

Sermon Outline - Sun, Feb 28th, 2021 – The Dream and the Hope of the Slave
(Romans 4:3,16-21 ; Hebrews 11:1-3;12:1)

Overview: This Black history Month our theme has been “The Dream and the Hope of the Slave.” The first week we explored the story of Harriet Tubman, the second week we learned about the founder of the AME Church, Richard Allen. Last week focused on Hush Harbors and now we bring these things together in the story of Abraham.

Story Exegesis

- The story of Abraham has been another key story in the Black theological tradition.
- Abraham is supposed to be the father of the nations, but by the time he dies he only has this one son that is supposed to make him the father of the nations.
- If you read the text between our Hebrews 11 and 12 verses it lays out the story of many ancestors most of whom are memorable because they had to overcome challenging odds to trust God.
- In chapter 12 it reminds us that all of these ancestors have done their part and now they are passing the baton to us.
- How do we understand our responsibility to carry the legacy forward? What can we learn from their example that helps us understand what it will take for us to run our own leg of the journey?

Key Points –

1. **The faith of our ancestors was perfected not in the perilous present but in the prophetic possibility** – The greatest faith comes from the worst of times. Saying – You don’t know that Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you have. Faith is not about what you see on the outside but when you began to see the phoenix rising from the ashes, when the vision of the possible is so real in the midst of the peril.
2. **The faith of our ancestors came from a deep knowing of the God who desires justice and jubilee** – God and God’s love were so clear and present even when they had been fed a God of compliance. They create
3. **The faith of our ancestors planted seeds for their progeny to harvest** - Believed with a knowledge they would not see the full outcome and yet they trusted that when they crossed over the could cheer us on.

In this season of Lent we celebrate our human ancestors from the Bible, from our lives and many in between who are names and photos to us, and even more whose stories have been lost over time. They were not perfect but they ran their leg and passed the baton on to us. In this season as we prepare for a new world on the other side of this pandemic, what does it mean for us to run with perseverance the race marked out for us?

Core Questions –

1. What are the perils in your present or in your past that have created openings to see the prophetic possibility? If you can’t see them – what actions can help you open your eyes?
2. Do you feel like you have a deep knowing of the God who desires justice and jubilee? During this Lenten season what can you do to go deeper in your relationship with God?
3. What plants are you harvesting that were planted before you? What seeds are you sowing that will be available to generations behind you?