

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Second Quarter 2021: *The Promise: God's Everlasting Covenant*

Lesson 6 "Abraham's Seed"

Read for this week's study

Ezekiel 16:8; Deuteronomy 28:1, 15; Jeremiah 11:8; Genesis 6:5; John 10:27, 28; Galatians 3:26–29; Romans 4:16, 17.

Memory Text

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. "Above All People . . ."
- III. Land Deal (*Genesis 35:12*)
- IV. Israel and the Covenant
- V. The Remnant
- VI. Spiritual Israel
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. We learned last week that God's purpose for Israel was to be a kingdom of priests to the other nations of the world (Exodus 19:5-6). In this lesson we look at some of the promises God made to Israel, the conditions attached to those promises, and how well Israel, both literal and spiritual, has followed through on those promises. (Sabbath Afternoon's Lesson)
2. Read Deuteronomy 7:6-8 and Ezekiel 16:8. Why did God choose Israel in the first place? What do you think God meant when He said that Israel was to be "above all people of the earth"? (Sunday's Lesson)
3. Read Deuteronomy 28:1, 15. What obligations did Israel have toward the covenant? How would you summarize in a few words the key point of this chapter? Can you

apply the principle idea of Deuteronomy 28 to the life of individuals? Can you individualize the covenant or is it only something between God and Israel as a whole? (Monday's Lesson)

4. Compare Jeremiah 11:8 with Genesis 6:5. What is the parallel between these verses? What does the phrase "curses of the covenant" mean? (Tuesday's Lesson)
5. Despite Israel's repeated cycle of apostasy, divine judgments, and repentance, what hope is found in the following texts? Read Isaiah 4:3, Micah 4:6-7, and Zephaniah 3:12-13. What is God's purpose in preserving a remnant? See Isaiah 66:19. What are three ways the remnant concept is used in the Old Testament? Read John 10:27-28. Apply Jesus' words to the situation regarding apostasy in ancient Israel. How do these words help explain the existence of a faithful remnant? (Wednesday's Lesson)
6. Read Galatians 3:26-29. What promise is Paul talking about in verse 29? What is the key element that makes a person an heir to these promises? Why is Paul breaking down distinctions of gender, nationality, and social status? What does it mean to be "one in Christ"? Which of the three types of remnant is Paul thinking of here? Read Romans 4:13. Where in the Old Testament does it say that Abraham would be heir of the world? Read Romans 4:16-17. How do these verses help us understand what Paul is saying in Galatians 3:26-29? (Thursday's Lesson)
7. In ancient Israel, the priests made animal sacrifices that pointed to the Messiah. Read 1 Peter 2:5. As members of a royal priesthood, what types of "sacrifices" are church members to make? (Friday's Lesson)
8. God separated Israel from the world so it could be a holy nation. They also were to share salvation truths with the world. Is the same true for the church today? How is it possible to be separate from the world at the same time that one is sharing the gospel with the world? (Friday's Lesson)
9. God always maintained a remnant in ancient Israel. Those remnants were not always visible. See 1 Kings 19:14, 18. Why is it often easier to be true to God in the midst of worldly people than in the midst of one's own church family? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

"For you are a people holy to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession." Do you have 'peculiar people' there, maybe, in your version? 'To be a peculiar people'? When I was a small boy and I hadn't understood this yet, I didn't like the thought of being peculiar. Although, well, if that's part of the price of being saved, I'm willing to be peculiar. I was completely missing the point. The word in the Bible means "one's own personal, private possession". When you say somebody has something that is peculiarly his own, you don't mean it's odd. You mean it's especially his. God says, "You are my peculiar people," not "you're my odd people". Not even, "You're my different people". It means, "You

are my personal, private possession. You are my own.” So it’s a term of endearment, not an oddity. I was greatly relieved when I finally learned that. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in All 66 – Ezra and Nehemiah, recorded December 1981, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

*Audio links to the West Covina series recorded in 1984:

<http://pkp.cc/23MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/24MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Surely it’s clear in the epistle to Rome that all that God asks of us is that we trust him, because if we trust him, without reservation, with no cheating, with a complete willingness to listen, he can heal and save and restore us. But if I’m forever violating that trust, that relationship with him, if sometimes I’ll listen and sometimes I don’t, sometimes I’m honest with him and sometimes I’m not, will he condemn me? Do you doctors condemn your patients who are foolish enough not to take their medicine and so become more and more seriously ill? Now you might correct them, that’s for sure. You might show great concern. You might, if need be, sound very stern and severe. You might read them the medical equivalent of the Third Angel’s Message. If you persist in this you’re going to die. You might well do that. But you wouldn’t condemn them, would you? What good would it do to send them home, corrected to be sure, but condemned and humiliated?

