

# Genesis 15

- I. God Comforts Abram 15:1-5
- II. God Credits Abram 15:6-11
- III. God Cuts Covenant w/ Abram 15:12-21

## I. God Comforts Abram

### **Genesis 15:1-5**

#### **“Do Not Fear, I Am Your Shield & Your Great Reward”**

• **Vs. 1** *“After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision saying Do not fear”*

#### **1. Maybe Abram Is Scared By God’s Presence or In Awe?**

- **Gen. 26** God Tells Isaac Not To Fear **Exodus 3** Moses hid his face, afraid to look at God
- **Judges 6** God Tells Gideon not to fear.
- **Luke** Zachariah in the temple, **Luke 2** Shepherds feared angel.

#### **2. Maybe Abram was Considering Retaliation For The Military Victory He Just Had?**

- What if Kings retaliate? God says *“Don’t Fear, I’m Your Shield & Reward”*

#### **3. Maybe Abram Is Fearful of the Future of His Estate, His Legacy, Promise of Great Nation?**

- **Gen. 12** God promised to make Abram into a great nation.
- **Vs. 2-3** Might reveal Abram’s concerns: *“What will you give me, since I’m childless?”*
  - In other words How can You be my reward when I have no children?
- **Vs. 3** *“Since You have given me no offspring”*
  - You (God) have not yet done what You had previously promised me.

#### **God Reassures Abram of His Promises**

- **Vs. 4** *“Eliezer will not be your heir, but rather a son from your own body.”*
- **Vs. 5** *“He took him outside and said, “Now look up, just try and count all those stars, that’s how numerous your descendants will be.”*
  - Gen. 13:14-16, Gen. 22:17, Gen. 26:4, Duet. 1:8-11, Rom. 4:18

#### **God Has Compassion For Abram’s Struggles & Concerns**

Doesn’t God Have The Right to Just Say, I told You I Will Make You A Great Nation?

**Psalms 86:15** *“But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth.”*

**Exodus 34:6** *“God is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth.”*

**Matthew 8** *“O ye of little faith, why are you so afraid? Then he rebuked the winds and the waves.”*

**Phillip:** *“Lord, show us the Father, and that will satisfy us. How long have I been with you and you still don’t get it.”*

**Thomas:** *“I’ll believe when I get to touch the holes in his hands and side.”*

**Paul’s Own Admission Regarding God’s Compassion for Him. I Timothy 1:12-16**

**Principle I:** Like Abram, God Comforts Us & Is Patient With Us When We Don’t Always Understand

## **II. God Credits Abram**

### **Read Genesis 15:6-11**

- **Vs 6** *“Then Abram believed God and God reckoned it to him as righteousness.”*
  - **Gal. 3:6-9** Galatians had fallen back into practicing the Law for salvation.
  - **Romans 4:1-8** Righteous because of his faith, not his deeds.
    - 9-17** Righteousness wasn't because of his circumcision.
    - 18-22** Wasn't Abraham's spry young body that produced a son.  
It was Abraham's hope & faith in God's sovereign promise of a son.
    - 23-25** Our righteousness in Christ is credited to us through faith, nothing else.

### **I AM The Lord Who Brought You Out of Ur, I Will Give You This Land**

- **Vs. 7** God reminds Abram, or reiterates the other part of his promise was land.
- **Vs 8** Abram replies and says *“Yes, but how will I know this.?”*
  - We don't get the impression that this is a faithless statement, but rather an innocent question.
  - Here, we get an impression that he is just asking for clarity.
  - Disciples asked Jesus Matthew 24 (Destruction of Temple, Signs of End Times)
    - “How will we know when all these things are to take place”*
    - “When will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and end of the age?”*

### **Contrast of Abram's Question with Zechariah In The Temple**

**Luke 1:18** Zacharias was a High Priest and Was Supposed to Trust God's Words

### **God's Confirmation to Abram Is To Officially Cut a Covenant w/ Abram**

- To Cut A Covenant was an Ancient Near East practice when two parties would make an agreement.
- This could be individuals, or treaties among nations.
- It often included a ceremony, sacrifice and/or meal.

### **God Instructs Abram To Bring:**

1. A 3 year Old Heifer
2. A 3 Year Old Female Goat
3. A 3 Year Old Ram
4. A Turtledove
5. A Young Pigeon

- **Vs. 10** God Instructs Abram to Then Cut The Heifer, Goat, & Ram (We'll come back to this)
- **Vs. 11** Abram drives away the birds of prey that come to scavenge on the carcasses.

### **Principle II: Like Abram, We Are Credited w/ Righteousness for Our Faith - Not Our Works**

Abram's obedience to up and leave Ur was rooted first in his faith.

Abram's success rescuing Lot was rooted first in his faith.

