



## 2022 2Q Genesis—Lesson 7 The Covenant with Abraham

by Tim Jennings

### SABBATH

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The lesson this week is entitled The Covenant with Abraham

What does this title mean to you? What is this covenant?

Read second paragraph, “Like Noah’s covenant...” this is well said, yes, the covenant with Abraham is not a NEW covenant, it is the covenant of grace given to Adam after the fall in Genesis 3:15 that a Savior would be born who would redeem Adam’s failure—meaning save the species human, destroy Satan, eradicate sin, and open a new path for every human being who so chooses to also experience salvation from sin.

What is the basis of the covenant with Abraham?

- Was it an agreement dependent upon Abraham’s work?
- Was it a contract that gave benefits based Abraham’s genetics?
- Was it made upon law keeping, regulations, or ceremony?

Certainly Abraham’s works were involved—he left Ur, and he is a human with DNA, and there were various ceremonies involved, but was any of this the basis of the covenant?

What was the basis of the covenant? God’s grace and Abraham’s trusting of God. That is the basis. God promised to send a Savior to deal with the sin problem and Abraham trusted God and **then** followed where God directed.

Are we able to participate in this covenant? How?

Our participation in the covenant is upon the same foundation, God’s grace and our response to that grace is to trust God, i.e. the righteous or just live by faith or trust, and that faith leads us to choose to do what we understand God wants, i.e. we work in faith, but our works do not provide the remedy for our sin-sickness, our genetics make no difference, and our law-keeping and ceremonies have no impact upon God’s grace or procuring the remedy to sin.

All of our works and law-keeping are the results or fruits of the Remedy being applied in our hearts and minds through faith/trust.

In the second paragraph the lesson states that Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, and Ishmael all struggled with fear, not fear in the sense of reverence and awe, but anxiety, dread, terror. Why? From where did the fear come?



As soon as Adam sinned he ran and hid because he was afraid—fear is part of the infection of sin and every human being who has ever lived since Adam’s fall is a descendant of Adam and Eve and is born infected with fear.

And what does fear cause one to do? Watch out for self—fear tempts us to be selfish, it is the primary emotion that drives the survival of the fittest instinct. It is part of what Paul would describe as the law of sin and death.

What drives out fear? Perfect love, godly love is antagonistic to fear and vice versus. Fear undermines our capacity to love the greater the fear the greater hindrance, love drives out fear the greater the love and less the fear.

But love isn’t the only godly element that drives out fear, is there another?

Trust drives out fear, when we trust we have less fear—even if we trust the wrong person or the wrong solution—as long as we trust, or believe, or have faith we have less fear.

This is one of Satan’s great traps. Not only does sin incite fear, but Satan roars like a lion—the messaging of the world is fear-inducing, and people don’t like to feel afraid, insecure, under threat. People want something to take away the fear and if they can’t resolve the threat, make the fear go away, they look for someone or something to trust in that will.

This is why so many trust in penal legal theologies—it takes away their fear. Their sin-punishment has been paid and they are legally declared righteous and they feel safe. To take away this idea is to make them feel afraid and they resist it.

Just like some people who put their trust in mask wearing to stop COVID. The truth that masks make no difference at all takes away their false security, increases their sense of fear and thus they resist it and get angry at others who are not wearing a mask. You see, the people not wearing a mask, even if they don’t say anything, are living witnesses to the fact that masks do nothing. These people are living healthy and those who have faith in the mask and need the mask to make them feel safe get threatened by those who are not wearing masks. Not threatened by the actual virus, but the virus of fear.

The point is that fear can be resolved by trust and trust can be misplaced.

The truth will expose the inadequacy of solutions that don’t work and those who are trusting in those solutions, if not mature and seeking truth, will get angry and seek to silence and destroy those who bring the truth.

What is trust safely built upon?

Trustworthiness of the one being trust, and that is known by what? The truth, thus the truth sets us free—from what? From the lies about God that break the circle of love and trust and incites fear, and



the truth restores our trust opening our hearts to God's presence and His love along with our trust based upon the truth further frees us from fear.

