

Genesis 12-35

The Story of Salvation



Abram Believed God

Genesis 15:1-21

Times of Turmoil

- ★ First Canadian Covid-19 case – Jan 25th 2020
 - ◆ An unprecedented period of disruption
- ★ Where is God? What is he doing?
 - ◆ Abram facing tough times asking difficult questions
 - ◆ “How does it help to receive rewards with no heir?”

Times of Turmoil ...

- ★ He had no heir:
 - ◆ No one to care for him in old age
 - ◆ Would be destitute and unprotected
 - ◆ No one to bury him with necessary funeral rites
 - ◆ No one to continue family line & name
 - ◆ *The very essence of existence in the ancient world*
- ★ God speaks: “I am your shield, ... great reward”

1. Abram's Problem

- ★ After first part of ch 12:
 - ◆ Forced to Egypt because of famine – tough time
 - ◆ Separated from Lot ... Lot carried away as plunder
 - ◆ Met by Melchizedek and blessed

1. Abram's Problem ...

- ★ God gives word of reassurance ...
 - ... not in matter troubling his heart
 - ◆ He wants & needs a son
 - ◆ His situation is hopeless
- ★ Ever been in a situation that weighs on you?
 - ◆ Felt that your life was meaningless?
 - ◆ Welcome to Abram's world

2. God's Promise

- ★ Easy to be glib –
 - ◆ we already know the outcome
- ★ Abram sits in his nomad's tent – an old man
 - ◆ Promise is almost unbelievable
 - ◆ His descendants will be as uncountable as the stars
 - ◆ He will have biological descendants
 - ◆ Give them land from Nile to Euphrates

2. God's Promise ...

- ★ Get overly literalistic – a problem
 - ◆ Maps don't exist
 - ◆ Accurate measures of distance don't exist
 - ◆ Gives Abram mental picture using obvious features
 - ◆ Roughly area of Canaan

2. God's Promise ...



2. God's Promise ...

- ★ Don't place 21st Century constraints on story
 - ◆ Be appropriate and reasonable
- ★ Set up symbolism for covenant
 - ◆ Cut sacrificial animals in half and lay in 2 lines
 - ◆ Walk through between the pieces
 - ◆ “May I become like them if I break the promise”

2. God's Promise ...

- ★ Pot of smoke, torch of fire pass between pieces
 - ◆ God makes a one-sided, unconditional covenant
 - ◆ Promises Abram his most fervent desire – a son
- ★ Believed the LORD ... counted as righteousness

3. Abram's Faith

- ★ Apostle Paul explains (Rom 4:18-22)
 - ◆ Convinced God was able to do what he promised
 - ◆ Abram's faith overcame the worldly impossibilities
 - ◆ That faith was credited as righteousness
 - ◆ Abram asks how it will happen
 - ◆ God doesn't really say
 - ◆ Gives Abram a vision to confirm his commitment

3. Abram's Faith

- ★ A paradigmatic example of faith
as basis of relationship with God
 - ◆ Abram's real descendants –
– share his faith not his genes

Living It –

- ★ Started with questions Abram was dealing with
 - ◆ Problem of not having a son
 - ◆ God speaks, Abram believes
 - ◆ Everything God has done seems inconsequential
 - ◆ God is not addressing his primary concern
- ★ Ever felt life is disconnected from faith?

Living It –

- ◆ God's concerns are not always the same as mine
 - ◆ God's timing definitely not same as mine
 - ◆ Faith is always the appropriate response to God
- ★ Abram is the example of living faith
- ◆ Rise above our own concerns
 - ◆ God has our lives under his control
 - ◆ His will is good and will come to pass