

Shawn Brummund: Good morning, and welcome to this week's edition of the "Sabbath School Study Hour." My name is Pastor Shawn Brummund, and it is my privilege to be able to invite you and welcome you to this particular study. I trust and know that this will be a time in which you have invested well, in which you will come to know the Word of God that much better. We pray that you come with a spirit of worship, and a sincere desire to be able to know God better and to be able to know His Word that much better as well.

We continue to come back to a rather new quarterly that we're looking at, just starting this particular month, and it is entitled, "The Promise and God's Everlasting Covenant." There is a theme throughout the Scriptures, right from the first chapters of the first book of the Bible that talks about God's promise and His covenant, that He has given not only to Abraham as we'll be looking at in our lesson study, in lesson study number five here today, but a universal lesson or covenant I should say, that God has given to all of mankind. And I look forward to be able to learning more about that as Pastor Doug teaches the lesson here today.

So if you have your quarterly, make sure you go and grab--great. If you don't have your quarterly, make sure that you go and grab it; if you don't have your Bible, make sure you go ahead and grab that as well. This is a Bible study and so we want you to be able to make that Bible your own and to get to know it that much better.

Also want to invite you to take advantage of a free gift offer that we have for you here today as well. And it is one of my favorite subjects by far, which is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The lesson study and study guide is entitled "Saved from Certain Death." And so, please take advantage of this. If you've never studied this study guide, this is one of my favorites by far. And you just go ahead and dial the number that is on the screen which is 866-788-3966. Again, that's 1-866-Study-More. And when you do dial that number, just go ahead and ask for offer, free offer number 109, and they'll be happy to be able to send that out to you for free. If you're in North America, that is in this particular continent or in the different US territories.

Now, for those of you are in the US, we also have a digital copy that's free and available for you as well. And so you can just go ahead and text the word "SH060," and you want to dial that to 40544. So please take advantage of that, get the digital copy. If you want a physical copy, we're happy to mail that out to you as well.

Well, before we invite Pastor Doug out, and actually open the Bible and look at our lesson, we want to worship God for a moment as we spend some time in song. And so, please as we welcome-- let's count ourselves blessed as we welcome our musicians today.

♪ ♪ When peace like a river

♪ ♪ attendeth my way,

♪ ♪ when sorrows like sea billows roll,

♪ ♪ whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,

♪ ♪ "It is well, it is well

♪ ♪ with my soul."

♪ ♪ It is well

♪ ♪ with my soul.

♪ ♪ It is well, it is well with my soul.

♪ ♪ My sin, oh, the joy of this glorious thought.

♪ ♪ My sin, not in part but the whole,

♪ ♪ is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more,

♪ ♪ praise the Lord, praise the Lord,

♪ ♪ O my soul.

♪ ♪ And, Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight.

♪ ♪ The clouds be rolled back as a scroll.

♪ ♪ The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend.

♪ ♪ Even so, it is well with my soul.

♪ ♪ It is well with my soul.

♪ ♪ It is well, it is well

♪ ♪ with my soul.

Shawn: Let's pray. Father in heaven, as we stop to bow before you, we want to thank you for this opportunity that we have to be able to worship you. We thank you for preparing our hearts through music. We thank you for the Holy Spirit that you promised to give to us as a true and full representative of Jesus Christ, to be able to be in our hearts and to be able to guide us and lead us. Want to pray that Your Holy Spirit will do His promised job in our hearts and our minds, to be able to teach us and guide us into all truth. We thank you for this lesson study. We thank you for the truth that it brings forth. Pray that you will be with Pastor Doug in a special way, and, God, that you will be with his mind as well as with ours, that we might receive the truth from Your Word, even as you give it. In Jesus's name we pray these things, God, amen.

Doug Batchelor: Good morning. Want to welcome those who are here at the Granite Bay Hilltop Church as well as the bigger audience we know that is watching on AFTV or on Facebook or YouTube or all of the different social media venues to our "Sabbath School Study."

We're continuing in our study dealing with the promise, God's everlasting covenant, and today we're on lesson number five. And we're talking about the different aspects of some of the covenants that God has made. And our lesson today is going to be dealing with the subject of the children of promise. And we have a memory verse. And the memory verse is from Matthew 28:20. And if you have your Bibles, you can say that with me, Matthew 28:20. It says, "Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world."

Some of your versions may say, "I'm with you always even to the end of the age or the end of the earth." But he's basically saying, "I will be with you till the end." And there's several promises in the Bible. You know God told Jacob, "I am with you." God told Joshua, "I am with you." And then the culmination of the plan of salvation in heaven is when God is with us. Sin separates us from God, and so it's a remarkable promise when God reminds us, "I am with you. I'm watching over you wherever you go."