## SUNDAY

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Read first paragraph, "God's first response." The lesson suggests we read Romans 4:1-6:

What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness (Romans 4:1–5 NIV84).

What does this mean? It says Abraham believed God, what does it mean to believe God? It must mean more than cognitive awareness knowing that God said something and believing that God said it because the Bible says:

"You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder" (James 2:19 NIV84).

So "believing God" must be something more than believing God exists or that God said this or that, what is this belief that Abraham had that is recognized to be righteousness?

It means to trust God—Abraham didn't believe some fact that God exists, or God said something, but Abraham actually trusted God. Why would such trust be linked in Scripture with Abraham being recognized by God as being righteous?

What is the natural state of the human heart and mind after Adam's sin? Is the normal/natural state/attitude of a sinful/unrepented heart? Does the sinful heart trust or distrust God?

Since we are referencing Romans to give us insight into this experience known as "saving faith," this faith in which people are recognized by God to be righteous, what some like to say is a legal accounting, or crediting Christ's righteousness to our record book in heaven and declaring us to be righteous even though we are not, maybe we should allow Paul in the very book of Romans only a few verses later in chapter eight to give his insights into this what this experience is.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit [*have their minds set on what the Spirit desires (NIV84)*]. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because **the carnal mind is enmity against God**; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God (Romans 8:5-8 NKJV).



What is the natural state of a sinful or carnal mind/heart? Do sinners naturally trust God?

So if Abraham trusts God what does that mean—does that mean his mind is still set on the carnal or has his heart and mind been changed from distrust to trust and prefer the things of the Spirit of God?

So, when God recognizes Abraham as righteous it is because the sinful, distrusting, carnal heart has been set right, put back to a right orientation of trust in God, which if we use the Latin term for that is justified. **God recognized Abraham as having been justified because he actually was!** His heart had been changed from distrust to trust, from carnal to spiritual.

The sad history of Christianity is that the healing plan of God, achieved in Christ, taught in Scripture, and promoted by Paul was supplanted by a Roman imperialistic view of law and authority which corrupted the gospel into a legal process. Luther came along and recognized many things taught in the Roman system that were not in Scripture and started the Reformation.

And we are thankful for Luther, what a man of conviction, of courage, a man used by God to lead people out of blindly trusting the authority of church leaders and back to the Bible and translating the Bible into the language of the people. He did a great work for God. But Luther was a finite human who retained many errors in his own thinking.

Luther did not accept all 66 books of Scripture. He did not accept James, Jude, Hebrews, and Revelation. This resulted in Luther failing to see the larger war that goes beyond the human sin problem to the angels in heaven. Further, Luther continued to operate under the imposed law mindset falsely believing that God's law functions like human law, imposed rules requiring imposed punishments by the ruling magistrate. This is one of the core reasons he found no light in the idea that there was a war in heaven, because a powerful God could easily punish any rule-breaker in heaven and no such war could ever be waged. Thus, Luther's views on atonement are also corrupted with penal/legal baggage that he never was able to get rid of.

We have such a better view, which is to be expected, because we have the benefit of the unfolding truth from many diligent Bible students who have advanced the gospel since Luther.

But sadly, when it comes to the atonement many Christians stay stuck in the penal/legal explanations of righteousness by faith as being a legal declaration of something that isn't actually real in the believer.

Here is Romans 4:1-6 from *The Remedy*:

What about our father Abraham: what did he understand about this issue? If Abraham was somehow healed by his own efforts at keeping a set of rules or performing certain rituals, then he would have his own healing formula to promote, and would not need trust in God. But what does the Scripture say? "Abraham trusted God, and his trust was recognized as righteousness because the distrust caused through Satan's lies had been removed, and through trust he was endowed with a new heart, right motives and Christlike principles." Now, when a person



works, their wages are earned and are not a gift or an endowment. But the person who doesn't try to earn God's Remedy by working for it, but instead comes to know and trust God—that person's trust is recognized as righteousness because the distrust caused by Satan's lies has been removed, and through trust they receive from God transformation of heart and experience God's own righteous character created within. David says the exact same thing when he describes the blessedness of the person to whom God bestows his perfect cure without them working to earn it: (Romans 4:1-6 REM).

