

Living in Limbo

Study Guide

This guide is designed to be used with the Living in Limbo Lectionary. The chart on the next two pages includes the names of the individuals whose words and experiences are used in the lectionary. The notes below describe how to use the chart to enhance your listening and lifting.

Persons & Passages

The names of the individuals are listed here and passages where you can read about their experiences. Feel free also to explore other passages either in the Old Testament or the New (Hebrews 11, for example) that may be relevant.

Length of Limbo

How long did each individual's period of uncertainty or waiting last?: In order to answer this question, you may need to do some math, check another resource, or make some guesses.

What was Handled Well

While they were living in limbo, what did they do well? How did they handle uncertainty well? Why?: In order to answer these questions, you may need to read between the lines by referring to a New Testament passage or simply through speculation (in communication with the Master Teacher, of course). For example, Genesis doesn't tell us how Sarah felt when Abraham told her to lie and say she was his sister. 1 Peter, however, describes how she remained faithful to Yahweh not to mention her husband. She followed what today we know were unfair societal rules that required obedience to her husband, but at the same time she refused to be intimidated by his efforts to coerce her into doing something wrong. (See 1 Peter 3:5-6 in the Amplified version.)

What Wasn't Handled Well

What mistakes did they make while they were living in limbo? In what ways did they sinfully give in to the uncertainty? Why?: Again, this may require some reading between the lines. The passages tell us about wrong actions but not necessarily the deeper sins behind them. For example, was having a child an idol for Sarah, and later was she jealous of Hagar? Did Joseph brag about his dreams out of pride, or was something else going on? Were Moses and Esther's initial refusals to do what they were asked because of fear or possibly complacency?

My Lessons

In communication with the Master Teacher, what principles for living in limbo can you derive from each individual's experiences?: Be careful here not to go directly from experiences to application. Instead, look for broader principles that may guide us while living in limbo. For example, we don't need to adhere to the authority structures found in these individuals' societies, and Daniel's dietary requirements don't mean we need to hold ourselves and everyone around us to legalistic rules. Instead, two principles might read: 1) *Look for ways to comply with societal norms while glorifying Yahweh.* 2) *When a norm contradicts an essential, be gently and respectfully subversive (using wisdom and tact).*

Also keep in mind differences between our experiences and theirs because of Jesus. Daniel and his friends followed Old Testament law. We are free though we may choose to "eat" or not so as to protect someone or the Kingdom. (See 1 Corinthians 8 and the passage starting with 1 Peter 2:13.) Moses acted as a mediator between Yahweh and Israel. Jesus does that for us although our intercession before the throne for others may look something like the give and take between Yahweh and Moses.

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persons & passages	length of limbo	what was handled well	what wasn't handled well	my lessons
Sarah & Abraham <i>Genesis 11:27-25:11</i>				
Joseph <i>Genesis 37, 39-50</i>				

persons & passages	length of limbo	what was handled well	what wasn't handled well	my lessons
<p>Moses <i>Exodus 1-19 & 32-34</i> <i>Numbers 11-14 & 20</i> <i>Deuteronomy 29-34</i></p>				
<p>Esther <i>the book of Esther</i></p>				
<p>Daniel <i>the book of Daniel</i></p>				