

Read through the Bible



Genesis Week 2



Monday, October Twenty-First

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One of the frustrations of using a computer is that, sometimes, one of your programs freezes up, or worse – the entire system. Even more frustrating is when you quickly realize that whatever you had been working on will now likely be lost. At this point, your only choice is to reboot the program or the system and pray that the computer will work correctly the next time around. In today's passage, God gives His creation a reboot.

Read: Genesis 9:1-29

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- How is God's command to Noah in verse 1 similar to 1:28?
- What covenant did God make? (see verses 8-11)
- Who is included in God's covenant? (see verse 12)
- What was the sign of the covenant? (see verses 12-13) What was the purpose of the sign? (see verse 16)

People have been fascinated with rainbows for generations. Some believe that a rainbow is a sign that today is going to be a good day, or that their wish is going to come true. Others believe there's a pot of gold at the end of them. The reality, though, is that all of these things are simply wishful thinking. Instead, our passage today shows us that the true purpose of the rainbow is to visibly remind God and us of His covenant to never destroy the earth again.

- What did Noah's youngest son do? (see verses 21-23) What was the result of his actions? (see verses 24-27)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Think about a recent situation where someone did not keep their promise to you. How did that situation make you feel, and how did it change the way you trusted that person? Take some time today to thank God for keeping His covenant to Noah and to all His creation that He would never destroy all life again (v. 15).

Tuesday, October Twenty-Second

If you attended Oktoberfest this past Sunday at Our Savior, chances are you either saw or heard some German words (e.g. “Prost!”). However, if you don’t know the German language, it’s near impossible to understand what these words mean. In today’s passage, Noah’s descendants have a hard time understanding one another thanks to their decision to disobey God.

Read: Genesis 10:1-11:9

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- Skim through the people and places listed in 10:1-10:30. What did these descendants do? (see 10:32)
- What did Noah’s descendants have in common? (see 11:1)
- How did God respond to their plan to build a tower to heaven? (see 11:5-9)

God had commanded Noah’s descendants to spread throughout the earth, but they decided that they would rather stick together and make a name for themselves (11:4). In response to their disobedience, God gave the groups of people different languages and scattered them throughout the earth (11:7-8).

- What pronoun does God use to describe Himself in 11:7?

Notice that God describes Himself in terms of His Triune nature: “Let *us* go down...” Some people believe that God the Father came first, and then the Son and Holy Spirit were added in sometime later, but this passage, John chapter 1, and many others remind us that God has and will always exist as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You can also look back at Genesis 1:26 and see that God describes Himself in the same way: “Let *us* make mankind in *our* image...”

Respond: Apply what you’ve learned in prayer and action

Thousands of years after the Tower of Babel incident, people are still trying to make a name for themselves. How does today’s passage give insight into how you might make a name for Jesus?

Wednesday, October Twenty-Third

It may look like a burger and it may taste like a burger, but the Impossible Burger is not a burger at all. Instead, it’s a plant-based patty designed to look and taste like an actual burger. While it certainly won’t satisfy everyone, the Impossible Burger makes it possible to have fun with a meatless alternative. In today’s passage, Abram is given a promise that initially appears impossible.

Read: Genesis 11:10-12:9

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- Skim the lineage from Shem to Abram in 11:10-26. What do you notice in terms of their ages when they died?
- What promise did God make to Abram? (see 12:2-3)

God’s promise to Abram is significant. Not only was God going to make him into a great nation, but “all peoples on earth will be blessed” through him as well (12:3). Today, we understand its significance in that it was through Abram’s lineage that Jesus came, and through Jesus, all peoples on earth have been blessed with His forgiveness and grace. Perhaps this is why one-third of Genesis is spent on Abram even though the entire book covers more than 2000 years and over 20 generations of people!

- In light of the detail in 11:30, why is God’s reference to Abram’s future offspring in 12:7 possibly confusing?

Imagine how confused Abram might have been. He knew his wife, Sarai, was unable to bear children, and yet, God was telling him that He would become a great nation and have many offspring. Could God really make the impossible possible?

Respond: Apply what you’ve learned in prayer and action

In Matthew 19, Jesus’ disciples wondered who could be saved after realizing that obtaining one’s own salvation was impossible. Jesus’ response demonstrates an important truth: “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” (v. 26). How have you seen God make the impossible possible in your own life?

Thursday, October Twenty-Fourth

Some teachers love to assign group work. While the idea of having students work together is well intentioned, it often turns out that a few students end up doing all of the work because they don't trust their other group members to do their part. In today's passage, Abram experiences some trust issues with God.

Read: Genesis 12:10-13:18

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What did Abram fear the Egyptians would do to him? (see 12:12) What did he suggest that Sarai do? (see 12:13)

Did Abram trust that God would provide for him and his family? His actions suggest that he likely did not. For example, Abram decided to move his family to Egypt to avoid the famine, and urged his wife to lie about being his sister so he would not be killed. In both situations, Abram tried to solve a problem without seeking God for guidance and help.

