**Origins (pt.2) - wk 1 – A New Beginning**

**66 books in Bible, 39 OT - 27 NT. The Bible is God’s revelation of himself to man. It illuminates and teaches us who God is, and the how and why of who we are.**

**OT points to, leads to, directs to, and tells us of the Messiah. The OT is the sign to - The NT is the arrival of – JESUS.**

**The Bible is His story. Genesis to Revelation it is about Jesus.**

**1st five books are The Torah (the Law) also called, Pentateuch (5 books)**

**They were written by Moses during the wilderness wandering.**

**Before the Torah was written, the stories were passed down by word of mouth. The first, Genesis, means “Beginning / Origin”**

**Is it a myth, made up, metaphor, symbolic, allegory, or literal?**

**Literal. Why? Jesus & apostles quoted it often - as fact**

**I am in pretty good company. The Bible can be trusted…**

**Unless we can first agree with the following verse, we will struggle thru Genesis Isaiah 55:8 ‘“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ declares the LORD. 9 ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts’”**

**I invite you to pursue the God of creation as He reveals Himself in Genesis. With it comes questions. It does not tell us everything we want to know – it tells us what we need to know.**

**THE MAIN EVENTS OF GENESIS:**

**Human Race: Hebrew Race:**

**Historical – dates unknown Biographical – dates traced**

**- Creation (1-2) - Abraham (12-25)**

**- Adam and Eve (2-3) - Isaac (25-26)**

**- Cain and Abel (4-6) - Jacob (27-38)**

**- Noah and the Flood (6-10) - Joseph (39-50)**

**- Tower of Babel (11) - Life in Egypt (50)**

**Notice this… Before the flood**

**Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.**

**After the Flood**

**Gensis 8:21 - …every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood.**

**The flood did not fix the sin problem – what it did was reduce the length of life – reducing the damage a person can inflict on others and himself in his lifetime.**

**We soon find out; Sin is as deep in the human heart as ever. As people were conspired together in rebellion, God dispersed them. (Gen 11) Tower of Babel. All this reminds us, we desperately need a savior**

**We have done a series on Genesis 1-11, this series picks up at 12.**

**Which then leads to Abraham: A New Beginning.**

**2nd most famous man in history. The most important human being in the Bible and the world.**

**He is a very real, messed up, unexpected, flawed, faith filled person. My hope is that we not only see ourselves in Abe – but we see the goodness of God. The wonder of his glorious grace!**

**God created the world – it spirals into rebellion and chaos. God picks Abe to be the father of hope and faith - and to father a nation that will bring the Savior to the world - the Messiah.**

**Genesis 11 - After years of disbursement / migration. Believed to be at the end of the Ice Age. ABE – is 85 to 700 yrs after Babel.**

**His family did not migrate far from Babel - they lived in UR.**

**Who is this guy? What made him different or special?**

**(Map) Let’s rewind - Genesis 11:27 This is the account of Terah’s family line. Terah became the father of Abram, (name later changed) Nahor and Haran. (aka, Aran) And Haran became the father of Lot. 28 While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, in the land of his birth. (Devastating)**

**Abe’s dad Terah, and 2 siblings lived in UR. His bother dies and Abe takes his bothers son as his own family - Lot.**

**29 Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram’s wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor’s wife was Milkah; she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milkah and Iskah. (Nahor married is niece - might have been to provide for her after dad’s death) 30 Now Sarai was childless because she was not able to conceive. (Dramatic music and pause - end of Abrams future lineage)**

**Sari: the name means “contentious” – barren and critical.**

**Abram: ironically, it means “father” – but was fatherless.**

**(Map) 31 Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Harran, (not to be confused his Abes brother Haran) they settled there. 32 Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Harran.**

**What is Abe’s nationality? He was a Babylonian - from UR.**

**Moving to the Sumerian pagan city of Harran.**

**Joshua 42:2 - Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River and worshiped other gods.**

**A pagan family. A sad family. A family of loss. No home. No land. No children. A man named father, married to a barren, contentious wife. Father & brother are dead. Living in Harran worshiping Idols.**

**A jacked-up family – with no future – and no plans.**

**Then… Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD (YHVH) said to Abram…**

**The one and only creator God of all - called Abram.**

**Whoa - Why? What made him different? How was he better? What did he do to earn favor? He didn’t have the credentials.**

**Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD (YHVH) said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.**

**God said, “Here’s the deal, leave your comfort and home and follow me. I’ll show you as you go.” No Google maps, just go. I will show you when you get there. God spoke of a place he had never seen or heard. Close your eyes and hold my hand.**

**Genesis 12:2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”**

**This is the first recorded promise of Abraham if he goes. It will be repeated many times in years to come. What is this promise?**

**Five Promises Given to Abram (Abraham)**

**More important than Abe’s faith, are God’s promises! Notice - “I will”**

**While Genesis 11 highlights man’s failed plans,**

**Genesis 12 highlights God’s magnificent future plans.**

**2 And I will make of you a great nation…**

**1. I will make you a great nation! (well known)**

**Somehow his children and descendants will be enough to populate a nation. Later promises say – they will be nations!**

**2 … I will bless you, so that you will be a blessing.**

**2. I will bless you!**

**You will have great wealth and its purpose will be for you to be a blessing to others! “Blessed to be a blessing”**

**2 I will… make your name great…**

**3. I will make your name great! (well known)**

**This wandering gypsy’s name will be known around the world. Nobody knows you – but one day the world will know you!**

**3 “I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse.”**

**4. I will bless those who bless you!**

**And curse those (a divine binding) who dishonor you.**

**If anyone mistreats you, they will have to deal with me. Those that look out for you, I will sustain.**

**3 …in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**

**5. I will bless the world through you!**

**Your faithfulness is going to not only change your life, but the world. I will bless people from every nation thru you.**

