

A Biblical Missions Mindset for God's Glory (Genesis 1-25)

We're teaching through the book of Genesis verse-by-verse and today we come to Genesis 25, which begins with a list of Abraham's many sons. The 2nd half of the chapter on Jacob and Esau we'll look at in a future week but today wraps up Abraham's life and his lineage. Timothy Paul Jones has a helpful book on prophecy we've been studying as leaders Friday mornings. He writes in it (and it relates to today's verses): 'If you spent any time in children's church in your childhood years, you may have heard a song that ran something like this: "Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had father Abraham" -- go ahead and start humming the tune if you know it -- "I am one of them and so are you, so let's just praise the Lord." What typically followed this line was a hodgepodge of physical movements [right arm, left arm, right foot, left foot, nod your head, turn around, sit down ... motions] that had nothing to do with father Abraham and everything to do with expending the children's excess energy. It's sort of like a church version of "The Hokey Pokey," but without the "shake it all about" bit.¹

But he then talks about how that song has some serious theology behind it. We're not going to sing that for our closing song today, but our opening text tells us "father Abraham had many sons" in addition to Ishmael and Isaac: Genesis 25:1 *Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah.*² *She bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah.*³ *Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim and Letushim and Leummim.*⁴ *The sons of Midian were Ephah and Epher and Hanoch and Abida and Eladaah. All these were the sons of Keturah.*⁵ *Now Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac;*⁶ *but to the sons of his concubines, Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and sent them away from his son Isaac eastward, to the land of the east.*
...¹²Now these are the records of the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son
...¹⁹Now these are the records of the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son...

You may be wondering what in the world I can preach on this (I wondered). This is a chapter about the many sons of Father Abraham. It's not just a list of names to add to a baby names book. I know of pregnant moms at GCBC who are interested in biblical names (at least 5 expecting moms here?), v. 2 is timely for you to consider: *Jokshan, Ishbak.* Or v. 14 *Mishma or Messa* (not mish-mash or mess-up). Or in v. 15 maybe *Hadad* (my kids say to me sometimes). Or v. 25 if "red, hairy" kids. My favorite in 22:21: *Uz and Buz.* These names may seem different and distant to us, but names are significant to God, as we've seen already with Abram and Sarai. He knows all by name.

But what's more important than the names here or even their meanings, is the nations that would come from these names, and God's mission to them. Just reading names may not seem interesting. Just trying to *pronounce* OT names is interesting and challenging. But we really believe "*all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for doctrine/teaching*" as Paul says and then by the authority of God he commands "*preach the Word*" (2 Tim 3:16, 4:2).

Preaching God's whole counsel includes a genealogy and its context and how it connects to the broader context. These names here connect to nations that came from them; tribes, peoples, places, princes (tradition ties these to Arabs): ¹⁶ *These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages, and by their camps; twelve princes according to their tribes.*

¹⁷ *These are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.*

¹⁸ *They settled from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt as one goes toward Assyria; he settled in defiance of all his relatives. [or "in presence of his brethren" or "over against all his kinsmen" or "in hostility toward all..."]*

Later in v. 23 Isaac's son (Abraham's grandsons, we'll study their story in a future week) God tells Rebekah pregnant with twins in v. 23: '*two nations are in your womb*' and He says their struggle will continue long after birth.

Gen 25 isn't just names, it's nations descended from Abraham who settle in the Middle East and have family feuds among brothers and relatives and kinsmen. This chapter is very relevant to what we see on the news each day we turn it on, nations descended from Abraham and his kin still struggling since their ancestors who were struggling before they were born. Arabs vs. Israelis, Arabs vs. Arabs, Muslims vs. everybody, Gen 25 is where it starts. But we need to look beyond Middle East conflicts in Abraham's family tree to conflicts in all of our family trees since Genesis 3 and we need to see our only hope is Jesus, the ultimate son of Abraham, adopting us to His family.

