

November 5, 2017

Created for Purpose
Genesis 15:1 – 16:16
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Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



GENESIS 15:6
ABRAM BELIEVED THE LORD, AND HE
CREDITED IT TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

In the passage this week we see God make His covenant with Abram promising him that he will be a great nation and that his descendants will number the stars in the sky. Abram simply believed and it was credited to him as righteousness. Abram was far from perfect. In the very next chapter he takes Hagar to try and bring about God's promise. But the covenant is not about Abraham; it is about God. God passes through the sacrifice without Abram. It is God's promise and God's covenant. All Abram has to do is believe and he is credited with righteousness. Then, because he believes, he does his best to serve the Lord even in the weakness of his flesh. God asks the same of us. We must simply have faith, and in faith attempt to serve God even in the weakness of our flesh.

Genesis 15-16 (NASB)

Abram Promised a Son

15 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying,

“Do not fear, Abram,
I am a shield to you;
Your reward shall be very great.”

²Abram said, “O Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³And Abram said, “Since You have given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir.” ⁴Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.” ⁵And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” ⁶Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. ⁷And He said to him, “I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it.” ⁸He said, “O Lord GOD, how may I know that I will possess it?” ⁹So He said to him, “Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” ¹⁰Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but

he did not cut the birds. ¹¹The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.

¹²Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror *and* great darkness fell upon him. ¹³God said to Abram, “Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. ¹⁴But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. ¹⁵As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete.”

¹⁷It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, *there appeared* a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. ¹⁸On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I have given this land,
From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:
¹⁹the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite ²⁰and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim ²¹and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite.”

Sarai and Hagar

16 Now Sarai, Abram's wife had borne him no *children*, and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar. ² So Sarai said to Abram, "Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing *children*. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I will obtain children through her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. ³ After Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife. ⁴ He went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight. ⁵ And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done me be upon you. I gave my maid into your arms, but when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her sight. May the LORD judge between you and me." ⁶ But Abram said to Sarai, "Behold, your maid is in your power; do to her what is good in your sight." So Sarai treated her harshly, and she fled from her presence.

⁷ Now the angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸ He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from and where are you going?" And she said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai." ⁹ Then the angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to

her authority." ¹⁰ Moreover, the angel of the LORD said to her, "I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be too many to count." ¹¹ The angel of the LORD said to her further,

"Behold, you are with child,
And you will bear a son;
And you shall call his name Ishmael,
Because the LORD has given heed to your affliction.

¹² "He will be a wild donkey of a man,
His hand *will be* against everyone,
And everyone's hand *will be* against him;
And he will live to the east of all his brothers."

¹³ Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, "You are a God who sees"; for she said, "Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?" ¹⁴ Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

¹⁵ So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. ¹⁶ Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him.

① EXAMINE His Word (Observation) (For personal preparation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the foregoing passage.

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?
5. What is emphasized?
6. Is there anything in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?
7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

② EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation) (For Community Group discussion)

What does God MEAN?

8. According to 15:6 what brought about Abram's righteousness?

9. Why was Abram so concerned with an heir?

10. Why did Abram cut the animals in half and lay them opposite each other?

11. Who are the Amorites in 15:16? Does God address them later in Scripture?

12. Why does Sarai give Hagar to Abram?

③ EMBRACE His Word (Application) (For Community Group discussion)
Why does this MATTER to me?

13. Abram is said to have faith that brings about righteousness. Yet he still doubts God and takes Hagar to become the mother of his child. When is it hard for you not to doubt God?

14. Consider the question above. Can we have a saving faith and still have doubts?

15. Abram's lack of faith causes chaos in his family. How has a lack of faith had a negative impact on you?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage

Write about what God wants you to **KNOW**, to **FEEL**, and to **DO**...

SERMON NOTES