

God Builds a Nation

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning all. Please turn with me in your Bibles to Genesis 45. Genesis 45. If you are new or visiting, welcome. I have the pleasure of being one of the pastors that serve here. My name is BK. And I got to be honest with you, I had a very disturbing week this week.

I was driving on MAMQAM and I'm trying to turn on the highway and I literally had to wait three light changes. This has never happened to me in my seven years of living in Squamish. In fact, it made me late for my doctor's appointment. When I got to my doctor's appointment, with much chagrin, I had to wait 45 minutes in order to get in to see my doctor. This led to following up to renew my insurance in my car. 20 minutes. I lamented to my wife that I felt like one of the early Israelites waiting upon God to rescue them. I say that with all sarcasm and jest.

If there is a group of people that God has trained to be patient, they're indeed his people.

This morning we're continuing our series on the story of the Bible. My goal is to go through the grand narrative of Scripture to see God's story of redemption as the story of God unfolds from the book of Genesis. And Lord willing, we will make it to Revelation. If you are new to Christianity or you're just checking out the church, this is precisely the series that you want to be a part of. What we're going to be doing is kind of taking an eagle-eye view of the stories and doing a deep dive at various aspects of the story in order to understand what God is doing and how God redeems, how God rescues, how God saves his people through the person of Jesus Christ. One of the big questions that often gets asked is, is the Bible relevant? I think a lot of people when we look at our Bibles will say, well, you know what, the Gospels and the New Testament, they're pretty relevant because we live in what's called the Church Age, that is after the time of Jesus Christ rose up to heaven and he's waiting for the time when he will come back and call us to him. So a lot of people think, you know what,

New Testament I'm okay with, but I really don't see the relevancy of the Old Testament. You'll hear comments such as, well, the Old Testament's really only for Jewish people. I really don't like the Old Testament because it portrays God as a harsh and judgmental God. Some people will ask, well, is it not just a historical, mythological, or just full of moral stories? Is that the purpose of it? Others you'll say, well, I don't like the Old Testament because it's all law and no grace. And then some will even argue that it's somewhat contradictory to the New Testament. Well, as I hope to establish over the next several weeks is this truth about the Old Testament. The Old Testament, probably more so than the New Testament, reveals God's character, his holiness, his justice, his mercy, his faithfulness.

[4 : 0 2] The Old Testament shows God as a covenant-keeping God who is faithful to his people despite our failures. It also provides prophetic and symbolic pictures of Jesus Christ. It gives testimony to our faith. When we read back, just even looking at chapters last week, we were looking at how God used this story of Abraham about to sacrifice his son Isaac on this tabernacle that he made, and how the imagery, the location, the words used, all form foreshadowing of what's going to happen with Jesus Christ. And it wasn't really meant for the readers at that time, but it's meant for us.

When we go back, we read that, we see that foreshadows, we see those symbols, those same symbols over and over. They're meant to encourage us, to help us understand that this indeed is God's word, and there is a consistency to God's character. And it also testifies to the lives of faithful saints who walked with God. The truth of the matter is, the Old Testament is the foundation of God's redemption plan. The Old Testament is the foundation of Jesus's rescue plan. Without the Old Testament, there is not a rescue plan.

There is no salvation for us. There is no redemption for us in the person of Jesus Christ. So therefore, the Bible is, and it's entirely, both the New Testament and Old Testament should be seen as entirely relevant for today. If you remember, I've kind of divided the Bible up into five acts, like it was if a play.

We have the prologue, which is Genesis 1 to 11, which kind of sets the stage for why we read the, why we need the rest of the Bible. We see in Act 1, we see a rise of God's program from Genesis 12 to 1 Kings, which will be 14 generations. Acts 2 will be the fall of God's program, which we see in 1 Kings 11 to 2 Kings 25. And the third act is exile and return, which we read between the books of Ezra and the Gospels and Acts 4 and 5 is the church age and future things. So this morning, we continue in Act 1.

