

Study Guide for sections of the *Commentary on Genesis*, by John Calvin

Extra Reading for the course: "Father Abraham"

ACADEMIC
PACKET

RESOURCES FOR GROUPS
USING THE ACADEMIC PACKETS



Read chapters 11-25 of Genesis in your Bible, and read the corresponding portions of Calvin's Commentary as you progress through the Scriptures.

Review Questions:

Volume 1 of Calvin's Commentary

Genesis, Chapter 11:10-32

1. Does Calvin agree that Abram was the first born son of Terah?
2. From what is the name of the city "Ur" derived?

Genesis, Chapter 12

1. What promises were made to Abram in Genesis 12:2-3?
2. According to Calvin, when God called Abram to leave Ur for Canaan, did he first spent time in Haran (or Charran) because he was doubting the promise of God?
3. What did Abram learn from the fact that he was not received kindly by the Canaanites, according to Calvin?
4. According to Calvin, was it wrong for Abram to build an altar after God appeared to him in Canaan?
5. After Abram arrived in Canaan, was he able to stay permanently in one place?
6. Why did Abram and Sarai go to Egypt?
7. What lie did Abram and Sarai tell to Pharaoh when they were in Egypt?
8. According to Calvin, what was Abram's motive for lying to Pharaoh about Sarai?

Genesis, Chapter 13

1. Describe Abram's financial situation when he left Egypt to return to Canaan.
2. Why did Abram and Lot separate?
3. Why did Lot choose the plain of the Jordan when he separated from Abram?

4. When Ezekiel speaks of the men of Sodom, what sin does he point out as a reason for their destruction?

5. Calvin concludes, regarding the fact that Abram left Lot and again moved to another place, "Let us therefore walk through the world, as persons debarred from all _____, who have no other resource than the mirror of the word."

Genesis, Chapter 14

1. What happened to Lot while the kings of the region around Sodom were at war?

2. What favor did Abram do for Lot while the kings of the region around Sodom were at war?

3. Who was Melchizedek?

4. According to Calvin, from what city was Melchizedek?

5. What did Abram give to Melchizedek?

6. According to Calvin, in what ways does Melchizedek represent Christ?

7. According to Calvin what is indicated by the fact that Melchizedek blessed Abram?

8. Did Abram accept any gifts from the king of Sodom for himself?

Genesis, Chapter 15

1. What does God promise Abram in Genesis 15:1?

2. Calvin says, "whereas the defense of God is greater than all dangers, so _____ triumphs over fear."

3. In Genesis 15:2-3, what concern did Abram present to God?

4. In Genesis 15:5, God promises Abram that his descendants will be as numerous as _____.

5. In Genesis 15:6, we read that Abram believed the Lord, and God counted it to him for _____.

6. Calvin says, "Therefore, we do not say that Abram was justified because he laid hold on a single word, respecting the offspring to be brought forth, but because he embraced God as his _____."

7. What theological point does Paul make in Romans 4:4, based on Genesis 15:6?

8. Calvin says regarding the ceremony in Genesis 15, "In commanding the slaughtered animals to be cut in parts, it is probable that he followed the ancient rite in _____."

9. According to Calvin, what does the ceremony of the cut animals in Genesis 15 teach about God's children?
10. In the vision in Genesis 15, does God reveal to Abram that his people will inherit the land immediately?
11. In the vision in Genesis 15, does God reveal to Abram that he will die soon?
12. According to Calvin, what is symbolized in Genesis 15 by the burning lamp (or torch) that passes between the divided animals?

Genesis, Chapter 16

1. According to Calvin, why did Sarai suggest to Abram that he have a child with her maid, Hagar?
2. What does Calvin say about polygamy at the time of Abram?
3. According to Calvin, was Abram's faith wavering when he accepted Sarai's suggestion to have a child with Hagar?
4. How did Hagar's attitude toward Sarai change when she became pregnant with a child of Abram?
5. What did the angel tell Hagar to do after she had fled from Sarai (Genesis 16)?
6. What practical application does Calvin make from the angel's message to Hagar (Genesis 16)?
7. What name was to be given to the son of Hagar and Abram?
8. How does the angel describe Hagar and Abram's future son?

Genesis, Chapter 17

1. In what sense was Abram to become "Abraham," father of many nations?
2. Are all those who are naturally born into the covenant as descendants of Abraham elected to eternal life?
3. What ceremony did God establish as a symbol of the covenant with Abraham?
4. What does Calvin assert regarding whether female children were partakers of the sign of circumcision that was applied to the male children?
5. What two spiritual truths were symbolized by circumcision, according to Calvin?
6. Who was supposed to be circumcised?
7. What is the meaning of Sarai's new name "Sarah"?

8. According to Calvin, why did Abraham laugh when God repeated the promises of the covenant to him and gave Sarai her new name "Sarah" (Genesis 17)?

9. What was to be the name of the promised son of Abraham and Sarah?

10. Did God also promise to bless Ishmael and make his descendants into a great nation?

Genesis, Chapter 18

1. According to Calvin, were the three men who visited Abraham, as recorded in Genesis 18, angels?

2. According to Calvin, why did Sarah laugh when she heard the Lord tell Abraham that she would have a child within a year?

3. How did Abraham respond when he realized that Sodom was going to be destroyed?

Genesis, Chapter 19

1. When the two angels went to Sodom (Genesis 19), how did Lot try to protect them from the evil intentions of the men of the city?

2. How did the two angels defend themselves from the evil men of Sodom (Genesis 19)?

3. What happened to Lot when God rained sulfur and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah?

4. What happened to Lot's wife when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah?

5. According to Calvin, why was Lot's wife punished so severely?

6. What happened to Lot after the destruction of Sodom?

7. What sin did Lot's daughters commit after the destruction of Sodom?

Genesis, Chapter 20

1. What did Abraham tell Abimelech about Sarah when they were in Gerar? (Genesis 20)

2. In what sense does Calvin think Sarah was Abraham's "sister"?

3. When Abimelech found out that Sarah was Abraham's wife, did he send him away and keep his possessions?

4. What did Abraham pray for Abimelech, and how did God respond?

Genesis, Chapter 21

1. How old was Abraham when Isaac was born?
2. After Isaac was born, what did Sarah ask Abraham to do with Hagar and Ishmael, and what did God tell Abraham to do in response?
3. What happened to Ishmael in the wilderness? Did he die before marrying and having children?
4. What kind of agreement did Abraham make with Abimelech?

Genesis, Chapter 22

1. In what sense did God "tempt" Abraham in Genesis 22?
2. Why was it especially difficult for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac?
3. According to Calvin, why did God make Abraham take a journey before sacrificing Isaac? What did Abraham learn on the way?
4. When Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, what did God do?

Genesis, Chapter 23

1. What was the first piece of land that Abraham purchased in Canaan?
2. What price did Ephron ask Abraham to pay for his land?

Volume 2 of Calvin's Commentary

Genesis, Chapter 24

1. What did Abraham make his servant swear regarding where he would find a wife for Isaac?
2. Did Abraham agree that Isaac should leave Canaan and go live in Abraham's original land if necessary, in order to marry a wife from Abraham's family?
3. What relation did Rebekah have with Abraham?
4. Does Calvin believe that the method that Abraham's servant used to pray for a wife for Isaac was correct?
5. Was Rebekah reluctant to leave her family and go to be Isaac's wife?
6. What did Rebekah do when she first saw Isaac?

Genesis, Chapter 25

1. What does Calvin say about when Abraham probably married Keturah?

2. How old was Abraham when he died?
3. Where was Abraham was buried?
4. What phrase does the Bible use to explain what happened to Abraham after he died?