**Origins (pt.2) - wk 5 – The Gospel According to Abe**

**The OT is the sign to the Messiah - NT is the arrival of - JESUS.**

**Genesis to Revelation is about Jesus. Genesis, means “Origin”**

**Genesis 11 – The Life of Abraham - the beginning of the way.**

**A down and outer idol worshiper whose family is falling apart is called by God to leave everything and follow him – as Jesus does to us today.**

**Given five promises from the LORD - the greatest of which is that his descendants will bless the world – they became the family of Jesus, the Way.**

**Abe is growing in his walk with God - settles in Canaan.**

**Lot, his nephew, is in and out of trouble – He just rescued him.**

**Gen 15 - is known as the Second Covenant. The first was Gen 11 (5 promises) Today a strange and important chapter.**

**\* Can a person have faith and doubt at the same time?**

**Genesis 15:1 After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.” (“I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward” – KJV)**

**Do not be afraid**

* **I am your strength**

**He just defeated an Empire’s army – He has reason to be afraid**

* **I am your shield**

**He needed protection and armory – He needed a literal defense**

* **I am your reward (Hebrews 11:6 – God is enough)**

**He just gave away his reward… and LORD says…**

**But Abe’s response is, “Awesome… but it doesn’t look like it…”**

**2 But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, ((Adoni YHVH - first use of Adoni) what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” 3 And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.” (Notice his servants treated as family)**

**But Sovereign God (eternal royal ruler of all things), I have no children of my own. What good is it if my name is gone?**

**4 Then the word of the LORD came to him: (you ungrateful brat - no) “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” (You will have Children!) 5 He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars - if indeed you can count them.” (it’s at night) Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” (Earlier, will be like the dust of earth)**

**6 Abram believed the LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness. (This is one of the greatest verses in the OT.)**

**7 He also said to him, “I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.” But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, (Adoni YHVH) how can I know that I will gain possession of it?” (Doubts are back already – it’s only been one verse…)**

**God how can I be sure you will do it and I won’t blow it?**

**9 So the LORD said to him, “Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.” (odd cooking recipe – age-specific cattle - he gets the items of this strange shopping list and returns) 10 Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. 11 Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away. (this is really happening – it was not in his head – a whole day’s work – now waiting…)**

**12 As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. 13 Then the LORD said to him, “Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. 14 But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. 15 You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. 16 In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”**

**Your descendants will absolutely receive this land – but first they will become slaves 400 yrs. But don’t worry – you won’t.**

**Remember, Israel is hearing this while in the wilderness.**

**This was the plan. Why? 1) They would enter the land with provision (v14) 2) God is showing mercy on the Amorites (v16)**

**17 When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. (what just happened??)**

**This is God – a theophany**

**\* A smoking firepot – like our smoke (Shekinah) in the wilderness**

**\* A burning torch - like our pillar of fire, burning bush – it’s YHVH**

**The prophets describe God’s Righteousness as fire and his perfect holy presence as burning smoke of the altar (Heb 12:29).**

**18 On that day the LORD made (to cut) a covenant with Abram and said, “To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates - 19 the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, 20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, 21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites.”**

**\*\*\* Happy Mother’s Day.**

**This is actually a powerful and beautiful passage.**

**Today is all about Doubt and Faith**

**Matters of Faith**

* **Righteousness is a matter of faith – alone**

**Gen 15:6 Abram believed the LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness.**

**The first time believe is used in the Bible = faith.**

**Believe = trust. I agree with that.**

**The first time righteousness is used in the Bible – right w/ God**

**This is not about righteous acts or right living.**

**This was the declaration by God of righteousness to Abe.**

**Romans 4:2 If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about - but not before God. 3 What does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” (9-10,**

**This was before the law & circumcision. It is not by religious rituals and actions. It was faith and faith alone.**

**The faith that made Abe righteous was not - *believing in God* (Jam 2:19) His faith was - *believing God* – God, I trust you and your words.**

**Writing a check – That paper is not the money it is an official legal document that is a promise of payment. It is credit. That paper is used to collect debt. The paper covers the debt.**

**OT – on credit / NT – paid in full past and future.**

**Abraham wrote a check called faith. Jesus ultimately paid for it on the cross - and now by our faith it is credited to our spiritual account also.**

**Romans 4:19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. 20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, 21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. 22 This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” 23 The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, 24 but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.**

**While they looked forward to the Messiah**

**We look back to the Messiah.**

**Gal 3:** **Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” 7 Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. 8 Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles (the world) by faith and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” 9 So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.**

**Eph 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.**

**You may see this and think – wow, Abe has so much faith. I can never have that. He never doubted… But he did.**

**Matters of Doubt**

* **Can doubt and faith co-exist – Yes**

**Notice Abe calls God repeatedly – Adoni YHVH. “Sovereign LORD”**

**You are a God in complete control. I believe in you.**

**But… but I am still struggling.**

**Not all doubt is the same –**

1. **Some doubt is the kind that causes one to walk away.**
2. **Some are the kind of doubt that leads to disobedience.**
3. **But this doubt is the kind that says - I worry, but I will follow.**

