

## God's Covenant with Abraham, the Believer (Genesis 15)

Grace Chapel June 3, 2009 Dr. John Niemelä

### INTRODUCTION

#### REVIEW

12:1–9 After Terah's death in Haran, God told Abram to leave his father's house & household; God would make him a great nation & bless him so that he would bless others, so Abram went to Canaan where the Lord revealed Himself again and gave the land to Abram, who then built altars to the Lord and worshipped Him throughout the land that the Lord gave him (claiming that land for the Lord)

12:10–20 A severe famine caused Abram to sojourn in Egypt; he told Sarai that her beauty would cause Egyptians to kill him, but to spare her alive; she was to say that she was his sister, so that he would be blessed & live; Pharaoh took her into his house & bestowed a great dowry on Abram, but Pharaoh's whole household (other than Sarai) became quite sick; Pharaoh rebuked Abram for the evil resulting from saying that she is his sister, because it created the possibility that intimacy could have occurred; Pharaoh gave Sarai back & deported Abram, w/ Sarai, & all that belonged to Abram

13:1–18 Abram left Egypt w/ Sarai, Lot & wealth; returned to Bethel & called on the Lord; Abram & Lot's herds overtaxed the land, so strife arose between their herdsmen while Canaanites looked on; Abram ended the strife because he & Lot were relatives (letting Lot choose land); Lot chose the Jordan valley w/ much water; so they separated; Abram dwelt in (the uplands of) Canaan, but Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain (even wicked Sodom); God reaffirmed the promise of innumerable seed; God invited Abram to investigate the land; Abram settled near Hebron and built an altar (to worship the Lord)

14:1–24 Eastern kings fought the western kings because western kings stopped paying tribute in the 13th year; the next year, the eastern kings attacked the Rephaim, the Zuzim, the Emim, the Horites, the Amalekites, the Amorites; then they attacked 5 kings near the Dead Sea; some western kings fell into tar pits around the Dead Sea; others escaped to the mountains; the eastern kings pillaged Sodom & Gomorrah, taking Lot captive before going northward; an escapee told Abram in Hebron (dwelling w/ his Amorite allies); Abram armed his 318 men & went to Dan; after dividing forces, Abram attacked, pursuing [survivors of the initial attack] to Hobah; thus, Abram rescued all of the booty, Lot, & other captives; after Abram returned from defeating Chedorlaomer, Sodom's king met Abram near Jerusalem; then Melchizedek (king of Jerusalem) brought Abram bread & wine & blessed both Abram & God Most High, the creator, who granted Abram victory; then Abram gave Melchizedek a tithe of [Abram's] whole portion; Sodom's king had offered Abram all Sodom's booty if Abram returned the people to him; Abram said that his loyalty is to God Most High, the creator, so he will not be enriched by the king of Sodom (lest he claim to have enriched Abram), but Abram does not speak for his allies nor for the food eaten by his own men

#### NEW EXPOSITION

*(15:1–6) God gives Abraham, the believer, enduring & supernatural promises*

**(15:1) In a vision the Lord told Abram not to fear, because He is his guardian & benefactor**

The vision starts in 15:1. The vision is introduced by *saying*. . . .

The vision does not start in verse 12

**(15:2–3) Abram's fear that God had not fulfilled the promise, so his servant (Eliezer of Damascus) might be his heir**

**(15:4–5) The Lord assured Abram that his own son (not a servant) would be his heir and his seed would be innumerable**

**(15:6) Abram had already believed in the Lord, so He accounted it to him for righteousness**

15:2 wayyōmer Then Abram said. . . .

(wayyōmer is a waw consecutive plus a qal preterite)

15:3 wayyōmer Then Abram said. . . .

(wayyōmer is a waw consecutive plus a qal preterite)

15:4 w<sup>e</sup>hinnēh + an infinitive And behold the word of the Lord to him, saying. . . .

(There is no finite verb in the construction. Timing comes from context)

15:5 wayyōtsē' Then He brought him out

(wayyōtsē' is a waw consecutive plus a qal preterite)

15:6 w<sup>e</sup>he'ēin Now he had believed

(w<sup>e</sup>he'ēin is a waw disjunctive plus a hiphil perfect)

15:7 wayyōmer Then He said. . . .

(wayyōmer is a waw consecutive plus a qal preterite)

15:8 wayyōmer Then he said. . . .

(wayyōmer is a waw consecutive plus a qal preterite)

15:9 wayyōmer Then He said. . . .

(wayyōmer is a waw consecutive plus a qal preterite)

15:10 wayyiqqah Then he brought. . . .

(wayyiqqah is a waw consecutive plus a qal preterite)

***(15:7–21) God guarantees His promises by covenant—promises that supercede death & suffering***

***(15:7–11) God guarantees His promises, so there is no reason for Abram to fear***

**(15:7) The God who promises is the same One who led Abram from Ur to give him this land**

**(15:8) Abram requests tangible evidence of God's guarantee**

**(15:9–11) God told Abram to prepare animals for a covenant ceremony, which he did**

***(15:12–16) Abram's death and suffering by his seed will precede fulfillment of the promise***

**(15:12) [In the vision] Abram saw himself going into deep sleep as the sun was setting**

**(15:13–14) God said to Abram that his seed would be afflicted strangers & servants in a foreign land for 400 years, but would leave that land with many possessions [which does not interfere with the promise]**

**(15:15) Abram would die peacefully at an old age [which does not interfere with the promise]**

**(15:16) The fourth generation will return to Canaan, when the iniquity of the Amorites is complete [when they are ready for judgment]**

**(15:17–21) In the dark God unilaterally ratified the covenant with a firepot and blazing torch, guaranteeing the fulfillment of the promise**

**(15:17) The Lord unilaterally ratified the covenant, guaranteeing the fulfillment of the promises**

**(15:18–21) The Lord specified the boundaries of the land and the peoples who would be displaced**

River of Egypt = Wadi El-Arish, not the Nile River

Israel has never controlled all of this land, not even during Solomon's day

## **CONCLUSION**