**5. “THE PASSIONATE DREAMS OF A DESTINY”**

**Section III:** THE PLAN ORGANIZED

**Biblical Basis:** Genesis 12-50

**Objective:** That each class member understand the necessity of God’s command for separation of His people.

**INTRODUCTION**

God’s divine intention in the creation of the world was harmony. That divine intention was disrupted by man’s sin and rebellion. The question we are dealing with is: “How can a righteous and holy God come back into a right relationship with a sinful, rebellious humanity?”

God had a plan and He began to unfold that plan in human history when He called Abraham and established a covenant with him. Now we need to see how God actually began to work out His plan in history. How would He form a people through whom all the earth would be blessed? How would He establish them in a place on the earth? What would keep them focused on God’s ideal?

**I. GOD’S CHOSEN ONES HAD SOMETHING TO DREAM ABOUT**

 A. A people set apart.

 1. Why did God find it necessary to choose a people for a unique destiny? (Gen 3:15; 6:5,11)

 2. What did God seek to accomplish by choosing a people for Himself? (Gen 12:3; Ex 19:3-6; Isa 42:5-7)

 3. Why did God choose Israel? (Deut 7:6-9)

 4. In light of what you have learned thus far, how do you understand the doctrine of election? (Rom 9:8, 11-16; Eph 1:4)

 B. A land to be possessed.

 1. Read Genesis 12:7; 15:7,17; 26:2-3. What important promise does God give Abraham and his descendants to dream about?

 2. In your opinion, why is this so important to God’s plan and to these people?

 C. A seed that would be numberless.

 1. According to Genesis 15:5; 22:17; and 28:14, what further promise was given to the descendants of Abraham to dream about?

 2. Think of what this meant in light of their background. (What kind of background did these people come from?) (Gen 11:28; Josh 24:2)

From this obscure background, God called a people. From meaninglessness He gave them dreams of destiny. Because of these passionate dreams of a destiny, Israel’s existence would affect all the families of the earth.

**II. ISRAEL’S DREAMS TEMPERED WITH DISCIPLINE**

 A. Ethnic separation.

 1. Why do you suppose the discipline of “separation” became so important for God to accomplish His plan? (Gen 34:8-9,16; 35:2)

 2. What principle do you find concerning marriage between God’s chosen and pagans? (Gen 24:1-4; 28:1-5)

 3. What does scripture tell you about Esau? (Gen 26:3-5,35)

 4. In the eyes of the Patriarchs, an Israelite and a pagan living under the same roof would soon compromise their faith in God’s promises. How was separation a constant theme in these verses. (Num 25:1-8; Deut 7:1-5; Ex 34:10-16)

 5. How can this principle be applied to Christians today? (II Cor 6:14)

 B. Separation within the family.

 1. Also, we find separation taking place within the chosen family. Why do you suppose this is so? (See Lot: Gen 13:8-11; and Esau: Gen 25:34; 26:34)

 2. Materialists, idolaters, and those who persistently disobey and rebel against God could not affect the fulfillment of a destiny which was spiritual at its roots. How did God mold Jacob, then later Judah, to become more spiritually inclined?

 (Gen 28:20-22; 32:26-28; 43:8-10; 44:18,33)

 C. Geographic separation

 1. Why was geographic separation an important factor for Abraham? (Gen 13:10-13)

 2. Why was geographic separation important for Jacob and his sons in Genesis 34:30-31?

 3. How were the children of Israel assured of separation when they came to Egypt?

 (Gen 46:31-34)

**III. ISRAEL’S DREAMS MUST BE VIEWED IN LIGHT OF PURPOSE**

A. Land, seed and separation must always be seen in their relationship to “be a blessing.”

 1. According to Joshua 5:15, how was Israel to regard the land given by God?

 2. What was God’s ultimate purpose for Israel to become a great nation?

 (Gen 12:3; 26:4)

 B. In later studies we will see how things instituted to be a “means to an end” become an “end in themselves.” What does Israel do later to forget their God intended destiny regarding the land, their separation from others, and their being chosen by God?

 (Jer 11:3-8; 7:3-10)

**CONCLUSION**

Think of some of the parallels in Christianity. What passionate dreams of a destiny are ours? What is our calling as a church? What about our separation, how do we do that today?