

# *God's Perfect Plan*

*(for imperfect people)*

Genesis 12-29

**\*\*\* VIDEO: "I hate religion" \*\*\***

God's perfect plan for imperfect people is NOT "religious" but relational – Amen!

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life." - John 3:16*

**Romans 15:4** = *"For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."*

Just as God chose to start creation with one man, Adam...

Again God chose one man, Abram the "Patriarch," to launch His redemptive plan of salvation.

*The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. "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.*

*I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

– Genesis 12:1-3

## God's Perfect Plan is a P.E.O.P.L.E. Plan

**P.** = Proper Perspective  
**E.** = Elect (God's "chosen" people)  
**O.** = Obedience  
**P.** = Power-filled Promise(s)  
**L.** = Loves the unlovely  
**E.** = Everything Eternal!

### I. Proper Perspective:

- a. Last week's summary verse: **Romans 15:4** = *"For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."*
- b. *Him, Here, Hurt, Help, & Hope* (Genesis 1-11, Ps. 8, 12, 104, Jn. 1:1-3)
  - b.i. HIM: "In the beginning GOD created..." Genesis 1:1
  - b.ii. HERE: "...it was very good..... Did God really say...."

- b.iii. HURT: "...they realized they were naked..."
- b.iv. HELP: "sanctify them with your truth, Your Word is Truth" (John 17:17)
- b.v. HOPE: **1 Timothy 1:1** = "...Christ Jesus, who is our Hope"
- c. **Genesis 3:15** (the gospel story told in the Garden & unpacked thereafter...)
  - c.i. Makes a promise
  - c.ii. Implies a plan
  - c.iii. Solves the problem (past, present, & future)
  - c.iv. Works in & thru people
  - c.v. Providence provides the power!
- d. *"Proper Perspective"* on Genesis = **SEEING GOD's PASSION for GOD's PEOPLE**
  - d.i. **Space Perspective** = Creation gets 1 chapter... Children get 38 (Abe-Joe)

## II. Elect: (God's "chosen/predestined people")

- a. Notice the pattern of choice (i.e. Noah, Enoch, Abraham)
- b. Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob)...
  - b.i. Reading the genealogy reveals Abram goes back to Seth...
  - b.ii. **Genesis 4:26** – *"Then men began to call on the name of the Lord."*

**\*\*\* NOTE the PRINCIPLE OF CONTRAST-in-CLOSENESS...**

<b>Abraham</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Lot</b>	<b>(nephew)</b>
<b>Isaac</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Ishmael</b>	<b>(step-brother)</b>
<b>Jacob</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Esau</b>	<b>(twin-brother)</b>

Ask yourself... does my life reflect...

<b>Abraham</b>	<b>or Lot?</b>
<b>Isaac</b>	<b>or Ishmael?</b>
<b>Jacob</b>	<b>or Esau???</b>

**\*\*\* CRITICAL CAVEAT... Even the "good guys" are bad guys/sinners**

**BUT... all 3 show their FAITH IN GOD!**

1. ABE = Leaving home.... & willing to sacrifice Isaac
  - a. Left early in the morning...
  - b. "we will return..."
  - c. **FIRST FAITH EVIDENCED IN RESURRECTION!**
2. ISAAC = willing to lay down for apparent sacrifice
3. JACOB = believed (by limp) after wrestling with God

- c. **Israel/Jewish people** – Scripture is clear that God has a special relationship with Israel
- d. **Invisible Church** – every TRUE, biblical Christian (**read Matthew 7:21-23**)

**Many ask: "Why this person/people and not \_\_\_\_\_?"**  
**ANSWER: Grace/Only God knows... (read Job 38-42)**

### III. Obedience: (the signature of God's people is loving, faithful obedience)

- a. Negative evidence found in the Garden, the Flood, the Tower of Babel, the Cross of Christ
- b. Positive evidence found in:
  - b.i. Faith/Trust = Abram's faith was counted unto him as righteousness.
    - b.i.1. God said "Go" and Abe said "Yes Lord" (vs. "tell me more...")
  - b.ii. Love = "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments" – 2 John 5:3
    - b.ii.1. NOTE: **Love & Obedience CANNOT be SEPARATED**
    - b.ii.2. Note pattern of consequences...
      - b.ii.2.a. Obedience brings blessing
      - b.ii.2.b. Disobedience brings pain

<b>The Garden</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>The Fall</b>
<b>Abel</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Cain</b>
<b>Noah</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Everyone else</b>
<b>In-the-Ark</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Under-the-Ark</b>
<b>Abraham</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Lot</b>
<b>Lot</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Lot's wife</b>
<b>Lot's guests</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Lot's neighbors</b>
<b>Isaac</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Ishmael</b>
<b>Isaac's lineage</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Ishmael's lineage</b>
<b>Invisible Church</b>	<b>vs</b>	<b>Visible church</b>

