

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

LIVING IN THE LAND (#1)

Introduction:

- Everyone has a story.
 - Historical
 - People group
 - Faith / non faith

To learn how to live in this (our) land today, we will look at a people of God historically, and their encounter with God and enemies and how it relates to the Bible; in particular the book of Romans.

1. The Call

- Israelites always look back to exodus.

BACKGROUND: ISRAEL'S CALL

(a) Joseph:

- had been sold as a slave to Egypt
 - He became regent or 2IC of Egypt
 - His family made Egypt their home.
- Promise made to Abraham

Genesis 12:2 *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.*

According to Joseph Holleman in his book "Empires of Gold, Iron and God"

- Joseph became second-in-charge by default because the heir was too young.
 - Introduced a worship of Adonanai to Egyptian royalty
 - After Joseph's death, a conflict arose between the worshippers of Adonanai and worship of old Egyptian gods;

- Worship of the old gods was restored and believers expelled, and also some Israelites
- The Hebrews who remained were gradually reduced to hard labour slavery.
 - Jethro, Moses' future father-in-law was probably one of those.

(b) Israel Looking Back:

- Look back to Exodus as when they became a nation
 - Promises of God fulfilled
 - God's intervention
 - Freedom.
- The Israeli call was to represent God in the world.

BACKGROUND: CHRISTIAN CALL

Romans 1:5-6 *through Him and for His name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith. And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.*

- We are called to obey
- We are called to belong
- The righteous will live by faith.

Romans 1:16-17 *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith".*

- Salvation is to those who believe

2. The State of the Nation

(a) What was it like to live in Egypt?

- Treated as second-rate

- Freedom to worship the Lord ridiculed
- Pressure to conform to society's way of life
- Physical bondage

(b) Paul to the Romans:

Romans 1:20 *For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – His eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.*

- Invisible qualities of God...
 - Snowflakes
- Eternal power
- Divine nature
 - His whole nature is toward life

Romans 1:25 *They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator – who is forever praised.*

- Exchanged truth for a lie
- Leads to...
 - Moral decline – we reap in our bodies
 - Self-centredness which leads to relationship breakdown.
- Christians of Rome changed their culture
 - ILLUSTRATION: children of Rome
- We too can redeem our culture.

3. **God's Intervention**

- Catastrophe was hitting Egypt
 - Israelites were still in bondage but protected from the plagues
 - Ref Exodus 9:4; 9:26; 10:23
 - Passover Exodus 12
- How many times did God allow some circumstances to get our attention before we responded?

Romans 2:4 *Or do you show contempt for the riches of His kindness, tolerance and patience, not realising that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?*

- God's kindness leads to repentance.
- Things that lead to freedom:
 - Faith ->peace -> freedom

Romans 5:1; 8 therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ... But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.