Now, H.M.S. Richards Sr. used to teach a fascinating--he used an illustration--sorry, we've got spare parts on the podium here-- where a father, it's a true story, a father and a daughter went swimming somewhere on the East Coast, and it was a warm day, and the water was fairly warm. And it was a calm day, and they went swimming out in the ocean. And they were good swimmers, and they went swimming out, and then all of a sudden, the father realized as they tried to swim back to shore, the tide had changed and now it was going out and it went out with great force in this particular area. And swim though he might, he could barely get back in and his daughter's with him. And if he tried to carry her back in, they just went out. So he had to make a pretty fateful decision.

He said, "Listen," he told his daughter, "I'm going to go in and I'm going to get some help. The water is warm. You can float on your back all day if you get tired. I will come back for you." And she was used to swimming in the ocean, so she wasn't frightened by that, but he took off and left her and she kept getting pulled further and further out. And he used all of his strength and just barely made it back in.

Well, he notified a bunch of people in the village and several of the people in the town. They got their boats together and they went swimming-- or they went paddling out to see if they could find the girl, and hours went by. Finally, four hours later, they returned where about 100 people had gathered on the shore with the girl. And when they picked up, they said, "Were you frightened? She said, "No." She said, "Dad told me he'd come back for me and he said you could float all day on your back, so I believed him." And so, she wasn't afraid.

You know, if you believe the promises and the covenant that God has made with us, it goes a long way to give you peace. There's a lot of trials in life and if you focus on the problems, you could live a fearful existence. But God wants us to be people of faith and not fear, amen. So we're going to talk about some of these promises God made.

Take a look for instance in that first covenant promise and you'll find this in Genesis chapter 15. And I'm going to read verses 1 through 3. If you got your Bibles, you can join me there. And we're going to focus on this. Genesis chapter 15, verse 1 through 3. Now, you remember, we read that first promise in an earlier lesson that God makes in Genesis 12 to Abraham. And He kind of renews it here when God first calls Abraham. We find it in Genesis 12, verses 1 through 3, and now we here in Genesis 15.

"After these things, the Word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield and your exceeding great reward.'" God says, "I am your reward." "But Abram said, 'Lord, what will you give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abraham said, 'Look, you have given me no offspring and indeed one born in my house is my heir.'" And he says, "Behold, the Word of the Lord came to him saying, 'This one shall not be your heir, but one who has come from your own body shall be your heir.' And He brought him outside and He said, 'Look toward the heaven and count the stars, if you're able to number them.' And He said, 'So shall your descendants be.' And he believed God and he counted it to him for righteousness."

That's what you call righteousness by faith. He believed God and God declared him righteous because of his faith. Well, a few things to consider in this passage that we just read. First of all, you'll notice that God said, "Do not be afraid." Now, why would He say that? Do you tell somebody who is not afraid

"don't be afraid" or do you tell someone who's afraid "don't be afraid"? Why was Abraham afraid? I mean, here he's called the father of the faithful.

Well, think about this. He had come from Ur of the Chaldees. Now, just so you know, there is discrepancy among the scholars where that was. Some have what they called the southern Ur, which is close to where the Euphrates River dumps off into the Gulf, and some have the northern Ur. There's an area in the mountains not far from Ararat that also had the ancient name Ur, that was inhabited by the people of Mesopotamia. So there's some discussion about whereabouts. But either way, so he comes from Mesopotamia. He crosses Euphrates, he leaves his family, and his people and his city, his town, all of this support structure, their culture, and they go to a strange country where people are speaking strange languages and they've got different customs and they're little bit barbaric.

Let me give you an example of why God had to tell Abraham, "Abraham, do not fear." You remember, for example, when--Genesis chapter 12, in just the former chapters here, "Came to pass when he was close to entering Egypt," during the time of famine, "that he said to Sarai, his wife," she had not been renamed yet, "Indeed, I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance. Therefore, it will happen that when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife,' and they will kill me, but they'll let you live. Please, say that you're my sister that it might be well with me for your sake, that I might live because of you."

So he was in fear all the time. His wife was so beautiful. He was in fear that they were going to kill him for his wife. He's surrounded by nations that were, you know, they just--remember, God destroyed the world because of violence in the days of Noah before the flood. And now, things have gotten to almost that same point where Abram said, "These are a violent and a barbaric people," and so he was afraid. They're surrounded by seven nations that were greater than they were.

Even in the days of Isaac, so, several years have gone by, Isaac tells Rebecca when they're going to stay with the Philistines, and they're in the area of King Abimelech. He said, "Say that you're my sister." Or they asked about Rebecca and he said, "Oh she is my sister," because he was afraid. That's what it says. He was afraid. So they're afraid. And one more example of this.

