

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG35 God Creates For Himself For A People

In this podcast today I want to talk about a pattern that I see which emerges out of the Exodus story. We are in the season of Pesach, or Passover; and whenever we're in a season where God has designated a time that we celebrate or that we observe the things from the Scriptures, personally I always look to see, "What is God doing for us today?" – for me personally today, for us as God's people today. Because I think there is always something He is pointing to, teaching us, looking for us to receive in what He has opened the door to. These times for me are like open doors or open windows in which we can reach into God and get something very special and unique during our year in our relationship with Him. And I see that in this story.

What I want to talk about is the fact that in the beginning, God was always making covenants, promises, and relationships with individuals. He had a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; really, He had a covenant with Moses. He had a covenant with Noah. And in these covenants and promises He would expect certain things of them, and they would be promised certain things that God would do for them in the relationship. This is the story of Genesis. As we go along, everything is contained within this idea of what He is doing in a relationship with an individual.

When we get to this Exodus story, something of a significant change takes place that we need to notice and recognize. And that is, God all of a sudden becomes a God of covenants with people. He met the children of Israel at Sinai and created them into a people of covenant. He said, "I'll be your God, and you will be My people." This is a really quite a transition, going from just one individual at a time. Because when you take these individuals, they were separated by time; it just seems like He is relating to one individual at a time, one covenant at a time. Yet then when He expands, in the story of Exodus, we see what happens; He takes the elements of these covenants and He brings them to bear and carries them on through into a greater covenant with a people. And those covenants and promises themselves begin to expand.

I want to start by reading in Exodus 3:15-16. It says, "God, furthermore, said to Moses, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, "The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you." This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations. Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, "The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, 'I am indeed concerned about you and what has been done to you in Egypt.''"

A great introduction to the story, because again, we see this picture laid out before us: God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These people have not necessarily known Him as their personal God; they recognize Him as the God of their fathers. And it's important that God then come and introduce Himself through Moses as the God of their fathers, because that carries the weight and it carries the understanding of who He is and what He has promised to the fathers.

Going on in Exodus 6:6-8 it says, "Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the Lord.'"

Here we have several elements at play. He is introducing Himself as the God of their fathers. He's also talking to them about what He had promised to the fathers, that they were to go in and possess the land. But things changed. He says, "Now I'm going to take you as My people, and I will be your God. You will be My people, and I'm going to carry out the promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through you, by giving you the possession of the land that I promised them that they would possess." So again, we see this great expansion happening in the picture; going from a God who relates to one individual at a time by covenant and promise, to saying, "Now I will be the God of a people, and I will create them," as we see going forward, "into a people and a nation."

In Deuteronomy 4:31-32, it says, "For the Lord your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them. Indeed, ask now concerning the former days which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and inquire from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything been done like this great thing, or has anything been heard like it?"

See, God is taking a people. And He is saying, "Go back in history to the time of Adam and Eve, to the very beginning of man on the earth, and you'll see that this has never happened before. I've never covenanted with a people. I've never taken to Myself a people."

In verse 33-34 it goes on to say, "Has any people heard the voice of God" – Has any people? Now see, Abraham heard the voice of God; and the others heard the voice of God; but has any people ever heard the voice of God, "speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard it, and survived? Or has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within another nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, as the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?"

Again, we have this connection with Abraham. God took Abraham out of the land of his birth, out of the land of Chaldees. And He took him across the river, which is what the Hebrew means, the one who goes across. And so, God took Abraham out of a people. You have to remember that the Jews were not a genetic people. They were taken. They were chosen. It was part of the idea of covenant. When you think of covenant, in Hebrew it's *karath berith*. It means that you take, like if you have a sheet of paper, and you cut a piece off of the paper. You've now sanctified that, you've separated it from the rest of the paper. Is it any different than the rest of the paper? No, other than the fact it has been separated, all the qualities are the same.

