

AVELEIGH'S YEAR OF THE BIBLE January 14, 2018
Sermon, HAGER; IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE
Texts 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 p.1239 & Genesis 21:19 p.20

"We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed." 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (NLT)

The Uncomfortable Story of Hagar

- **THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S WAYS ARE BEYOND OUR COMPREHENSION**

"Just as you cannot understand the path of the wind or the mystery of a tiny baby growing in its mother's womb, so you cannot understand the activity of God, who does all things."
Ecclesiastes 11:5 (NLT)

**IN HIS LOVING GRACE, GOD WORKS OUT HIS SUPREME PURPOSE WITHIN
AND IN SPITE OF OUR CORRUPT HUMAN NATURE.**

When my life doesn't make sense, I will . . .

1. REMEMBER GOD'S PROMISES

"Then he added, 'I will give you more descendants than you can count.' Genesis 16:10 (NLT)

"We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. . ."

"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them." Romans 8:28 (NLT)

2. RELY ON GOD'S PLAN

*"The angel of the Lord said to her, 'Return to your mistress, and submit to her authority.'"**
Genesis 16:9 (NLT)

- My way will seem to make sense, but will just create more trouble

"There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death."
Proverbs 14:12 (NLT)

". . . we are perplexed, but not driven to despair."

- God's way may not make sense in the moment, but..... I know His plans are good and full of hope.

"'For I know the plans I have for you,' says the Lord. ' They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.'" Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT)

3. RECOGNIZE GOD'S PROVISION

"Then God opened Hagar's eyes, and she saw a well full of water. She quickly filled her water container and gave the boy a drink." Genesis 21:19 (NLT)

God's provision is exactly what we need, exactly when we need it.

"We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God"

"And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19 (NLT)

4. REST IN GOD'S PRESENCE

"Thereafter, Hagar used another name to refer to the Lord, who had spoken to her. She said, 'You are the God who sees me. . .'" Genesis 16:13 (NLT)

"We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed."

"Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5 (NLT)

- In His presence we find . . .
peace in the midst of the chaos
perspective that overshadows the questions
power to overcome the pressures, expectations, and responsibilities

Conclusion: BECAUSE IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE DOESN'T MEAN IT'S SENCELESS.

Lord, I thank you so very much for your Word today. And, Lord, there are a lot of things in our life, there are a lot of things in our world that don't make sense. But what we do know, Lord, is that you love us. What we do know, Lord, is that you do have a grand purpose for our lives. And I pray, Lord, that you'd help us every single day to remember that regardless of the pain that we carry, regardless of these unfair scars that we have to deal with and the weight and the things that we just don't understand, all the things that don't make sense, we know, Lord, that it's not senseless because our life is in your hands. We know, Lord, that you are hurt when we are hurt. We know that you hear us. We know that you are present with us. We know, Lord, that you are the God who rescues us. So today, we do, we rest in your presence. And we ask you to give us strength. Help us to connect with you, Lord, so that we can have what's necessary to accomplish the purpose that you have for us. In your name we pray. Amen.

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Leader: Winds blow, rains fall, storms rage,

People: God is our strength and sanctuary.

Leader: Floods rise, waves batter, wars ravage,

People: God is our strength and sanctuary.

Leader: Violence threatens, hunger abounds, diseases flourish,

People: God is our strength and sanctuary.

All: We are safe here in this Spirit place, for God's sustaining and nourishing Spirit surrounds and affirms us.

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image, through Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. Amen.