

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY!

Thank you for joining us today. This is a short note to let you know that we know what you are thinking: It is hot and cramped in this room. We want to acknowledge with you that yes, the front room is full, the kids rooms are full, and it can get warm. We are working on alleviating this good problem as we look for a future permanent home that Element can move into that will be larger and have some proper Air Conditioning. There is a lot that goes into the process of Element having a permanent home, but we hope that today you are first drawn to Jesus before you are overwhelmed by anything else. If you would like a service that has open seats (and is cooler), you are invited to our 8:15am service. Please understand that all of these "challenges" are because of our love for Jesus and people, we hope you will stay as we work to make more room for you to be part of the good thing Jesus is doing here.

- The Element Team

UPCOMING EVENTS:

BAPTISMS

June 4th at 1pm

Lunch: Taco Salad Bar

Last names bring:

A-L: Desserts M-Z: Taco/Salad Toppings

Sign up TODAY if you'd like to be baptized,
or would like more information.

JOIN OUR WEEKLY EMAIL

Stay up to date in your inbox!

Sign up at ourelement.org or email
connect@ourelement.org and say, "Join mailing list"

MEN'S BREAKFAST & BBQ

- BBQ & Arcade Game Fun at the Keinert's Saturday June 10

RSVP required at moe@ourelement.org.



PART 2 WHAT! — IN THE — WORLD?

GENESIS 15:17
GENESIS 15:1-18
HEBREWS 9:22

ISAIAH 53:12
1 PETER 3:18
1 PETER 2:24

SIX: SMOKING POT & FLAMING TORCHES

5/28/2017

SIX: SMOKING POT & FLAMING TORCHES

In our current [What in the World Part 2](#) series, we are answering questions you had asked us at the end of last year. This is week 6, and this was the question: *In Genesis 15:17 it says that a smoking fire pot and flaming torch passed between the halves of the animals Abraham cut in half at God's direction. What is the significance of the fire pot and torch moving between the halves?* It's a good question because our present understanding of covenant and redemption takes shape during this moment.

Have you ever made a deal with someone and it did not work out the way you intended? What happened and how did you feel?

What comes to mind when you hear the term, "Let's cut a deal?"

This passage in Scripture illustrates a fairly common custom in the ancient Middle East of learning to trust someone else when there weren't laws to enforce an agreement. Some scholars today believe that the cutting of animals in half and walking between them is where the term "cut a deal" might have first originated. When people entered into a business relationship with one another they cut animals in half and walked between them to show they were serious about honoring their commitment, which they would call a "covenant."

How do you understand covenant?

What are some places we use the word covenant today?

There were two kinds of covenants in the ancient world:

Unilateral covenant. Made between a more powerful party and a less powerful party,

Bilateral covenant. Made between equal parties (trading partners and the like).

When God enters into a covenant with us, it is a unilateral covenant. God, the more powerful party, makes a declaration to fulfill His promises to Abraham and his descendants (us).

Read Genesis 15:1-18. What stands out to you?

This passage is about covenant; a commitment or promise that God makes to Abraham. This unilateral covenant, between God and man, it is also an unconditional covenant, where God says He will fulfill it no matter what. God commands Abraham to get the animals. Abraham cuts them in half without any direction from God because it was a normal custom in the ancient world, then, instead of having Abraham walk through the isle of cut animals, God Himself walks through alone.

Walking through the cut animals states the intention of, "May I become like these animals if I fail to uphold my end of the covenant." God is declaring His intention to fulfill His promises to Abraham and his descendants; He is good for what He has promised. He commits himself to the process of reconciliation and redemption despite the fact that Abraham is unable to offer anything meaningful to God.

Why do you think God "covenants" with us?

Why is God's covenant with us important?

What is your understanding of the smoking fire pot?

To answer this What in the World question, this what is called a "theophany." A theophany is when God shows up in person in the Old Testament; when this happens it is widely accepted that Jesus is the one showing up. It means that Jesus appeared up in smoke and flame and passed through the pieces Himself. Jesus arrives in smoke and flame in the Exodus from Egypt, at Mount Sinai, when God's presence comes into His tent while the Israelites are wandering in the desert, when the Israelites build God's temple, and even at Pentecost in the New Testament. We see Jesus promise Himself for man's salvation and redemption.

What does God promise to us?

Where do you struggle to trust in God's promise to us?

Why do you think God chooses to covenant with us?

Does God get anything out of the covenant?

God gets to continue to show His Glory and His good. God gets to bless, God gets to love, God gets to pour out all the affection and warmth and care of His infinite heart. God is free to do whatever He wanted, but He chose to bind Himself, restrict Himself, to the covenant because of His great love.