So when we think of the Jewish people, we think of them racially; but the truth in the beginning is they were taken by God. Abraham was taken by God out of his people. That's what made him special. That's what made him sanctified unto God. God took Abraham to Himself. And that's what He is repeating here with all of Israel. He's saying, "Look, when before has a god taken a people for himself as a nation from within another nation?" See, they were separated out from the nation of Egypt and became, in that separation process, sanctification process, a nation unto God. In verses 35-38, it says, "To you it was shown that you might know that the Lord, He is God; there is no other besides Him. Out of the heavens

He let you hear His voice to discipline you; and on earth He let you see His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire. Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them. And He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power, driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in and to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is today."

This was, again, different. When the fathers had the promise of possessing the land, they went into the land. God did not deliver the land into their hands and did not remove the people who had lived in the land before them; they lived as aliens and sojourners in the land. You see how when God does this, He is not just increasing because He's bringing a people instead of an individual; but the promises and the covenants themselves expand into something greater than they were. And in this instance, God doesn't just bring Israel into the land and leave all the other inhabitants. The other inhabitants are driven out of the land, and Israel possesses the land unto themselves.

In verse 39, "Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the Lord, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other." There is no other God, and He kept emphasizing that to the children of Israel so that they would understand this covenant between Himself and them.

Deuteronomy 7:6 says, "For you are a holy people to the Lord." In other words, they are sanctified. He took them out from the midst of Egypt; that's a separation, a sanctification. "You are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all of the peoples who are on the face of the earth."

We know that the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. All the earth is His. All the nations are His. But He chooses Israel. He takes His people. Again, He brings them out from the midst of the other nations, separates them, sanctifies them unto Himself. That's how it works. That's how the covenant works.

Verses 7-8, "The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the Lord loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the Lord brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh King of Egypt. Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments."

This is important for us to realize as we enter our covenant with God, that He is a faithful God. He is going to keep His covenant, just as He is going to keep His covenant with Israel. See, people believe in Israel having failed, and God now violating His covenant in replacement theology with Christianity. That cannot be. If God breaks His covenant, then He's a liar. Then He's not faithful to all generations. Then He's not one who keeps His covenant. If you think that way as a Christian, be careful; because if God didn't keep His covenant with Israel, what proof do you have? What guarantee do you have that God will keep His covenant with you as Christianity? Why doesn't He just replace Christians? Have we been faithful? No. In many ways, we failed. So this statement is important, that we realize that God is a God who is faithful. And He keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments. Beautiful picture; and that we lean on, His faithfulness.

Now we come to a few more Scriptures that I want to read about King David. Again, the same content of what's happening with God taking to Himself a people. I don't think there's a way to overkill this idea,

because it is the idea that we as Christian believers not only recognize, but we enter into. I'm going to read out of I Chronicles, and we see how, again, the promise expands; because David sees beyond what is actually happening with Israel becoming His people, and he sees, he looks forward, into the days of the Kingdom of God.

I Chronicles 17, starting at verse 20-21, says, "O Lord, there is none like You," this is David speaking, "nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation" – what one nation, "in the earth is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make You a name by great and terrible things, in driving out nations from before Your people, whom You redeemed out of Egypt?"

At some point you may say, "When does this relate to us as Christians?" Well, how can this not relate? What God is there who sent His Son into the earth to redeem us out of the nations of the earth, to free us from the futility of this age, to free us from the bondage of the evil of this age and the evil one who suppresses us and has suppressed us as people in this age, just as Israel was suppressed by Egypt? So this does absolutely apply to us, very specifically. He is saying, "What nation in earth is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem for Himself?" God came and redeemed us for Himself as a people, to make Himself a name by great and terrible things. Great and terrible things. The cross, the resurrection, all of these things are what God used to redeem us unto Himself and to create us, as believers in Yeshua, in Christ, into a people for His own possession. He had delivered them from Egypt. He delivered us out of this age, out of the sin and iniquity, out from under the god of this world.

