

Oak Hill Baptist Church



The Covenant with Abram

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The Book of Genesis / Genesis 15

Genesis 15 NASB95

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great.” Abram said, “O Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” And Abram said, “Since You have given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir.” Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.” And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. And He said to him, “I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it.” He said, “O Lord GOD, how may I know that I will possess it?” So He said to him, “Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds. The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror *and* great darkness fell upon him. *God* said to Abram, “Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. “But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. “As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age. “Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete.” It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, *there appeared* a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite.”

Vision - נִחְזָה (mă·hăzē(h)): n.[masc.]; ≡ Str 4236; TWOT 633f—LN 33.459–33.462

revelation, i.e., a rational communication from God to an individual, and communicated to

others, with a possible focus on the visual aspects of communication ([Ge 15:1](#); [Nu 24:4](#), [16](#); [Eze 13:7](#)+)

Theophany - the manifestation of God. The OT contains a number of narratives of or poetic allusions to God revealing himself to men and women. Theophanies frequently are associated with particular holy places, representing the foundation legend of a sanctuary ([Gen. 12:6–7](#); [13:18](#); [18:1](#); [28:1–17](#); [Exod. 40:34–38](#)) or the call of a prophet within it ([Isa. 6:1–8](#)) (Harper's Bible Dictionary)

Theos - θεός (theos), οὐ (ou), ὁ (ho) and ἡ (hē) [Ac 19:37](#): n.masc. and fem.; ≡ DBLHebr 466; Str 2316; TDNT 3.65—1. LN 12.1 God ([Ac 17:24](#))

Genesis 12:1 NASB95

Now the LORD said to Abram,...

Genesis 12:7 NASB95

The LORD appeared to Abram and said, ...

Genesis 13:14 NASB95

The LORD said to Abram, ...

Genesis 15:1 NASB95

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision...

Reckoned - חָשַׁב (hā·šăb): v.; ≡ Str 2803; TWOT 767—1. LN 60.1–60.9 (qal) credit, account, reckon, impute, i.e., keep accounting records ([Ge 15:6](#); [Ps 32:2](#)); (piel) determine value ([Lev 25:27](#)); (nif) accounted ([2Ki 22:7](#)); 2. LN 30.1–30.38 (qal) consider, i.e., pertaining to thought and thinking in a detailed, logical manner, considering various factors, which has some focus on the formulation of an opinion ([Ge 38:15](#))

Heifer - the appointment of a king ([1 Sam 16:2](#))

Goat - Passover ([Exod 12:5](#)), Day of Atonement ([Lev 16:5](#))

Ram - ordination of priest ([Exod 29:1](#)), guilt offering ([Lev 5:15-18](#)), Day of Atonement ([Lev 16:3](#))

Turtledove - regular offerings ([Lev 1:14](#)). purification rites ([Lev 12:6](#))

Young pigeon - *gô·zāl*: n.masc.; ≡ Str 1469; TWOT 337c—LN 4.38–4.46 young of a bird, i.e., an adolescent bird just coming to maturity, but before egg laying maturity, of apparently any species ([Ge 15:9](#); [Dt 32:11](#)+), note: a pigeon in Genesis and eagle in Deuteronomy (rare term only used twice as noted in definition)

Jeremiah 34:18–22 NASB95

‘I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not fulfilled the words of the covenant which they made before Me, *when* they cut the calf in two and passed between its parts— the officials of Judah and the officials of Jerusalem, the court officers and the priests and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf— I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life. And their dead bodies will be food for the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth. ‘Zedekiah king of Judah and his officials I will give into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life, and into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon which has gone away from you. ‘Behold, I am going to command,’ declares the LORD, ‘and I will bring them back to this city; and they will fight against it and take it and burn it with fire; and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without inhabitant.’ ”

The New American Commentary on [Genesis 15:17](#) - The “smoking firepot with a blazing torch” symbolized the presence of God as it passed between the animal parts. Among the many different Hebrew words for oven/furnace is “firepot” (tannûr), which was used for baking bread ([Lev 26:26](#)) and roasting grain for sacrifice ([Lev 2:14](#); [7:9](#)).²⁸⁴ A metaphorical use of “furnace” (tannûr) depicts divine judgment against Israel’s enemies (e.g., [Isa 31:9](#); [Ps 21:9](#)[10]). “Smoke” (‘āšān) attends divine theophanies (e.g., [Isa 6:4](#)), functioning as a veil, and may also signify the Lord’s wrath ([2 Sam 22:9](#) = [Ps 18:9](#)). God’s appearance at Sinai ([Exod 19:18](#)) brings together the four elements of 15:17: smoke (‘āšān), furnace (kibšān), fire (‘ēš), and lightning (lappîd at [Exod 20:18](#)). There is an unmistakable association between the events. A “torch” (lappîd) appears in prophetic descriptions of the awesome and eerie presence of God (cp. [Ezek 1:13](#); [Dan 10:6](#)), and it pictures destruction (cp. [Judg 15:5](#) with [Zech 12:6](#)).²⁸⁵ The thunderclaps and lightning (lappîd) with the thickly veiled smoke (‘āšān) at Sinai ([Exod 20:18](#)) created fear in the Israelites, who begged Moses to meet with God in their behalf (20:19). The same contrasting effects of awe and fear, that is, attraction and retraction, are symbolized by the flaming fire in 15:17. The covenant promises hold forth both blessing and curse (12:3; 27:29).

Terror - תַּיִשָּׁר (‘ê·mā(h)): n.fem.; ≡ Str 367; TWOT 80b—LN 25.251–25.269 terror, fear, dread, i.e., a state of great emotional distress ([Ge 15:12](#); [Ex 15:16](#); [23:27](#); [Dt 32:25](#); [Jos 2:9](#); [Ezr 3:3](#); [Job 9:34](#); [13:21](#); [20:25](#); [33:7](#); [39:20](#); [41:6](#)[EB 14]; [Ps 55:5](#)[EB 4]; 88:16[EB 15]; [Pr 20:2](#); [Isa 33:18](#); [Jer 50:38](#)+))

Darkness - חֹשֶׁךְ (ḥăšē·kā(h)): n.fem.; ≡ Str 2824, 2825; TWOT 769c—LN 14.53–14.62 darkness, the dark, i.e., the lack of light, with the associative meanings of distress or mystery ([Ge 15:12](#); [Ps 18:12](#)[EB 11]; 82:5; 139:12; [Isa 8:22](#); [50:10](#)+))