And this morning, I want to look at three separate scenes to see God and who he is as he works in the background, preparing his Savior to come and rescue us. If you're new to Christianity and you do not know, we are a beleaguered people. We are a broken people. And I don't think I need to spend any amount of time explaining to you the damages of our own rebellion and our sin has caused in this world. The literal fact that we age is a blamed on sin, the decaying of our body, the decaying of this world all links back to our sin, our rebelliousness to God. So this morning, I want to look into how God preserves his nation through the hatred of a brother, how God builds a nation through slavery and misery. In the final part of my sermon,

[8 : 0 0] I'm going to look at how God builds a leader through exile and humility. So where we left off last week, we ended up in the crazy life of Jacob. He's got four women, 12 kids under his tent and their kids.

And if there was a lesson that God demonstrates to us is that even in broken, dysfunctional families, God still redeems and uses his people. Amen? That the criteria to be used by God is not perfection.

The criteria to be used by God is not coming from a holy, perfect, priestly family. That God specifically uses broken people and their stories to bring him glory. So God has this small group of 70 people and he needs to turn them into a nation. But first of all, they need to be protected. And this is where we read the story of Joseph. And I'm going to go over this very quickly. Many of you know, you've heard of Joseph in the coat of many colors. He was the favored son of his father, Jacob. And he was the son of Rachel, who was the fourth woman that Jacob had children with.

Rachel was his love, but through deception on his father-in-law's part, he did not get a chance to marry her first. He was forced to marry her sister. But Rachel could not have kids. So Jacob continued to have kids with midwives and the sister. And finally, God opened her womb. As it says, God heard the cry of Rachel and Joseph was born. Joseph ends up being his father's most favored son.

And he becomes so favored that Joseph lacks complete self-awareness. If I could say that, if I could quantify Joseph, I would say he definitely did not go through Dale Carnegie's course of how to win friends and influence people. In fact, he would continually have these dreams that God would be speaking to him. And he would speak to his brothers how one day they would be bowing down to him. I don't really get along with my sister, but I have never told her any of these type of dreams or created any of that type of animosity. So this hatred comes over the brothers. They want to kill him. They put him in a pit, but then they have a change of heart and decide to sell him into slavery.

[10 : 45] Joseph goes to Egypt as a slave and rises to become the second most powerful person in the nation. The simple question is, how does that happen? The answer is simply God.

See, what's interesting, the story of Joseph, for those who know, it isn't just meant to be a story of how to protect your virtue, how to stand firm in the face of injustice, nor is it a lesson on how to forgive your 11 brothers who sold you to slavery. The story of Joseph is seen that God uses men and women to preserve his people. And in this instant, God uses Joseph to protect his people. Genesis 45, 5.

And he's speaking to his family. He says, and now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here. For God sent me before you to preserve life. And then we read in Genesis 50, starting in verse 15. This is after the death of his father, his sons fear that Joseph will turn and kill on them because they are all living in Egypt because there is a famine in their land. It says, when Joseph's brother saw that their father was dead, they said, and maybe that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him. So they sent a message to Joseph saying, your father gave this command before he died. Say to Joseph, please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin because they did evil to you. And now please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father. Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Verse 18. His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, behold, we are your servants. But Joseph said to them, do not fear for am I in the place of God? Verse 20. As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good to bring it about that many people should be kept alive as they are today.

So do not fear. I will provide for you and your little ones. Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. So it's easy to read the story of Joseph and it's an incredible story. There's many chapters dedicated to him. There's a great character studies, but the main role of Joseph. And as we saw last week, the line of Jesus does not come through Joseph. It doesn't come through Benjamin, his younger brother.

It actually comes from his older brother, Judah, who we read last week is quite a character. But God used Joseph to preserve his people. So that is act one, scene two. Now I want us to turn to act one, scene three, which begins in Exodus. This is God builds his people through slavery and misery.

[14 : 19] If you remember going back to Genesis 12, God promised Abraham that Abraham would be the father of a great nation. As much as I complain to waiting three lights at the highway. It is now 215 years since God made a promise to Abraham that Abraham would be the father of a great nation.

And yet now there's only 70 people living in Egypt, a land that is not their own. And if you remember to get a nation, there's three different aspects. One, you need a people with a culture. Two, you need a leader. And three, you need a land. Right now his people is 70.

But we read in Exodus 1, 7, but the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly. They multiplied and grew exceedingly strong so that the land was filled with them. So by the time we get to Exodus, 400 years have passed. Scholars estimate that there is anywhere between two and three million Jews. However, sadly, the Jews don't get there because they were able to flourish in business and economics. But God in his wisdom flourished them under the yoke of slavery. If you look at Exodus 1, 12, I will read it here. It says, but the more they were oppressed, that is the Jews, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel.

