

**Slide 1 Building on Biblical Foundations**

**“There is a Plan”**

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Genesis 12:9-20

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We continue our story in Genesis Chapter 12 verses:9-20

**9. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.**

**10 And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.**

**11 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:**

**12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.**

**13 Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.**

**14 And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair.**

**15 The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.**

**16 And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.**

**17 And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife.**

**18 And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife?**

**19** Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore be hold thy wife, take her, and go thy way.

**20** And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

What just happened? Abram was fearful. His trust in the Lord floundered and he relied upon his own devices to escape certain death. And what did he do? He lied, and told his wife to lie.

Remember this is the father of faith. . . we were supposed to talk about how he trusted the Lord this week. . . what is this? This is not trust? This is the opposite of trust. Surely the Lord will not continue to use such a man. . . right? Wrong. . . the Lord actually protected him and Sarai . . . from Pharaoh. How can this be?

In the kingdom of God, in His sovereignty and rule, He has set his plan and nothing shall overcome it. Not the frailty of humanity, not even the sin of mankind. The success of this plan is NOT determined by the actions of mere mortals. The Lord does not *rely* upon us to advance his plan. . . but he will invite us to join him nonetheless.

And He will use everything and bring it all into alignment for HIS PERFECT PLAN.

**Proverbs 19:21 - There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.**

The Lord has a plan – and every person who has ever lived, or shall ever live is a part of it. He created humanity for His good pleasure and then send Jesus to redeem us from ourselves, and rescue us from the destruction that we deserved.

His plan from Genesis to Revelation is to reveal Himself to a perishing world. In each generation he has those who will not forsake him, those who choose to be right with God. Abram was one of these. . . and together with Sarai – the Lord's plan would continue. From this one couple the Lord would make for himself a great nation – the nation Israel – who would be HIS chosen people. A people He would use to reveal himself to the world. Through this chosen people the Messiah would come. A savior sent for the entire world.

So how could Pharaoh harm them? The Lord himself had set them apart. His hand was upon them. Even when it seems that all is lost, still the Lord's plan prevails.

In each of us, HIS plan is at work.

**Jeremiah 1:5 - "Before I formed you in the womb I knew[a] you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."**

**Jeremiah 29:11 - For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.**

He will use every one of us to continue His plan. . . the plan to reveal Himself to this world.

**Ephesians 2:10 - For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**

But don't be deceived . . . our works do not purchase our salvation.

**Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: that no man may boast.**

This is our privilege and our gift unto the Lord . . . to partner with Him in accomplishing his purpose.

And we can do ALL things that he places before because he – Jesus – has now overcome everything that could have hindered us when he died on the cross and rose again. . . We can also overcome by His blood, by His sacrifice, for we who are IN HIM have become the righteousness of God, we stand before all – powers in heaven and demonic principalities on earth – with the authority that has been bestowed upon us as co-heirs with Christ, his first fruits.

Those who say Yes to the invitation of Jesus take their place in the great plan of humanity's redemption. With the assistance of the Holy Spirit working in and through us . . .

Some will be used to bring good news, to speak for him, to bind the broken hearted, to set free the captives, to heal, to deliver, to teach, to extend mercy. . . to literally be an extension of the Lord's kingdom rule on earth.

The Lord will use everything - Circumstances:

**Psalms 138:8 - The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.**

He will safeguard us even from ourselves. . .for we know that our own minds wage war against the truth of God.

But he promises:

**Philippians 4:6-7**

**6 Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.**

**7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

We must choose to keep to remain in a state of gratefulness, thanksgiving. His will keep our hearts and minds in perfect peace. Are you living in perfect peace? With yourself? With your loved ones? With your neighbors? With the Lord?

You can. That is a promise. If you aren't – press in to Him in prayer.

You see there is a plan. . .this plan has been unfolding since the garden of Eden and every generation takes its place in the unfolding plan of humanity's redemption and the revealing of the Lord of All.

HE will use everything. . . even a beast of burden. . .

