

God of the Covenant

Genesis 15:1-21

Structure

Part 1: Descendants (vs. 1-5)

Part 2: Land (vs. 7-21)

1. God reveals himself and makes a promise to Abram (vs. 1 & 7)
2. Abram complains and ask a question (vs. 2-3 & 8)
3. God confirms his promise (vs. 4-5 & 9-21)

#1: The Promise of Descendants (vs. 1-5)

¹ After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.”

² But Abram said, “O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue^[a] childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³ And Abram said, “Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir.”

⁴ And behold, the word of the LORD came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own son^[b] shall be your heir.” ⁵ And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

#2: Interlude of Faith (v. 6)

⁶ And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Romans 4:9-11 (CSB)

⁹ Is this blessing only for the circumcised, then? Or is it also for the uncircumcised? For we say, Faith was credited to Abraham for righteousness. ¹⁰ In what way, then, was it credited—while he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? It was not while he was circumcised, but uncircumcised. ¹¹ And he received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while still uncircumcised.

#3: The Promise of Land (vs. 7-21)

⁷ And he said to him, “I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess.”

⁸ But he said, “O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?” ⁹ He said to him, “Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” ¹⁰ And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and

laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half. ¹¹ And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹² As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. ¹³ Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. ¹⁴ But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. ¹⁵ As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. ¹⁶ And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

¹⁷ When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. ¹⁸ On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, ¹⁹ the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰ the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, ²¹ the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites."

Five Biblical Covenants

- In the covenant with Noah – God Restrains
- In the covenant with Abram – God Reaffirms
- In the covenant with Moses – God Reveals
- In the covenant with David – God Reigns
- In the New Covenant – God Restores

#4: Reflection Prompts

1. Abram is Unimpressive
2. God Keeps his Promises
3. A Call to Believe