



The Gospel Project – Sermon Outline

Unit: Covenant Foundations

Title: A Promise toward Paradise Regained

Text: Genesis 12:1-4

Connection to Unit Theme

God alone existed before He created the world. He acted out of His divine prerogative to create for His glory and for man's good. Man willfully rebelled against God's command, resulting in separation from God's presence and His bountiful provision in the Garden. Man, in his sinful and separated condition, could not do anything to restore his relationship to God. Man depended on God to restore the relationship that was lost through sin. God, in His grace, established a covenant with Abraham that promised restoration of the relationship, the establishment of a people, and the provision of a land. God was the one who established, and would be faithful to bring about, these covenant promises.

Introduction Idea

After the fall, Adam and Eve, and those who came after them, demonstrated the devastating consequences of rebelling against God and pursuing one's own way. The world-wide judgment of the flood and the confusion of languages at Babel demonstrated evidences, both of God's judgment of sin and His grace and longsuffering toward sinners. At this point in God's grand story of redemption, God acted to establish a covenant relationship with a people, giving them a land, and, through them, blessing all the peoples of the earth. God's covenant promises to Abraham show God's initiative, His grace, and His faithfulness. Abraham responded to God's goodness with faith and obedience.

Sermon Division I – A God who acts, A God who promises (vv.1-3)

Though God had clearly acted in His righteousness and justice to bring judgment upon sin, in this passage we see Him also acting in grace and mercy, establishing a covenant with Abraham and making covenant promises that would impact not only Abraham but all the nations of the earth. God initiated His covenant with Abraham (then Abram) with a command to leave his land, his family, and his relatives. Abraham was not given a final destination to chart on a map. He was simply, by faith, to follow God wherever He would lead Abraham to go. Abraham had two options: He could either stay in his current land with his family and his people, or, by faith, follow where God would lead Him.

God announced not only His involvement in the plan, but also His provision for Abraham in the midst of the plan. God promised: to make a great nation from Abraham; to make Abraham's name great; to bless Abraham and those who blessed him; to curse those who cursed him; and to bless all the people of the earth through Abraham.



How could Abraham know that God would be able and faithful to keep His promises? The God who made this promise is the same God who created the world and everything in it. He is the God who destroyed every living thing on the earth (besides Noah and his family) in the great flood. He is the same God who confused the languages of those at Babel, leading to the formation of the various nations and language groups of the earth. A God who can do all those things certainly can keep His promises to Abraham.

God would tie His future actions back to His promise to Abraham. He would later remind His people that because He had made a promise to Abraham, He would be faithful to act on their behalf to keep the promise He had made. He is a faithful, covenant-keeping God, and they could trust Him.

Application: How does God's gracious initiative of instituting a covenant with Abraham, and His committed faithfulness of seeing it through, give you hope for trusting Him today in the midst of difficult circumstances in your life?

Sermon Division II – A proper response to God's call (v.4)

How would you respond to a call to leave everything that was familiar and dear to you: your immediate family, your kinfolk, and your land? While we know that Abraham was not a perfect man, the Bible is clear that he was a man who believed God and obeyed Him from a heart of faith. God graciously chose Abraham as the one with whom He would establish His covenant. God worked out His plan through the life of a man who responded to the plan of God by faith, surrender, and obedience. Despite Abraham's occasional sin, fear, and unbelief, God continued to work through Him to bring about His covenant promises.

Through His covenant with Abraham, God would show His grace, His power and His faithfulness. God showed His grace in choosing a man that was not worthy on his own, but who would walk by faith in, and obedience to, the almighty God who would call him. God demonstrated His power by providing a son-of-promise to an elderly couple far beyond child-bearing years. God would be faithful, in just a few short generations, to multiply Abraham's offspring to the point that even the Pharaoh in Egypt would be fearful of their number, resorting to killing all of the male children born among God's people. God would continue to demonstrate His faithfulness by watching over, providing for, and protecting His people, even when they would rebel against Him. He would discipline His people, calling them to remember the covenant He had established, and bringing them back to repentance, faith, and obedience. God is faithful to His people. He calls His people to respond to Him in faith and obedience.

Application: The proper response to the call of a gracious God is faith and obedience. We come to a relationship with God through repentance and faith. We must walk in covenant relationship with Him in repentance, faith, and obedience. If you are a child of God, one who has received His covenant promises as His child, are you walking daily with Him in faith and obedience?



Conclusion Idea

Moses says (and Paul quotes him), "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness" (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6). We receive God's covenant promises today by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, the promised Son of our covenant-keeping God.