In this context, in the middle of the names in v. 2-6 and v. 12-16, we read in v. 7-11 an important note, that Abraham died. Verse 8 says he died and v. 9 says Isaac and Ishmael came together to bury their father in the same tomb his wife was buried in, a site still revered by Jews and Muslims 4,000 years later today. Abraham was the one through whom God promised to bless all the nations of the earth through his seed. God's promise is still alive even though father Abraham has died now. I think the key statement is in v. 11: *It came about after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac ...*

Abraham is the one through whom God brings together the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael and other nations (including us) through the greatest son of Abraham, his great descendant Jesus, who makes us part of many sons and daughters spiritually under father Abraham if we share Abraham's faith. The mission of God in Genesis includes a lot of people with names different than most of us in this room, and who look different than most of us in here, but the gospel announced in Genesis is to bless all in/with Abraham's family

Turn to Galatians 3 which is another chapter about the "many sons of Father Abraham," and gives us a deeper theological significance in the NT of this. The lyrics of that children's song about Abraham's "many sons" are actually much deeper than "Deep and Wide" (which I'm not sure what that has to do with Christianity, maybe someone can educate me afterwards), but I think it's important to explain what it means to be a "son of Abraham," and that not every kid singing is "one of them" (and neither are all of you adults). It's only those the Spirit of God has worked a miracle in, regeneration, and faith

Galatians 3:5 So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? [that's a rhetorical question Paul expects them to answer "by faith, not by works"]⁶ Even so Abraham BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.⁷ Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.⁸ The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU."⁹ So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer ... [i.e., believers of 'all the nations,' v. 28 says Gentiles, women, slaves, all one in Christ] ...²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

So as I've suggested before, I think we should rewrite the children's song a little to match Galatians 3: "Father Abraham had many sons, and many sons had Father Abraham. I am one of them and so are you *if Jesus is your Lord*"

We're not automatically in the family of faith just because our parents raise us in the faith. It's not about any earthly family lineage, it's about Lordship. When we read of Abraham's descendants in Genesis 25, the NT wants us to think beyond biology (Paul and John the Baptist and Jesus had to rebuke Jews who claimed Abraham as their father when they didn't share his faith). We need to look beyond geography or the names in the Genesis genealogy; we need to look to *theology* and the big picture of God's mission to nations.

Our study today will be "A Biblical Missions Mindset" from Genesis 1-25. I don't want to miss the forest looking at the trees in Abraham's family tree in chapter 25, I want to ride the helicopter up and look back at the big picture, the panorama of God's truth, to broaden our worldview about the world. I want us to see the path the author of Genesis has already taken through the forest of Genesis 1-25 and also see the mountain he's going to, Mt. Calvary.

4 key words for missions in Gen 1-25: creation, relations, salvation, nations. I don't want you just to think of human missions, and foreign missionaries, I want us to think of God's mission and commission for every person here. I want you to think of *mission statements* for individuals and families here. I want to consider what our purpose on the planet is, and God's purpose for it. 4 foundational truths for a Biblical Missions Mindset laid down in Gen 1-25

- *Creation* is all about God's glory
- *Relations* are ways to spread God's glory
- *Salvation* must be proclaimed to God's glory
- *Nations* must worship with us for God's glory

1. Creation is all about God's glory

God's glory is weightiness, worthiness to be honored, praised, His renown. Our tendency is to focus on us, but the first 25 chapters of the Bible are not about us, or even about Israel (which really develops later in Genesis). Gen. 1 is about God, His Story in history for His glory exalted in all the world. I pray that God uses this message to stir our hearts both globally and locally.

Gen 1:1 doesn't start with man, it starts with '*In the beginning God created* ... How? v. 3 says *Then God said, "Let there be light."* And there was light. Light is a way God reveals and radiates a radiance of His glory and beauty.

Light also pictures gospel glory. 2 Corinthians 4:6 says '*For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*' The glory of the first creation isn't enough, mankind needs a new creation, a regeneration, God's '*let there be light*' to our hearts to see the glory of Christ and the beauty of Christ so that we love Christ and want to see more of Him

John 1 also starts with creation: '*In the beginning was the Word [Jesus]*' and John says of Jesus in that chapter '*and we beheld His glory...*' (v. 14). Col. 1 also starts with Christ's glory as the Creator: '*all things were created by Him and for Him...that in everything he might have the supremacy*' (16, 18 NIV)

