*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

May 30 – June 4

*Walking with Abraham*

**Monday, May 30 Genesis 12:1-3**

*“…go to the land that I will show you”*

 In verse 1, we are introduced to the central theme of the story of Abram: the Lord calls Abram to go where he is sent and to trust in God’s promises. For Abram, this will mean leaving behind all that he has known and all that is familiar. He will travel to a strange land where he will be a foreigner. He will be vulnerable to many dangers and must rely on the Lord’s provision. Yet, the Lord promises that he will guide Abram and his family. He will bless Abram, and Abram will be a blessing to others.

 Though our destination differs from Abram’s, the content of our call is the same. Like Abram, we are also called to “go to the land that I will show you.” Like Abram, we will find ourselves in places of vulnerability- unsure of the path before us. To live as a foreigner in this world requires that we, too, trust in the promises of God. These promises sustain and equip us to do the work the Lord has given to us. As we hold on to these promises, the Lord blesses his church and blesses others through it. The story of Abram is also our story.

*Lord, let me respond to your call and trust in your promises. Amen.*

**Tuesday, May 31 Genesis 12:4-6**

*“Abram departed as the LORD had instructed”*

 Having received the command to leave his homeland, Abram gathers his belongings and family, and travels a great distance to an unknown land. At the age of 75, Abram is starting over. Can you imagine? The travel would have been difficult and slow. There would have been ample opportunity to doubt the successful completion of this journey. Furthermore, when Abram reaches Canaan, he discovers that it is already occupied by a hostile people. In the face of these challenges, Abram must trust that God will guide his path.

 Trusting in the Lord is like travelling to Canaan. Starting over with God, regardless of how old you are, is never easy. Yet, the journey begins with taking the first step. Is Abram aware of how the Lord will address each obstacle in his journey? Are we? Of course not! But Abram chooses to depart as instructed by the Lord. In the words of Christian philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, he “ventures a decisive act.” If we are to walk our own journey, we must take our first step as well.

*Give me the courage, Lord, to take the first step on my journey with you. Amen.*

**Wednesday, June 1 Genesis 12:7-9**

*“…and he worshiped the Lord”*

 Having discovered the land occupied by the Canaanites, the Lord reassures Abram that he will give the land to Abram’s descendants. Here, again, God points Abram to his promises. While the content of the promise is important, the means by which it will come to pass is greater still: “*I will give* this land to your descendants.” The fulfilment of the promise will come to pass not by Abram’s efforts but by the Lord’s grace. God is the One who will keep the promise. Abram is the blessed recipient of God’s gracious provision.

 In grateful response to the Lord’s promises, Abram- on two occasions in a relatively short passage- builds an altar and worships God. This is the appropriate response of those who are recipients of God’s grace and love. Worship is living, breathing, joyful gratitude. Worship is a public recognition that God is good and faithful to his people. Abram worships the Lord not out of obligation, but out of a joyful recognition that God is present and active in his life. As we recognize the Lord’s presence in our own lives, we ought to seek ways to joyfully worship him.

*Lord, in joy and gratitude I worship you, the living God who shows grace and love to me. Amen.*

*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

May 30 – June 4

*Walking with Abraham*

**Thursday, June 2 Genesis 12:10-14**

*“So please tell them you are my sister”*

 Leaving the land of Canaan promised to him by God, Abram travels south into Egypt where he lives as a “foreigner”. Egypt is a powerful nation, and Abram is clearly intimidated. Rather than trusting in God’s promises, Abram relies upon his own ingenuity and presents his wife, Sarai, as his sister. Abram’s hope is that the Egyptians will “spare my life and treat me well” because of her beauty. Thus, Abram compromises his trust in God’s promises, and as a result, Sarai becomes a pawn- a survival tactic- in Abram’s plot to protect himself and his property.

 When faced with the powers of this world, it is easy to forget what God has promised and turn to our own faculties and logic. We see a world marked by chaos and confusion, and we often add to this chaos and confusion through our actions, thoughts, and words. However, these attempts at self-preservation rarely result in anything but more brokenness. As in the case of Abram, the result is often the manipulation and exploitation of others. As followers of Christ, deception is never the path to follow; we must choose to place ourselves in God’s care.

*When faced with the powers of this world, help me, Lord, to trust in you and not myself. Amen.*

**Friday, June 3 Exodus 20:16**

*“You must not testify falsely against your neighbor”*

 In verses 10-14, Abram has convinced the Egyptians that Sarai is his sister, not his wife. In doing so, Abram has sown a falsehood that will bear bitter fruit. Certainly, the lie will have immediate repercussions for Sarai; however, one might also argue that this small lie is the first brick in a shaky foundation upon which the history of Israel and Egypt will be built. Abram’s deception of Pharoah is the first in a line of corrupted relationships that leads all the way to Pharoah and Moses in Exodus.

 In Exodus 20:16, the Lord commands the Israelites to reject false witness and stand in truth. We live in a world in which lies and the truth are often intermingled and difficult to distinguish between one another. The ninth commandment is a reminder that the Christian life is lived in truth. As followers of Christ, our words and actions are rooted in God’s truth, and we are called to witness to this truth every day. Doing so encourages healthy relationships of trust, not deceit. These relationships are God’s desire for our lives.

*Lord, help me to live in your truth and reject a life of lies. Amen.*

**Saturday, June 4 Genesis 12:15-20**

*“Why didn’t you tell me she was your wife”*

 In verses 15-20, the full consequences of Abram’s deception are realized. Pharoah and the Egyptians suffer a plague, and Pharoah confronts Abram. Twice (verses 18 and 19), Pharoah asks Abram the question, “Why?” Why has Abram chosen deception as opposed to the truth? Interestingly, the writer of Genesis does not record a response from Abram. No answer can justify the lie and the consequent exploitation of Sarai. Abram remains silent, the writer recognizing that the deception is best explained by turning to the root of all falsehood: a sinful heart.

 In the face of the brokenness of the world, we often want to ask the same question: Why? How did we get here? Who is to blame? Like Pharoah, we see the corruption around us and desire an explanation. Yet, we are best served to do as the writer of Genesis: examine ourselves. Like Abram, we also live out falsehoods in many areas of our lives. These spring forth from a heart that has turned from the Lord. If we are to live in truth, we must seek the grace of God and live in his truth.

*By the power of your Spirit, Lord, let me examine my heart for lies and live in your truth. Amen.*