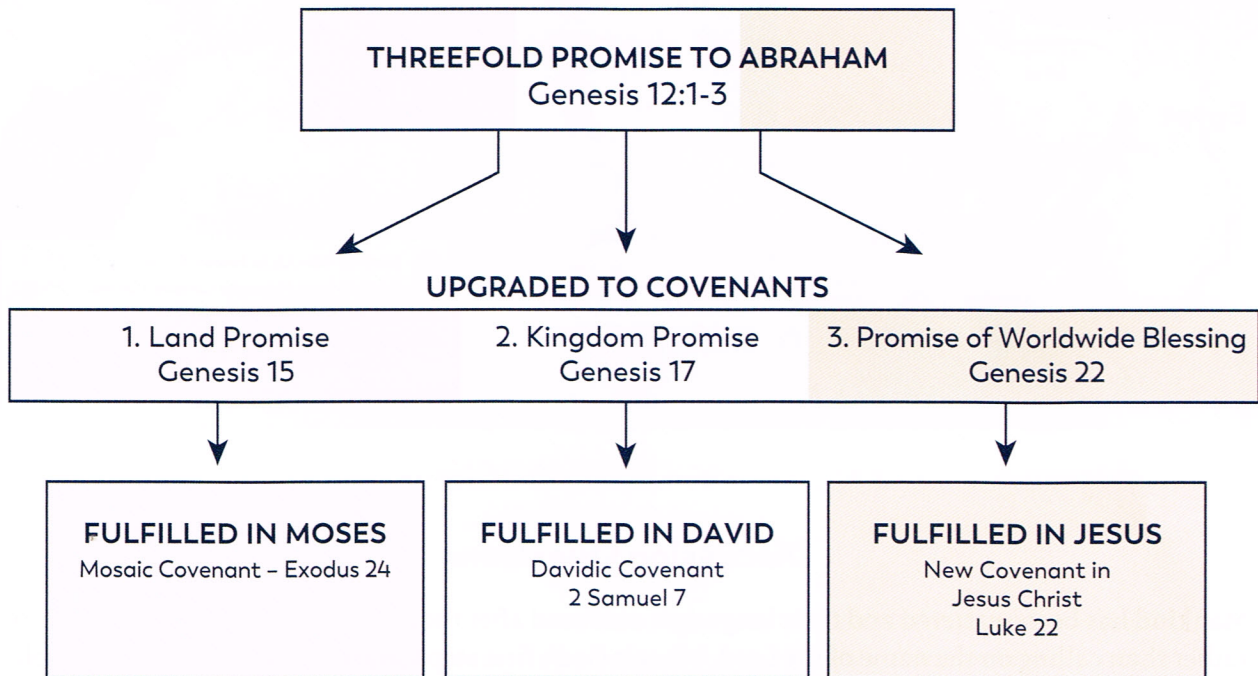
T • A • K • E • A • W • A • Y • S

1. You can believe and trust God.
2. God uses difficult circumstances to do marvelous things.

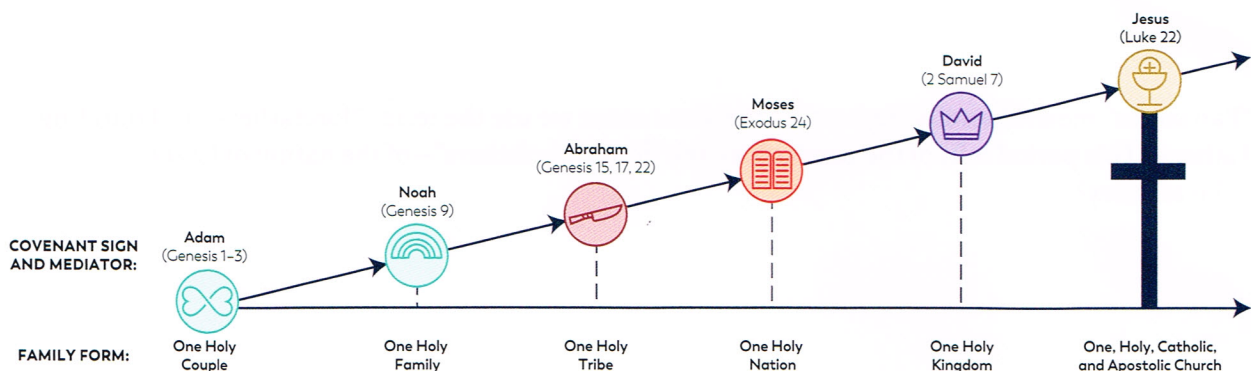
The Covenantal Structure of Salvation History

The charts below diagram the way salvation history unfolded through a series of covenants God made with his people. Adam and Eve were created in a close relationship with God that was shattered at the Fall. This relationship with God would later be imaged by families and bonds of kinship created through covenantal promises. God moved to restore humanity to relationship with himself by means of a series of covenants.

