

LESSON 5

Dispensation of Promise

Objective : To become abundant in hope by believing completely in all promises of God.

Bible Portion : Gen. 12-22; Heb. 11:8-27

Memory Verse : Heb. 11:9-10

By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Introduction :

How do we get assurance of hope and courage amidst of adverse situations like sickness, sadness, death etc? There are many promises which are highly glorious and comforting (John 14:1-3). Those who fully believe in the promises of God need not to fear. Abraham was a giant of faith who firmly holds the promises. The promises God given to Abraham were a guiding light to him and his descendants. The Dispensation of Promise is a period of 430 years spanning from the

Calling of Abraham from the Ur of the Chaldeans to the time in which God gave commandments and rules to the Israelites at Mount Sinai. The history of God's intervention during this period can be seen in Gen. 12-Exo. 19).

The Call of Abraham

In the time of Noah his descendants became isolators. Nimrod, the mighty hunter led them. And now by the time of Abraham, the later generation of Shem idolatry became so popular. Amidst of this situation God called and separated Abraham. There were two important reasons for the calling of Abraham.

1. To generate a race who will believe in the true God and through whom present the Messiah to the universe.
2. To give a separate land for those people to avoid possible mix with other races so that they may not lose their sanctity.

Upon hearing the call of God Abraham left his land and kins and dwelt in Haran (Acts 7:1-3). After the death of his father Terah God called Abraham again and gave him with promises. The command and promise in Gen. 12:1-4 has to be given special attention. Abraham departed as the Lord had spoken to him. Lot and his wife Sarah accompanied him and he was seventy five years old.

The promises given to Abraham

Many times after the Call of Abraham and his depart from Haran god confirmed his covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-4; 13:14-17; 15:1-7, 13, 21; 18:18-19; 22:16-18). It is seen many of the promised God made to Abraham has been repeated to his son Isaac and grandson Jacob (Gen. 26:2-5; 26:24; 28:13-15; 32:28; 35:9-12). The promises were mainly of two issues.

1. Offspring

- a) Abraham who was childless will begot a son through Sarah. He will be called Issac. His generation will be increased like sands of the earth and stars of heaven (Gen. 17:19; 27: 4-5; 22:17). But this generation has to live 400 years in a foreign land that is not theirs.

And the fourth generations of Israelites in Egypt will come back to their own land (Gen. 15:13-16).

- b) Through Jesus Christ who is the seed of Abraham, all nations of the earth will be blessed (Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Gal. 3:16).
- c) The believers are the spiritual descendents of Abraham. There are also being blessed along with Abraham (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:7-9; 3:29).

2. A nation

- a) Though God gave the Land of Canaan as inheritance to the Israel, the full control will be given only upon the Millennium Rule (Gen. 15:18-21; 26:3-5).
- b) Abraham and his spiritual descendants, believers are waiting for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Test

The Godly plan about Abraham and his family was that they must completely believe in the promises of God dwell together in the Promised Land (Gen. 26:2-3). The responsibility of man/woman during the Dispensation of Promise was to Dwell in the land, and feed on [his] faithfulness.

Failure

Many a times Abraham, the father of believers has become faithless. When the land was affected by great famine Abraham departed to stay in Egypt. He also tasted the bitter fruit of the same (Gen. 12:10-20). His maid Hagar and son Ishmael became a big problem (Gen. 16:4; 21-9-12). The people of God got stuck in unbelief. Think the deviation from the path of God will draw troubles to them and their generations. The history of Abraham's descendants is much pitiable. Isaac was not so spiritual like his father. Among the children of Isaac Esau was unspiritual (Heb. 12:16). Though Jacob had given with revelation from God, he was not spiritual. He also suffered the bitterness of his unspirituality. No one except Joseph among the children of Jacob had spiritual insight. The people of Israel who descended from them tested God and murmured against Him and subjected to severe punishment (1 Cor. 10:6-10). In

fact, the blessed promises given during the Dispensation of Promise was not benefitted for the salvation of humanity.

Judgment

Like other dispensations this dispensation also ends up in judgment. As a punishment to Abraham's and later Jacob's journey to Egypt, Israelites had to undergo severe affliction in Egypt as Pharaoh's slaves (Exo. 1:8-22).

Redemption

God in His mercy and compassion raised Moses to redeem the people and lead them to the Land of Canaan. God delivered them from the destroyer and led them to the Canaan with his mighty power. Let's full believe in the promises of God and live in abundance.

Questions

1. The span of the Dispensation of the Promise. How suitable is its name?
2. What are the purposes of God behind the selection of Abraham?
3. What are the promises of God given to Abraham and his descendants?
4. What were the norms of God about men/women during the dispensation of promise?
5. 'The descendants of Abraham failed in the test during the dispensation of promise'. Prove.
6. Explain the judgment and redemption of people during the dispensation of promise.