

# Genuine Faith Expressed by Abram (Part 2)

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Preacher: Willard Lyons

[ 0 : 00 ] As we started chapter 15 last week, we saw that God began to deal with Abram and the vision.

We said that the entire chapter, the entire chapter 15 is that vision. It's changed us a little bit and we'll see that in a minute into a prophetic vision.

But that entire chapter is that particular vision in which God speaks to Abram. The word of the Lord came into vision and said, fear not Abram, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.

Keep in mind, this comes right on the heels of Abram going and rescuing Lot from the kings that were in battle and bring him and all of his goods and some spoils as well with him from that place where he was held captive.

And so God said, I am your shield. I'm your protector. Abram, keep that in mind. And you're exceeding great reward. God's going to reward his confidence and his faithfulness and his obedience in the days ahead.

[ 1 : 16 ] So realize this just keeps building higher and higher or more and more in the life of Abram in which he is not only learning more about God as he did when Melchizedek came to meet him and tell him that you are the servant of the most high God.

And in essence, God saying to Abram in a way, I want you to realize that the reason why you were successful in the battle to bring Lot back was because of what God did.

And Melchizedek kind of reinforces that by telling him that God is El Elyon, the most high God. All right. And so now God says that I am going to give you that covenant relationship that I had promised to bring you into.

In verses two and three, remember, Abram said, Lord God, what will you give me? Seeing I go childless and the steward of my house, this Eliezer of Damascus, must be my son in this case for the covenant to be passed on.

Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed and lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And then in verses four and five, the Lord said unto Abram, This shall not be your heir, but he shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

[ 2 : 40 ] And he brought him forth abroad and looked and said, Look toward heaven, tell the stars if thou be able to number them. And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

And then in verses five and six, here's a key to this. Abram believed in the Lord, believed in Jehovah, and he counted it to him for righteousness.

In other words, counted that trust, that faith in God as righteousness. Now, when we left off last week, we asked this question. In what way did Abram make known his faith in Jehovah?

And then also, in what way did God count it to him then for righteousness? Verses seven and eight, the answer to those all lie in the context here. Verses seven and eight, he said unto him, I am the Lord.

I am Jehovah, literally, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know I inherit it?

[ 3 : 50 ] Now, we see here what really what Abram's reply was in receiving that promise from God.

What was his reply here? All right, take note here. Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? Now, that's part of how how Abram shows his faith.

But it's not only that question he asked, but how he responded to that. What he did in result of how God responds to him in that.

All right. God here confirming the promise to Abram. And when he did that, he declared himself to be Jehovah, the one that brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees.

I'm the one that led you out of that, told you to leave and come to where I tell you to come and where I show you. Now, Abram then replies, Lord, whereby shall I know I shall possess it?  
[ 4 : 55 ] How am I going to know that? Now, when we look at that first, it kind of gives you the idea. It was a doubtful question here, but it's not. He's not doubting what God says here.

He just needs some confirmation. I mean, after all, you know, he set aside the debacle in Egypt. All right. Which taught him a great lesson for a while.

He'd been following God. So it's not a doubtful question here. I don't think he has a question here at all about what God has promised or what he said. He just needs it to be confirmed.

So he's saying, God, how are you going to confirm that to me? What should I look for? All right. What shall I look for here as a confirmation? Have you ever done that? You know, some people throw out the proverbial fleece.

All right. Some say doing that is a sign of lack of faith in God and trust and so forth. Others say it's biblical because Gideon did it, but doesn't necessarily mean it was right.

[ 6 : 00 ] But nonetheless, God, I sent you doing something here. I sent you directing me in a path here that you want me to go in.

But I'm not quite sure and certain to this point. Now, let me ask you something here. Okay. When we say that, what are we saying?

I don't really think it's a case of unbelief when we do that. It's a case of our humanity needing something that's very specific from God.

Okay. Yeah. And aren't you glad God knows this in our humanity? Amen. He knows the weakness of it. He knows the frailty of it. He knows everything about us as human beings because we're in a fallen state.

Now, so, so Abram in that condition says, God, how am I going to know that I possess it? All right. Now, God responds to him in that, in a very positive way.

