

## Commentary Genesis Chapters 15 and 16 by Chuck Smith 1.15.25

Pastor John Donovan, cell phone 508-380-0471

Pastor Terry Gerlarneau, cell phone 603-455-4399

Web site [todbc.org](http://todbc.org) email us at [opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org](mailto:opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org)

January 2025 memory verse (NKJV)

Luke 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

## Commentary Genesis Chapters 15 and 16 by Chuck Smith 1.15.25

### Chapter 16

Now after these things ([Gen 15:1](#)) That is, after the battle against these kings, after the meeting of Melchizedek, after the refusal of taking the reward and so forth from the king of Sodom.

the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward ([Gen 15:1](#)).

"The word of the LORD", this is the first time this phrase is used in the Bible. It will now be used many, many times over. But always the first usage is always interesting of a phrase. And this is the first usage of the phrase, "The word of the LORD". Later in the New Testament we find the word of the LORD being identified as Jesus Christ.

"In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness; the darkness comprehended it not" ([John 1:1-5](#)) and so forth. And then "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" ([John 1:14](#)).

The word of the LORD came of Abraham in a vision. It could be that Jesus was referring to this when He said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and saw it" ([John 8:56](#)). "Word of the LORD came to Abraham in a vision."

This is the first time that the term "shield" is used or "reward" is used and it is the first time God revealed Himself as the "I am." "I am thy shield and exceeding great reward." Jesus picked up this term many times in the New Testament. "I am the light of the world" ([John 8:12](#)). I am the bread of life, down from heaven" ([John 6:48,50](#)). I am the good shepherd" ([John 10:11](#)). And so many times Jesus in John's gospel used the "I am," the ego-eimi. "Before Abraham was, I am" ([John 8:58](#)). That name by which God actually revealed Himself to the nation Israel as the God who becomes whatever your need might be. I am thy shield.

## Commentary Genesis Chapters 15 and 16 by Chuck Smith 1.15.25

Abraham, of course, had probably been thinking about the battle now that he's gone back home. Begins to really live the experiences and the excitement. It's amazing how your mind can flash back on vivid and powerful experiences and you almost relive them again. Many of the fellows who fought in some of the wars, you get home and in the middle of the night you begin to relive it. You think you're back out there. You begin to hear the sounds, the shelling. You begin to feel the tension. You begin to scream and you begin to relive the whole experience that makes such a deep impression on your mind, and you're seeking constantly while in it, you repress it. Then it has a way of working itself out later on.

Abraham was perhaps in one of these experiences where he was really again going through the feeling, the sound of the clanging shields and swords. The arrows coming, the shield going up and deflecting it and the sword flashing and the shield going up and protecting, and he perhaps was thinking, "Oh-oh, one of those kings regroup. What if they come down and they catch me by surprise? What if they invade the land and they destroy me and they take away all of my riches?"

He saw that riches were such an uncertain thing. All of the wealthy cities of the Amorites and all were destroyed. The cities of the plain had all been sacked. The wealth of Lot had been taken away. But yet in a moment, these men who had become so rich by this invasion, their riches were taken away. And he saw the uncertainty of worldly treasures and the worldly riches. He began to think, "Oh, what if they come and take away all my riches? What will I do then? What if I'm faced in an ambush and I don't have my shield? What if I'm caught by surprise?" And fear began to grip his heart because the first thing the Lord said was, "Fear not". It always indicates that he was afraid. The Lord said, "I am thy shield".

"You don't have to worry whether or not you have your shield, Abraham. I am thy shield. I am your defense. I will protect you. And you don't have to worry about your great supply. Someone sacking them and taking them off. I am thy exceeding great reward. I'm your resource. If you have Me, you've got the resources with you. You don't have to worry about the provision. You have Me. I am your exceeding great reward". So Abraham made a very wise decision in turning down the puny treasures that were offered to him by the king of Sodom for the greater wealth of God who became his exceeding great reward.

Oh, if we'd only realize if we have the Lord, we have defense. We have the protection that we need, plus also we have the provisions that we need. God wants to be to you everything you need. He wants to be your protector. He wants to be your provider. I am thy shield, thy exceeding great reward.

And Abram said, Lord God (Gen 15:2), Now this is the first time this word is used, it's Adonay, or Adonay is what it is. Actually, Lord God. The Lord signifying the-or Adonay

## Commentary Genesis Chapters 15 and 16 by Chuck Smith 1.15.25

Jehovah is what he's saying. Lord God, notice the God is in all capitals. That's indicating that this now is a translation of that Hebrew word Jehovah, which is a word filled with mystic glory and beauty. Adonay is a title of Lord. And so it is capital "L" and small "o-r-d". The Adonay, the first use of Adonay in the scriptures. The term which is a title that signifies relationship immediately.

Abraham is placing himself in the position of the servant. When he calls him by Adonay, it's a term of relationship. It is Lord in relationship of master. And it can be applied to deity or to man. Abraham was the lord over his servants. When it applies to man, the word is spelled with a small "l". When it is applied to God, it is spelled with a large "L" in our text to help us to understand.