Of course, the sons of Jacob caused this problem. You know, Simeon and Levi got upset because the people of Shechem, the Prince of Shechem slept with Jacob's daughter Dinah. And so Simeon and Levi went through and they sort of tricked the men of Shechem into going through the rite of circumcision, and then Levi and Simeon attacked them, killed all the males, took all their livestock and their slaves, and here's what Jacob says. He said to Simeon and Levi, "You have troubled me by making me obnoxious, odious, making me stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites. And since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me and I'll be destroyed, I and my household." And so, they kind of lived in constant fear of one nation attacking another.

Why did Abraham have to rescue Lot? When Chedorlaomer, the king of the north up by Damascus, he and the confederacy of other kings, they were really tribes back then, they came and attacked Sodom and Gomorrah. And so, they were warring back then and attacking. So Abraham's surrounded by these barbaric, warlike people. And you know, he didn't have to--had to wonder at night if they're going to take his livestock and it was a dangerous time. It was the wild west back then. We call it the Middle East, but it was west of Mesopotamia. And so God said, "Don't be afraid. I've called you. I'm going to watch over you."

God had to tell Paul that. Paul went to preach in some dangerous cities. Paul said, "No man is going to hurt you here because I'm going to be with you. I've got many people in this city." And so there's many

times that God's servant has had to have reassurance that He's going to watch over us during these times. What else does He say? He said, "Do not be afraid."

I remember hearing a pastor. A little boy said, you know, he sometimes was afraid. And the pastor said, "Do you say your prayers every night?" And the boy said, "Yes, sir." And he said, "Do you say your prayers in the morning?" He said, "No, sir, I'm not afraid during the daytime. Just afraid at night." But Deuteronomy chapter 20, verse 8, "What man is there among you who is fearful and fainthearted, let them go and return to his house, lest the heart of his brethren faint like his heart. Fear can be contagious, and God did not want His people being fearful."

And when Jesus calmed the sea, you know what He said to His disciples? "Please be still. Why are you so fearful? How is it you have no faith?" You know what that means? People that are living in constant fear, they don't live by faith.

I just finished a book on worry. I grant it's not the word "fear" but--same principle. And the reason I wrote the book is because I've met so many Christians that just live afraid all the time and afraid of everything and they're always worried. And once they find they don't have to worry about one thing, they find something else to worry about. And nobody is won to your faith by your worrying.

People will be won to your faith by your faith. If you're a person that has peace and some serenity, people will be attracted to that because we're in a fearful world. And so, God tells--Jesus said, "Where is your faith, why are you afraid?" Now, wouldn't you be afraid if you were in a storm in a little boat at night on the dark sea and about to sink? And Jesus was not afraid, and He said you should not be afraid. I know that sounds like a stretch.

You know how Wesley was converted? Wesley was out doing missionary work in North America trying to work among the Indians and he didn't have very much success. And sailing back across to England, he was doubting his conversion when during a terrible storm, all the sailors were afraid and the passengers were afraid except a group of Moravian, primitive Baptists. They were up on deck singing, and they looked absolutely fearless. And Wesley was so impressed, he asked them, he spoke to the elder of the group, he said "Aren't you afraid?" This terrible storm, the boat was going down into the trough of the waves. The waves were rolling over and it was rocking back and forth, and lightning was flashing, the wind was howling, and everybody was afraid. Water was coming in, the sailors were pumping, and they were singing. He said, "Aren't you afraid?" "No, we're not afraid." "Aren't your women and children afraid?" "They're not afraid. We're in the hands of God."

You know, when we decided to follow Jesus, we died way back then so now we're not afraid of death anymore. You realize when you take up your cross to follow Jesus, you die. And once you're dead, Christians just go to sleep. They don't die, right? So you don't have to be afraid.

Anyway, I've got a friend that her husband was a little bit of a reckless driver. If they're watching now, they'll know I'm talking about them, but I'm not going to tell their names. And he was, you know, totally fearless and she was fearful. Isn't it something how God puts those people together all the time in marriage? It's part of God's cosmic humor, and He takes those opposites. Somehow, they're attracted to each other. And every time he'd go around the turn, she'd scream, "Oh, oh, oh," because he was--he'd be up on two wheels and he's just that way. He drove like Jehu. And I finally told her one day, I was riding with him in the car and I'm watching this go on. And I thought, "Wouldn't be easier," I'm talking to the sister, I said, "wouldn't be easier just to assume that you're going to die and then relax?" I said, "Living in constant fear like this has got to be torment. Just accept, say, 'I'm going to die,' and then just enjoy the ride." It doesn't make any sense to just be afraid and screaming all the time, it was this constant terror.

And so for the Christian, you know just accept, "Well, I'm going to die." Enjoy the ride, right? Live by faith. Anyway, God said, "Don't be afraid," and then He makes this other statement. He says, "I am your shield and your exceeding great reward."

