

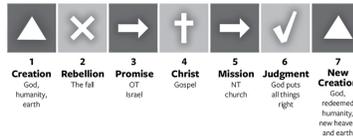
# + How many Acts (or Plot Moves) are there in the Bible's Story?



### Drama in Five Acts

- Act 1: Creation (Gen. 1–50)
- Act 2: The Exodus (Exodus through preexilic history, writing, and prophets)
- Act 3: The Exile (exilic and postexilic history, writing, and prophets)
- Act 4: Jesus Christ: The Coming of the Kingdom (Matthew through Jude)
- Act 5: The Consummation (Revelation)

Fig. 2.1. The Seven Acts of the Biblical Drama



### Drama in Seven Acts

- Act 1: The Creation and the Fall (Gen. 1–11)
- Act 2: Calling a People through Abraham (Gen. 12–50)
- Act 3: Rescuing and Separating a People: The Exodus and the Monarchy (Exodus through preexilic history, writing, and prophets)
- Act 4: Maintaining God's Holiness: The Exile (exilic and postexilic history, writing, and prophets)
- Act 5: Saving a People: Jesus the Messiah (Matthew through John)
- Act 6: Gathering a People: The Church (Acts through Jude)
- Act 7: Renewing All Creation: The Consummation (Revelation)

17



## A Missional Reading of the Bible CREATION



18

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### CREATION

- Gen 1
  - The goodness of creation reflects the goodness of the Creator
    - Structural goodness (i.e., essential, natural, substantive)
  - The goodness of humanity uniquely created in God's image
    - Structural goodness (i.e., essential, natural, substantive)
- Gen 1:28
  - Humans were created to:
    - "multiply and fill the earth"
    - "subdue the earth"
    - "have dominion over creation"
- Gen 1:31 "...and behold, it was very good"
- Gen 2:1-3 "God rested... blessed... made holy"
- Gen 2:17
  - The choice and promise of life or death (real choice and real responsibility)

19

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### CREATION

- Five ways we are like God:
  1. Spiritually
  2. Morally
  3. Rationally
  4. Creativity/Imagination
  5. Relationally

20

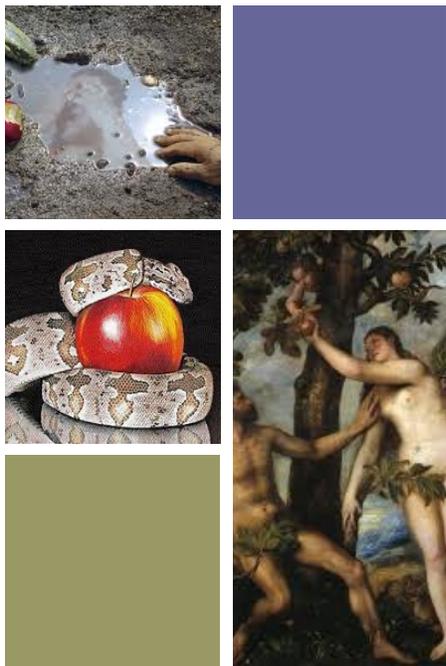
**+** A Missional Reading of the Bible  
CREATION

- Four relationships we were created for:
  1. Love for God
  2. Love for God's creation
  3. Love for one another
  4. Love for oneself

21

**+**

A Missional Reading of  
the Bible  
FALL



22

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

FALL

- Gen 3:1-24
  - Gen 3:1 – a deceptive serpent who doubts God’s word
  - Gen 3:3 – “no eating and no touching”
  - Gen 3:4 – “you shall not surely die” ... “eyes opened” ... “being like God” ... “knowing”
    - A direct challenge to God’s goodness and God’s “God-ness”
  - Gen 3:6 – “a delight to the eyes” ... “to make one wise” ... “she ate and gave some to her husband **who was with her**”
  - Gen 3:7 – “eyes opened” ... “sewed fig leaves and made themselves loincloths”
  - Gen 3:8-13 – God’s enjoyment of creation is interrupted; Adam blames Eve, Eve blames the serpent...
    - God introduces divine discipline and curses (3:14, 3:17, 4:11, 5:29, 9:25)

23

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

- The Fall’s impact on our relationships:
  1. Broken relationship with God
  2. Broken relationship with creation
  3. Broken relationship with others
  4. Broken relationship with oneself

The Fall’s impact on humanity’s divine capacities:

- Spiritually
- Morally
- Rationally
- Creativity/Imagination
- Relationally

24

**+** A Missional Reading of the Bible

- Cain and Abel (Gen 4-5)
  - Greed, covetousness, jealousy, murder... "sin is crouching at the door"
  - Gen 4:11 – cursed
  - Gen 4:15 – grace
- Human corruption abounds (Gen 6)
  - Gen 6:5 "And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."
  - Gen 6:11-12 "Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth."
- Noah and the Flood (Gen 7-9)
  - Human corruption, God's judgment, God's grace (the ark)
  - "multiply and fill the earth"
- Babel (Gen 10-11)
  - Gen 10 – The Table of 70 Nations (example of prolepsis)
    - "each with his own language, by their clans, in their nations"
  - Gen 11 – "Now the whole earth had one language and the same words"
    - Human rebellion reaches its zenith – the Ziggurat
      - Confusion not curse
      - Dispersion was in conformity with God's command "multiply and fill the earth"
    - God's desire was for humanity to fill the earth and naturally diversify (geographically, ethnically, linguistically, culturally, technologically)
      - Zeph 3:9; Acts 2

25

**+**

A Missional Reading of the Bible  
REDEMPTION

The collage consists of four distinct images arranged in a 2x2 grid. The top-left image shows a person's foot, likely a slave, trapped in a heavy metal cage. The top-right image is a solid, medium-blue square. The bottom-left image shows a stone mortar and pestle, symbolizing grinding or processing. The bottom-right image shows a young, white lamb standing in a field, with a small red circle on the ground near its feet.

