

## **Genesis 15 - Do Not Be Afraid, Abram.**

*I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.*

### **What is a promise?**

a declaration that something will or will not be done, given, etc., by one  
an express assurance on which expectation is to be based:  
something that has the effect of an express assurance; indication of what may be expected.

### **To have promise?**

to seem likely to be effective or successful in the future

*Have you ever made a promise?*

*One you haven't kept?*

**Is there a way to still keep it? Do what you can to keep your promises, especially to God.**

Do you know God has a promise for you? Many in fact?! One count has it at 3573

Have you heard them? Even one?

*First promise of the Bible:*

*Genesis 3:15, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."*

*The last promise found in the Bible:*

*Revelation 22:20, "He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly.' Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."*

**He has one, even today, for you rest in.**

## **15:1-6**

**The LORD came to Abram in a vision**

### **Have you ever had a vision?**

Vision and promise go hand in hand. They're connected by faith.

*Maybe you like to make things and you have a vision for how it will turn out*

*How did it turn out?*

God's vision is perfect. We must act on what we see in the vision God gives us.

**Do not be afraid - why was Abram afraid?**

**Could it have been because of all of the events of the past chapter? Battle, not making allegiance with Sodom, his position, where his life was headed**

A lot to think about, worry about, even in Abram's day and age

**I am...**

The I am's...And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM, I am the bread of life, I am the light of the world, I am the way, the truth and the life

I am your **shield** - shield/buckler

I am your **exceedingly great reward** exceeding/force/abundance/to great degree, become great/numerous/multiple/increase/enlarge/do much, hire/wages/reward/pay/fare/free-passage

**Fighting with kings, not taking a reward/bribe from king of Sodom**

**What will you give me?**

**He desired of the Lord to bless him**

**We all desire blessing. What differs is who we desire it from and what form of payment we want it in**

*A theme in the Bible - Jacob wrestling*

**No child...what about the promise?**

Part 2 from 12:1-3,

**[Gen 12:2 NKJV] 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.**

**Chief servant someone from damascus...** maybe one of the servants he armed and went to battle with

**But not his own son.** Something so special for a man to have a son

Paul / Timothy son in the faith

**[1Ti 1:1-2 NKJV] 1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, 2 To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, [and] peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.**

*I want to be a true son in the faith. I know you do too.*

**Looking to a servant for an heir...a problem we'll see surface as Sarai's advice later**

**Brought him outside** - how important it is to get outside, get away from your problems for a minute, get a breath of fresh air...and look up

## Look now, toward heaven

Immediately and upward

**Abram had been looking toward earth. His own problems. His own insecurities  
Worried about dying, about the end of his life, about not having someone to pass it on to  
About not having God's promise to him fulfilled**

But did he have any reason to worry? To doubt God? Hadn't God come through on everything so far?

To you...to me...Look now, toward heaven...

**[2Co 6:2 NKJV] 2 For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now [is] the accepted time; behold, now [is] the day of salvation.**

**[Luk 21:28 NKJV] 28 "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."**

**Abram believed in the Lord and the Lord accounted it to him for righteousness**

*Abram was saved. I believe the time at the tree was the turning point in Abram's walk*

*But now Abram was trusting in God's word to him.*

Remember Noah?

**Abram knowing what God personally had for him. Not just for his place to live, his place in the world...but his place and children's in the next**

**It was bigger than he see, bigger than he could ever even imagine.**

(count the stars if you are able to number them)

**More than just biological descendants**

*Paul in romans and galatians brings it up, James does too*

**[Rom 4:1-10 NKJV] 1 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has [something] to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." 4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. 5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: 7 "Blessed [are those] whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; 8 Blessed [is the] man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin." 9**

**[Does] this blessedness then [come] upon the circumcised [only], or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.**

**[Gal 3:6-14 NKJV] 6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." 7 Therefore know that [only] those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, [saying], "In you all the nations shall be blessed." 9 So then those who [are] of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed [is] everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God [is] evident, for "the just shall live by faith." 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them." 13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed [is] everyone who hangs on a tree"), 14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**

**[Jas 2:23 NKJV] 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.**

*It wasn't Abram's actions, good deeds, saving his nephew, being a good neighbor that gave him righteousness.*

*It was **only through faith**. The works wouldn't come until much later, when he was to offer Isaac up.*

**Receiving the blessings of God start with our faith in the one who blesses.  
That God is who he says he is...our shield and exceedingly great reward**

It is immediate, infinite and finite, right in the now with God.