Whenever we violate our relationship of trust in God he can’t trust us. Sometimes we’re with him, sometimes we’re not. It’s a very irregular relationship. Sometimes we’re so honest and sometimes we cheat, we’re looking for alibis, we’re always rationalizing. He cannot heal us and we lose. This is a rebellious, untrusting, untrustworthy relationship. And that’s why sin is so dangerous. That’s why sin results in death, not because our heavenly Father and physician will kill us, but the man who doesn’t trust God, the man who’s cheating will reap the consequences. He will die, for God cannot heal this person who doesn’t trust him.

And I think this is such a correction to the definition so often used, sin is just breaking this or that rule and you know what God does to sinners. This suggests that breaking our trusting relationship with God is the most dangerous thing we can do. The consequences are very disastrous both in this life and in the end, but not at the hands of our gracious God. If we persist in cheating he will let us go and reap the consequences. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series Romans, chapter 14, recorded January 1978, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/27MMROMANS66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/28MMROMANS66> Part 2)

How you define faith and trust enters into this. And we need to read other places. To me, faith is just a word we use to describe a relationship with God as with a person well known; and we get to know him through the gospel. The good news is about God, that he is infinitely worthy of our trust. It implies an attitude toward God of love, and trust, and deepest admiration. It means having enough confidence in God, based upon the more than adequate evidence, all summed up in the good news, to be willing to believe what God says—as soon as we’re sure *he* said it! And to accept what God offers, as soon as we’re sure *he’s* offering it, and to do whatever God wishes, without reservation, as soon as we’re sure *he’s* asking us, and not somebody else. Anybody who has such a trusting relationship with God, of love, trust, and admiration, willing to listen, is perfectly safe to save.

He could die just beginning that relationship, like the thief on the cross. He would arise loving, trusting, and admiring that kind one in the middle. He will be willing to listen, and accept all kinds of instruction and correction. He is therefore safe to save. But you can’t regard God in that attitude without a new heart and a right spirit. So you are a new creature, which *he’s* going to mention in a moment.

And that’s what David eventually wanted—truth and honesty in the inner man. Mention honesty, and you remember Micah, Amos, Hosea, they all talked about this. All God asks of us is that we stand humbly in his presence with an honest willingness to listen, and let him do for us whatever needs to be done.

I would add that even though with the passing of time I’m finding more and more that everything God has asked us to do makes such good sense and I agree with him; I would have to say that being still somewhat ignorant and immature, I’m willing to obey this trustworthy God when he instructs me to do something beyond my present understanding.

Wouldn’t that be safe? Because *he’s* proved always to make such good sense in every other respect. And I think that’s what Abraham said to him. “God, you’ve always made such good sense. But your command to sacrifice the son of the promise makes no sense to me. But I know it will. So God, I’m on my way.” I believe faith says to God, “God, I hear you, and I’ve checked that carefully. It is you. And I am on my way. But as I go, in all reverence, may I ask why?”

And that’s how we come to know God. And for three days and three nights Abraham thought that through; and in the end he said, “God, I’m even beginning to think of ways in which you could work this out. I’m not telling you how, but I know you will; because you’ll not contradict yourself in the promise you gave me about my son. Maybe you’ll resurrect my son. Just as you gave him miraculously, you could easily resurrect him. Or maybe you’ll provide a substitute.”

And that’s what God chose to do. And Abraham is cited in Hebrews 11 as one who trusted God, but thought it through. Faith is not blind. You can jump off a cliff if you take leaps in the dark, and call that faith. It is not safe. History is strewn with the wreckage of people who leap in the

dark and call it faith. Light makes faith possible, and without it we ought to wait. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Galatians, recorded April 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/65MMPOGIA66>*

Further Study with Ellen White

God had chosen Israel. He had called them to preserve among men the knowledge of His law, and of the symbols and prophecies that pointed to the Saviour. He desired them to be as wells of salvation to the world. What Abraham was in the land of his sojourn, what Joseph was in Egypt, and Daniel in the courts of Babylon, the Hebrew people were to be among the nations. They were to reveal God to men. {DA 27.2}