So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their work, they ruthlessly made them work as slaves. So for 400 years, what we read is that God's people did two things.

One, they made bricks for the buildings of Pharaoh and two, for babies for the king of kings. That's the two things that preoccupied them, work and babies. And what's interesting, we don't get into this text. Pharaoh was so cruel to them is that he said, I am no longer going to give you any straw in order to build the bricks with. You are now responsible to farm for that straw in order to build those bricks. So even in that side, what does every farmer want? More kids, right? If you're going to sustain the farms, you need more kids. So here's Pharaoh trying to minimize the Jews, but he is strengthening the Jews through this time. We know the story. The Egyptians grow so fearful that they command that the baby boys be killed, but the midwives fear God more than Pharaoh, and God blesses them for that. So Pharaoh orders that the baby boys were to be thrown into the Nile River. It's not as cruel.

[17 : 44] Now, have you ever asked yourself, how did the Jews feel during this time? Hey, man, make work because we know God is at work, right? Do you think that's what's going on? Do you think, hey, we've got these promises and we're going to keep to them? I think the attitude would have been, I wonder what happened to that God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

I wonder if he hears us anymore. I wonder if he sees us anymore. How many times have we ourselves asked God, where are you? If you know your Psalms, you will know there's several Psalms speak specifically to that point. God, do you hear me when I cry?

Do you hear me when I pray? Do you hear me when I plead for you? Have you ever asked that question, where are you, God?

Could be in any situation. More often than not, I find people crying out for God when they are a slave to their own life situation. They've made choices that has led them to a struggle that they cannot get out of. And they see no help on the horizon.

[19 : 24] But if there's a lesson here, a lesson for us to understand that even during the difficult and dark times, God hears, God hears, God is at work. Specifically, in Egypt at that time, God builds his nation.

But nations need a leader. So as we read in Act 1, Scene 4, we now turn the page to the rise of Moses.

It's defined that any nation needs a leader, and a leader needs laws, a constitution to be made a nation.

So we read in the text that God hears the cries of his people, and he provides for them a leader, and what a leader Moses is. Born from the tribe of Levi, yet raised in Pharaoh's house, all by the hand of God.

If you know the story, it's a touching story. Every children's book has it. Moses put it in the basket of reeds, sent out, followed by his sister Miriam, and the daughter of Pharaoh finds the baby and adopts Moses into her home.

[20 : 43] Miriam comes to the daughter and says, hey, I know a midwife who can nurse the baby, who ends up being Moses' mother. So now, Moses is afforded the greatest opportunity of not just becoming a slave, but getting the greatest education that the world has to offer.

So for 40 years, Moses received the best of the best. Acts 7.22 tells us that Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in his words and in his deeds.

If there was a hero that you could pick to lead God's people, this was it. This was Moses. His education, we know from history, the Egyptian education system, he would have been an expert in athletics, art, writing, music, geometry, literature, law, astronomy, medicine, and philosophy.

What a leader. What a leader. I could say we only have a drama teacher for ours, but I'm not going to say anything more. But you've got this person who's accomplished.

In verse 23 of Acts 7, it says, when he was 40 years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. He's ready, I said.

[22 : 19] I can lead these people burdened by these Egyptians. Verse 24 of Acts 7, and seeing one of them being wronged, Moses defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian.

Is that not what a hero does? He prevails over those who are being oppressed. He brings a vengeance over wrongdoing. And he said he supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hands.

But they did not understand. So here is this man afforded all the greatness that this world has to offer, has taken it all in, and he's ready to lead.

So when he comes into his people again in verse 26, it says, on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling. These are two Jewish brothers, and he tried to reconcile them.

I will come as a judge. I will help you. I am Moses. I was raised in Pharaoh's courts. Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong each other?

[23 : 43] But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside saying, who made you a ruler and judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?

Verse 29, at this retort Moses fled. We read in Exodus as Pharaoh had heard the news and desired to kill Moses and became an exile in the land of Midian where he became the father of two sons.

It's kind of funny, right? Same thing in our lives. Sometimes we think we're ready that God has prepared us for a task that we know we're called to, but sometimes it's just not the right time nor are we the right person.

