

WHERE ARE WE NOW AND WHERE ARE WE GOING? (PART 4)

Introduction – Our human imaginations are captured and shaped by stories. Stories are our attempt to make sense out our lives that can appear to be random events. The Bible presents stories within a grander narrative about the purpose of human life.

A. The message of the Hebrew Scriptures contains wisdom and a singular story that calls for our participation.

1. The story begins with the Creator God placing humans in creation to be His representatives.
2. Human rebellion leads to exile from God's presence in the garden. A trajectory fueled by violence and evil imagination results in a catastrophic flood.
3. God calls Abraham out of the idolatrous, advanced Chaldean civilization with covenant promises.
4. The descendants of Abraham end up as slaves of the powerful, idolatrous Egyptian civilization.
5. God delivers them from Egyptian slavery, providing for them in the wilderness and giving them the land He had promised Abraham.

Deuteronomy 30:1-6

6. God gave them a king to represent them and lead them to their intended purpose – to be a light to the Gentiles.
7. The story ends with an exile back to Babylon and only a partial return to the Promised Land. There is an anticipation that God will act anew to fulfill His promises.
8. This is a story characterized by God's faithfulness to His promises and human-kind's continual rebellion and unfaithfulness.

Ezekiel 36:22-27

B. The message of the New Testament is about God's rescue from Satanic slavery through Jesus.

1. The promises of the Hebrew Scriptures are fulfilled in an unexpected way by Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. In the Messiah, the work of the Spirit is restoring our true humanity in a covenant community.
2. We are saved from our rebellious behavior which enslaves us to sin and set free to follow Jesus.

3. We are being lead by the Spirit of God to our promised inheritance of a new heaven and new earth.
4. Jesus is enthroned in the heavens and will return to defeat His final enemy, Death.

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

C. History repeats itself and we can be a part of this grand narrative we call the Bible.

1. Where are we now?
 - a. We begin in a state of idolatrous illusion addicted to sin.
 - b. We exit sin's control through repentance and faith that Jesus is a fulfillment of all God's promises. We are identified with Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection through baptism.
 - c. We continue our spiritual journey through the wilderness of our culture, celebrating our hope in communion.
2. Where are we going?
 - a. The rebellious world that worships Satan's lies is headed for judgment and eternal destruction (Revelation 20:11-15).
 - b. We are rescued by God's grace to do what God has prepared for us (Ephesians 2:1-10).
 - c. We are headed to our inheritance and home (2 Peter 3:13).

Conclusion – There are many contemporary stories that are trying to capture our imaginations. They are filled with lies and illusions. You can choose to enter the one true story of God. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The Spirit is calling you to enter the great adventure that will lead home.

Revelation 22:17

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the stories that our society presents that attract our rebellious hearts?
2. What are the results of all the worldly stories for our lives?
3. How can we choose to enter the story of God and participate in its narrative?