



# God's Story, Our Stories

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ISRAEL:  
God Begins His  
Relentless Rescue



Docksway Landfill in Newport, Wales

**Where do I even begin?**

Fear, Anxiety, Alienation, Folly...  
and it's complicated.

## Genesis 12:1-3

<sup>1</sup> The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

<sup>2</sup> “I will make you into a great nation,  
and I will bless you;

I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.

<sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;

and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you.”

**ELECTION:** God chooses to be faithful to humanity and blesses through his first choice.

Gift: God gives the *land* (and descendants and protection) so there can be *fruitfulness*.

Purpose: Blessing for the whole world!

But...famine! (Gen. 42:1)

The land doesn't produce food.

Abraham's descendants go into Egypt and are enslaved.

What will God do now?

**EXODUS:** God rescues his chosen people  
and gives them a role.

## Exodus 19:3-6

<sup>3</sup> Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: <sup>4</sup> ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. <sup>5</sup> Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, <sup>6</sup> you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.”

# Exodus 20

<sup>1</sup> And God spoke all these words:

<sup>2</sup> “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

<sup>3</sup> “You shall have no other gods before me.

<sup>4</sup> “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. <sup>5</sup> You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, <sup>6</sup> but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

<sup>7</sup> “You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

<sup>8</sup> “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work, <sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

12 “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

13 “You shall not murder.

14 “You shall not commit adultery.

15 “You shall not steal.

16 “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

**EXODUS:** God rescues his chosen people and gives them a role.

Gift: God gives the *law* so that there can be *faithfulness*.

Purpose: Worship by the whole world by a holy priest.

But...failure!

The law doesn't produce faithfulness.

The Israelites are too much like the other nations (Deut. 31:15-18).

What will God do now?

## Deuteronomy 31:15-18

<sup>15</sup> Then the Lord appeared at the tent in a pillar of cloud, and the cloud stood over the entrance to the tent. <sup>16</sup> And the Lord said to Moses: “You are going to rest with your ancestors, and these people will soon prostitute themselves to the foreign gods of the land they are entering. They will forsake me and break the covenant I made with them. <sup>17</sup> And in that day I will become angry with them and forsake them; I will hide my face from them, and they will be destroyed. Many disasters and calamities will come on them, and in that day they will ask, ‘Have not these disasters come on us because our God is not with us?’ <sup>18</sup> And I will certainly hide my face in that day because of all their wickedness in turning to other gods.

**What will they do with the  
determined faithfulness of God?**

## Jeremiah 7:1-8

<sup>1</sup> This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord;

<sup>2</sup> “Stand at the gate of the Lord’s house and there proclaim this message:

“Hear the word of the Lord, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the Lord. <sup>3</sup> This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place. <sup>4</sup> Do not trust in deceptive words and say, “This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord!”

<sup>5</sup> If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, <sup>6</sup> if you do not oppress the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, <sup>7</sup> then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your ancestors for ever and ever. <sup>8</sup> But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless.

**EXILE:** God holds his chosen people accountable for the sake of the world.

## 2 Kings 17:7

**All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD** their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

## 2 Kings 24:3-4

Surely these things happened to Judah **according to the LORD'S command**, in order to remove them from his presence because of the sins of Manasseh and all he had done, <sup>4</sup> including the shedding of innocent blood. For he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the Lord was not willing to forgive.

**EXILE: God holds his chosen people  
accountable for the sake of the world.**

What is the gift?

What is the purpose?

1. God can bring life from death.  
(Abraham and Election: Hebrews 11:12)

## **Hebrews 11:2**

And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

1. God can bring life from death.  
(Abraham and Election: Hebrews 11:12)
2. God can form beauty in bondage.  
(Moses and Exodus: Deuteronomy 4:15-20)

## Deuteronomy 4:15-20

<sup>15</sup> You saw no form of any kind the day the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire. Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. <sup>16</sup> so that you do not become corrupt and make for yourselves an idol, an image of any shape, whether formed like a man or a woman, <sup>17</sup> or like any animal on earth or any bird that flies in the air, <sup>18</sup> or like any creature that moves along the ground or any fish in the waters below. <sup>19</sup> And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars—all the heavenly array—do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshiping things the Lord your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven. <sup>20</sup> But as for you, the Lord took you and brought you out of the iron-smelting furnace, out of Egypt, to be the people of his inheritance, as you now are.

1. God can bring life from death.  
(Abraham and Election: Hebrews 11:12)
2. God can form beauty in bondage.  
(Moses and Exodus: Deuteronomy 4:15-20)
3. God can sustain identity in isolation.  
(Prophets and Exile: Isaiah 54:1-3; 13)

## Isaiah 54:1-3, 13

<sup>1</sup>“Sing, barren woman,  
you who never bore a child;  
burst into song, shout for joy,  
you who were never in labor;  
because more are the children of the desolate woman  
than of her who has a husband,”  
says the Lord.

<sup>2</sup> “Enlarge the place of your tent,  
stretch your tent curtains wide,  
do not hold back;  
lengthen your cords,  
strengthen your stakes.

<sup>3</sup> For you will spread out to the right and to the left;  
your descendants will dispossess nations  
and settle in their desolate cities.

<sup>13</sup> All your children will be taught by the Lord,  
and great will be their peace.



# God's Story, Our Stories

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## **Isaiah 9:2**

The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness  
a light has dawned.