



LIFEGROUPS

Series: *The Long Story Short*
Message: *Four Promises*

Scripture: *Genesis 15*

**Date: February 29-March 1,
2020**

—[LET'S START]—

Pastor Dale began his sermon by recounting the tragic tale of a man who lost his wife in a tragic accident. When a friend asked the man what he feared most, the man's answer was "being alone." We have all had seasons in our life that felt lonelier than others. What was the loneliest season of your life?

—[LET'S TALK]—

1. **GRATITUDE AND PRAYER:** What happened last week for which you are thankful? What challenges do you see in your life? Your family? The World? Thank God for the beautiful ways that He has been at work. Pray for the challenges that those in your group are currently facing.
2. The Nevi'im section of the Hebrew Old Testament begins with the story of Joshua. Read Joshua 9:14. What bad habit did the people of Israel have? How common is this in our lives? What happens when we fall into the same trap?
3. Think through the characters of the Old Testaments from Joshua through the time of the Babylonian captivity. What are some of the common traits of people like Joshua, the line of judges, priests and prophets, and the line of Kings beginning with Kings Saul, David, and Solomon?
4. Read Daniel 1. This chapter of the Bible tells the story of some of the young men who were taken from Israel into captivity in Babylon. How do you think they felt? What does this passage teach us about God? What does it teach us about human beings? What does it teach us about adversity?
5. When the Old Testament ends, the Messiah hasn't yet come. There were probably some who asked. "Does God keep his promises?" Have you ever felt that way? What was going on? How have you seen God prove his faithfulness in your life?
6. What is a covenant? What were some of the biblical Covenants that God made with his people?
7. Tim Keller says that in a covenant relationship two people look at each other and say, "I will be what I should be, whether you are being who you should be or not." How does this help us understand what God has done for us?

—[LET'S ACT]—

The Bible Project has a ton of downloadable content. This week we want to encourage you to download and study their study guide for the Covenants. You can find the study guide at:

<https://bibleproject.com/other-resources/study-notes/themes/>. Take some time in the next week to work through this content on your own. Celebrate the fact that we have a promise-keeping God.

—[SERMON REVIEW]—

- It is so important to know the story of the Bible. It gives us hope that ultimately we are not alone. That what appears senseless has meaning. That everything does turn out good in the end.
- The Tanak is made up of three parts: The Torah, Nevi'im and the Ketuvim. Each part is made up of different books of the OT.
- The Nevi'im section of the Hebrew Old Testament begins with the story of Joshua!
- Joshua was a good but imperfect leader who had a bad habit of acting before thinking things through all the way.
- After Joshua came a whole line of judges, kings, priests and prophets who did not consult God. In fact, some just forgot about him altogether and took up with all kinds of idols, pagan worship and practices. There were a few who tried to lead reforms but even they made spiritual snafu's. As great a hero as David was, he ended up making a mess out of his life and his son Solomon, who was one of the wisest guys alive, became a fool.
- The Ketuvim section of the Hebrew Old Testament introduces us to the timeline in Israel that happened after Jerusalem was ransacked and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon. The people felt abandoned by God, utterly alone, in a foreign land surrounded by foreign gods.
- In the Ketuvim we see that there is hope that someday God will send a redeemer to make Israel and the Gentiles right with God. The Psalms call him the Righteous One, the promised King. Daniel the prophet conveys the visions God gave him that while the world will become more evil, a day will come when God's Savior will conquer all evil and establish his kingdom on earth in partnership with human kind. The Ketuvim also contains scrolls of the Proverbs offering godly advice on how to live. It features stories like that of Esther where we see that hope and salvation can come from even the weakest person who trusts God. It contains writings like that of laments which mourns the human condition and the ravages of sin. Interlaced in all these stories is the promise of hope.
- The Ketuvim ends with Chronicles! These writings are summaries of God's work from the beginning to the captivity. They are reminders of what went wrong and the inability of humans to fix it.
- In the Bible, particularly in the OT, the word that is used to describe God's promises is COVENANT! There are around seven major covenants that God makes in the Bible.

- Tim Keller says that in a covenant relationship two people look and say, “I will be what I should be, whether you are being who you should be or not. In a covenant both people have to say that!”
- God always keeps his promises. And he knew that we could not, so when the time was right and it had been revealed that there was no way even the best of us could keep the promise of obedience God tore his son apart and laid him on the cross for our sins. He did that for you and He did it for me.
- The story of the Old Testament is God’s story of preparing to rescue you from the cruelty of sin and evil.

—[NOTES]—
