

Genesis: The Book of Beginnings - Week 8

Text: Genesis 12:1–4; Genesis 15:5–6; Galatians 3:5–9, 16

Main Idea: God's promise to bless all nations begins with Abram and is ultimately fulfilled through Abram's offspring, Jesus Christ. The right response is faith expressed through obedience.

Introduction

Genesis 12 marks a major turning point in the book of Genesis. The first 11 chapters give a broad view of the world: creation, the fall, the flood, and the scattering of the nations at Babel. Beginning in Genesis 12, the focus narrows from all nations to one man, Abram, and then to one family.

This shift matters because God's plan to bless the world will now move through this one family line. Abram is called to trust God, leave what is familiar, and step into the unknown. In doing so, he becomes the starting point of a promise that reaches far beyond himself. That promise finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Key Truth

All nations are blessed through Abram's offspring.

This is the central truth of the passage. God's call to Abram was never just about Abram. It was always about God's larger redemptive plan for the world.

Scripture Reading

Genesis 12:1–4

- God gives Abram a command: Go
- God gives Abram a promise: I will
- Abram responds in faith: So Abram went

Point 1: God Calls Abram to Trust Him

Genesis 12:1

“The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.’”

God’s call required Abram to leave behind the things that represented security:

- his country
- his people
- his father’s household

Abram was not told the full plan in advance. He was simply called to obey.

Study Notes

- God often calls His people to trust Him before they can see the outcome.
- Faith is not based on full visibility; it is based on confidence in God’s character.
- Abram had to step away from what was familiar and trust the Lord for what was ahead.

Discussion Questions

1. What did Abram have to leave behind in order to obey God?
2. Why is it difficult to obey when God does not show every detail in advance?
3. What does this passage teach about the nature of faith?

Application

Faith begins with trusting God enough to obey Him, even when the destination is not yet clear.

Point 2: God’s Promise to Abram Is Bigger Than Abram

Genesis 12:2–3

“I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

The repeated phrase in these verses is “I will.” God is the One who initiates, establishes, and fulfills the promise.

Key Promises

God promised Abram:

- a great nation
- blessing
- a great name
- protection
- worldwide impact

Study Notes

- Abram had no child at this point, yet God promised a great nation.
- This promise was humanly impossible, which highlights God’s power and faithfulness.
- Abram was blessed not merely for his own benefit, but so that he would become a blessing.
- God’s purpose for His people has always extended outward toward the nations.

Discussion Questions

1. Which part of God’s promise to Abram would have seemed most difficult to believe?
2. What does the repeated phrase “I will” reveal about God?
3. Why is it important that God’s blessing on Abram was meant to reach others?

Application

God’s blessings are never meant to terminate on His people. They are meant to flow through His people.

Point 3: Abram Is Counted Righteous by Faith

Genesis 15:5–6

He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

This is one of the most important statements in all of Scripture.

Study Notes

- Abram still had no son, yet God expanded the promise.
- God’s promise was not merely unlikely; it was impossible apart from divine intervention.
- Abram’s righteousness did not come from his performance, but from his faith.
- This means Abram was accepted by God not because he earned it, but because he believed God.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is Genesis 15:6 such a significant verse?
2. What does it mean that righteousness was credited to Abram?
3. How does this challenge the idea that people can earn acceptance with God?

Application

A person is made right with God by faith, not by religious effort or moral achievement.

Point 4: The Gospel Was Announced in Advance

Galatians 3:5–9

“Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: ‘All nations will be blessed through you.’”

Paul teaches that the promise to Abram was always pointing forward to the gospel.

Study Notes

- The blessing of Genesis 12 ultimately reaches the nations through Jesus Christ.

- Salvation has always been by faith.
- God's plan was never limited to one ethnic group; it always included all peoples.
- Those who share Abram's faith are counted as children of Abraham.

Discussion Questions

1. According to Galatians 3, how was the gospel present in God's promise to Abram?
2. What does Paul mean when he says that those who have faith are children of Abraham?
3. How does this connect Genesis to the New Testament?

Application

The story of Abram is not isolated from the gospel. It is part of the gospel story.

Point 5: Jesus Is the Offspring Through Whom the Promise Is Fulfilled

Galatians 3:16

"The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed...meaning one person, who is Christ."

Paul narrows the focus even further. The ultimate fulfillment of God's promise is not simply a nation, but a person: Jesus Christ.

Study Notes

- God's promise moved from all nations, to one family, to one offspring.
- Jesus is the true fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise.
- Through Jesus, blessing, salvation, and righteousness are extended to all who believe.
- The promise to Abram finds its fullest meaning at the cross and in the resurrection.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important that Paul identifies the “offspring” as Christ?
2. How does Jesus fulfill the promise made to Abram?
3. What does this teach about the unity of the Bible’s message?

Application

The promises of God are fulfilled in Jesus. To trust Christ is to enter into the blessing God promised long ago.

Faith and Obedience

Abram’s story shows that genuine faith leads to obedience.

Genesis 12:4

“So Abram went, as the Lord had told him.”

Abram’s obedience did not earn God’s promise. His obedience revealed that he believed God.

Study Notes

- Faith is not merely agreeing with truth; it is responding to God with trust.
- Obedience is the visible expression of faith.
- A life of faith is not one dramatic step only, but an ongoing walk with God.

Discussion Questions

- How did Abram demonstrate his faith?
- Why can faith and obedience not be separated?
- What does obedient faith look like in everyday life?

Application

Faith is shown not only in what is believed, but in how a person responds to God’s Word.

Gospel Connection

Abram believed God and was counted righteous. In the same way, sinners today are made righteous through faith in Jesus Christ.

The message of the gospel is this:

- all people are sinners
- no one can earn righteousness before God
- Jesus died for sins and rose again
- whoever trusts in Him is forgiven, counted righteous, and brought into God's family

The blessing promised to Abram reaches the nations through Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Genesis 12 represent such a major turning point in the book of Genesis?
2. What stands out most about God's call to Abram?
3. What is the relationship between faith and obedience in Abram's life?
4. How does Genesis 15:6 help explain salvation?
5. What does Galatians 3 add to the understanding of Genesis 12?
6. Why is it significant that Jesus is the ultimate offspring of Abraham?
7. How should this passage shape the way believers think about mission, evangelism, and the nations?

Personal Reflection

1. Have I placed my faith in Jesus Christ for salvation?
2. Am I trusting God only when I can see the whole plan, or am I willing to obey step by step?

3. Is there a specific area where God is calling me to walk by faith right now?
4. Am I treating God's blessings as something to keep, or as something to share?

Prayer

Father, thank You for Your faithfulness from generation to generation. Thank You for calling Abram and for making promises that reached far beyond his lifetime. Thank You that those promises are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Help us to trust You as Abram did, to believe Your Word, and to walk in obedience. Strengthen our faith, deepen our trust, and use our lives to be a blessing to others. In Jesus' name, amen.