



S1E12: The Childless Father

THE PROMISE: God Calls a Family (Gen. 11-50)

Continues from Episode 11. God's plan starts with a childless, middle-aged couple. In a world designed by God to flourish and grow with human life, instead there is barrenness and emptiness.

- Abraham's story = 12 chapters in Genesis
- Covers 25 years of his life from age 75 to 100; very little detail otherwise
- God rise up a family through a couple unable to conceive on their own
- Hints at reversal of the curse of Eden
- Abraham's track record as a hero of the faith is spotty
 - Willing to follow God into the unknown and trust his promise for a family
 - But often took matters into his own hands to make it happen
- Not a biographical sketch about Abraham but a theological message about who God is
- Faithfulness and trustworthiness of God
- Abraham (Abram) and Sarah (Sarai) are childless. Abe considers making his servant, Eliezar, to be his legal heir. God says it will Abraham's own biological child.
- Abram means "Exalted Father." Ironic title—he is the patriarch over his clan but no biological children of his own
- Abraham's children – God keeps his promise
 - Ishmael - first child, conceived with Hagar, his wife's Egyptian servant
 - Isaac – second child, promised one of God, born to Sarah
 - Keturah, wife after Sarah's death – other children, 6 are named
 - Gen 25:5 mentions Abraham's other children by other concubines
- Rest of Genesis
 - 12-24 focus on Abraham's life
 - 25-37 middle section focused primarily on Jacob and Esau, sons of Isaac
 - 37-50 end of the Genesis narrative, primarily Joseph, his captivity, and the family's flight to Egypt because of famine
- Historical enemies of Israel

- Ishmaelites – descendants of Ishmael, Arabian peninsula
- Midianites – descendants of Keturah’s son, Midian. Located along Gulf of Aqaba in northwestern Arabian Peninsula
- Moabites and Ammonites – descendants of sons/grandsons of Lot, Moab and Ben-Ammi
- Edomites – descendants of Esau, nicknamed Edom (“red”). Known as Idumeans in the New Testament. King Herod was an Idumean.
- Summary
 - God keeps his promise to bring forth children and descendants of Abraham
 - But it’s a messy, dysfunctional family because human sinfulness still reigns, even in God’s chosen people
 - The redemption and victory that God will bring about is not political triumph of Israel over her enemies, but the victory over the violence and sin that pits brother against brother and nation against nation
 - God worked faithfully in Abraham’s family in spite of the blemishes and dysfunctions and works that way still today