

“The Foundations of Our Faith Revealed, Theme by Theme in Genesis — With God, Our Weakness Reveals His Strength”

Introduction (and some theme verses):

First, through Paul:

2 Cor. 12:9-10

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. **Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: **for when I am weak, then am I strong.**

2 Cor. 13:4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

Then, in the Old Testament:

[READ] 1 Sam. 2:8-9

8 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, [and] lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set [them] among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth [are] the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them.

9 He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail.

[READ] Gen. 50:18-20 [Main theme verse in Genesis today]

18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants.

19 And Joseph said unto them, **Fear not: for am I in the place of God?**

20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

Today's Outline: in Genesis Eight Exemplars of Our Faith Stand Before Us!

Plus eight more — Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Barach, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel after the Genesis list, then many unnamed who “died in faith not receiving the promises”:

Heb. 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that **they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.**

- ***Hebrews 11 provides our outline today. I believe with all my soul that these verses and so many more define the content and meaning of Scripture.... And it all begins in Genesis!***
- ***Adam — His Sin Brings the Plan of Redemption to His Fallen Race (Gen. 3 & Rom. 5)***
- ***Abel — God Provides a Path to Fellowship with Sinners though a More Excellent Sacrifice (Gen. 3)***
- ***Noah — He Preaches a Coming Judgment Never Seen Before (Gen. 6-8)***
- ***Abraham — He Is Called to Walk by Faith Where No One Has Walked Before (Gen. 12-15)***
- ***Abraham & Sarah — By Faith Their Weaknesses Are Turned to Strength (see Heb. 11 & Rom. 4)***
- ***Abraham — He Offers up the Son of the Promise Expecting to Receive Him in Resurrection (Gen. 22)***
- ***Isaac — He Blesses His Son Jacob through Weakness of Body but Strength of Spirit (Gen. 28)***

===== NEXT TIME =====

- ***Jacob — He Makes a Vow to Almighty God, “If God Will Be With Me” (Gen. 28)***
- ***Jacob — The Lord Changes Jacob’s Name to Israel, A Prince with God (Gen. 32)***
- ***Jacob — He Blesses the Sons of Joseph, of Him Who Was “Separate from His Brethren” (Gen. 49)***
- ***Joseph — He Hopes Against Hope for the Blessed Nation by the Visitation of Almighty God (Gen. 50)***
- ***Israel — He Dies with the Hope of a Future Resurrection in the Land of Promise (Gen. 50)***
- ***Joseph — He Reaffirms Israel’s National Heritage In His Final Words of Testimony (Gen. 50)***

I. Adam — His Sin Brings the Plan of Redemption to His Fallen Race (Rom. 5 & Gen. 3):

Key Verses:

Gen 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, and that it [was] pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make [one] wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Gen. 3:17-19

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life;

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

- *I am reminded of this great Biblical theme: With God, Our Weakness Reveals His Strength. This is a great theme of the entire Bible, isn't it? As Paul wrote of it, adding the ultimate purpose of it all in the Lord God's eternal plan through resurrection:*

1 Cor. 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

And then in Romans chapter 5 where we read that through weakness, grace super-abounded:

Rom. 5:19-21

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

- *O Felix culpa: "According to Augustine, "God judged it better to bring good out of evil than not to permit the existence of evil" (Enchiridion, VIII), an idea which reappears in the West in a traditional hymn for the Easter Vigil: O felix culpa quae talem et tantum meruit habere redemptorem, "O happy fault that merited such and so great a Redeemer."*
- *Even satan's greatest act of rebellion would be used to bring redemption through the seed of the woman!! Remember those*

words from Gen. 3:15: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel”. **Paul states this theme so well in these verses:**

[READ] 1 Cor. 2:7-8

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

- ***So through weakness and even sin, even the greatest sin of all perpetuated by the arch-enemy satan (or Lucifer), the strength and power of Almighty God is revealed. For God has chosen to work with sinners such as ourselves to reveal his eternal power and glory through the completed work of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Seed of the Woman.***