The works, the sanctification, they are that same faith, played out over time

## **:7-11**

God reminds Abram of where he brought him. That he is faithful.  
To this land to inherit it

**I brought you out of that place with an express purpose...to give you a new inheritance**  
What a picture that is repeated over and over throughout scripture  
Our salvation

### **God's promises are full of purpose**

People are missing purpose in this life, and it's evident. School shootings, suicide, not even knowing who they are

The further we stray from his promises, the less purpose we have

**Immediately Abram says, yeah God, but how will I know that I will inherit it?  
Is there a sign? Do I get a signed contract?**

### **Lord, Can I take You at your word?**

*I get the sense of that middle-eastern bargaining spirit here which we can spot a lot of in Abram and his family over the years*

Abram: God, how shall I know?

God: a sacrifice

**We, too, have a guarantee of our inheritance, that we've be saved...through sacrifice.**  
The Holy Spirit himself!

**[Eph 1:11-14 NKJV] 11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. 13 In Him you also [trusted], after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.**

**Don't neglect Him! Do you hear him? Do you trust Him?**

The only sign and miracle we should NEED to see from God is the sign of the cross  
(foolish and wicked generation seeks after signs)

But, from there, we can expect and even ask God to work in more ways.

**We have access to him.**

We have access to God.

We have access to all of human knowledge, can communicate with almost anyone immediately, video, know things happening in near real time - but it is limited, comes at a price, costs us our individuality and freedom. The march toward an AI being, humans not needing to talk, etc.

**But we have something infinitely more powerful and wise - The Great I AM, interested in us, here for us. Ready to both make and keep promises to us because he is in love with us.**

AI will never love you. God will always love you.

### **A cow, a goat, a ram, a turtledove and a young pigeon**

Levitical law outlines these things, but God instituted these long before the law

They are all a picture of the spiritual.

Physical visions of spiritual sights.

*Matthew Henry's commentary*

*Perhaps Abram expected some extraordinary sign from heaven; but God gives him a sign upon a sacrifice. Note, Those that would receive the assurances of God's favour, and would have their faith confirmed, must attend instituted ordinances, and expect to meet with God in them.*

*Observe,*

*1. God appointed that each of the beasts used for this service should be three years old, because then they were at their full growth and strength: God must be served with the best we have, for he is the best.*

*2. We do not read that God gave Abram particular directions how to manage these beasts and fowls, knowing that he was so well versed in the law and custom of sacrifices that he needed not any particular directions; or perhaps instructions were given him, which he carefully observed, though they are not recorded: at least it was intimated to him that they must be prepared for the solemnity of ratifying a covenant; and he well knew the manner of preparing them.*

**When the birds came down, Abram drove them away. They were out there for a while.**

**Abram prepared the sacrifice, but it took time for God to show up (not that God was late)**

But we must be patient for God's timing. God is not a magic spell, a potion, a formula, a genie in a bottle of sacrifice for us to summon up.

He is a living being with whom we have a relationship with.

### **Covenants require sacrifice**

*Signing your life away. Musician telling about how people still sell their soul (not a believer saying this), mortgage, 30 years! AH*

**It is our duty to drive away the enemy from coming and stealing what's rightfully the Lords**

Prayer, vigilance in service, in faithfulness. In protecting the holy from the unholy.

**[Eph 6:12 NKJV] 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual [hosts] of wickedness in the heavenly [places].**

*Our children, our friends, our loved ones, the things God has promised us in this life and the next*

**We must be vigilant to hold on to them. They aren't always just handed over to us.**

**[1Co 4:1-5 NKJV] 1 Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. 3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. 4 For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord. 5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.**

## **:12-21**

**A deep sleep fell upon Abram** - God put Adam into a deep sleep to provide for what was needed for him, a help mate.

**God promised. Abram prepared and God gave him rest.**

*Terror of great darkness  
God in a nightmare?*

**[Exo 33:17-23 NKJV] 17 So the LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name." 18 And he said, "Please, show me Your glory." 19 Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." 20 But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." 21 And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. 22 "So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. 23 "Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."**

**When we really see God, "we fall down as dead" -  
His presence is no joke.**

*He is not the "man upstairs." He is not an old guy with a white flowing beard (although, I hope to be some day)*