Actually Sarah later on called Abraham lord. It is a term of respect as it indicates relationship, and in the New Testament it is-it's equivalent, of course, is found in the Greek "Kurios" as refers to Jesus, the Lord Kurios, Jesus Christ. Now because it is a term of relationship, Jesus one time said, Why callest thou me Kurios, Kurios? Why do you call me Lord, Lord; and yet you don't do the things I command you? That's inconsistent. That's wrong. You're using a title but you're only using it as a name, it isn't a reality. I'm not truly your Lord.

Many people are using the title, "Oh, Lord," "good Lord," you know and all, and they use it only as a name but not really indicating a relationship. It is a name that should indicate relationship. It's a beautiful, and not name, but a title that indicates relationship. And His title, as far as I'm concerned is the Lord Jesus Christ. His name is Jesus Christ but His title and my relationship, He is my Lord and I want to submit my life totally and completely unto Him.

Now Abraham said Adonay, Jehovah, Lord God. what will you give me (Gen 15:2),

Lord said I'm your great reward. You've just turned down all of the loot, you know, that you had captured from these kings. And so "I am your great reward," he says, What are you going to give me. seeing I have no child, and the steward of my house is Eliezer of Damascus (Gen 15:2)?

So his chief servant was Eliezer and without any children, Eliezer actually at Abraham's death becomes the heir of all of Abraham's good. So what are you going to give me? Anything I have is going to go to Eliezer; he's not even my own son. So You are my great reward. Great, but I don't own anything and if you did give me anything, it's going to, you know, I don't have any child. I don't have anyone to pass it on to. It's interesting how that when you get up into the later years, you don't begin, you begin not to think so much for yourself but for what you can pass on to your children. And so you're not so much laying up for the rainy day as you're just trying to set things up so that your children can have a little easier than you had, if possible.

## Commentary Genesis Chapters 15 and 16 by Chuck Smith 1.15.25

So what are you going to give me seeing I don't have any child? And Eliezer, this guy from Damascus, is the heir of all that is in my house. You've given me no child: no one born in my house who is my heir. And, behold, the word of the LORD (Gen 15:3-4)

Again, the term the word of the LORD. came unto him, saying, This [that is, Eliezer] shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and he said, Look now toward the heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be (Gen 15:4-5).

Earlier He said, "As the dust of the earth." Now look at the stars, see if you can number them: So shall thy seed be." And that famous verse quoted by Paul, James.

And he believed in the LORD; and he [that is, the Lord] counted it to him for righteousness (Gen 15:6).

God made a wild promise to him. Abraham is eighty-five years old. God said, "I'm going to make your seed like the stars of heaven, you can't count them". And "Abraham believed the promise of God." As far-fetched as it might have appeared at this point, "And God accounted his faith for righteousness." And that is why Abraham is called the father of those that believe because our righteousness tonight is imputed to us by our believing the promise of God in Jesus Christ. That Jesus died for our sins and took our iniquities in His own life, in His own body, died in our place and as we believe the promise of God, God accounts our believing in Jesus for righteousness.

He doesn't account my works for righteousness. He doesn't account my prayers for righteousness. He doesn't account my study of the word for righteousness. He doesn't account my diligence or sincerity for righteousness. He accounts my believing for righteousness. That's great because many times, my works are horrible. They're negative. Many times I'm a total failure in my devotions. He doesn't count that against me. He counts my believing for righteousness.

So Paul the apostle speaks of his own experience of righteousness by the law which was perfect. And the "righteousness which is according to the law, blameless. And yet that which was gain to me, I counted loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ: for whom I suffer the loss of all things, and count them but refuse, that I may know him. And be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of Christ through faith" (Philippians 3:6-9). Believing and God accounting my believing for righteousness.

Here's where it all began with Abraham. Abraham believed God. God said I'm going to make your seed like the stars, you can't number them. All right, far out. He believed God and God said, All right, you're a righteous man. He accounted that faith for

## Commentary Genesis Chapters 15 and 16 by Chuck Smith 1.15.25

righteousness. Now it's a good thing because Abraham's works weren't always the finest, either. He did some pretty shoddy things after this. But yet it was the basic believing in the promise.

And we'll point out to you in a little bit, that that believing wasn't always as strong and powerful as it should be because a lot of times Satan comes saying, "Hey, yeah but look, you've-you've really failed in your faith a lot of times, brother. You know, your faith has been weak. You tried other things and he begins to show you that your faith isn't really so perfect. So if he counts faith for righteousness maybe you're going to be kicked out too because your faith hasn't always been steady and strong. Well, neither was Abraham's. And yet God took and accounted his faith for righteousness. We'll get to some of the failures of faith in just a little bit.