II. Abel — God Provides a Path to Fellowship with Sinners though a More Excellent Sacrifice (Gen. 3):

Key Verses:

[READ] Gen. 4:1-8

1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

- *Let us consider well the circumstances here. It seems that the Lord had set appointed times for the bringing of sacrifices and offerings and both Cain and Abel brought what they believed would glorify God. Abel was the younger and Cain was the elder son. Cain brought the best he had produced through his farming. But Abel brought a lamb which was nearby in the field and offered it up by the shedding of its blood on the altar.*
- *Cain had brought the best he had and we can assume it was a glorious display of his farming skill. Abel brought the same but also offered up a sacrifice.*
- *The Lord received Abel's offerings but did not receive Cain's. It must have been very visible and I believe based on much other scripture that Abel's offering was received by God by fire from heaven.*
- *So the shedding of the blood of an innocent lamb here has brought forth the revelation of God's strength through the weakness of the lamb and also of Cain's sinful heart. He could not please God through his works and his rejection then led to the shedding of his brother's own blood and his martyrdom. Even these great sins would ultimately glorify God when every knee would bow.*

III. Noah — He Preaches a Coming Judgment Never Seen Before (Gen. 6-8):

Key Verses:

[READ] Gen. 6:10-14

10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

[READ] Gen. 6:17-18

17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life, from under heaven; *and* every thing that *is* in the earth shall die.

18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

- ***Take note of what is written in chapter 2 regarding rain:***

Gen. 2:4-6

4 These *are* the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,
5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for **the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was not a man to till the ground.***

6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

Gen. 7:4 For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

- ***So it had NEVER rained on the earth until now. The preaching of Noah for 100 years to a sin-cursed humanity of coming judgment from heaven, when no one had ever seen even a little rain, must have seemed ridiculous. Noah built a great ship for deliverance of himself and his family and to preserve the air breathing animals. But his message of judgment was received by no one else! So in these events the weakness and sin of mankind becomes the foundation of the revelation of God's glory and strength as even the great sin of mankind would not prevent the revelation of God's glory and mercy towards some with his miraculous power over all the creation revealed to the rest. Amen and amen.***

Gen. 7:5-7

5 And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.

6 And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

7 And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.

Gen. 7:21-23

21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man:

22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry *land*, died.

23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of

the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained *alive*, and they that *were* with him in the ark.

Gen. 8:15-22

15 And God spake unto Noah, saying,

16 Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

17 Bring forth with thee every living thing that *is* with thee, of all flesh, *both* of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

18 And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

19 Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, *and* whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

20 And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

- *How many years passed? It was about 4-500 years! That is all.*

IV. Abraham — He Is Called to Walk by Faith Where No One Has Walked Before (Gen. 12-15):

Key Verses:

Gen. 12:1-6

1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

- *Take note of the context here. Abraham is called out by God in Ur of the Chaldees, that is, near the coast of the Arabian Sea not that far south of where the city of Babylon was found. But the promised land was inhabited by other tribes and nations as it says here in chapter 12. And Abraham and his family would be aliens and strangers there with all that means. The great question is this (and I am sure it would have been Abraham's great life question as well): Would Abraham's weaknesses be the occasion of God revealing his strengths and his glory? We know that the answer to that is a resounding Yes!*

Gen. 14:18-20

18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

- *This is a most wonderful section of scripture. We see here that Abraham, the one that would reason with Almighty God regarding the delay in the fulfilling of the promise of God, is blessed here by these words of glory and mercy and grace. They lived in a very dangerous land owned by other fierce tribes but nevertheless Abraham is told that he is the very center of God's plan of blessing!*

This points forward to much blessings of God's power and glory on one who is so weak according to the flesh.

And that is our theme today.

