



Genesis: The Book That Started It All
Weekly Devotionals | October 19

OPEN with prayer.

Find a quiet place where you can set aside distractions. Ask the Lord to make His goodness and faithfulness personal to you as you explore His promise to Abraham.

Read Psalm 89:1-2

I will sing of the Lord's great love forever;
with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known
through all generations.
I will declare that your love stands firm forever,
that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

God is good. And He's faithful. And Abram was learning that day-by-day in the life God had called him to.

After a long time wandering without a specific word from God about where he will go, Abram finds himself entangled in a fight with nearby tribes and honestly questioning God's plan. God had called and blessed Abram, but along the journey, Abram met a lot of resistance. Go back and skim chapters 12-14. There is family division, battle and the threats of attack, and an ordeal where he claims his wife is his sister so they wouldn't be killed in Egypt. Abram might've found himself saying, "Life is harder now than it was before I started following you!" Sound familiar?

But after all that, God reminds Abram of who He is and what He's up to.

Read Genesis 15. Verse 1 says,

After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

*"Do not be afraid, Abram.
I am your shield,
your very great reward."*

- What has life been like for you the past six months? The past few years? What journey have you been on?
- How has it led you to question God? How has it allowed you to see God's faithfulness?
- What would it mean to you if God told you He was your shield and very great reward?

Throughout the Bible, we see reminders of God's faithfulness where we're, in fact, promised that He is indeed our shield and our very great reward.

Read each of these passages and jot down the ways God is faithful in each promise. (i.e. God is faithful to protect me, to strengthen me, etc.)

2 Thessalonians 3:3

"But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one."

1 Corinthians 10:13

"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Psalms 91:4

“He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.”

Deuteronomy 7:9

“The Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.

Hebrews 10:22-23

“Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings...for he who promised is faithful.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.”

With those reminders in mind, let’s look at what God does to show his faithfulness to Abram.

Read Genesis 15:9-18.

This is a ceremony that would happen in ancient times that showed a covenant is being made. A couple things to notice in this story:

- When making the covenant between the animals, it was like saying, “May I be torn apart if I fail to keep my end of the covenant.” That means there are no loopholes – you were willing to back it up with your life.
- The smoking firepot and flaming torch were symbols of God’s presence.

- The person in power in the arrangement would watch as the weaker party walked through. Never once did the person in power pass through – except here!
- God is the *only one* who passed through. That means he took on both sides of the agreement. If He failed to keep His promises *or we failed to keep ours*, He would be the one on the line!

Read these verses from Hebrews.

“Jesus appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.” (Hebrews 9:26)

“For by one sacrifice, he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.” (Hebrews 10:14)

The promise that God made to Abram thousands of years previous was a foreshadowing of how Jesus would be the sacrifice that would pay for humanity’s unfaithfulness.

REFLECT

- What was the specific promise God made in His covenant with Abram? What is the extended promise that is hidden in the meaning of the ceremony?
- How does the covenant with Abram make its way to us today? What are the repercussions of His promise?
- How does the covenant speak to you if you find yourself in a Genesis 15 scenario today? How is God promising you that He’ll be your shield and your very great reward?

PRAY

In your prayers, thank God for how He rescues and restores us through Jesus. Ask Him to open your eyes to the meaning hidden in your own journey right now and to reveal how He is walking through with you. Pray this Psalm again, perhaps in your own words.

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