**Abram heard the voice of God and responded… (Can I call you back?)**

**Gen 12:4 So Abram went, as the Lord had told him…**

**A most profound verse**, “**So Abram went, as the Lord had told him,**

**His wife was barren - His Social Security plan was his family - they were to care for him. God says leave it all – trust me - and he does.**

**This is one of the reasons why he is called great in faith.**

**It starts our great – but quickly goes downhill.**

**We are soon reminded he is not the savior.**

**He is goof in nearly every chapter from here.**

**He is a struggling man who is also has growing faith in God.**

**What can we learn from this today? Some First Steps:**

**1. God’s route (ways) will always be greater than our route (ways)**

**Genesis 12 – I will make your name great and a great nation!**

**Hold on… Wait a minute – that sounds like Genesis 11**

**Genesis 11 – Let’s build this tower / structure to fortify ourselves.**

**So that we can be a great nation and make a name for ourselves.**

**Sounds like the same thing promised Abe. But God judged them. Why was it wrong? That’s what they were trying to do?**

**Then God tells Abe, I’ll do it if you trust me… “But they got in trouble for this, is this a trick?” What was the difference?**

**Gen 11 – They sought greatness in their own pride and strength.**

**Gen 12 – Abe was to trust the greatness of God in his weakness.**

**The issue was - They tried to do it in their own power. They sought man’s way verses God’s way. Pro 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.**

**Greatness based on your strength and pride will fail, fall, and confuse.**

**Greatness through our weakness and God’s strength is everlasting.**

**James 4:10 - Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.**

**(NLT – He will lift you up in honor).**

**If we do it God’s way in our weakness, watch what He will do!**

**The Difference: God gets all the glory. God declares, “I will do this”**

**2. God chooses unlikely, undeserving persons, to be His own.**

**Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD (YHVH) said to Abram…**

**The one and only creator God of all the universe YHVH – called Abram.**

**Whoa - Why? What made him different? How was he better? What did he do to earn the favor of God? He did not have the credentials.**

**Why was he special or unique? He wasn’t.**

**Joshua points this out in Josh 42:2.**

**God still does today! He calls as His own, those counted out and uncredentialed. Those wandering and looking. Those unqualified and counted out. Those far from God and not interested.**

**Why would God pick a reject – because he was a reject.**

**God says, “You’re the one!” That’s grace!**

**God loves to work in the most hopeless and helpless of situations. You’re not too far – you’re just right.**

**3. We are still blessed to be a blessing**

**Gen 12:2b I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.**

**Yes, this is for Abe – but a principle we see through the Bible.**

**What you have been given is given to change the world!**

**Possession or resources – to bless others.**

**4. God always follows through**

**We have the ability to look back and see if the promises happened. Israel does not see it as fulfilled – Christians do.**

**Did They Happen?**

**\*\* I will make you great nation! (well known)**

**Did the LORD do this? Yes – Israel. One of the smallest countries in the world with the most influential global impact. As Israel goes, so the world goes.**

**\*\* I will bless you!**

**Did the LORD do this? Yes, in his lifetime he became one of the wealthiest men alive.**

**\*\* I will make your name great! (well known)**

**Did the LORD do this? Yes - the most famous human on earth.**

**60% of people on earth see Abe as the father of their religion.**

**The most honored name in the world. Father Abraham.**

**\*\* I will bless those who bless you!**

**Did the LORD do this? Yes.**

**As nations fight and dishonor Israel – God binds & limits them.**

**This does not mean they are without much fault. God judges Israel too. This happened in the OT and still happens today.**

**\*\* I will bless the world through you!**

**Did the LORD do this? Yes – and Amen!!! It was through his family that we have Jesus. This is the primary eternal promise.**

**Unfortunately, this was forgotten for many generations as the Hebrews people began to develop an arrogance as God’s chosen and a hatred for the nations – the Gentiles. The prophets often reminded them.**

**Genesis is the story of how this wandering family became the founder of the greatest faith in the world – so that wandering hearts today – can have a home in God.**

**Abraham is the story of Jesus. (John 8:58 – before Abraham, I am. Jesus is the God of Abraham. YHVH in the flesh.)**

**5. God is still calling us to leave it all and follow**

**Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD (YHVH) said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.**

**God said, “Here’s the deal, leave your comfort and follow me. I’ll show you as you go.” Close your eyes and hold my hand.**

**Luke 9:23 And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. 25 For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?**

**That’s following Jesus – leave it all. Trust me and follow. He may have you stay right where you are or he may call you to the nations**

**But the call is the same - If anyone would come after me…**

**6. You don’t need to know everything to follow Jesus.**

**Step out in what you know and expect to grow.**

**Today you are invited. Jesus the God of Abraham says,**

**“Come and follow me.”**