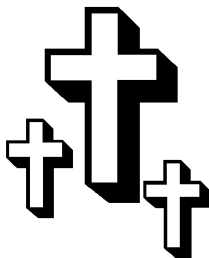


DO I WORRY?

3 Cures for Worry

taken from

Genesis 15



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DO I WORRY?

The title of tonight's class is "DO I WORRY?" We start in Genesis 15 with the worrying saint. The first three words of Genesis 15 say, "after these things." "After these things" means Abram has had four previous, victories. In chapter 14 we saw the victory he had over his mental attitude. How that Abram, when he heard that his nephew Lot was in the catastrophe, why he wasn't full of "I told you so's" and "Lot's getting what he deserves," and all the rest of it.

Abram understood some of the principles found in the Word of God and he acted upon them and he applied them. First of all, he understood the principle, even though Lot had done something wrong and was in a catastrophe, a hopeless situation, he understood the principle that you can never ever build your happiness on someone else's UNHAPPINESS. Never. Lot was in the status quo of misery. He was a prisoner of Chedorlaomer and he was in a hopeless situation. However that was no cause for rejoicing on the part of Abram, even though Abram had been hurt by Lot. He didn't say, "I told you so." He didn't rejoice in the fact that his nephew was in serious trouble. So he won that great victory that very few people will have, and that's the victory of the mental attitude.

Then we also saw how he had a tremendous military victory. Then he won a victory over motivation. He refused to become an extremely wealthy person. He could have been a millionaire many times over, yet he refused to accept from the King of Sodom all the wealth of the Jordan Valley. Then, finally, the last verse of chapter 14. We find the greatest victory of all, the victory over self-righteousness. He refused to impose high standards of maturity on believers who were new to the Christian way of life, as it were.

Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre were new believers. They hadn't had the opportunity to understand the Word as Abram understood

it. They hadn't had the opportunity of growing in GRACE. So he did not make an issue out of things which they could not understand, but that he could. So he won the great victory that so very few Christians win today and that's the victory over self-righteousness. Some believers can't wait to turn respectable so they can also turn self-righteous. They are those who are "Holier than thou."

It's very interesting. Some of the worst people that you will ever know, as far as just living it up is concerned, as soon as they become believers, as soon as they shed some of their previous habits, suddenly they feel as if they have arrived and they are filled with tremendous self-righteousness which destroys their testimony and their opportunity for service.

Chapter 15:1, "After these things," refers to the fact that Abram has just won four great victories. The principle behind this is, now that Abram has been victorious four different times in chapter 14, Satan will have a counter-attack in chapter 15. We are **most vulnerable to defeat after we have been victorious in our Christian experiences.** Many times pride comes in and we begin to congratulate ourselves as if we have arrived. The result is that you become very vulnerable. There are various subtle attacks, one of which is pressure. What happens, is that we react to that pressure simply by worrying.

What isn't said, but what is implied throughout the entire chapter is that Abram got involved in worrying. So, these first three words, "after these things," mean after Abram had great victories Abram began to worry. So, chapter 15 is a very practical chapter. It's a very wonderful chapter because it tells us something of the problems of worrying and how to handle it.

If you have never worried, I don't know how you're going to get much out of this passage. If you have gone through life in

some form of limbo or sort of Ivory Tower, and your character has always been characterized by placidness and you have never had anything to worry about as long as you have lived, this won't be practical to you at all. In fact, you won't know why all this big fuss about worry. But, it's here and it set Abram back and he failed.

Here is Abram, one minute he's a great believer, chapter 14. And the next minute he's a complete and total failure. All of his failures can be attributed to, in chapter 15, the fact that he began to worry. His motto was, "Why trust the Lord when you can just worry." So, he followed that procedure to a disastrous conclusion in this particular chapter. Ending where there was disaster, which is always rectified by the Word of God.

We have three great problems in the life of Abram. We first glance at what the problems are and then we'll get to them and see what happens when he gets to them. These are the things that caused Abram to worry:

- 1). This was causing Abram a great deal of anxiety. It was the fact that Chedorlaomer was still the most powerful king in the middle east. Even though his army had been destroyed by this attack at night by Abram and his 318 men, most of the army would recover somewhere on the other side of the Euphrates River. There was still a great army at home. Abram got to thinking about it and he thought maybe Chedorlaomer might just come back with 100,000 men and Abram still has 318 soldiers of his own household. So he started to worry about the possibility of Chedorlaomer taking vengeance. He became concerned that somewhere along the line, that this king would come back and cause him a lot of trouble. So, that was one of his first problems.
- 2). The second cause for anxiety. He had insulted the King of Sodom by refusing to make a deal with him. Remember the deal that the King of Sodom proposed? He said, "I'll take the people and go back to the Jordan Valley and you take the wealth." Abram refused and said he

wouldn't even touch a shoelace, after he had some help from Melchizedek. Now there's some antagonism from the King of Sodom. Abram lives near the Jordan Valley. Now there's the possibility that the King of Sodom might seek to take vengeance on him. He's worried about that also.

- 3). The third cause for worry. The fact that Abram does not have a son. Even though he's been promised that he would have a seed that would live forever, even though he's been promised that from his loins would come several nations, yet at this particular point he no longer believes those promises and he's worried about that also.

This is more or less the outline of Abram's worry, when chapter 15 opens. Chedorlaomer, King of Sodom, might retaliate and this fact of not having a son. I'm sure that you do not have the same basis for anxiety in your life. You don't even know who Chedorlaomer is. You don't have to worry about him and could care less. You're not worried about the King of Sodom either, because you "slapped him in the face," as it were. And you're probably not worried about not having a son either. See, none of those things are pertinent to you at this time. But there's a tremendous analogy which follows out throughout this passage. You do have something in your life, that if you succumb to it, you'll start worrying. Maybe you're worrying and you cannot have this inner peace and inner happiness and inner blessing.

And you cannot have the victory and the wonderful things that God has provided for you as long as you worry. Worry is more of less a SYSTEM OF LEGALISM. Under the concept of worrying you're trying to solve your problems through your anxiety instead of LETTING GOD SOLVE THEM. If you're worried about your problems, or any problem in your life, then that worry is HUMAN WORKS ATTEMPTING TO SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM. You have to decide WHO IS GOING TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS IN YOUR LIFE, YOU OR GOD.

It's interesting. I just had a fellow, not too long ago, pull up on the parking lot and ask me if I was the pastor. I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, I've got a problem." We just went through this about two hours ago. He came from Dallas. I asked him why he stopped here. He said, "I don't know. I just drove here and pulled up on the parking lot." He's got serious problems. He figured he had committed the unpardonable sin and there was no way back. I asked him to take a deep breath, so he took a deep breath. I said, "You're still alive so you're here and you should go off and running."