Through the Jewish nation it was God's purpose to impart rich blessings to all peoples. Through Israel the way was to be prepared for the diffusion of His light to the whole world. The nations of the world, through following corrupt practices, had lost the knowledge of God. Yet in His mercy God did not blot them out of existence. He purposed to give them opportunity for becoming acquainted with Him through His church. He designed that the principles revealed through His people should be the means of restoring the moral image of God in man. {COL 286.1}

As His representatives among men, God does not choose angels who have never fallen, but human beings, men of like passions with those they seek to save. Christ took humanity that He might reach humanity. A divine-human Saviour was needed to bring salvation to the world. And to men and women has been committed the sacred trust of making known "the unsearchable riches of Christ." Ephesians 3:8. {AA 134.2}

All heaven is interested in the work going on in this world, which is to prepare men and women for the future, immortal life. It is God's plan that human agencies shall have the high honor of acting as co-workers with Jesus Christ in the salvation of souls. {5T 573.3}

And the effort to bless others will react in blessings upon ourselves. This was the purpose of God in giving us a part to act in the plan of redemption. He has granted men the privilege of becoming partakers of the divine nature and, in their turn, of diffusing blessings to their fellow men. This is the highest honor, the greatest joy, that it is possible for God to bestow upon men. Those who thus become participants in labors of love are brought nearest to their Creator. {SC 79.1}

God might have committed the message of the gospel, and all the work of loving ministry, to the heavenly angels. He might have employed other means for accomplishing His purpose. But

in His infinite love He chose to make us co-workers with Himself, with Christ and the angels, that we might share the blessing, the joy, the spiritual uplifting, which results from this unselfish ministry. {SC 79.2}

God takes men as they are, with the human elements in their character, and trains them for His service, if they will be disciplined and learn of Him. They are not chosen because they are perfect, but notwithstanding their imperfections, that through the knowledge and practice of the truth, through the grace of Christ, they may become transformed into His image.

{DA 294.4}

Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. "The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." James 5:11. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." Psalm 147:3. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son. {SC 100.1}

The Lord declares by His prophet, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31:3. While the sinner is yet far from the Father's house, wasting his substance in a strange country, the Father's heart is yearning over him; and every longing awakened in the soul to return to God is but the tender pleading of His Spirit, wooing, entreating, drawing the wanderer to his Father's heart of love. {SC 54.1}

Many are the ways in which God is seeking to make Himself known to us and bring us into communion with Him. Nature speaks to our senses without ceasing. The open heart will be impressed with the love and glory of God as revealed through the works of His hands. The listening ear can hear and understand the communications of God through the things of nature. The green fields, the lofty trees, the buds and flowers, the passing cloud, the falling rain, the babbling brook, the glories of the heavens, speak to our hearts, and invite us to become acquainted with Him who made them all. {SC 85.1}

In word and in deed the Messiah, during His earthly ministry, was to reveal to mankind the glory of God the Father. Every act of His life, every word spoken, every miracle wrought, was to make known to fallen humanity the infinite love of God. {PK 696.3}

The enemy can never take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. If the soul is trusting and working obediently, the mind is susceptible to divine impressions, and the light of God shines in, enlightening the understanding. What privileges we have in Christ Jesus! {SD 351.4}

When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to *choose* another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand. In constantly beholding Him, we “are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18. {SC 72.1}

Christ has made every provision that His church shall be a transformed body, illumined with the Light of the world, possessing the glory of Immanuel. It is His purpose that every Christian shall be surrounded with a spiritual atmosphere of light and peace. He desires that we shall reveal His own joy in our lives. {PK 720.1}

How carefully the Lord worked to overcome the prejudice against the Gentiles that had been so firmly fixed in Peter’s mind by his Jewish training! By the vision of the sheet and its contents He sought to divest the apostle’s mind of this prejudice and to teach the important truth that in heaven there is no respect of persons; that Jew and Gentile are alike precious in God’s sight; that through Christ the heathen may be made partakers of the blessings and privileges of the gospel. {AA 136.3}

But not to any class is Christ’s love restricted. He identifies Himself with every child of humanity. That we might become members of the heavenly family, He became a member of the earthly family. He is the Son of man, and thus a brother to every son and daughter of Adam. His followers are not to feel themselves detached from the perishing world around them. They are a part of the great web of humanity; and Heaven looks upon them as brothers to sinners as well as to saints. The fallen, the erring, and the sinful, Christ’s love embraces; and every deed of kindness done to uplift a fallen soul, every act of mercy, is accepted as done to Him. {DA 638.4}