

Week 4: September 29, 2010
THE 611
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IX. Patriarchs unlock the key to understanding the mystery of salvation history.

A. The story of Genesis continued. In the story of Adam and Eve, we see God's covenant with man given through marriage. In the story of Noah, we see that covenant expand from a couple to a family. Not just Noah and his wife are saved from the flood; their sons and daughters as well. The circles of blessing have expanded (cf. aforementioned notes).

1. The covenant with Noah recapitulates the covenant with Adam in the story of Creation and The Fall. God promises to never again destroy the world by water, which means that the simple solution to the problem of evil will no longer be available. Moreover, in the re-creation account found in the story of Noah a greater truth is revealed. We will be saved through water (1 Peter 3.20)!

Old Covenant Creation

1-God rests
2-waters of chaos
3-significance in the number 7
4-spirit over waters
5-fruitful and multiply
6-garden curse

Old Covenant flood

1-God rests
2-waters of chaos
3-significance in the number of 7
4-spirit over waters
5-fruitful and multiply
6-vineyard curse

2. 1 Peter 3.20...We are a new creation in the waters of Baptism. Baptism is a prophecy of our own death and resurrection. Baptism is an eschatological preparation for the world to come. In essence, the flood prefigures judgment, Baptism, and the eschatological reality of death and resurrection.

b. Early Church fathers also hold that the wood of the ark in which the people were saved is similar to the saving wood of the Cross. In addition, Noah's ark is also seen as a portrait of the Church, which saves via water.

B. Tower of Babel: Man's attempt to create heaven on earth through our own means: reason, science, technology, etc...

1. Biblical evidence proves the Tower of Babel to be a great lesson learned in history. Man's way "up" is at the same time God's way "down" and God's way "down" is man's way "up"

C. Abram. God promises to him that he will make him the father of many nations. (Gen.12; 15; 17). Moreover, for this reason he is considered the father of our faith. Abram continues the expansion of God's circle of blessing as he establishes a tripart blessing/covenant as chieftain of the human race.

1. Why does Abram receive a name change to Abraham (Abram: meaning, "exalted father"; Abraham meaning "father of all nations")? In salvation history with a name change, came with an elevation of status. Moreover, the name was more than a social identity as much as it was your divinely ordained character and destiny—this is to be true even today.

a. Panim (Hb.): meaning "face". A word that is seen over 400 times in the OT, addresses God as a subjective person. Hence, this term is tied to a God of relationship. The Greeks picked up on this and coined the term

prosopon (Gk.), which also speaks of the subjective person. This ultimately brings us to persona (L.), which is the base root to personality.
b. Shem (Hb.): meaning “name” or “listen”. God’s name points to the essence of the listen/response relationship. We discover our identity by listening to God!

2. Revelation of truth given to one person. Eventually we see this covenant of truth expand to a number greater than that of the stars.
 - a. Gn. 15.17: God made a covenant with Abram--land.
 - b. Gn. 17.13: God made a covenant with Abram (ham)--covenant of flesh by way of circumcision.
 1. Note name change at the time of the covenant!
 - c. Gn.21.31: God made a covenant with Abraham—exchange of seven ewe lambs at the well.
 1. Gn.22.15...blessing that will unfold and mature over the course of history...Until fully realized in Christ! There is one seminal truth to each patriarch in history, that is not true of Christ, there story ended with “...and he died”.
3. God makes of Abraham a wanderer and sets him on his wandering way. Adam leaves earthly paradise to become a wanderer, so God must take hold of man in this condition—a wanderer...a case of every great saint, we must all become pilgrims.

D. Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. Key players who are in Abraham’s pedigree; each establishing themselves to play a pivotal role in the drama of salvation history.

