

# PARTICIPANT NOTES

Learn to become a blessing

## SESSION TWO

### THE KINGDOM STRIKES BACK

*Patriarchs, Matriarchs, Prophets and Promise*

Tuesday 11 August

#### KEY QUESTION

***Every day, two kingdoms compete for our allegiance. How do we refuse to give empire the last word?***

#### 1. Kingdom Journal Check-In

Share briefly with those near you:

- Where did you notice empire, and pause to pray “Your Kingdom come”?
- Where did you glimpse God's Kingdom, and pause to say “Thank You, Lord”?
- What surprised you?
- What did the Holy Spirit draw your attention to?

#### Your notes / reflections

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#### 2. So Let's Recap

Fill in the blanks as we go along.

- Genesis 1 and 2 show the world as God intended it to be: creation flourishing under His loving \_\_\_\_\_.
- Every human being bears the image of God — not just kings, rulers and powerful people.
- Genesis and Revelation are like bookends declaring that the Kingdom to come is greater than the Kingdom that was \_\_\_\_\_.
- Tonight we are standing between Genesis and Revelation — between promise and \_\_\_\_\_.
- God never abandons His Kingdom project — even when His people \_\_\_\_\_.

#### 3. A Kingdom Promise — Genesis 12

##### INTERACTIVE QUESTION

*If you were designing a strategy for God to change the whole world, where would you begin, and why?*

- A government?
- An army?
- A wealthy nation?
- A global corporation?

- A social media influencer?
- A political movement?
- Something else?

### Genesis 12:1–3

“I will make you into a great \_\_\_\_\_, and I will bless you; I will make your \_\_\_\_\_ great, and you will be a \_\_\_\_\_  
... all peoples on earth will be \_\_\_\_\_ through you.”

At Babel, humanity says: “Let us make a \_\_\_\_\_ for ourselves.”

In Genesis 12, God says: “I will make your \_\_\_\_\_ great.”

Count the word “bless” or “blessing” in Genesis 12:1–3 — how many times do you find it? \_\_\_\_\_

*Empire asks: “How can I manipulate God and become great?” The Kingdom asks: “How can God bless the world through me?”*

## 4. The Seven Declarations

- I will make you into a great \_\_\_\_\_.
- I will \_\_\_\_\_ you.
- I will make your \_\_\_\_\_ great.
- You will be a \_\_\_\_\_.
- I will bless those who \_\_\_\_\_ you.
- Whoever curses you I will \_\_\_\_\_.
- All peoples on earth will be \_\_\_\_\_ through you.

*What do these seven declarations say about God's purpose?*

## 5. Blessing: Purpose, Not Privilege

*God chooses one family to bless every family. One nation to bless every nation. One people for the sake of all peoples.*

Fill in the contrast:

| Empire                                    | Kingdom                                               |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Empire accumulates.                       | The Kingdom overflows.                                |
| Empire asks: “How much can I keep?”       | The Kingdom asks: “Who can I bless?”                  |
| Empire builds bigger _____.               | The Kingdom builds bigger _____.                      |
| Empire pursues control, status and power. | The Kingdom practises service, faithfulness and love. |

*Who blessed you this past week? Thank God for them right now...*

## 6. Patriarchs and Matriarchs: Custodians of the Promise

*Patriarchs come with matriarchs. Scripture often tells the story through the men, but without the one, there is no other.*

What did each of these carry forward?

- Abraham — learns to trust God's \_\_\_\_\_.
- Sarah — laughs at the promise, then watches it \_\_\_\_\_ anyway.
- Isaac & Rebekah — provision and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Jacob — blessing through \_\_\_\_\_ rather than striving.
- Rachel & Leah — carry the promise despite rivalry and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Joseph — blessing for the sake of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Tamar — takes extraordinary \_\_\_\_\_ to keep the promise alive.

*Which one of these names struck you most tonight, and why?*

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## 7. Outsiders Who Protected the Promise

*None of these were custodians of the promise by birth. Every one of them became custodians of the promise by faith, courage or kindness at exactly the moment the promise needed protecting.*

| Name               | What they did / what they reveal                                                          |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hagar              | An Egyptian slave who meets God in the wilderness and names Him “the God who sees me”.    |
| Shiphrah & Puah    | Egyptian midwives who defy Pharaoh and protect Hebrew baby boys.                          |
| Pharaoh's daughter | Rescues one of the very people her father is trying to destroy.                           |
| Jethro             | A Midianite priest who helps Moses structure leadership for the nation.                   |
| Rahab              | A Canaanite from Jericho who protects Israel's spies and is woven into the line of Jesus. |
| Ruth               | A Moabite widow who chooses Israel's God and becomes David's great-grandmother.           |

*What does this suggest about who God can use to protect His Kingdom project?*

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## 8. Saved From... Saved For...