[ 7 : 16 ] All right. Abram, you need to know this. So I'm going to show you. I'm going to show you how you can know for sure, for certain. All right. Same thing that Moses does later.

Remember? When Moses tells God, God, I need to see your glory. If I'm going to lead this bunch of backslidden Israelis, I need to know how you operate and who you are.

So God answers that in a positive way. Takes him bottom of the mountain, puts him in the cleft of the rock and shows him his back parts, the non-consuming aspects of his glory or his attributes.

All right. So God kind of does the same thing here. Look in verse number nine and ten, verses nine and ten. And he said unto him. Now, here's his response to Abram's question.

How am I going to know? Where's the confirmation here? God said, take me and heifer of three years old and a she goat of three years and a ram of three years old and a curdledove and a young pigeon.

[ 8 : 22 ] And he took unto him all these and divided them in the midst and laid each piece one against another. But the birds he divided not.

Now, Abram took the animals, gathered them together as God required, arranged them as God commanded him to do. Now, by his readiness and willingness to perform what God had said here in placing those animals in proper order, Abram gave proof, practical proof that he believed Jehovah. I mean, why would you do that if you didn't really believe this is going to come to pass? All right. Here's what God says he's going to do to confirm that for me. So I'm going to go ahead and do this because I believe he's showing me this.

All right. So he believed Jehovah. And then what God did with the animals was a practical declaration of God in deeming Abram righteous here.

All right. Now, again, get in your mind what he said here. Take these animals, separate them, lay them out with a path in between them.

[ 9 : 41 ] All right. That's what you're to do. Now, notice, can't really call this a sacrifice because nothing is offered on an altar here.

No blood has been shed per se. No animal has been consumed by fire. All right. So it's not particularly a sacrifice here.

All right. Not even really an offering. Now, notice what happens. Back in the day of Abram, it was customary for any parties that make a covenant with one another, you know, or a contract, if you will, to do this very same thing, to indicate for them that whatever my responsibilities and obligations under that covenant are, I will satisfy that.

All right. Because both parties then pass between those pieces as that indication. All right. One person goes through that and in essence saying, I'm going to fulfill my obligation, looks back and sees the other guy, make sure the other guy comes through and does the same thing, making the same type statement in symbolically, if nothing else.

All right. All right. Now, that's what happens here. Abram is a Chaldean. This was a Chaldean custom.

[ 11 : 22 ] So God kind of condescends to Abram here and the Chaldeans by using their custom of signifying the ratification of a covenant relationship or agreement on his part.

Now, significance of that act is in verse 18, which we'll get to later. But it says, on that day, Jehovah made a covenant with Abraham.

So consequently, God considered Abram's faith, reckoned it to him as righteousness. So making that covenant of fellowship as well with Abram.

Now, he believed God. He believed Jehovah. Here's what one scholar has said. He believed expresses that state of mind, which is sure of its object and relies firmly upon it.

As denoting conduct towards God as a firm inward personal self-surrendering reliance upon a personal God. That's the picture here.

[ 12 : 31 ] In particular, upon the source of all creation or all being. All right. So that's what it means when it says he believed him.

No shade of doubt at all. Full confidence and belief by faith that this is what's going to happen. All right.

Now, what do these particular animals that are laid out, what do they represent? They represent Abram and his seed, his descendants that will come.

All right. You see, Abram is in essence standing beside them. And you see what happens here. And that Abram probably recognizes what this is all about.

Because with those divided animals laying there against each other. Birds of prey come along and try to consume them, try to eat them.

[ 13 : 32 ] Then darkness comes. And when the darkness comes, the glory of God passes through those pieces. All right.

Now, verse 11 says that when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. Now, the age of those animals, three years old, except for the birds, is believed by many to refer to simply the three generations of Israel that will remain in Egyptian captivity.

Others think three centuries of captivity in a foreign land. So whatever the case is, doesn't seem to be that big a deal here. Because God doesn't show us. Now, again, when the fowls came upon the carcass, if the animals laid out represent Abram and his descendants, what do these fowls that come upon them represent?

All Israel's foes. All right. That will come from generation to generation. All right. Now, the birds of prey come to eat or the literal ideas to try to exterminate the seed of Abram, which we know to be the people of Israel in this day.

