

Lesson 8  
Study of Genesis  
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Disc 8



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**My Notes:**

Chapter 15 <24.37>

- The beginning of the idea of covenant
- I am your shield
- Hebrew word “magen” (shield)
- Same word is used to describe his refusal to accept the booty from his conquest, is also used to describe the announcement of great reward
- Abram's allies are called “belil berit”
- The structure and grammar of the Hebrew text ties one story to another
  - +Three separate words
  - +Modified in their vowel structure
  - +The reader will recognize the connections
- In Hebrew, these connections are intentional--they want you to see what happens in Chapter 15 is due to his character development from Chapter 14
- It is a result of Abram's loyalty, fidelity and humility that God comes to him in Chapter 15 to offer him what he did not accept from the human kings
- Gen 15:4 - And, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, This shall not be your heir; but he who shall come forth from your own bowels shall be your heir. (Hebrew World)

**Genesis 15:5** - And he brought him outside, and said, **Look now** toward heaven, and count the stars, if you are able to count them; and he said to him, So shall your seed be.

וַיּוֹצֵא אֹתוֹ הַחֲצוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר הִבְטֵנָּא הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וּסְפֹר הַכּוֹכָבִים אֲמֵ-תֹכֵל לְסַפֵּר אֹתָם  
וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ כֹּה יִהְיֶה יְרַעְךָ:

Va•yo•tzé o•to ha•chú•tza va•yó•mer ha•bet-na ha•sha•mái•ma oos•for ha•ko•cha•vim  
eem•tu•chal lis•por o•tam va•yó•mer lo ko yi•hi•yé zar•é•cha. (Hebrew World, **emphasis mine**)

- "-na" : habet-na

**Your Notes:**

-this only happens five (5) times in the entire scripture where "-na" is attached to a verb that is directly related to God's action

-What does "-na" mean?

-It changes it from a command to a request

-"Please, look"

-Why is this important?

-This also shows up later in Abraham's life:

Gen 22:2 - And he said, **Take now** your son,...

וַיֹּאמֶר קַח-נָא...

Va•yó•mer kach-na

-It was a request for Abraham to take Isaac for sacrifice

-Paul's quote about righteousness and salvation <not sure which specific verse he is referring to>

-The Genesis version of salvation is found right here!

-And Abraham believed in the Lord and the Lord counted it righteousness

-The fact that Abraham trusted God enough to cast his eyes up and look at the stars to believe what God said--He believed God's word

-He isn't righteous because he earned anything--it has nothing to do with meritorious work

-He is counted righteous because he believes what God said!

-Luther calls this "alien righteousness"

+It isn't righteousness that belongs to me--it is righteousness that is given to me from the outside

+This becomes foundational for everything Paul says about how righteousness operates

+The Gospel of Grace is built on this verse

+It shows up in the Prophets as, "the just shall live by faith"

-His belief is not an intellectual ascent

-The "-na" never gets translated into English!

-Paul knew the "-na" was in the text

-When Paul uses this in Romans, and in the Greek text, the "-na" is not there

-This then causes us to think it has something to do with "works"

-It has to do with voluntary attribution of trusting God and following through

-Adam has nothing to do with righteousness—he IS righteous

-Once I become righteous, then I have commands—I am

obligated

-Does my obedience have anything to do with me being righteous?—NO!

-Righteousness comes when I was not obedient!

-Once I am righteous, now the commands become obligations—this keeps my usefulness in front of God completely wide open

-The reason it is not translated is because from a translator's perspective, it is an added "marker" (like "et") at the end of a verb

-The translator simply translates the verb, and not the meaning of the marker

-Righteous = "tzedek"

-Tzedek is the idea of being in proper and right relationship

-The process of "remembering" is a process of "tzedek"

-Why does "teshuqah" (desire) destroy this relationship—why are they opposites?

+Teshuqah says "I" control the relationship

-Picture language: tzedekah (tzade, dalet, qoof, hey)

+hey: what comes from

+qoof: last, behind

+dalet: doorway, path

+tzade: hook

+“the pathway to what hooks you comes last”

+my desire doesn't rule me—this is what it means to be righteous!

-Righteousness is not a state of being that I receive once when I say the "sinner's prayer"

+If my desire is ruling me, I am out of relationship!

+In order to be in relationship, I have to practice "my desire coming last"

+This kicks "eternal salvation" out the door!

+Can I be saved if desire is not under control in my life?

+I can't be in relationship, how can I be saved?

-Paul picks this sentence out of Genesis to support for his doctrine of justification by faith

+see what's buried in here—Paul would know this

+Paul is not talking about intellectual ascent to faith, a set of propositions or a good set of doctrines

## Covenant

-We have talked about righteousness

-Gen 15:7 - *And he said to him, I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it. (Hebrew World)*

-This is similar to what God said to Israel coming out of Egypt  
+Who is reading this? Israel at Sinai

-This vocabulary connects the story to the audience who heard it first

-They are serving the same God who established righteousness prior to establishing the covenant

+The same is true with Israel: He brought them out of Egypt prior to giving them the covenant

-The vocabulary is connecting Israel with Abraham

-What is Abraham's concern: How shall he know?—There is no heir

-How does Abraham know to bring clean animals and how to properly cut them in half?

