



# God Builds a Nation: One Person at a Time

The two key words that form the basis of this entire chapter are: “I will...” – words of covenant commitment and promise. This time, there could be no contingencies. The plan to save mankind had to rest on bedrock, so God said, “I will...” His words were the ironclad guarantee. And so, His master plan to restore us to Himself gets a fresh start with these words. In spite of our inconsistent, erratic behavior, God is determined to fulfill His promise. God said: I will . . .

- Make your descendants into a great nation
- Give you a land in which to dwell
- Bless all other nations through the nation of Israel

The first lesson is how God builds a nation: individually – one person at a time. He appeared and spoke to Abraham several times: when He first called him, when the three visitors came to announce Sarah’s pregnancy ... over and over again, God’s arrival is a personal one. When Jacob had gotten by all those years with trickery and cunning, God knew a personal encounter was needed to move him from con artist to convert, so He appeared and wrestled with Jacob all night. And when it was over, Jacob understood grace for the first time.

Instead of writing an impersonal message in the stars, God comes to us, one-by-one, in the circumstances of our lives. Where has He appeared to you?

- Perhaps through the tough but honest counsel of a friend?
- Through the undeserved love and acceptance of your mate?
- Perhaps God has appeared to you through an obstacle or some sort of setback that stops you dead in your tracks and requires you to work out some character issues.
- Has God personally revealed Himself through the imperfect, flawed Bible characters like Elijah who was depressed, Job who was defiant, or Naaman whose pride almost left him a permanent leper?

The first lesson of chapter two of *The Story* is that God is so gracious, so loving, that He meets each of us not through a celestial text message, but in the daily events of our lives: a Creator humble enough to approach us in the smile of a child, in a career setback, on the battlefield, or under our own roof, always willing to process with us, to wrestle with us, to entertain our hard questions. A God who doesn’t need to explain himself to anyone – but who, out of love, has touched each one of us personally, and led us from darkness to light. THAT is a God worthy of our worship.

## **Reflection:**

1. In what personal, individual ways has God met you – challenged you for His sake?
2. In what ways have you seen God use your brokenness to further His purposes?
3. What is God trying to teach you about your character or life through the stories of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?