

Top 150 Bible Stories Week 6 February 10

Abram and Sarai

Genesis 12:1-20

Have you ever had to move from one city to another? How about from one house to another? It is a big deal to move everything...like your bed, and all your stuff - toys, games, and clothes. And how about the refrigerator? It is really heavy and hard to move! That's what this true story is about. God asked Abram (his name will be changed to Abraham, which is the name you may know him by) and his family to move. And Abram was 75 years old! God wanted Abraham to move so that a great nation could be started. It was to be the nation of God's people. And that nation would bless all other families on the earth (v.3). So, Abraham was going to start a nation of blessing! But Abraham had to do it God's way, which meant Abraham had to move somewhere new- the land of Israel. What we learn in this story is that God our Father greatly blesses (vv. 2-3). Blessings start from no one else, but God. And God (a lot of times) blesses by using people (like Abraham). God blesses so that we can be used to bless others. There is something else in this story; it is very clear that God worked through Pharaoh to save Abraham (v. 16). We learn that God commonly acts through others (even people like Pharaoh) to save His own people. Looking forward from the time of this story, we are thankful for Jesus whom God sent on our behalf so that we might be saved. Even in hard times (v.10), we are to worship God (v. 8).

Covenant with Abram

Genesis 15:1-18

What do you think about when you hear the word "shield?" I think back about a knight leaving a castle on his horseback to protect his king with a sword and a shield. What do you think about? Maybe we should think about God who the Bible says is a "shield" for His people (v. 1). That means that God fights for us, defends us, and protects us from all kinds of harm. Because of that, we do not fear (v. 1). This protection is part of what is called a "covenant." We tend to be a fearful people, so God brings us near Him (covenant) and promises to be our protector. In this story, God made a covenant with Abram (and his family) that they would always belong to Him and always be in God's family. This story tells us about a funny thing that people did when they made a covenant with each other. Believe it or not, they walked between the pieces of a dead animal (vv. 9-10). Walking between the pieces made them remember that the covenant was very serious, "life or death." In Abram's deep sleep (v.12) he wasn't able to walk between the pieces to keep his part of the covenant. So God passed through all by Himself (smoking firepot and flaming torch in vv. 17-18) reminding us of what God does for us in Christ. God does for us what we cannot do on our own. God sent Jesus to uphold man's part of the covenant. It seems too simple, but God calls us to believe (v.6). God is our shield.

Parable of Sower

Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23

I know some kids who have taken a bean seed, planted it in rich dirt, and grew a bean plant. At first they didn't believe it was going to work. For days the kids watched the container of dirt with the bean seed in it. Finally, a little bump appeared just under the dirt. It was a beanstalk! It cracked open the layer of dirt. Before long the stalk was a couple of inches tall. It worked! They had grown a plant! Jesus told a similar story (called a parable) about a seed and a plant. It was really a parable about God's Kingdom (v.19). It was specifically about people hearing the word of God's Kingdom (vv. 9, 19, 20, 22, 23). We know that God is King and that He reigns today and forever in His kingdom. And we learn that God's kingdom is open to all those to whom God allows the word of the kingdom to be heard. In this story, the Word is like a seed, small but powerful. The different soils are like the hearts of people that must make room for the little seed. In this story, Jesus is the Word! Today, God's Kingdom is ruled by Jesus in heaven. May we long for God's kingdom and yearn for the Word, Jesus Christ. May God help us to guard our hearts against anything that keeps us from listening and making room for Jesus (v.19, 21, 22). In response to making our hearts like the good soil, may we bear fruit for God's kingdom and never grow weary of doing good.