



Lesson 9
Study of Genesis
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Disc 9

GRAFTED IN FELLOWSHIP
KING GEORGE

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My Notes:

Chapter 17

- The change of name
- Only a few people have their name changed by God
- Abraham and Sarah are two
- Jacob
- Isaac? No. Why?
 - +God named him in the first place
 - +Yitzchaq = laughter
 - +Sarah laughed to herself
 - +Everyday Sarah looks at Yitzchaq, she remembers that she laughed and lied to God

Circumcision

- Plays a major role in the sign of the covenant
- A fundamental issue of argument in the NT letters
- This is the first time we have an OT recounting of the obligation for circumcision
- Gen 17:9-10 - 9. And God said to Abraham, You shall keep my covenant therefore, you, and your seed after you in their generations. 10. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your seed after you; Every male child among you shall be circumcised.
- 9. Va•yó•mer Elohím el-Av•ra•hám ve•ata et-be•ri•ti tish•mor ata ve•zar•a•cha a•cha•ré•cha le•do•ro•tam. 10. Zot be•ri•ti ashér tish•me•ru bey•ni oo•vey•ne•chem oo•veyn zar•a•cha a•cha•ré•cha hi•mol la•chém kol•za•char. (Hebrew World)

- Does this mean that circumcision has to occur in order for me to be a recipient of alien righteousness?
 - +this is a command
 - +It follows that the covenant relationship that God establishes with Israel through Abraham
 - +This covenant is through God Himself, so it can never be broken
 - +So what is the point of saying, "This is my covenant"?
 - +The covenant is not between "me and you", it is with "Myself" (God)

Your Notes:

Yitzchaq = Isaac
("He laughs")

יצחק

tzade = 90
qoof = 100
What's left?
yod & chet (spells "chai" = life!)
Meaning: Only God can take a 90 year old and a 100 year old and bring life!

-So what is God talking about here?

+Don't forget the important words are the connectors

+Therefore: what is the "therefore" there for?

+What does keeping the covenant have to do with?

--Gen 17:4-8

+This is the covenant relationship between God and Himself

+This covenant has a beneficiary: Abraham (and his seed after him)

+How does the beneficiary behave to show that they are ready to accept it?

--You shall keep my commandments!

+How do we do this? Does it depend on Abraham keeping it? No!

+What depends on Abraham keeping them? The delivery of the benefits.

-The covenant is God's promise to Himself that He is going to do what He needs to bring this about

-Abraham has to be able to receive the benefits from this covenant

-It isn't the covenant that is at stake, it is the benefits that come as a result of it

-Abraham is to carry God's mark (being at the right place at the right time)

-Notice the text does not tell Abraham how to be circumcised

+This assumes he already knew how to circumcise

+This was a common practice

+When? At puberty

+Why? A rite of passage

+This is not why children are circumcised in Israel

+In Israel, they are 8 days old at circumcision

-Sarna: A pagan rite is reinterpreted as part of worship to God

+this removes any intimation of sexual preparedness

+the rite is transferred with a new meaning

+it is now about my obedience to worshipping God

-Why circumcision?

+no one sees it

+this mark is entirely private

+why there? What is the importance of cutting the foreskin off the penis?

+the covenant mark is a sign of ownership

+who owns it?

+God owns this particular part of the body, and He has control over what I do with it