- b.ii.2.c. Consider how serious God takes disobedience:
  - b.ii.2.c.i. **Thrown out of the Garden of Eden...**
  - b.ii.2.c.ii. **The flood...**
  - b.ii.2.c.iii. **Babel...**
  - b.ii.2.c.iv. **Sodom & Gomorrah**
  - b.ii.2.c.v. **Reality of hell...**
  - b.ii.2.c.vi. **JESUS WENT TO THE CROSS!**

#### b.iii. Commitment

- b.iii.1. The **PERSONALITY** of **FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE** is **ZEAL**
- b.iii.2. The **SIGNATURE** of **FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE** is **COMMITMENT!**
  - b.iii.2.a. **Noah's boat**
  - b.iii.2.b. **Abe's journey & mountain top experience with Isaac**
  - b.iii.2.c. **David "RUNNING TOWARD the giant"**
  - b.iii.2.d. **Stephen's martyring testimony (and all who have followed him)**
  - b.iii.2.e. **Ananias seeks out Saul/Paul**
  - b.iii.2.f. **Paul's church planting missionary trips**
  - b.iii.2.g. **Christ & His cross**

#### b.iv. **Biblical CONTRASTS:**

- b.iv.1. **LOT: follows his eyes & selfishness vs Holy Spirit**
- b.iv.2. **ESAU: chooses "instant soup" vs God's long term promises**

- b.iv.3. **Rich Young Ruler...**
- b.iv.4. **“Playing church” vs BEING CHURCH!**

#### IV. Power-filled Promise(s)

- a. *The GOSPEL!* (read Genesis 3:15 again and then watch for it throughout the Bible)
- b. *RAINBOWS!*
- c. The Patriarchal passages are filled with God’s covenantal promises...

#### **“I WILL BE YOUR GOD & YOU WILL BE MY PEOPLE”**

- d. *PERSEVERANCE* of the “remnant” and eventual, “invisible Church”
  - d.i. God’s children ARE the promise!
  - d.ii. God’s children WILL ALWAYS BE the promise...
  - d.iii. Gods children are to champion & carry the promise to every tribe & tongue!
- e. *PERSECUTION* is a *POWERFUL PROMISE*: “...all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” – **2 Timothy 3:12**
- f. *GRACE* is the DNA of God’s Power-filled Promises “...for you have been saved by grace, thru faith... not by works but for works” – **Eph. 2:8-10**
- g. **COVENANT**: biblical definition has beautifully unique traits...
  - g.i. Terms of the “covenant” are absolutely **unchangeable**
  - g.ii. One side/party “makes the terms” of the covenant...
  - g.iii. Second party can either “accept or reject” the terms BUT cannot alter them.
  - g.iv. NOTE: all of God’s covenants are guaranteed! He says: “I will...” (done deal!)  
**“I will be your God... and you will be My people.”**

**\*\*\* PROVES GOD IS THE ONLY HERO OF THE REDEMPTIVE PLAN! \*\*\***

#### V. Loves the unlovely

- a. “For while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. – **Romans 5:8** (“came for the sick...”)
- b. Look at WHO God bestows His grace-filled, merciful, & lavish love upon:
  - b.i. Adam, Eve, Cain, Noah, Babel-boys, Abe, Sarah, Lot, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob...
    - b.i.1. Abraham:
      - b.i.1.a. In Egypt he offers Sarah to kings to save his own hide..
      - b.i.1.b. He **does it again** with/to Abimilech in another setting
      - b.i.1.c. Lays with Hagar vs waiting on the Lord
    - b.i.2. Lot:
      - b.i.2.a. Proves to be selfish & shallow
        - b.i.2.a.i. Chooses lush valley & leaves arid land for Abe
        - b.i.2.a.ii. Offers up his daughters to the mob
    - b.i.3. Sarah:
      - b.i.3.a. Does not trust God to fulfill His promise...
      - b.i.3.b. Gets ugly with Hagar (and Abe somewhat)
    - b.i.4. Isaac:
      - b.i.4.a. Like Abe, offers wife up to Abimilech to save his own hide...
      - b.i.4.b. NOTE: 2(X) with Abimilech shows family line is sinful!
    - b.i.5. Rebecca:
      - b.i.5.a. What kind of mother plays favorites?

- b.i.5.b. She deceived her husband and robbed one son to give to another
- b.i.6. Jacob.... True scoundrel early in life...

b.ii. All the imperfect people from Adam to US!

b.ii.1. **GRACE/ELECTION = being PICKED, NOT PERFECT!**

c. Look at **HOW God reveals His love**

- c.i. GRACE chooses to save the sinning Elect
- c.ii. MERCY withholds wrath, forgives, & accepts Christ's atoning sacrifice
- c.iii. PROTECTS thru providence until God's plans are fulfilled
- c.iv. BLESSINGS are rooted in the plan and purposes of God
- c.v. JUSTICE/WRATH upholds the LORD's loving standards... (i.e. Garden, flood, Sodom & Gomorrah, the Cross of Christ, & the reality of hell).

