

WEEK 3

APRIL 30, 2023

Digging Deeper

Words of a Dying Man

Structure of Genesis 15

Setting:

When? After Abram's rescue of Lot and blessing from Melchizedek, Approximately 10 years since the promise
Evidences of the coming promise up until this point?

Promised land:

1st 12:2 Very general "I will bless you" (implied land)

2nd 12:7 Land of the Canaanites "To your offspring I will give this land."

3rd 13:14-15 All that you see "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, for all the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever."

4th 13:17 "...walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I will give it to you."

5th 15:7 "...to give you this land to possess."

6th 15:18-21 "...to your offspring I give this land..."

Children:

1st 12:2 "...I will make you a great nation and make your name great..."

2nd 12:7 "...to your offspring I will give this land..."

3rd 13:15-16 "... to your offspring forever. I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted."

4th 15:4-5 "...this man will not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir... look at the stars..."

5th 15:13 "...know for certain that your offspring..."

6th 15:18 "...to your offspring I give this land..."

Where? He is in the promised land- the land his ancestors will come back to and lay claim to.

What? After saving Lot God the "word of God" came to Abram in a vision (He sees the word? John 1:1?). "I am your shield" First movement of Abram's nomadic army- they are a legitimate nation (sorta) now open to be attacked. The Lord reminds him that his reward shall be great- Abram reminds him that all he cares about is having an heir. Abram lacks faith and turns to the Lord. He believed the Lord- counted it to him as righteousness.

Why ... was it told?

Knowing the character of God will drive God's people from fear to faith.

Plot:**Breakdown of the story of Abraham:**

Episode	Location	Essential Content	Plot Section
1	11:27-32	Introduction: genealogy of Terah	Setting
2	12:1-9	YHWH's commands and promises (progeny & land)	Early events/beginning of conflict
3	12:10-13:18	Threats to the promise of heir in Egypt: Abraham separation from Lot	Complications/threats to promise
4	14:1-24	Abraham's militarily intercesses for Sodom and Lot	Complications- indication of beginning of blessing, still w/o land or an heir
5	15:1-21	Covenant with Abraham	Official "signed document" climax building
6	16:1-16	Hagar & Ishmael	threat to promise/complication
7	17:1-19	Covenant with Abraham	sign of promise climax building
8	17:20-19:38	YHWH Destroys Sodom	Complications- indication of beginning of blessing, still w/o land or an heir
9	20:1-18	Abraham & Abimelech	Complications- indication of beginning of blessing, still w/o land or an heir
10	21:1-7	Birth of Issac	Resolution
11	21:8-21	Problem with Ishmael	complication
12	21:22-34	Treaty with Abimelech	Resolution of land
13	22:10-24	Sacrifice of Isaac	complication/ proof of faith
14	23:1-20	Death of Sarah, purchase of land	resolution of land
15	24:1-67	Isaac and Rebekah	Results

Breakdown of Genesis 15

Episode	Location	Essential Content	Plot Section
1	15:1	Promise by YHWH	Setting
2	15:2-8	Promises still not fulfilled, doubting God's promise, Abraham is becoming a legitimate military force, a nation without land or an heir	Conflict, complications and Climax-
3	15:9-21	YHWH speaks in a language that Abram would understand and "makes it official" with Abram	Resolution

Examine dialogue: Most of the “action” in this text takes place in dialogue between Abram and YHWH. It’s a sort of personal account and, I think, made to reveal the speakers (in order that we might identify with Abram and know YHWH more deeply).

Problems:

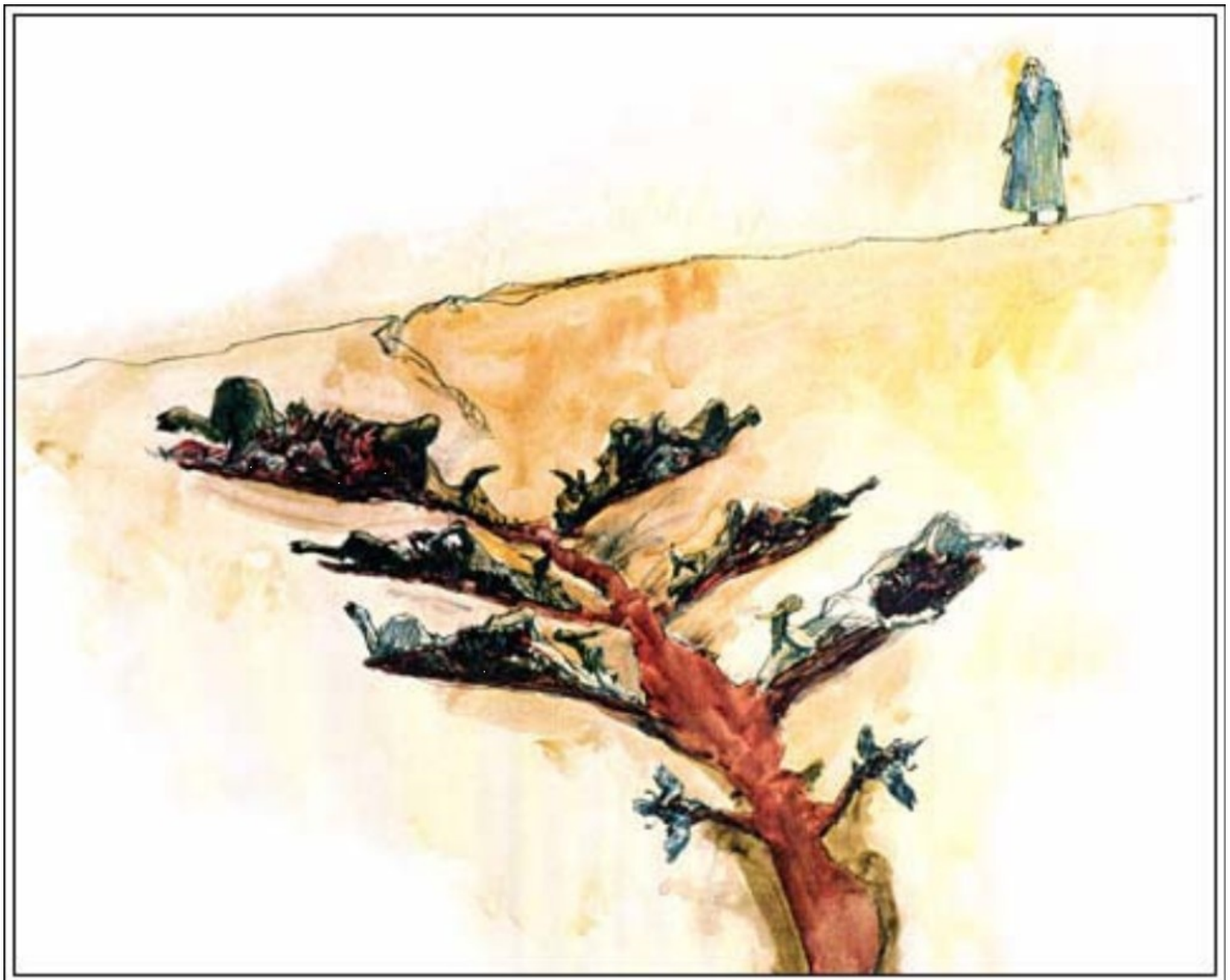
Abram has been promised offspring but it has been 10 years and he has none yet. He is becoming a larger nation but has no potential heir. Fear that it is all for nothing, that he will end up just giving it to a servant is paralyzing him.

Big Idea:

Abram’s problem is not that he has not received his reward/promised land/child, it is that he lacks knowledge of and faithfulness to His God. Knowing the character of God will drive God’s people from fear to faith.

How this incident supports the larger narrative idea:

When God shows up when our forefathers are weak in their faith He shows up and reveals His character-primarily. He doesn’t just fix the problem. If God had just given Abram the land and given him a son it wouldn’t have fixed his problem, which was fearfulness instead of faithfulness.





Questions to ask when reading the Bible

Sometimes when we read a passage in the Bible it can be confusing or we may not know how to best figure out what it is saying. Below are some good questions to ask when reading the Bible to help make the Bible make sense.

1. What stands out to me?

Note that this does not say “What does this passage mean?” Consider what stood out to you? What did you notice? What did the Holy Spirit highlight for you as you read it?

2. What does the text say about the character/nature of God?

The Scriptures are primarily about God so ask first what the text says about Him before moving to what it says about us, about His plan, or about anything else.

3. What does the text say?

Look at what the text literally says first (this may not be the intent of the text but it is important to look at it as read... at least initially).

4. How is it saying it?

What is the genre of the text and how should we read text in that genre?

5. Why does it say it that way?

Speculate about why the author chose this method of saying what they've said.

6. What is it trying to say?

Getting behind the Scripture, looking at its context, its original audience, its author, etc., what is the text trying to get across to the reader (both the original audience and us today?)

7. How does this fit into the whole of the book and the whole of Scripture?

Looking at the whole book, does what is being said jive with the whole book, with the whole of Scripture?

8. What questions do I have?

Do you have questions about the text? If they aren't answered in the text, are they good questions or are we asking questions that the text isn't meant to answer?

9. How do I feel about this teaching/text? Why do I feel that way?

What does your gut say? Are you frustrated with it? Are you trying to make it say something else than what it says? Does it make you uncomfortable? Where are these feelings coming from? Is there sin in my life I need to repent of?

10. What is the universal application of this text/teaching?

What are we to do with this text? Consider the original audience as well as us today.

11. What is my personal application?

What is God calling you to apply with what you've learned with this text?

12. How will I apply what it calls me to?

Make a plan to apply what God has taught you. Seek to be faithful and obedient to His leading, wherever it may go.