

## **The Theology of Missions, part one**

**Missions:** Our committed participation as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation.

**God seeks a world full of people who will worship him.** Therefore he commands the first man and woman to be fruitful and multiply.

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:28)

After the entrance of sin, God floods the earth in chapter 8 and starts over. He then gives the same command to Noah and his sons.

And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (Genesis 9:1)

God scatters prideful man and spreads man across the earth. This sets the stage for his story of reaching his people.

So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. (Genesis 11:8)

God calls Abraham to leave his country. He sets off to establish a nation that will bless all peoples.

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. (Genesis 12:1-2)

God promises to make Abraham's descendants innumerable and that through his offspring all nations will be blessed. He then repeats the promise to his son, Jacob

Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. (Genesis 28:14)

### **God makes himself known to Israel**

Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. <sup>7</sup>I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. <sup>8</sup>I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD.' " (Exodus 6:6-8)

You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God and there is none else. (Joel 2:27)

O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your servants who walk before you with all their heart ... that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no other. (1 Kings 8:23,60)

### **The nations will witness the redemptive history of Israel**

The peoples have heard; they tremble; pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia. Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them; because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone, till your people, O LORD, pass by till the people pass by whom you have purchased. (Exodus 15:14-16)

all the nations will say, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this land? What caused the heat of this great anger?' Then people will say, 'It is because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt, and went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them. (Deuteronomy 29:24-25)

"Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. <sup>23</sup> And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. (Ezekiel 36:22-23)

### **The nations are beneficiaries of Israel's blessing**

Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! For the LORD, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth. (Psalm 47:1-2)

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations. Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you! (Psalm 67:1-3)

### **The nations will worship Israel's God**

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before you. (Psalm 22:27)

Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! (Psalm 46:10)

...that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. (Psalm 67:2,4)

Nations will fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth will fear your glory. (Psalm 102:15)

### **The nations will be included in Israel's identity**

In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance." (Isaiah 19:24-25)

These (foreigners) I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." (Isaiah 56:7)

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, I come and I will dwell in your midst, declares the LORD. And many nations shall join themselves to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people. (Zechariah 2:10-11)