## VI. Everything Eternal!

## God reigns!

**His sovereignty ensures & empowers every aspect of His will – guaranteed!**

- a. EVERYONE!
- b. EVERYTHING!
- c. EVERY-TIME!

### **Genesis 12:1-3**

***Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."***

God's perfect plan, including imperfect people...  
is to providentially perfect the imperfect!

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Plan, Promise, People, Pattern, Problems, Power/Providence, Promises-restated

Read in light of Genesis 3:15

Note: Creation is given one chapter and then is unpacked in the next (Gen. 1 & 2)  
Sin/The Fall is given a few chapters of introduction... (Gen. 3-6)  
God's wrath/The Flood as a consequence to sin... a couple more (Gen. 7-8)  
God's promise & grace evidenced in the rainbow is found in Genesis 9  
God's remnant lives in and amidst sin (Noah, Babel, descendants) (Gen.10-11)

Key verses/passages:

12:1-3

1. God's plan of restoration is God-empowered & man-implemented (relational)
2. God's plan comes at a cost of comfort & a call for compliance (sacrifice/obedience)
3. God's plan involves the unknown... "to a place I will show you" (adventure)

4. God's plan is totally dependant on Him and His power... "I will make you" (truth)
5. God's plan is itself a promise of blessing... "I will bless you" (grace & mercy)
6. God's plan is designed to shine thru the lights of His people (servitude)
7. God's plan requires loving selflessness... "so that you shall be a blessing" (purpose)
8. God's plan will be provided for & protected by God (power)
9. God's plan blesses support and curses sin toward God's children (providence)
10. God's plan is universal... "all the families of the earth" (sovereignty)

12:4a = Note the role and reward of faithful obedience... "the LORD had spoken to him"

12:7 = the Lord appeared to Abram and promised "this land" to Abram's descendants...  
Abram's response was to build an alter to God and worship (note the heart!)

12:8 Abram did the same thing when he stopped to pitch his tent (note consistent worship!)  

- Abram thanked God for progress (he didn't wait till he got everything...)

12:9 Shows that Abram was committed to the journey... he "journeyed on" (vs. quitting)

12:10-20 Abram shows us that even God's best are still sinners (i.e. David, Paul, Peter, us!)  

- God sent a famine... perhaps to test Abram and/or demonstrate His power
- Note: Abram goes to Egypt to deal with the famine... but God never said go...
- He is willing to sacrifice his wife's purity and pain for his hide...
- He actually asked his wife to lie "so that it will go well with me" (selfish sin)
- Pharaoh rewarded Abram's sin with worldly stuff (so much like today!)
- "BUT the LORD struck Pharaoh & his house with great plagues..." (protection)
  - Note the mercy displayed in not striking down Abram & Sarai!
  - Note how God rescued Sarai before defilement & held back wrath from Abram... both deserved consequences but God spared them (mercy!)

13:1-13 Abram and Lot separate...  

- Note why... they had too much stuff, much of which came from sin...
  - Their separation ultimately led to much pain and sorrow
  - Their separation was at the root of Lot going to Sodom
  - How much of our struggles seep in due to past & present sins?
- Note Lot's selfishness... he picked the "best" of the options for self
  - It is no coincidence that the selfish choice led to sin & suffering
  - Don't miss how God blessed Abram's righteous offering to Lot
    - See the dichotomy of Abram's choices past & present
      - We are seeing a real struggle with sin... (just like us)
      - Yesterday's struggle does not prevent today's victory!
  - Look at what selfishness led Lot to... v.13 = "Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD."
    - We need to be careful what we wish for!

13:14-18 God talks to Abram and promises him the land (Canaan) all around him  

- God makes His promise specific to Abram about the land of Canaan
- God promises to give the land forever!
- God promises Abram countless descendants – knowing Sarai is barren.

Promises:

- 12:1 to the land which **I will show you**
- 12:2 and I will make you a great nation...  
I will bless you & make you name great...  
...you shall be a blessing;
- 12:3 I will bless those who bless you  
...the one who curses you I will curse.  
In you all the families of the earth will be bless
- 12:7 To your descendants I will give this land
- 13:14b-15 “look...all the land which you see (Canaan), I will give it to you and to your  
descendants forever.”
- 13:16 I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth
- 13:17 Arise, walk the land... and I will give it to you

Personal verses/passages:

- 12:1, 7 (promise)  
13:4,13