

The Covenant Maker

Genesis 15:1-21

Introduction: In the text of Genesis there are two unilateral covenants. In Exodus we read about a bilateral covenant that God makes through Moses at Mount Sinai and In 2 Samuel 1 we read about one other unilateral covenant that God made with David.

There are two things going on in this story, first, the conversation between God and Abram that establishes the Abrahamic Covenant, and second, an introduction to the 'doctrine of justification'.

Concept: When our faith is challenged we often try and work things out and all the while God waits for us to come to the end of our internal wrangling. (Psalm 46:10)

The Promise: God promised Abram that he would protect him, reward him greatly, give him a host of offspring and give him the land that he could see with his eyes, with the description in verses 18-20. That promise was made to Abram alone.

Divine Justification - When I stand before God I stand alone in my own righteousness or I stand in righteousness that has been imputed or gifted to me. Divine Justification is God standing before me and seeing the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to me, and my sinfulness, which has been imputed to Jesus Christ at the cross.

The Ritual - In the ancient world "agreeing" in the marketplace was ritualized in a number of ways; with something similar to a handshake in the modern world, or a complex document or contract in a legally binding transaction. (Ruth 4:7-10)

Celebration Ceremony - Genesis 15:12-21 - In a ceremony where both parties were to participate, Abram is caught in a deep sleep, darkness fell on him such that he is unable to participate (17); and God walked this trail of blood alone.

Conclusion: God is a covenant maker. At the cross God did all the work, and I must simply believe by placing my trust and faith in Jesus alone for my completed future salvation. God the Father chose us, God the Son died for us and God the Holy Spirit sealed us for the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:3-14).

God has certain habits and predictable patterns because God is a promise keeper. If God said it we can count on it. Walking by faith is believing God and acting upon His promises.

When I believe God something happens that initiates the greatest blessings that God can bestow, God counts that belief as righteousness (Genesis 15:6; John 3:16; Acts 16:31; Hebrews 3:19) and salvation follows.

God sees things I do not see, God plans things that I am not privy to, God is sovereign in the affairs of mankind and I can be clueless about it; but be sure that God is over all and his plans are sure and my future is secured by His plans. I learn from Genesis 15:13-16 that God's plans go well beyond my life, he has history planned out, because it is his story and I, we are privileged to live in it - Thank God that he is a Covenant Maker!