

(Genesis) Genesis 15:11-21

by J. Vernon McGee

The sermon explores God's covenant with Abraham, emphasizing the importance of faith in God's promises for salvation.

Duration: 7:25

Scripture: Genesis 15:16, Jeremiah 34:18, Matthew 6:33, John 3:16, Romans 10:9, Ephesians 2:8

Topics: "Genesis"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Abraham and God's covenant with him. The preacher highlights the unusual nature of this covenant, where God promises something without requiring anything from Abraham in return. This parallels the concept of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, where God offers eternal life to those who believe in Him. The preacher also mentions how God delayed giving the land to Abraham's descendants, the Amorites, in order to give them a chance to turn to Him. The sermon emphasizes the importance of believing in God's promises and the faithfulness of God in fulfilling His covenant.

Transcript

Now, you'll notice that Abraham got everything ready according to what God wanted him to do. Notice verse 11, "...when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abraham drove them away." This is sure a very human scene. If you'd been there, you would have probably have seen all this display of the sacrifices and you had known the custom of the day.

I probably ought to turn and read from Jeremiah 34, 18 for here you have a reference to this custom that was prevalent in that land, not just among these people, but all other peoples in that day. And here's a reference to it. I'm reading Jeremiah 34, 18, "...and I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain and pass between the parts thereof." You see, this was the method in that day of taking the sacrifice and dividing it and the men then make the contract.

Now, Abraham gets everything ready and while he's waiting for the Lord, why the fowls of the air come down, the buzzards, the crows, and all other carrion. And Abraham's there shooing them away. They were ready to swoop down.

And you would say, well, Brother Abraham, apparently the one you're making a contract with hasn't shown up. And he said, no, hasn't. Says, I guess he's late.

No, Abraham says, I don't think he's late. He just told me to get things ready and that he'd be here and make the contract. Now, notice what happened.

"...When the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram and lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him." Now, this is the thing that took place. Abraham is paralyzed in sleep and put aside. Now, that seems very strange that God would paralyze him in sleep when he's supposed to be making a contract.

This is an unusual contract. God is going to go through because God's promising something and Abraham's not going to go through because Abraham's not promising to do a thing. He just believed God.

That's all. My friend, that's exactly what took place 1900 years ago. God the Father so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son and the Son agreed to come to the earth and die for the sins of the world, your sin and mine, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but have everlasting life.

And I wasn't even there. 1900 years, I wasn't even there to make a contract. But God the Father and God the Son did and He went to the cross and He died for my sins.

And I was paralyzed by sin. I couldn't promise anything. You couldn't either.

Abraham's not going to promise anything. Suppose that God had said to Abraham, Abraham, if you will just promise to say your prayers every night, I'm going to do this for you. Suppose Abraham forgets to do this and doesn't pray one night.

Well, the contract is shot. It's broken. And therefore, God doesn't need to make His part good.

God said that He'd do it. And He's asking man to do just one thing. Say amen to God.

You believe it. Believe what God has done. Friends, that's salvation.

And it's to believe God. Years ago, a dear little Scotch mother, her son had gone away to Glasgow to college and he came back rather an unbeliever. And she was talking with the boy and telling about how wonderful God was and that she was sure of her salvation.

Well, he had become skeptical and he was a little provoked and finally said, how do you know you're saved? Well, he said, your little soul doesn't amount to anything. And he began to compare her to the vastness of the universe and said, God could forget all about you and you can't be sure. And she never said anything.

She just kept serving the boy's breakfast. And finally, when she'd finished, she sat down with him and she said, you know, son, I've been thinking about it. Maybe you're right.

Maybe my little soul doesn't amount to much. Maybe the vastness of God's universe would mean He wouldn't miss me at all. But says, you know, says if He doesn't save me, He's going to lose more than I'm going to lose.

And he says, what do you mean? Well, just as you said, my soul doesn't amount to anything. I wouldn't lose much, but He's going to lose His reputation. He promised to do it.

He agreed to do it, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. Friends, God's the one went through. God made the contract.

And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that's not theirs shall serve them. They shall afflict them 400 years. In the scripture, it's predicted these people would be put out of the land three times.

This is the first one. It's also predicted they had returned back to the land. They did from this one.

Later on, it was the Babylonian captivity. They were carried into captivity. They returned.

At 70 AD, Jerusalem was destroyed. And again, they were scattered. They have never returned from that, but it's predicted they will come back someday.

Now, God says also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge. And afterward shall they come out with great substance. And they did.

And thou shall go to thy fathers in peace. Thou shall be buried in a good old age. Abraham would not live to see it, of course.

Verse 16, but in the fourth generation, they shall come hither again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. God says, I can't put you in this land now because I love Amorites too. And I want to give them a chance to turn to me.

And God gave them 400 years. That's a long time, is it not, to see if they wouldn't turn to him. And the only one that turned to him in that land was that Canaanite.

You remember Rahab the harlot. She turned to God. She believed him.

That's all God asked you to do is to believe him. But he gave the Amorites all this opportunity. It came to pass when the sun went down, it was dark.

Behold, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. Both of those speak of Christ. The furnace speaks, of course, of judgment.

The lamp speaks of him as the light of the world. In the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, Under thy seed have I given this land, under the river of Egypt, under the great river, the river Euphrates. And God now marks out the land.

By the way, what did Abraham promise to do? Nothing. He believed God. God will save you, saves you by grace, by believing what he's done for you.

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