+God owns the "life" that is represented by this organ

- +only two people who will see a circumcised penis: me and my wife
- +there is only one person who has absolute authority over it: (and it's not me)
- +it is the very thing that must be used in order for me to bring about the next generation who will worship God and fulfill the promise of "be fruitful and multiply"
- Was Adam circumcised? No. (and neither was Noah or anyone else prior to Abraham)
- Until this verse takes place, circumcision was not a mark of the covenant
- It is at this point that God says, "Now that you have been guaranteed a promise of the destiny of a great nation, now I want you to have a permanent mark of Who brings that about and why it is there."
- Circumcision of the heart
 - +the example is, we are circumcised in the flesh because of the assumption that Abraham is already right (in his heart)
 - +this is just the physical symbol of what has already happened in his heart
 - +we don't get physically circumcised in order to become spiritually circumcised
 - +I am spiritually circumcised in order that I might demonstrate it with physical circumcision
 - +just like baptism is a reflection of something that has already happened
- This is why Paul can say, "it doesn't matter if you are circumcised in the flesh if you haven't been circumcised in the heart—an outward example has no inner substance" (form without substance)
 - +this is why Paul says Titus was not asked to be circumcised
 - +the Jerusalem Council has no problems with it either
- The first thing that has to happen is a circumcision of the heart—a different attitude about who owns me
- I have to "look up" <Gen 15:5>
- This is a gender specific requirement
- This is not the way God designed it to be in the beginning
- But God is working with an upside-down world, and in this world He puts into action those things that remind a male that this is His (even in the very thing that makes him male)
- The command for circumcision applies to everyone in Abraham's party – not just those in his family

- Who is the beneficiary of the original covenant—just the Jews? No!
 - From the very beginning, the emphasis of God’s interaction with human beings always included Gentiles!
 - The Greek view is “individual”
 - +I have an “individual” relationship with God
 - +He is my “personal” Savior
 - +it doesn’t matter what happens to you, it matters what happens to me
 - What we see here is: what happens to Abraham, happens to everyone!
 - +does Abraham have an individual relationship with God? Yes!
 - +is this the end of the story? No!
 - +the end of the story is that Abraham’s relationship with God has a community effect
 - +when Paul says to the Jailer, “believe on the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ and you and your household will be saved”
 - +they will all be affected by the decision of the Jailer
 - The function of the relationship between individual and community is extended through the rest of the OT
 - Paul says the same thing in the NT!
 - Greek thought:
 - +it happens to me
 - +me and my relationship to God
 - +my relationship to my family
 - +it’s us against the world
 - Hebrew thought:
 - +I am an extension of the community I belong to
 - +what happens to me, happens to them
 - +we are in it together
 - Exodus 4
 - +Moses’ son needing to be circumcised
 - Gen 17:19 – And God said, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son indeed; and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.
- Va•yó•mer Elohím aval Saráh eesh•te•cha yo•lé•det le•chá ben ve•ka•rá•ta et-sh’mo Yitz•chák va•haki•mo•tí et-be•ri•ti ee•to liv•rit o•lam le•zar•ó a•cha•rav. (Hebrew World)

Chapter 18

-Sodom & Gomorrah

-Sexuality is not the sin of Sodom

-Ezekiel 16:49-50 - 49. Behold, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: pride, surfeit of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters; and she did not strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. 50. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me; therefore I took them away when I saw it.

49. Hi•né•ze ha•ya avon S'dom acho•tech ga•on siv•at•lé•chem ve•shal•vat hash•ket ha•ya lách ve•liv•no•té•ha ve•yad•ani ve•ev•yon lo he•che•zí•ka. 50. Va•tig•be•héna va•ta•a•sé•na to•evá le•fa•nái va•asir et•hen ka•a•shér ra•ée•ti. (Hebrew World)

+they refused to acknowledge their obligations to others

+they treated life with disdain

-The sexual immorality of Sodom is a result of treating life with disdain—they care nothing for the sanctity of life

-This is the reason they were judged

-Sarna: “cry” – it is not possible to capture in English what the word actually means

+za'akah: <Gen 18:20 - 2201 זָעָה [za 'aq, zâ 'aqah /zah·ak/] n f. From 2199; TWOT 570a; GK 2411; 18 occurrences; AV translates as “cry” 17 times, and “crying” once. 1 cry, outcry. 1A outcry. 1B cry of distress. 1C outcry, clamour. >

+tze'akah: <Gen 18:21 - 6818 זָעָה [tsa 'aqah /tsah·ak·aw/] n f. From 6817; TWOT 1947a; GK 7591; 21 occurrences; AV translates as “cry” 19 times, and “crying” twice. 1 cry, outcry. 1A outcry (against). 1B cry of distress (especially as heard by God).>

+the anguished cry of the oppressed, the agonizing plea of the victim for help in some great injustice

+moral outrage!

