

I. Abram's Frustration (Gen. 15:1-3)

1. "The word of the LORD came to" (verse 1)

-God communicated in a vision

Rea -discuss the differences between a vision and a dream

2. In this era dreams were more common - with the written word the role of the prophets and the priests increased

-a new importance of the written word of God

-unless the vision is consistent with the Bible it is not God's message

Rea -that would mean... that God said one thing at one time and another at another. The consistency of the scripture is a sign and indication that it comes from God.

3. Reassurance comes first - "do not be afraid"

A. Abram has become anxious about the promises

B. Why no fear

1) I am your shield - compare with Ps. 3:3; 28:7 and 33:20

-a defensive piece of armor

Rea -so... a person is a shield - an invisible shield

2) your very great reward

-could be translated that his reward will be great

>God is the source of the reward

>his reward is God Himself

Rea >I prefer this because it is in keeping with the same idea at "shield" - a person is a thing. The priests had no allotment of land (for example) - because "God" was their reward.

4. Abram's response: (verses 2-3)

A. He still has no son

B. Addresses God as "sovereign"

-Lord Yahweh is literally the way this should be translated

-it implies a personal relationship

-he acknowledges God's sovereignty over him

C. His situation - Eliezer will be his heir - a servant of his household

Rea Ideas:

1. Do you need reassurance from God? - how often?

-why do you think Abram needed reassurance?

-why do you need reassurance from God? - is it a sign of weakness... or immaturity in your faith to need reassurance?

-how much fear do you live with every day?

2. Which had you rather have as your "shield" - great armies or the Lord?

3. If God is my reward I shouldn't need stuff

-in our world... church people are just as much into stuff and pride as others. We compete with one another for places... that's pride. We have elevated stuff until we view it (in a very spiritual way of course) as a sign that God has blessed.

II. God's Promise - Genesis 15:4-5

1. God reassures (verse 4)

-expresses no displeasure

2. "The word of the Lord" came - not a hopeful thought, but God's word

3. Your own flesh and blood

-the physical reality (verses 2-3) are irrelevant

Rea 4. Here are delineated two "ways:"

A. God's way - the flesh - reality

B. Man's way - manipulation - Eliezer

Rea 5. Also... in response to Abram's query God gets more specific

-you almost hear Abram saying... "should I just be happy with my servant being my heir?" - "is that how you're going to do it?"

Rea 6. What do you think this conversation required from Abram?

-patience and faith

-is God willing to do this? - is God able to do this?

7. God restates the promise in verse 5

A. A picturesque way to say... I'm going to do this

B. "Count the stars"

-there are too many

-he had called into question God's word

-God created the stars (let there be lights) - He could create children

C. Your descendants will equally numerous

-Abram just wanted one son... here are many promised

Rea Ideas:

1. The Christians in the New Testament are the children of Abraham in the Old Testament

2. God's promise in one generation happened in the next - multi-generational promise?

3. God's answer restates the promise... so doesn't this tell us what Abram was anxious

about? - so, does "do not be afraid" mean he was afraid about the fact that he is aging

and God still has not given a son?

4. Are you patient? - why not?

5. Note the irony... we find faith when we "look up" (verse 5)

III. Abram's Faith - Genesis 15:6

1. God's word means Abram must make a choice

-depend on human understanding

-depend on God's promise

2. Abram "believed the LORD"

-that means he trusted God

-believed that God would act in such a manner as to fulfill the promise given

3. God's response to Abram's "belief"

-credited to Abram as "righteousness"

-gave him the value of righteousness - equated his faith with him being right with God

-he did nothing to earn righteousness - God granted it through grace

Rea -obviously he DID do something - he believed. Ech. 2:8-9 - we are saved by "grace" through "faith"

Rea Ideas:

1. Often it's not what you believe, it's who you believe that matters most

2. We have a number of promises from God... - to receive them we must (often) wait

3. What "evidence" did Abram have that God would fulfill His promise?

IV. God's Plan - Genesis 15:7,13-16

1. God identified Himself - "the Lord" (verse 7) - Yahweh

-by name He identified Himself

2. Also He identified Himself as a God of action

Rea -the feel of this verse is - I'm the same God who's been there all along... if I've done that... I will fulfill my promise to you. If you can trust me in the past... then your future is secure as well. He'd seen God work in bringing him out of Ur... now watch me work in this circumstance.

3. God announced the future (verses 13-14)

A. This is one way our God is different from the others

B. God had already predicted that Abram would have many children... now He

promises that they will be in captivity for 400 years

-strangers in a country not their own

Rea -a negative as well as positive promise

C. Abram's grandson and great-grandchildren migrated to Egypt during a severe

famine - Gen. 46:6b-7; Ex. 1:1-4

D. Exactly 430 years after moving into Egypt they moved out 12:40-41

-as they moved out they carried away all their material belongings - 12:35-

36

4. Go to your ancestors in peace (verse 15)

-"peace" is completion - more than just a peaceful death

Rea -Abram did not "see" most of this... he just "heard" God's word. Faith is important, only when you can't see.

Rea -assurance of a great future... while still living in the present

5. You will come back here (verse 16)

A. God's delay concerned the Amorites

B. He would permit their depravity

C. God will dispossess the Amorites

Rea Ideas:

1. Why do you think God wants us to walk by faith?

2. Miracles are what we like to see... -when we "see" a miracle... it's not so important to

have faith - contrast, faith before a miracle, and faith after a miracle.

3. Just a thought... "promise" means (to me) - I know you don't believe me... but I promise. In the Bible that's often not the way it is. In the Bible, God just says "I will do this" - He doesn't have to (nor does He) say - believe me... I promise you I will do this. His word is good enough.

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