If God solves your problems then you have no anxiety or worry. You have perfect peace knowing the battle is the Lord's. But if you try to solve them, then you're going to be in a state of constant anxiety. You're going to be upset, as Abram was between these two chapters. So, with all of these problems it's time for Abram to panic and that's exactly what he does. He falls apart.

When we open chapter 15 we are no longer looking at the victorious believer of the previous chapter. We are looking at a believer who is out of fellowship through anxiety and worry and he needs help. Even though Abram has failed, **God doesn't fail him.** In his failure God is gracious to him. Not while he's in fellowship, but out of fellowship. He's out of it and you'll see it. Yet God does not withhold His help from him.

Therefore, in the first seven verses of chapter 15 we have the first of three cures for worry. I don't know how many books have been written on "worry." They have psychiatrists, and sociologists and all kinds of people making all kinds of money on worry, psychosomatics and everything else. But, here are Biblical answers, three Biblical cures for worry. This chapter is beautiful and practical. It should be in the book of James because that's where all of the practical stuff is.

The first of three cures to anxiety, and the cure which is given in the first seven verses, you'll never guess what it is. **THE WORD OF GOD.** You thought I'd never say

it. The first cure for worry is **THE WORD**, period. Now notice how this goes and you'll see it. It says, "after these things," and this reminds us: 1— great victory followed by defeat. Abram began to worry. "After these things," the psychologist came to Abram and said "Lay on the couch and tell me about your childhood." What do you read there? "After these things the Word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, Fear ye not, Abram, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward."

There it is. You say, "Where?" There it is. What's the principle? **The Word of God is the solution to THE ANXIETY AND PROBLEM.** God has provided His Word, promises, techniques and categories whereby we may avoid any type of anxiety and worry in this life. So, when it says, "the Word of God came unto Abram," the principle is that this was the solution to the anxiety which was to destroy his spiritual life and to weaken him.

Before we go any further with this passage you have to ask yourself a very honest question. "**Do I worry?**" Am I the type of person that easily becomes upset? You may not think that you worry, but if anything upsets you, then this is a pipeline to worry. If you live in panic, if you're easily disturbed and upset by circumstances in life, then you do worry. As long as you do worry you are **off balance and out of fellowship and unstable.** Therefore, you are not enjoying this wonderful GRACE life which God has provided for each one of us. It's a terrible thing to go through life worrying, full of anxiety and fear.

So, some of you may like, as a pass time, gardening. So, there's a nice shiny day and you go out and putter, if that's what you do, in the garden, but you're worried and you don't enjoy it. You dig up the petunias.

Others like to putter around a golf course. Well, if you're worried about something, you don't enjoy it. You may have to work and you go to work but you can't enjoy work if you're worried. You said, "enjoy work?" Do you know as a believer in the

Lord Jesus Christ you can enjoy work? But you see, if you're worried, you can't enjoy your work. Whatever you do, no matter how pleasant it may be on the surface, you can't enjoy anything while you're worrying. I'll tell you something else that is very important. **neither can anyone else enjoy you while you're worrying.** You know when a person worries they sort of give off an odor. I don't mean that really. But there's a certain stink that goes with them. We'll see it a little later on coming up in the passage. Have any of your friends avoided you lately? Well, maybe you're a "worry wart." If there's anything that is unpleasant, it's to be around someone who is constantly upset and worried.

After this situation here in chapter 14, to have this great battle, possibly Aner, Eshcol and Mamre just probably sat around with Abram and talked about this great battle where they ran Chedorlaomer out of town. But Abram was so worried that they probably left him sitting there and they avoided him. So, the only friend that Abram had left was God Himself. And the beautiful thing about it is **God never changes towards us, even when we're worrying.** Even though we may change from one minute to the next. See, in chapter 14 Abram was victorious. And in chapter 15 Abram was a complete failure. How are we going to get him out of this? Here's a start, "the Word of God came unto Abram."

I gave you three worries of Abram. Two of them are covered in this promise. It says, "fear not." That's a command to stop worrying. Every time you see that expression, "fear not," "fear not," "fear not," that's a command to stop worrying. "Fret not," the whole 37th chapter of Psalms, "fret not," is the same thing. Notice, "fear not," stop worrying, "I am thy Shield." Why shield? A shield is a military device. He's worried about this battle in which he was victorious, and he's afraid that maybe this guy's going to come back and counter-attack. God says, "Stop worrying about that. I'm your Shield. I've got your flank covered." Abram's worried about Chedorlaomer. He's looking back. Chedorlaomer can have an army of 100,000

or a quarter of a million. It doesn't make any difference how large of an army he has or how mad he gets, or how much he is motivated by the desire to revenge. Those things make absolutely no difference. Why? Because, "Abram, I am your Shield." That's why. "The battle is the Lord's." You don't have to worry or look over your shoulder. You belong to the Lord, you're growing in GRACE. You don't have to worry about this person or that person taking vengeance on you because THE LORD IS YOUR SHIELD. You just keep your "nose clean" and study the Word, you make application, you grow in GRACE and He'll protect you. That's a promise. That's one of many.

At this point Abram has a decision to make. He's got Chedorlaomer over here and He's got the Lord over there and the Shield in between. Abram can either worry about Chedorlaomer coming back or he can believe the Word of God. It's that simple. You have a situation in your life, we all have situations in our lives, where we have to make a decision. Are we going to worry about that situation, or are we going to believe that the Lord is our Shield and our Buckler. It comes up all the time. There's never a day that passes that you don't have to make that decision and make that choice. Many times we make the wrong choice and we let that pressure or that worry or that anxiety pull us right down and neutralize us. It's that simple.

Abram take the choice. You can believe the Word of God, "I am thy Shield," and you can relax. Or you can worry about Chedorlaomer and fall completely apart. So, keep on worrying about him, have a nervous breakdown and we'll send you up to Mt. Herman sanitarium. That's indigenous there in the ancient world.

Then the next phrase. He was worried about vengeance from the King of Sodom. Or about the King of Sodom maligning him because he refused all of that wealth. Perhaps he was beginning to feel sorry about the fact that he refused all that wealth. And began to think in terms of how fantastically rich he would be if he would have accepted all of that money. He would be a millionaire

many times over. Maybe he began to regret a little bit and worry about that decision that he wouldn't take a shoe lace. So, now we have another promise. What would be fitting there? "I am thy exceeding great reward." Don't worry about the money or the details. Don't think about it twice. I can take care of you. All of the reward that Abram will ever need will come from the God of the Universe, whose wealth is inexhaustible.

So, he'll never have to take anything from anyone. God will provide. There's a Hebrew word for that, JEHOVAH JIREH, which means "the Lord sees and the Lord provides." Now it's a question of whether Abram will believe this promise or not. God will provide. Will he believe that or does he worry about the King of Sodom and rethinking the fact that maybe I should have taken the money?