1. Isaac, son of Abraham, marries Rebekkah and has two sons: Jacob and Esau. Jacob receives the first-born blessing. Jacob has twelve sons who eventually become the twelve tribes of Israel.
2. Jacob is clever and scheming and shows no remorse. Nevertheless, God makes use of him to achieve his end. God is the Lord of history. God writes straight with crooked lines (remember all the great patriarchs stumble but what makes them great is their ability to get back up again). He uses evil to achieve his greater good (Gn.50:20). He uses Satan, Judas, Pilate, Caiphaz, etc...to redeem the world.
 - a. God’s motive behind his discipline is love and he uses it for his greater glory (Heb.12:6-8)—God remains faithful despite our iniquities!
 - b. Jacob’s blessing is an objective reality...new people, new nation—Israel. The rest of the OT is caught up with the fortunes of these people.
3. Joseph is one of the twelve children who would be sold into slavery. He is imprisoned...eventually interprets dreams...amasses stores of grain and food for the coming famine.
4. One prevailing truth is that God is constantly snatching away the many fragile human hopes that arise out of human need to fill the void that is there when we remove God from the picture.
 - a. Secularism means “of a particular age”; when we fall into a materialistic secularism, we are caught up in the latest fad or brand and this fills a material need. We must rise up and start filling our hearts with the only “designer” that matters—the designer of our hearts!

X. Moses and the Exodus (cf. *Word of the Week* on **Departure).** Moses continues the expansion of God’s covenant blessing as he establishes a national covenant in the Passover sacrifice along with the law in the 10 Commandments.

- A. Summary and main points of Moses in History. Exodus picks up where Genesis left off (remember the narrative books). The inheritors of the promise of Abraham are in Egypt.
1. 400 years of oppression for the Israelites when we read that Jezebel sent Moses down the river to be followed by his sister Miriam. Moses would be raised as Prince of Egypt.
 - a. The Hebrew word for basket is the same word used for the Ark.
 2. In defense for his people, he kills a fellow Egyptian and flees to the East.
 3. Flight into Median (40 years) where he encounters YHWH on Mt. Sinai. God calls Moses to return to Egypt and set his people free.
 - a. With the aid of his brother Aaron, Moses would ultimately comply with God's request to return to Egypt.
 4. Moses goes to Pharaoh and he first refuses (the workload is doubled for the slaves) only to have Moses return a second time with the Ten Plagues and the smite of the first-born.
 - a. Israelites were called to put the blood on the doorposts as a sign to the angel of death that you belonged to Yahweh.
 5. Exodus from slavery via the Red Sea. Two months later they arrive at Sinai where Moses receives the 10 Commandments.
 - a. Water from the rock at Horeb—MEEKNESS!
 6. Worship of the Golden calf and the Levitical Priesthood.
 - b. Moses is indignant at the sight of the Golden calf...He still intercedes on behalf of the people and reminds God of His covenant.
 7. Building of the Sanctuary that they will carry with them during their time in the wilderness.
 - a. This prefigures the church in our time here on earth...what the spiritual doctors of the church call the desert.
- B. Moses highlighted in the Book of Exodus.
1. Ex.3.1... *"Moses was keeping the flock."* God has a love affair with shepherds. They have the role of constantly bringing the flock together again, guarding it from the wolves.
 2. Ex.3.2... *"The bush was burning."* God's love is described as fire.
 - a. God's fire is a saving fire: Pillar of fire, tongues of fire, etc...
 3. Ex.3.5... *"You are standing on holy ground."*
 - a. Is.6 and Rev.4...*God is described as "holy holy, holy."*
 4. Ex.3.11; 4.10-17... *"Who am I."* False humility or genuine humility. Do we trust in God's strength to carry us in our vocation?
 5. Ex.3.12... *"I will be with you. This will be the sign."* The sign is the fact that God sends! We must cooperate in grace.
 5. Ex.3.14... *"I am who I am."* God's essence is love (1 Jn.4.16) and points to our vocation of realizing our identity and being.
 - a. Pope John Paul II: *"Become who you are."* Our life is a process of letting go and being more grafted to God.