



New Covenant

Presbyterian Church

"THE REWARD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH"

GENESIS 15:1-6

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"We, like Abraham, often take the promises of God and read them through the lens of our circumstances (Gen. 15:2-5); when, in fact, what we need to learn to do is to turn the telescope the other way around and read them through the eternal lens of God's supernatural power and wisdom." - Nick Batzig

A. BELIEVERS HAVE A CONTINUAL NEED FOR GOD'S PROTECTION

1. AS WITH ANY ENDEAVOR WE UNDERTAKE IT IS TEMPTING TO ASK OURSELVES THE QUESTION, "IS IT WORTH FOLLOWING THE GOD OF PROMISE?" WHILE WE NAVIGATE THE HARDSHIPS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. IN THIS PASSAGE ABRAM, THE MAN WHO CONTINUALLY FACES TRIAL AFTER TRIAL, NEEDS HIS FAITH STRENGTHENED.
2. ABRAM JUST MET THE GREATEST TYPE OF JESUS, YET HE STILL NEEDS STRENGTHENING. ABRAM IS STUMBLING AND THE LORD KNOWS IT. OUR HEAVENLY FATHER KNOWS OUR EVERY ANXIETY. HE KNOWS WHATEVER IT IS WE ARE TRYING TO SECURE FOR OURSELVES.

"You are never in more need of protection by God than in the aftermath of some spiritual triumph or blessing." - Eric Alexander

3. GOD COMES AGAIN TO STRENGTHEN ABRAM WITH A PROMISE.

"This time, the totality of the spiritual blessings promised to Abraham (and all the elect with Him) are thrown under the two categories of safety and satisfaction. The Lord promised Abraham, 'I will be your shield (i.e. safety), your exceeding great reward (i.e. satisfaction).'" - Nick Batzig

4. GOD CONSTANTLY STRENGTHENS ABRAM WITH HIS WORD. FOR 10 YEARS ABRAM HAS WALKED BY FAITH WITH THE LORD, AND GOD HAS NOT YET FULFILLED HIS PROMISES TO HIM. WHAT ABRAM NEEDS AND WHAT ALL BELIEVERS NEED MOST OF ALL IS PERSEVERANCE. WHAT ABRAM WANTS IN THE LONG PERIOD OF WAITING, HOWEVER, IS PROVISION.

B. BELIEVERS HAVE A CONTINUAL NEED FOR GOD'S PROVISION

1. ABRAM DOES NOT ACT IN ABSOLUTE UNBELIEF. THOUGH HE IS STUMBLING HE WANTS TO SEE THE LORD'S PROMISES TO HIM FULFILLED. HE KNOWS THERE HAS TO BE A SEED. HE GOES TO THE LORD WANTING TO BE STRENGTHENED.
2. GOD STRENGTHENS ABRAM BY SPEAKING TWICE TO HIM. GOD TELLS ABRAM HE'S GOING TO BE ABRAM'S SHIELD AND REWARD. GOD ALSO GIVES ABRAM A SIGN TELLING HIM TO LOOK UP AND NUMBER THE STARS EXPLAINING THAT SO SHALL HIS OFFSPRING BE.
3. ABRAM IS STRENGTHENED, GOES FORWARD AND WALKS BY FAITH.

"Faith is not anything you are doing. It is saying 'Do, Lord, what you have promised to do.'" - Nick Batzig

4. APPLICATION: JESUS IS THE SHIELD AND REWARD OF HIS PEOPLE. HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE WON'T END UP IN HELL FOREVER? IF WE BELIEVE ON JESUS AND TRUST IN HIS SAVING WORK IN HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS-HIS BROKEN BODY AND SHED BLOOD-FOR US THEN WE WILL LIVE FOREVER WITH HIM. JESUS IS THE ONE WHO GIVES THE REWARD. HE, HIMSELF, IS THE REWARD. WE ALL RUN AFTER SAFETY AND SATISFACTION IN THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD, WHEN JESUS OFFERS ETERNAL SAFETY AND ETERNAL SATISFACTION.

"If God is for us, who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:31b, 35, 37-39)

"In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, 'So shall your offspring be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness." But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification." (Romans 4:18-25)

5. APPLICATION: BECAUSE OF WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN JESUS WE CAN HOPE AGAINST HOPE. DO NOT GROW WEAK IN FAITH.