The more you worry, the further you go from blessings from the Lord. In other words, if you try to solve it yourself, as soon as you put you in the picture, **God cannot work on your behalf.** God will not come where He's not invited, as far as solving your problems are concerned. Worry is simply a manifestation of the fact that you are not going to let God solve your problems and you're going to work on them for yourself. "I can do it myself." The repercussions are fantastic.

In verses 2 and 3 Abram is satisfied on two points, but the third cause of worry is still in mind and now we have his worried response. Verse 2, "And said, Lord God, what will You give me?" See, he's responding to "You are my Reward." Are you going to give me more money? I have lots of money. I don't need money actually. I want a son. I want a son from my own loins.

This brings us back to Abram's hopeless situation again. His wife is barren. He has no children, no progeny and so he complains. Here's a principle: Whenever you find a person who worries, you find a person who ALWAYS complains. They go together. He's a real whiner. "Lord God, what will you give me, seeing I go childless, and

the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?" Eliezer of Damascus is his foreman, the steward of his house, his heir at this point. He doesn't have any children of his own. He and Lot have separated and now his will has been made out to Eliezer of Damascus, who is not related to him in any way.

Verse 3, "And Abram said, Behold, to me Thou hast given no seed: and lo, one born in my house is mine heir." Here is something else that comes out of worrying. Not only do you have COMPLAINING when you worry, the next thing is "It's all your fault God." "See, you haven't given me a son." You haven't given me a son, in other words, there's really no one he can blame at this moment so he tries to make a patsy out of God. This is what worry does for you. Instead of depending upon the Lord to solve the problems and to meet his needs, No, it's all God's fault. You can see that at this point he is pretty far gone. "Thou hast given me no seed: and lo, one born in my house is mine heir." and that's Eliezer of Damascus.

So, we have the Word of God coming again the second time. I want to ask you a question. At this particular point in Abram's life He is definitely out of it. Does he deserve a revelation from God? Absolutely not. He's out of it. So, we have the Word of God coming again the second time. We have it in verse 1 and now we have it in verse 4. I want to tell you something. God is very patient. God is very GRACIOUS. God is very faithful. And now He gives Abram another promise with regard to his third worry. He's answered all three worries. SHIELD, REWARD, SON. Abram's out of it all three times and still he gets an answer.

Verse 4, "And behold the Word of the Lord came unto him saying, This shall not be thine heir," this one, Eliezer of Damascus, shall not be your heir. "This" in verse 4 modifies the word "this" in verse 2. So, at the end of verse 2 this Eliezer of Damascus is the one we're still talking about in verse 4. "This one shall not be thine heir." He won't be your heir. "But he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir."

"Bowels" here are your own being. Your heir's going to be your own flesh and blood son. This is a promise. Abram is complaining. Abram is blaming God. He's in a hopeless situation. No children. There's no human possibility of children. The situation is desperate. In a sense Abram has given up. He's worried. He's disturbed. He's off balance. He's in status quo anxiety. He can't even think straight. Now he's been given promises so he faces another issue.

Now what are you going to do Abram? Are you going to believe the promises of God? Are you going to believe the circumstances? Here's your circumstance, barrenness, hopeless, or are you going to believe the promises. If you trust in circumstances then the only thing that you can do is worry. If you trust in the promises of God then you have to recognize that the battle is the Lord's. And you "Stand still and watch the deliverance of the Lord." And you "Cast all your cares on Him because He keeps on caring for you." And you stop worrying about anything, but in "everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving you let your requests be made know unto God." You recognize that "with God nothing shall be impossible." And you fulfill Isaiah 41:10, "Fear thou not for I am with thee: be not dismayed for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." So take your choice Abram. What's it going to be? If you're going to go any place in this Christian life, you can't stay down here in worry and misery.

Not only are you miserable by worrying, but you make everyone else around you miserable. So, take your choice. See, God is very patient. He's tapping His foot, waiting for Abram to trust Him so He can pour out on him. He demonstrates His patience not only by giving him two promises here, but He goes another mile and He illustrates them, too. So many people say "I can't understand the Word of God." The Word of God is so written and so declared that it is IMPOSSIBLE to miss it, IF you study it. He gives him two promises and then He supports it with

three illustrations. You know, how much further can He go? Hey, dummy. Listen. Here it is. Here are the promises. Now if you don't believe them, let Me illustrate them for you.

So in verses 5-7 we have three Divine illustrations. It's interesting to me how people make human illustrations. I seem to think that the Word of God is written by God the Holy Spirit and His illustrations are better than mine. So stick with them. You don't have to make up your own. You've got them right here. In verses 5-7 we have three Divine illustrations. What are these three Divine illustrations? These three Divine illustrations say to you and I that God keeps His Word. That God will solve Abram's problems and God **will solve your problems, if you let Him.** If Abram will just stop worrying long enough God will take over.

In fact, God is tapping His foot just waiting to help Abram. But Abram keeps getting in the way of the Lord. Abram keeps shoving God out of the way, as it were. He's in essence saying, "Let me worry about it God. I can do a better job than you can."

Now some illustrations.

Illustration #1: The stars. This is both an illustration and an analogy. The illustration, making reference to the stars, simply says this: Look Abram. I want you to look up. He says, I hold all the stars in place. Billions of stars, all moving at tremendous rates of speed. The ones beyond those, which you can't see, are more stars and more stars. They move throughout this space without a collision. They all have a course. They are all moving at fantastic rates of speed. And I hold them together Abram. Now, Abram, if I can do that with the stars, don't you think I can handle your little old problem? See, that's the approach. Just go outside and look up at the stars. If He can handle that traffic pattern, He can handle your "traffic pattern. That, in addition to the illustration, is an analogy. Well, Abram, if you can count the stars up there, you have a pretty good idea of what is coming out of your loins. You talk about having no children, listen, nations

are coming from you. If you can look up there outside and count those stars, then you can begin to know just exactly what you will have in the future. This is the way it is stated in verse 5. "And He brought him forth abroad," which means outside, "and said, Look now toward Heaven, and tell the stars." We know one thing, it was at night. "Tell" is count. "Count the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be." Can you number those stars? You cannot. Neither will you be able to count the tremendous number of people who will come from you. That's the first illustration. And you're worrying about just one child.

The second illustration, verse 6. "And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness." You say, "man, this is out of place." Doesn't this sound like it is out of place? He's talking about the stars, the promises and now here's salvation. Let me correct the translation a little bit for you. "Abram HAD believed in the Lord." He didn't believe at this point. In fact, he's worrying right now as made his decision. We're talking about a believing person.

The first illustration, the stars, verse 5. Second illustration, salvation. The corrected translation: "Abram had believed in the Lord." He didn't believe at this point. He had believed in the Lord, past tense. Something that had happened in the past. This is the perfect tense in the Hebrew, which means an action that has been completed. He believed many years before in Ur of the Chaldees. This isn't telling something that Abram did at this moment. It's an illustration of something that had been completed in the past and he needs to learn a lesson from what He's done about salvation.

