

Sermon Follow-up | September 22, 2019

The Torah — Abraham's (Abram's) Family

Focus Passage: Genesis 15:1–21

Context: Genesis 4:1 – 11:31

Sermon Recap: Genesis 4–11 give an account of the rupture that occurred after the initial rebellion of Adam and Eve. In Cain and Abel, through the time of Noah, we see that rebellion raged on. Regretting the sinful and broken state of the world, God sent a destructive flood to kill everything that breathed air except for Noah's family and the animals he took into the ark. God gave Noah and his family the same mandate to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, rule over it that He had given to Adam and Eve before sin entered the world. However, it did not take long for rebellion to surface and rage on. We see in the chapters that rescue and redemption required God's intervention. Humans were unable to redeem and save themselves apart from God. In God's covenant with Abram in Gen 15, we see that God Himself unilaterally walked between the cut halves of animals and made covenant commitments to Abram and his descendants. The only thing humans were required to do was to believe God and walk with Him. "He (Abram) believed God and the Lord and he credited it to him as righteousness" (Gen 15:6).

Background Info

- A covenant-making ceremony in the ancient Near East was often referred to as cutting a covenant. Animals would be cut in half with the halves separated to allow a path in between. By cutting the animals in half during covenant ceremonies, the parties making the covenant were effectively saying, "Let this be done to us if we break the terms of this covenant."¹ Sometimes both parties of the covenant would walk through, at other times such as in the case of a ruler and subjects, the party considered the lesser would walk through. It was unheard of that the king would walk through the cut halves of animals unilaterally.

Connect: *Making Honest Connections with One Another*

What is something you are thankful for that happened this week?

What is a challenge you are facing?

How was your experience with living out God's word this past week?

How were you able to let others know about what God's word says this past week?

Grow: *Listening to and Learning from God's Word*

Notable Sermon Quotes

- "Rescue requires God's intervention. We can't save ourselves from our rebellion."
- "Surrender is a one-time thing, and surrender is an everyday, every moment thing."

¹ Calvin Park, "[Cutting a Covenant](#)," in *Study Like a Pro: Explore Difficult Passages from Every Book of the Bible*, ed. John D. Barry and Rebecca Van Noord (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

READ: Stories Genesis 15:1–21 (Stories 4–7 from the Fall Chapel-wide Study will also be helpful)

1. Were there any parts of the passages that you found hard to understand?
2. Can you give a synopsis of each of the stories in your own words?
3. Did you see human rebellion or idolatry in any of the passages?
4. Did you see God's judgment of rebellion in any of the passages?
5. Did you see God's love and grace in any of the passages?
6. Can you see how any of the passages relate to other passages you have studied?
7. Do you see any ways in which any of the passages have connections to Jesus in the New Testament?
8. Are there any promises in the passages we need to remember and trust?
9. Are there any commands in the passages we need to obey?

Serve: *Serving King Jesus and Others By Living Out and Letting Others Know God's Word*

1. What do you believe God's Spirit is saying to you specifically about living by His word we have been listening to and learning from? — "With the Holy Spirit's help, I will _____ to live out God's word in the coming week."
2. Who can you let know something you're learning from God's word in the coming week? — "With the Holy Spirit's help, I will let _____ know what I am hearing and learning from God's word."

Further Resources

- Illustrations and quotes from the sermon can be found on the "Sermon Slides" link at the bottom of www.wcchapel.org
- The Cutting Room Floor — www.wcchapel.org/thecuttingroomfloor