

What God Intends for Us to Know, Part 3

Dan Todd | May 3, 2018

This is Part 3 of a three part series on this subject. ([Part 1](#), [Part 2](#)) In part 2, we ended with a look at the story of Joseph. In this article, we will fo all the way back to Abraham.

Abraham

To understand more of why God wanted the nation out of the land of Canaan, go back with me to the story of God's covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15.

Gen. 15:13 *Then the LORD said to Abram, "Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years...*



16 *And they shall come back here (Canaan, the Promised Land) in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."*

In other words, God needed the nation of Israel out of the way for 400 years while He dealt with the people of the land of Canaan.

The Bible does not explain what that means, but, knowing that God is a God of grace and of redemption, we should be safe in assuming that God did a work of grace among the Amorites to which they did not respond positively.

As a result, God, having allowed them to exhaust every chance for redemption, determined to extinguish them as a people.

Now go forward to Deuteronomy 9.

The nation of Israel has been through the Exodus and the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Now they are standing on the eastern bank of the Jordan River, preparing to enter the Promised Land, and Moses is exhorting them.

Deut. 9:4 *Do not say in your heart, after the LORD your God has thrust them out before you, "It is because of my righteousness that the LORD has brought me in to possess this land," whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving them out before you.*

5 *Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them*

out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

God said to Israel, “You, as the chosen people of God, are on the threshold of receiving a tremendous blessing of my redemptive work, but before you can claim the Promised Land, I must remove those who inhabit it now.

I want you to understand that the removal of these people is not directly related to your redemption. I am not removing these people because you are righteous, but because they are unrighteous. I am only finishing up something I started over 500 years ago with these Canaanites.”

God’s removal of these inhabitants of the land had nothing to do with Israel directly...

- Not with any merit or goodness that Israel might imagine is inherent in them
- Not with any decision that Israel might have made according to their own will
- Not with any contribution that Israel might believe they have brought into the relationship between them and Almighty God.

Redemption and reconciliation and reward are the providence of God and completely dependent on His sovereign grace, His eternal plan, and His infinite love.

Although I have never seen the actual cartoon, the internet makes numerous references to a Dennis the Menace cartoon in which Dennis and his friend Joey are walking away from the Wilson’s house with their hands full of cookies. Joey asks, “I wonder what we did to deserve this?” Dennis tells his friend, “Joey, Mrs. Wilson gives us cookies, not because we’re nice, but because she’s nice.”

We have wandered afar in the discussion, and you may have lost sight of the original point this blog entry is attempting to make. So here it is again...

The redemption of fallen man is only one part of the eternal purpose that God set in motion before the foundation of the world. As redeemed people, God intends for us to look beyond redemption into His glorious light until we come to experience His glory in person.

2 Cor. 3:18 *And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

2 Cor. 4:6 *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

God created man to worship God, not simply for the things that God does – creating, sustaining, redeeming – but for who God is. God is much, much more than the sum of all of His actions. That is why He identified himself to Moses as “I AM” and not as “I DO.”

God is, and therefore, we are to worship Him simply because He is.

When we see God as the source of our redemption and blessing, such a glorious gift calls us to worship and to service.

However, when we look beyond redemption to see God in His sovereign role as Lord over all things in heaven and in the Universe involved in carrying out His eternal purpose through Christ in us, then we are not simply called, but compelled to fall on our faces and worship Him in awe and wonder, and we are then compelled to rise and apply ourselves in service.

For that is the reason Christ came to die and to be resurrected. He came, not simply to call us to salvation, but to call us to service. He saves us so that we might serve.