In other words, there's a lot of lessons that we can learn from salvation. Whenever you're disoriented, whenever you're worried, whenever you're upset **go back to the point when you were lost and without Christ and when you accepted**

Him. And how did you get into the Plan? Salvation is an illustration of a lesson to learn for life.

Abram had believed in the Lord, at which point he was saved. He, God the Father, credited it, or counted it, to him for righteousness. What's the point here in this second illustration? Look, Abram. When you were saved you were a sinner. In God's sight you were His enemy. In God's sight you were evil and wicked. There wasn't anything good in you and there was no way that you could save yourself. In God's viewpoint you had no merit. Even your righteousnesses were as filthy rags in God's sight. So, you were a very unlovely creature and God would not have anything whatever to do with you UNTIL you believed in the Lord.

Now, if the Lord Jesus Christ died for you, and He did the most, what do you think he's going to do for you, Abram, now that you're saved and His son? In other words, why are you worrying? Jesus Christ hadn't died historically in Genesis 15, but in the mind of God it had already occurred because it was in the mind of God and in the Plan of God billions of years before men existed. That's the doctrine of eternal decrees applied to the circumstance.

Abram was saved. At the point of salvation, like all of us, he was dead. He was lost. He was evil. He was an enemy. What will God do for him now that he is His child? What's the point of the second illustration? Abram, the greatest problem that you ever had was spiritual death. You came into the world physically alive, but spiritually dead. That was solved when you believed in the Lord. **If God solved your greatest problem, salvation, can He solve your problems in time?** In other words, Romans 8:32, "God, who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?" So, the second illustration is this: If God did the big thing for you in salvation, what's He going to do for you now? If He did the big

thing for you when you were His enemy, what will He do for you now that you're His friend, now that you're His child?

The answer: He can only do much more than the most. The answer says, in effect, from the second illustration, there is no problem in life, there is no difficulty in life, there is no adversity in life, there is no hopeless situation, to which God does not have a perfect solution to the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But worrying gets you no where. Nothing will ever be solved while you are worrying. **Worrying is you doing something. God always deals with us in GRACE.** You have to stop doing EVERYTHING. **Every moment, every second that you spend in worrying, you're delaying God's blessing for you.** He's trying to bless you, but you have elbowed Him out of the way. You have shoved Him aside. You have straight-armed Him.

All the time that you are worrying you're telling God that you're smarter than He is and that you can handle your affairs much better than He can. As long as you worry, YOU'RE DOING SOMETHING. God says you have to stop doing for GRACE to be able to pour through to you.

Illustration: That was the way that you were saved. You didn't do anything for your salvation. God did it all for you. The Father planned it, the Son executed it and the Holy Spirit revealed it to you. You didn't do anything for your salvation. That's the second illustration. Learn something from it.

The third illustration is past faithfulness.

We have three illustrations: Stars, count them. Salvation, how we got into the plan. The third thing is past faithfulness, verse 7. "And He said unto him, I am the Lord that brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it." How did Abram ever get to Canaan? God's faithfulness. He got tied up in Haran. It was a dead end, the dried up place. God brought him out. God's faithfulness took him to the land. He slipped out and

went to Egypt. God's faithfulness brought him back. He had failed many times and God had always been faithful to him.

Here he is right now, after all these tremendous experiences and adventures, and all these marvelous things that God has done, so it says take a look at your past, Abram. Has God been faithful to you in the past? You would have to say, "Has He ever!" Imagine attacking that great army with 318 men! Imagine getting out of Egypt with his whole skin when he lied to the pharaoh about his wife! Imagine getting out of that dried up place! Imagine getting out of that cattle war with Lot! Of course, the Lord has been faithful. You have to ask yourself a question along the same line: **Has God ever been faithful to us over our past, as believers?** Well, the fact that we're here tonight is about as much evidence as you need. We're alive, we're here.

Apparently we're not lacking anything, including oxygen. So, Abram, believer, what does the record show? Take a look! Go back and check the record. God has been faithful to you in the past. Now, Abram, is there any reason to suppose that God will stop being faithful now? Well, he may say, "Well, look how terrible I've been." It doesn't make any difference how terrible you are.

God's love doesn't depend on how good or how bad we are. God's love depends on God. God's love depends on the nature of God. Every once in a while you find human love in life that is compatible to that. When a person loves someone else, regardless of what someone else does to them, because they just have the character and the capacity for that love. Even though they are often poorly treated.

God's love doesn't depend on how we treat Him. Or how we behave, or how we misbehave. **It doesn't make any difference.** God's love is not remotely dependent on that at all. God's love depends on **who and what God is.** It always goes back to who and what God is, His essence. Because of God's character, He can only deal with us in

one way, that's GRACE. He can't deal with us in any other way. Since the moment we believed in Christ, there's only one way that God can deal with us and that's in GRACE. NEVER on the basis of our merit. NEVER on the basis of demerits.

You see, here is Abram doing all of this worrying and it doesn't depend on him one way or the other. So, we have three illustrations of God keeping His Word: The stars, count them. Salvation, GRACE. The past faithfulness of God. Look up, see the stars. Look inside and remember your salvation. Look out towards the past and remember God's faithfulness.

In the first seven verses is the first cure for worry, the Word of God. Notice verse 1, "The Word of God came to Abram." Verse 4, "The Word of God came to Abram." And then three illustrations. Twice in this passage we have promises and we have three illustrations of the faithfulness of God and the GRACE of God and the love of God.

Now, I don't want you to be disturbed for one moment, but just think of some of the sins that you have done in the past and just stop and think, **you are still here.** Isn't that amazing? You actually are still here in spite of the things that you have done. "Praise the Lord anyhow." But, that isn't a true statement if you think about it. You're not here in spite of the things that you have done. That's a negative. **You're here because of the very nature and character of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

You will remain on this Earth because of the nature and the character of God, because He has a plan for you. As long as He has a plan for you, when you leave this Earth you're going to go somewhere to something that is so much better that it is beyond human description. You may say to yourself many times, "I simply don't deserve all of these wonderful things of eternity. And you'll be absolutely right. None of us deserve them. You may have thoughts somewhere that you've collected a fantastic record of good deeds. It may be a lot of wood, hay and stubble that will burn up.

But there is one thing that is absolutely certain: **God has a marvelous eternal future for you and I.** It includes so many wonderful things that are described and so many wonderful things that are not described that it's absolutely fantastic. When we start to put this package together about God's Plan and God's GRACE and see this category and the doctrines that are involved, you always have to remember that all of these wonderful things that we are going to have in eternity, **we are not going to have them because we are something special.** Because we are NOT something special. We're going to have the whole works because **He is something special.** Because of His character and because of His nature and because of His person. Because He is immutable and can't change.

