





A Megalithic Dolmen. These structures are common near Israel's crossing of the Jordan, likely remnants of Sodom's idolatry.

Abraham, Father of the Faithful

Summer Study Campout: July 1-5, 2020

Due: June 20, 2020 (part 1, 2 and 3)

RSVP by May 24, 2020 to glendonrhoades@gmail.com

NAME:

Part 2 of 3

Before beginning Part 2, do a quick resource review. What resources (things like atlases, bible dictionaries, lexicons, concordances, marginal cross references, books, etc.) have you used? Which ones have you thought about using, and would be helpful, but haven't used yet?

Resources used (circle most helpful ones)	Haven't used, but would be helpful

Have you used all of the resources recommended in the resource list and footnotes of part 1 of the workbook (pg iii, 3, 4)?

What can you do to make using these resources easier for the rest of the workbook? Try to do a couple of things to improve your study habits, so you'll be more efficient (e.g. download another Bible dictionary in e-Sword, find the book of maps that's put away somewhere, etc.).

SECTION 3: TOKENS OF THE COVENANT

3. **Read carefully from Genesis 16:15 through the end of Genesis 18.** As you read, make notes of interesting points or things you'd like to look up.

3.1. What repetitions do you find in Gen 16:15-16?

3.2. Why might these verses be so repetitive about these three people?

3.3. Does the verse indicate that God considered Ishmael Sarai's child?

3.4. Does the verse indicate that God considered Ishmael Abram's child?

3.5. Had Sarai been included in any of the promises so far? Did the seed have to come through her?

3.6. What does this mean for Sarai? What are the implications (at this point) about her inclusion in the promises? Try to imagine what it would be like for her at this point.

3.7. How old is Abram at the beginning of chapter 17?

3.8. How old was he when he answered God's call in Haran?

3.9. How many years had passed since Abram obeyed and became a stranger?

3.10. What does the phrase "Almighty God" mean?

3.11. Is this the way God usually refers to himself in scripture? Ever?

3.12. What might be the significance of God referring to himself this way right now?

3.13. What is the meaning of “be thou perfect” according to TSK¹?

3.14. What does the original word for “covenant” mean?

3.15. What is the original phrase for “between me and thee”?

¹ TSK is the Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge Cross Reference module listed as a Commentary in e-sword.

3.16. List out the promises in Gen 17:2-8 and note what is new and what is repeated from previous promises to Abram.

3.17. Was this covenant conditional? Did Abram have to do something to receive it or did God promise it “with no strings attached”?

3.18. Is there something in vs 2-8 that makes it clear that the promise is conditional or unconditional?

3.19. Any other parts of scripture that prove this promise was conditional or unconditional?

3.20. What are the “many nations” referred to here? What does the word signify?

3.21. What’s the difference between “Abram” and “Abraham”?

3.22. Can you break down the meaning of the added syllable between “Abram” and “Abraham”?

3.23. What is the tense (or aspect) of “have I made thee” (vs 5)?² What does this mean?

3.24. What’s the original word(s) for “multiply thee exceedingly” in vs 2 and “exceeding fruitful” in vs 6?

3.25. Why is God emphasizing this fruitfulness so much, e.g. “multiply thee exceedingly” (vs 2), “father of many nations” (vs 4 and vs 5), “nations/kings out of thee” (vs 6)?

² Strong’s does not tell us whether a verse is past, present, future, perfect, etc. You can use Blue Letter Bible online to find the verb tense which is contained within the “parse” in the Hebrew language. Verbs are parsed in many languages, meaning their form shows who the subject is, who the verb happens to, whether it’s reflexive, and what tense/aspect it is in. BLB is in the Resources Tab at nevercease.org. On the BLB website, use the verse lookup and the tools on the verse of interest. Explore the resources on BLB for yourself a bit.