Let's talk about the shield part here for a minute. If you look in, oh, Psalm 144, verse 2, "God is my shield, the one in whom I take refuge." Now that's a picture of, like, when--you can read in Ephesians. One of the implements of the Christian's armory is the shield of faith that you hold up and you quench the fiery darts of the enemy. When Satan is hurling his doubts and his temptations at you, you hold up that shield and they just deflect. They don't touch you. And God protects us.

I like the picture it gives in Psalm 91, verse 4. Says, "He will cover you with His feathers and under His wings you will take refuge. His truth will be your shield and your buckler." So you picture, you know when the hen gives a little chirp for warning and all the chicks run underneath the wings, and there they're shaded, and there they're protected and the mother's ready to give her life to protect them. God says, "I will protect you under My wings and you'll take refuge." God is your shield.

Now, if you've got God as your forcefield, if He is your protection, then is there anything the enemy can do to hurt you? Yeah, nothing-- God said no one's-- by the way, Abraham didn't make it. He died of old age. God protected him through his life, through all the trials and adventures that he had. God said, "I will protect you." It's amazing with all the adventures that David had that David managed to die in his bed of old age, essentially. And He says, "I'll take care of you. I'll protect you. Don't be afraid. I am your shield." And He said, "And I am your exceedingly great reward."

Now, when you think about the reward of the Christian, you think about heaven or do you think about God? So many people, they think about heaven, they think, "Ah, a world--no more pain. New body. No more aches and pains. No more sorrow and no more tears. I'll be able to fly. Soar to worlds unknown. I'll be able to eat from the tree of life to my full. Never be hungry again, never be thirsty again." And people go through the litany of wonderful things in heaven.

And all of that is true, but what is the greatest reward of heaven? God himself will be there and we can be with God. The real reward for the Christian is when you love Jesus and you think about heaven and you're thinking about being with the one you love, that will be your exceeding great reward: to be with your Creator and your Redeemer.

All right, let's go to the next section here. It's the messianic promise, messianic promise, and there's two parts to this; this is part one. And you read here in Genesis 28, part of God's covenant for His people. "Also your descendants will be as the dust of the earth and you will spread abroad to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. And in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Now, that is really a-- that's a promise and a prophecy that has multiple, you might say manifold, different ways that it could be fulfilled. First of all, the Jewish people--Christians in the world today, 2.1 billion, 2.3 billion, somewhere in there. A lot of people are classified as "Christians." They are born in the Catholic church or they're born in the Anglican church, they may not be practicing, but they are categorized as Christians. Muslims, of course, you've got both devout and you've got secular Muslims. They're about 1.7, 1.8 billion. Jews, you want to guess? Sixteen million. How'd they--good, Luke. There's not that many. I mean, you think they'd been around a lot longer than Muslims--well, of course there's been several times in history that they've been virtually annihilated or exterminated, but about 16 million.

And so when He said, "Your people will be like the sand of the sea," was He talking about Jews or was He talking about Christians or maybe both? Because every Christian-- what does the Bible say? You read

in Galatians chapter 3, verse 29, "If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." So the promise that God made to Abraham, "Your descendants are going to be like the stars and like the sand." That will also include not only literal Israel. And you know, even back in the days of Solomon when he dedicated the temple, and David, he said, you know, "You've made me king over your people that are numberless." And so God had fulfilled that promise back then. He made them a great nation back then.

But even beyond that, you can read here in Genesis 18:18, "Since Abraham surely shall become great and a mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him," how? I know you think about the greatness, you can think about the numerical quantity. There's a lot of Christians and Jews in the world. Billions, they fill the world. Why does it say, "In your seed all the world will be blessed"? You know the word "seed" means descendants. It's sort of the Hebrew way of saying "your offspring."

How is all the world blessed in that offspring? Through the seed of Abraham, the Messiah came, right? But another way you might realize that-- how do you have the Bible? We're all sitting here today because of the book. You know, I'm glad that we found an acronym for this facility or I should say these facilities. Namely the church, and the Amazing Facts office, the warehouse, all that happens here in the studios, and we call it the WORD. The WORD Center. And the WORD, in case you don't know, that's World Outreach Revival and Discipleship. Everything we do here is because of this book. Would you agree? Everything we believe, it's the foundation, it's our constitution, it's the, you know, the Magna Carta of what the Christian believes. It's the ultimate source. Jesus is called "the Word."

How do we get this book? This book is the history of Abraham and his people. It is all written by Abraham's people. "In the end, in your seed, all the world will be blessed." If it was not for the Jews, the world would not have the Bible, with the exception of a small excerpt in the Book of Daniel, written that Nebuchadnezzar that was inserted. You know, Nebuchadnezzar had his, had his dream in chapter 4 and he writes that section. The whole book is written by Jews.

