

The True Story of the Whole World pp 42-46
Act 3 --- The King Chooses Israel. Redemption initiated
Scene 1 --- “A People for the King” ---Abraham and Sara

Creation	Rebellion & Fall	Abraham and Sara	Egyptian Captivity	Promised Land
All creation Adam and Eve	The Garden Cain and Abel Babel Flood (Noah)	Isaac Jacob and Esau 12 sons (tribes) Joseph in Egypt The above = “The Patriarchs”	Moses Plagues Exodus Mt. Sinai Wilderness	Joshua Judges Kings Saul David Solomon Divided Kingdom

Genesis 11:31-12:9; 15 (If possible, Genesis 12-50)

In a nutshell.....

The story begins to reveal how God will respond to what has gone wrong in His creation. Through one person (Abraham), God will bring into being one nation (Israel), that will be a blessing to all the other peoples of the earth.

God’s ultimate purpose extends with redemptive blessing to the whole creation. From the beginning, God’s people are to be ‘missionary’, chosen to be a channel of blessing to others.

Sound familiar?

- Abraham ‘sacrificing’ Isaac [list text]
- destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah
- Sara giving birth at old age
- Jacob tricking Esau
- Laban tricking Jacob
- Jacob dreaming of a ladder to heaven
- Joseph’s coat of many colors
- Joseph sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers

Three Main Themes of “The Patriarchs” (Genesis 12 – 50)

1. God’s promises to Abraham are reaffirmed to his son and grandson, “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”
2. The stories honestly confront the sinful nature of those whom God chooses. There are bitter breakdowns in family relationships.
3. God overcomes many obstacles to work out a plan for the chosen people.
 - barrenness
 - famine
 - stupidity
 - lack of faith
 - dishonesty

Other Biblical references

- Matthew 3:9
- Deuteronomy 34:4
- Isaiah 41:8ff
- Acts 3:25
- Romans 4
- Hebrews 11:8-19
- James 21:23

Hymns

- HWB 162 The God of Abraham praise
- HWB 168 Creating God, your fingers trace
- HWB 439 I want Jesus to walk with me
- HWB 422 Bwana awabariki (May God grant you a blessing)

General questions for Biblical reflection

1. What do you notice about God in this text?
2. Is there any part of the text that is surprising? Why?
3. What in this text encourages, troubles, surprises, or confuses you?
4. Is there anything in this text you had never noted before? Why do you think it stood out to you this time?
5. How does the action in this passage fit into God's salvation plan?

Specific to the texts for this Sunday

1. Why are there seemingly always 'two sons' in The True Story of the Whole World (Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, older brother/younger brother)?
2. How is God's intention to be a "blessing to all nations" being realized in your life? Whom are you 'blessing'?
3. How is God's intention to be a 'blessing to all nations' being realized through MCN? Is it necessary that this happen through 'a people', not just through scattered individuals?
4. Are there areas in which you (or we) 'laugh' like Sara? "Sure, God makes promises in theory and in theory we say we believe them, but in real life.....?????"
5. Where do you find yourself in this story? With whom do you identify in their weakness? With whom do you identify in their faith?
6. These are stories of journeys.....movement.....transitions. Take some time to record major waypoints on your own journey of faith.