**The third doubt is a part of learning to trust God.**

**It does not make you a terrible Cristian.**

**\*\*\* Sovereign Lord, I believe – but how is this possible?**

**2 But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?”**

**LORD – I believe, but I can’t see it. It does not look like it**

**I don’t have any kids – the gap between what is and will be.**

**In the natural, it does not seem possible. My family, my job, my kids, my finances… doesn’t look like it. What about this…**

**\*\*\* Sovereign Lord, I believe – but how can I know?**

**8 But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, (Adoni YHVH) how can I know that I will gain possession of it?”**

**LORD –I believe, but how can I know that You will do it and I won’t blow it? I don’t have the best track record.**

**GOD Responds to doubt**

**\*\*\* God responds – Remember what I’ve done**

**15:7 “I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans…**

**Remember where he has been faithful – what he has done – and the testimonies of others. God is mighty and able!**

**\*\*\* God responds – Remember what I said**

**7 He also said to him, “I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.”**

**God reminds Abe of his Word –Gen 12:1-3, 12:7, 13:15-17**

**Remember the Word of God – what I told you. God responds with comfort and assurance to doubt. “My words are reliable!”**

**When in doubt dive into the Word of God – know his promises.**

**\*\*\* God responds – Remember the blood**

**God responds with a blood covenant. When doubt sets in remember this…**

**Abraham asks God, How can I be sure you will do it?**

**God says - I’ll make a covenant with you. Let’s sign a contract.**

**God’s covenant with Abe – what is that all about?**

**We live in a written age – sign here. Can I get it in writing?**

**God instructs get a heifer, goat, ram, each 3 yrs old, with a dove and a pigeon - Knowing this was a ceremonial contract- he preps it.**

**The custom: split the carcasses – at dusk, each person is to walk thru and repeat the agreement, lest I am split in two.**

**Creating a bloody isle. They walk through and make a vow.**

**As they walk thru the “river of blood” – it gets all over you. If I break this agreement – let this happen to me. By blood and with blood. “karath berith” – to cut a covenant. (Jer 34:18-20)**

**So, while Abe was sleeping – God showed up as the smoke and fire – and walks through it alone - Realize this –**

**Abe did not walk through it – only YHVH. He passively slept.**

**This agreement was made by God – and based on who God is.**

**God makes himself responsible for both sides. “This is up to me.”**

**Abe messes up majorly 5 times – and God says, I have a plan. I am not finished with you – I finish what I start. I have you!**

**Hebrews 6:13 When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, 14 saying, “I will surely bless you and give you many descendants.”**

**This was not based on Abe keeping his part, or by what he does. God does the whole thing. God signed for both - Monergism.**

**Therefore, Abe can know it will not fail. Because God cannot fail.**

**If God fails to keep it (impossible) – God will pay with blood**

**If Abe fails to keep it – God will pay with his blood.**

**This is an amazing picture of Jesus Christ!**

**The animals sacrificed point to Jesus sacrifice when God walked thru humanity in the broken and bloody body of Jesus to seal his covenant with us. God signed for both of us – we simply enter the agreement by faith. The terms are simple – believe it – trust it!**

**Interesting addition, while he waited - he chased off the vultures. This was perseverance in his faith.**

**\*Vultures will come to try to peck away at what God is doing in you**

**The naysayers – the enemy - will say you are not saved – you’ve messed up too much. God is done with you… look to the blood.**

**But we faithfully persevere and chase away the lies.**

**The covenant was fulfilled 2000 yrs later – as dreadful darkness fell upon the earth. And once more the righteous fire of God, passed thru the pieces of blood. This time in the flesh. Christ was torn to pieces –as we were asleep in our sin – He died for us – his blood was shed.**

**God not only kept his end of the promise –he also makes up for where we mess up – this is GRACE.**

**We could not keep our end of the bargain – so he gave his own blood.**

**God walked through calvary alone and will never / can never break it.**

**Ephesians 1:7** **In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace 8 that he lavished on us.**

**How often do we ask – God prove it. How can I know I am saved? God says – remember the blood = and trust it.**

**Back to - Genesis 15:1 After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.”**

* **I am your strength**

**I am your strength when you feel like failing and when you do.**

* **I am your shield**

**I have taken the blows that are meant for you.**

* **I am your reward**

**I am your end reward - Eternity with me awaits you.**

**Are you doubting your faith – doubting God’s faithfulness?**

**#1 What has God done? #2 What does God’s word say?**

**#3 Have you believed this by faith in the blood?**

**This is the gospel according to Abraham**

**We are saved by grace, secured through faith, sealed with blood.**

**6 Abram believed the LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness.**

**Moses family – mom**

**Abram – Sari – mom**

**Mom’s play a pivotal role in the scriptures (old and new testament)**