+they so despised the life of others, they gave no credence at all to the anguish of anyone else

+there is no longer any human element to their desire: it is completely released to the animal

+God judges that unrestrained desire as not worthy of being allowed to exist

-So much of Christian “clamor” over America’s condition focuses on sexual immorality

+Sodom was judged because it was prosperous, proud, blessed—and they didn’t care about life!

Genesis 19:30-36

-Clear case of incest

-No other males would want them: they were judged along with Sodom

-Moab: From my father

-Ben-Ammi: Son of my father

-These are the two progenitors of races of people (Moabites and Ammonites) who were enemies of Israel

Chapter 20

- Repeat of first incident with Pharaoh
- This time with Abimelech
- Sarah cooperates; both agree to do this
- God speaks to Abimelech in a dream
- Abimelech argues he is not at fault; he was lied to
- When God “caused” me to wander
- Strange verse: God tells Abimelech has to ask for Abraham to pray for him

+Gen 20:7 – Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for you, and you shall live; and if you restore her not, know you that you shall surely die, you, and all who are yours. (Hebrew World)

- +Who has to pray Abimelech will live?
- +Abraham-the one who caused the problem in the first place
- +Purpose? ** The impact on Abraham
- +Unless Abraham prays for the king, he will die
- +Abraham is in the “blame somebody else” mode
- +The impact on Abraham is to show him that the consequences of his immoral decisions have repercussions far beyond him and he needs to be the intercessor for the very thing he has perpetrated
- +This is a major character development step for Abraham: God needs Abraham to grow up

Chapter 21

- Isaac is born
- Hagar is sent away so she and her son can't receive the inheritance
- Abimelech and the well

Chapter 22

- The Akedah: the binding
- The summary chapter in the life of Abraham
- Sarna - opening verse: This is in the narrative to show it is not an endorsement for child sacrifice; it has to do with the test
- Behold I am here: hineni – the expression of a servant in front of a master <Gen 22:1>
- +This is used by others in the Bible where it becomes very important in the roles and functions in the community
 - +Isaiah 6 (whom shall we send)
 - +Samuel
- Hineni is an important link between what happens in Genesis and the description of a fully committed servant of the Lord
- Vayomer, kach-na (please take)

-This is not a moral obligation, it is a request
 -verse 7: here I am, where is the lamb (why isn't it here?)
 -The point of this chapter is complete humility on the part of Abraham
 -Rabbinic commentary: Isaac is not a child, but as a young man—it is not possible Abraham could force Isaac; Isaac has to volunteer
 -Isaac is the most passive of all patriarchs—the least likely to make a fuss and the most likely to be obedient to what is asked of him
 -Knife: special knife used for slaughter (only in scripture a couple of times)
 -The Angel of the Lord: the Same Angel as with Hagar
 -hineni: third time we have seen this word in this chapter
 -Ahav: the first time it is ever used <Gen 22:2 - And he said, Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you.
 Va•yó•mer kach-na et-bin•cha et-ye•chid•cha ashér-aháv•ta et-Yitz•chák ve•lech-le•chá el-é•retz ha•Mo•ri•yá ve•ha•alé•hu sham le•ola al a•chad he•ha•rim ashér o•mar e•lé•cha.
 (Hebrew World, *emphasis mine*)>

+What kind of love? Father for a son

+Second time: <Genesis 24:67 - Isaac loved Rebecca>

+We have to wait until there is complete and total humility before God to see this word

+When Isaac accepts completely the father's gift of a bride for him, and he enters absolutely into that relationship

+Isaac is the only monogamous patriarch

-Do not lay your hand on the lad for now I know you "love" (fear / yare) me

-The beginning of Abraham's story is to go forth (lech lecha), and the end of his story is to go forth (lech lecha)

+The beginning is to break ties with my past

+The end of the story is to break ties with my future

-yare: utter and complete respect for you

-How do you show yare? Cut off everything in your past, and everything in your future

-What's left? What God does today!

-Hineni is in the present!

-From this point, the story shifts from Abraham to Isaac

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