Abram's obedience with these sacrifices & chasing the birds away are based on faith & trust

**John 14:15** *Jesus said “If you love me, you will keep my commands.”*

### III. God Cuts Covenant w/ Abram Vs. 12-21

#### DEMONSTRATION: Cutting Covenant

#### ***“When the Sun Was Going Down, A Deep Sleep & Great Terror of Darkness Fell on Abram”***

- Abram obediently brought sacrifices, cut them as God asked, he chased away the birds of prey.
- Presumably continuing to ward off the birds of prey while waiting on the Lord.

#### **Vs.12** *“The sun began to set and Abram fell into a deep sleep, then a great terror came upon him.”*

- Much like Vs 1, we might ask, what was Abram fearing?
  - Did God give Abram a Vision of What Would Happen to His Descendants? A Preview?
- **Read Vs 13-16 Look At What God Reveals About Abram’s Descendants**
    1. Your descendants will be strangers in a strange land not their own.
    2. They will be enslaved 400 years.
    3. God will judge the nation enslaving Abram’s people
    4. Abram’s descendants will depart with many possessions
    5. You will die at a good old age.
    6. After the 4th generation, your descendants will return to the land I am giving you.
    7. The sin of the Amorites in Canaan (this land) will ultimately be judged by God.

#### **God appears to clarify and provide some comfort to Abram regarding His plan.**

- The Egyptians will ultimately be judged for their sins. *Plagues, Death of 1st Born Males, etc.*
- The Israelites would leave Egypt w/ many possessions *Ex.12:36 Israelites took silver & gold.*
- Abram would die at a good old age. *Gen. 25:7 Abraham died age 175, buried*
- Abram’s descendants would return to the promised land. *Joshua’s conquest*
- God would judge the Amorites living in the Promised Land. *Israel’s victories Jericho, Ai, Palestine, Makkedah, etc.*

#### **God Performs the Covenant Ceremony On His and Abram’s Behalf - Only God is Worthy**

**Vs. 17** *“When the sun had set, it was very dark, a smoking oven and flaming torch passed between the animal sacrifices.”*

#### **Smoking Oven:** Smoking Firepot, Smoking Furnace

*(This could parallel the references to Israel’s future afflictions)*

- **Deut. 4:20** *“But as for you, the LORD took you and brought you out of the iron-smelting furnace, out of Egypt, to be the people of his inheritance, as you now are.”*
- **1Kings 8:51** *“for they are your people, and your heritage, which you brought out of Egypt, from the midst of the iron furnace.”*
- **Jer. 11:4** *“I commanded your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you.”*

We also know that furnaces are used for refining & in reference to silver & gold in scripture.

#### **Flaming Torch:** Burning Lamp, Blazing Torch

**Is. 62:1** *“For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch.”*

**Zech. 12:6** *“On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a blazing pot in the midst of wood, like a flaming torch among sheaves. And they shall devour to the right and to the left all the surrounding peoples, while Jerusalem shall again be inhabited in its place”*

## **Pillar of Cloud by Day and Pillar of Fire By Night**

Exodus 13:21-21, Exodus 14:24

- God did this for Israel as He was:
  1. Delivering them from Egypt (strangers in a land not their own)
  2. As they were leaving with great possessions
  3. The cloud & fire consumed the Egyptians in the Red Sea (judgement)
  4. The Cloud & Fire led them in the wilderness as they were supposed to return to Canaan.

## **Vs. 18 God Makes and Reiterates His Covenant with Abraham**

Think About God's Covenant With Abraham In Light of The New Covenant We Have in Christ

- The Abrahamic Covenant was sealed with the blood of the sacrifices.
- It was God who passed between the animal's bodies.
- It was God who passed through the blood that ran between the halves.
- This is how Ancient Near East Covenants were sealed between the parties.
- Abraham doesn't pass through the sacrifices and the blood. God does so on Abram's behalf.

Jesus Became The **Blood Sacrifice** of the New Covenant  
(Last Supper, *"This is my blood poured out for you"*)

Jesus Became The **Priest** Who Offers The Sacrifice of the New Covenant  
(Hebrews 7:26 *"He is our great high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens."*)

Jesus Became The **Mediator** of the New Covenant  
(1 Tim. 2:5, Heb. 9:15, Heb. 12:24 *"Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance...."*)

**Principle III:** Like the Abrahamic Covenant, God's New Covenant w/ Us Is Executed & Upheld By Himself

### **God's Expectation of Abraham Was to "Walk Before Him & be Blameless"**

- God did not expect Abraham to be sinless. He expected Abraham to be devoted to God
- God doesn't expect us to be sinless. He expects us to be devoted to Him.

When We Stumble, God Is Faithful to Forgive Us. When we are faithless, He is faithful because He cannot deny Himself.

Aren't we grateful that God provides us Comfort when we don't understand His ways?

- He was patient with Abraham and He is patient with us.

Aren't we grateful that God has granted us His Righteousness when we place our trust in Jesus?

- We are not righteous by our works and accomplishments, but rather Jesus' righteousness.

Aren't we grateful that God Has Called Us to Faith In A New Covenant and He is Faithful.

- When we are weak He is strong. He upholds His promises because He is Sovereign.