3.26. What is the original word(s) for “between me and thee and thy seed” in vs 7?

3.27. Who is the land specifically promised to in vs 8?

3.28. For how long a possession? Are you sure?

3.29. Could this already be fulfilled? Why or why not?

3.30. What is circumcision (vs 10)?

3.31. Why would God say that circumcision is the *covenant* that Abraham and his seed should keep (vs 9)?

3.32. Which of Abraham's seed were supposed to keep this?

3.33. Fast forward: Who are all of Abraham's (literal) seed? List all the nations or tribes that came from him.

3.34. Do the scriptures indicate whether any of these nations continued to keep the covenant of circumcision? Record the passages you find.

3.34.1. Were the Amalekites from Abraham's descendant through Esau or did they exist in Abraham's time? (Remember that throughout this workbook, you should be listing the places where you get your answers, whether chapter and verse or from another resource like TSK or Strong's)

3.35. How many times is “circumcise” used in this chapter, in any of its forms (circumcised, uncircumcised, etc.)?³

3.36. How many times in the whole story of Abraham?

3.37. How many times does the word “flesh” appear in Gen 17?

3.38. What does the word “flesh” indicate? How is it used elsewhere in scripture?

³ In e-sword, you can search for all forms of “circumcise” by selecting “partial match” in the search options and only searching for the root part of the word. For example, select partial match and search for “circumci”. It will then find “circumcised”, “circumcising”, “uncircumcised”, etc. all at once for you.

3.39. How many times does the word “foreskin” appear in Gen 17?

3.40. What is the original word? Where does the word come from and what are the meanings of these root words?⁴

3.41. Why would God use the reproductive organ as the place for the cutting off of flesh?

⁴ Strong's usually gives the root of words. Sometimes a word is the feminine or masculine form of a more common word. Looking into the more common word may give more information. You may find that *that* word has a root word that it comes from, which will give more information still. In this case, the original word is H6190, which is the feminine form of H6189, the root of which is H6188. The meanings of all three of these words is helpful.

3.42. Did this happen only to the men? Why might it have been applied specifically to men as opposed to women? Any relevant examples in scripture that might help?

3.43. Is the word used in relation to anything other than humans?⁵

3.44. Is the word circumcision used in relation to any other organs of the body?⁵

⁵ Search for the Strong's number(s) in the KJV+ version in e-sword.

3.45. What does the New Testament tell us about circumcision? Read the relevant passages carefully and note findings. (This is the Divinely inspired explanation of circumcision; read carefully!)

3.46. What is a “token” (vs11)?

3.47. What other examples of a token do we have in scriptures? How is it used in each of these places?

3.48. Does your idea of a “token” seem to fit with what circumcision was and where and to whom it happened?

3.49. Dig into anything about this that seems confusing or contradictory. Note your thoughts and findings.

3.50. When was circumcision supposed to happen?

3.51. Try to find out why God chose this day. Record what you find.

3.52. Who was supposed to be circumcised? Was it just newborn babies of purchased servants, or the servants themselves?

3.53. Was anyone in Abraham's household circumcised at 8 days old? Who?

3.54. What does it mean to be “cut off from my people” (vs 14)?

3.55. Does the command of circumcision relate to us now? Refer to your New Testament passages above and *prove* your answers.

3.56. How does the *principle* or lesson of circumcision relate to us? Refer to your New Testament passages above. Give examples that apply to your life.

3.57. Is vs 15 the first time God has connected Sarai with the promises to Abram?

3.58. What is the difference between the meaning of “Sarai” and “Sarah”?

3.59. Why did God command Abraham “thou shalt not call her name Sarai” and choose instead the name of Sarah to indicate her part in the promises?

3.60. What New Testament passages can you find that shed light on Sarah? What did you learn from each?

3.61. The promised seed was through Sarah (vs 19). Is this speaking of being a literal descendant of Abraham through Sarah?

3.62. Can we be literally descended from Abraham through Sarah?

3.63. Who was the ultimate promised seed, i.e. the promised literal descendant in the greatest sense?

3.64. Can we be a part of that blood descendant? How? Do the scriptures say this explicitly?

3.65. Is there any other way that any Gentile could ever be any part in the promises concerning a *blood-descendant* of Abraham through Sarah?

