

Study Aids

Discussion Questions and Suggested Readings for “What’s the Message?” Lessons

Lesson Fifteen

Questions:

We first see God’s promise that Abraham would become the father of a great nation in Gen 12:2, then in 15:5, 17: 4 and 6, and again in 22:17. It is repeated later to Jacob (Gen. 35:11) and to Joseph (Gen.48:19). Why is this promise so important and emphasized so often? What are the implications? Is this promise in any way connected to the command to be a blessing to the world? Do you see an image of the many arms of God?

What is the purpose of the story of the separation of Ishmael from Isaac? Contrast the information we are given about the two sons – see Isaac in Gen. 15:2-5; 17:19-21; and 24:1-6. Then see Ishmael in Gen. 16:7-12 and 21:15-21. What different attitudes do you see there? Do the same with Abraham and Lot – contrast Gen. 13:8-18 and 14:18-24 with Gen. 13:10-13 and 19:15-16. Do you see God enforcing a discipline through separation within the chosen family to select the leaders of His people?

What role does separation play today in maintaining purity of doctrine within the Church? Is this important? Can it be abused?

Is there a connection between the Old Testament command to be a blessing, and the instruction Jesus gave that we are to be His witnesses in all the world?

Suggested reading for further study:

God’s Covenant of Blessing (previously recommended), chapter 4, pages 37-63.