

*TO TELL  
THE STORY*



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## Chapter Three: The Scarlet Thread of Hope

The Bible is a story. It's the story of a Prince who goes out to seek his lost treasure.

When God created the world, everything was very good, and his treasure, humanity, the highest part of his creation – he loved them dearly. And then humanity turned against God. The treasure was lost. Humans fled from God.

But God decided to seek his lost treasure. He promised that one would come to crush the head of the serpent.

And then God drove Adam and Eve out of the garden. And they had children And they had children and they had children, until the world was filled. And their evil multiplied. They rejected God and his promises. And God regretted making humans.

But in all the world there was one man left who still treasured God's promises. And God sent a flood to rescue Noah and his family, to rescue them from the unbelieving world. And when the flood had ended, Noah proved that... he was still a sinner. Turned against God. Got drunk; made a laughingstock out of himself. And yet... God kept his promise.

Well, Noah's children had children, and they had children, until once again the world filled. And God selected a man named Abraham. God made three promises to him: "I will make you a great nation. I will give you land. All nations on earth will be blessed through you." Through your family line, the One who will crush the head of the serpent will come.

And Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.

But Abraham proved that he took after his father Adam.

Abraham got tired of waiting. And he slept with his servant instead of his wife, and had a child with her.

In spite of Abraham's sin, God kept his promise. And Abraham and his wife Sarah had a son named Isaac. And Isaac had a son named Jacob.

And Jacob... he was a trickster. He stole. He connived. And one day, he wrestled with God himself. Despite everything that Jacob had done, despite rejecting God so many times, God kept his promise, and even gave Jacob a new name: Israel. And now God's special people would have that name: The Children of Israel.

Jacob's twelve sons didn't get along. In fact, they sold one of their own, Joseph, into slavery in Egypt. Despite their evil, God kept his promise and protected them and used Joseph – made Joseph second in command in Egypt, and used Joseph to protect the rest of his family. Brought them down into Egypt to protect them from a great famine. And God kept his promise.

And there in Egypt, God fulfilled one of the promises to Abraham, as over 400 years the people grew and multiplied and became a great nation – and a great threat to Egypt. So the king of Egypt enslaved the Israelites. And many of the Israelites turned away from God.

Despite that, God sent someone to rescue them. And through ten plagues, God broke Egypt. And the people rejoiced as Moses led them out to the edge of the Red Sea. And then the people were pinned between the sea and an army, and the people cried out, “We need to go back into slavery!” Despite their sin, God was faithful. And he came down and divided the Red Sea, and the people walked across on dry land.

God took them to Sinai, and gave them his holy law. And the people declared, “Yes! We will keep this Law! For this great God, we will do anything!”

And then, just a few scant years later, God guided them to the edge of the Promised Land. And then the people doubted God. They didn’t think that the God who had rescued them by crossing the Red Sea could give them the Promised Land. They cried out, “We need to go back to Egypt!”

And there were consequences for their sin. Oh, yeah. God promised that all the adults would die before he gave them the Promised Land. And forty years later, it happened. And God guided those who had been children at the beginning of the journey and were now adults – God guided them into the Promised Land.

God kept the second promise to Abraham, to his children. And you’d think that would be it – now we simply have to wait for the one who will come and crush the head of the serpent!

But in the Promised Land, the people grew complacent. They turned away from God. They worshiped false gods. And God let them see the consequences. The one true God allowed armies to come in and conquer Israel, and as soon as the misery was enough they turned back to God, repented, and God sent a deliverer, a judge.

And then it started all over again. For 300 years.

For 300 years...

During that time, there was a famine. And Naomi and her husband moved to Moab to find food. And while they were there, their two sons got married. And Naomi’s husband and her two sons died. And Naomi set out to go home. But Naomi’s daughter-in-law, Ruth, followed. “Your people will be my people, and your God my God.” And once in Israel, a man named Boaz fell in love with Ruth, and took her as his wife. And they had a son named Obed. And Obed had a son named Jesse. And Jesse had a son named David.

And God raised David up to become king of his people. And then David turned against God. Committed adultery. Murder. Tried to cover what he had done. And yet, despite his sin, God remained faithful. Yes, God called David on his sin, and offered full and free forgiveness. And... also promised that David would [have] a descendant that would reign on the throne forever.

David’s son Solomon built a great temple to God. And then... after Solomon died... people rebelled. Civil war. The nation broke into two. But really, the nations weren’t all that different. The people turned against God. The kings ignored God – just did whatever worked so they could stay in power.

Oh, God sent them prophets to warn them. People like Isaiah. Jeremiah. Joel. They said, “If you keep this up, God will take away the land.” But the people refused to listen, and God kept his promise.

First the northern kingdom was destroyed by Assyria.  
Then the Southern Kingdom destroyed by Babylon.

For seventy years, the people were in exile. They couldn't go home.

But despite their sin... God kept his promise. God brought them back. And the people came back and rebuilt the temple. And the city of Jerusalem. And they waited.

They waited for God to keep the last promise.

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The Old Testament is for you. Look at the people and see a mirror. We're just like them. We turn away from God so often.

And God has not changed. Our unfaithfulness does not negate God's faithfulness.

The people then were waiting. They yearned for that last promise, for the One who would crush the head of the serpent.

But he was still coming.

This story – the whole Old Testament – this story is true.

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