And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God (Gen 15:7-8),

Again, Adonay Jehovah. whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it (Gen 15:8)? What kind of a sign? And he said unto him, Take a heifer three years old, and a she goat three years old, and a ram three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took them all, and he divided them in the midst, he cut them in two and he laid each piece one against another, side by side: but the birds he didn't divide (Gen 15:9-10).

In other words, he left them whole. And the fowls came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away (Gen 15:11). The vultures began to come down and descend and Abraham was driving them off.

And when the sun was going down (Gen 15:12), Abraham was tired driving off the vultures from these pieces of the carcasses that he had set out there.

and a deep sleep fell on Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And the Lord said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and they shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years (Gen 15:12-13);

Now "they shall afflict them four hundred years" does not necessarily imply that they would be four hundred years in Egypt. It is God telling him they're going to go down into a strange land. They're going to go down the land of Egypt but they will be afflicted four hundred years.

Now whether or not the-in Galatians the third chapter tells us that the four hundred years which is a round figure, four hundred and thirty years from the time that God made this promise to Abraham, it was four hundred and thirty years from this time unto the Mount Sinai, to their coming out of Egypt. Which meant that the sojourn, which was

## Commentary Genesis Chapters 15 and 16 by Chuck Smith 1.15.25

for four generations in Egypt was not a four hundred-year sojourn in Egypt but about a two hundred and fifteen-year sojourn in Egypt. But they were to be afflicted by the people roundabout them until God would bring them out and bring them into their own land and they would have their own place to dwell.

And so rather than a four hundred and thirty-year sojourn in Egypt, total time in Egypt, it was from the time that the covenant was made with Abraham here at this time. So it makes the Egypt sojourn only about two hundred and fifteen years, four generations.

And also that nation, whom they shall serve [that is, Egypt], will I judge: and afterward they will come out with great substance (Gen 15:14).

Now here's interesting prophecy because they did go down to Egypt. God did judge Egypt. When they came out of Egypt, they really looted the Egyptians. They came out with great substance. They borrowed all the jewelry and all from their masters in Egypt and then they took off with what was really sort of back payment for their slavery.

And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; and thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation (Gen 15:15-16)

That is, having gone down into Egypt. they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full (Gen 15:16).

In other words, the area where they were living it was not yet full. The iniquity wasn't to be fully judged yet.

And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, to the river Euphrates: the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaims, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites (Gen 15:17-21).

Now they never did conquer this much land. God promised to Abraham, to his seed, the land all the way to the Nile River, Euphrates River, and to the Mediterranean. So much broader area than what they have ever captured. Now this was a very interesting and strange experience. These carcasses, driving off the birds, the prophecy of the Lord of the horror of the great darkness which was the time that they, that his descendants would be the slaves in Egypt. And then the smoking furnace, the burning lamp that passed between those pieces and the covenant of the Lord with Abraham. It's a very interesting chapter that is deserving much study.



## Chapter 16

Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: she had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai (Gen 16:1-2).

It's a mistake. Not always is it a mistake to hearken unto the voice of your wife but this is the second time it speaks of a man hearkening to the voice of his wife and both of them at this point were mistakes. Now there will be other times when God will say, "Listen to Sarai and hearken unto the voice of Sarai thy wife".

Now Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan (Gen 16:3),

So Abraham was eighty-five years old.

and gave he her to her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, she began to despise Sarai (Gen 16:3-4).

The barrenness, you know, you can always say, "Well, maybe the husband is unable to have children. Maybe there's something defective with him". But when Hagar conceived so readily, obviously now it is Sarai who is barren, the curse of barrenness in that culture and so Hagar despised Sarai.

And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid unto thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: and the LORD judge between me and thee. Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in your hand; do to her as whatever you please. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face. And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water [The angel of Jehovah found her by the fountain of water] in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur (Gen 16:5-7).

Hagar was running back to Egypt. She was getting out of there and going to go back home. But man, to get back home she had to go through that horrible wilderness area. She surely would have perished in trying to return to Egypt. And so she was by this fountain of water.

And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, where did you come from? Where you going? She said, I'm fleeing from the face of my mistress Sarai. The angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands (Gen 16:8-9).

## Commentary Genesis Chapters 15 and 16 by Chuck Smith 1.15.25

Now she actually at this, she was in wrong in despising Sarai and the Lord is telling her now to return and submit.

And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, thou shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; which means God shall hear and because the LORD hath heard thy affliction (Gen 16:10-11).

So she was probably crying there by the fountain and God heard her cry and He said call your son Ishmael, which means, "the Lord will hear". God will hear.

And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he will dwell in the presence of all his brothers. And she called the name of the LORD that spoke unto her, Thou God seest me: and so she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; which is between Kadesh and Bered (Gen 16:12-14).

So she had made pretty good way down into the desert to Sinai there going near Kadesh. The name of the well is "the well of him that lives and sees me." Beerlahairoi. Beer is well, the well of him that lives and sees me.

And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. And Abram was eighty-six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram (Gen 16:15-16).