The lesson next points to the land of the promise, what are your thoughts on the land promised to Abraham?

What was the purpose of promising Abraham the land?

Are the promises to Abraham based upon human works? Or human genetics? Or law keeping or ceremonies? Then what?

Was the promise of inheriting the land part of the same covenant of Genesis 3:15, to bring the Messiah to save the species human?

In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice (Genesis 22:18 NKJV).

Who is this promised Seed? The same Seed from Genesis 3:15, so Abraham is the one through whose family the promise to Adam will be fulfilled. This promise was repeated to Isaac (Genesis 26:2-4) and to Jacob (Genesis 28:13-15) so we can be sure that the promised Seed of Genesis 3:15 does not come through Ishmael, but through the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and later Judah.

So, there is no doubt that God made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob promising that that region of land would be given to them and their descendants and that through them the promised Messiah would come.

But does that mean the nation-state of Israel that exists today is part of that promise, or is it possible that we may have missed a larger promise from God because we have remained focused on that smaller regional promise? Is it possible that this promise to Abraham and his descendants is a dual-fulfillment prophecy and we have not fully appreciated its larger applications?

The Bible is filled with dual prophecies and promises:

- Joel's prophecy about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit before the second coming of Christ (Joel 2:28–32) is also applied by Peter to the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14–21).
- Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 both start out referring to an earthly king and then transition to the fall of Lucifer.



- Jesus' prophecy about the second coming is also blended with the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 24).

In all these dual-fulfillment prophecies, there is a lesser application and a greater application—the lesser is regional; the greater is global.

- The promise given to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15 is the promise given to the entire human race, for all human beings were in Adam and Eve.
- The promise given to Abraham was a *regional* promise of that *global* promise.
  - Meaning that God promised that through Abraham's family the **earlier promise** would be realized; that it would be through Abraham's genetic family that the Seed of the woman would be born and deliver the descendants of Adam from sin and death. This is the focus of Scripture, the plan of salvation.

The covenant with Abraham is the same covenant that was given to Adam, but with Abraham we now have the identification of the specific branch of the human family through whom the Messiah would come. And with the recommunication of the covenant to Abraham, God gives a dual-fulfillment prophecy concerning the land:

1. A smaller, local, regional promise that Abraham's genetic descendants would inherit the land of Canaan **in order to fulfill their mission** to be the genetic family through whom Jesus would be born; and
2. the larger, global, spiritual fulfillment, **that the true descendants of Abraham, those who are like Abraham in faith and character would inherit the entire earth!**

**The covenant with and promises to Abraham focus on two promised lands.** The local application is the one in which Abraham's genetic decedents are the branch of the human family through whom God accomplishes the promise of Genesis 3:15 and through whom the Messiah is born. This local regional promise to Abraham informs him that his children would inherit the land in Canaan **for the purpose** of fulfilling their mission of being the avenue through whom Messiah would come **so that** Jesus can fulfill God's greater promise, the covenant of grace given in Genesis 3:15, and crush the serpent's head **so that** the "meek will **inherit** the earth" (Matthew 5:5)—the true Promised Land.

- The *genetic* descendants inherited Canaan *in order* to be the avenue for Jesus our Savior to be born and fulfill the covenant given to the entire human family in Genesis 3:15 so that ...
- ... the *spiritual* descendants of Abraham—all those who have faith like Abraham—will inherit the entire planet, the earth made new.

The promise for the genetic descendants to occupy the small land of Canaan has been fulfilled—Jesus has come. Jesus has confronted Satan, and Jesus has won the victory. Now the promises to Abraham are to be fulfilled on the global, not regional, scale when Jesus returns and we, the faithful, finally inherit the earth.



Here is the biblical evidence for this position:

The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land” (Genesis 12 7).

This is the regional promise for the genetic descendants to occupy Canaan for the purpose of being the branch of the human family through which the Messiah would be born.

The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, “Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you” (Genesis 13:14–17 NIV84).