On day 2 of creation in v. 6-8 God spreads waters on and over the earth, and that language is also used later of His plan to fill this planet with His glory. The prophet Habakkuk prophesies a day that '*the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea*' (Hab 2:14). The massiveness of the oceans gives a hint of the magnitude, magnificence, and matchlessness of the Lord Jesus that will be seen in His millennial glory

On day 3 in v. 9-12 He creates land for earth, filling it with plants and trees. Numbers 14:21 says "*all the earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD.*" Isaiah 60:13 says even the plants and trees created on day 3 will glorify the Lord in His kingdom to come. Jesus said when He came as King to begin His kingdom (Palm Sunday) that if the people wouldn't glorify Him then the rocks would have to cry out "*glorify Him in the highest*" (Luke 19:38, 40).

[glorify=magnify, make a big deal out of, lift up, honor, praise]

On day 4 God decorates the heavens with the sun, moon, and stars. Ps 19:1 says '*the heavens declare the glory of God...*' and then it talks about how the message of God's glory goes to all creation through creation, unmistakable glory that makes man inexcusable. The stars in our galaxy reveal a God of wonders beyond our galaxy. The universe declares His majesty. He is holy.

This is a very big point: the bigness of the universe points to a bigger God. Isaiah 40:12 says the universe compared to God is like the span of His hand. Solomon said to God '*the highest heaven cannot contain You*' 1 Kings 8:27.

From the highest of heights to the depths of the sea
 Creation's revealing Your majesty ... Indescribable, uncontainable,
 You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name
 Awestruck we fall to our knees as we humbly proclaim You are amazing God²

On Day 5 He creates sea creatures and birds that are also all about His glory (Isaiah 43:20 talk about animals that glorify God, even the ostrich birds). Psalm 148 calls on all the "*sea creatures and all the depths*" to "*praise the name of the LORD, for ... His glory is above the earth and heaven*" (148:7).

On Day 6 He creates mankind in His own image. Isa. 43:7 says He created us *for His own glory*. From Genesis to Revelation, beginning to end, we're created to glorify God and enjoy Him in creation, and above all in Christ. It starts in Genesis and continues to Rev 14:7 where an angel shouts out "*Fear God and give Him glory...worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and the sea...*" (v. 7). Romans 1 says since the creation of the world men see God in it but have *neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks* (20-21 NIV)

Creation is all about God's glory, the purpose of the planet, that's point #1.

2. Relations (ex: family, community) are ways to spread God's glory

As we move to chapter 2, the chief end of everything is to glorify God and enjoy God and to spread that to others. In Genesis 2 God creates marriage for companionship and enjoyment to glorify God beyond what man can do alone. After Gen 1 says '*God saw what He made and it was good*' 10x, now God sees something that's not good in 2:18, for man to be alone. Humanity is relational and it's for community and relationships that God designed us.

You know the story of v. 18-24, but I would just remind you that v. 24 gives us the theological reason for marriage between one man and one woman in a one-flesh union for one lifetime. And as we've studied before, marriage is also intended by God as a picture of the relation of Christ to His church. It's one of the ways God designed to spread His glory, through godly marriages that present to the world a visual of Christ's glorious love for His bride. You who've been married faithfully for decades are marriage missionaries to us.

[Let God's love and your light shine before men so they glorify your Father]

One reason I like to highlight in our church services wedding anniversaries, especially of 50 years or more, is that Hebrews 13 says in a worship context that marriage is to be honored by all. I often say when I officiate a wedding that my sermon is not to the audience but to the couple and they're the ones responsible from that day forward to be a living sermon to the world of the glory and beauty of Christ's faithful love. Not only does Ephesians 5 make that analogy, but 1 Peter 3 talks about husband and wife relations and says we're to be always ready to give an answer or speak of gospel hope within us (v. 15 implication in context of v. 1-7, they may see it in our marriage).

The marriage relationship is one way we are to display the glory of Christ. The love of the husband is to be modeled after Christ's relational love and the equality and submission of a wife is modeled after Jesus in the Trinity. 2 Corinthians 11 makes that analogy of Christ, equal to God, yet submitting, and John 17 speaks of the joy and glory shared eternally within the Trinity.

