

# Genesis 15-17 – 10 October 2019

## “Belief + Nothing = Righteousness”

### Introduction

Chapter 12 begins with Abraham making a great commitment to God by leaving Ur of the Chaldees and coming into the land of Canaan.

Chapter 12-14 – then shows us Abram, the peacemaker, his resilience, his loyalty and integrity.

Chapter 15-17 is the primary Biblical text showing us that Belief + Nothing = Righteousness

**Tonight, we’ll see the 3 parts of this principle.**

**Chapter 15 presents the 1<sup>st</sup> part of the principle:  
the Truth about Belief**

1. Read Vs 1
  - a. The “Word of the Lord” came to him – refers to Jesus Himself.
  - b. “Fear not” – Even after great spiritual victory, we can still get depressed.
  - c. “Shield” – After this great battle, he knows that he needs this.
  - d. “Reward” – God says, I have everything that you want and need.
2. Read Vs 2
  - a. Lord if you’re my reward that what is it!?!
3. Read 3-5
  - a. The promise that in his old age he will have a son!
  - b. Abe just got reminder of vastness of God.
  - c. Exp: Praying for \$100 to pay the rent and the Lord’s trying to give you \$2000!
4. Read Vs 6
  - a. As farfetched as it was, he believed
  - b. Turn to Rom 4:1-8

c. *Abe's works, weren't that great...good thing righteousness comes thru faith.*

5. Read Vs 7-12

a. This is an ancient custom of ratifying an agreement, except, in this case, only one party will pass between the sacrificial animals.

b. *Abe has nothing to do w/ keeping the deal.*

i. *Just needs to believe that God will keep it.*

6. Read Vs 13

a. God now prophesies of Abe's future seed.

b. 400 years? Now Read Exo 12:40

i. Wow how many see a contradiction here.

ii. Sojourned 430 yrs and afflicted 400 yrs

7. Read Vs 14-16

a. God's having grace on the Canaanites yet!

8. Read Vs 17-21

a. They never did have enough faith to go possess all the land that God promised them.

b. Only piece of earth that has a title deed straight from God the Father.

**Chapter 16 presents the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the principle:  
the Tragedy of adding anything to belief.**

1. Read Vs 1-4
  - a. Since God promised kids to Abe, Sarai now thinks the problem of no kids is with her.
  - b. Sarai was looking at the wrong problem.
    - i. Sarai not having babies wasn't a problem
    - ii. Sarai unbelief/lack of patience was problem.
  - c. Sarai's only real problem (lack of faith) lead her to much bigger problems (w/ Hagar)
  - d. MANNA – Sometimes we think we have problems, but if we just wait for God's timing and believe God, it's no problem at all.
2. Read Vs 5-6
  - a. Contention needed never to happen
3. Read Vs 7-12
  - a. God's call and promises here to Hagar
  - b. Beginning of Arab people (flesh & Spirit)
4. Read Vs 13-16
  - a. Notice Hagar's obedience/faith in returning.

## **Chapter 17 presents the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of the principle: the Triumph of God's grace for righteousness**

1. Read Vs 1-8
  - a. Abram will now be Abraham
    - i. “Father Exalted” to “Father of Nations”
  - b. The covenant is reconfirmed with Abraham and his descendants to come.
  - c. Notice in vs 8 the covenant is specifically tied to the land of Canaan.
  - d. Aren't you glad God doesn't throw us away and start over every time we have a lapse of faith?
    - i. Everything about the Ishmaelites was “in the flesh” on Abraham's behave.
    - ii. God again, in vs 1, called Abe to be upright, but is willing to continue to provide His grace!
2. Read Vs 9-14

- a. So circumcision was the sign of the covenant that would remind Abe of his relationship with the Lord.
- b. It would be an unseen reminder to each other that they were set apart from the flesh to think and do and be spiritual people!
- c. Stephen challenged the Israelites (Read Act 7:51) to be ready, to be different.
  - i. Circumcision is the cutting away of the flesh to leave only the essential.
  - ii. Stephen says even our heart and ears can be uncircumcised.
- d. Paul later in Rom 2:25 reminds us the circumcision was a sign of the covenant give to Abe and later to the people of Israel.
  - i. If you're going to keep the law of circumcision, you're indebted to do all!
  - ii. Read Rom 3:30

3. Read Vs 15-22

- a. So the son of promise will be thru Sarah and will be named Isaac (or laughter).
  - i. The covenant to be passed down to Isaac and not thru Ishmael.
  - ii. Abraham here laughs at the promise of God
  - iii. In chap 18 Sarah will also laugh when told of God's promise.
  - iv. A gentle rebuke from God
    1. Isaac's name means laughter.
    2. Abe & Sarah didn't believe this was to happen.
    3. Imagine the day that their unbelief turned to belief & they KNEW they were having a baby.
    4. They would have sat shamefaced
    5. Then thankful for God's grace.
- b. Notice God's love/grace toward Ishmael.
  - i. Abe has more kids (Gen 25) but Ish blessed
  - ii. There's no reason to despise the Arabs

4. Read Vs 23-27
  - a. Abraham obeys
  - b. For 13 yr olds and grown men this would be a painful action with no real pain killers.
  - c. The ability to return to God in obedience after such betrayal is just amazing grace!

### Conclusion –

## **Today we've looked at the 3 parts of the Belief + Nothing = Righteousness principle**

1. The truth about belief
  - a. Abe believes God and he was considered righteous.
2. The tragedy of adding anything to belief
  - a. Our real problems are unbelief not the tangible, temporary problem our eyes are on.
3. The triumph of God's grace in righteousness
  - a. His arms are always open to forgiveness.