For example, in Hebrews 13:8 it says, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever." He doesn't change. We change but He doesn't. Here is Jesus Christ talking to Abram. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever." Well, is Abram the same yesterday, today and forever? No way. Yesterday, chapter 14, he was great. Today, chapter 15, he is terrible. But the GRACE of God goes right on and it doesn't change. See, the Word of God is there for him, whether he's in it or out of it. God's still faithful. Abraham gets some discipline, but we make our own discipline most of the time. We manufacture it ourselves. We think sometimes that God is spanking us, but all we do is manufacture it for ourselves.

For example, worry. The nature of worry is where we make our own discipline. When we stop trusting the Lord we worry. When we worry we manufacture our own discipline. We don't need help from anyone else. I hope that after this class, that if nothing else, you begin to see that it is not only silly and ridiculous and a little bit stupid to actually worry. But adding to that, **worry is an insult to God.** You wouldn't think for one minute of stepping up and slapping the face of the Lord Jesus Christ, but in effect you do when you worry.

In fact, it hurts the Lord more when you worry because that is thinking. It hurts Him

more if you do worry than if you did step up and slap Him. It couldn't hurt Him nearly as much because your thoughts and your thought pattern can hurt the Lord much more than any physical activity, any hostility expressed, for example, in slapping. So why insult the character of the Lord? You have every right to insult yourself. We can all look at ourselves and be very insulting if we were honest. Why insult the Lord and think that He is suddenly going to stop caring for us? That He can change? That He can become mean and vindictive and hate us?

He can't do it. It's impossible. He can't change His character. His character was established billions of years ago. There never was a time when it wasn't established. Long before we existed. Now you can begin to see that Christianity is designed so that the praise and the glory will go to God. Specifically our praise and our glorification goes to God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Worrying is insulting God.

So, the first solution to worry is to get into God's Word, the thinking of God. 1 Corinthians 2:16 says the Bible is the mind of Christ. The second cure for worry is found in verses 8-11. This is different categories of the Word. This is a cure for worrying. In other words, it's categories that you already know. Not something that you dig out when you have a pressure. We have in verse 8 the problem of Abram's ignorance of certain categories of doctrine. He's going to present in these five animals five different categories of doctrine that will stop you from worrying. They all pertain to occupation with Christ.

Verse 8, "And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" He's asking how do I know? How can I find out? As a result of that he gives him a heifer, a ram, a turtledove, a she goat and a young pigeon. All of these things speak expressly of Jesus Christ, particularly His person and His work. Actually, what the problem was, worrying, the cure is found in the Word of God, in God's promises, and then in certain categories that you need also, that will stop you from worrying.

In verses 1-7 you have the general concept of applying promises to your life. In verses 8-11 there are certain categories that you can apply. Baby believers can apply promises. As you begin to grow you establish certain categories, salvation, spirituality, prophecy, Christian way of life, growing in GRACE, the doctrine of reconciliation, the doctrine of propitiation, the doctrine of the uniqueness of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are just some categories. You go from promises to categories.

In verses 8-11 we see this second cure. This is categories that you already know. Abram still has some doctrinal ignorance at this point. He is speaking here in verse 8 and it says, "And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Remember that he is a believer. He is saying in effect, "How do I know that I'm going to inherit all this that you promised me? How do I know that I'm going to have a seed and the seed will inherit it? How will I know this?" In other words, he is questioning the promises of God. You can tell when a person is worrying. One of the characteristics of a worrying saint is that he questions the promises of God.

Furthermore, the promise had already been given. If you look at Genesis 13:14 it says, "The Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." There is a promise to Abram. In Genesis 15:8 Abram says, "How do I know?" It says, "To thee, Abram, I will give all this land." That's an inheritance. "Unto thy seed." There's a promise that he will have a son. Then it says, "from his own loins." And how long? As long as you behave. No, it doesn't say that. That's not in keeping with the character of God. God can't do that. He said, "I will give it to you for ever." He said, "I will make thy seed as the dust of the Earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the Earth, then shall thy

seed also be numbered." Then He tells him to rise and walk through the land.

In Genesis 15:8, at this point Abraham doesn't believe that promise. Abram says, "How do I know? How can I know that you will give me this inheritance?" If God says He is going to give you something, and if you say, "How do I know?" then you don't really know the character of the Giver. Once God says He is going to give you something, there's no way He cannot give it to you. Abraham is a believer but he really doesn't know much about the Lord.

There are a lot of people who have accepted Christ as their Saviour, but they don't know much about Him. They may know that they are saved but that's about all that they know. Now when he says in verse 8, "How do I know?" That's the key. He doesn't know. Yet the doctrine has been set up for him categorically through these promises and it's going to be done again. It's going to be once more spelled out for him in this passage a little later on. His question will be answered when we get to verse 12 and following.

In the mean time Abram has declared his ignorance, which is a part of the fact that he is worried. Now he gets his first answer. This is not a direct answer to his question, but it prepares the way for his question and He gives a second answer to the problem of worrying, which is categories of doctrine. The answer is given in verses 9 and 10. The Lord Jesus Christ is the beginning of God's Plan. When you accept Christ as your personal Saviour, you are in God's plan, which means that God can only deal with you in GRACE and no other way. God can't deal with you in any other way other than in GRACE. Furthermore, Christ dying for your sins and you receiving it, is a guarantee that God will provide for you in time and God will also provide for you in eternity. Therefore, you can't worry. If God provided for you in time and God provided for you in all eternity, **you can't worry**. It's impossible to worry and still know and believe this doctrine. You can't know **that God is going to meet every need in your life, and that God**

is going to meet every need in eternity, and still worry. You just can't do it. If you really know it, if you really believe it, then you definitely can't worry.

In verse 9 we have types of Christ referring to certain categories of doctrine. "He said unto him, Take me a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon." I know that everyone of you has that as a memory verse. You've got it on your refrigerator and over your bed and in your closet. I want you to see what you can get out of it.

Years ago if I would have read this passage and you said to me "You are a pigeon," that would mean a sucker. You know, some guy trying to take advantage of someone is a pigeon. An easy mark. A turtledove is two young people in the park, cooing. A she goat, I won't get into that. A heifer, that was an overweight woman. And a ram was someone who played for Los Angeles.

Now that I've messed all that up, we'll get with it. We have five types of animal life here, in the sense of lower life. I have to add that because people think that animals are higher than the human race. Robert Redford and other people like that. We have five types of animal life here and they are lower life, lower than man. The first one that we have is a heifer. In the Old Testament, "God in sundry times and in diverse manners, spoke unto the prophets through the fathers, hath in these last days spoken unto us through Christ," Hebrews 1:1. These animals are shadows, Hebrews 10. The things in the Old Testament were shadows of Jesus Christ. Everyone of these animals has a category of doctrine pertaining to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The heifer comes first for one reason: is Abram a born again believer or not? Genesis 15:6 tells us that he had already accepted Christ as his Saviour. He's already saved. Now, if he's already saved, what does he need right now? He needs a heifer. He doesn't need salvation. See, that's a lamb. But he needs a heifer. The heifer is the principle of being restored back to fellowship. The

principle of the Holy Spirit in control of the life.