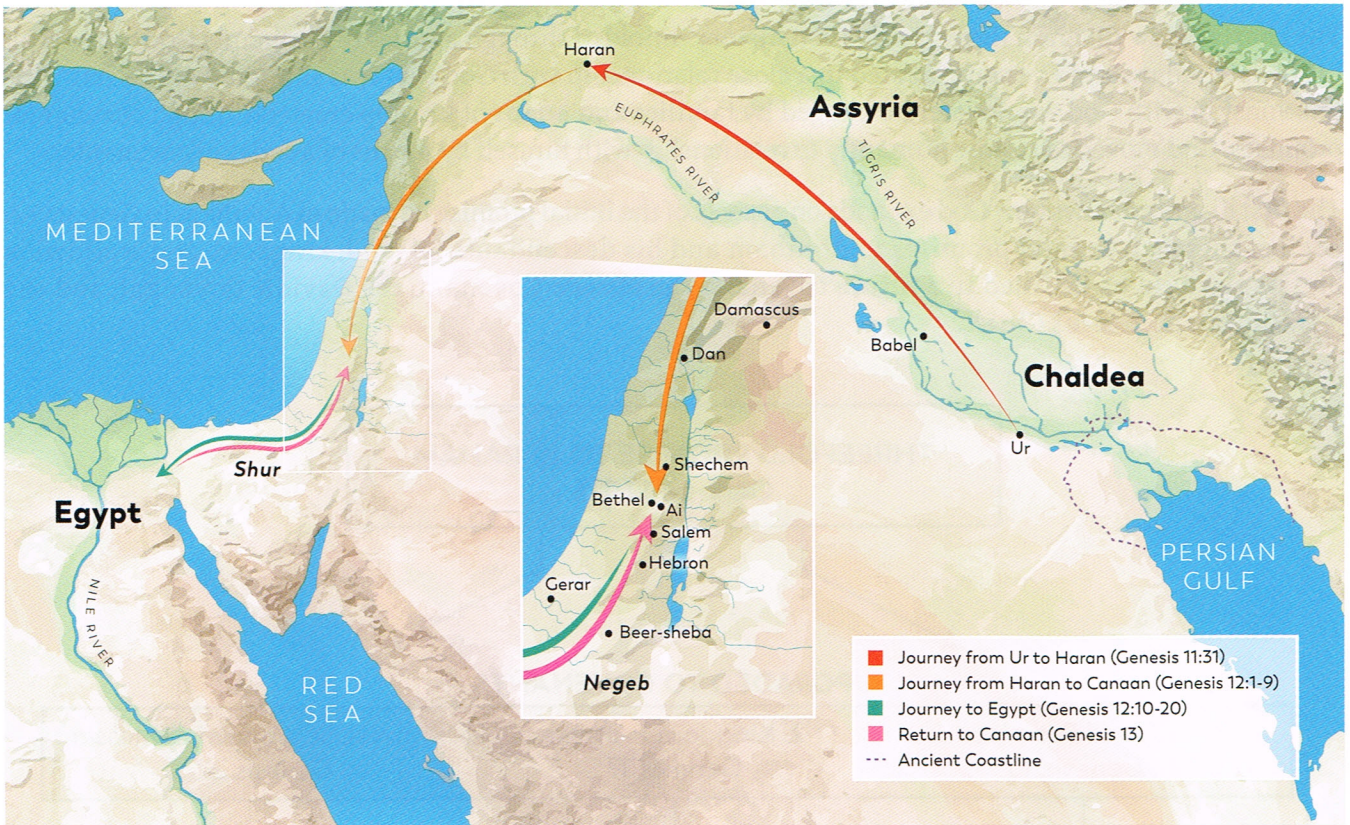
The first diagram shows how God expands on aspects of the initial promise he made to Abraham in Genesis 12. Each of these covenantal promises to Abraham and his descendants (of land, kingdom, and worldwide blessing) would be fulfilled in a future covenant: the Mosaic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant in Jesus Christ.