This is the larger, global, promise—that the entire earth (east, west, north, south, all points of the compass) will be given to the people of God; the earth will be made new, and those who are like Abraham in character, in faith, whose hearts have been circumcised from sin, will be heirs to this promise and inherit the earth.

The apostle Paul, a former Pharisee of the tribe of Benjamin and a highly trained Jewish theologian of the first century, wrote:

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. **If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise** (Galatians 3:26–29).

Jesus Himself explicitly told the Jewish leaders of His day these very truths, that genetics did not determine who is considered an heir of Abraham and who would inherit the promise. We find Jesus’ explanation to the Jewish authorities in John 8:34-45; my comments are in red:

Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a **slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.** [If we don’t experience freedom from sin through Jesus, then we are not part of the family of God—that is, not part of Abraham’s family.] So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know you are Abraham’s descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word. I am telling you what I have seen in the Father’s presence, and you do what **you have heard from your father.**” [Jesus tells them plainly that even though they are genetic descendants of Abraham, God doesn’t see them as being children of Abraham, but children of a different father. Note, the Jews, to whom Jesus was speaking, understood this point and protested, claiming their genetic heritage.]

“Abraham is our father,” they answered. [Jesus’ response disallows their genetics as being a



valid basis for being considered a descendant of Abraham.]

“If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then you would do the things Abraham did. [Those recognized by God as children of Abraham are those who have the same faith in God as Abraham did and who act on that faith as Abraham did.] As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. You are doing the things your own father does.” [Jesus again tells them that their heritage is not determined genetically but characterologically. They have embraced another father, but again, they protest and claim a higher father than Abraham.]

“We are not illegitimate children,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.” [The Jews claimed God as their Father because God created humanity. But Jesus disallows this claim as well, for we are born in sin (Psalm 51:5) and Jesus already said that those who remain slaves to sin have no permanent place in the family of God. Only those who, through Jesus, are freed from sin become part of the family of God and are considered children of Abraham. Note Jesus’ answer.]

Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. **You belong to your father, the devil,** and you want to carry out your father’s desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:34–45 NIV84). [Jesus unequivocally destroys the idea that genetics determines who is an heir of Abraham, and He makes it clear that it is all about faith, character, love, and trust like Abraham.]

The dual-fulfillment promise to Abraham had two starting points and two ending points.

- The starting point of the global promise was in Eden, in Genesis 3:15;
- the starting point of the regional promise was with Abraham when he was called out of Ur.
- The ending point of the global is when Jesus recreates the earth and the meek inherit it;
- the ending point of the regional promise for the genetic people to be the avenue for the Messiah was when they crucified Christ and Jesus said to them, “Your house is left to you desolate” (Matthew 23:38 NIV84).

Jesus masterfully weaves these two covenant promises together in His prophetic description of the destruction of Jerusalem and His second coming as described in Matthew 24 and Mark 13.

- The destruction of Jerusalem occurs because the regional fulfillment of the promise has ended. The genetic descendants kept open the avenue, Messiah had come, but they rejected Him and now there is no further purpose for a regional land to be occupied by them. The gospel must now go to the world. It is time for the global application, which culminates in the second coming and the meek inheriting the earth.





The great nation that God promised would come from Abraham's descendants is the global nation whose ruler is from the line of David. As the angel said to the virgin Mary about her Son:

“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, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; **his kingdom will never end**” (Luke 1:32, 33 NIV84).

And the writer of Hebrews tells us that the faithful of God in Bible times—Abel, Enoch, Noah, along with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who lived “in the promised land” (Hebrews 11:9)—“did not receive the things promised” (Hebrews 11:13), that they were “looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (Hebrews 11:10). “All of these people” of faith “did not receive the things promised; they saw them and welcomed them from a distance. ... They were longing for a better country—a heavenly one” (Hebrews 11:13, 16).