There's two things that God desires in his leaders. One, a desire to lead, but two, those who desire to cooperate with God.

Pride leads us so easily to the other side that we want to cooperate with our agenda as opposed to God's agenda. So we read in Exodus 2.23 it says, during those many days the king of Egypt died and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help.

[25 : 11] Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God and God heard their groaning and God remembered his covenant with Abraham and Isaac and with Jacob and God saw the people of Israel and God knew.

Now what's interesting is even with all the knowledge that Moses had, Moses was not raised with his people. What little the Jewish people would have remembered of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, I contend that Moses knew less.

So God removes Moses from Egypt in the land of Midian and we read for over 40 years, God reveals himself as the great I am.

God has been to God. Have you guys ever had that experience? There's a struggle in life, you're pleading with God and that God through usually the experience of his word and experience of life clearly reveals himself to who you are.

Often it's when we're faced with our sin or frustration and God reveals his goodness and graciousness and forgiveness for us. Those are the times which break our wills.

[26 : 33] It's those times when we make that decision, it's not my will anymore but it's your will. Moses took 40 years to break. Moses needed to be humbled to rule for God and God teaches him the greatest things out in the wilderness.

So by the time Moses is called to lead, he is no longer the headstrong leader that he was when he killed the Egyptian but when God called him to go speak to Pharaoh, what did he say?

I'm really not too good with words. My brother Aaron, he would be really good. He doesn't even want the job. That's how much he has been humbled in that position.

But what's interesting, when we look through the story of Moses, he's an incredibly unique individual. He spends 40 years as a member of the royal court. He spends 40 years as a desert shepherd.

Then he spends 40 years as the deliverer of Israel. He becomes the lawgiver, the builder, the commander in chief, the judge. He is the author of the first five books of the Bible.

[27 : 46] He is the mediator between God and Israel. And God uses all those parts of him to be the person that God needs. And God raises Moses up because he needed a leader to build a nation.

And it was the leader that God wanted. How often we complain when life is tough. How often we gripe when the light doesn't change in our favor.

Hey guys, I've lived in Toronto, downtown Toronto, Chicago, and LA. I know how to use a horn. I was tempted for the first time in Squamish.

Maybe they need to be a little encouraged, eh? Like, you can go through that yellow light honk honk. We're an impatient people. We're even impatient in the things that God wants us to do that we know to do, but yet sometimes and often we are not ready.

So what happens now that God has a leader, God has a nation, but now he needs a land.

[28 : 58] So God's people need to be delivered from this land. God tells them he's going to take them out of the land.

So the beginning of the process of removal begins in Exodus 5. Pharaoh increases the pressure on the Jews. He's making life very miserable.

In fact, he makes it so unbearable and miserable that they are now willing to leave. And I want you to think about that for a second.

Oftentimes in our lives, how many times are we willing to live in our own ministry before we actually cry out to God? Ask yourselves that.

Sometimes we live in our own frustration, our own sin. We know what the answer is, but we don't do it. And sometimes it's God has got to turn up that water to make it boil for us to finally hop out of that situation.

[30 : 00] And it's no different with God's people. Even though they're in the midst of this slavery, they still need to be pushed out of the nest.

it's kind of funny. If you know my family, my mom sighed, and I kind of joke about this and some of you guys have heard this joke.

My background's Acadian, and parents grew up in New Brunswick, and my father passed a couple of years ago, but just before that, I started tracking down our family tree of what was going on and found out that our family had come to Canada in 1640, lived in Nova Scotia, and then in 1710, there was pressure put on the British, so they went to New Brunswick.

So my family has been in that same area for over 300 years. And when I say they're still living in the same area after 300 years, I literally mean they're living in the same 40-mile vicinity for over 300 years.

Now someone asked me, you know, they must be rich, they must own everything. No, they're pretty much as poor as people could be. And when you think about it, sometimes if there was anybody who had any foresight, you're living on the coast, and if you know New Brunswick, there's some depressed areas, you just get depressed.

[31 : 22] And what's interesting for many of my mom's siblings is that life just got unbearable and too poor and forced them to move to Toronto or Montreal. That was the way they finally broke out of poverty.

That's how they got educated. That's how they kind of moved ahead in life. I think that's a lesson that many of us do. We're just stuck in our misery and God's going to boil it up.