3.66. Study Abraham's reaction in vs 17. Why did he laugh?

3.67. Was 100 yrs old for a first son in those days? How do you know?

3.68. Was 90 yrs old for a woman to give birth in those days? How do you know?

3.69. What do you think Abraham's expression in vs 18 means?

3.70. Up to this point, could Ishmael have been thought of as the promised seed?

Compare previous promises.

3.71. What is promised concerning Ishmael?

3.72. What does “Isaac” mean?

3.73. Why was Abraham’s promised son to be named this?

3.74. What is the “set time” of vs 21?

3.75. What does it mean “God went up from Abraham”? Who was speaking with Abraham and how?

3.76. How many people do you think were circumcised the same day that God spoke to Abraham? Why do you think that many?

3.77. Can you find any indication of how long or how well circumcision was kept by Abraham’s descendants (Israel and other descendants)?

Once you've looked at a section in detail, and developed a conclusion on it, it's a good idea to check that conclusion against what other people have found, particularly well-studied individuals who understand the gospel correctly.

Often, their conclusions may differ from yours based on details of a different study on a different topic altogether. At first glance, the two topics are unrelated; only if you've done the other study will you see how it relates to this one.

An example of this is Nimrod. Studying Genesis 10 seems obvious, but a study of Daniel or Revelations will give us a much, much better idea of the system of things that Nimrod developed - this is the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, and the basis for "Babylon the great" in Revelations.

This underscores the importance of being a well-rounded scholar of the Bible. You can never fully understand one story or one topic without the rest. It's why the daily readings are so important, and it's why we should try not to pick and choose our favourite topics and leave the other ones to other people to study. Everything's related.

3.78. What other reference books might help expand our understanding of the institution of circumcision and the change of names? What do those references say?

Once you've looked at a section in detail, it's always a good idea to **re-read** that section, with what you've learned in mind. This is where you make connections, and the story comes alive. It's also usually when all the little facts you've found out combine to make the lessons of the story much deeper and more powerful. It's the lessons of the story that are really valuable.

Often as you're re-reading a section, you'll find several more things you need to look into, or perhaps a problem with a conclusion you've come to. That's alright. It's great, actually. It means that re-reading the section has added significantly to what you've gained from the study.

The expression "He/she can't see the forest for the trees" is used to describe someone who's lost in the small details and isn't seeing the big picture. They've missed the point because their only view of the topic is through a microscope. It's important to keep the big picture in mind all through a study. How do the details we're looking closely at fit with the whole story? Much of the error related to scriptures comes from people who are studying in-depth, but not keeping the big picture in mind.

Reading the whole story before looking at sections in-depth helps with this. Re-reading after looking at the details also helps.

3.79. Re-read Genesis 16:15 through Genesis 18. Look up anything that you still find interesting or intriguing or confusing. Make sure you've looked into everything you noted when you read it at the beginning of this section. Use the space below for notes.

SECTION 4: ENTERTAINING ANGELS

4. **Read carefully Genesis 18-19.** As you read, make notes of interesting points or things you'd like to look up. (We'll only briefly look at Gen 19)

4.1. What is the "plain of Mamre"?

4.2. Where is this place?

4.3. Why is Abraham sitting in the tent door?

4.4. Who are the three men? Is this how “the Lord appeared to him” (from vs 1)?

4.5. Does Abraham know these are angels? Can you know for sure?

4.6. Why would Abraham run to meet them?

4.7. Do the scriptures describe the hospitality of Abraham and Sarah anywhere else?

4.8. Any significance to the things that Abraham offers in vs 6-8, i.e. water, washed feet, rest, food, comfort?

4.9. Why does Abraham get Sarah to make the “cakes”?

4.10. How much is 3 measures of fine meal?

4.11. How much bread do you think that would make?

4.12. What is the fine meal Abraham mentions? Can you find what kind of grain was it?
How was it processed? What was it worth?

