

Fire Blight & Other Pests – Sermon 2

Text: Genesis 15:5-14 (ABRAHAM) And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. 6And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. 7And he said unto him, I *am* the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. 8And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? 9And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. 10And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. **11And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.** 12And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. 13And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; 14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

Hebrews 10:38 *Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

Introduction: *I preached this sermon on June 1, 2025 but God directed me to go in a DIRECTION that missed THE SECTION WHICH DEALT WITH MY SERMON TITLE: “FIRE BLIGHTS & OTHER PEST”. AFTERWARDS, I TOLD JANINE THAT THE SERMON MUST OF LEFT EVERYONE WONDERING – WHY THE STRANGE SERMON TITLE? Tonight, I want to go back and complete the sermon and HOPEFULLY, explain WHAT WAS MEANT BY THE TITLE, FIRE BLIGHT & OTHER PESTS!*

I. My focus in the my last sermon was the “COMMON LINK” - between Abraham, John the Baptist, and all Christians Believers – THE COMMON LINK AMONG EVERY FOLLOWER OF GOD - PAST & PRESENT – EVEN TODAY!

The just shall walk by faith! FAITH IS THE COMMON LINK- A WALK OF FAITH!

<p>Hebrews 10:38 <i>Now, <u>the just shall live by faith:</u> but <u>if any man</u> draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. <u>FAITH IS THE COMMON LINK BEWEEN ABRAHAM, JOHN, AND ALL BELEIVERS!</u></i></p>

II. Tonight, I want to focus on THE FAITH WALK

Let us look at God’s Covenant with Abraham to find Similarities to Help us in our own Walk of Faith!

Genesis 15:7-14 And he said unto him, I *am* the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. **And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.** And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

III. Let us bring out some helpful facts from this covenant that applies to our own “WALK OF FAITH”

I. Notice the Promise from God - Genesis 15:5&7 And he (GOD) brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy

seed be. And he said unto him, I *am* the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

II. Notice Abraham Believed God but Questioned God at the Same Time - HOW shall I know I that I shall inherit the land?

Genesis 15:6&8 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness

And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

THE MARKERS OF THE WALK OF FAITH – HOW TO KNOW IF WE ARE WALKING THE RIGHT PATH OF FAITH AND WILL ARRIVE AT THE RIGHT PLACE IN THE END?

III. Notice God's Answer: A Personal Meeting with HIM & HIS Promise SEALED w/ a COVENANT

Genesis 15:9-10 And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, **Take me** an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

HOW WE CAN APPLY THIS TO OUR WALK OF FAITH?

FAITH MARKERS OF TODAY

- Abraham's Faith had SUBSTANCE – IT HAD A FOUNDATION – THE COVENANT
- Our faith has SUBSTANCE TOO – IT HAS A FOUNDATION – THE NEW TESTAMENT COVENANT!
- Abraham's Faith included an encounter with God as a means of assuring & sealing the covenant
- Our Faith includes an encounter with God at SALVATION as a means of assuring & sealing our NT Covenant!

IV. Notice the Hideous Pests who tried to interfere with the Covenant!

Genesis 15:11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

FIRE BLIGHT & OTHER PESTS - A personal look at my backyard small-time fruit growing projects and home gardener – 9 types of fruit trees and bushes (apple, peach, pears, plum, blueberry, grapes, blackberry, strawberry, fig)

– ALSO, annual backyard vegetable gardening of various home-grown vegetables

Problems to Fight in having a Successful Harvest: *it's not easy being successful!*

Droughts-Wet Seasons

Under Fertilizing – Over Fertilizing

Pest – unseen: aphids/mites, fruit worms, beetles, spiders, tomato worms, slugs, etc,

Pest - seen – birds, (7 raccoons--captured/killed), (3 possums--captured/killed), (8 squirrels-- shot), armadillos, (1 chipmunk--shot)

Diseases – FIRE BLIGHT, powdery mildew, bacterial blight, black rot, and many more!

****Backyard Gardening Issues are examples of our life on Earth!**

- *It is not a perfect world - we live in a Fallen World - we all face our own unique challenges*
- *God Blesses but we are expected to work too! God causes things to grow but we must plant seed and till the soil - ABRAHAM CHASED AWAY THE PESTS!*
- *Life on earth is a mixture of both GOOD and BAD – IT RAINS ON THE JUST AND THE UNJUST IN OUR WORLD TODAY!*

V. Notice 1st - ABRAHAM DIED IN FAITH NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISE!

Hebrews 11:13 *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

God foretold of a long list of tribulation to come BEFORE FULFILLMENT OF HIS PROMISE:

- 400 years of living as strangers in a foreign land – **Genesis 15:13**... four hundred years
- Living on land that belonged to someone else -- **Genesis 15:13**... thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs,
- Living as servants -- **Genesis 15:13**...ye shall serve them
- Suffering under affliction -- **Genesis 15:13**... they shall afflict them four hundred years
- Waiting for an unknown amount of time for God's judgement to fall upon the strangers -- **Genesis 15:14** 1 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: **and afterward shall they come out with great substance.**

THE JUST SHALL WALK BY FAITH –

- *EVERYTHING IS NOT GOING TO BE PERFECT FOR US WHILE ON EARTH - NOT EVEN FOR CHRISTIANS!*
- *FAITH MEANS WAITING ON GOD'S TIMING - NOT ALWAYS AN INSTANT MIRACLE!*
- *FAITH MAY MEAN EVEN DYING BEFORE IT IS BROUGHT TO PASS BY GOD!*

VI. Lessons Learned from our TEXT & from over 40 years of Ministry- on the “Walk of Faith”

I HAVE SEEN MANY HARD – FOUGHT CHRISTIAN BATTLES:

- ❖ CHILDREN from more than one DEAR SAINT'S HOME who have died!
- ❖ Christians who have had to deal with murder or the suicide of a loved one!
- ❖ Spouses who have died and left behind Christian spouses who deal daily with loneliness!
- ❖ Christians who have dealt with tremendous pain and suffered devastating health issues!
- ❖ Christians have lost jobs – houses – cars – and even all material possessions!
- ❖ Christian homes have been torn apart by divorce or spouse unfaithfulness!
- ❖ Millions of Christians today who live under COMMUNISM or OPPRESSIVE DICTATORSHIPS! They are persecuted or imprisoned for little or no reason – many just for their faith in God!
- ❖ Christian sufferings of the past major events in history – THE DUST BOWL – WW1 – WW2- CIVIL WAR – THE GREAT DEPRESSION – THE GREAT PLAGUES – etc., etc., etc.

From this I have learned:

1. God's Wisdom is FAR Greater than what we can understand! We may never understand the path God has for us on earth – We simply must TRUST that He KNOWS WHAT IS BEST!
2. If we don't understand – We must continue to TRUST in HIS LOVE - Where else can we Go? What else is better to trust in? Answer: NOWHERE & NOTHING ELSE!
3. It's not about us – it's all about God's Will! We will not always get our own way! We live in service unto HIM! He is GOD – SOMETIME HE CHOOSES FOR US WHAT WE MAY NOT LIKE!
4. We are fighting against Powerful Forces – EXPECT INTERFERENCE FROM TIME TO TIME - even when you are trying our best to obey God!
****Abraham Drove away the pest – we must chase the devil away many times in our FAITH WALK!*
5. Don't be offended if God takes us to places outside of our comfort zone!
6. Victory is measured differently by God – defeat to us may be victory to HIM! (e.g., martyr)!

7. FAITHFULNESS IS HIGHLY ESTEEMED BY GOD!
He is pleased with our Faithfulness - If we stay true to him we will be honored for our faithfulness in the end.
8. We are never REALLY Alone - whether in a prison cell or in a prison of trying circumstances –
GOD IS EVER WITH HIS CHILDREN!
God will Strengthen us with GENTLE Refreshing and Reassurances, WHENEVER IT IS NEEDED!
9. Our Life on Earth is BRIEF - A Much Greater Future is Ahead for us – an eternity in heaven. This is God's REAL Plan for us!
II Corinthians 4:17-18 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.
10. God will work it out for us in the end - no matter what happens.
Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.
TRUST HIM - HE IS GOD ALMIGHTY AND HE KNOWS WHAT HE IS DOING!

VII. CLOSING: IF ANY MAN DRAW BACK MY SOUL SHALL HAVE NO PLEASURE IN HIM!

- **Hebrews 11:6** WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD
- QUITTING or GIVING UP ISN'T AN OPTION!

LOOK BEYOND WHAT WE MAY BE FACING TODAY – LOOK AT OTHERS WHO HAVE ENDURED FAR WORSE!

Revelation 2:10 (SMYRNA CHURCH) Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Could Jesus have changed the future for the Smyrna Church – YES, HE HAD THE POWER!
Did Jesus change the future of the Smyrna Church – NO, JESUS ALLOWED THE CHURCH TO GO THROUGH THE 10 YEARS OF PERSECUTION!
Why??? ONLY GOD CAN ANSWER THIS QUESTION – ONLY GOD KNOWS!

BUT – REMEMBER OUR TEXT:

Hebrews 10:38 *Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

TRUST HIM - HE IS GOD ALMIGHTY AND HE KNOWS WHAT HE IS DOING!