And although we complain, it's God actually doing us a favor. So it gets so bad that Moses goes to Pharaoh and he simply says, let God's people go.

Pharaoh says, first, sure I will. Then he says, no I won't. In Exodus 5, 1, we read Moses' first request.

It says, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, let my people go that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness. But Pharaoh said, who is the Lord that I should obey his voice and let Israel go?

[32 : 33] I do not know the Lord and moreover I will not let Israel go. For those of you who are familiar with cinema, this is called great foreshadowing.

And it's an honest question. I don't know who your God is. Why should I obey? So obviously we are familiar with the ten plagues of Egypt that occur from Exodus 7 through chapter 12.

But I want you to understand these are not just random plagues. These are actually specific plagues targeted at specific gods that existed in Egypt.

The first plague is when water turned to blood. That was targeted to the god Hapi which was known as the god of the Nile and Osiris because they saw that Nile was the blood stream for these gods.

And as the Nile was central to Egypt's life and economy it symbolized fertility and divine provision God by turning it to blood mocked their reliance on Hapi as a sustainer of life.

[33 : 45] Number two the frogs that was a targeted towards their god of Heket which was known as the goddess of fertility which is depicted as a frog's head and the significance in Egypt was that the frog was sacred and associated with fertility and life but God with their overwhelming presence and eventual death highlighted God's absolute control over creation rendering Heket powerless and when I say God I am talking about the great I am Yahweh the gnats we read in Exodus 8 we believe that was against the god Geb which was known as the god of the earth and the plague arose from the dust of the ground humiliating this god who was believed to control the soil and its fertility then we had the flies in Exodus 8 20 the god

Kepri which was the god of creation and rebirth depicted with a beetle's head the swarms of flies and beetles overwhelmed Egypt and here was God mocking their god's role as controller of insects in life cycles the death of the livestock targeted Hathor the cow headed goddess of fertility and motherhood and Apis the bull god which was worship for strength and virility God's death of the livestock attacked their very economy and exposed these gods inability to protect even these sacred animals the boils attacked Imhotep which was the god of medicine and healing the priests and magicians who were expected to have divine powers to heal were afflicted themselves showing their impotence before the great Yahweh then the hail attacked their gods Nut Seth and Shu which are the gods of the sky storm and air when the hail and fire ravaged

Egypt demonstrating that Yahweh controls the elements not their gods the locusts attacked the god seth which was the protector of their crops darkness many of you would have heard the god ra the sun god which was known as the chief deity god brought about a prolonged darkness symbolizing Yahweh's power over the sun and the impotence of ra the cornerstone of Egyptian religion and finally we move to the death of the first born the targeted deity would have been pharaoh himself demonstrating that even their great god pharaoh could not protect the first born because the first born represented the future and strength of Egypt and their deaths demonstrated Yahweh's ultimate authority over life and death shattering pharaoh's divine claim so these ten plagues were not random but were created by god to systematically dismantle the

Egyptian gods exposing their impotence in the face of Yahweh and the central truth is read in Exodus 9 14 it says so that you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth so that you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth you see Israel's deliverance isn't just a physical deliverance it's also a theological deliverance it's God not only demonstrating his power over Egypt but it's demonstrating to God's power how great their God is anybody here sometimes forget how great God is it's usually seen not only in our disobedience but our lack of prayer our lack of hope when we become despondent over our life situations and we're giving more to complaining rather than glorifying

God oftentimes we need to be reminded so that you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth and if Israel was to have their own nation they needed to understand this so in this final plague the Passover is instituted again we see the symbolism the lamb that absorbs the judgment to protect them from the angel Christ becomes our lamb they required a spotless lamb our redemption requires a lamb without sin and the blood that must be shed so that there can be life we needed Christ's blood that was shed so that we may have life and in the same way

[39 : 21] God delivers his people God delivers us amen because that's the promise of the Bible that when we become new in Christ we become a new people a new nation a new creation we are to have nothing to do with the old but our lives are to be transfixed on Jesus Christ there's incredible meaning in the Passover but there's also meaning if you go to Israel and when we studied the life of Christ we found out that there was this week before the Passover and it was the week of the unleavened bread and the week of the unleavened bread was meant to institute certain thought processes one the reason that they were supposed to make bread without leaven and leaven would be another word for yeast that causes bread to rise that God was going to deliver you so quickly you weren't even going to have time for the bread to rise so just make unleavened bread before