4.13. What is “the hearth”?

4.14. Why does Abraham run to the herd himself?

4.15. Can you figure out how old the calf was? How large it might have been? How valuable it might have been?

4.16. What was the butter and milk that Abraham offered?

4.17. Can you find any significance to these items?

4.18. Abraham says to the men to rest “under the tree” in vs 4. In vs 8 it says Abraham “stood by them under the tree”. Do we know anything of this tree? What was it? Has it been mentioned before?

4.19. How do the angels begin their message to Abraham? Is this the way past promises to Abraham have begun?

4.20. Who are the angels’ messages directed for?

4.21. Is there any mention of Hagar or her seed?

4.22. What is the “time of life” (vs 10)?

4.23. What does the phrase “I will certainly return unto thee” mean?

4.24. Where was Sarah? Any significance to this?

4.25. What does “old and well-stricken” mean? How old were they?

4.26. What does it mean that it “ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women”? Is this phrase used elsewhere in scripture?

4.27. How did Sarah laugh *within herself*? What is meant here?

4.28. What is the meaning of the phrase “waxed old”?

4.29. What does “have pleasure” mean in vs 12? What kind of “pleasure” is she thinking of?

4.30. Who is “my lord” in vs 12? Why does Sarah use this phrase?

4.31. Does the New Testament talk about this specifically? Where and what does it say?

4.32. What is the “time appointed” of vs 14? How does it relate to the “time of life” of vs 10?

4.33. How could the “men” have known that Sarah laughed in her heart? What does this indicate to Sarah about these “men”?

4.34. Why does Sarah deny?

4.35. What does the word for “afraid” indicate?

4.36. Where do vs 16-22 take place?

4.37. *Why* does God decide to reveal the future of Sodom to Abraham?

4.38. What does this have to do with Sodom's destruction?

4.39. What was Sodom's sin, in the words of scripture?

4.40. Does this have any relation to the society we live in? What? Give examples.

4.41. Who are “the men” that went toward Sodom (vs 22)? Who is “the Lord” that Abraham still stands before?

4.42. What is the basis for Abraham's "negotiation" with God? What is the reason that He gives that God should not destroy the city if there are righteous in it?

4.43. Was this an appropriate basis for Abraham's request, i.e. was it based on justice?

4.44. In the end, does God preserve the justice that Abraham is concerned with in vs 23 and 25? Does he do it the way that Abraham proposed?

4.45. What are the original words used in this chapter for “Lord”? List verses and original words in each.

4.46. What are your thoughts on Abraham’s conversation with God about Sodom’s destruction (vs 23-33)? What does this indicate about God’s dealings with evil societies?

4.47. Does this have any relation to the society we live in? What?

4.48. Contrast the numbers of faithful men around Lot with those around Abraham. Do we have an indication of how many faithful men were around each one?

4.49. Do the scriptures speak of Lot as a righteous man?

4.50. What do you think might have been the big difference between Lot and Abraham that led to their very different situations? Any scriptures that indicate your answer?

4.51. Who are the 2 angels that came to Lot? Are they the ones that left from Abraham's tent? If so, where is the third?

4.52. Compare and contrast Lot's hospitality with Abraham's. What's similar? What's very different? Why might this be?

4.53. Feel free to study the story of the angels in Sodom as much as your curiosity inspires. Questions on this section are limited to their relation to Abraham directly. Use the space below for notes if you'd like.



4.54. 19:27 says Abraham gat up early. Do we find this in other places? Which ones and why?

4.55. Where is the place that he stands? Can we know exactly where this is?

4.56. What does Abraham see as he looks toward Sodom and Gomorrha?

4.57. Why might it be described as “like the smoke of a furnace”?

4.58. Why does it say “God remembered Abraham” in vs 29?

4.59. Can you locate the place that Abraham was and where the cities God overthrew were? Optional: How about where Lot was and the route he’d traveled? This all might take some real research.

