

December 5th, The World Did
Part 1 in the series 'Who Needs Christmas'

What were some things from last Sunday's message that resonated with you?

Was there anything you wrestled with?

READ Genesis 12:1-3

The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "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. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Why would it have seemed such a big ask for Abram to leave his home country and people?

Why did this promise to Abraham seem like an impossibility?

Why do you think God chose to provide Abraham and Sarah with a child in their old age?

Why is it particularly interesting that God says "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."?

Can you recall some of the key events that took place between this promise given to Abraham and the first Christmas?

- * Abraham & Sarah have a son named Isaac
- * Isaac & Rebecca have twin sons- Esau & Jacob, Jacob steals Esau's birth right
- * 10 of Jacob's sons sell his other son, Joseph, into slavery in Egypt
- * Joseph in Egypt, famine & Jacob's family ends up in Egypt
- * Over the next 400 years, the clan becomes a slave-nation in Egypt
- * Moses, 40 years in the wilderness, military conquest of Canaan
- * King David
- * King Solomon marries wives from other nations, Israel worships other Gods & is lead into idolatry
- * Babylonian captivity
- * Persians conquer Babylon & allow a group of Jews to return to their homeland
- * Roman occupation

READ Luke 1:26-33 (NIV)

26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, **27** to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. **28** The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. **30** But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. **31** You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. **32** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, **33** and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

What do you find interesting about the way God chose to fulfill his promise to Abraham?

Why is Jesus’ coming more powerful than any great nation on earth could ever be?

Why do you think God’s promise to Abraham involved such a long and winding course?

What is so extraordinary about Jesus’ Kingdom?