

Torah Studies

Genesis: In the Beginning

God's Covenant with Abram Genesis 15



Rabbi – Konstanty Szewczenko

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Delighting in God's Word

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Delighting in God's Word

- Psalm 119:21-24 (NKJV)

21 You rebuke the proud—the cursed,
Who stray from Your commandments.

22 Remove from me reproach and contempt,
For I have kept Your testimonies.

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Delighting in God's Word

- Psalm 119:21-24 (NKJV)

23 Princes also sit and speak against me,
But Your servant meditates on Your statutes.
24 Your testimonies also are my delight
And my counselors.

God's Covenant with Abram

Genesis 15

Introduction

- Previously in **Genesis**:

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Introduction

- Previously in **Genesis**:
- Once they made it to the Promised Land, Lot separated from his uncle Abram.
- Lot went toward Sodom.
- It wasn't long before Sodom was captured – Lot and his family along with it.

God's Covenant with Abram

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Introduction

- Previously in **Genesis**:
- Abram rescued Lot and many others.
- He was then blessed by Melchizedek, king of [Jeru]Salem.
- Abram, in turn, gave Melchizedek a tenth of his enormous wealth.

God's Covenant with Abram

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Introduction

- God will now appear to Abram with two main purposes in mind.
 1. He will make official His covenant with Abram.
 2. In so doing, He will shore up or strengthen the patriarch's faith.

God's Covenant with Abram

Genesis 15

Outline

God's Covenant with Abram

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Outline

- I. God Makes Promises to Abram 15:1-11
- II. God Alone Ratifies the Covenant 15:12-21

I. God Makes Promises to Abram

15:1-11

I. God Makes Promises to Abram

15:1-11

- 15:1 I am your shield; your reward shall be very great
- Or: “I am your shield, your very great reward.”
- First mention of God as a shield.
- God can protect us and give us what we need.
- Abram would not lose out by honoring Him and neither will we.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram 15:1-11

- 15:2-3 I continue childless
- Ten years have passed since God's original promise.
- He said that He would make Abram into a great nation in Genesis 12.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram

15:1-11

- 15:2-3 Eliezer of Damascus
- He was the chief of Abraham's servants.
- In the absence of a son, he would have been the customary heir to Abraham's possessions.
- Eliezer means "God is my helper" or "God, the helper"
- The word *ezer* was first used when God created Eve.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram 15:1-11

- 15:4 God assures Abram he will have his own son.
- In Genesis 24 Eliezer will go to get a wife for Isaac, the true heir.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram

15:1-11

- Is Abram doubting God here? Maybe a little.

Consider these distinctions:

- The doubt that *denies* God's promise vs. the doubt that *desires* God's promise. (Guzik)
- The doubt of the skeptic vs. the doubt of the believer.
- Abram is struggling but wanted to believe.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram 15:1-11

- 15:5 Look toward heaven and number the stars.
- This was in the time before all the artificial light made the stars harder to see.
- Psalm 147:4

He determines the number of the stars;
he gives to all of them their names.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram 15:1-11

- 15:5 Look toward heaven and number the stars.
- After the Israelites sinned with the golden calf, God threatened to do away with the nation.
- Moses interceded, praying to God and bringing up this promise.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram

15:1-11

- Exodus 32:13-14

13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.'"

14 And the Lord relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram

15:1-11

- 15:6 And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.
- This is the Bible's first use of all three important terms in this verse – but far from the last.
 1. Believe
 2. Counted
 3. Righteousness

I. God Makes Promises to Abram 15:1-11

- 15:6 And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.
- In Romans 4 Paul makes this verse the basis of his teaching on salvation by grace through faith.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram

15:1-11

- Romans 4:2-5

2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” 4 Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. 5 And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram

15:1-11

- Romans 4:20-25

20 No unbelief made [Abram] waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, 21 fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. 22 That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” 23 But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, ...

I. God Makes Promises to Abram

15:1-11

- Romans 4:20-25

... 24 but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, 25 who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram 15:1-11

- Our faith in Christ is counted as righteousness.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram

15:1-11

- Our faith in Christ is counted as righteousness.
- Do we trust in the God of Abram, who sent Christ to die for our sins and raised Him from the dead?
- If so, then we are saved from our sins. Our faith is counted as righteousness – just as Abram's was.

I. God Makes Promises to Abram 15:1-11

- 15:7-11 Here we see an ancient method of ratifying a covenant – One or more animals was cut in two.
- Then the parties would pass through the middle between the pieces.
- Pay close attention to what happens next.

II. God Alone Ratifies the Covenant 15:12-21

II. God Alone Ratifies the Covenant 15:12-21

- 15:12-13 This is a prophecy of the Israelites' stay in Egypt, which was not the land promised to them.
- The sojourn would last around 400 years

II. God Alone Ratifies the Covenant 15:12-21

- 15:14-16 The fourth generation
- God is counting a generation at that time to be about 100 years.

II. God Alone Ratifies the Covenant 15:12-21

- 15:14-16 The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.
- These people are wicked, but not yet wicked enough.
- God declares His future judgment several centuries before He will carry it out.
- It will be based on the continuous, unrepentant sin of the Amorites – the current inhabitants of the land.