- How did Pharaoh respond when he and his family were inflicted with serious diseases? (see 12:17-19)
- What promise did God make with Abram after he and Lot had parted ways? (see 13:14-17)

After promising Abram that he would become a great nation, God added on to this promise by promising a place for this great nation: "all the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever" (13:15).

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Every day, we come across challenging situations and problems, and our natural inclination is to try and resolve them on our own. What situation or problem is challenging you right now? During your prayer time today, take a moment to seek God for guidance and help with this situation. How might you continue to consistently seek God in the future when these situations arise?

Friday, October Twenty-Fifth

A few weeks ago, two dogs in Wayne, New Jersey got stuck in a stormwater drainpipe and could not get out. Members of the local fire department responded to the scene, and upon hearing the dogs' whimpering cries, set out to find a quick solution. Finally, after finding a manhole about 125 feet away, the firefighters inserted a pole into it, which allowed the two dogs to climb up to safety. The dogs' owner was both relieved and grateful that these firefighters had done everything they could to rescue them. In today's passage, Abram initiates a rescue operation for a close family member.

Read: Genesis 14:1-24

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What happened to Lot during a time of war in the region? (see verses 11-12)
- How did Abram respond to the news that his nephew had been captured? (see verses 13-16)

Abram was willing to do whatever it took to save his nephew, Lot, even if it meant risking his life and the lives of his 318 trained men (v. 14). Perhaps most impressive was how successful he was: he and his men were able to recover all of the people and possessions that had been seized by the four kings (see verse 16).

- How did Abram respond when the king of Sodom gave him permission to keep the goods that he had brought back from the rescue operation? (see verses 21-24)

Abram was determined that if he was to become rich, it would not be from men like the king of Sodom, but rather from God.

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Every day, as followers of Jesus, we are confronted with the reality that we serve a God who risked everything, including His own life, to rescue us from the consequences of our sin. Take some time today to praise God in song and/or prayer for this amazing reality.

Saturday, October Twenty-Six

Have you ever looked up into the sky at night and wondered how many stars there are? 100? 1,000? 1 million? Scientists estimate that if there are approximately 10 billion galaxies in the observable universe, and if there are approximately 10 billion stars per galaxy, that means that there are about 1,000,000,000,000,000,000 stars (and those are just the ones that we would be able to possibly observe with the technology we have today!). In today's passage, God provides Abram with an important answer by encouraging him to look up at the stars.

Read: Genesis 15:1-21

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What was Abram concerned about? (see verses 1-3)
- How did God respond to his concern? (see verses 4-5)

God told Abram in chapter 12 that He would make him into a great nation, but after quite some time had passed, you can imagine that Abram might have wondered whether or not this was actually going to happen. The key in this situation was that Abram expressed his concern to God (v. 2). He didn't hide his unease or simply give up on God's promise, but instead reached out for guidance and clarification on the matter.

- What does verse 6 tell us about Abram?
- What events did God predict? (see verses 13-14)

Verses 13-14 are a great summary of the book of Exodus. God's words here remind us that He is in control and has a plan.

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

How do you typically respond when you find that one of your prayers is not being answered in what you consider to be a timely manner? How might you continue to "believe the LORD" (v. 6) while you are waiting? Take some time to pray for patience, wisdom, and understanding as you wait for God's response.

Sunday, October Twenty-Seven

In the movie *Toy Story*, Woody the cowboy is Andy's favorite toy. That is, until Buzz Lightyear the space ranger shows up as a birthday present. All of a sudden, Woody's place in Andy's world becomes smaller and smaller, which only fuels his animosity toward Buzz. In today's passage, Sarai harbors animosity toward her Egyptian slave, Hagar.

Read: Genesis 16:1-16

Reflect: Use the passage to work through these questions

- What did Sarai suggest to Abram? (see verses 1-2a) How did he respond? (see verses 2b-4a)

Why would Sarai allow Abram to sleep with Hagar? Back then, tradition held that if a husband slept with a surrogate mother, the husband and wife would still be considered the mother and father, not the husband and surrogate mother. Perhaps Sarai believed that this route would solve their problem and fulfill God's promise. Regardless, this was an example of Sarai (and Abram) thinking they could resolve things on their own instead of trusting God's promise and His timing.

- What did this decision do to Sarai and Hagar's relationship? (see verses 4b-5)
- What commands and promises did the angel of the LORD give to Hagar? (see verses 7-13)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

As both Sarai and Hagar learned, one bad decision can damage a valued relationship. Think about a damaged relationship you have with someone you value. Keeping in mind how Jesus mended our relationship with God (e.g. forgiveness, grace, humility), how might you work to mend that relationship?

Questions? Comments? Contact Pastor Chris at chris.futch@oursaviorfl.org or (727) 344-2684.