CHAPTER 2
God Builds a Nation
GENESIS 12-13, 15-17, 21-22

THE STORY

Introduction
Recap from Week 1
• God’s grand vision is to be with us.
• Adam and Eve chose another vision. They ate of the forbidden tree. Sin entered our world and spread to all mankind.
• Even a flood could not eradicate it. Sin is present in all of us.

THE STORY

In this part of the story, we discover that God’s plan is to build a nation. Through that nation he will carry out his plan to win us back.

I. God uses unlikely people to build a nation.
Genesis 11:27-32

THE STORY

The story of Abraham begins in chapter 11 with his father Terah.
• Abram (later given the name Abraham) was called out of pagan idolatry.
• Abram and Sarai are an old couple. Abram was 75 and Sarai 65 when God called them.
• Sarai is barren. She had no children.

THE STORY

They are not the kind of couple we would expect God to use to build a nation. But God’s ways are not our ways.
Why does God use unlikely people to accomplish his purposes?
It is so that everyone will know that God did it.
Be encouraged. That means God can use you and me.
II. God revealed his plan to Abraham.  
**Genesis 12:1-3**

Abraham was asked to give up a lot, but look what God promised him.
- I will make you a great nation.
- I will make your name great.
- I will bless those who bless you.
- I will bless all the peoples on earth through you.

Abraham by faith obeyed God and went even though he did not know where he was going. Abraham’s obedience did not mean everything would go smoothly for him.
- Famine in the land.
- Pharoah would take Sarah as his wife.
- Conflict with his nephew Lot.
- But God protected Sarah and Abraham.

God spoke to Abraham and renewed his promise in Genesis 15:1-6.
“Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

“We learn something fundamental about God in his curious choice of Abraham. It is God’s grace, not our own effort that matters most in this story.”  Adam Barr

III. When Abraham and Sarah try to make God’s plan work through their own efforts things get very messy.  
**Genesis 16**

Sarah came to Abraham with a proposal that is offensive to us, but was culturally acceptable in their day. Sarah proposed that Abraham sleep with her maidservant, Hagar, and the child born to her servant would be considered Sarah’s.

Just because the world says that something is acceptable doesn’t mean that God does.
We see the consequences of Abraham and Sarah’s decision.

- Hagar flaunts her pregnancy.
- Sarah is hurt and angry and drives Hagar away.
- Hagar gives birth to a son, Ishmael, who will be the father of the Arab nations.
- Genesis 16:12 says, “He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone’s hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers.”

IV. God renews his promise with Abraham. Genesis 17

God in his grace does not reject Abraham. Abraham is 99 years old and God renews his promise and established a covenant with him. A son would be born to Abraham and Sarah at the age of 100. His name would be Isaac which means laughter. Abraham’s faith would be severely tested once again. God commanded Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice on Mt Moriah.

Abraham obeyed God because he believed that God could even raise the dead. Hebrews 11:17-19

Just when Abraham was about to slay his son, God stayed his hand. God provided a ram in his place. Isaac would go on to have two sons, Jacob and Esau. Jacob would have 12 sons and God would change his name to Israel. A nation was born.

Conclusion

What do we learn from this chapter of the story?

- God uses unlikely people to accomplish his purposes.
- God asks us to trust him in spite of famine or infertility or hardships or delay.
- God calls us to walk with him by faith – to follow his will and not our will.
- God keeps his promises.