

## Genesis Ch. 15

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### Review:

- Invasion / war between kings of Chaldees, Shinar, Elam – and kings of Sodom, Gomorrah – area in which Abram dwelt.
  - As the powerful army of Chedorlaomer returned to their kingdom having been victorious, with plunder, and captives – including Lot and his family.
  - Abram intervenes, pursues, and catches them by surprise – and “slaughters” the kings and brings back Lot.
  - Abram encounters two kings: The king of Sodom offers him worldly riches which he refuses.
  - Abram meets the King of Salem, Melchidedek: who offers him broken bread and poured out wine – Communion; fellowship with God. Abram received a (better) blessing from God, and pays tithes to Him.
  - Abram is dwelling in richness and communion with God and...
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V: 1 We know that the Lord has spoken to Abram a few different times (Genesis 12:1, 12:7, 13:14) – the Lord has “appeared” to Abram – and Abram responded by building an altar and worshipping God.

- Here again God speaks to Abram:

Principle of 1 <sup>st</sup> mention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant.</li><li>• Sets precedent.</li></ul>
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“*the word of the Lord*”: (1<sup>st</sup> mention) is about a vision of God...

The Word of the Lord is Jesus:

**John 1:14** “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

“*Word*” (H1697). “dabar”, translated mostly, “word” but also “speak(s)”, and “commandment”;

**Exodus 34:28** “So he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.” (dawbawr – used both times.)

- Here we see something different – “*the word of the Lord comes to Abram in a vision...*”

“*Vision*” (H236). machazeh, makh-az-eh'; only used 4 X's in the Bible, essentially a waking dream.

- A spiritual insight, a glimpse into the spiritual reality around us.

**Numbers 24:16** “The utterance of him who hears the words of God, and has the knowledge of the Most High, who sees the vision of the Almighty, who falls down, with eyes wide open.”

- **1<sup>st</sup>** “vision” – in this book of beginnings – Elisha and the prophets in the OT.
- Here we are in the last days, waiting on the Lord.

**Proverbs 29:18** “Where there is no vision, the people perish; but happy is he who keeps the law.” (connection between vision & God’s Word)

**Joel 2:28** “And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; you sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.”

- God speaks to Abram through a vision, he spoke to Moses face to face, he spoke to Elijah through a still small voice, Belshazzar saw the handwriting on the wall – the book of Revelation comes to us as John was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day (Rev. 1:10) on top of that, and more - God has given us the Living Word – Jesus Himself.

**Hebrews 1:1-2** “<sup>1</sup>God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;”

**Psalms 138:2** “...for You have magnified Your word above all Your name.”

- [This how I find that God speaks to me, mostly through His Word.](#)
- **1<sup>st</sup>** “*vision*” – is about God, our shield and very great reward.
- **1<sup>st</sup>** admonition / command to “*fear not*”.
- “Fear” is first used in **Genesis 3:10** – where the voice of the Lord caused Adam to fear because he was in sin.
- Now the same voice is telling Abram to “fear not”.

Adam	Abram
Father of all mankind.	Father of all mankind that believes (Rom.4:11)
Had a fig leaf.	Had a shield.
Received a curse.	Received a reward.
Was afraid.	Was afraid – and was comforted.

God wouldn’t tell Abram not to be afraid if Abram wasn’t already afraid of something.

- Abram had just gone through a battle – concerned about reprisal or revenge.

- Abram had just told the king of Sodom – essentially – “go take a flying leap, I won’t take anything from the likes of you.”
- Abram is getting older, maybe feeling his age – wondering if he was ever going to have children.

- *“I am (1<sup>st</sup>) your shield” (1<sup>st</sup>)* – I am your protection.

- Jesus made several “I am” statements:

**John 6:35** “I am the bread of life...”

**John 8:12** “I am the light of the world.”

**John 8:58** “Before Abraham was, I AM”

**John 10:9** “I am the Door.”

**John 10:11** “I am the Good Shepherd.”

**John 11:25** “I am the Resurrection and the Life.”

**John 14:6** “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man comes to the Father except through Me.”

**John 15:5** “I am the Vine,...”

**Revelation 1:8** “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,...”

**Revelation 22:16** “... I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”

**Revelation 22:20** “I am coming quickly.”

- *“I am (1<sup>st</sup>) your shield” (1<sup>st</sup>)* – I am your protection.