So, the heifer is restoration back to fellowship. It's an offering. Like David said in Psalm 23, "He restoreth my soul." When a person in the Old Testament was out of fellowship, all they did was bring up an heifer, they would place their hand on the heifer's head, they would identify themselves with it and that would be confession of sin as a believer.

So, what does he need? He doesn't need salvation. He needs to be back in fellowship. He's been worrying. And the heifer is the restoration back to fellowship offering. He needs to get back into fellowship. He needs "Whatever is not of faith is sin." He has sinned in that he doesn't believe God's promise and he's worrying. First of all he needs to get back into fellowship, so He says, "You take a heifer. A heifer is the restoration offering. Once you cut that animal up, it's the same as confessing your sins and God, being faithful and just in forgiving of your sins and cleansing you from all unrighteousness. All of these can be found in Leviticus 1-5. All of your documentation on these animals can be found there.

So, we have the fellowship concept. The next thing that He says to take is a she goat and a ram. Once you're back in fellowship, you need to be occupied with the person of Jesus Christ. Hebrews 12:1, 2, "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." Once you are in fellowship, you have to be occupied with Christ, looking at life from Divine Viewpoint. So it falls into two categories: she goat and ram. These two speak of different aspects of the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. The she goat is the peace offering, sometimes, in 2 Corinthians 5 it's called the doctrine of reconciliation, where Jesus Christ went to the cross and reconciled the **whole world** to God. The she goat is a reconciliation offering, which is the doctrine of the removal of the barrier between man and God. You need to remember that Jesus Christ removed all the barriers, just as Christ will solve all your problems now. After he's back into fellowship, the heifer, he has to be

"Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith."

Secondly, you have the ram, which is the propitiation offering, or God's satisfaction. God is not satisfied with Abram. **God is satisfied with the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.** He said, "This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." Since God is satisfied with the work of Jesus Christ on the cross, and God the Father is satisfied with the Son of God, since you, Abram, are related to the Son of God through regeneration, now Abram, because you are seen as being IN CHRIST, God will deal with you in your relationship with Him, so **stop worrying.**

Then we have two more animals. Here is the reconciliation. Here is propitiation. The two of those are talking about the work of Christ. Now you have the turtledove and the young pigeon. While the goat and the ram speak of the work of Christ and it's application. now we have the Person of Christ. Before you had the work and now you have the Person of Christ. That's the turtledove and the pigeon. In other words, in communion we do the same thing. So as not to take of the Lord's table unworthily, you confess your sin and you judge yourself. That's the heifer. 1 John 1:9. Then you recognize the work of Jesus Christ in the Cross, and that's the cup. Then you recognize the person of Christ, and that's the bread. See, they had the same thing in the Old Testament, only it was done differently.

So, the cup is the she goat and the lamb, while the bread that you take in communion is the turtledove and the pigeon. One is talking about the work and the other is talking about the Person. You will note in the next verse, when we get to it, that in the turtledove and the pigeon, they are not divided. These other animals are divided. The reason that they are not divided, these two birds, the turtledove speaks of the Deity of Jesus Christ in His Person. He's not divided because Christ cannot be divided in His Deity. Christ cannot die in His Deity. The young pigeon speaks of the resurrection, the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, this is Deity and humanity. We have the unique Person of the universe, the hypostatic union. The two together, the young pigeon and the turtledove, remind us of the uniqueness of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, as He is today at the right hand of the Father. He is the God-man. He is the turtledove and the young pigeon. This speaks of the uniqueness of the Person of Christ. He is God and yet He's different from God. Then He's man and He's different from man in that He is God. He's the unique Person of the universe, the God-man. The turtledove and the young pigeon will not be divided and it speaks of the doctrine of the hypostatic union.

We have fellowship, heifer. We have the she goat, reconciliation. We have a ram, satisfaction of God the Father, or propitiation. Then we have the two birds representing the hypostatic union, or the uniqueness of the Person of Jesus Christ. Now, if someone asked you "What about those animals, those five animals?" Five is a picture of GRACE. All of them are necessary for you as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. You have to be in fellowship. You have to be occupied with the Person of Christ. You have to recognize the uniqueness of Him and that God is satisfied with Him and we're reconciled to God through Jesus Christ so WHY WORRY? That's the point!

You see, promises help you not to worry and categories of doctrine help you not to worry. Now, verse 10, "If Jesus Christ did the most for us in salvation, what can He do for us now that we are His children? Only much more." So WHY WORRY? Verse 10, "And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not." Isn't that interesting? "All of these" are the five offerings of Leviticus. Dividing the first and walking between it is restoration back to fellowship. The dividing of the next two is occupation with the Person of Christ. The emphasis is on His death, where He did something for us. We did NOT do ANYTHING for our salvation. **Jesus Christ did it all.** The emphasis is on reconciliation, peace

with God, and propitiation, God is satisfied with the work of Jesus Christ.

"But the birds he divided not." He divided the first three but not the last two because they speak of the Person of Christ. The first three, the work of Christ, the humanity of Christ in resurrection, the Deity of Christ. So, once again the principle. The Father's Plan begins and centers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Along with Christ, God the Father provides for every need that the believer has in time. And everything that the believer has need of in eternity.

Now, in verse 11, worry on the part of Abram, or ANY believer, is an attack on the Father's plan for time. It's an attack upon the Christian way of life and the believer's life on Earth in time. Verse 11, "And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away." Now we know something very interesting. We know why he drove away these fowls that came down to prey on these carcasses. We'll have to call them vultures because that is what they are.

Do you know why he drove those vultures away? Because he had already gotten back into fellowship, the heifer. And he cut the heifer right down the middle. In so doing, he declared his sin. He drove away the vultures and these vultures represent satanic ambassadors, just like the birds that lodged in the tree in the parable called the fowls of the air.

Satan always has his ambassadors, his representatives, his disciples, trying to get you to worry. One of Satan's objectives is to get the believer neutralized by worrying. So, the fowls coming down to prey upon the carcass refer to satanic attacks upon you and specifically in the field of worry. Now turn to 1 Peter 5:7-11 for another look at this concept. It says, "Casting all your cares," or worries, "on Him, for He keeps on caring for you." That's His job. So, you are to cast your cares, your worries on Him because He keeps caring for you. It's not a part of God's Plan for you to ever be in the state of anxiety in anything.

Next it says, "be sober," and you say, "oh, no. Now he's going to go with a booze sermon." "Sober" means mental stability. When you cast your cares on the Lord you have mental stability. Be mentally stable. Then it says, "be vigilant," in other words, be on the alert. Don't worry. Just be alert. "Because your adversary the devil," here's the vulture, and now we have a roaring lion walking about, "seeking whom he may devour." In other words, the vultures wanted to devour the carcass. The devil wants to devour you. How does he do it? WORRY.