In Genesis 1:26 when God says "*Let us make man in our image ...*" God is speaking within the relationship of the Trinity (not to angels who don't and can't create, we're not made in the image of angels). Part of what it means to be created in God's image in Gen 1 is that we are relational beings as well, created for relationship with God. Our God designed human relationships to be one of the ways (if not the primary way) to spread His glory and multiply enjoyment of Him as a relational God who's revealed as Father and Son.

Through human fathers and sons, parents and children of godly marriages, God desires to spread His glory. His first words in v. 28 are '*Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth...*' which is another way to say *multiply my image to fill the earth with my likeness by many children who magnify my glory.*'

Multiplied children is repeatedly seen as a blessing in the OT, not a burden as our world (and sometimes Christian world) views kids. They're blessings and responsibilities. Psalm 127 says children are a blessing, a heritage from the Lord, and the ESV says '*blessed is he who fills his quiver with them.*' It's not the American way of thinking, but neither is most of what's in the Bible.

Psalm 127 uses that imagery of children filling a quiver, not just gifts from God, but responsibilities for parents (quivers are for battle). This is spiritual warfare we're in as families against a dark kingdom. Kids are arrows to be taken by the hand, shaped, fashioned for flight by parents, and as ready, sent out into the battlefield like flaming arrows spreading God's blazing glory.

In our family devotions, we've been reading missionary stories along with biblical stories. This week we read about Jim Elliot, a man on fire for God's glory who wanted nothing more than to be shot out like an arrow into Auca territory in Ecuador's kingdom of darkness. At age 22 he wrote his parents: 'Remember how the Psalmist described children? He said that they were as an heritage from the Lord, and that every man should be happy who had his quiver full of them ... with the strong arms of prayer, draw the bowstring back and let the arrows fly - all of them, straight at the Enemy's hosts.'

[as an old hymn says] "Give of thy sons to bear the message glorious,
Give of thy wealth to speed them on their way,
Pour out thy soul for them in prayer victorious,
And all thou spendest Jesus will repay."³

Don't plan your families based on the American dream, live God's vision in your home. Marriages are to spread God's glory and so is the relationship of parents to their children. This original commission to humanity has relation to Christ's commission: "*make disciples of all ... teaching them ...*" The first place we're called to do that is in our homes, to disciple and teach our kids. Adam and Eve apparently taught their children how to worship God, as Gen 4 begins with their children worshipping God. Noah in chapter 8 leads his family in worship at an altar as their first family activity in the new world. In chapter 9 God reminds Noah that God created man in His image and God repeats the command to be fruitful, multiply children to spread God's image.

From Genesis to the last book of the OT, Malachi, the purpose of marriage is not just procreation, it's the magnification of God's glory, multiplication of children in His likeness who are spiritually fruitful. Malachi 2:15 says of man and wife in a marriage union: *Has not the LORD made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself...¹⁶ "I hate divorce," says the LORD God...(NIV)*

Marriage is important because of God's glory pictured in it and also because God seeks and saves godly offspring through it. God's plan to multiply His spiritual family begins in a human family, parents, especially a godly father.

Turn to Genesis 18 where God's plan is laid down as clear as anywhere else. Genesis 18:17 *The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,¹⁸ since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed?¹⁹ "For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him."*

The household, the family, is the primary means God has chosen to pass on His glorious truth - parents, and fathers in particular teaching their children in the nurture and instruction of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). It's dereliction of duty for dads to leave spiritual childraising to mom or others. A church or school or parachurch group or SS can't impact kids like God designed the home to. Churches, schools, ministries, etc., have a place, but can never replace this.

Turn to 2 Timothy 2 before I move on from this point. Paul takes this truth a step further that I think also has application to a biblical missions mindset. Timothy didn't have a godly father but Paul became a spiritual father to him¹ *You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.² The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*

Paul later talks about the sufficiency of "all Scripture" (3:16) and calls him to "preach the Word" (4:2), but what I want us to notice in chapter 2 is that Paul wanted Timothy to pass on those things to faithful men, to 'be fruitful and multiply' spiritually. This is ministry multiplication, as Paul discipled a son in his faith, and Timothy in turn must disciple others to disciple others. Paul's mission mindset wasn't Paul the Jewish foreigner discipling/teaching everyone, it was to establish men to reproduce ministry in their community.

