

## A Covenant Conversation

Genesis 15: 1-6

Abraham had responded to the call of God to follow Him into a land that He would eventually reveal. With the exception of his lack of judgment by going into Egypt, Abraham had followed the Lord by faith, totally trusting Him to provide for his every need.

We cannot know with certainty how long Abraham had followed the Lord at this time, but as far as we know, he had received very few details. Throughout this journey he was forced to walk by faith, not by sight. I am sure Abraham was eager to hear a word from the Lord that would serve to reaffirm all he had heard in the beginning. In His time, and according to His will, God offered a word to Abraham that would sustain him later in life.

While our journeys are much different, we are all expected to walk by faith as well. As we serve the Lord, we too can experience long seasons when it appears as if the Lord is silent. In those times we are often tempted to alter our course, and even abandon the journey. As He did with Abraham, God always has a word for us before it is too late. We must learn to walk by faith, patiently waiting for a word from the Lord.

I would like to examine the [certainties](#) revealed in the text as we consider: [A Covenant Conversation](#).

**I. The Provision of the LORD (1)** – [After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.](#) Bear in mind that Abraham is now dwelling in an unfamiliar land. He had left his homeland to dwell in a place of God's leading. While he had enjoyed great blessing for his obedience, he had also encountered some difficulties, and made some enemies in the process. He had defeated the alliance of king Chedorlaomer, and it is quite possible that Abraham feared a future encounter with those kings. In his moment of doubt and fear, God spoke to Abraham. We find He offered:

**A. A Comforting Word** – [Fear not, Abram.](#) This is quite simple and yet it would have spoken profoundly to Abraham at this moment in his life. As long as he followed the Lord in obedient faith, there was nothing to fear. God had not called him from the land of his birth to allow him to perish in the wilderness.

- That simple statement has brought comfort and peace to many down through the ages of time. This the first time it is recorded in Scripture, but it certainly isn't the last. [Psalm 27:1](#) –

The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? Isaiah 41:10 – Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

**B. An Encouraging Word** (1) – Fear not, Abram; I *am* thy shield. God also declared that He was Abraham’s shield. God would stand as his protection and defense. What could possibly come against Abraham that the Great I Am could not handle? Abraham was assured that he did not stand alone; God would fight his battles and preserve him from his enemies.

- We all face doubts, fears, and uncertainties in life. There is much we encounter that we are unable to handle on our own. No doubt we are no match for the enemy. In our own strength and ability, we would surely perish. However, like Abraham, we have nothing to fear. The saved by grace are secure in the hand of our Lord and Savior. He is our shield, our protection and defense against the enemy! Psalm 119:114 – Thou *art* my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word. Heb.13:5b-6 – for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. <sup>[6]</sup> So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

**C. A Satisfying Word** (1) – Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield, *and thy exceeding great reward*. God also revealed that He was the exceeding great reward Abraham had received. While he enjoyed wealth and material possessions, those could not bring the satisfaction Abraham desired. He continued to walk by faith, but the land in which he would dwell would not be the source of Abraham’s peace and contentment. He may have been a pilgrim on a journey to an unknown destination, but he had already received his great reward.

- This truth needs to be emphasized and embraced in our materialistic culture. Most base their prominence and satisfaction in life solely upon the wealth and possessions they have acquired. While these are okay in themselves, they can never provide the satisfaction and peace one craves within the heart. Such peace and satisfaction comes only from a right relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

**II. The Promise of the LORD** (2-5) – Here we find words of promise given to Abraham. Consider:

**A. The Apprehension** (2-3) – And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house *is* this Eliezer of Damascus? <sup>[3]</sup> And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. Abraham hadn’t forgotten the promise of a great nation being born through him, and yet he remained perplexed. As of yet, Abraham had no son.

The only male heir Abraham had at the time was his servant, Eliezer. He questioned if the servant would be the heir to his inheritance and produce the nation God had promised. He believed God would provide, but he was unsure how it would happen.

- We too are prone to apprehension and even doubt. We know the Word of God is true and He is faithful to His promises, and yet we question how these things will ever be accomplished. In times like these, we only have one option – trust the Lord by faith. There is nothing sinful about expressing your concerns to God. Talk to Him in prayer about your fears and apprehensions.

**B. The Answer** (4) – *And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.* God graciously responded to Abraham's apprehension, providing guidance and hope. The promised nation would not come through a servant, but through a son that God would give Abraham and Sarah. God had a plan for Abraham, Israel, the coming Messiah, and the redemption of mankind. This involved the birth of a promised son for Abraham.

**C. The Assurance** (5) – *And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.* The Lord provided further assurance for Abraham regarding his son and those who would follow. I can imagine God calling him to step forth on a clear, star-lit night. He challenged Abraham to look into the heavens at the vastness of the stars. He asked Abraham if he had the ability to count the stars. No doubt he couldn't, but God assured him that the generations to come would be numbered as the stars in the heavens, literally impossible to count.

- I know we are dealing with the covenant God made with Abraham regarding the birth of Israel, but a gracious principle remains. Much too often we fail to receive the blessing and provision of God because of doubt and a lack of faith. The provisions He has for us are beyond our ability to comprehend. The majority of Christians live well below their means spiritually. *John 10:10 – The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Eph.3:20 – Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.*

**III. The Providence of the LORD** (6) – *And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.* Finally we discover the sovereign providence of God displayed in the life of Abraham. We see:

**A. The Presence of Faith (6a)** – [And he believed in the LORD](#). Abraham believed God, in spite of what he experienced. He was a man well beyond child-bearing years. He was walking by faith and had yet to receive the promise. Through all of this, Abraham continued to believe God.

- It is impossible to overemphasize the necessity of faith in our lives today. We serve one we have never seen with our physical eyes. We are headed to a land we have never visited, and have limited information about. Our world continually seeks to minimize and discredit our faith. We are becoming a greater minority as the years pass. Like Abraham, we must continue to walk by faith, choosing to believe the Lord instead of those around us.

**B. The Position through Faith (6b)** – [And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness](#). God recognized Abraham's faith and considered Abraham righteous because of his faith. Abraham was justified in the eyes of the Lord because of his faith. While his life revealed the evidence of faith, his works had no bearing on his standing with the Lord. He was accepted of God because of his faith. [Rom.4:20-23 – He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; <sup>\[21\]</sup> And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. <sup>\[22\]</sup> And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. <sup>\[23\]</sup> Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him. James 2:23 – And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God](#). Abraham's righteousness and the relationship he enjoyed with the Lord was obtained by faith alone.

- The same principle remains regarding the Christian faith. Abraham was justified by faith, as are all who are accepted of God. Salvation is not obtained through the lineage of Abraham or by works of the flesh. Salvation is obtained through faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. We are justified by faith in Christ, and upon receiving salvation, His righteousness is imputed to our account! [Eph.2:8-9 – For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: <sup>\[9\]</sup> Not of works, lest any man should boast](#).

**Conclusion:** I have enjoyed our study again today. It has been challenging as well as comforting. We all have times of uncertainty and doubt, but we can rest secure in Christ. [2 Tim.1:12 – For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day](#). My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness! Are you walking by faith with the Lord? Have you been accepted of God through salvation in Jesus Christ? If not, come and begin this wonderful journey today!