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Genesis 49:8-12

The Genesis of God's People:

Genesis is a Rescue Story

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Website: What is the book of Genesis about? *Genesis is a rescue story.* This sermon summarizes and re-tells the whole-story of Genesis and how it connects to the big story of the Bible. Judah was a sinful man who experienced repentance. God chose his line to bring the savior king Jesus Christ, our rescuer.

Introduction: **(Slide #1)**

1. I'm sad that the summer is almost over but I love the red, yellow, and orange foliage of fall.
2. When I asked Monica out for our first-date, I invited her to go see all the "dead leaves" with me.
3. Monica loves taking close-up pictures of these leaves, we probably have thousands.
4. Some of them are blurry, some crystal clear, but not many are of the entire tree (ash, birch, maple).
5. When we read the book of Genesis, it's easy to focus on each individual leaf and branch.
6. For the book of Genesis I want to take a step back take a picture of the entire tree.
7. I want us to know what it's about and how you and I are apart of its story.

(If someone asks you, "What Genesis is about?" Tell them... *Genesis is a rescue story.*)

I. God created us for relationship with Him but we broke the relationship. (Genesis 1-11) **(S2)**

(We call the first-eleven chapters of Genesis primeval history—from creation to Abraham.)
(God doesn't say how long this time is but that he created everything and we can trust Him.)

A. God created us for relationship with Him. (Gen 1-2) **(S3)**

1. God created everything out of nothing (ex nihilo).
2. One of the first things Genesis tells us is that men and women are made to know God.
3. **(S4) Genesis 1:27** "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (NIV®)
4. Adam and Eve walked in the garden of Eden with God, knowing him face to face.

(This relationship could have lasted forever, but Adam and Eve were tempted by the serpent.)

B. **(S5)** We broke the relationship. (Gen 3)

1. Adam and Eve ate from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
2. God told them not to, but they so did anyways... they trusted themselves instead of God.
3. The first sin is called the fall, we all fell into sin, fell from perfect relationship with God.
4. When they ate, it says their eyes were opened (3:7) and they felt shame for being naked.
5. Now our relationships with each other, with creation, and with God are full of shame.

C. Our broken relationship with God has lead to complete brokenness w/ 1) others and 2) creation.

1. World War II killed approximately 75 million men, women, and children.
2. More recently in the 90s, the Bosnian Genocide killed around 100k people.
3. You may remember the 2004 tsunami that struck Indonesia+, killing 280k people.

4. In 2010, the Haiti earthquake killed about 160k people and displaced thousands.

D. **(S6)** The consequences of the broken relationship are ugly. (Gen 4-11)

1. Adam and Eve's oldest son Cain murdered his younger brother Abel.
2. God spared Cain, but his descendent Lamech exemplified Cain's evil nature.
3. Lamech is the first to have multiple wives, kills a young man, and swears vengeance 77 times.
4. People become so wicked God decides to wipe us out with a flood and start again.
5. He saves a man named Noah and his family even though Noah was a wicked man (Gen 6:5-8).
6. Through his life Noah is transformed through his relationship with God into a righteous man.
7. This doesn't fix the broken relationship between God and people... sin is a heart issue.
8. People gather to create the most wicked city of all (Babel), but God scatters them.

(S7) (God created us for relationship with Him but we broke the relationship.)

E. Miss Congeniality is about a cop going undercover at a women's beauty pageant.

1. In the competition, the host Stan asks, "What is the one most important thing our society needs?"
2. There's a montage of woman after woman saying, "World peace... That's easy, world peace."
3. Then the host, William Shatner, asks the cop, Sandra Bullock the same question.
4. But she says, "That would be harsher punishment for parole violators, Stan."
5. All you hear are crickets so she adds, "... and, world peace" and everyone cheers.
6. We live in a broken world, but our hearts yearn for the garden of Eden.

(God created us for relationship with Him but we broke the relationship.)

(Genesis is a rescue story.)

II. God uses Abraham and his family to rescue our broken relationship. (Genesis 12-50) **(S8)**

A. God promised to fix the broken relationship through Eve's line. (Gen 3:15)

1. When God curses the serpent, Eve, and Adam, he promises restoration (proto-euangelion).
2. **(S9) Genesis 3:15** 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." (NIV®)
3. God is promising that one of Eve's spiritual/biological seed/offspring (ze-ra) will defeat Satan.
4. The serpent will wound this hero but the hero will prevail, slaying his ancient foe.
5. Cain is no good and Abel is dead, so God gives Adam and Eve another son, Seth.

(Eve gives birth to Seth, and his descendants are Enoch, Noah, Shem, and eventually Abraham.)

(Genesis tells us both Enoch and Noah walked with God, and so will Abraham.)

B. God promises to bless all peoples through Abraham (Gen 12:1-3)

1. God calls Abram (early name) to leave his country for a: 1) a place, 2) people, and 3) presence.

(S10) Genesis 12:1-3 1 The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you (Place = Canaan). 2 "I will make you into a great nation (Jews + Gentiles), 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 (God will be with you!); and **all peoples on earth will be blessed through you** (rescue broken relationship)." (NIV®)

2. There's only one problem, Abram is 75 years old and his wife is also old and barren.
3. Our God is a God who brings life out of death (resurrection hope!)

