

Series - Blood Covenant

Date/s - 12 October 2014

Topic - Part 3 – The enormity of Covenantal Benefits

Speaker/s - Pastor John Koe

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like “You Deserve ” or “In The Presence”

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Know that God’s covenant is meant to last and its benefits are available for believers and their families.
2. Receive covenantal blessings which are activated by faith, actualized by fellowship.

Word [45 min]

The two earlier messages describe how God initiated His covenant with Abraham in Gen 12:1-3. God called Abraham to leave Haran for Canaan. When Abraham obeyed God and was willing to sacrifice Issac to God in Genesis 22, God promised a Seed to Abraham through whom all nations of the earth will be blessed. The present sermon details the enormity of the covenantal benefits enjoyed and given to both Abraham and to us, his spiritual seed.

God, the covenant keeper, is still blessing the Jewish people today. This is evident in the disproportionate dominion they have over the patents and riches and the supernatural protection of the nation as she successfully withstood the animosity of her neighbours in numerous wars. This blessing is also available to us as recorded in 2 Corinthians 9:8 “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” God prospers us to enable us to do the good works that He has called us to do to draw people to Him. As a sign of their covenant with God, all Jewish males are circumcised and the scar is a reminder that they are a people in covenant with God. Christians are spiritually circumcised in the hearts as we put off the old sinful nature. (Colossians 2:11)

God supernaturally blessed Abraham. The supernatural protection of God is seen in how God has twice intervened to protect Abraham’s wife Sarah (formerly Sarai) from Pharoah and King Abimelech who wanted to take her as his own wife because Abraham cowardly told them that Sarah was his sister to protect himself. God also fought on behalf of Abraham and gave him supernatural victories against an army led by a band of 4 kings. Abraham routed them with 318 servants and managed to rescue his nephew, Lot. Abraham enjoyed the supernatural provision of God. Abraham prospered and his neighbours acknowledged God’s favour upon him and one king even initiated a treaty with him. (Gen 21:22-23,32). When God wanted to destroy Sodom & Gomorrah for its extreme sinfulness, he informed Abraham because his nephew, Lot lived in Sodom and when God destroyed the cities, he sent angels to rescue Lot and his family.

Abraham’s brief stay in Egypt when severe famine struck the land, was a low point in his life when there were no accounts of him building any altars to the Lord. His biggest heartaches and losses in life could be traced back to his backslidden though brief stay in Egypt. It was here that he compromised his integrity when he told Pharoah that Sarah was his sister, a truth as Sarah was his half sister, but kept the fact that she was also his

wife from Pharaoh for fear that he might be killed. Going down to Egypt symbolized the use of worldly methods rather than trusting God. Initially, Abraham seemed to benefit from Egypt as Pharaoh lavished him with gifts, as he was interested in Sarai. The Egyptian maid, Hagar joined his family here and later bore him Ishmael, who caused much conflict in his family. When Abraham and Lot left Egypt, they were materially well off which led to a conflict over pasture lands and subsequent separation of Lot and Abraham. Lot was corrupted by the abundance he saw in Egypt and chose to stay in the plains of Sodom. Lot left his uncle and met a sad end as he did not realize that his prosperity was due to God's covenantal blessings.

God's covenant with a person involves him and his whole family. This is seen in how God watched over all that belongs to Abraham. Biblical examples on the passing down of benefits of the covenant to the descendants can be traced in the lineage from Abraham → Isaac → Jacob → Joseph and from King David to King Hezekiah who lived 313 years after David. The descendants were able to access the power and blessings of the covenant made with Abraham and David when they walked in fellowship with God and called on Him. The covenant is activated by faith and actualized by fellowship.

Discussion Questions

1. **God gives supernatural protection, victory and provision to those who are joined with Him in the Covenant. Share how this is evident in Abraham or in your own life.** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: This is a recap question. Members are free to share their personal accounts. You may want to refer to the following for details regarding Abraham.

- God's protection in a) Gen 12: 10-20 which describes Abram's sojourn in Egypt and God's intervention on behalf of Sarai, b) Gen 20:1-17 for account of Abraham's lie about Sarah to King Abimelech;
- Supernatural Victory in Gen 14:11-16;
- Supernatural provision in providing a sacrificial lamb in place of Isaac (Gen 22:13-14) and in relation to the rescue of Lot and his family when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. (Gen Chapter 19)

2. **Ps John mentioned that "The covenant is activated by faith and actualized by fellowship." Tell how Abraham's faith and his fellowship with God enable him to enjoy covenantal blessings.** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: This is a relate & reflect question. Recall how Abraham believed God's promise and acted on his belief, e.g leaving Haran for Canaan or sacrifice Isaac when asked. When Abraham acted on his belief in God, he received further revelation from God as seen in the differences in wording of the promises in Gen 12:1 -3 and Gen 22:15 -18. The first promise was given when Abram was 75 years old and the second when he must be about 120 years old. However, when Abraham saw the severe famine and decided to leave Canaan for Egypt in Gen 12:10-20, he lost fellowship with God and suffer consequences for his "unbelief" in God to protect and provide. When Abraham went back to God in Genesis Chapter 13 and his fellowship was restored, God's plans and blessings resumed operating in his life.

You may refer to 2 Kings 19:14-20 : 11 for the account of King Hezekiah's prayer on behalf of Judah during the invasion by the Assyrians, his illness and God deliverance's of him because of His promise to Hezekiah's forefather, King David.

Ponder on how Abraham's journey might have had similarities with your personal journey with God.

3. **Would you agree that you are living under the Covenant? In Psalms 89:34, God is faithful to those who are in Covenant with Him and to their descendants. Share how you would like to claim full covenantal blessings for your entire household.** [15-20 min]

Leader's Notes: *This is a response question. Pastor has shared how God cared for and watched over Sarai, Lot, Isaac and even Ishmael simply because Abraham believed in God and has a covenant with him. Challenge members to continue to pray and trust God for the salvation of unsaved family members and for those who have backslidden. Parents are to entrust God with the future of their children and help their children build a relationship with God so that they will not be like Lot, who after departing from Abraham, could not receive the covenantal benefits. It is God's desire for the covenantal benefits to be extended to our descendants as recorded in the bible that God promises to show love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and follow His commands (Ex 20:6). End the session by praying for members and their loved ones to enjoy the full covenantal benefits.*

Works [30 min]

Let's pray

- 1 Every RiverLifer understands that God's covenant is meant to last and its benefits are available for believers and their families.

Announcement

- 1 Baptism Service
Sun, 2 Nov | 2.30pm-4.30pm | Victory Chapel
-