In Abraham's seed, all the world is blessed. Part of the job of the Jewish people was to announce and introduce the Messiah. They did that at Pentecost, and in addition, they delivered the holy Scriptures. Paul says, "For to Israel, we're committed the oracles of God. The sacred oracles. The law, and the prophets and the Psalms through Abraham's seed. So it wasn't all written by Jesus in person. It was written by the seed of Abraham, right? So there's a few ways that this prophecy was literally fulfilled but the ultimate way is that the Messiah would come through the genealogy, the line of Abraham.

Now, there were several forks in that tree. You know, you've got--not every Hebrew is a Jew. I saw something on the internet when I was studying last night that says, "Jews, Hebrews, Israelite are the same." That's just--sorry, they don't know their Bible. That's categorically not true. Jews, the word Jew, principally means people who have descended from the tribe of Judah because ten other tribes were carried away by Assyria, but the tribe of Judah which was the biggest tribe, and Benjamin and Levi, they were carried off by the Babylonians. They did come back. The Assyrians never really allowed the Jews carried off, or the Israelites carried off by them, to come back again.

And a Hebrew, technically Abraham was a Hebrew. The word Hebrew means those who have crossed over. That would mean all Muslims are Hebrews. It is true Jews and Muslims are both Semitic. That means that they came from the tribe of Shem. That's where you get the word Semitic. But there are differences.

The descendants of Jacob: Israel are the Israelites, the 12 tribes. The descendants of Judah: Benjamin and Levi, they're typically called Jews but--yeah, if you're--you can find people from Manasseh or Issachar, you can call them a Jew too. Everyone will sort of know what you're talking about. All right, and

that was probably more than you needed on that. Now, can you be a physical Jew and not a child of Abraham?

Let me read something to you. John 8:39. "They answered and said to Him, 'Abraham is our father.' Jesus said to them, 'If you are Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.'" And later He says, "You're not Abraham's children. You're of your father, the devil, because you do the works of your father."

So when it talks about the seed of Abraham, it's not just talking about physical genealogy, DNA. It's talking about those who have the spiritual DNA. And what was the real trait? What was that identifying marker in the DNA of Abraham? Abraham believed God. These are people of faith, amen?

All right, so you get that first promise and there's many in prophecies we could look at where it talks about the Messiah would be coming through the line of Abraham, and we know that that was true. Not only did it tell us that the Messiah was going to come through the line of Abraham; further on it says it was going to come through the line of Jacob. Then again, they'll come through the line of Isaac, then the line of Jacob. Then Jacob says, "that through the line of Judah, the Messiah would come." Did I put that verse in my notes? Yeah, Genesis 49 verse 10, "The scepter will not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet."

And a little later, he not only narrows the focus more, starts out saying you know it's going to be through Shem and through Abraham, and then it's going to be through Isaac and Jacob, and then it's going to be through David--or Judah, then David. And the last marker given is that it's going to come through the line of David. And then of course, both Joseph and Mary came from the line of David.

All right, moving on, the Messiah promise, part two. Now, there were a lot of promises in the Old Testament that talk about the Messiah's coming. Some of them are talking about the first coming and some of them are talking about the Second Coming.

Let me just say this, because you probably heard me say it before, but there's always people listening who haven't heard it. The devil confused people regarding the prophecies of Jesus coming so they were not ready for His first coming. Some prophecies talk about Jesus coming loudly like a lion. Some talk about Him coming meekly like a lamb. The nation of Israel thought that the first coming of Jesus was going to be loudly like a lion, but they were wrong.

They misunderstood the prophecies. And when He came quietly, they said, "We don't understand. We thought you were coming like a conquering king and you were going to overthrow the Romans and you're going to reestablish the Davidic dynasty and the kingdom of Solomon." And when He came, and he's dying on a cross, they said "This was not at all what we pictured with the King coming. Don't look like a King." And they got the prophecies mixed up.

Now, what's happening-- and so they were not ready for His first coming. Now what's happening is the same thing. They say he's coming secretly, quietly. People are going to disappear. And life's going to go on, and we're going to go through seven years of tribulation. No, now when Jesus comes next time, he's coming like a lion. And he's going to roar and it's not going to be a secret. And they're confusing the Second Coming, preparing much of the Christian world to be deceived by a false Christ.

So the devil always does that. He tries to flip things over. He says, "They call good, evil; and evil, good; and light, dark; and dark, light," and the devil wants to just get it all mixed up.

So, now we're dealing with the promises of the Second Coming of Jesus. Do you find in the Old Testament promises about the first coming? Yes, do you find-- and let me see what are some examples

of the first coming. Well, Isaiah 53 is an example of the first coming of Jesus. Do you find any Old Testament prophecies of the Second Coming or were they only New Testament? Don't be afraid to answer. Worst that could happen is you'd be wrong. Yes, so there are prophecies, many prophecies in the Old Testament of the Second Coming, and that's why they sometimes got it mixed up, and here's just a couple.

