

First Southern Baptist Bible Study - October 16, 2019

Abram's Vision - Genesis 15:1-21

Introduction

1. The flow
 - Shared ideas: - with chapters 13-14
 - protection
 - possessions
 - judgement and punishment
2. Two visions - each begin with "I am the Lord" (1, 7)
 - of God (1-6)
 - the firepot (7-21)
3. Each vision - Abram requests confirmation (2, 8)
 - Two signs
 - A. Multitudes of stars (5)
 - B. The torch between the animal parts (17)

I. God's Word Comes

- A. Verses 1-6 - the Word in a vision
- B. Words of consolation first - "do not be afraid"
- C. Other cultures use fertility rites... Abram relies wholly on God

II. Use Eliezer of Damascus

- A. Wordplay between
 - Eliezer - *'eli'ezer* - inverted consonants - *'zr*
 - Childless - *zera* - *zr'*
 - Since God has promised to provide "*zera*" then Abram will provide an "Eliezer"
- B. Common to hand down inheritance to a servant
- C. Wait on the promise of the Lord - this is faith, to wait (verse 4)
 - leave the future to the God who has promised
- D. Abram's idea - Eliezer
 - Sarai's idea - Hagar
 - We're very good at "helping" God
- E. Abram believed (6)

III. God's Word

- A. "Your" shield
 - "Your" reward
- B. Shield
 - Septuagint says "I am covering you as a shield"
- C. Reward
 - Abram allowed Lot to choose... but he got a greater reward
 - Abram refused loot after rescuing Lot (14:22-23), but he will be rewarded
 - "reward" looks ahead to descendants and land
 - (Possessions did not mean anything if there is no heir)

IV. The Firepot/ Torch (7-21)

- A. Abram had asked for a tangible sign (2) - he received the stars (5) and then in 8 he asked for a sign he would inherit - received the torch sign
- B. Did Abram actually see this sign? -he is in a trance (12)
 - the message is heard (13, 18)
- C. Five animals
 - three used in sacrificial rituals
 - three years old (optimal age, when appropriate) - remember that Jesus ministered three years
 - 1) Heifer
 - appointment of David
 - purification rite - Dt. 21:1-9
 - 2) Goat
 - one of the two permitted animals for the Passover
 - required at the Day of Atonement
 - 3) Ram
 - a male sheep used in the ordination of priests
 - guilt offerings
 - 4) Turtledove -purification
 - 5) Young pigeon - rare use, possibly a young bird of prey
- D. Abram was prompt to obey
 - Cut the animals with the parts facing one another - creating a passageway
 - Jeremiah reports a similar rite - Jer. 34
 - animals cut, threatens death to those who violate the covenant
 - the birds of the air will feast on you
- E. What does it mean? - it's symbols
 - 1) Theories:
 - A) Two parts of the animals represent two parties making the covenant
 - B) Swearing of death to those who violate the covenant
 - C) Enslavement to Egypt
 - Firepot/ torch - reminds of the pillar of fire, and cloud that leads them
 - smoke and fire a repeated symbols of God and His presence
 - Chasing away the birds... is the birds of prey that await them
 - 2) This is God's Covenant
 - Symbol of Abram/ Israel's future - not past... a symbol, and statement of Covenant
 - The killing of animals is not new - the placement of animals
 - Abram does not pass through them, only God
 - this is before these animals were set apart as sacrificial animals
 - God is the firepot/ torch - a common symbol for God
 - Based on death? - no, the seriousness of death, - speaks to dedication,

along

their journey - the nation of Egypt

-Animal parts are the children/ descendants of Abram

So, God makes covenant "among" them

consecration. However, one cannot help but think of Jesus' covenant.
 Grace - "five" is the number of grace, only God passes through, therefore
 grace
 All a response to the questions of Abram

V. Rite of "Covenant" to Confirm Promises

1. The Lord's "Reward"
2. The Lord's "Shield"
 - who delivered him (verse 1)
 - just like Lot (14:14)
3. Prediction
 - A. Of kids (reward) - like the stars (5)
 - B. Of Egypt (shield) - promise of protection (13-16)

VI. Abram "Believed the Lord" (verse 6)

- God "credited" to him righteousness - or "reckoned"
- to assign faith the value of righteousness
- Jewish belief that Abram was faithful in ten divine tests... so securing the covenant
- Paul argues that Abraham was among the "wicked" when he believed (outside the family) - Gal. 4:3,5

VII. Abram Begins to Have Children (chapters 16 and 21)

- Chapter 16 - Hagar
- Chapter 21 - Sarah