



Lenten Reflection for Thursday, April 7th

Jane Miller

You can listen to the reading and reflection by clicking [here](#).

Genesis 17:3 - 9

Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him,

“As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.

I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding; and I will be their God.” God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations.

The first time I read this passage it reminded me of a work email- “God wants Abraham and his descendants to do what, exactly? And for how long?” “Forever” has to be one of the heaviest words in the English language, and “perpetual” and “everlasting” carry that same weight. Here, they’re used by God, who can mean them literally in a way no human can. Who wouldn’t find that a little intimidating, no matter what the message?

I hope Abraham took a deep breath as he was hearing what God had to say, because God is telling him something both great and good. Abraham will have many descendants, including kings, and those descendants will make up many nations. All of them will have a place to live, in Canaan, and God will always be there for them. What exactly do Abraham and his progeny have to do? Well, you have to keep reading to find out.

I also hope that Abraham, after finding out the details of the covenant that God described, was able to slow down and take his part of it day by day. I'm sure this wasn't easy. I find trying to do that so important and so challenging even for the most ordinary things in my life. Abraham was told directly by God what he needed to do. We don't often get that kind of clarity, or the personalized backstop of a specific covenant with God. Or, if we do, it's easy to overlook it.

But if we keep asking what God wants from us, wants for us, if we keep looking and listening and praying for wisdom on those questions, we can find our own covenant with God and help other people find theirs. None of us may be as famous as Abraham, but if and when we find that covenant we can uphold it, "living faithfully a hidden life" one day at a time.



Jane Miller has been attending Holy Apostles since January 2022. Originally from southeastern Virginia, she currently works for the City of New York and lives in Windsor Terrace.