

Third Installment of Reading thru the Bible for Heritage Family: January 11, 2012

On Monday, January 16th we leave the suffering of Job and return to Genesis 12. When we left Genesis 11 we were introduced to the family of Terah who had Abram. Abram marries Sarai. We are told in verse 31 that “Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (Haran’s son), and Sarai his daughter-in-law and set out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans for the land of Canaan. But when they got as far as Haran, they settled down there. Chapter 12 brings us now to the story of Abram who will become Abraham.

I wanted to share with you an introduction to this group of books called the Pentateuch or the Books of Moses which are the first five books of the Old Testament. Whenever you hear the New Testaments reference the Books of the Law these five books are what they are talking about. Remember God is the primary concern of these books. But it is not only God; we get included. That’s why when you read these stories we ask where we fit in.

The Books of Moses are made up mostly of stories and signposts. The stories show us God working with and speaking to men and women in a variety of circumstances. God is presented to us not in ideas and arguments but in events and actions that involve each of us personally. The signposts provide immediate and practical directions to guide us into behavior that is appropriate to our humanity and honoring God.

Eugene Peterson in his introduction to the Books of Moses says, “An image of human growth suggests a reason for the powerful pull of these stories and signposts on so many millions of men, women, and children to live as God’s people.” Peterson says the five books are like the five stages of growth in which God creates first a cosmos and then a people for his glory.

Genesis is Conception. After establishing the basic elements by which God will do his work of creation and salvation and judgment in the midst of human sin and rebellion(which were the chapters 1-11), God conceives a People to whom he will reveal himself as **the God of salvation** and through them, over time, to everyone on earth. God begins small, with one man: Abraham. The people of God grow in the womb. Gradually details and then more details become evident as the embryo takes shape: Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Esau, Rachel, Joseph and his brothers. The pregnancy develops. Life is obviously developing in that womb but there is also much that is not clear and visible. The background history is vague, the surrounding nations and customs veiled in a kind of mist. But the presence of life, God-conceived life, is kicking and robust.

These next chapters 12-50 are that gestation time of the Abrahamic people which will be given birth and the Infancy in the Book of Exodus.

Look at it this way:

- Genesis** is Conception
- Exodus** is Birth and Infancy
- Leviticus** is Schooling
- Numbers** is Adolescence
- Deuteronomy** is Adulthood

May your hunger for God’s Word grow!!!