Verse 9, "Whom resist steadfast in the faith," claiming the promises of God, "knowing." Remember what part of Abram's problem was? He said, "How should I know that I am to inherit?" "Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." Verse 10, "But the GRACE of God who hath called us unto the eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." In other words, "perfect" is mature, "stablish" is to stabilize you, "strengthen" means to pour the power in you, and "settle you" means maturity.

Here's the principle: **As soon as you get back into fellowship, the heifer, you're going to be attacked by the vultures.** The vultures attack the carcass, but Abram drove them away. What does that mean? It means that he had put his problems in the Lord's hands and refused to worry any more about them.

Here's Abram the worrier, the worrying saint. The first cure for worry was Genesis 15:1-7, the Word of God, the mind of Christ, the Divine Viewpoint of life. The second cure for worry is verses 8-11, specific categories of doctrine. Doctrine in this case pertaining to the Person and pertaining to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The doctrine of restoration back to fellowship, then three doctrines, reconciliation, propitiation, and hypostatic union.

Now the third cure for worry: Prophecy. Some people have no time for prophecy and

some people all they do is prophecy. You see people usually going one of two ways with prophecy. They either have nothing to do with it, or they have everything to do with it. Some say you don't need to know anything about prophecy, all you have to do is witness. All you need to do is go out and win souls. But prophecy is soul winning for Christ. You'll find organizations that are all full of this "Rah, rah, rah," and inspiration and never are filled with the Word of God. **All of the work that counts for God is solid and is built on the Word.** You need prophecy. Revelation says, "The Spirit of prophecy is the testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ." Prophecy helps you personally to orient to both eternity as well as time.

Abram has found a victory but he still has his moments. Now he has some problems with nightmares. Starting in verse 12 through verse 21 we have the final cure, prophecy. In verse 12 let's notice that Abram has a nightmare. Verse 12 says, "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram." He started out resting. He's not going to worry any more. He's relaxed. Then it says, "And lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him."

The words "horror" and "darkness" tell us that it was a nightmare. He has cast all his cares on the Lord. He has driven the vultures away. He went to bed in perfect peace. Then he woke up, as it were, in a cold sweat. Something is bothering him again. He's still worrying. "A horror of great darkness." This time God is going to cure his worries with prophecy. What is he worried about? From this prophecy, he has to be worried about his progeny. A lot of parents come up with the idea of "What kind of world am I going to leave for my children?" Children, Abram does not have yet. He believes that now he is going to have them, but he wonders "What kind of a world am I going to bring them in." This world is a horrible place, it's rough. He says, "I just found out that there are three things that can cause you to worry in this life. I'm not worried any more."

But all of a sudden he wakes up with this nightmare, "What's going to happen to my children?" In verses 13-16 we have the prophecy of Israel's future. The prophecy of Abram's progeny. This prophecy answers the question of verse 8.

In chapter 15, verse 8 he said, "Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" How shall I know? You will notice, this passage, which started in verse 13 says, "Know of a surety." Here's how you're going to know. He's going to know through prophecy, knowledge of prophecy, verse 13, tied in with verse 8. **Knowledge of the future gives the believer assurance in time.** The more you know about eternity, the more assurance you have for time, therefore **don't worry!**

You know, every day that you live as a Christian, is one less day that you'll be here. You'll be absent from the body and face to face with the Lord. There's going to be no more sorrows, no more tears, no more pain, no more sickness, no more death. The more you know about the future the easier it is to live in time. Why worry?

Now, in Genesis 15:13-16 we have the answer, the Word, the third cure, prophecy. In verse 13 we have the prophecy of the Egyptian bondage. He's going to tell them that the Jews are going to go into bondage. In verse 14 He's going to tell them the prophecy of the exodus. In verse 15 He's going to prophesy Abram's death. He's going to be spoken of of dying in the sphere of GRACE. He's going to have a very wonderful death. God's going to tell him how he's going to die. In verse 16 we have the prophecy of the Jews returning to the land. That's the outline, so let's take a more detailed look at it.

Genesis 15:13, "And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety." The word "surety" means with assurance. Here's the key for you. **KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORD OF GOD PRODUCES ASSURANCE.** Knowledge of prophecy of the future produces assurance. **Confidence comes from knowing the Word of God.**

There's a tremendous section in 2 Corinthians 5, which talks about the death of a believer. If you have any questions about what happens to a believer when he dies, 2 Corinthians 5:1-8 is the passage. The principle that you have here and in our passage, Genesis 15:13-16, is **confidence in life comes through knowledge of the Word of God.** That's the secret. We have a wonderful pattern here. 2 Corinthians 5:1 says, "Know this." In verse 6 it says, "Knowing... we have confidence." Then, in verse 8 it says, "We have confidence." The whole secret and pattern is right here, knowledge of the Word of God gives you confidence.

In 2 Corinthians 5:1 it says, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a body not made with hands, but a building that is eternal in the heavens." So, if your body dissolves, and it will, we know that we have a resurrection body coming. That's assurance. Then verse 6 says, "Knowing we are confident that while we are in this body, we are absent from the Lord, but when we are absent from the body we are face to face with the Lord." We know this from these two passages right here. You have a pattern here: Know, know with confidence, then we have confidence. That's the pattern.

The more you know about the Word of God, the more confidence you have in life. The more confidence you have, then it eliminates worry from your life. When you know that you're related to the Lord because you've accepted Christ as your Saviour, you know that He's provided for all your needs in time AND eternity. And you know that you're going to be absent from the body and face to face with the Lord, THAT'S CONFIDENCE. When you know it DOESN'T DEPEND UPON YOU, that's more confidence.

So, Genesis 15:13-16 says that one of the cures for worry is knowledge of the future. "Know with assurance," or confidence, "that thy seed," Israel, "shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's," that's Egypt. This is a prophecy of the Egyptian bondage. "And they shall serve them," the Jews will serve the Egyptians. "And they," the Egyptians,

"shall afflict them," the Jews, "four hundred years," that's four generations actually. The best way to explain it is by mentioning four names: Levi, Kohath, Amram and Moses. That's the best way I know to trace those generations. Levi, the generation that went in. Kohath was the second generation. Levi's grandson was Amram and his great grandson was Moses. Four hundred years. 100 years in those days was a generation. Today a generation is about 30 years.

In verse 14 we have the prophecy of the exodus. What will happen after those 400 years? "Also, that nation, Egypt, whom they shall serve," bondage, "will I judge." The judgments took place in Moses' time. They culminated with judgment, where the first-born in every Egyptian family was destroyed. "Will I judge, and afterward," after the judgment of the Passover, "shall they," the Jews, "come out," the exodus, then notice, "with great substance." Remember, they took the wealth of Egypt with them. The Egyptians were so glad to get rid of them that they gave them all of their gold. This is the story of Exodus 12:35, 36.