4.60. Re-read Gen 18-19 (just quickly look over Gen 19). Look up anything that you still find interesting or intriguing or confusing. Make sure you've looked into everything you noted when you read it at the beginning of this section. Use the space below for notes.

Do you know how to do your own study? I.e. without a workbook?
It's obviously a good thing to be able to do a study on any topic in scriptures.

Think about what we've done so far:

- **We've located the story in scripture, and quickly looked through the 10 or so chapters before it to gain a wider context.**
- **Then we looked at a few chapters before the story begins in a little more detail to get the immediate context.**
- **We began our actual study by reading through to get an overview of the whole story.**
- **Then, we began back at the beginning of the chapters of study and looked at it verse-by-verse in-depth.**
- **We compared this with other parts of scripture as we went.**
- **We compared our conclusions with those of others after studying in detail.**
- **Lastly, we re-read the chapters under study.**

This is a good basic framework for any study.

The workbooks are simply providing you some direction in how to dig in. They are asking some of the questions that hopefully you would have asked anyway. You probably would have asked several other, different questions. Hopefully you did ask some of those questions and searched for an answer, even though it wasn't a specific question in the workbook. That's what doing a study is.

Don't be afraid to break out of the specific form of questions in the workbook in order to study something that's not specifically asked.

One of the goals of doing these workbooks is helping you develop study habits that you can use for your own studies (ones where there isn't a workbook prepared). As this workbook carries on, you'll be expected to do the study more and more independently. For example, instead of telling you to look up a word in Strong's, then look up the root, then look up where else that's used, the question will simply be "what can you find about this word?" This will give you more flexibility in the way you do the workbook study, but also more responsibility to do the study thoroughly.

**For some study topics (e.g. the atonement, or roles of brothers/sisters, or angels, etc.) there will be several shorter passages that we must go through this process with, but the process is still basically the same.

Congratulations! This concludes Part 2 of the workbook!

Check www.nevercease.org>"Workbook & Campout 2020" for Part 3 of the Abraham workbook for 2020

About the cover photo: Archaeologist Dr. Stephen Collins has done some very interesting research at Tall el-Hammam. It seems to match up with the scriptural description of Sodom better than any of the other suggested sites, some of which dismiss the scriptural references to Sodom's location altogether.

In the plains near Tall el-Hammam are many dolmens (up to 1500 of them), part of the extensive sacrescape that tells the story of Sodom's idol worship. In solemn rituals at solar events, human bone fragments and vessels of oil and grain were carried to these dolmens. After the plain of the Jordan was destroyed by God (Gen 19), these dolmens stood over the burnt, devastated landscape like memorials to the wealthy, advanced, artistic and idolatrous society that God had destroyed in such a remarkable way. It must have become a sort of mourning ground, an eery place of silent destruction where nothing grew, but the charred remains of a civilization consumed by God told a tale of the fate of the wicked.

It was here that the Egyptians held a mourning for Jacob when he died (Gen 50:11), even though it was out of their way to his burial location. It would doubtless have served as an appropriate place of mourning the dead - a valley full of ashes and death.

Later, the Midianite prostitutes seem to have gathered at these dolmens for pagan celebrations, and it is where Israel was camped when they were allured by these cultic rituals. Numbers 25 indicates that the leaders of the people were killed for this adultery - both spiritual and literal - and their bodies hung up, or flayed open [Str], to the sun. This likely happened right on the dolmens where the cultic worship had happened.

The dolmens may even have been where Ehud made his fateful decision to assassinate Eglon, king of Moab (the "quarries" of Judges 3:19) as he was reminded what God's powerful destructive hand was capable of, even against solid, secure, advanced civilizations.

The ancient site of Sodom still stands as a beacon and reminder of God's awesome power to bring iniquity to justice. Collins has found clay artifacts there that are bubbling with green, glassy substance formed only in temperatures of over 1400 degrees Celsius. The sin of Sodom hits closer to home than we might often think:

Eze 16:49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, **pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness** was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.