**Psalm 91:4** “He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.”

- In Acts Ch. 7 Steven describes the battle the resulted from Abram chasing Chedorlaomer down and rescuing Lot as “the slaughter”.
- Sometimes you’re in a situation that is so hairy that you don’t even comprehend the gravity of it until later.
- You’re wrapped up in events that are moving quickly.
- Returning from the battle, the re-union with your family – dealing with the king of Sodom – fellowship and communion with Melchizedek.
- Finally there is that time to unwind – and it all hits you.

**Psalm 18:2** “The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

God further communicates to Abram:

- *“I am your exceedingly great reward” (1<sup>st</sup>)* – I’m the prize, the goal, the treasure that you seek.

- Significant - this is the only time that this phrase is used in the Bible.

**Revelation 22:12** “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with me, to give to everyone according to his work.”

**Ephesians 3:20** “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.”

*“Exceedingly great reward”* – sounds pricey:

**1 Peter 1:18** “knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,<sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

V: 2 “Lord God” – (Adonai -YHWH) reverently, humbly – right attitude.

- It’s ok to question God – with the right heart, from the right perspective positionally. **Asking:** “**how**”, “**when**”, not: **can You?**
- What great reward could you give me? What I want is a son, and heir.

**Psalms 37:4** “Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.”

- *“Eliezer of Damascus”* – Eliezer is only mentioned here, he later comes into play and greater significance a few chapters down the road.

Eliezer: “God our help” – “ Comforter” – a model or type of the Holy Spirit.

V: 3 You promised that I would be the father of many nations, that my descendants would be as innumerable as the dust – but so far “zip - zero – nada!”

V: 4-5 The word of the Lord comes to Abram – and God affirms His promise to Abram.

- No sense of criticism or condemnation – just affirmation.

**Picture the scene:**

- God puts His arm around Abrams shoulder and says walk outside with me and check out the stars.
- I know you can’t number them, but that is what your descendants are going to be like, like the stars of heaven – innumerable.

- This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> time that God makes or re-affirms His promise to Abram about his children. (**Genesis 12:2 & 7, Genesis 13:16, Genesis 15:5**)

Dust of the Earth ← Stars of Heaven ← Heaven & Earth.

Abram had 2 seeds:

1. Physically, the nation of Israel.
2. Spiritually, the father of all that believe – the church.

**Romans 4:11** “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also,”

- By faith in Jesus Christ we are sons of Abraham and heirs to His promise.

**Galatians 3:29** “And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

V: 6 Abram believes!

- Abram didn’t just “believe the Lord” – as in He would give him lots of kids.
- Abram “*believed in the Lord...*”

**James 2:19** “You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe – and tremble!

- And God accounts that belief, that faith to Abram as righteousness!
- Key principle: Not by works do we attain or manifest righteousness, but by faith!

This is huge! – Abram hasn’t seen it come to fruition yet. He simply believes!

- This scripture is directly quoted in three New Testament passages: **Romans 4:3, Galatians 3:6, and James 2:23.**

**Hebrews 11:1** “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

**Hebrews 11:6** “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

**Ephesians 2:8-9** “<sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

- We’ve seen justification through faith modeled through Noah, but this is the first time we’ve seen it directly stated.

- Abram was faithful to God, but Abram was not saved for being faithful. He was saved for believing in God.
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- Abram had been out of sorts, he'd been grieved seemingly about not having a son.
- Abram is comforted: God re-assures him – and Abram believes

How did Abram get there? (Examining cause & effect.)

1. **Prayer:** V: 2&3 – Abram talked to God.
2. **God's Word:** V: 4 – Then the Word of the Lord came to Abram.
3. **Communion / fellowship** with God: V: 5 – Then “He” / God brought him / Abram outside – they walked together.
4. **Abram looked to Heaven:** V: 5 – Look now toward Heaven.
5. **Abram listened to God and believed.**

- People ask: “how do I give this problem or that concern, or grief to God?”
- Prayer – God's Word – Communion – Fellowship w/ God – looking to Heaven, a right perspective – incline your ear & listen to what God says – and believe!

