

Lutheran Foundations: A Confirmation Curriculum[©]

It Starts Here! Stories of the Old Testament

The Tomorrow River Lutheran Parish

Year 1, Lesson 6: Abraham

We just did a full review last week, so we will not do that again this week. Feel free to go back at any time to remember where we have been!

We are making a big turn today – one that will shape the rest of our year together. Genesis 1-11 is an introduction to the entire OT, giving us themes and structures to understand everything else. Now we get into that “everything else” part!

God has a problem. God created a wonderful world and we keep messing it up and hurting each other. God is going to have to fix us in order to fix the creation... and God is COMMITTED to fixing us whatever it costs. And God has to start SOMEWHERE with the reclamation project. So, God picks a guy named ABRAM and decides to start with him and his descendants. God locks Godself into a room with this family and will not leave, will not let them go, because God is going to use this family to save the world, everyone in it, and the whole creation. Remember the promise that one of the woman’s descendants will crush the serpent’s head? We need the family that will give us that descendant. And God starts building and shaping that family with Abram.

All of you should have read the “G rated version” of these stories in your daily readings in the Egermeier’s Bible Story Book. If you have not, get on it! This should all be review – which will lead to a much better conversation!

The actual Bible version is “PG-13” or “R”, and has some pretty disturbing stuff in it... The breakdown of Abraham’s story in the Bible is listed below.

Genesis 12: The Call of Abram, & Abram and Sarai in Egypt

Genesis 13: Abram and Lot Separate

Genesis 14: Lot’s Captivity and Rescue, & Abram Blessed by Melchizedek

Genesis 15: God’s Covenant with Abram

Genesis 16: The Birth of Ishmael

Genesis 17: The Sign of the Covenant

Genesis 18: A Son Promised to Abraham and Sarah, & Judgement Pronounced on Sodom

Genesis 19: The Depravity of Sodom, Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed, & The Shameful Origin of Moab and Ammon

Genesis 20: Abraham and Sarah at Gerar

1. You need to know these stories! The rest of the Bible assumes that you know this stuff and refers to these stories to understand who Jesus is and what God is doing.
2. What kind of literature is this?
 - a. Biography/history with some etiological stuff mixed in
 - b. Probably technically a legend (A traditional story sometimes popularly regarded as historical but unauthenticated. i.e., King Arthur)
 - i. Abraham's bone-headedness, cowardice and errors of judgement argue that these stories are historical. No one making something up would make the hero such a frequent dope.
3. Abraham is regarded as a spiritual father by Christians, Muslims and Jews. Jews and Muslims continue to fight over Israel/Palestine, motivated in part by the promise God made to Abraham that his descendants would own the land forever.
4. Christians (especially Pauline/Lutheran Christians) see Abraham as an example of someone declared righteous by faith alone ("And Abraham believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness" Genesis 15:6). He was not a perfect man! He did not have any achieved holiness. He simply believed God's promises.
5. You need to know these stories!