

THE COVENANTS: PART 5

LIVING IN THE WORD

WITH DR. GARY YATES

PART 5 | THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT I

The Abrahamic Covenant is foundational to God's plan of redemption. The Noahic Covenant guaranteed the continuation of creation and humanity, but human sinfulness and rebellion persists after the Flood and culminates with the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11. Through Abraham and Israel, God implements the strategy of working through his chosen people to bring blessing and salvation to all peoples in the place of cursing and judgment. The Abrahamic Covenant involves three specific promises: 1) God will make Abraham into a great nation and give him many descendants; 2) God will give Israel the land of Canaan as their special possession; and 3) all the families of the earth will be blessed through Abraham. The story of Abraham particularly emphasizes Abraham's faith in God. These covenant promises to Abraham would find their ultimate fulfillment in Jesus as the son and seed of Abraham, who would come to bring salvation to all peoples.

Read the following passages:

Genesis 12:1-7 with Genesis 12:10-20

Genesis 15:4-21 with Genesis 16:1-16

Joshua 24:1-3

Acts 7:1-8

Hebrews 11:1-6, 8-19

THE COVENANTS: PART 5

Questions for Discussion:

1. What stands out about Abraham's initial faith in the Lord's promises in light of his family background? Note the following quotation:
"The people of the ancient Near East worshipped many gods. This allowed them to focus their attention on particular problems like the need for rain, a plague, or devastating earthquakes by praying and sacrificing to the god associated with the specific aspect of nature. Furthermore, there was a hierarchy among the gods, so that if one god did not respond, the worshipper could go to another deity higher up and ask for relief or favor. Having only one god meant that there would be no opportunity to seek help elsewhere. This would have been a frightening prospect, and this is what makes Yahweh's command to Abram such an important and life-changing event." — Victor Matthews
2. What other aspects of Abraham's faith do you find exceptional in the passages we have read for this lesson?
3. What do we learn about Abraham's life of faith when we read the passages from Genesis 12, 15, and 16 together? What are some of the specific lapses in Abraham's faith and what life lessons can we learn there? What were the specific things that caused Abraham's faith to lapse or weaken? What circumstances and situations cause you to lose faith or to doubt and question God in unhelpful ways? How did these times of failure in faith ultimately help to strengthen and build Abraham's faith?
4. What specific practices and spiritual disciplines can help us to develop the kind of faith that we see exemplified in Abraham's life? When and

THE COVENANTS: PART 5

how have you seen your faith in God grow and increase in the most significant ways in your Christian life?

5. According to Hebrews 11, how did faith inform Abraham's view of God, life, and his ultimate values and priorities? What are some practical ways that we can reflect those priorities in our own lives?
6. What is something that you have learned about God in this study that you can share with someone else to be an encouragement to them or to initiate a Gospel conversation with someone who does not know Christ?