The following diagram shows the progressive growth of God’s family from “One Holy Couple” to “One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church,” illustrated by means of these same covenants.



The Journeys of Abraham



Discussion Questions

1. Mankind has been scattered and their languages confused after they tried to build a name for themselves rather than calling on the name of the Lord. What is God's first step toward restoring them to himself? (See Genesis 12:1-13.)
2. "Patriarchs" means literally "fathers" in the same sense we use the terms "forefathers" or "Founding Fathers." This period tells of the patriarchs—the "founding fathers"—of the nation of Israel. Who are they?

3. Why is the color burgundy used to represent this time period?

4. Read Genesis 12:1-3. What promises does God make to Abraham?

5. To whom do the promises pass in the following generations?

6. God's three covenant promises to Abraham are elaborated in Genesis 15, 17, and 22. In this three-part covenant (also called the "Abrahamic Covenant"), God promises to give Abraham's descendants a land, to establish them as a kingdom, and to make them a source of worldwide blessing. This covenant gives us a blueprint for understanding the rest of the Bible, which is basically the story of God making good on those promises. Look at the Patriarchs period on your Chart to get an idea of where the story is headed. Each time God fulfills one of the promises, he makes yet another covenant with his people. Find the "Abrahamic Covenant" box on your Chart, and identify the people through whom God will make future covenants with his people and fulfill the three promises he made to Abraham.

Land Promise:

Kingdom Promise:

Promise of Worldwide Blessing:

WHAT IS A COVENANT?

In Scripture, a covenant is a binding oath that forms an unbreakable bond between God and his people. God's help is invoked to help his people be faithful to the covenant, which is established by means of a solemn oath sealed with blood. There are blessings promised for keeping the covenant and curses for breaking it.

7. Throughout salvation history, God repeatedly poses the same question to mankind: “Will you trust me?” What does trust in God look like, as demonstrated in the life of Abraham?

8. How might God be calling you to trust in him today?

Closing Prayer



God’s plan unfolded through history and gives us the “story” for our lives. Let us pray in the name of Jesus.

In the time of the Patriarchs, you called Abraham and promised his children land, a royal kingdom, and worldwide blessing:

R: Help us to always hope in your promises.

Our Father ...



Home Preparation: Looking Ahead

The next session will cover two time periods. On your Bible Timeline Chart, you will notice that the first time period covered, **EGYPT AND EXODUS**, spans approximately three hundred fifty years. Little is known about much of this time. When our story opens, Jacob's family (also called "Israel") has been in Egypt for generations. When a new pharaoh comes to power and enslaves them, they cry out to God for deliverance. God takes them out of Egypt and in the process punishes the Egyptians and demonstrates his power through the dramatic events of the Passover. He then establishes Israel as his own people, "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

Despite the many miracles God works to free Israel from slavery, his people refuse to trust him. The following forty-year period of **DESERT WANDERINGS** is both a punishment and an opportunity for them to learn to trust God in preparation for conquering and living in the land of Canaan.

Use your Chart to fill in the following information about these time periods:

Period name: **EGYPT AND EXODUS** Approximate dates: _____

Period color: _____ Color meaning: _____

Supplemental book for this period: _____

What key person does God send?: _____

Name a current event in secular history: _____

Period name: **DESERT WANDERINGS** Approximate dates: _____

Period color: _____ Color meaning: _____

List two key events: _____

Narrative book for this period: _____

In the future, you may want to read all of the books of Exodus and Numbers. For now, choose one or more of the following passages to read before the next meeting to give you a feel for these time periods.

EGYPT AND EXODUS:	Exodus 3	Moses and the burning bush
	Exodus 7–10	Plagues on Egypt
	Exodus 11–14	The last plague (Passover), the Exodus, the Red Sea
	Exodus 32	The golden calf
DESERT WANDERINGS:	Numbers 13–14	Rebellion and forty years of wandering
	Numbers 25	Israel's apostasy with the Baal of Peor