

A Word from Kathy

In Genesis 14, we saw that Abram had just enjoyed a great victory given to him by God. His nephew is safe and has been returned home. You would think that Abram would be riding high at this point. Often, a great victory is followed by fear. It seems irrational, but many great men and women have fallen prey to it. The same God who gave Abram the victory over the wicked kings and their army will give him the victory over his fears.

This is a glorious chapter describing God's covenant with Abram. Let's look at it carefully and prayerfully, asking God to speak to us as we dig into His Word.

Observation

1. Briefly state the facts you know about Abram up to this point. Try to do it from memory then go back and add any important details you might have left out.
Abram's father _____, brothers _____, wife _____
other relatives _____. God called Abram out of _____ of the _____ to go to a land God would show him and give him. God promised to make him a _____ and to bless him and make his _____. (This will get you started, now you keep going)
2. This chapter begins "After this," what had just taken place?
3. What does God tell Abram in Gen. 15:1 that seems a bit odd after this great victory?
4. What does Abram call God in Gen. 15:2?
This is the name Adonai and Jehovah.
Adonai- the LORD my Great LORD
Jehovah- The Self-Existent One
5. These are names that reflect his intimate knowledge of God. What question does he ask God in Gen.15:2?
Then he suggests an alternate plan, which was common in that day. What was it?
For those who like to *dig deeper*, look up the meaning of Eliezer's name.

6. It is not God's desire to leave Abram in the dark concerning His promise. In what way does God unquestionably clarify his promise? Gen. 15:4
God took him outside, what does he show him? Gen. 15:5
7. What is the beautiful statement in Gen. 15:6 that is quoted several other times in God's word? Look up Rom. 4:3, 22; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23. As believers today, we look back to the cross for our salvation. How were the saints of the Old Testament saved?
8. Gen. 15:12 says, "a deep sleep fell upon Abram." This is the same thing that Gen. 2:21 said of Adam. Why would God cause a deep sleep to fall on these men? In both instances, it was God who was the responsible party. It was God alone who was active at both times, not Adam and not Abram.

Interpretation

9. Abram had experienced God as his shield and had relied on Him to be his great reward. What does it mean that God is his shield?
What had God promised him in Gen. 12:3?
Whose retaliation might cause Abram to be fearful?
What had Abram understood about his reward? Gen. 14:22-23
10. John 1:12-13 "*Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.*"
Heb. 11:1 "*Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*"
What do these verses say about faith?
What is faith?
11. What specifically does God remind Abram of in Gen. 15:7?
This is the name *Adonai*, the Master and the total Authority.
12. The word "knows", in Gen. 15:8, is the multi-faceted Hebrew word "Yada".
Look over the verses on the next page where the word has previously been used in order to gain a greater understanding of its meaning.

Gen. 3:5, "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Gen. 3:7 "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves."

Gen. 3:22 "And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever."

Gen. 4: 1 "Adam lay with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man."

Gen. 4:9, "Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Gen. 4:17, "Cain lay with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son Enoch.

Gen. 4:25 "Adam lay with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying "God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him."

Gen. 8:11 "When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth."

Gen. 9:24 "When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him,"

Gen. 12:11 "As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are."

Jeremiah 22:15-16 "Does it make you a king to have more and more cedar? Did not your father have food and drink? He did what was right and just, so all went well with him. **16** He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?" declares the LORD."

Read Ps. 25 also. It is such a beautiful Psalm to the Lord our God who promises in verse 14, "*The LORD confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them.*"

Define *Yada* -

13. What does God instruct Abram to do in Gen. 15:9-11?

14. What is the sin of the Amorites referred to in Gen. 15:16?

Whose descendants are the Amorites? Look back to the list of descendants from Gen. 10.

It might be helpful to look at the verses on the next page concerning the Amorites.

1 Kings 21:25-26 *“(There was never a man like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, urged on by Jezebel his wife. He behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols, like the Amorites the LORD drove out before Israel.)”*

2 Kings 21:11 *“Manasseh king of Judah has committed these detestable sins. He has done more evil than the Amorites who preceded him and has led Judah into sin with his idols.”*

God is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; even the Amorites.

This is a quote from the *Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown* commentary

“The statement of Gen.15:16 implies that there is a progress in the course of sin and vice among nations as well as with individuals, and that, although it be long permitted, by the tolerant spirit of the Divine government, to go on with impunity, it will at length reach a culminating point, where, in the retributions of a righteous Providence, the punishment of the sinner, even in this world, is inevitable.”

15. Even though they did not have God’s commandments at this point, which one applies to the Amorites? (Exodus 20)

Application

16. Abram’s actions reveal much about what was going on in his heart. How well do you believe Abram understood faith?

We are not saved by our actions; salvation is by faith, not by works.

Rom. 1:16 *“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.”*

Eph. 2:8-9 *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast.”*

Does your walk reveal what you truly believe about faith?

James 2:14 *“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?”*

17. In Gen. 15:13-16, what does the LORD say He wants Abram to “know” for certain? Now that you have a greater understanding of the Hebrew word “Yada”, what does God want Abram to understand and to know? Why do you suppose He wants him to know these things in advance?

18. Who is the lord of your life? Is Jesus the LORD over all? Or is he even LORD at all? If he is Lord, then he is to be Master. Would you honestly say he is Master?

A most important event has just happened in Gen. 15:18. The LORD has made a covenant with Abram. Who passed between the pieces of the animals? who did the smoking fire pot represent?

Kay Arthur calls the truth of **covenant** is the "**crimson thread**" that God's Spirit has woven in His Word, from Genesis to Revelation.

Dennis Rainey, a well known Christian family life speaker, writes:

"For the past two years I have had a growing concern that the Christian community has passively watched the "dumbing down" of the **marriage covenant**. Marriage has become little more than an upgraded social contract between two people—not a **holy covenant between a man and a woman and their God for a lifetime**. In the Old Testament days a covenant was the most sacred and solemn of pledges. When two people entered into a covenant with one another, a goat or lamb would be slain and its carcass would be cut in half. With the two halves separated and lying on the ground, the two people who had formed the covenant would solemnize their promise by walking between the two halves saying, "May God do so to me [cut me in half] if I ever break this covenant with you and God!" You get the feeling that a covenant in those days had just a little more substance than today." (from The Covenant of Marriage) (Bolding and links added)

19. Has your understanding of covenant changed after studying God's covenant with Abram? If so, in what way?

20. Why not stop and ask God to help you continue to ponder His covenant.

Are there any covenants you have taken to lightly?

Remember **1 Jn.1:5-9** "*This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*"