

Preaching Extended Biographies and Complex Characters (Genesis 12 – 36)

In this session, we will explore how the key themes of the book (descendants, blessing and promise) unify and characterise this central section of Genesis. Seeing how these themes unfold will set us on the right track to preach these narratives. We will also discuss some of the challenges of preaching extended biographies (Abraham) and complex characters (Jacob), and consider how to overcome them.

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I. The Themes of Genesis

- A. From all People to one Man
- B. Narrative Pace
- C. Genesis 12:1-3 & Interpretive Keys

II. Blessing

- A. “She is my Sister”
- B. Melchizedek
- C. Names

III. Fulfillment

- A. A “Lot” of Problems
- B. The Land
- C. “Minor” Promises

IV. Descendants

- A. Abraham's Solution
- B. Sarah's Solution
- C. God's Solution
- D. The Test
- E. The Structure of the Narratives
- F. The Story goes on

V. How to Preach:

- A. Select the Text Carefully
- B. Don't lose the "Plot"
- C. Create Identification
- D. Show more than Tell
- E. Participation more than Argumentation
- F. Preach on Multiple "Levels"

Suggested Readings:

Arthurs, Jeffrey D., *Preaching with Variety: How to re-create the Dynamics of Biblical Genres*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2007.

Ross, Allen P., *Creation & Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998.

Goldingay, John. *Genesis*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020.