

Bible Studies for Life: November 7

Confidence in Seasons of Uncertainty • *Genesis 15:1-6, 13-16*

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Tucked into the book of Isaiah, we read, “Who among you fears the Lord? Who obeys the voice of His Servant? Who walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely upon his God” (50:10 NKJV).

I don’t think anyone would deny that the past two years have brought forth a season of uncertainty on a grand scale, both globally and individually. Take a moment to think about all the changes you’ve gone through during this time frame. Have you dealt with fear? Are you in a season of uncertainty right now? If so, are you learning to trust God even when you don’t have the answers? Please take a moment and honestly evaluate your responses.

Warren Wiersbe titles Genesis 15, “The Dark Night of the Soul” (Be Obedient, Genesis 12-25): Learning the Secret of Living by Faith). In this chapter, Abraham expresses his emotions to God through questions. Wiersbe points out that Abraham had three concerns that brought him to this point: his safety (15:1); his heir (15:2-6); and his land (15:7-21).

Trust God even when the way is not clear (Genesis 15:1-5). In

verse one, we have two “first mention” phrases. He opens with, “The word of the Lord came,” and it points us to the fact that when we deal with fear, our faith is to be placed in the Word of God and not our feelings. The phrase is used over 100 times in the Old Testament.

The phrase, “Do not be afraid,” is the next first mention in the Bible. We discussed this phrase in an earlier lesson. It is important to note that God told Isaac (Gen. 26:24) and Jacob (46:3) not to fear when He reminded them of His promise to Abraham.

The solution to fear? “Do not be afraid, Abraham. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward” (v. 1). God is our protector and provider. He is the I am!

Think about all Abraham has encountered since Genesis 12. He had a lot of time to ponder upon the promises of God. Like most of us, he’s trying to figure out or question how God’s plan will work. Perhaps anxiousness set in as he thought about the fact that he and Sarah were getting older. Also in his thought process, he realized the only person who might be his heir was Eliezer of Damascus.

God reassures Abraham and Sarah they will have a child and Abraham’s descendants would be as numerous as the stars. He had to learn one of the “basic lessons in the school of faith, God’s will must be fulfilled in God’s way and in God’s time” (Be Obedient).

Trust in God results in righteousness (Genesis 15:6). This verse sets the clear pattern traced throughout the Scriptures: a person is saved only and always by grace through faith – nothing more (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23). In other words, God applied the results of the atonement (righteousness) to those who believed in the Lord (the preposition in Hebrew is significant) in Old Testament times.

Those people were, in essence, saved on credit and waiting for

their payment for sin to be made. Now that Jesus has made the payment, citizens on this side of Calvary need only look back and trust what He did on the cross. (The Jeremiah Study Bible, page 22, © 2013, Worthy Publishing).

If you have time, go back and read the entire chapters of Romans 4, Galatians 3, and James 2. Notice and highlight the words believe, counted or impute, and righteousness. Isn't it amazing that this one verse from Genesis takes three chapters of the New Testament to be explained (Be Obedient)?

Trust God to work in His time (Genesis 15:13-16). In verses seven through 21, we see the Lord calling Abraham to remember who He is and giving him an affirmation regarding the inheritance of the land. Then He uses a covenant to ratify His agreement. God gave Abraham His plan for a nation (vv. 13-14, 16-17), himself (v. 15), and the land (v. 18-21) (Be Obedient). All this was to give assurance to Abraham and encourage him to trust God.

The same is true for you and me. His Word is filled with His promises. We are to trust the "I am" who tells us "I will" and to rest in the "I have given" in uncertain times.

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