*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

June 27 – July 2

*Walking with Abraham*

**Monday, June 27 Genesis 15:1-3**

*“But Abram replied…”*

 In verse 1, God says to Abram, “Do not be afraid.” These are words of comfort. They are an assurance to Abram that God is with him, and he has nothing to fear. Such words ought to be met with a response of gratitude. We might expect Abram to fall to his knees, shouting to the Lord, “Thank you! Thank you for all your good gifts.” However, this is not Abram’s response. Abram responds as we often do when encouraged by the Lord to put away our fears: he doubts. He doubts whether God will fulfill his promises, and in doing so, he allows his fear to run rampant.

 Each one of us has fears that we carry with us every day. Each time we engage these fears, we do so in stark opposition to what God has said to us: *Do not be afraid*. Though fear is a natural emotion, living in constant fear is not God’s desire for our lives. His will is that we live in the freedom of his loving providence. Instead of doubt, we ought to choose to hold to his words of assurance spoken through Jesus Christ and fulfilled through the power of his Spirit. Through faith in him, we find our comfort.

*Lord, when faced with my fears, let me find my comfort in you. Amen.*

**Tuesday, June 28 Genesis 15:4-6**

*“The Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith”*

 The word *righteous* is used in many different ways. Someone is deemed *self-righteous* when she appears to flaunt her moral superiority in front of everyone else. When a surfer catches a big wave and impresses those watching, he is said to be a *righteous dude*. With so many different uses, it can be hard to know exactly what it means to be righteous.

 To be a righteous follower of Christ has nothing to do with personal morality or big wave surfing; to be righteous before God is to know and trust him. In verse 6, Abram trusts that what God speaks will come to pass. He has faith that God will keep his promises.

 For many of us, we find that trusting the Lord is far more difficult than seeking to earn our favor with him. We consider all the ways that we might impress God or demonstrate an inner holiness that he finds pleasing. Verse 6 reminds us that God is pleased by a trusting heart. We need not earn our way into God’s favor; he is pleased when we give our lives to him.

*Lord, let me be righteous before you through faith. Amen.*

**Wednesday, June 29 Genesis 15:7-11**

*“I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans”*

 Humans are forgetful creatures. When I am ill, all I can think about is how wonderful it will be when I’m feeling better again. Tossing and turning with a fever and sore throat, all I want is to be healthy. Yet, it only takes a few days of feeling like my old self for me to forget just how grateful I should be. I return to taking my health for granted until the next time I’m feverish and miserable.

 Sometimes we need to be reminded of who God is so that we don’t take for granted his love and mercy in our lives. In verse 7, God reminds Abram what he has done for his family; the Lord has led Abram out of Ur and into a land promised to him. God encourages Abram to remember all that the Lord has done for him and his family.

 Do you need to be reminded of what God has done for you? It is easy to forget those moments when God has demonstrated his great faithfulness. However, remembering God’s love is an important part of our daily worship of him. By taking the time to reflect on all that he has done for us, we are better able to live lives of gratitude to him.

*Lord, help me to remember your faithfulness so that I may live a life of gratitude. Amen.*

*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

June 27 – July 2

*Walking with Abraham*

**Thursday, June 30 Luke 22:14-20**

*“This cup is the new covenant between God and his people”*

 In Genesis 15, God establishes his covenant with Abram and his descendants. The covenant is God’s unbreakable commitment to be the God of Abram and his family. These aren’t merely words spoken by God; he makes these promises a part of his very being. From this moment forward, God cannot be known apart from his relationship with his people.

 For many of us, the covenant might seem a bit antiquated. What does an ancient agreement between Abram and God have to do with me? The answer: everything! The covenant established between God and Abram serves as the foundation of the relationship we share with God. God’s promises to each of us are rooted in his covenant with Abram.

 In Luke 22, Jesus tells his disciples that God is establishing a new covenant through his death and resurrection. While this covenant in Christ is new, it does not negate the old; the new fulfills the old. Through his redeeming grace, we return to the relationship he wills for each of us, a relationship that finds its beginnings in Genesis 15. As God’s people, covenant is a central part of our relationship with him.

*Lord, thank you for establishing your covenant of grace. Amen.*

**Friday, July 1 Genesis 15:12-21**

*“As the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep”*

 In ancient Semitic culture, two parties made a covenant by announcing their commitment to one another and then walking between two lines of butchered animals (i.e. verses 9-10). The message intended was thus: “If I break this covenant, let it be done to me as has been done to these animals.” By walking through the animals, both parties acknowledged the seriousness of the promise they were making to one another. This was a matter of life and death.

 It is very interesting to note that Abram is asleep when God (“a smoking firepot and a flaming torch”) passes between the halved animals. Such behavior would have been striking to an ancient reader of Genesis familiar with the covenant ceremony. It’s as if the writer of Genesis is making an important observation: God alone is the one who establishes, keeps, and upholds the covenant.

 This is good news for each of us. Because of our sin, we are incapable of upholding our end of the covenant. As such, we are deserving of death. However, as both human and divine, Jesus fulfills the covenant on our behalf. Through him the promise is kept.

*Thank you, Lord, for keeping your covenant in Christ. Amen.*

**Saturday, July 2 Hebrews 13:20-21**

*“…and ratified an eternal covenant with his blood”*

 As noted throughout this week, Genesis 15 is central to our understanding of the relationship we have with the Lord. The covenant established with Abram and fulfilled in Jesus Christ serves as the foundation of our call to be God’s people and the promises he has made to each of us. As Hebrews 13 declares, this covenant is an “eternal” covenant in Christ. For all eternity, God has promised that he will by our God and we will be his people. To God be the glory!

 In the busyness of our daily lives, it is easy to forget that we belong to this covenant. When we forget the nature of the covenant that God has established with us, we also lose sight of our standing before him. We begin to place our trust and worth in things that have no allegiance to us whatsoever. We make covenants with parties that cannot keep the promises they make. As the people of God, let us place our trust in him, holding to the covenant established in Christ.

*Lord, I will remember your covenant and trust in your love. Amen.*