The third phase of this prophecy, Abram's death. "Now, where do you fit into the picture Abram? Here you are. I'm going to tell you how you're going to die. Verse 15 is a verse to claim for your death. If you want to go, this is the way to go. "And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace." That's a principle of dying in the sphere of GRACE. Abram's going to live a long, long time and die a very easy, painless death.

Not like Isaiah, who was sawed asunder. Do you know what they did with Isaiah? They took one horse and tied one leg to that leg and then took the other leg and tied it to another horse and they sent the horses off in opposite directions. That's how he went home to be with the Lord. How about that one? You don't want that one. Take this one. It says, "Thou shalt be buried in a good old age." Abram, I don't know what you're worried about. You're going to live a long time. You're going to have health up to the end and your death is going to be painless, after living a very wonderful, long

life. Like Job 5, God's going to pick you when you're ripe, like corn. God doesn't pick rotten corn. He's going to come to a full age.

Isn't that something? Here's a man who's worried right out of his head, he has a glorious future ahead of him in time and a marvelous future in eternity, and you just wonder, "Why does a man like that worry?" Don't be too critical. **Why do you worry?** You've got the same concept that he had. God has promised you that if you keep short accounts, confessing of sin, staying in fellowship a maximum amount of time, growing in GRACE, you'll come to a full age and you will have a wonderful future also. We don't have the time to develop the concept of dying in GRACE here, but it's all here. You can refer to the booklet from Colossians 1:23.

Verse 16 is the fourth part of the prophecy, the return of the Jews to Palestine. It says, "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again." They will return to the land of Palestine. During that 400 years while the Jews are in bondage, the iniquity of the Amorites will reach its peak, but at this time the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. Do you know why? Because Abram's missionary work results in the conversion of many of the Amorites and postponed the judgment of the Amorites for 600 years. A couple hundred years of the patriarchs and 400 years in bondage. Just like the judgment of Nineveh was postponed for a whole century because of the preaching of Jonah, who never wanted to go there in the first place.

This prophecy, four verses, Genesis 15:13-16, was the basis of peace, and strength, and hope and assurance, and it was the basis for evangelism for the Jews during the Egyptian bondage. This was the prophecy that made Joseph take a promise from his brethren, that they would not bury him in Egypt. Joseph knew that the children of Israel were going to leave Egypt and that God would bring them out. This is how he knew, from this passage. Not only is this prophecy a source of great blessing to Abram, and stops any nightmare activity, but this promise was a whole Bible to the

Jews in bondage. For 400 years they lived under the most difficult circumstances. They were saved. They had inner happiness, they had inner peace. Instead of the slavery destroying them, they multiplied. That's the principle of the multiplication of GRACE, when it says "GRACE be multiplied unto you." God always multiplies in the sphere of GRACE. They became, as a result, a wonderful nation in bondage, in slavery, because of this passage right here. The bones of Joseph, the last four verses of Genesis, the 400 years of captivity. That was the "Bible" in that coffin, Joseph's bones.

Verse 17, now Abram, one more word about worrying. "Abram, are you going to be a smudge pot or a flaming torch? Are you going to be a smoking lamp or a lamp shining brightly, that sheds its light unto the night?" Verse 17, "And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark," this is the day after the nightmare, the darkness speaks of pressure and adversity, when pressure and adversity come to you it's dark, when it comes do you shine, do you have a testimony or impact or are you going to be just a smoking, smoldering lamp.

"It was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces." In other words, every believer has some kind of pressure, difficulty, or adversity. One of two things happens. You're either a smoking lamp or you're a bright, brilliant torch. If you worry, then you're a smoking lamp. That's the context of Genesis 15. If you cast your cares on the Lord and operate on the principles of claiming the promises of God, then you're a bright and brilliant torch, shedding light into the darkness of pressure. In other words, how do you take pressure, how do you take suffering, how do you take trial, heartache, difficulty, how do you take it? You see, you have a choice. Worry, and smoke, like a smoking lamp. "Cast your cares on Him," claim the promises of God, have a tremendous, dynamic testimony for Him. "Let your light so shine before men." "Don't put your lamp under the basket." The light shines forth in the midst of your troubles. Say, "take your

choice Abram. What do you do to do?" Of course, you have the SAME CHOICE today. The option rests with us. We can choose the smudge pot, the smoking lamp that gives no light, the area is covered with darkness, it throws out only smoke, no light. This describes the worrying believer.

Or the burning lamp. In time of adversity, we cast our cares on Him, we can rest in Him, we can relax in Him. In other words this passage is saying this: **Don't be legalistic about your sufferings. Worry is legalism because you're doing all the work. Faith is GRACE because God does all the work.** "Cast your cares on Him, for He careth for you."

Then notice, "that passed between those pieces," which is a reference to the experience of the believer. The believer has walked between the pieces. Walking between the pieces of the sacrifice is declaring our appropriation of salvation.

Now, in verses 18-21 we have the first statement of the Palestinian Covenant. The Palestinian Covenant is an unconditional covenant given to born again Jews, which means they will have a land, going from the Mediterranean Sea all the way to the Euphrates. It's very important to understand this. Why do we have this statement now? The Palestinian Covenant tells about the inheritance of the land. Believing Israel's inheritance is a land. Believers in the Church Age inherit Heaven.

So, the Palestinian Covenant is given at this time to Abram. If we want to use this phrase, we can here. It was "given to the person who least deserved it." Abram doesn't deserve it. He doesn't deserve anything from God. Yet, here it is. The first declaration of the Palestinian Covenant.

There are four declarations of this: Genesis 15:18-21, Numbers 34:3, Deuteronomy 30:4, and Joshua 1. Here are four passages that give an unconditional covenant and God says, "no strings attached. Whether you're good or bad, Abram. No matter how your progeny turns out, good or bad, you're going to have the land forever." The word

“forever” means one thing. It means only those Jews who are born again will inherit. **if you’re under a forever covenant, you have to have forever life.** Abram was born again. Isaac was born again. Jacob was born again. That’s why Jesus Christ is called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

So, they are off on a good start, as far as salvation is concerned. Here’s the Palestinian Covenant, which is once again the manifestation of the GRACE of God. Abram believed this promise at a time when he didn’t deserve it. He was a worrying saint. This is God’s GRACE again. God gave him this marvelous declaration, this covenant, when he was worried, upset. Again, the principle, **we never earn or deserve anything from the Lord.**

Here is the biblical cure for worry:
Genesis 15:1-7—**The Word of God. The Divine viewpoint. Emphasis on the promises of God.**

Genesis 15:8-11—Then, **categories found in the Word of God.**

Genesis 15:12-21—Then, **prophecy.**

This booklet was taken from classes taught by Buddy Dano on his series on the book of Genesis, January 5 and 12, 1983.

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