V: 7 God declares Himself to Abram, reminding Abram that He is the One who called Abram out of the Ur of the Chaldees and has taken care of him ever since.

- God also re-affirms His promise to give Abram the land.

V: 8 Abram asks “how will I know?” – “What is the sign that these things will happen?”

- He's not questioning God's ability, or goodness – he is questioning his own ability to perceive.
- Abraham is being transparent & honest:

**Psalm 51:6** “Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.”

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Abram asks “how will I know?” – God replies, we'll make a covenant – a contract.

V: 9-21 At first glance it looks like God is giving Abram a shopping list.

- The Lord is setting up a contract, a covenant – which will end up being one sided – yet binding from God's perspective.

- In that day and time when two people wanted to create a binding agreement they would take an animal sacrifice and cut it in half, separating both halves.
- The parties in the agreement would then hold hands and walk in between the two portions of the sacrifice, then having done so was considered a binding contract or agreement.

V: 9 Abram is told to get a heifer, a female goat, and ram, a turtledove, and a pigeon.

- Each is a ceremonial clean animal, acceptable for sacrifice.
- Each animal will later be used as a sin offering of various kinds.

V: 10 Each animal is cut in two and laid out, the birds are set opposite of each other as if they were each a ½ .

**Jeremiah 34:18-19** “<sup>18</sup>And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it – <sup>19</sup>the princes of Judah, the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf-.”

V: 11 While waiting on the Lord, the vultures come in, but are driven away.

- Birds are usually analogous to evil in the Bible.

**1 Peter 5:8** “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”

V: 12 Sun set, “deep sleep”

**Genesis 2:21** “And God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam,…”

- Possibly exhausted by his own efforts...
- Abram is set aside, paralyzed, God will do all the work.
- Similarly, God sacrifices His only begotten Son for our sins which had paralyzed us just like Abram. To take advantage of this wonderful gift all we need to do is believe.

Horror & great darkness fell upon him. ???

Isaiah 8:13

Deuteronomy 10:17

V: 13-15 Abram is told what the future holds – as much for our benefit as his.

- Abrams descendants will be slaves in a foreign land – Egypt.
- They will be afflicted for 400 years.
- In the 4<sup>th</sup> generation they will be delivered and brought back to the land of promise.
- They will bring out great possessions and that foreign nation will be judged.

Abram will live a good life, then “be gathered to his fathers.”

- Phrase indicating that he will die.
- Abram’s father seemingly a non-believer probably not “gathered” to the same place.

V: 13 400 years.

**Exodus 12:40** “Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.”

- Exodus describes the total time in Egypt, Genesis describes the time spent in affliction.
- 30 years of blessing under Joseph.

The scriptures describe 3 different times when the Hebrews are put out of their land.

1. Here in Genesis to Egypt.
2. Later in the Babylonian captivity.
3. 70 AD, the Diaspora following the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

V: 14 The nation / Egypt will be judged by God.

- The most powerful nation in the world at that time, plundered, and later – a desolate wasteland, living in subjugation to all the other world powers.

V: 16 Moses is the 4<sup>th</sup> generation.

- The sin of the Amorites is not yet complete:
- God is going to use the Nation of Israel to bring judgment to the Amorites – but they still have a chance to repent.
- God loved the Amorites also and is giving them an opportunity for forgiveness.

**2 Peter 3:9** “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

V: 17 As the sun went down – darkness.

- Smoking furnace: judgment – Jesus Christ - will judge the living and the dead. (**2 Timothy 4:1**)
- Burning Torch: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world. (**John 8:12**)
- Only God Himself passed in between the two parts of the sacrifice – God Himself bears the full burden – there is nothing that we can do.
- Abram's only part, our only part is to believe in the Son of God.

**John 6:28-29** “<sup>28</sup>Then they said to Him, what shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” <sup>29</sup>Jesus answered and said to them, this is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

V: 18 This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> time that God has promised to give the land to Abram and his descendants.

- Genesis 12:7, Genesis 13:14-15, and here.

The boundaries: from the Nile to the Euphrates –

V: 19-21 Currently occupied by 10 groups of peoples.

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Where are you today? Are you tired?

**Matthew 11:28-30** “<sup>28</sup>Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”