C. God ratifies His promise by making a covenant with Abram. (Gen 15) **(S11)**

1. Covenant: a promise where God is involved... it's an unconditional covenant/promise of grace.
2. God promises to give Abram a place, people, and presence no matter what.
3. God passes through split animals as if to say, "May this happen to me if I break my promise."
4. Abram's response is belief (faith), which God rewards with righteousness. **(S12>)**
5. **Genesis 15:6** Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness." (NIV®)
6. Abram and Sarah give birth to a son named Isaac when Abram is 100 years old.
7. God renames Abram to Abraham b/c he's going to make him into a great people

(Abraham's son of God's promise is Isaac and Isaac's son of God's promise is Jacob.)

(We didn't study Isaac or Jacob's lives, but skipped right to Joseph, the son of Jacob.)

(Genesis is a rescue story... Every good rescue story needs a rescuer, a hero.)

(Saving Private Ryan, Apollo 13, and Toy Story are all about rescuers... who are all Tom Hanks.)

(Joseph models what that ultimate rescuer will look like, but he will come from his brother Judah.)

III. God is going to send a rescuer to heal our broken relationship. (Genesis 49:8-12) **(S13)**

A. The rescuer is going to come from Jacob's son Judah. (Gen 49:8-12) **(S14)**

1. In Genesis 37, Judah convinces his brothers to sell Joseph into slavery for a profit.
2. In the next chapter, Genesis 38, Judah marries and has a son named Er.
3. Er marries Tamar, but before they can have children, God strikes Er dead for his wickedness.
4. Because of levirate marriage, Judah gives his son Onan to Tamar but he dies too (Deut 25:5-10).
5. Now instead of giving Tamar to another of his sons, Judah forget's about her.
6. So Tamar dresses up like a prostitute and tricks Judah into sleeping with her.
7. When he realizes she is pregnant with his child, he realizes his sin against her, and repents.
8. When he goes to Egypt, and Joseph threatens to enslave Benjamin, he offers to take his place.
9. Judah demonstrates true repentance from his previous life of putting himself first.
10. Now he is willing to substitute himself for his younger brother's freedom.
11. Jacob sees this heart change in Judah and blesses him differently than his brothers in Gen 49.
12. Jacob says he's a lion and foretells that "the scepter" (king) will never leave his family line.

(The rescuer is going to come from Jacob's son Judah.)

B. The rescuer will be a royal king. **(S15)**

1. One of Judah's descendants becomes the greatest king of Israel, King David.
2. God promises in 2 Sam 7:12 one of his seed/offspring (ze-ra) will rule forever. **(S16>)**
3. **Mt. 1:1** This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham: (NIV®)
4. Jesus is the descendant of David, of Tamar and Judah, of Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, of Seth and Eve.
5. Just like Judah is called a lion's cub who crouches and catches prey, Jesus is called a lion.
6. In Revelation 5:5, the last book of the Bible, Jesus is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." **(S17)**
7. And in the very next verse he is described as the "Lamb, looking as if it had been slain." (5:6)

C. The rescuer loses his life to rescue us.

1. Our lion is slain like a lamb on the cross to restore the broken relationship between God and us.
2. God dealt with our sin by pouring out all his anger and wrath upon his own son, Jesus.
3. This rescuer has become your substitute (i.e., just like Judah was Benjamin's).
4. In Jesus, we are set free with sin and given a restored relationship with God.
5. If Genesis is the beginning of the rescue story, Revelation is its climax/peak.
6. In it we see Jesus has rescued a great-multitude nobody can number (Rev 7:9-10).
7. We see him defeat the great dragon—the serpent from Eden—Satan himself (Gen 12:1-17, 20:10)

(God has sent a rescuer to heal our broken relationship.)

(Genesis is a rescue story.) (S18)

D. I want to give you one big challenge as we wrap up.

1. God invites us to be part of the search and rescue team.
2. Church is the center of the search and rescue operation, it's a training center.
3. If all we ever do is come to the training center, and never go outside, we've missed the point.
4. God is calling us to go into the dark unforgiving night with our lights to seek the lost.
5. Are you living like you're on the team? Or are you always training and never going?
6. In your bulletins, I've inserted a Top Ten Most Wanted (aka. Top Ten in Need of Rescue).
7. (During the offering) I want you to write down the names of ten people who don't know Jesus.
8. These can be anyone you know or don't know the names of—and begin to pray for them.
9. They can be coworkers, friends, neighbor's, or that Starbucks barista or Market Basket clerk.
10. I want you to invite one of these people to our **bring a friend day**, Saturday September 10th.
11. If you don't think they could come to know Jesus, remember Judah (he slept w/ a prostitute).
12. If God can rescue Judah, God can rescue anyone!

(Genesis is a rescue story.)

Conclusion:

1. When WWII was coming to a close, the Army Rangers were liberating American POWs.
2. When they came to one of the Japanese camps in the Philippines, the POWs didn't know how to respond.
3. They'd been so abused and were so defeated and diseased they couldn't think straight.
4. Their captors had deceived them before and so they thought these Army Rangers must be a trick.
5. One prisoner who had become blind from a vitamin deficiency couldn't see and wouldn't budge.
6. A soldier walked up to him and asked, "What's wrong with you? Don't you want to be free?"
7. The prisoner, blind and defeated, smiled, because he recognized his southern accent... Rescue had come.
8. Our friends, neighbor's, coworkers, and family are blind and defeated and in need of rescue.
9. All we can do is offer them freedom... Christ rescued you, it's time to extend that rescue to others.
10. Genesis is a rescue story.

Preview: Come back next week to hear Chris Coughlin preach!

Revelation 1:4b-5a “Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.” (NIV®)