

## PERSONAL/GROUP STUDY NOTES (GENESIS 21 VS 22-34)

### MONDAY 21/08/2023 - WHEN SWEARING IS RIGHT

Our words are very important. In fact, this will be reaffirmed throughout the rest of the Bible, that when we take an oath or when we **swear** or when we say that we will do something, that we should keep our word. Leviticus 19:12, Numbers 30:2, Psalm 15:1-4, Psalm 24:3, Matthew 5:37, James 5:12

### TUESDAY 22/08/2023 – GOD HIMSELF SWEARS

We should also note that God Himself swears. He swears by Himself, for there is no name higher than God. It is as though God puts His hand on His own heart and swears by His own holiness that He will keep every promise. Psalm 89:3, Psalm 89:35, Psalm 110:4, Isaiah 14:24.

### WEDNESDAY 23/08/2023

#### **The Agreement Initiated/God is with You - Verses 22-23**

Before we go any further, you and I must know that God is with us as we live in this world. The fact that God is with us means that all that God is, is with us. Wherever the Lord will send us, that there will never be anything that will happen to our lives, where God is not with us, to either protect us or preserve us, to empower us, to equip us, we will never be separated from the Lord. You need to know that. Please know this is the case today, tomorrow and for ever, for believers in Jesus. Matthew 28:20, Hebrews 13:5, Joshua 1:9

### THURSDAY 24/08/2023

#### **The Agreement Accepted - Verse 24**

Now this raises a very practical question; and the issue is, can a believer ever enter into an agreement with an unbeliever? Because 2 Corinthians 6:14 says. ***Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?*** So, can you as a Christian enter into a contractual agreement with an unbeliever? **That is the question?**

Abraham has, so the answer to this is, yes, you may. What 2 Corinthians 6:14 is referring to is Gospel ministry. You may not enter into Gospel ministry with unbelievers, because they're your mission field, not your supporters; and it sends a mixed signal to unbelievers that you're trying to reach, that you are working in league with someone who doesn't even believe the message that that you bring. So, 2 Corinthians 6:14 has nothing to do with business arrangements, has nothing to do with financial obligations, has everything to do with Gospel ministry in the name of the Lord.

### FRIDAY 25/08/2023

#### **The Agreement Broken - Verse 25-26**

Abraham agrees to allow Abimelech servants to draw water out of his well, but they have now taken control of the well. They have taken it by force and were no doubt preventing Abraham's flocks from being able to come to this well and drink from it and so, Abraham complained, and rightly so. There's been a breach of the agreement here, and Abraham has every right to come to Abimelech and to present this to him.

***"And Abimelech said, verse 26 "I do not know who has done this thing,"*** I think he's telling the truth. We can't tell from the narrative; but in all probability, Abimelech did not know it was his servants under the leadership of the general that had seized control of this well.

Furthermore, Abimelech said, ***You did not tell me,*** referring to earlier ***and I have not heard of it until today.*** He's only just now learning of this. And this is sad, this is a sad tragedy. Anytime anyone, even an unbeliever, breaks their word, it is a breach of trust. I can't trust you when you break your word. It is a breach of your character, a violation of your character, and it is the harming of other people. So let your yes be yes and your no be no. But that's not what we see here. And so, we do have the right of appeal when an agreement has been broken. And of course, in our advanced culture there are courts and lawyers and the opportunity to appeal, and mediation, and to settle out of court, to settle in court, and we have that right.

#### **The Agreement Reaffirmed - Verse 27-33**

Abraham, who is the offended party, takes the high road and seeks to reaffirm the agreement. It really should have been the other way around; it really should have been Abimelech who took the initiative, and to have, even in a worldly sense, repented and tried to make reparations and restitution; and it should have been Abimelech who took the high road to bring his sheep and his oxen to repay the wrong that had been done to Abraham. But here, Abraham, who knows the Lord, Abraham who walks with God, Abraham who has a sharper conscience and a sense of right and wrong, Abraham who wants to be a peacemaker. You remember even

earlier he let Lot choose first which way he wanted to go, and he would take the leftovers. This is so much like Abraham, and this is so much like a true believer, to be willing to suffer unjustly, and to take the initiative to be a peacemaker.

