

# Bethany School

## Towards a Christian Curriculum

### Topic Theme - Nations

#### Context and Aims

This is the last of nine topics in the Bethany School Curriculum: Beginnings, Work, Water, Dry Land, Living Things - Plants and Animals, People, The Earth in Space, Communication and **Nations**.

In previous topics we have seen that God alone is eternal and that all things **originate** in Him. God's **activities** involve making, sustaining, redeeming and renewing creation and by acting in this way God reveals His character to the **created realms**. The whole of creation declares God's nature and attributes but **people** are especially the object of His desire to **communicate** with His creation. We have looked at God's work in creating and ordering the world, the effects of our obedience to or disregard for God laws and the extent to which Christians can bring a measure of the redemption, achieved through Christ's death, to this fallen world. In this topic we will investigate God's dealing with Abraham, His covenant with His chosen people and the pattern modelled for us by Abraham as the 'father of many **nations**'.

#### Context

##### Authority and Obedience

- All authority belongs to God.
- God has given people legitimate authority over the creation and a mandate to tend, subdue and fill the earth.
- There is a legitimate order in family relationships which is part of God's merciful judgement after the Fall. Authority is given to husbands and scripture is full of guidance regarding the correct exercise of this God-given rule.
- Parents have responsibilities to exercise authority as God's agents. This is good for children and good for society.
- Society has developed with a patriarchal system (generally mirrored in the animal kingdom) and God promised to Abram that '*in you all the **families** of the earth shall be blessed.*'
- God allowed authority and rule to include judges, prophets, priests and kings. By faithfulness to His covenant God empowered Israel to be a self controlled people living freely under the authority of God. In this they are an example to all nations.
- Jesus is the ultimate example of the correct use of legitimate authority. He possesses all authority and yet He came as a servant. He is a Ruler who serves. He is also a Servant who rules. He exercises sovereign authority that is **kind** - authority exercised on behalf of His subjects.
- People are expected to respect authority and submit to the rule of law.
- Justice and service should characterise leadership. God's people should strive for this but also, willingly submit to legitimate authority. Righteousness exalts a nation.
- Pride, greed and selfishness leads to an abuse of authority, tyranny and oppression.

- The end times - the gospel preached to every tongue, tribe and nation. Nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom.
- In heaven: the 24 elders cast their crowns at the feet of Jesus; ...a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues ..... ; the tree of life, removed from Eden, is used for the healing of the nations.

Our aim is:

- to demonstrate that God, not man makes history and sets out the affairs of men.
- to show that in the nation of Israel God has given us a model of His dealings with individuals and nations.
- to observe where, through the transmission of culture, nations have developed, or departed from, Godly ways.
- to discover through an in-depth study of a chosen country how faith and beliefs influence national identity.
- to look at the imbalances between nations and suggest biblically appropriate responses.