Walk Before Me And Be Perfect

Genesis 14:16-19:28

Reading Questions

1. How does יהוה make himself known to a prophet?
2. How did the word of יהוה come to Avram in Genesis 15:1?
3. What is a covenant?
4. Why did Hagar despise Sarai?
5. Why did Sarai say what she said to Avram in Genesis 16:5?
6. Who laughed?
7. Is it permissible to serve and eat meat and milk together in the same meal?
8. Are men supposed to *command* their household to follow the ways of יהוה?
9. Why did Lot offer his two daughters in Genesis 19:8?

Reading Answers

1. In a vision (Numbers 12:6)

2. In a vision

3. The phrase “made a covenant” in Genesis 15:18 is literally, “cut a covenant”. The covenant is defined by the Ancient Hebrew Mechanical Translation Dictionary as:

   > *“A solemn and binding agreement between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action. Covenant is instituted through the sacrifice of a choice, fattened, animal that is cut in two pieces, and between which the parties of the covenant pass. If one party fails to meet the agreements of the covenant, then the other may do the same to them.”*

   An example of a covenant through cutting of animals in half and agreeing parties going between is shown in Genesis 15:9-10, 17-18, and Jeremiah 34:17-20.

   While that is the literal example of covenants, generally speaking, it seems that covenants involve blood. Covenants between a man and wife involve the blood that results from the first time the woman lies with a man (Deuteronomy 22:15-17). There is, also, the blood of the New Covenant which is יהושע's (Matthew 26:28, Mark 14:24, Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:25, Hebrews 12:24).

4. It is not really clear to me why Hagar despised Sarai when Hagar conceived and was pregnant. I think it is possible she despised her knowing that the child would

not be hers, but Sarai's, since she was Sarai's maidservant. However, I am not certain if this is the answer.

5. More than just the obvious, that Sarai was now despised by Hagar, this question is getting to the heart of what kind of a woman Sarai (or Sarah) was. I do not believe Sarai would have done anything against Hagar unless Avram had first given her the authority to do so. Knowing that Hagar was now Avram's wife also, and being a woman that feared יהוה and honored and respected the authority of her husband, she knew there was no authority on her part to do anything regarding being despised by Hagar unless Avram first approved. Her only recourse then was to leave it all in the hands of יהוה and trust that He would deliver her. It is because she respected the authority of Avram so much so, and because of her inner struggle to deal with this situation, that she said what she said. Avram's response in the next verse, Genesis 16:6, shows that he gives her permission, because without that Sarai would have been able to do naught.

6. Avraham (Genesis 17:17) and Sarah (Genesis 18:12). Notice that it wasn't just Sarah that had laughed; Avraham had laughed first.

7. Yes (Genesis 18:8). There is a traditional Jewish view that meat and milk must always be separated based upon Exodus 23:19, 34:26, and Deuteronomy 14:21. However, those verses are speaking specifically of milk which is from the mother of the animal being cooked. This may have been a pagan practice which may be why it was prohibited, but it might also be because the milk of the mother was intended for that specific animal to grow and thrive, and to take it and then use it to cook the animal in may be considered improper.

   No verse in the Torah teaches all milk and meat must be separated, it is very specific which meat and milk must be separated. If it were wrong to eat milk and meat together, then the messengers of יהוה would have refused. Since we see Avraham is the one who prepared the meal and יהוה's own messengers eating meat and milk together, it is clear beyond doubt that it is acceptable to eat meat and milk together as long as the milk is not from the mother of the animal we are eating at that specific meal. We do not need separate utensils for meat and dairy either.

   There is no such requirement for separate utensils in the Torah of יהוה given through Mosheh. However, we should remember the principle in Romans 14:21 and 1 Corinthians 8:13. Although those verses are addressing people eating meat offered to idols, the principle here is to not do something openly in front of someone else that would cause them to stumble. For this reason, if I was for some reason eating in a setting where I knew there were Jewish persons around and I was not sure if they were believers yet in יהושע, I would not want to purposefully flaunt that I am eating meat and milk together around them lest they confuse that for thinking we believe in disobeying the law of יהוה.

I may be more discreet in such situations so that they do not misunderstand our intentions or beliefs about obedience to the Torah. Or, if an opportunity arose, I might also explain why I view it as permissible to eat meat and milk together. We would never want to make people think we are against the Torah (Law) of יהוה in any way because #1) we are not – we believe in following all of the laws completely and fully, and #2) that could cause stumbling for Jews to come to belief in יהושע; and we do ***not*** want to cause stumbling – we want them to come to belief in יהושע.

