

RUN THROUGH THE BIBLE

ATHLETE STUDY

WEEK 4

"I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN"

There's no team where everyone starts. It can be hard to feel overlooked—especially when your coaches keep promising that "one day, eventually, your time will come..." But, strategic waiting can feel an awful lot like neglect.

Last Week we saw how *Genesis* is setting up its original audience to understand the world around them. We saw the origin of language and people groups. This Week we see their origin as a nation based on a promise to their father, Father Abraham.

However, they're probably left with a question, "Yeah, well if God is so great and his promises are so assured, how did we end up as slaves in Egypt?" The answer is found in the moment that God makes his promise to Abraham, "*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... for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.*"

Israel's slavery wasn't God forgetting His promise—it was grace running its course for someone else. We'll see in the Weeks to come how God deals with the injustice dealt to Israel, but we'll also see how God's justice served on the inhabitants of the Promised Land comes only after tremendous grace.

RHYME REVIEW

1	CREATIONS GLORY NOW UNDONE
2	FLOOD OUT THE WORLD, START FRESH WITH YOU
3	NEW LANGUAGE BRINGS DISUNITY
4	THE SOD, THE SEED, AND BLESS SOME MORE

GENESIS 12:1–3, 15:7–10, 17–18A

¹ Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 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."

^{15:7} And he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess." ⁸ But he said, "O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" ⁹ He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." ¹⁰ And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half.

¹⁷ When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. ¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land..."

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

You are the God of Abraham, You are in command of every throne, You are the God of majesty, And saw the heart in me and made a home.

Many times in the Bible, God is referred to as "the God of Abraham." Why? Because of the promise we read about today. Because God brought salvation when he didn't have to. Scan the QR code to worship.



DISCUSSION

What's something you counted down the days for (a game release, a season opener, a big trip) and was it worth the wait once it finally came?

1. What did God tell Abram to leave, and where did He tell him to go? (12:1)

2. What did God promise Abram? (12:2–3)

3. What did God have Abram prepare, and what passed between the pieces? (15:9–10, 17)

4. Why does it matter that God alone passed between the pieces? (15:17–18)

5. How does God's faithfulness to Abraham encourage your faith in his faithfulness to you through the Gospel?

6. Are you in "the family" through Christ? If not, what's holding you back? If so, who are you inviting in?

Understanding and receiving the gospel is step one—being able to explain it to someone else is step two. If you're not sure how to share? Talk to your coach today!

ICEBREAKER

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

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ATHLETE STUDY

STUDY NOTES

FAMILY PHOTO

We had a rule in my family before all of my siblings were finally married. Nobody was allowed in family photos who wasn't married into the family. Pics of "just the family", were just the family. This became a house rule after my brother's fiancée was included in a round of family portraits. Portraits we can no longer use, because they broke off the engagement and he's now married to someone else.

Don't get me wrong, breaking an engagement is way better than breaking a marriage (even though society sometimes gets that backwards). But when we're talking about "just the family," it's not enough to have an association or even an aspiration of joining. To make it legit, a covenant is required—the covenant of marriage. Only then can new people be added to the family photos.

In our study so far, we've covered some of the major plot points in Genesis 1–11—the prologue to the story of the Bible. Regardless of what you believe about the age of the earth, these 11 chapters cover more time than the rest of the Bible put together. Genesis 12 is where the plot truly begins.

There we meet a man, nobody special. Joshua 24 recounts Israel's history and basically calls this man an idolater. Yet, God invaded history to call him to follow God from the safety of his homeland and family. Through his obedience to God's call, God made a covenant. One made to a childless elderly man, founding a family—whose portrait we'll keep expanding throughout the rest of the Bible.

GOD'S BLESSINGS BEGIN WITH HIS CALLING

Imagine going about your day when suddenly, the **LORD said, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 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. 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."**

That's exactly what happened to a man named **Abram** later renamed "Abraham." Keep in mind, at this point in history it was uncommon to just pick up and leave like this. There were no police or paved roads. Safety was found in numbers, among your people. But God called Abraham to leave all that behind promising three things: land (the

sod), a seed (descendants), and that not only would he be blessed, but the whole world would be blessed through him (bless some more).

Two things that add to the craziness of this whole situation: first, Abraham was an old man—75 when he left. Second, he and his elderly wife had no kids and way past the age to have them. So, Abraham packing up and setting out says something about his faith.

Eventually, Abraham arrived in the place the Bible calls the Promised Land. That's not what other people called it—they called it home. It's the Promised Land because after Abraham arrived, Genesis 15 records the Lord repeating his promise: *this* is the Land I will give you and your descendants (whom he doesn't have yet).

He said, **"I am the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess."** But Abraham asked, **"O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?"** God told Abraham to get several animals and **cut them in half** to create a walkway (**But he did not cut the birds in half.**)

An ancient covenant often had these kinds of symbols. Both people in the covenant would say, in effect, **"May I be like these animals if I don't uphold my end of the bargain."** Then pass through together. But, that's not what happened here. **When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces.** In other words, God made a covenant where only he was responsible. Not that Abraham had no obligation, but God knew his inability to fulfill it perfectly because of sin. So, the promise didn't depend on Abraham, but solely on the Lord—and it was irrevocable.

#4, THE SOD, THE SEED, AND BLESS SOME MORE

Many of you know how the *Genesis* story continues with the miraculous birth of Isaac, Isaac's son Jacob (renamed "Israel"), and Jacob's 12 sons that became the 12 tribes of Israel. We see Abraham's seed promise unfold by the time *Genesis* ends. In a couple of Weeks, we'll see Israel seeking to claim the Land promise. But, little did anyone know, it would be the Snake-Crusher from Genesis 3 who would ultimately fulfill God's promise that the "whole world would be blessed through him."

What's more, Galatians 3:7 says, **"Know then that it is those of faith [in Jesus] who are the sons of Abraham."** In other words, as we covenant with Christ, when it's time for a portrait of "just the family," we can join too.