You can look in Psalm 50, verse 3, "Our God shall come and shall not keep silent. A fire will devour before Him. It will be very tempestuous all around Him and He will call to the heavens above and the earth, that He might judge His people. Gather My saints together." That's what Jesus is--He'll send the angels to gather together the elect from the four ends of heaven, "Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."

Look in Job 19, verse 25. "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He will stand at last on the earth. And after my skin is destroyed, this I know that in my flesh I will see God." That must be Second Coming because you're talking about the resurrection, glorified body. "Whom I will see for myself and my eyes will behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me."

So there are several prophecies in the Old Testament. You can look in the Book of Joel, and the Book of Amos, Book of Ezekiel, and I mentioned Jeremiah. Lot of prophecies of the Second Coming in the Old Testament. And of course, in the New Testament, all the prophecies of His coming are the Second Coming, or when He comes at the end of the millennium. Jesus said--John chapter 14:1-3.

Here's one of the plainest ones. "Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions, many dwelling places. If it were not so, I would've told you. I go and prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself that where I am, there you might be also."

And then, of course, Revelation 3:12, "He who overcomes, I will make a pillar in the temple of My God and he will go out no more. And I'll write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven from God, and I will write on him My new name." God talks about that new city, and the many prophecies. In fact, if you read in Matthew 24, Mark chapter 13, Luke chapter 17, Luke chapter 21, these are passages where the disciples just said, "Jesus, tell us about Your Second Coming, what is the signs of Your coming? What's going to happen in the end of the world?" He gave them a very thorough discourse on some of the events dealing with the Second Coming.

So there are multiple prophecies. You can read there in 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4, "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, the voice of the archangel, the trump of God. The dead in Christ shall rise." You can even read in Daniel talking back about the Second Coming in the Old Testament. "At that time, Michael will stand up, the great prince that stands for the children of my people and they'll be a time of trouble such as there never was and a resurrection. Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake."

So you can find many prophecies about the Messiah's Second Coming in the Old and in the New Testaments. And then He makes a promise that Abraham would be a great and a mighty nation. Did God keep His promise, that Abraham would be a great and a mighty nation? Let's read something here, Deuteronomy 4, verse 6 through 8, "Therefore, be careful to observe them." He's just recited the Ten Commandments. And--actually, this is--I'm sorry. This is just before the Ten Commandments. "Be careful to observe them for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes. Others are going to hear about My laws. And they will say, 'Surely, this great nation is a wise and an understanding people. For what great nation is there that has a God so near to it

as the Lord our God is to us. For whatever reason we may call upon Him. And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all of His law which I set before you this day?"

You know, God's plan was that as missionaries fan out around the world, and you teach the Word of God, that the different nations will say, "Wow, these are just really logical, just and righteous laws. And if society followed these laws, you would have a lot more happiness and peace."

Now, it is true, and you'll often hear from, you know, modern media today and the history books that these, you know, missionaries went out and they were all violent Jesuits that told people, "Either believe or die.. That did happen some; that didn't always happen. There were a lot of good missionaries, yes, and there were a lot of even gentle ones from, like, Catholic and Orthodox churches that went out. A lot of Protestant missionaries that didn't say, "Believe what we tell you or die." They lived among the people, they taught them the Word of God, they learned the language.

I've been reading some great books on missionaries, William Carey, and Hudson Taylor and others, and the incredible work they did. And you know what happened? People that had never heard about Christianity, they said, "This makes sense. It resonates as true. These are wise and just laws."

The reason that Christianity spread around the world is not because it was all done by force. It's because they were good laws. Matter of fact, most of the governments in the world today, their basic statutes of law have been adopted from the laws of Moses. And no matter what country you go to today, it seems like after a while, they end up going over to the state of law that is basically founded on the laws of Moses. And they're just laws, that you treat people differently if they did not know something, and if they do know, you're more culpable.

That's why in America, you got first degree murder, second degree, third degree murder. If it's premeditated murder, you're more liable and the punishment is more severe. All that's in the laws of Moses. And the laws regarding inheritance and property, so much of that traces to the Bible. Good and just laws, laws about take care of your neighbor. If their donkey wanders off, bring it back. Even if you don't like your neighbor, it's the right thing to do. And so, things are, they're basically, they're wise laws that make for a happy society. By the way, we're starting to get away from that now.

How much time do I have? You probably heard me say before that, you know, we have one group in North America that is kind of pushing that if it's anything religious, we need to get away from it. They tried it, they called it the separation of church and state: anything that can be found in the Bible, shouldn't have the Ten Commandments posted anywhere, and we shouldn't be enforcing anything based on what's in the Bible because that's using religion.

