

### **Third Story of Creation to Culmination: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**

#### First Third:

Express joy in Christ together

Vision 100

Questions:

How are you doing?

How did you obey last week's teaching?

Who are you witnessing to?

Who has come to faith? Are they witnessing to those in their circle?

Who are you training to become a reproducing disciple? Are they training others?

#### Second Third:

Pray briefly for God to open up His message to us.

DO stick to the story.

DON'T talk about politics; DON'T chase rabbit trails; DON'T focus on minor points in the passage.

DON'T talk about religion. DON'T dominate the conversation.

*This is a true story from the Bible.*

Recall Genesis 3:15 from the previous lesson. God is speaking to the serpent:

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

God could have destroyed Adam and Eve when they rejected His goodness, and set themselves up as the judges of what was in their own interest. But He did not. Instead, He began a lengthy plan to fulfill this promise.

Around 2000BC, God called a man named Abram.

Genesis 12:1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. 2 "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

But years later, Abram still does not have a son; he wonders how God can fulfill this promise.

Genesis 15:1 After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward." 2 But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" 3 And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir." 4 Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir." 5 He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars-- if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." 6 Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

God changes Abram's name (meaning "exalted father") to Abraham (meaning "father of a multitude") – *before* granting him any children! Indeed, Abraham grows close to 100 years old and his wife is 90, and the two of them still have no children. But God miraculously gives them a son, Isaac. When Isaac is about 13, God tells Abraham to sacrifice him on top of a mountain. Abraham obeys – but at the last second God tells him not to kill him. God then says:

Genesis 22:17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, 18 and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

In later chapters, God confirms His promise to Isaac and Isaac's son, Jacob.

(To Isaac) Genesis 26:3 Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. 4 I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed.

(To Jacob) Genesis 28:13 There above it stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. 14 Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.

*This is a true story from the Bible.*

Have someone read the story, and then another person tell it.

What does this story tell us about God? About His promises?

About Abraham? How does Abraham differ from Adam and Eve? Did Abraham do anything to deserve God's blessings?

Are there sins to avoid? Promises to claim? Examples to follow? Commands to obey?

Last Third:

Practice telling the story

What will you do differently this week because of this story?

Who will you witness to or share this story with next week?