

“God’s Covenant with Abram”

Genesis 15:1-21

For the week of January 17, 2021

The Set-Up

Leading up to chapter 15, Abram’s faith has been more general in its nature. It has rested primarily on the call of God as stated in chapter 12. Chapter 15 has one of the high-water marks of the Old Testament in verse 6 which states: *“And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.”* This has been called the John 3:16 of the Old Testament. God seldom allows our faith to remain general. Indeed, crises or difficulties in our life will bring our faith from general to specific. This is exactly the case with Abram in this chapter.

The Story Begins

Read Genesis 15:1-6. How is this passage a model for us today as we walk with God?

“After this...” (verse 1). What is this referring to (see chapter 14)?

“...the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision.” What does this mean, especially since no Scriptures had been written at this period in time?

In verse 1 God tells Abram not to be afraid. What does Abram fear?

What’s Taking So Long?

Abram’s concern (verse 2) was that God had made a promise of an heir, yet nothing had happened, and he was now old (as was Sarai). Was Abram’s concern valid? Have you had any of the following experiences? Discuss each one in your group.

- “God promised me something, and I expected it to happen right away...but it didn’t.”
- “I’m done waiting on God – I’ll take matters into my own hands.”
- “God hasn’t answered yet so it must be something I’ve done wrong.”

Now describe a time in your life where you waited on God. And waited on God. And waited some more. Then He responded. What did you learn from waiting on Him?

Waiting on God means going without answers to prayer, wondering why the wicked seem to do well, and having desires delayed and hope deferred. Thankfully, God has a greater perspective of life and His plans are perfect. Read Psalm 18:30 and Isaiah 40:31 and describe what these passages say about waiting.

Faith & Righteousness

Reread Genesis 15:6. How is faith related to righteousness (see Romans 4:18-25; Galatians 3:5-9)? Which comes first? Which comes from God? Which is indispensable to a right relationship with God?

Reassurance Needed

Look again at Genesis 15:6 and then read Genesis 15:7-8. If Abram believed in verse 6, is he now questioning or doubting God in verse 8? Why or why not?

Is it wrong to ask God for reassurance of His promises? Explain your answer. How do you reassure someone your word is good?

“Cutting a Covenant”

Read Genesis 15:9-11. What is described in this passage is referred to as “cutting a covenant.” It involved the death of animals and binding of people to a promise. The person(s) making the covenant would sacrifice several animals and divide the bodies, placing the halves opposite each other on the ground. Then they would walk between the pieces of the sacrifices. This was a declaration that if they failed to keep their word, they deserved the same fate as the animals.

God is God – And We Are Not

Read Genesis 15:12-21. This passage gives us an example that God is God and we are not. God knows all, and that includes the future. He knows exactly what is coming just as clearly as we know what happened a moment ago. Our future is as clear to God as our past is clear to us.

Is there a current situation in your life that you don't know why it is happening or why God has allowed you to be where you are? Read Proverbs 3:5-6. Based on this passage, how are we to move forward with uncertainty?

What does it mean to “...*trust in the Lord with all your heart*”?

How do God's promises, His wisdom, His power, and His love help us to trust in Him?

All About God

Genesis 15 offers many examples of the attributes of God. Go back through chapter 15 and answer each of the following questions:

- Read Genesis 15:1. How does this verse show that God protects us?
- Read Genesis 15:1. How does this verse show that God Himself is our reward?
- Read Genesis 15:5. How does this verse show that God's blessings are more than we can count?
- Read Genesis 15:6. How does this verse show that God accounts us righteous when we believe?
- Read Genesis 15:13. How does this verse show that God allows us to go through seasons without His blessings?
- Read Genesis 15:14. How does this verse show that God will deliver His people?

- Read Genesis 15:15. How does this verse show that God blesses people even when He allows His people to be afflicted?
- Read Genesis 15:18. How does this verse show that God repeats His covenants?