Remember, Passover judgements were against the gods over Egypt. And when Christ came, He brought judgment on the gods of this age and the gods of this world. And He set us, who believe in Him, free from bondage to not just sin, but the oppression of being servants of the god of this age and god of this world. Then He tells us, "Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Romans 12:2) We go through this same process. That is why I'm saying this is such a pattern that God shows us through these Scriptures and through this story that surrounds the Exodus.

David goes on to say, "Now, O Lord, let the word that You have spoken concerning Your servant", in other words, himself, "and concerning his house be established forever, and do as You have spoken. Let Your name be established and magnified forever, saying, 'The Lord of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel; and the house of David Your servant is established before You.'" (I Chronicles 17:23-24)

David was looking forward. See, he was seeing the expansion of the promise and the covenant reaching into the fact that on the throne of David would reign the Messiah King in the earth. And this was part of what God was doing through this whole pattern and process of going from individual covenants and promises into choosing for Himself a people, and then bringing that people into a place where they were leading, under the Messiah, the rulership of this world.

I want to read a Scripture now because we go into this idea that God is no longer just meeting individuals. This is important for us to receive as Christians, because I know in believing in Jesus and believing in Yeshua, in the Christ, we must have an individual experience that brings about this salvation and covenant that He holds for us. And it is a very individual thing; it's a very personal thing that happens. It's not like a group event that takes place when you are saved; it is between you and the Lord. It is between you and the Father who has given His Son to bring about redemption for you on a personal level. And it deals with your deliverance. It deals with your forgiveness, and it deals with your personal walk as an individual and relationship with the Lord Himself, and with Yeshua as your Messiah. And He's looking for that to happen. But it goes again beyond that. That's why I say this is a pattern. God doesn't

just save us individually and keep us in a relationship with Him as individuals; He brings us into something that expands the covenant, expands the promises. He brings us to be a part of His body, His people.

I want to read I Peter 2, starting with verse 9, it says, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood." What does he mean, "a chosen race"? Well, just like God chose Abraham and took him out of his family, and He took Israel out of Egypt, He comes to us in this earth and He takes us out of the bondage of this, and He calls us by a new name. He brings us into the family of God. So we are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession." Doesn't that sound familiar? That's exactly what He says about Israel.

He says it in an Exodus 19, starting at verse 4-6, He says, "You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;" and what shall you be? "and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

You see how this covenant goes on and it continues to expand. Because that's what Peter is saying. He's saying, "You are a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." (1 Peter 2:9-10) Before we were nothing. We were not a people. We were not a race. We were not a priesthood. We were not a nation. But in Christ we are made a chosen race, a royal priesthood. We receive the unfolding of the promises and covenants which God has brought to His people.

Going on and looking further into Revelation 5:9, it says, "And they sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.'" Christ through His blood pulled us out of every tribe and kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and He recreated us into a kingdom of His choice, into a royal priesthood, into a holy nation, into a people for God's own possession. That's what Revelation is accounting to.

In Verse 10, it says, "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." See, this is going back to what David saw. David saw through the promise to himself and Israel that the Messiah would come. And through the Messiah there would be the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the earth; and that the Messiah would reign, and His people would reign with Him. And now we see the expansion for that into the body of Christ. God is coming not just to individually save us; He wants to solidify us, to mold us, to create us into His great body that sees something further and greater than just the personal promises and covenants that God would make with us individually. It's much greater to recognize that He is creating us into a kingdom and priests to our God for His own possession, and that we will rule and reign with Him as He establishes His Kingdom on this earth.

Can we remember a few points from this? God always begins by making promises and covenants with individuals. He does that to Christians within their salvation. He did that in Israel by taking Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; then God begins to expand that covenant. So God carries elements of those individual covenants and promises, and He creates for Himself a people and a nation with expanded covenants.

Furthermore, our Christian experience begins the same way. It begins as a personal meeting with God, with a salvation experience, and with the promises of eternal life and resurrection that He gives us. But like the children of Israel, Yeshua right now is driven to mold us individually into His body, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, with expanded promises and covenants concerning His Kingdom that is coming in this earth. We believe for it with all of our hearts, we thank God for it, and we enter into it in the name of the Lord. Amen.