Well, that's not really what the writers of the Constitution believed. The writers of the Constitution were a religious people. Even deists, some of them were deists, are religious. They believe in God. And you look at the writings of the founding fathers. They all unanimously believed that these laws would only work among the religious people that were self-governed, that had certain morals. If you expect the government to solve all the problems with new laws, most of the problems that we have in society are from people with bad hearts. It's not because we don't have enough laws.

If our hearts were changed, we would not have half the problems we have. You missed a good amen. That one, that was a great opportunity there. No, it's too late now, it doesn't count. I had to tell you to do it. If I have to tell you to do it--tch.

Was Roger Williams came along and he said, "You know, you need to make a distinction." Said, "You know, I would hope that everybody would want to keep all ten, but as far as the government's concerned, there does need to be a separation. You separate the two tables of the Ten Commandments

the way that God did. One is more civil in nature. One is more purely religious. The first four commandments deal with our worship of God. It defines who God is and how to worship Him and when to worship Him, what His name is.

The government should never make laws telling people, 'This is when you should worship,'" and that's important for us, right? We should be free to choose. "Or what His name is or how to worship Him," and so forth.

So--but he said, "The government must enforce the last six. Parental rights, the sanctity of marriage, that marriage is between a man and a woman." Notice it's, "Love your--honor your father and your mother." That's pretty clear that there's only supposed to be one of each, and they're not the same. And the rights of property ownership. The government doesn't own everything. You have the right of property ownership, your house, your land; do not covet your neighbor's possessions. When a government stops to support those things, it begins to unravel, and pretty soon you got kind of totalitarianism.

But anyway, I don't know how I got on that little rant, but it feels better now that it's over with. So going to a great and mighty nation, that's where we were, Joshua 21:44.

Did God keep His word, did they become a great and mighty nation? Joshua 21:44, "The Lord gave them rest all around according to all that He had sworn to their fathers, and not a man of all their enemies stood against them. And the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hands." If they've delivered all the foreign nations into their hands, they've become a great and mighty nation. "Not a word," I love this verse, "not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass."

And what's the title of the lesson? It's talking about the covenant of promise. Did all of God's promise come to pass that He would bring them into the Promised Land and give them victory? He did. God keeps His word. He is the author and finisher of your faith. You must believe that if you let Him, He will finish what He started in your life. God finishes His work if we follow. Jesus said, "Follow Me." The children of Israel, as long as they followed God, He brought them into the Promised Land. Psalm 19, verse 7, "The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul. The testimony of Lord is sure, making wise the simple." What nation is there that has laws that are so righteous? And then finally He said, "And I will make your name great," was God's promise to Abraham.

We're still expanding on Genesis chapter 15. He said, "I'll make your name great," how did that happen? He also says this in Genesis 12 verse 1 and 2, "The Lord said to Abram, 'Get out of your country from your family, from your father's house to a land that I will show you, and I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great.'"

What does it mean to have a great name? Does it mean to have a long name like Evil-Merodach or Zaphnath-Paaneah? Or--I'm trying to remember this, there's another. I think there's some Egyptian Pharaoh who had a really long name, but I can't say it. Uses every letter in the alphabet. Is that what it means to have a great name?

"Have a great name" means that you've got a great reputation with the name. The name of the Lord is great, why? Because He is a great one. His name represents who He is. When people think about Abraham, they think of his great faith. Now, he deserted his country at 75. He lost his name there. He started out new. If you move to a new town, nobody knows you, you're starting from scratch, you've got no name. I moved to new towns before, I go to the bank, I want to open an account, and they said, "You got any credit?" And I said, "No." "And you got anyone here who will cosign for you?" "I don't know anybody." He said, "Well, then you're nobody here." No, you have no credit. Nobody knows you.

So Abraham's starting out from scratch, God says, "Don't worry, you're going to have a great name before it's over. The word "Abram," the definition is a high father, a father of height or an exalted father. It was a good name. But then God later changed his name to Abraham. What does that mean? A father of a multitude. A father of many nations. And God changed his name to Abraham before he had any children; now, that must've been awkward. Here he is, you know, 75, 80 years old, and he marches into a new territory of the land of Canaan. And he meets some of the people there, "And hi, how are you?" "Fine, how are you?" "What's your name?" "Abraham." "Oh, father of many nations. So how many children do you have?" "None yet, but I'm optimistic." "And how old are you?" "Seventy-five." And so he did end up with a great name. Abraham means "father of a multitude."

Now, how many people are there in the world right now? Just under 8 billion. It changes every moment. You realize that. But there's under 8, just under 8 billion. Roughly 50% of the people in the world today claim Abraham as their spiritual father. Think about that. All the Muslims, Jews, Christians, even people of the Bahá'í faith and others, they trace back the great inspiration of their faith. I emphasize the word "great" inspiration to the name Abraham, someone who loved God so much he left everything to follow God and put his son on the altar. I mean you got to--he put his past on the altar when he walked away from home. He put his future on the altar when he put Isaac on the altar.