[READ] Gen. 15:1-6

1 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

2 And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house *is* this Eliezer of Damascus?

3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

4 And, behold, the word of the LORD *came* unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Gen. 15:17-18

17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

- *So we see that the promise to Abraham is being restated and even expanded from a son and an offspring that cannot be numbered and a land wherein they would dwell in peace to a land of vast proportions.*
- *These truths recorded here are used by Paul so many centuries later to underscore and emphasize his teachings on the imputed righteousness of our Lord Jesus to our accounts! But note that this is a comment by the author. It was not told to Abraham himself here. But the gospel Abraham was given and which he believed was all about his coming offspring! Nevertheless, God “counted it to him for righteousness”, though he was a doubting and frail and weak sinners as are we all. Amen*
- *Let’s see how Paul uses this scripture as the foundation for his teachings regarding grace and the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to us sinners who have believed on him. We shall see how it is both Abraham and his wife Sarah who will be in the very center focus of God’s great and developing plan for sinners:*

V. Abraham & Sarah — By Faith Their Weaknesses Are Turned to Strength
(see Heb. 11 & Rom. 4):

Key Verses:

[READ] Rom. 4:17-22

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Gen. 16:1-2

1 Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

2 And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

- *Well, eleven years have passed since the Lord had called out Abraham to go to the land which he had promised. Chapter 16 records the conception of the one to be named Ishmael and how through this example of weakness in Abraham, in Sarah, and in Hagar, God's great glory and strength was made manifest. We remember well the springs of living water in the wilderness where the Lord tells Hagar that he would bless here and her son greatly. And so our theme is found revealed here on nearly every page in Genesis!*

Gen. 16:10-16

10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

12 And he will be a wild man; his hand *will be* against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

13 And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?

14 Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, *it is* between Kadesh and Bered.

15 And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

16 And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

- *This well named Beerlahairoi meaning “the well of the one that sees me and I live to see him myself”. Interestingly, chapters 24 & 25 reveal that that very well became the dwelling place of Isaac through much of his life!! Do you wonder why? Was it that “with God, our weakness reveals his strength”, our theme today? Also, there seemed to be no conflict with Ishmael there for he had moved on, away from this well that spoke of God’s glory and strength in the face of human weakness and sin, living it seems on the edge of an unlivable wilderness.*

Now we see in chapter 17 how eleven years of their weakness yields an opportunity for the Lord to reveal his power and strength:

Gen. 17:1-8

1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

4 As for me, behold, my covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. *[So the promise of chapter 15 will be an everlasting one!]*

Gen. 17:18-22

18 And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac [*Meaning “laughter”*]: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his seed after him.

20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

22 And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

Gen. 18:8-10

8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where *is* Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

10 And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard *it* in the tent door, which was behind him.

Gen. 21:1-6

1 And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so *that* all that hear will laugh with me.

- ***So their son, the Son of the Promise, is named Isaac, or ‘laughter’! So appropriate this is.***
- ***What are the implications of this for those living under grace today? There are many!***
- ***The many ways that “God meant it for good” are for our “learning”***

VI. Abraham — He Offers up the Son of the Promise Expecting to Receive Him in Resurrection (Gen. 22):

Key Verses:

Gen. 22:1-5

1 And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am*.

2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only *son* Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

Gen. 22:9-14

9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am I*.

12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son* from me.

13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

VII. Isaac — He Blesses His Son Jacob through Weakness of Body but Strength of Spirit (Gen. 28):

Key Verses:

Gen. 24:27 And he said, Blessed [be] the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I [being] in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren.

[READ] Gen. 28:1-4

1 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

2 Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

3 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

4 And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.

Our Concluding Thoughts:

- ***God did not create man in his own image but with the liberty of free will and potentially sin and rebellion without the plan and promise of a coming redeemer. And then when sin and rebellion came upon mankind God through satan's tempting of Eve and Adam's sin, the Lord God used that for great blessing for many.***

[READ] Gen. 50:18-20 [Main theme verse in Genesis today]

18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants.

19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for *am* I in the place of God?

20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.

With God, our weakness reveals his strength.