**Numbers 22:21-32**

**21 Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the Moabite officials. 22 But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the Lord stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. 23 When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, it turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat it to get it back on the road.**

**24 Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path through the vineyards, with walls on both sides. 25 When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, it pressed close to the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it. So he beat the donkey again.**

**26 Then the angel of the Lord moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, either to the right or to the left. 27 When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, it lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat it with his staff. 28 Then the Lord opened the donkey's mouth, and it said to Balaam, "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?"**

**29 Balaam answered the donkey, "You have made a fool of me! If only I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now."**

**30 The donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?"**

**"No," he said.**

**31 Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with his sword drawn. So he bowed low and fell facedown.**

**32 The angel of the Lord asked him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me.[a] 33 The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If it had not turned away, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared it."**

You can continue the story when you get home... Numbers Chapter 22.

The Lord's plan will prevail and HE will use whatever he desires to advance that plan.

He uses the plans of the enemy too... he doesn't just frustrate them. He actually redeems them! Drug addicts become recovery counselors, murderers become evangelists and church planters, Crooked tax collectors become generous benefactors. There is no better witness than to see God take the life of a person and turn it all around.

There is a plan.

He is revealing himself.

In every life. In Every death. In all of creation He is revealing Himself. Can you see it? No? Pray to have eyes that see. Pray to have ears that hear.

IF you cannot see it, cannot hear it, do not know it be assured it is not because it is ot happening. . it is because you have not come close enough to see, to hear.

For the Lord reveals himself to those who seek. He says ask – and keep asking – seek and keep seeking – knock and keep knocking. . . and you will receive, you will find, the door will be opened to you.

Which door?

The door to the understanding of God's kingdom.

When you understand these truths, your entire perspective shifts.

When you belong to the kingdom of God you can expect that everything in your life is being used to advance His kingdom here on earth. EVERY THING. Even the things that felt like defeat. Even the things that were contrary to God's perfect will. Even the things you did in outright rebellion to the Lord. He still uses all of it. Because the economy of God is to use everything single thing to advance HIS PURPOSES.

How do I know this? His word says so. . .

## **Romans 8:28**

**And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.**

Even before we were born – He had a plan to redeem us – to conform us – to use us -

## **Romans 8:29-30**

**For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.**

**Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.**

Notice that the Lord foreknew. . .that means He knew before. How did He know? He is omniscient. HE knows all. He knew we would be here today talking about this. He knew every move you would make before you even decided it.

He knew Abram would cause Sarai to lie to Pharaoh. He also knew Pharaoh would not harm Sarai or Abram. . .He knew that they would continue to serve Him. To trust Him. And even still they would stumble. . but always to return to trusting the Lord.

We do that too. We start out strong . . .grow weary. . .doubt what we once knew. . . stumble, maybe even fall. . .but when we turn back to the Lord He is still there. He has never left us.

## **1 John 1:9 says that**

**If we confess our sins ( our doubt, our fears, our distrust, our faithlessness) HE IS FAITHFUL and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

## **Romans 8:31**

**31What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?**

Truly? What can be against us? If God is for us – If He has our back? If He is our protector, deliverer, redeemer, defender. . . what can hurt us? What can come between us and GOD?

Oh, many things may try. . .but none will succeed. Jesus defeated it all and then gifted us the ability to overcome with Him.

That is indeed GOOD NEWS!

The Lord is able to keep those who belong to him. He can sustain us in times of trial, during any storm.

Nothing will defeat the plans of God. And as we continue to follow Abram and Sarai. . . we will see them trust the Lord over and over . . . we will see how they endure. . . how they overcome. . . to become Abraham and Sarah.

We will follow Isaac and then Jacob who becomes Israel.

We will follow Israel through her ups and downs, her faithfulness and rebellion, her seasons of promise and glory and destruction and desolation.

Regardless of how many times Israel stumbles, God is faithful. He is merciful. He is just. HE cannot deny Himself. As long as the seasons come and go we can trust Him to extend mercy – until that final day when he declares that it is indeed done.

But there is still much to do before that day. And we, his children, his chosen people, we get to join all heaven in advancing His great plan.

Let's rejoice in that knowledge and ask what we may do for our Lord this day. . . and every day.

Don't be deceived each one of you here today is here as the Lord ordained for you to be. You have a distinct role to play in this great plan. And even if you are right now unaware of what it is – rest assured He is still using you. Your awareness is not required.

Even so hold fast to this truth – it is the Lord's plan that shall prevail. Take heart.

***Isaiah 59:1***

***Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.***