As Elders, this seems to us a key verse for missions and a focus that hasn't been a clear focus in our missions and we're praying for God's help to focus on what v. 2 focuses on: *supporting men committed to Timothy's ministry*. Missions is legitimate in support roles or for schools or teaching women or children or youth, but a gap or growth area for us we see is right in this text: *Men like Timothy committed to the sufficiency of all Scripture, preaching the Word in an expositional way (verse-by-verse like we believe at GCBC), committed to the doctrines and biblical ministry philosophy we hold dear, men teaching these truths to pastors in their own culture who teach others.*

We don't have unlimited finances with our increased debt for this building that we believe God is using for glory, but when God allows us to increase giving to missions, this is where we as Elders want to prioritize investing in strategized kingdom work that multiplies 2 Tim 2:2 among national pastors. Many in the world aren't blessed with a church committed to the sufficiency of all Scripture (psychology or secular theories or strategies of the world are often really driving ministry). Sound doctrine and qualified male leadership and discipleship is lacking. Many don't have a pastor trained in expository preaching through the Bible, opening up the meaning and applying it, and so like Amos 8:11 said there's a famine in the land of true biblical preaching

My family knows that from experience in the Philippines and next week our guest preacher in my absence has a heart for meeting that need over there, and I hope he'll stir our hearts towards 2 Timothy 2:2 ministry to his people. National pastors trained can impact their own better than white missionaries

Relations (family or ethnicity) are ways to spread God's glory, point #2 ...

Point #3: Salvation must be proclaimed to God's glory

Relational evangelism is a misnomer if it's not 'salvational'--if salvation isn't being proclaimed in some way. Not every missionary is a street preacher or evangelist of big groups, but any missionary (or Christian) can and must be seeking to and eager to speak of salvation to the lost, whatever else they do. If it doesn't include the Great Commission somehow, it's not truly 'missions'

Our church supports Compassion for Congo, which in part provides orphan and widow ministry, but it also is a gospel-proclaiming and church-planting ministry that has asked our help for training pastors, which excites me. I've adopted 2 boys from there (only 1 made it here as most of you know), but I want you to know GCBC decided to support in our missions for the spiritual adoptions, salvation being proclaimed and happening in those churches, too.

Ps 96:2 says "*proclaim his salvation...declare his glory among the nations.*" This also flows out of Genesis and God's calling of Abraham in Genesis 12, which Paul calls "*the gospel proclaimed beforehand to Abraham*" (Gal 3:8). Everywhere Abraham went, the text says he built places of worship and he "proclaimed the name of the Lord" (a phrase for some public proclamation). Proclaiming God's name, includes His attributes, God's name is God's glory.

Noah before him was also a "*preacher of righteousness*" (2 Peter 2:5), and salvation from God's wrath in the flood was proclaimed to others if they'd come to the ark before judgment rained down. Salvation was proclaimed to Lot and his family in Sodom if they would flee before fiery judgment rained down. It's always been the message: flee God's wrath by His glorious grace.

The Savior Jesus was prophesied in Gen 3:15 and pictured in that chapter as Adam and Eve don't die for their sins but are given a covering of an animal that must have died to give up its skins. The gospel was preached in some sense in Gen 12:3 but was most clearly pictured in Genesis 22, where Isaac is spared death by a substitute animal killed in his place on the altar. This is the message of the Bible from beginning to the end, Jesus is the Lamb slain for sinners, the substitute who suffers death and wrath which we deserved. He is the ark of salvation, He is the covering on the ark, He is the door, He is the only refuge from God's wrath for all who flee their sins to the Savior.

This is the message essential to all missions (and what makes us Christian). You may do social justice or charity but it's not "missions" without gospel. I'm encouraged to see this in the heart of John and those organizing a trip to Mexico that you'll hear more about, this isn't just a Christmas vacation, or just a way to help those less fortunate that time of year, it's an opportunity to share the gospel with the unsaved, offering the greatest gift of all: Jesus.

