

S1E13: A Flawed Hero

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

Continues from Episodes 11-12. 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.

God promises to bless Abraham in order to be a blessing for the world: 12:2-3
Blessed to be a blessing. When God blesses our church or our families, it's never just for us. But God blesses us so that through us he can bless other people.

God as Promise Maker

- God's assurance, his character is at stake
- Emphasizes his power, faithfulness, care
- What was promised? LAND, FAMILY, REPUTATION
- Kingdom -- must have a ruler, land and people
- Spiritual aspects here are not mentioned: salvation, eternal life, etc. Why not?
    - Contrast to garden of Eden and the lie that God didn't care about these things: "Who supplies my needs? Who can I trust?"
    - First step in the plan is to establish that God is trustworthy, so an emphasis on care and provision, a place to live and dwell securely is in view.
- God will eventually bring the story to the matter of the individual's heart and moral character. But it can't start there. Sin's damage in creation has eroded that ability to trust, even the ability to be aware of the lack of trust. Starts with the physical.

- Abram & Lot to Canaan
    - Famine causes Abraham to take the family to Egypt
    - Abraham and Lot grow extremely wealthy and their extended families larger and larger. They eventually have to spread out.
    - Lot chooses the Jordan Valley and the western plateau around the Dead Sea.

    - Abraham takes the central and southern hill country of Canaan. Abraham and Sarah are buried in Hebron (Gen 23). Buried in the Cave of the Patriarchs in modern Hebron.
- Abraham known as a hero of the faith but that faith had to be learned over time and he made numerous mistakes along the way; yet God was faithful each time!
    - Gen 12 – deceives Pharaoh about Sarah being his wife
    - Similar incident in Gen 20 – deceives King Abimelech
    - Gen 16 – Has a baby with Hagar to "fix" their childlessness. A legal, acceptable custom of the ancient world.
    - Not so much placing fault on Abraham but emphasizing the contrast between his way of thinking and how God wants him to think
    - The question throughout is who is going to bring about God's promises to preserve Abraham and establish his offspring in the land? Self-reliant human nature says its up to me. God is beginning to gently demonstrate that it won't work. Redemption is something God has to do; we cannot.

The story of Abraham is really the story of who God reveals himself. Before God demands absolute loyalty, worship, and obedience, he determines to do something for humanity and to prove himself! What a different kind of God this is!

I am the holy one, the one who is absolutely good and faithful. And I am powerful enough to do for you what you cannot do for yourself. Learn to trust me as you walk with me and I will show you what I am like. And in time I will teach you how to be like that, as well.