

Connect Group Discussion Guide – 1/29/2023

Genesis 12, 15 Abrahamic Covenant

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvR0S5fB8AzraGYts4eQfg> (Note Sunday's message usually is posted on Monday.)

Audio Only: On Spotify or Apple Podcasts: Connection Point Podcast

Opening question: What is grace?

Highlights

- Noah's three sons: Japheth, Shem, Ham (this is their birth order)
 - Ham "uncovered" his father's nakedness – you can study this on your own.
 - Japheth and Shem covered his nakedness, covered his shame
 - Should remind us of the Garden, God covered Adam & Eve's shame/nakedness
- Ham was exiled the other two were blessed. Descendants of all became large people groups
 - Ham: Babylonians, Ninevites, Canaanites (who were evil)
- Abram means "exalted father." He was part of a pagan family; did not know Yahweh.
- Genesis 12:1 – God chose Abram. Why? We don't know...maybe God knew his heart would be open to His call?? **Do you feel like you've ever been chosen by God, and you don't know why?**
- Genesis 12:2-4 – Everything God is going to do, he's going to do through Abram's family.
- Genesis 12:5-7 – Abram was 75 years old when God called him to leave Ur.
 - If you are still breathing, you are not done.
 - **Do you ever feel like God can't use you? Why or why not?**
 - God told Abram to go without telling him where.
 - Abram said "yes" before he knew.
 - Ended up being in the land of Canaan (a land of evil)
 - **Tell about a time you said "yes" to God before you knew the whole plan.**
 - Abram said yes, got to Canaan and there was a famine, so he went to Egypt (Ham's other son)
 - **Have you ever obeyed God then something bad happened (a famine)?**
 - In Egypt, Abram lied to the Pharaoh and told him Sarai was his sister
 - She was beautiful and felt that his own life was at risk
 - Pharaoh gave Abram a lot of stuff (including servants), but God inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his family. So Pharaoh said to leave.
- Genesis 13-14 is all about Abram and his nephew Lot. Come Wednesday to hear more.
- Genesis 15:1 Abram was trying to work it all out and keep himself safe, but God told him, "I am your shield and your very great reward"
 - We don't need anything else; we don't need God's blessings, Jesus is your reward
 - What happens to us on earth is not our reward; heaven is not our reward.
 - The reward for following the Lord is not a Jesus-blessed life. It's simply Jesus.
 - Eternity is a reward only because Jesus is there with us.
- God says he will protect Abram and He is his reward, and in Genesis 15:2, so what will you give me?
 - We are the same way.
 - **What does this all mean to you? Do you believe it? Do you live your life like Jesus is your only reward? What do you need to change in your life to live this way.**
- Genesis 15:7-8 Abram asks, you say that I'm going to get this land, but how will I know?
 - **Have you ever been there? I hear you God, but how do I know for sure?**

- Covenant of Pieces
 - When make a covenant in those days, they would take an animal, sacrifice it and cut it exactly in half.
 - They would separate the two halves
 - The non-prominent party (the less influential, the less wealthy, the less ruling, etc.) would walk between the pieces to show:
 - I know you have more power and influence, so if I (the lesser) don't uphold the covenant you can have my life.
 - Genesis 15:9-11, God is saying bring me all of animal creation for our Covenant of Pieces
 - Genesis 15:17-20 smoke and fire passed between the pieces
 - Smoke and fire: think of Mt. Sinai, the tabernacle, Pentecost – God walked between the pieces!!!
 - In the covenant between God and man, God took the lesser and walked through to make sure the covenant is upheld.
 - God's saying, if you don't keep your end of the covenant (which I know you won't), I will take my own life (which He did)! JESUS
- God's willingness to take the weight of the covenant is an act of GRACE.
 - Grace is the undeserved favor that moves us closer to God's promises and His love.
 - Grace doesn't give you permission to do whatever you want. That moves you further away from God.
 - **What does grace mean to you?**
- Abrahamic Covenant
 1. Land (Genesis 12:1)
 2. A great nation (Genesis 12:2)
 3. All people will be blessed through your descendants (Genesis 12:3)
- All of this covenant is undeserved because of grace.

What do we learn about God and ourselves in the Abrahamic Covenant?

- God chose 1 family to save all people
- Sometimes God calls us without clarity.
 - We have to say "yes" to God; don't wait to critique the plan. Don't say "are you sure?"
- God is gracious. HE is the gift or reward.

Discuss these.

The King of the Universe willingly took the burden of the covenant from Abram.

God said, "you can kill me."

In the Abrahamic Covenant we see a God who still wants to partner with humanity. Through one family he blesses ALL people. His grace is our great reward.

The Bottom Line

- **The grace of God and the burden of the covenant takes Jesus to the cross...for you.**

Prayer