26

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### REDEMPTION

1. The God of Abraham (and eventually Israel) is the creator of heaven and earth;
2. There is only one true God, and there is none other;
3. He is the God not only of Israel, but of all nations;
4. He is the sovereign ruler over the whole earth and all of history;
5. All nations have descended from one man (i.e., one couple), created in God's image to love, worship, and serve him;
6. All peoples are living in revolt against him, shape their cultures and society in rebellion, are accountable to him, and are under his judgment;
7. The scope of God's redemptive intention is creation-wide, with his promise being to undo the deleterious effects of human sin in all creation, for all nations, and all of human life.

27

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### REDEMPTION

- Gen 3:15, 21
  - The promise of life
  - The promise of redemption
  - The cost of redemption
- Gen 4-9
  - Accounts of God's righteous and holy discipline of human sin are accompanied by instances of God's mercy and grace

28

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### REDEMPTION

And YHWH said to Abram,  
 Get yourself up and go  
 from your land, and from your kindred, and from your father's house,  
 to the land that I will show you.  
 and I will make you into a great nation;  
 and I will bless you;  
 and I will make your name great.  
 And be a blessing.  
 And I will bless those who bless you;  
 whereas the one who belittles you, I will curse;  
 and in you will be blessed all kinship groups on the earth.  
 And Abram went just as YHWH said to him (Gen 12:1-4, translation by C. Wright)

29

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### REDEMPTION

- Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) notes...
  - Blessing is creational and relational
  - Blessing is missional and historical
  - Blessing is covenantal and ethical
  - Blessing is multinational and Christological

30

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### REDEMPTION

Text	Speaker	Verb/Intent	Agent	Focus
Gen 12:3	LORD	ונברכו "be blessed"	בך "by you/in you"	כל משפחות האדמה "all families of the earth"
Gen 18:18	LORD	ונברכו "be blessed"	בו "by him/in him"	כל גויי הארץ "all peoples of the earth"
Gen 22:18	Angel of the LORD	והתברכו "bless themselves"	בזרעך "by your seed"	כל גויי הארץ "all peoples of the earth"
Gen 26:4	LORD	והתברכו "bless themselves"	בזרעך "by your seed"	כל גויי הארץ "all peoples of the earth"
Gen 28:14	LORD	ונברכו "be blessed"	בזרעך/בך "by you/in you; your seed"	כל משפחות האדמה "all families of the earth"

31

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### REDEMPTION

#### ■ Three Themes in the Abrahamic Covenant:

1. God is the source and initiator of mission
  - Human initiative(s) vs. God's initiative
2. YHWH is a sending God
  - Purposeful; authoritative; despite humanity's reluctance to obey, God uses messengers
3. The covenant reveals God's heart for all nations
  - The story seems Israel-centric, but we must not forget the universal horizons of God's purposes for all of humanity/creation

32

## + A Missional Reading of Scripture

### REDEMPTION

- Exod 19:3-6
  - Rescue from slavery
  - Foreshadowing of the sacrificial system in the Passover
  - Israel is saved for the purpose of being an illustration of God's purposes for all peoples
- The Law is given to **orient** their lives towards holiness in a way that was visible to the nations:
  - Backward – they were to be a picture of God's original intentions for human life.
  - Forward – they were to be a sign or preview of God's goal for humanity post-Fall
  - Outward – they were to confront the idolatry of their day by living in contrast to the nations that did not know God

33

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### REDEMPTION

- On the land and in site of the nations
  - Joshua
    - What about the Canaanites (C. Wright)?
      1. *No contradiction between ultimate blessing and historical judgment*
      2. *The conquest of Canaan was a limited event*
      3. *The conquest described as an act of God's punishment*
      4. *God threatened to do the same to Israel—and did*
      5. *Fairness a slippery concept*
      6. *The conquest anticipated the final judgment*
  - Judges
  - 1 and 2 Samuel
  - 1 and 2 Kings
  - Psalms
  - The Prophets

34

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### REDEMPTION

#### ■ Isaiah's servant songs (K. Warstler):

1. Nation:
  - 41:8-10; 42:18-25; 43:8-13; 44:1-5; 44:21-23; 49:1-7
2. Individual:
  - 42:17; 45:4; 49:1-7; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12
3. Group/Remnant
  - 42:6

35

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### REDEMPTION

#### ■ Redemption entails God's image-bearers bearing witness:

- Isaiah 66:18-19; 22
 

**18** "...and the time is coming to gather **all nations and tongues**. And they shall come and shall see my glory, **19** and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations...that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory among the nations...**22** For as the **new heavens and the new earth** that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain.
- Jer 3:17; Micah 4:1-5; Zeph 2:11; 3:9; Zech 8:20-22; 14:16; Mal 1:11

36

## + A Missional Reading of the Bible

### REDEMPTION

- Redemption is comprehensive:
  - Redemption of both *anthropos* and *cosmos* (Isa 65:17; Col 1:21; Rom 8: 19-23; Rev 5:9-14; Rev 7:9; Rev 21)
- Redemption entails the reversal of alienation:
  - Christ's work ends the hostility and alienation and restores harmony (2 Cor 5; Eph 2:12)
- Redemption entails the restoration of relationships:
  - We are reconciled to God, to others, to the creation, and to ourselves (2 Cor 5:17-21; Eph 2:10; Eph 3:10)
  - These are all signs and tastes of the Kingdom that is here now but is coming in its fullness