Abraham trusted God completely, and God made his name great. Matthew Henry writes in his commentary, "His name is great among the Jews whose descendants boasted having Abram for their father. And among the several nations of the world, his name is famous in a secular history even among non-Jews and Muslims. And it is in high esteem with the Muslims, especially among--especially is his name great and famous. And the memory of him is precious among all those who have obtained like precious faith. Every Christian out of every nation."

You know, God makes a promise, He says in 1 Samuel 2:8, "He raises up the poor out of the dust. He lifts the beggar from the dunghill, and He sets them among princes to make them inherit the throne of glory." God can take people that are nobody and make them somebody, amen? And gives them a great name. Hebrews 11, verse 8, "By faith, Abraham obeyed when he was called to go to the place in which he would receive as an inheritance, and he went out not knowing where he was going." That took courage and faith. "By faith, he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise, for he waited for a city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." He had great faith. It's why he had a great name. Anyway, finally, "The Lord gave him rest from all the nations around and made them as the stars of heaven, as God promised."

Want to remind our friends before we go off the air, we do have a free offer. And that free offer today is "Saved from Certain Death." It's a wonderful story of salvation by faith. We've been talking about in our lesson today in God's promise of--is a covenant promise. You can get a free copy of this by simply calling 866-788-3966. That's 866-Study-More. And we'll continue studying His Word with you again next week.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 40544 or visit the web address shown on your screen. And be sure to select a digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with "Amazing Facts," wherever and whenever you want. And most important, to share it with others.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts" changed lives.

Dan: One particular evening, we're searching through the channels and happen to find a program called "Amazing Facts" with Pastor Doug Batchelor. Some of the things that he was talking about were very interesting and intrigued me.

Female: As Dan began to continue to watch "Amazing Facts," this Doug Batchelor, this caveman that had an incredible story-- my world is beginning to change. It's been turned upside down. I was resistant. I think hit me was really the testimony of Pastor Doug. This was a real person with a real story that had had some things in his lifetime that maybe I didn't experience, but he was real, his journey was real. He was honest about wanting to share and giving that light to other people, so they too, could have more light.

That's when we got the cancer diagnosis, and nobody wants that C-word, cancer. And then to find out that it's aggressive. And sometimes, people get to wait with prostate cancer, but we didn't have that opportunity. He's in surgery and doctor comes out and I knew something was wrong. Come find out that my husband's had a stroke. So we go about midnight and have an MRI, and they confirmed that it truly was a stroke, and he was going to be okay.

Dan: Within one year and a half, I had a major heart attack, cancer, aggressive cancer and a stroke. I really was at the lowest point. I didn't know what I was going to do. We had rehab scheduled after I was dismissed from the hospital.

Female: And I watched him walk out a facility with a cane, that two weeks before, he couldn't even walk into.

Dan: God knew ahead of time that I was going to be going through all of this, and I truly believe that it was His hand that brought the "Amazing Facts" and the additional light that I was getting, that it helped take my mind off of the circumstances at the time, in a way that I don't think anything else could.

Female: It's so comforting to know that we have a Christ that loves us so much and will always hold us.

Dan: I cannot thank the people enough who support ministries like this. Because of them, I am one of those lives that have been changed. And I can only thank God for leading me through His providence to that program. My name is Dan. Thank you for changing my life.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts" changed lives.

Connie: Nobody was there to defend me. Nobody was there to protect me. My question was why did that happen to me, God? Why didn't you intervene? Once I hit my teenage years, everything just started coming out. I felt embarrassed of what had happened because for so long I felt it was my fault. There were times that I prayed, but it was prayers of resentment, and anger and just yelling at God. I was so confused, so depressed and I could not bear any more of the pain. You know, what's the point of living? It's might as well just die.

I started cutting myself, but I heard a small, still voice and it said, "Stop. Give Me a second chance." And right there, I just felt something completely different. I felt a presence there and I put everything down and I went to my room, I just started crying. I realized that me and God connected so well. And I no longer saw Him as just a God that no longer cared, but I actually saw Him as a Father, and I continued praying.

One day, I was sleeping, my mom came to the bed, and she said, "Connie, he's here, he's in town. And the Lord impressed me that you need to face the situation. It's time for you to forgive." When something so drastic and so painful has happened, forgiveness is very hard because you're vulnerable,

you let go of that ego, that pride that has taken over you for so many years. I prayed, and when we confronted the situation, it was the most amazing moment, where we could pray, we could cry, and we could forgive. And because of that, I'm able to help others and tell others that there is hope and there's someone that does care.

Announcer: Together, we have spread the gospel much farther than ever before. Thank you for your support.