

Patriarchs Study and Discussion Questions

Lesson Two: God's Covenant & Abraham's Growth – Genesis 15:1-18:15

Read Genesis 15.

1) About which two things did Abram express doubt and how did the Lord answer his honest concerns? (See also Genesis 12:2 and 13:14-16.)

2) Reread verse 6 along with Romans 4:1-5, 18-25 and Galatians 3:3-9. These passages explain what kind of “belief” (faith) will result in a person being considered “righteous” or “justified” by God. In other places, the Scriptures call this being “saved.” Make a list of all you learn from these verses about being made righteous (justified/saved) by faith. (*Note: The New Testament passages listed above use the name “Abraham” rather than “Abram,” a name he was given in Genesis 17. The “law” Galatians references is the Mosaic Law [the commandments] given to Israel by God in the Old Testament. If you are new to Bible study, these verses will likely raise questions. This is to be expected, as Bible study is a learning process.*)

3) Do you think a person today can simultaneously believe God and have honest doubts, as Abram did? Explain your answer and if possible, include an example from your own life.

Read Genesis 16:1-6.

4) Identify the characters involved in the drama of these verses. Also, tell who (surprisingly) was *not* included in the decision-making?

- 5) Why do you think Abram agreed to this plan?
- 6) Have you ever wanted (or tried) to “hurry along” something that you have been waiting a long time for God to do? What happened?

Read Genesis 16:7-16.

- 7) Who found Hagar alone in the desert?
- 8) What things might Hagar have been thinking of when she named the Lord “*the God Who Sees Me*” (verse 13)?
- 9) Perhaps you or someone you love lives with the consequences of a decision made without consulting the Lord, or even made in direct disobedience to Him. Like Hagar, you or your loved one might not have even been included in making the decision, yet you live with the consequences. How does this name for God, “*the One Who Sees Me*” (*El Roi*), make a difference in the way you view your circumstances?

Read Genesis 17.

- 10) Based on verses 1 and 17, together with Genesis 12:2-4, 16:16, 17:24 and 18:10 and 14, tell how many years Abram waited between the time God promised him descendants, the time Ishmael was born, and the time Sarah’s son was born? Altogether, what was the minimum amount of time he waited for God to do what He promised?

- 11) What was the sign of God's covenant with Abram? Include the verse numbers.
- 12) Read Deuteronomy 30:6, Romans 2:28-29, Philippians 3:3 and Colossians 2:11. What might the symbol of circumcision represent in the Christian life?

Read Genesis 18:1-15.

- 13) Do you think there was a difference between Sarah's laughter in verse 12 and Abraham's laughter in 17:17? Why or why not?
- 14) Compare what God says about Himself in verse 14a with the name God gave Himself in Genesis 17:1 (*El Shaddai*). Is God limited by anything? (Consider Leviticus 11:45b.)
- 15) What will you ask God Almighty (who says nothing is too hard, too wonderful, or impossible for Him) to do for you today?