

Notes on talk given by Lyndall Bywater to St Andrew's URC, Canterbury

Sue Marsh felt that word for today was "Praise the Lord!"

Reading: Gen 13.14-18 and Josh 14.6-15; 15.13-19

Lyndall said that she has been constantly singing *The Long and Winding Road* by Paul McCartney – felt it was relevant to this church

St Andrew's

- something particular in the purposes of God
- great excitement across the city's churches when St Andrew's given this building in 2000-2001

Gateways

- places of authority, key decisions are made here
- The Riding Gate (where St Andrew's is now situated) – strategic position, immensely promising (asked Lyndall about the Riding Gate after the service and learnt that it has been very significant in the history of this city, being the place where royalty would come into the city, and the main connection between the city and London)

Abraham to Caleb: where we (St Andrew's) are now

- Things don't happen fast in Canterbury
- St Andrew's coming into Caleb season
- "Look up from where you are"

Hills and Plains

Abraham and Lot part ways and Abraham gives Lot the choice of land. Lot chooses the plains: fertile land, cities; Abraham is left with the hills: the hard place, difficult, unknown quantity, inhabited by other tribes. *But*, this is the context in which God tells Abraham to "Look up"

- Abraham sees more land from the hills than he would have done on the plain: he got the hard place, but he also got the *view*
- St Andrew's have occupied the most difficult, contested place (see Lyndall's talk to St Andrew's on Abraham and the wells)
- Lyndall said that she has never failed to find a (spiritual) view here

Hebron

Native name: *Kirjath Arba*, after the king of the Anakim, a race of giants

- Abraham never expected to be given the land himself, but to his descendents
- Caleb went into Canaan as part of the spying party for Moses. By this time, Hebron had become even more difficult, occupied by three giants

- Caleb and Joshua trust God to give them the land (Num 13.30; 14.6-9)
- Because Caleb followed God whole-heartedly, God promises Caleb the land where he went (Num 14.24)
- Forty-five years later Caleb goes to Joshua and claims the promise

Need to move from Abraham to Caleb

- Abraham: “camping in the vision”
- Caleb: time to action, to take some land
- Stepping into the promise can be scary: fear of disappointment, fear of ‘giants’
- Dispatching the giants and taking the land will be messy and probably not what you expected. Lyndall spoke about her “First order prayers”, things she has been praying for 10, 15 years. She has seen the answer to one and explained that it was not how she imagined it when she started praying. This is because God is more creative and does things better than we can imagine. She also said again that things happen very slowly in Canterbury
- By the time Caleb gets to Hebron it has become a city: is it what he imagined?
- Joshua 14.15 ‘Then the land had rest from war.’ – when the land was in the right hands, it had rest from war
- Have to be prepared to push into things and not be surprised of its being very different to what we expect, or even want; but it will be right and what God wants

Caleb’s daughter (Josh 15.18-19)

- Asked for the spring *and* the overflow – asked for more, asked for *abundance*
- This meant more land to look after
- When young people start asking for big things...
- Youth work – prophetic direction
- St Andrew’s has possibly accommodated more youth work than any other church in this city. Be aware: are they beginning to ask for overflow? When young people start asking for the overflow, don’t say no
- There is something going on in this church with young people – people are watching this place with anticipation
- The Caleb time for St Andrew’s now
- Don’t be afraid: you won’t be disappointed
- Partly because of what God does with this church, this city will have rest from war

Lyndall’s prayer for St Andrew’s

- Thanksgiving for St Andrew’s, for this courageous community
- For a Caleb anointing
- Grace to believe – without seeking to design it ourselves
- Strength
- Rest from war