*We often talk of the Exodus as God saving Israel from slavery and delivering them from the Empire of Pharaoh in Egypt. And of course He does. But God is not simply rescuing them from Egypt. He is rescuing them for worship, for covenant, for mission, and for Kingdom.*

**Freedom is never the \_\_\_\_\_. Freedom is only ever the \_\_\_\_\_.**

| Saved From...               | Saved For... |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Slavery                     | Worship      |
| Pharaoh's empire            | Covenant     |
| Fear and exploitation       | Mission      |
| A life shaped by domination | Kingdom      |

## 9. Sinai and the Tabernacle

### Sinai — Learning the Culture of the Kingdom

- It took only one night to get Israel out of Egypt. It took \_\_\_\_\_ years to get Egypt out of Israel.
- Formation always takes longer than \_\_\_\_\_.
- Empire says: if you want it, never \_\_\_\_\_. Kingdom says: if God wants it for you, learn to \_\_\_\_\_.

### The Tabernacle — The Presence Changes Everything

- The Kingdom is not just about laws — the nations around Israel had laws too.
- Without God's presence, Israel was just like every other \_\_\_\_\_.
- With God's presence, they became God's Kingdom \_\_\_\_\_.
- The Tabernacle is like a little Garden of Eden travelling through the wilderness — a piece of \_\_\_\_\_ touching earth.
- The first person explicitly filled with the Holy Spirit in Scripture was \_\_\_\_\_, the craftsman.

*What might God be reminding us about creativity, beauty, skill and work?*

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## 10. If God Was King Here... (Group Exercise)

Our table's setting:

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*Imagine Jesus was obviously King in this setting — not theoretically, but actually, practically, visibly and specifically. What would change about leadership, power, money, justice, hospitality, outsiders, conflict, rest and generosity?*

| Area                    | What would change if God was King here? |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Leadership              |                                         |
| Power                   |                                         |
| Money                   |                                         |
| Justice                 |                                         |
| Hospitality / outsiders |                                         |
| Conflict / forgiveness  |                                         |
| Rest / generosity       |                                         |

*Something from another table that inspired or challenged me*

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## 11. Hosea — God's Course Corrector

### Hosea's repeated message to Israel

- Remember who you are.
- Remember whose you are.
- Remember why you were chosen.

- Remember that you were blessed... to become a blessing.

Fill in the blanks:

- Hosea marries \_\_\_\_\_, who is unfaithful to him — a living picture of God's relationship with \_\_\_\_\_.
- Prophets are God's course \_\_\_\_\_.
- God's Kingdom cannot be \_\_\_\_\_. His promises cannot be \_\_\_\_\_. His covenant cannot be \_\_\_\_\_.
- Jeremiah speaks of a new covenant written on human \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ezekiel speaks of a new \_\_\_\_\_ and a new spirit.
- Joel speaks of the Spirit poured out on ordinary people: sons and daughters, old and young.

*One thing I want to remember from tonight*

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## 12. Drawing the Threads Together

### Can you see the pattern?

- God blesses.
- People drift.
- Empire creeps back in.
- God raises prophets to call them back.
- God renews His promise again and again.

*The Old Testament leaves one question hanging: Who will finally succeed where Adam failed, where Abraham stumbled, where Israel drifted, where kings disappointed?*

**Next time we meet the Kingdom on legs: the One every patriarch, matriarch, prophet and king was pointing toward all along.**

## 13. Kingdom Practice for the Next Two Weeks — Become a Blessing

### Every morning ask:

*Holy Spirit, who do You want to bless through me today?*

Then have the courage to respond. Don't overthink it. It may be a conversation, an encouragement, an invitation, an act of generosity, forgiveness, hospitality, standing up for someone, sharing a meal, praying with someone, listening well, or offering practical help.

### Every night ask:

*Who was blessed because I was here today? Was I trying to make a name for myself, or to make a difference for someone else?*

**Whatever else you do this week... Be Kingdom!**

### Week One

| Day   | Who did I bless / how? | Empire or Kingdom moment I noticed |
|-------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Day 1 |                        |                                    |
| Day 2 |                        |                                    |
| Day 3 |                        |                                    |
| Day 4 |                        |                                    |

| Day   | Who did I bless / how? | Empire or Kingdom moment I noticed |
|-------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Day 5 |                        |                                    |
| Day 6 |                        |                                    |
| Day 7 |                        |                                    |

## Week Two

| Day    | Who did I bless / how? | Empire or Kingdom moment I noticed |
|--------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Day 8  |                        |                                    |
| Day 9  |                        |                                    |
| Day 10 |                        |                                    |
| Day 11 |                        |                                    |
| Day 12 |                        |                                    |
| Day 13 |                        |                                    |
| Day 14 |                        |                                    |

## 14. Prayer

*A name or situation I want to hold before God this week*

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### CLOSING PRAYER

*Father, thank You that You never abandon Your Kingdom project. Form us into the kind of people through whom Your blessing flows into the world.*

***“Your Kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”***