

Genesis 12-21—Abraham, the Father of Many

At age 75 God calls Abraham to go to a land that God will show him and make him a great nation
As years pass and while Abraham has no children, God promises as many descendents as stars
When Abraham is 99, God makes a covenant with Abraham and his many descendents
God promises to give his wife Sarah a child—Sarah is 90 years old and beyond child bearing age
When Abraham was 100 and Sarah 90, their son Isaac was born—25 years after the promise

Numbers 13—Twelve Spies go into Canaan

10 said the land is wonderful, but full of giants and impossible for us to take
2 said "Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it."
But the people were afraid and chose to follow the 10 to God's great displeasure

Judges 7-8—Gideon and the Midianites

32,000 soldiers gather in Gideon's army
God says Gideon he has too many soldiers and sends away 10,000
God says there are still too many and all but 300 left
With 300, they didn't even look like an army, but they defeated the Midianites by God's power

1 Kings 18—Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah vs. Elijah, a prophet of the Lord God
850 prophets begged their gods to send fire to light the altar
Elijah prepared his altar and flooded it with water 3 times, prayed to God, and the fire came

2 Kings 4—Elisha and the Widow's Oil

A widow with 2 small boys is losing her children to slavery and comes to Elisha for help
Elisha asks her, "Tell me, what do you have in the house?" She tells him she only has a jar of oil
Elisha tells her to gather many jars and pour oil into them, which she did until all were full
Elisha said to sell the oil and pay the debts, then live on the rest

Matthew 14, Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6—Feeding a Large Crowd—5000 men plus women and children

When the disciples say it is late and to send the people away so they can buy food
Jesus tells them to give them something to eat—What do you have? How much bread?
The disciples search the crowd and all they have are 5 loaves and 2 fish
Jesus blessed what they did have and there was more than enough for everyone—12 baskets left

Matthew 15, Mark 7—Feeding a Large Crowd—4000 men plus women and children

This time Jesus wants to feed the crowd that has been with him for 3 days and asks the disciples
They ask where they can get enough food to feed this large a crowd
Jesus asks how much bread they have and they answer 7 loaves and a few small fish
Jesus blessed what they did have and there was more than enough for everyone—7 baskets left

John 11—Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

Mary and Martha send word to Jesus that Lazarus is very ill, but Jesus waits 2 days before going
Jesus said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory..."
When Jesus and the disciples finally arrive, Lazarus is dead
Even though he has been in the tomb 4 days, Jesus calls him to come forth and live
He came out bound in death cloths, which the people removed

2 Corinthians 12—God's Strength and Our Weakness

Paul has a "thorn in his flesh" which he asks God to remove—3 times he asked
God said no... "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness."

Clearly God is not bound by our human understanding of what is required to move forward

Rarely does God match our expectation

It often takes longer and is done with less!

Yet when we TRUST God—God is glorified and it is done God's way

We look around and say we aren't enough—and humanly that's true

But in God—we are enough!

God isn't dependent on the world system of bigger and better

What does it take for us to live this way?

1. TRUST
2. Willingness to wait
3. Courage to follow
4. Noticing and letting God use what is in your hand...

What is in your hand?

Abraham—he was not asked to do anything special—it was all God

Moses—God asked "what is in your hand?" and God used Moses' staff

Widow—Elisha blessed the only thing she had, a jar of oil

Feeding of the 5,000 and 4,000—Jesus blesses a few loaves of bread and fish

Peter and John heal the beggar—"I have no money, but what I have I give you"

What do you have in your hand?

NOT—what do you need? which is our usual question

We so easily focus on our need and what we lack that we miss what we have

What do we have? Now? As a community gathered at North Seattle Friends Church?

The full presence of God

Faithful community

Quaker

We can Listen and know God and know way forward!

Often we are so aware of our lack that we don't see what we do have

So, I want us to take time to name what we do have!

First some reminders...

Relax—being a non-anxious presence makes space for people

The Kingdom of God is never at risk and as Kingdom people we're not at risk—even if we die

Be real and authentic—the evidence is in our story and experience

We can't use a weakness—we can only use a strength so don't worry about our weaknesses

Let's name what is in the hands of our community at North Seattle Friends Church...