

Bible Study Questions

Genesis: The Story Begins – God’s Covenant Continued

Focus

This third major passage on the Abrahamic covenant of grace continues to drive home to us what this covenant is all about and, most importantly, who this God is who has made it – that He is the God for whom nothing is too hard.

Read

[Genesis 17:1-18:15](#)

As you study this passage on your own or with a small group of others, here are some questions for study, reflection, and application.

Questions for Review

(The purpose of these opening questions is to review the passage that was recently preached on in order to make sure that everyone understands the basic structure, events, people, and point of the passage.)

1. Work through some basic review questions for this passage:
 - What’s the context? (Where are we in Genesis; the Pentateuch; the Old Testament; and the Bible as a whole?)
 - Who are the main characters in this section?
 - Is time or place significant in the events that happen in the passage?
 - Is there a conflict or high point in this passage? (What is the structure of this passage that builds to that point?)
 - What was the main point or theme of this passage that was identified in Sunday’s sermon?
 - What surprises are there in this passage?
2. What questions do you still have about this passage that you’d like to discuss?

Questions for Reflection and Application

(The purpose of these reflection questions is to help each other not just understand what the passage is saying, but to think more deeply about what it means so that we can then accurately apply it to our lives today.)

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1. Why do you think there are so many references and passages in Genesis on this covenant God makes with Abraham? Why does Genesis keep coming back to it? Why might God have revealed these things in this not-all-at-once way?
2. What new things do you learn about the covenant in this passage?
3. “God’s people today must practice circumcision to be part of the covenant.” How would you respond to such a claim? Where would you go in the Bible to do so?
4. What was physical circumcision pointing to? How does that help us understand what it means ultimately to have a new heart? (You might consider passages like Deuteronomy 10, 30; Jeremiah 4, 31; Romans 2.)
5. What’s the relationship between faith and obedience? Why is it important that Genesis 15 comes before Genesis 17? (You might like to check out Romans 4.)
6. In what areas of your life are you least likely to believe that God can accomplish His purposes? Why do you tend to think that?
7. What are some of the promises God has made to us in His Word? Which of these do you think seems the most difficult? Do any of them seem impossible to you?
8. What would it mean for you right now and how would it change aspects of your life to believe that God is absolutely trustworthy because nothing is impossible for Him and therefore He can keep all the promises He’s made to us in His Word?

Ongoing questions to ask of any passage:

1. How does the gospel inform your understanding and application of this passage?

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2. Has studying this passage in any way challenged your understanding about who God is and what He’s like? If so, how so?
3. In light of studying this passage, is there any behavior or attitude that you need to personally address in your life? If so, how specifically will you address it?
4. How does this passage help you to love, trust, and worship Jesus more fully?