

Cleopas' Corner

The Trajectory of Grace

It was a time of great peril for the people of God. Israel had been scattered among the nations and was suffering under foreign oppression. Faithful to his covenant, God sent a son of Abraham to save his people. But God's deliverer was in great jeopardy and unjustly condemned to death. So God intervened to vindicate his servant by raising him up and exalting him to the right hand of the royal throne. As a result of this remarkable deliverance from suffering to glory, the gospel message of the sovereignty of the Lord went out over the whole world to proclaim God's saving mercy both to Israel and the nations, thus fulfilling God's covenant with Abraham. Such are the contours of God's amazing trajectory of grace.

Joseph ~

The trajectory of grace, moving from suffering to glory, describes the story of Joseph. It was a time of severe famine for the people of God. Faithful to his covenant, God sent a son of Abraham to save his people. But Joseph was unjustly condemned and sent to a dungeon. So God intervened to vindicate Joseph and he was taken up out of the dungeon and exalted to the right hand of the pharaoh to rule over all Egypt. There was no one apart from the royal throne greater than Joseph. As a result of his wisdom, Joseph made provision to save all of Egypt as well as the family of Abraham in the time of the famine. Moreover, all the nations surrounding Egypt came to buy life giving bread from Joseph and to hear how God had saved the world through his servant. All the nations around Egypt were blessed by the saving mercy of God, in fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham.

Moses ~

It was a time of great peril for the people of God. Israel had been pressed into bondage in Egypt and her first born sons condemned to death. Faithful to his covenant, God sent a son of Abraham to save his people. But Moses was unjustly condemned to death and placed in peril in an ark of bulrushes upon the river. So God intervened to vindicate his servant by raising him up and exalting him to be raised in the royal court as the son of the king's daughter. As a result of this remarkable deliverance from suffering to glory, God's people would be delivered from death at the Red Sea and the gospel message would go out to all the nations of Canaan proclaiming the saving acts of God toward his people, thus fulfilling God's covenant with Abraham.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego ~

It was a time of great peril for the people of God. Israel had been scattered among the nations. Faithful to his covenant, God sent three young sons of Abraham to stand

before the court of the king in Babylon. But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were unjustly condemned to death in the furnace of fire. So God intervened to vindicate his servants and they were delivered from the fire and honored by the king who made them prosper in the province of Babylon. As a result of their deliverance, the King of Babylon wrote letters to all the peoples and nations of his empire proclaiming the sovereign rule of the Most High God whose dominion is from generation to generation, thus fulfilling God's covenant with Abraham.

Daniel ~

It was a time of great peril for the people of God. Israel had been scattered among the nations. Faithful to his covenant, God sent a son of Abraham to encourage his people. But Daniel was unjustly condemned and sentenced to death in a dungeon of lions. So God intervened and his servant was delivered from death and taken up to rule over the entire empire of Persia directly under the Great King. As a result of Daniel's deliverance, the king sent letters into all the provinces of his empire commanding all the nations to fear the God of Daniel, for he is the sovereign God over all the nations and he is able to save his people from death. All of this was to fulfill God's covenant with Abraham.

Mordecai ~

It was a time of great peril for the people of God. They had been scattered throughout the Persian Empire and had been condemned to death by a royal decree. Faithful to his covenant, God sent a son of Abraham to save his people. But Mordecai was unjustly condemned to die a scandalous death upon a gallows tree. So God intervened to vindicate his servant and Mordecai was delivered from death and given the royal signet ring of authority in order to send letters of salvation throughout all the nations of the empire. The letters under the seal of the Great King delivered the people of God and proclaimed the great salvation of the Lord. All of this was to fulfill God's covenant with Abraham.

Jesus ~

And all of this was to anticipate the trajectory of suffering to glory that would describe the ministry of Christ. It was a time of the greatest peril for the people of God. Israel had been scattered among the nations and suffered under the Roman oppressor. Faithful to his covenant, God sent the Son of Abraham to save his people. But Jesus was unjustly condemned to death and laid in a tomb in the earth. So God intervened to vindicate his Servant and he was raised up and exalted to the right hand of God's royal throne. From there the gospel message of mercy went out into all the earth proclaiming the sovereignty of God and his saving mercy in Christ Jesus by which all the nations would find blessing. All of this was to fulfill God's covenant with Abraham, just as the Scriptures had foreseen.

The People of God ~

Finally, it was a time of great peril for us. We were alienated from the people of God and strangers to the covenant of promise. We were justly condemned for all our sins. But God sent the Son of Abraham to save us. Jesus was unjustly condemned and crucified on the cross and buried in the grave for us. God intervened to vindicate his Servant, however, and we who trusted in him died with him and were raised with him and are now seated with him upon the right hand of the throne of his Father, even in heavenly places. We who were once condemned have been made a royal priesthood. And because of all of this, we proclaim to all the world that God has fulfilled his covenant of peace with Abraham to bless all the nations with grace, just as the Scriptures so long ago had promised.

Grace and peace,

Cleopas ~