Genesis 15:12 - *And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a fear of great darkness fell upon him. (Hebrew World)*

-The covenant has nothing to do with Abraham

-After Abraham divided the animals, the next thing that would normally happen: both parties would walk through the animals

-By walking through the halved animals, you signify that if you break the covenant, you too will be halved—you die

-By Abraham being asleep, is there any possibility of the covenant ever being broken?—NO!

-As long as God lives, the covenant will never be broken: God made the covenant with Himself

-The result is that there is never a replacement of Israel with some other group that takes over this covenant

-Anyone who belongs to the family of Abraham is eternally in this covenant that God made

-Who is in the family of Abraham?

+Paul: Not all of Israel is Israel

+Not the children by natural birth

+The children by spiritual birth!

+Those who are “not hooked by their own desire”

+The covenant can never be replaced, it can only be guaranteed!

+The death and resurrection of Jesus is not the replacement of this covenant (it can't be replaced), it is the guarantee that the covenant will ultimately be fulfilled!

+Every covenant requires a sacrifice as its guarantee

+How will the covenant be fulfilled?—The New Heaven and the New Earth! Restoration.

-Genesis 15 begins to discuss some of the critical issues the

rest of the whole Bible rests on: righteousness, covenant

-It all drives us back to Genesis 3 & 4

+Without Gen 3 & 4, we don't understand what righteousness and covenant are all about—to return us to the original design; it's about restoration

-When we read what Jesus does—His authorized commentary on the Old Testament—is remind us of the original program

-Jesus' perspective of the Torah is commentary that reminds you of its original intent!

+This is what He is doing with the Pharisees: cleaning up their mistaken views of the Torah

+Reminding them of the original intent

+Jesus is causing us to think as an originalist

+It is about God's ultimate one and only perfect plan!

+The perfect plan put in place in the first chapter of Genesis, which we have been trying to return to ever since

+There isn't any new plan coming—like God is going to do it over again in a different way—it was perfect to begin with!

+This is why we should want to get back to the original!

## Chapter 16

-Where did Hagar come from?

+She was part of the “bride price” for Sarai from the Pharaoh

-Abram listened to Sarai

+Just like Adam listened to Eve

-God told Abram he would have an heir, so why is Abram listening to Sarai?

+She is the ezer, and her desire is coming first

+Abram is listening to her desire

-Don't confuse being credited as righteous with behaving righteously

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-Genesis 16:5 - *And Sarai said to Abram, My wrong be upon you; I have given my maid to your bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes; the Lord judge between me and you. (Hebrew World)*

-This was common practice in Semitic cultures, but it was out of the ordinary for a man who was promised by God to have an heir

-“You tell me the results you want, and I will figure out how to get the score”

-This is standard human practice

-Any means necessary to get to what God's will is, is endorsed

- in the action that says “the only thing that matters is the result”
- But God comes back and reminds us, “the only thing that matters is the method, not the end”
  - The end is guaranteed by God, what matters is that I accept God’s method of getting there
  - “My wrong be upon you”
  - This is the way it works when we don’t listen to the method and only pay attention to the result
  - This is Adam & Eve again
  - This time, the woman is doing the blaming
  - As a result of the total screw-up in the relationship, the man is the director, but he was never designed to do that
    - +When he acts in a role he wasn’t designed to do, it doesn’t work!
    - +Sarai abdicates her role as spiritual director (she doesn’t guide him into saying this isn’t what God wants)
    - +He accepts it because the roles are upside-down
    - +As a result, Sarai blames him for it
  - How does Abram respond to this?
    - +She is not saying she wants God to judge between the two of them
    - +She is really saying, “God curse you”
    - +“God will vindicate me, and see that it is your responsibility”
    - +Abram tells her to do whatever it takes to please her

#### Hagar fled

- This results in the first time a particular person who shows up several times in the Old Testament
- Nahum Sarna doesn’t deal with this very well, taking it from a Jewish perspective
- This particular person is not treated as an angel every time he shows up
- “and the angel of the Lord” – malach Adonai (YHVH)
- “bamidbar” – in the wilderness
  - +what is the root for this word?
  - +d’bar = word, to speak
  - +why does the word for wilderness come from the root word meaning “to speak”?
  - +is there a logical connection between these two words?
  - +in Hebrew, the word for “to speak” (verb) is related to the noun “wilderness”
  - +God speaks in the wilderness
  - +this is the place you can’t survive without Him!
- +you want to hear what God has to say, go where you

can't live without Him

- Wilderness means, uninhabitable by people
  - +you need food, water and protection from God
  - +the three things Israel received while in the wilderness
- When the first audience heard that God finds Hagar “bamidbar”, they knew exactly what it means
- The Angel of the Lord asks the two most important questions in Genesis:
  - +Where did you come from?
  - +Where are you going?
- Hagar only answers one question
- The same answer everyone answers: I am fleeing from my pain!
- The Angel never tells her where she is going, but he does tell her to go back
  - +running away from your pain is not the answer to your life
- Submit – why would she do this?
  - +God is going to do something with her (verse 10)
  - +it is your duty and in your self-interest
- The Angel provides hope – there is something better coming
- New Testament:
  - +Where else can we go? You have the words of eternal life!
  - +Peter: you have not suffered unto death
  - +Revelation is all about hope!
- The reward will come if she perseveres
  - +this theme is found in Genesis that is found throughout scripture
- Abram is given hope of an heir, but he does not persevere very well—he causes this problem with Hagar
- The Egyptian is the one who listens and obeys

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