



Women's Bible Study

Read Genesis chapters 15 & 16 before studying the text below.

Chapter 15

Scene 1: A dialogue about seed (15:1-6)

The LORD's Makes a First Promise of Protection and Reward

¹After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision:

"Do not be afraid, Abram.
I am your shield,^u
your very great reward.^u"

Abram Responds with a Doubt-Filled Question

²But Abram said, "Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit^u my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?"

Abraham Responds With His Own Plan

³And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

The Lord Makes a Second Promise of a Son

⁴Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir."

The Lord Speaks

⁵He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them."

The Lord Speaks a Promise of Abundant Seed

Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring (seed)^u be."

Abram Responds with Trust and Righteousness

⁶Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness. (*a right relationship*)

Scene 2: A dialogue about land (15:7-21)

The Lord Makes a Third Promise of Land

Our purpose is to glorify God and make disciples of women as we grow into our identity as daughters of the King

⁷ He also said to him, “I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession (inherit) of it.”

Abram Responds With a Doubt-Filled Question

⁸ But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?”

The Lord Orders Abram To Get Animals

⁹ So the LORD said to him, “Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.”

Abram Obeys and Gets Animals

¹⁰ Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. ¹¹ Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.

¹² As the sun was setting Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. ¹³ Then the LORD said to him, “Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants (seed) will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. ¹⁴ But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. ¹⁵ You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”

¹⁷ When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. ¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, “To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates— ¹⁹ the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, ²⁰ Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, ²¹ Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites.”

Footnotes

- Genesis 15:1 Or *sovereign*
- Genesis 15:1 Or *shield*; / your reward will be very great
- Genesis 15:2 The meaning of the Hebrew for this phrase is uncertain.
- Genesis 15:5 Or *seed*
- Genesis 15:18 Or *river*

Chapter 16

¹⁶ Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; ² so she said to Abram, “The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.”

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. ³ So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. ⁴ He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.

When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. ⁵ Then Sarai said to Abram, “You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me.”

⁶ “Your slave is in your hands,” Abram said. “Do with her whatever you think best.” Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

⁷ The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. ⁸ And he said, “Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?”

“I’m running away from my mistress Sarai,” she answered.

Our purpose is to glorify God and make disciples of women as we grow into our identity as daughters of the King

⁹ Then the angel of the LORD told her, “Go back to your mistress and submit to her.” ¹⁰ The angel added, “I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.”

¹¹ The angel of the LORD also said to her:

“You are now pregnant
and you will give birth to a son.

You shall name him Ishmael.^a

for the LORD has heard of your misery.

¹² He will be a wild donkey of a man;
his hand will be against everyone
and everyone’s hand against him,
and he will live in hostility
toward^b all his brothers.”

¹³ She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen^c the One who sees me.” ¹⁴ That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi^d; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

¹⁵ So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. ¹⁶ Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.

Footnotes

- a. [Genesis 16:11](#) *Ishmael* means *God hears*.
- b. [Genesis 16:12](#) *Or live to the east / of*
- c. [Genesis 16:13](#) *Or seen the back of*
- d. [Genesis 16:14](#) *Beer Lahai Roi* means *well of the Living One who sees me*.

Chapter 15 questions:

1. What are Abrams concerns, how does it affect his thinking?
2. How do you see God responding to Abram's doubts in the first scene and then the second, Is it ideal?
3. Who are the responsible parties in the covenant (promises) God made?
4. What is the significance of the animals cut in half and the birds all about? Read Jeremiah 34:13, 18-20.

Chapter 16 questions:

5. What were the concerns of Sarai in chapter 16 and how did she deal with it?
6. Was Sarai's solution a good one, why or why not? What were the consequences? How is she like Eve?
7. What was Abram's role in chapter 16, was were the issues with his role, do you see any parallels with Adam?
8. Why did God react the way he did? ~~What was his message to Sarai?~~

Application:

1. Do you believe that God is your shield, that he is present with you and cares for you. In what ways do you find doubt creeps into these truths?
2. Do you feel the need to help God answer your prayers, why do you think that is?
3. In what ways do you trust God and in what ways do you demonstrate a lack of trust and belief in his promises?

Extra:

Righteousness - Abram's response of faith to God's promise.**Study Guide for Genesis 15 by David Guzik**

a. And he believed in the LORD: When Abram put his trust in God, specifically in God's promise to him (descendants leading to the Messiah), God credited (accounted) this belief to Abram's account as righteousness.

i. **There are essentially two types of righteousness:** righteousness we *accomplish* by our own efforts, and righteousness *accounted* to us by the work of God when we believe.

ii. Since none of us can be good enough to accomplish perfect righteousness, we must have God's righteousness accounted to us by doing just what Abram did: **he believed in the LORD.**

iii. God's accounting is not pretending. God does not account to us a pretended righteousness, but a real one in Jesus Christ ([Romans 4:1-3](#)).

b. **And He accounted it to him for righteousness:** This is one of the clearest expressions in the Bible of the truth of salvation by grace, through faith. This is the first time *believe* is used in the Bible and the first time *righteousness* is used in the Bible. This is the New Testament gospel in the Hebrew Scriptures, later quoted four times in the New Testament.

i. *What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."*([Romans 4:1-3](#))

ii. *Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.* ([Romans 4:9-10](#))

iii. *And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.* ([Romans 4:19-24](#))

iv. *Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? — just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.* ([Galatians 3:5-7](#))

c. **He accounted it to him for righteousness:** [Romans 4:9-10](#) makes much of the fact this righteousness was accounted to Abram before he was circumcised (later happening in [Genesis 17](#)). No one could say Abram was made righteous because of his obedience or fulfillment of religious law or ritual. It was faith and faith alone that caused God to account Abram as righteous.

d. **He believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness:** The faith that made Abram righteous wasn't so much believing *in* God (as we usually speak of believing in God), as it was *believing God*. Those who only believe *in* God (in the sense of believing He exists) are merely on the same level as demons ([James 2:19](#)).

Ishmael

The name Ishmael means ***God will hear***. We may take this as a prompting to pray for revival and spiritual awakening among the Arab peoples, because when they cry out to Jesus, *God will hear*.

- **He shall be a wild man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him:** The life of Hagar's son would not be easy, but God would still look over him and sustain him.
- Remember that the ill effect of this — **a wild man, his hand shall be against every man, every man's hand against him** — has been mostly seen in violence and murder among Arabs themselves. They kill each other even more than they kill Jews and Christians. For their own sake, even more than ours, we pray: *God, bring salvation to the Arab people.*