### **SATURDAY 26/08/2023**

#### **Blessed are the Peacemakers**

Abraham was successful in initiating this peace, he was successful in by being the one who took the lead, to extend the hand of friendship, to try to patch this broken relationship back together. And this is really how a believer a follower of Jesus Christ, is to function in this world.

God is giving us, Bethany Church and other Christians a real practical example of how we are to conduct ourselves, when someone breaks an agreement, covenant with us.

Matthew 5:9, Romans 12:18, 2 Timothy 2:22, Hebrews 12:14

That the one distinguishing mark of personal holiness that is singled out in Hebrews 12:14 is being a peacemaker towards others; and not just towards other brothers and sisters in Christ, which, of course, is prioritised, but even with unbelievers, with your neighbours, with work associates, with people with whom you go to school. We are to be marked as those who pursue peace.

And so, think about your life. Think about the situations in which you find yourself. Think about your relationships. Think about where there may be friction or where there may be tension. Rather than retreat, you should take the initiative like Abraham did to try to repair the breach and to build the bridge back with that person and to offer whatever would be necessary for there to be peace. God honours the one who seeks to establish peace. **How highly God values peace.**

#### **The Agreement Marked - Verse 33-34**

In order to set a landmark at this very place at Beersheba, where this breach was re-established, it was repaired, and now this covenant made, Abraham plants a tree as a remembrance. A Tamarisk Tree. It's a small tree, but it thrives in arid, dry conditions; and it was the right kind of tree to plant there to mark the place where the agreement had been made and there, he called on the name of the LORD.

### **SUNDAY 27/08/2023**

#### **Three names of God**

#### **LORD (Yahweh, Jehovah) (The self-existent One,)**

God is not dependent upon anything outside of Himself for His existence, that everyone and everything outside of God is dependent upon God for its existence, but that God Himself is self-existent. He is autonomous, He is independent, He is fully sufficient within Himself, that God has no needs within Himself. He did not create us because there was something lacking in Himself. God is completely self-sufficient, and therefore we need to call upon His name, because you and I are dependent upon God for everything.

#### **Everlasting (secret, hidden, concealed, unknown.)**

The word **everlasting** in the **Hebrew** means **secret, hidden, concealed, unknown**. There is the element of the incomprehensibility of God, that He far exceeds our comprehension. But there's more to it here, and it is that there is this incomprehensible future that God has already ordained; that God has this unending future, an eternity that is unknown to us, and I don't know about you, but I know this to be true, but I just can't get my head around it. It's too big for me.

Psalm 90: vs 2. He is without beginning, He is without end, and He will endure forever. He will never cease to be God, He will never be put out of office, He will never be removed from his throne; He is the Everlasting God.

#### **God which is El. (mighty, powerful.) (Elohim)**

Usually it appears as **Elohim**, which is in the plural, not meaning more than one, god, but it's referred to as a majestic plural which intensifies the name of **God**, and **El means mighty, powerful**. When you combine **Everlasting with God, the Everlasting God**, it means that God will be, forever throughout all the ages to come, **all-powerful**, that He will never diminish in His strength. He will never grow weary; He will never grow weak; He is forever immutable in His power and in His strength. He will never gain any strength because He already has all strength; He will never lose any strength because He is the everlasting Elohim, He is the Everlasting God. And so, the relationship that we have begun with this God through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ is but the beginning. It is a relationship that will never be broken with God. We will dwell with Him forever and ever, we will see His face, we will serve Him, we will praise Him and adore Him throughout all eternity, all future, and never grow tired and never go weary of magnifying His name.