

Session 3: Patriarchs

Scripture questions:

Genesis 12:1-20

What kind of promise does God make to Abram? What must Abram do in response?

What does the encounter with Pharaoh reveal about Abram's confidence in God?

Genesis 17:1-21

What kind of agreement is established between God and Abram? How do they respond to the promise of children? Why do they respond that way?

Genesis 22:1-13

What does God command Abraham to do and why? Does it make sense or seem fair?

How did Abraham's relationship with God change over the years?

Genesis 26:1-11

How is Isaac like his father? Do you think his actions reveal a lack of confidence in God?

Genesis 27:1-38

What did Jacob do? How was it right or wrong? What would you have done?

Genesis 32:1-32

What does Jacob expect his fate to be and why?

Whom did Jacob wrestle with? What was the purpose?

Genesis 33:1-4

Is the meeting between Jacob and Esau what you would expect? What does this meeting say about both people?

Genesis 35:9-13

What does God tell Jacob in this passage? How is Jacob's story connected to the promise God made to Abraham?

Genesis 37:1-36

What family dynamics do you see in this story? Is this a hopeful situation?

Genesis 39:1-23

How do these events contradict the dream that Joseph had?

Genesis 41:37-41

Genesis 42:1-8

Genesis 45:1-15

Does Joseph's response to his brothers seem appropriate? Why or why not? What can we learn from Joseph's actions?

How do we see the hand of God running throughout the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph?

The Patriarchs: the Fathers or early leaders of the Jewish faith. Their stories make up much of the book of Genesis, and help us understand the history of our faith.

Covenant: a special relational agreement between two parties; establishment of a relationship.

Abraham

- God called Abraham to leave his home in Ur and go to the land of Canaan.
- God made a special covenant with Abraham.
- For his faithfulness, God promised several things to him: blessing anyone who blessed him, cursing anyone who cursed him, and to make him the father of many nations.

Isaac

- Isaac was Abraham's only son, whom God called Abraham to sacrifice.
- Abraham obeyed when he chose to sacrifice his only son, which parallels the way God sacrificed his only son to die for our sins.

Jacob

- Jacob and Esau were Isaac's two sons, who were very different.
- Jacob was deceitful and manipulative. He lied to his dying father and destroyed his relationship with his brother, Esau.
- Jacob came to a point where he sought God to restore his broken relationships.
- Jacob had twelve children, who were the source of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Joseph

- Joseph isn't technically a Patriarch, but he is still an extremely significant figure.
- Joseph was Jacob's youngest son, whom his brothers envied greatly.
- Joseph's story illustrates how God can work through the darkest of circumstances.
- God favors Joseph and he becomes second in command of the empire that once held him in slavery.

Application Questions:

If God told you to sacrifice your only child, what would you do?

Abraham's and Jacob's problems and weaknesses were self-inflicted. How do you sabotage God's activities and plans in your life? Can you give a specific example?

If God's covenant with us is not contractual but relational, how does this make our walk with God both easier and harder?

Write a brief history of the way God has acted in your life to bring you back to Him.

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