[some may support others proclaiming it, but the gospel must be the goal]

This is an area for us to grow locally as well, increasing our outreach to the unsaved around us, and I would invite your involvement, ideas, initiative. Pray for us Elders as we seek to develop our philosophy of missions and a "missions and outreach" oversight team to help give oversight and attention to short and long-term missions, and local outreach and evangelism and how to increase. The heart of our 2819 group is prayer and to encourage our missionaries with cards and a place to hear from our missionaries, and that will continue and you're welcome to that each month. We also recognize as Elders a need for a group with leaders and laypeople to oversee outreach, to help evaluate future partnership opportunities and current ones and needs.

As we clarify a missions philosophy that will help us give priority to needs. I've been reading many books on missions, researching how other missions-minded churches have done it, getting counsel from like-minded pastors as to how to go about this, and I would invite your prayers for God to increase mission impact with wisdom as stewards of gospel ministry (Eph 3:2-10).

Salvation must be proclaimed to God's glory, that's our 3rd point ...

Our 4th and final point: **Nations must worship with us for God's glory**

Gen 12:3 says to Abraham: "*with you all the families of the earth will be blessed.*" The context includes salvation blessing. Kaiser calls Gen 12:3 'the Great Commission of the OT.'⁴ Abraham in Gen 12 is saved and worships and begins to call upon or proclaim God's name (12:8) and people begin to join his family of faith in that same chapter (v. 5, 16). He worships with Melchizedek of another nation in chapter 14. People of African and Arab and Middle Eastern nations begin to worship with Israel in the early OT. In Genesis 25, Ishmael's tribes are part of every tribe to worship Christ (Rev 7)

This must be our heart: all nations must worship with us for God's glory.

- Paul's missionary zeal in Rom 15:9: '*for the Gentiles to glorify God ... praise...among Gentiles...Rejoice, O Gentiles with His people...*'
- Ps 86:11: *I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, And will glorify Your name forever...[but he's not satisfied to worship alone] All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And they shall glorify Your name* (v. 9)
- Ps 96:3 '*Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples...⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe ... glory and strength.⁸ Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name ...¹⁰ Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns..."*
- Ps 102:15 ... *the nations will fear the name of the LORD And all the kings of the earth Your glory.*
- In Isaiah 66:18 God says '*the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory...to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations...*
- I believe that will happen after Jesus comes again, 2 Thess 1:10 says "*when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired [or 'marveled at'] among all those who believe ...*" (NKJV)
- Rev 15:4 "*Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? ... For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU...*"

John Piper says in his book subtitled *The Supremacy of God in Missions*:

‘Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Mission exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.

So worship is the fuel and goal of missions ... The goal of missions is the gladness of the peoples in the greatness of God ... (Psalm 67:3-4).’⁵

May that be our goal as well, to glorify God and enjoy Him forever together in worship with as many people as we can bring to Christ, including Arabs descended from Gen 25, and every tribe and tongue and people and nation. May our homes be launching pads for the gospel, our marriages pictures of the gospel, our children made disciples and made arrows to make a mark on the world in enemy territory. May God’s renown, name, and glory engage our heart. Our Father in heaven, honored be Thy name. Thy kingdom come.

I close with the last words of the missionary David Brainerd before he died: ‘Friday, October 2 [1747].—My soul was this day, at turns, sweetly set on God: I longed to be with him, that I might behold his glory. I felt sweetly disposed to commit all to him ... all my concerns for time and eternity. O that his kingdom might come in the world; that they might all love and glorify him, for what he is in himself; and that the blessed Redeemer might see ... and be satisfied. O come Lord Jesus, come quickly.’⁶

¹ Timothy Paul Jones, *Rose Guide to End Times Prophecy*, p. 56.

² Chris Tomlin, “Indescribable.”

³ Elisabeth Elliot, *Shadow of the Almighty: The Life and Testament of Jim Elliot*, [New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers: 1958] p. 132; hymn quote from “Oh, Zion Haste”

⁴ Walter Kaiser, *Mission in the Old Testament*, p. 15.

⁵ John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*, 3rd edition, p. 35.

⁶ Jonathan Edwards, *The Life and Diary of David Brainerd*, final diary entry.