II. God Alone Ratifies the Covenant 15:12-21

- 15:17 God appears here as the smoke and the fire.
- By passing through alone, God affirms that this covenant depends on Him alone and not on Abram.

II. God Alone Ratifies the Covenant 15:12-21

- 15:18-21 The boundaries of the Promised Land are now given for the first time.
- Maybe the Israelites held this land for a short time under Solomon. Maybe?
- It might be best to say this promise has not yet been fulfilled but it will be when Christ returns.

II. God Alone Ratifies the Covenant 15:12-21

God's covenant with Abram, which includes a promise for the land, is a one-sided covenant.

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God's covenant with Abram, which includes a promise for the land, is a one-sided covenant.

- Only God made any promises here.
- Only God passed between the slain animals.
- Abram was asleep when God spoke to him.

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Conclusion

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- Israel's right to the land remains unchanged.

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- Israel's right to the land remains unchanged.
- There is no freedom for "Palestine" that excludes the Jewish state.
- Here is an example.

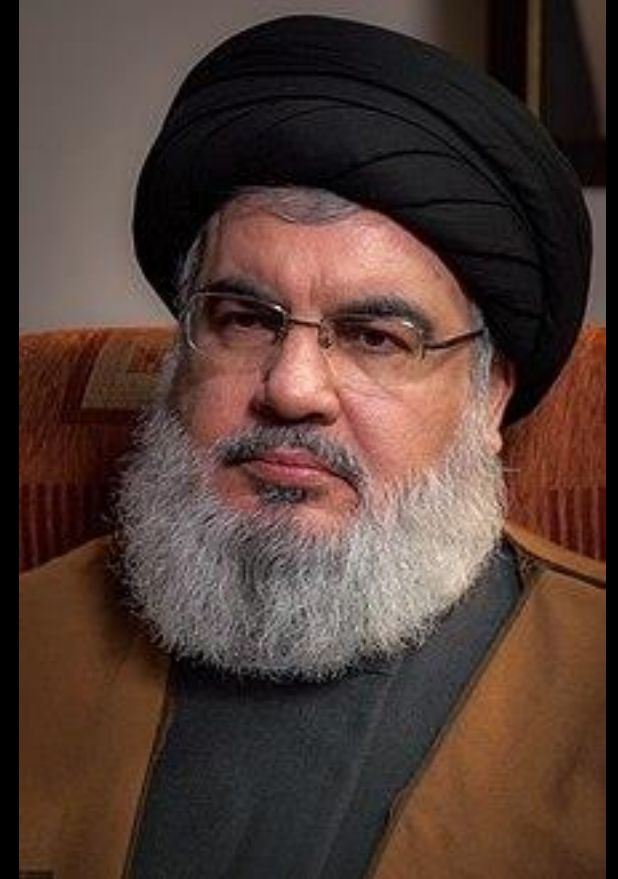
God's Covenant with Abram

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Conclusion

I believe that Palestine is an occupied land from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, and this is the right of the entire Palestinian people, this land.

*– Hassan Nasrallah (1960 – 2024),
former secretary-general of Hezbollah
(Party of God), killed in Beirut by an
Israeli airstrike*



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Conclusion

- Israel's right to the land remains unchanged.
- We should expect God to continue to keep His promises.

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Conclusion

- We are saved in the same way Abram was, by grace through faith.

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Conclusion

- We are saved in the same way Abram was, by grace through faith.
- The content of our faith is more complete, since we live after the cross.
- But the principle is the same: We trust God to do what He has promised to do.
- He will forgive us, save us and give us eternal life.

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Conclusion

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 ...

*— David Guzik, Calvary Chapel
Pastor and Bible Teacher*



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Conclusion

... Those who only believe in God (in the sense of believing He exists) are merely on the same level as demons (James 2:19).

*– David Guzik, Calvary Chapel
Pastor and Bible Teacher*



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Conclusion

- That is why James can quote the same verse as Paul, and yet emphasize the need for works.
- These are what we might call *works of faith* not works of the law or works of religious ritual.
- They are works that reveal whether we trust in God's promises.

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Conclusion

- James 2:21-23

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God.

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Conclusion

- Just as He promised to Abram, the God of Abram can protect us and give us what we need.

God's Covenant with Abram

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Conclusion

- Just as He promised to Abram, the God of Abram can protect us and give us what we need.

- Psalm 28:6-9

6 Blessed be the Lord!

For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy.

7 The Lord is my strength and my shield;

in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; ...

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Conclusion

- Just as He promised to Abram, the God of Abram can protect us and give us what we need.

- Psalm 28:6-9

... my heart exults,

and with my song I give thanks to him.

8 The Lord is the strength of his people; ...

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Conclusion

- Just as He promised to Abram, the God of Abram can protect us and give us what we need.

- Psalm 28:6-9

... he is the saving refuge of his anointed.

9 Oh, save your people and bless your heritage!

Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

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Conclusion

- What does it take to inherit God's promises?

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Conclusion

- What does it take to inherit God's promises?
- Hebrews 6:11-12

11 And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

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The Scholars – Konstanty Szewczenko

Next Week:

The Birth of Ishmael

Genesis 16