8. Yes (Genesis 18:19). It is true that we are to lead by example, but it is also true that we as men are supposed to be commanding our children and our household to follow the ways of יהוה. There is nothing wrong with giving commands. This is a man's job given by יהוה. We have to stand up and be the ones to do it. We have to speak up when something is not right.

9. I have heard one perspective to answer this question from Jeff Benner of the Ancient Hebrew Research Center. Jeff explained it this way (paraphrasing): Notice how Lot said the men has come under the shadow of his roof in his reply in Genesis 19:8. Hospitality was so important back then, that when someone would come under your roof it was important to protect them so much that people would go out of their way to do so, in this example including to the extent of even giving away his daughters who had not yet known a man to the crazy mob outside the door.

   I think that Jeff's view on this may be correct, and I also consider it a possibility that Lot realized these are messengers of יהוה and therefore did the only things he knew to do to protect them at the time, possibly not realizing these messengers would blind the whole lot of them and protect his household all on their own.

   Lot was definitely in a tough situation, having such a disgusting mob outside his home. This is similar to the disgusting situation in Judges 19:22-28 which shows, again, women being offered in place of the men, and one actually given who ends up dying. We see in Judges 20:5 the man says they were going to kill him, so perhaps it was also this kind of violence in addition to the sexual assault that was trying to be avoided when he offered his two daughters. I am not certain, however.

Reading Notes

- Genesis 15:13 says they would be afflicted for 400 years, but the timeline study I did came out to estimating slavery only lasted, at the most, 144 years. This is based on the starting point of slavery being the year after Yoseph's death, and the ending point being 430 years after the promise was given to Avraham (Galatians 3:17).

  Yoseph's death is calculated to be in the year 2369 and the promise given to Avraham is calculated to be 2083, the year Terach died and he left Charan. 2083 + 430 = 2513. 2513 – 2369 = 144 years of slavery.

Perhaps the 400 years is referring to one hundred years from each of the 4 generations in slavery? Genesis 15:16 says they return in the 4th generation. Perhaps Genesis 15:16 is referring to the generations of Lewi (who lived 137 years), Qehath (who lived 133 years), Amram (who lived 137 years), and Mosheh and Aharon (who lived 120 and 123 years)? These periods of time obviously overlap, so I'm not sure on what the 400 years or the 4 generations refer to specifically, just presenting some possibilities based upon the timeline studies I've done.

Or, more likely I think, perhaps the 400 years is referring to the time period from 30 years after the promise until the exodus? The reason why that is possible is because Genesis 15:13 also mentions being "sojourners" as well, not just the affliction of slavery. Therefore, perhaps the 400 years includes not just the time of hard bondage in slavery, but also time of sojourning. That is what I think is most likely the best explanation for the 400 years mentioned is that it may include also the time of being sojourners, since that is also mentioned in that verse.

- In Genesis 18 Avraham discusses with יהוה when would a city be spared if a certain amount of righteous persons dwelt in that city. This reminds me of how when יהוה returns those who are His will be caught up in the air to meet Mashiach (1 Thessalonians 4:17) and transformed (1 Corinthians 15:52), and then the destruction through fire will come upon the whole world and many will be slain (Isaiah 66:16, 2 Peter 3:7-12). This destruction might be part of fulfilling Deuteronomy 13:13-16.

Related Verses

Avraham A Prophet: Genesis 20:7
Avraham Chosen & Name Change: Nehemiah 9:7-8
Sons of Free Woman Not Slave Woman: Galatians 4:19-31
Circumcision: Exodus 4:24-26, 12:48-49, Leviticus 12:3, Luke 1:59, Luke 2:21, John 7:22-23, Acts 7:8, 16:1-3, Romans 2:28-29, 4:1-25, Galatians 2:3, 5:1-12
Covenant: Jeremiah 34:17-20, Zechariah 11:10-14, Malachi 2:14, Matthew 24:45-51, 26:28, Mark 14:24, Luke 12:42-46, 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:25, Hebrews 12:24
All Nations Blessed In Avram & In His Seed: Genesis 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14, Acts 3:25-26, Galatians 3:8
Lot's Wife: Luke 17:31-32
Men of Beliya'al Surround House & Daughter Offered: Judges 19:22-28
Meat & Dairy Together: Exodus 23:19, 34:26, Deuteronomy 14:21