The Bible says that “*all* of these people” did *not* receive the things promised; note who is included on that list—Enoch, who was taken to heaven! Enoch, who has already received eternal life, a glorified body, who currently lives in heaven with Jesus, surely he has received the promise, hasn't he? Not in its complete and fullest sense. What was Abraham promised? That his spiritual descendants would inherit the earth. This promise will not be fully realized until Jesus comes again, all sin and sinners are eliminated, the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven, and the earth is made new to be the home of the righteous. Then the promise will be realized and we, who have faith like Abraham, will receive our inheritance of a goodly land, a beautiful home, perfect and flawless that God intended Adam and Eve to possess. It is true that the meek will inherit the earth, for what God has promised He will fulfill.

## MONDAY

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The first paragraph points out that after Abraham believed the promise from God to give him a son, that with time Abraham's faith began to fail. He looked to normal human biology, human culture, and sought to implement a human created solution, based upon human understanding of things and took Hagar to be a surrogate for Sarah. He came up with an alternate heir to fulfill the promise. However, did this work? Was Ishmael the child of the promise?

The Bible is the record of real historic people doing real historic stuff, but their lives also serve as object lesson for us? What is the object lesson here?

God has a plan of salvation based upon the reality of His kingdom, His design laws; the real terminal sin-condition caused by Adam's choice needed to be eradicated and God's law of love needed to be restored into humanity. We need to become righteous again in order to be reconciled to God and receive the gift of eternal life. This required Jesus to come as the second Adam and take the terminal condition upon Himself and eradicate the death causing principle and restore the life causing principle into humanity in order to be our Savior.



In God's plan, all who trust Him will open their hearts in trust and receive the Holy Spirit who renews them in Christlikeness of heart motive, writing God's law upon our hearts reconciling us to God. This is God's plan, to actually fix the damage caused by sin and restore us to sinless perfection.

It is a miracle of rebirth, bringing life out of death, just like Isaac was a miracle birth bringing life out of a dead womb.

**But, just like Abraham doubted and sought a human solution through human law and human customs, far too many Christians have rejected God's plan and substituted a human plan based upon human law and customs of legal payments to an offended god to pay for our sins in order to get the god to declare us legally righteous when we remain unrighteous.** Far too many people simply cannot believe God's plan can work so they devise their own legal plan instead. This is the penal substitutionary atonement theory based upon human law.

But God calls us back to trust, to faith, and to receive what Christ has done and when we do so, we "become the righteousness of God" (2Cor 5:21).

The lesson points out that God eventually speaks to Hagar but only after she leaves the house of Abraham... what is the object lesson for us?

God will enlighten, convict, speak to people today but ONLY if they leave behind their own human devised methods and systems of salvation and seek Him! If we insist upon our human systems, doing it our way, including the penal legal systems of salvation, we close ourselves off to advancing light, for we reject the true light as false and what else can God do for us?

## TUESDAY

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What was the sign of the covenant with Abraham? Circumcision—why? What does it mean? What does it symbolize? What is the reality to which it points?

A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code (Romans 2:28-29 NIV84).

Circumcision is a sign of circumcising the heart—what does this mean? How does this work in reality?

Circumcision is a sign of dying to self, the old carnal heart dying and being reborn to a new life, of cutting away ties, practices, attachments, values of fear, sin and selfishness and have the heart renewed in truth, love, and trust in God.

- Circumcision was painful—conversion, dying to self, is painful
- Circumcision happens on a part of the body not easily seen by others—conversion happens in the secret parts of the heart not easily seen by others



- Those with whom we have some intimacy can know if we have been circumcised bodily (not just spouses, but our doctors, our military buddies with whom we trust our lives and sometimes undress in the same barracks or shower in the same locker room), so too with circumcision of the heart, the people who get to know us well can tell if our hearts have been changed from fear and selfishness to love for God and others
- Circumcision happens upon the part of the body that physically joins husband and wife together as one and circumcision by the Spirit happens upon the heart cutting away sin, fear, selfishness, guilt, shame, and every obstacle that interferes with becoming at-one with God

Without the cutting away of fear, selfishness, guilt, shame and love interests that we care more about than God, we cannot be wedded, united, bonded to our Savior.