*He is an awesome, powerful God, who dwells in unapproachable light*

**When we take a covenant with him, we need to know it is a serious thing**

**[Ecc 5:1-7 NKJV] 1 Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil. 2 Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God [is] in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few. 3 For a dream comes through much activity, And a fool's voice [is known] by [his] many words. 4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For [He has] no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed-- 5 Better not to vow than to vow and not pay. 6 Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin, nor say before the messenger [of God] that it [was] an error. Why should God be angry at your excuse and destroy the work of your hands? 7 For in the multitude of dreams and many words [there is] also vanity. But fear God.**

**[1Co 11:27-32 NKJV] 27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks [this] cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many [are] weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.**

**We do not need to be afraid of God, but we must fear him**

*False religions have a god that must be feared in terror. Believe me, God will be terrifying to his adversaries in the end, but only because they rejected him when he was to be found*

**Psa 116:12-14, 17-19 NKJV - What shall I render to the LORD [For] all His benefits toward me? I will take up the cup of salvation, And call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows to the LORD Now in the presence of all His people. ... I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, And will call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows to the LORD Now in the presence of all His people, In the courts of the LORD's house, In the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Praise the LORD!**

**The real repayment for his covenant, our vow with him...is a life of praise**

**Now God answers Abram's doubts v8, "how shall i know?  
Abram...KNOW CERTAINLY**

**God gives Abram a view of the future** - a prophecy, a vision of a dark time to come  
God's promises shine through dark times.

When there is darkness, know that God promises light at the end of it.



*The world's promises are all light until we take hold of them, and then it is darkness  
Satan to Eve in the garden...a promise of light, but all she got was darkness  
It's too good to be true, it probably is*

A good way to know if it's true is to see the whole story, the good and the bad.

Marriage vows - sickness and in health

**Israelites in Egypt** (end of Genesis)

But they come out blessed - Egyptians send them out with riches trying to get rid of them after all of the plagues

**Now as for you...**a long term promise to his children, an immediate promise to him  
Life to old age, die in peace

**Abram's mid-life crisis - worried after the fight in the land, not making a pact with Sodom,**

**He's going to be OK without worldly protections**

*Health Insurance, 401k, retirement, mortgage, children...all well and good, but in whom are we ultimately trusting? Jake from state farm? Or Jesus from Heaven?*

*Do you know that your God will provide for you in all of these things, if you but trust him?*

**Fourth generation they will return here...**

Abram, this will be your land while you live here in peace, but it will take time before your children come back to possess it.

**The iniquity of the Amorites...God was giving the amorites time to repent.**

Judgment is placed against God and his people for taking over the promised land (promised to them)

*They received it because others didn't care for it. Didn't take care seeking God.*

*God gave the amorites time to turn to them - and if they did, they would have inherited it too.*

*How do I know? I'm not Jewish, I'm Irish...and I've inherited the promises to God's people because of Jesus.*

Judgment would come on the people of the land through God's people. And when it would, four generations later, it would be just. But if it were now, it wouldn't be just.

**That's why God hasn't come back yet.**

**Romans 11 (fullness of gentiles, grafted in)**

**Smoking furnace, fiery torch**  
(pillar of cloud and fire anyone?)

The Holy Spirit, God's shekinah glory, was there, And did the work of offering the sacrifice  
Abram prepared.

**That's the evidence of God's work. That He's the one doing it. Not our own efforts.**

*We come to prepare a sacrifice - reading, worshipping, praying, fellowship, song, ministry...but  
God himself is the one who offers it up.*

**It is no good unless God does it.**

*Our part in it is just to prepare it. We're just the sous chef cutting up the tomatoes. He's the one  
who turns in into something amazing, sweet smelling, pleasing*

**The Nile to the Euphrates..guys, Israel is supposed to be MUCH, MUCH larger**  
Not New Jersey sized, Texas sized

**Israel being abundant**

**On the same day the Lord made a covenant...**

**God will not let the sun go down on his promise to you.**

*Looking up at the stars in the pre-dawn hours of the night, preparing and protecting the sacrifice  
of the covenant all day, the promise guaranteed at dusk*

Night to night Israeli time.

**The day is not over yet for God's fulfilling of his promise to you.**

**Whatever He has promised you, He will do it. You can know that for certain.**

**Look now, toward heaven and ask God to show you.**