I am going to take you out of Egypt so in unleavened bread in Exodus 12 when God instructed the Israelites to prepare for their deliverance from Egypt they were told like I said to bake this on leavened bread and the absence of leaven symbolized the urgency of their departure now what's interesting is there's two symbols the one symbol that many of us are familiar with is leaven becomes the symbol of sin and corruption as you know it just takes a little bit of yeast to spread through the dough to make it rise it's the same thing with sin corruption or in purity so there was two aspects that when the Jews were preparing this unleavened bread they knew there was both physical rescue but also religious rescue so this feast was created for them to remember this time it's the same way that God wants us to abstain even from the appearance of evil not just evil but anything that would appear to be evil as

Proverbs 8 13 says the fear of the Lord is to hate evil and so when we are in Christ we are to be given to that very righteousness of God in its very position but it's also to become practical in our lives as God delivers us God expects separation from the world so Israel now once out of the land delivered by the great hand of God what does God do he has a people he has a leader and now if you know God gives Moses the Ten Commandments so they have laws and a constitution and they are told something and there's three main passages that every Jew needs to understand and memorize

Deuteronomy 6 4 to 9 which you would know as the Shema let me read it to you says hear O Israel the Lord our God the Lord is one you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul and with all your might does that sound familiar to anyone when Jesus was challenged what is the one command that is above every other he tells them that this is the greatest command still to this day this is our command as well this demonstrate that one the Shema affirms the oneness of God there is only one God and his name is Yahweh he is the one and only true God unique and incomparable to the command to love God with all our heart and soul emphasizes a total commitment to

God both emotionally spiritually and physically the third aspect of our faith is obedience to God's commandments as to the Israel the Shema calls for faithful obedience to God's word with the instructions to meditate on his commandments teach them to our children and incorporate them into our daily lives and probably more importantly it reminds Israel of their identity as God's chosen people bound to him by covenant and of their mission to live as a holy and distinct nation those are the four themes that God calls us into as well let me conclude for you so God has started a nation by a guy from

[44 : 55] Ur of the Chaldeans one man builds up a family named Abraham Isaac and Jacob who all had barren wives and God supernaturally gives them children God begins to work he builds a tribal framework from Jacob's family 70 people from four wives who escaped to Egypt because of a flood plague to be protected by their brother who God had sent before them to prepare the way they get down there and they end up staying for 400 years building bricks and babies they come out with close to 3 million people and they are this huge nation with a language they are a people but not really a nation yet because there is no leadership so God raises up Moses in the most unique of ways prepares him trains him and takes him to

Mount Sinai where he gives Moses the Ten Commandments now God's people have this incredible law they've been delivered from Egypt they're a people with a language a culture they have a leader in a law and now all they need is a homeland let's pray dear holy heavenly father we just thank you for these stories that you give to us and if there's any aspect of the stories when we read our Old Testament is that these aren't myths these aren't legends but these are stories of real people these are stories of real people who suffer loss who feel grief who feel jealousy who feel angry who feel lost who long and yearn for your voice all too often it's easy to disassociate ourselves or to even judge these people even last week in the story of

Tamar she was a desperate woman who desperately wanted to be somebody and without a child in that culture she would have just faded away but God in his goodness wrote her name in his words so that all would know that she's a part of the line of Jesus so it is with our stories we make decisions we complain we grumble we fall we get up yet the question is are we seeking God's glory or our own glory do we seek to be of use to the king or are we content to live in our own little home and be distant from everyone else the fact of the matter is

God is and continues to do a great work in his people and God continues to desire to call people to him today perhaps you're one of them perhaps you identify with some of these parts of these stories but you have not given your life to Jesus Christ perhaps this is the day when you will call out and say Jesus I need you Jesus I need you to change me Jesus I need you to do a work in me Jesus I need to be a different spouse a different parent a different employee and maybe you're there right now because of hardship the water has been boiling that God has been making things miserable for you for the stated purpose that you would finally turn and bow the knee to him father

I pray that you would use these stories as we read them for ourselves and we do get involved in the drama may we see that your redemption is for us just as much as it was for the Jews we ask these things in your most holy and precious name amen