

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (January 9) – Genesis 13, 14

Genesis 13 opens and closes with Abram going to the altar of the LORD and calling upon Him in faith. Prayer and worship is the pattern of the Christian life. Abram being a man of faith in Christ sought to live in peace with others. He let Lot choose first where to settle even though he was older and had the right to choose first. Abram knew that God would keep His promise to give him the land of Canaan and provide for his daily needs.

In Genesis 14, the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah rebel. They lose the battle and many of their people including Lot are captured. Abram in faith gathers his servants and rescues Lot. God's deliverance of Sodom and Gomorrah should have caused them to repent and believe in the LORD, but sadly it did not. Melchizedek, who was the king of Salem (later Jerusalem) and also the priest came out and blessed Abram. Melchizedek means "King of Righteousness" and Salem mean "peace." The Book of Hebrews says that Melchizedek is a type pointing to Christ. Jesus is our true King of Righteousness and Peace who is greater than Melchizedek and holds His priesthood forever, continually covering our sins with His righteousness and making peace between God and us (Hebrews 7).

Tuesday (January 10) – Genesis 15, 16

In Genesis 15 God repeats His promise to Abram that he will have offspring more numerous than the stars. Abram believes God and it was counted to him as righteousness. Paul quotes this verse in Romans and Galatians to show that our justification before God is by faith and not by works. Christ in His death and resurrection has earned righteousness for the entire world. We receive this righteousness when we like Abram believe in Jesus for our salvation. Justification is to be counted righteous because of what Jesus has done for us.

Certainty is a good thing. So God makes a covenant to Abram to confirm His promise and give him certainty that it will happen. A covenant is a legal and binding promise like a last will and testament. God makes this covenant with Abram by appearing as a smoking fire pot and flaming torch and passing between the pieces of the animal sacrifice. Notice how God alone walks through the pieces. God's covenant and promises are one-sided. He doesn't make Abram or us walk through. For us in the New Testament, baptism and the Lord's Supper are our covenants that Jesus gives to us and to give us certainty of our salvation!

In Genesis 16 Abram and Sarai sin by trying to help God. Abram takes Hagar as a concubine. This was a sin but the Angel of the Lord who is the Son of God (Jesus before His incarnation) makes a special promise to care for Hagar and her child despite this sin.

Wednesday (January 11) – Genesis 17,18

In Genesis 17 God renames Abram as Abraham and Sarai as Sarah. Jesus also calls us by name and puts His name on us in baptism. In this chapter God gives Abram the covenant of circumcision. All males were circumcised no matter their age and it meant that they were part of God's covenant of salvation. In the New Testament baptism has replaced circumcision. To

be baptized is God joining us to His covenant of salvation. God also promises Abram that Isaac, not Ishmael shall be Abram's heir.

In Genesis 18, the LORD with two angels appear to Abraham and repeat the promise that Sarah will have a son despite her old age. Paul in Romans 4 says that the miracle of Sarah conceiving shows that Jesus can bring life even out of death. God also tells Abraham of the coming judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah. God wants Abraham to pray for Lot because this is the same role Jesus takes on for us. Jesus intercedes for us every time we sin.

Thursday (January 12) – Genesis 19

God saves Lot and his family but judges Sodom and Gomorrah for their great wickedness. Their sins were many and included unrepentance, hurting the vulnerable, and homosexuality. Their destruction is a picture of Christ's final judgment on unrepentance. May we all repent of our sins and believe in Him for His salvation. God saves Lot and his family, but Lot's wife loved sin more than Jesus and was turned into a pillar of salt. Lot's two daughters were also morally corrupted as seen by what they do to their father. We are to flee from sin and not keep bad company for it will change our hearts like it did to Lot's wife and daughters.

Friday (January 13) – Genesis 20, 21

In Genesis 20 Abraham in weakness of faith lies about Sarah. Despite his failings God protects Abraham and Sarah. We have moments of weakness in which God must protect us!

In Genesis 21 God keeps His promise and Isaac is born of Sarah. Hagar and her son are cast out which Paul says is a picture of how we cannot be saved by keeping God's Law but rather through faith in Jesus (Galatians 4). God cares for Hagar and Ismael, for He loves them too. Lastly, Abraham makes a covenant with Abimelech and reproves him for stealing wells.

Saturday (January 14) – Genesis 22

God tests Abraham's faith. God tests us too. Tests are meant to bring us closer to Christ and rely on His Word alone. Abraham took Isaac in faith, trusting Jesus and His Word, knowing that God could raise Isaac from the dead (Hebrews 11:17-19). God provides a ram as a substitute for Isaac. In reading this story we see how the Father sacrificed His only Son as a substitute for what we deserved because of our sins.

Sunday (January 15) – Genesis 23

This entire chapter is devoted to Abraham burying Sarah. Throughout the Bible believers have buried their dead. They did so to confess their faith in God's promise that He will raise us from the grave. Funerals have two purposes. First, to treat the body of our loved one with respect knowing this same body will be raised from the grave (1 Corinthians 15). Second, to give comfort and hope to those who mourn. More than a celebration of life, funerals are a time to remember God's grace and love shown to our loved one in their earthly pilgrimage, along with a confession of the faith and hope we have in Jesus Christ who is the resurrection and the life (John 11).