Physical circumcision is done by a physical knife, whereas circumcision of the heart is done by the Spirit of love and truth wielding the Spirit created or inspired tools of love and truth:

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Hebrews 4:12 NIV84).

The Holy Spirit works through the Scriptures to cut through the lies, fears, misunderstandings and bring healing truth to bear upon our hearts and minds in order to cut out of our hearts falsehoods, unhealthy practices, worldly or lustful affections and to instill godly methods leading us to establish healthy routines and boundaries with others.

The Holy Spirit also works through His trusting followers. When the prophet Nathan confronted King David after his sin with Bathsheba, the truth brought to bear by Nathan was used by the Holy Spirit to bring David to conviction and repentance and was part of healing process of cutting the sin, guilt, shame out of David's heart.

While we can choose for our infant sons to be circumcised, we cannot make the choice for any other human heart to be circumcised, just our own. The new born in Christ must choose for themselves surrender to the Holy Spirit, study the Word of God, and actively ask the Spirit to cut out of the heart anything that interferes with our intimacy with Jesus.

This is because the transformation of the heart that occurs in God's plan of salvation requires the active and voluntary participation of the sinner. God cannot use His infinite power to inflict a change of heart without the consent of the person because to do so would destroy that person's individuality and create either a programmed robot that cannot love, or a new intelligent being with a new individuality that would still need to decide for themselves whether to trust God or not.



## THURSDAY

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Read first paragraph, “God’s promise of a son...” What do you think if the description, “he also is a prophet who intercedes on behalf of the wicked?”

Did God need this intercession? If Abraham would have asked for more, would God have relented? Did God tell Abraham what He was going to do hoping Abraham would talk Him out of it?

What is the purpose of this encounter? Was it not to give a record of why God did it? God knew what Abraham would do and God knew that there were not 10 righteous in the city before telling Abraham and having the encounter. God had this encounter because He wanted it understood and recorded that the city was destroyed because not even 10 righteous were in it—but destroyed in the context of the promised Seed to save humanity.

In other words, God just confirmed the covenant with Abraham that Abraham would have the land for the purpose of being the family through whom Jesus would come to save the species from sin, and in that context, God tells Abraham I am going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah and the associated cities—why? It is necessary to fulfill the promise to you that your family will have this land and be the avenue for the Messiah.

And what did history reveal? Even after removing this toxic sewer of depravity ten of the tribes were dispersed and Judah barely made it through to fulfill their purpose and be the avenue for Messiah.

So we see the grace of God working here not to punish sin, but to keep open the avenue for Messiah and give us a record so that we can understand why God acted—therapeutically, not judicially or punitively.

Also note that when Abraham heard this news from God, Abraham didn’t respond with “God said it, I believe it, that settles it.” Abraham didn’t say, “Who am I to question the sovereign Lord?” But Abraham did question God, humbly, reverently, with jealousy for the Lord’s reputation, but He did question Him and Abraham was called a friend of God.

Moses did the same thing years later. This idea in Christianity that we are not to question God is completely contrary to what God wants. He wants us to humbly question and to seek to understand with hearts eager to learn and be corrected by the truth.

## FRIDAY

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Read second paragraph, “In an extremely...” Is what is described in Scripture regarding Sodom a legal or judicial process? Is it that God grants legal pardon or forgiveness to wicked people for sake of the righteous? Is it that if no righteous people are around then God is not forgiving?



This description misunderstands reality completely. It is quite simple, if there are still enough righteous it means there is still enough viable or healthy tissue that amputation or cauterization is not yet necessary. But when the situation becomes completely necrotic and threatens to kill the rest of humanity, love requires a therapeutic intervention to cauterize the dead tissue in order to save the viable.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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**May 6-7, 2022:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Lakewood Seventh-Day Adventist Church 1382 Arthur Ave, Lakewood, OH 44107.

- Friday evening: Healing the Mind
- Sabbath SS time: The God Shaped Brain
- Sabbath Church: Growing up in Christ—the 7 levels of moral decision making
- Sabbath afternoon: The Developing Brain followed by Q&A

**July 15-16, 2022:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the United Healthcare Summit in Grand Rapids MI. More details to follow.