All right. Abram then did what? Waiting for God to manifest himself in all that. As the one that commanded him to do all that, to ratify the covenant.

[ 15 : 14 ] Abram then drove them away. All right. So that they might not pollute or devour what God has consecrated for him. And now, the fact that Abram scared them away was a sign of Abram's faith because he believed in what God's doing here.

And what it's going to represent concerning his relationship to the Lord. And that God would preserve his posterity from destruction.

Now, so, his descendants would be saved, free from destruction for Abram's sake.

All right. Now, consider that just a moment. Look at Psalm 105. I'm going to read it out of the Amplified for you, but Psalm 105.

God has always and always will protect his covenant people, covenant nation in particular here, from destruction.

[ 16 : 27 ] Even today. He will do that. God will preserve his people. All right.

Verse 1. Oh, give thanks unto the Lord. Call upon his name. Make known his doings among the peoples. Sing to him. Sing praises to him.

Meditate on and talk of all his marvelous deeds and devoutly praise them. Glory in his holy name.

Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek and require the Lord as their indispensable necessity.

Seek, inquire of and for the Lord. And crave him and his strength, that is his might and inflexibility to temptation. Seek and require his face and his presence continually evermore.

Earnestly remember the marvelous deeds that he has done. His miracles and wonders, the judgments and sentences which he pronounced upon his enemies as in Egypt.

[17:33] Oh, you offspring of Abraham, his servant. You children of Jacob, his chosen ones. He is the Lord our God. His judgments are in all the earth.

He is earnestly mindful of his covenant and forever it is imprinted on his heart. The word which he commanded and established to a thousand generations.

The covenant which he made with Abraham and his sworn promise to Isaac, which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute to Israel as an everlasting covenant.

Saying, unto you will I give the land of Canaan as your measured portion, possession and inheritance. Now run down to verse 42. From where we left off to verse 42, he just tells about various things that God did.

For he earnestly remembered his holy word and promise to Abraham, his servant. And he brought forth his people with joy and his chosen ones with gladness and singing.

[18:39] And gave them the lands of the nations of Canaan. And they reap the fruits of those people's labor. That they might observe his statutes and keep his laws.

That is hearing, receiving, loving and obeying them. Praise the Lord. That's hallelujah. Amen. Amen. Yeah. That's the goodness of God. In particular here, toward his covenant people, Israel. Now, with that in mind, run over, if you will, to Revelation 19. Because we no doubt recognize in what we see here and what we see in Psalm 105, the captivity in Egypt or the sojourn in Egypt there.

All right. But look what else happens here. Revelation chapter 19. The chapter of the four hallelujahs.

Begin in verse 11. And I saw heaven opened. And behold, a white horse. He that sat upon him was called faithful and true.

[19:51] And in righteousness, he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire. And on his head were many crowns. And on his head were many crowns.

And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood. And his name is called the word of God.

And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. That's us, by the way. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword that with it he should smite the nations.

And he shall rule them with a rod of iron. And he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Then we see later the doom of the beast and the false prophet. Chapter 20. The binding of Satan through the millennial reign of Christ. God always takes care of his people.

[20:57] Through the revelation we recognize that basically the tribulation period is, though it's worldwide in scope, that is a judgment upon the covenant nation of Israel.

But God comes to rescue her as they embrace Jesus as the Christ. All right? God always takes care of his people.

And he will and he does us as well. In this day of grace as his church. Revelation chapter 21.

Look at the end result of God's dealing with the church. His bride. In verse number 9 and following. There came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vows full of the seven last plagues.

And talk with me, say, Come hither. I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. Okay?

[22:00] That's us, folks. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great high mountain and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

Now, you recognize that as the new Jerusalem. All right? Having the glory of God and her light was like unto a stone, most precious, even like a jasper, clear as crystal.

All right? And on down he goes. It had a wall great and high and twelve gates. The gates were twelve angels. Names written thereon, which the names of the children of Israel.

Three gates and so forth. So, you see, on down here he goes through that. And now he says in verse number 22, I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple

of it.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither the moon to shine in it. For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.

[ 23 : 09 ] And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there. They shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. And there shall no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh alive, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Amen? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Go ahead and redo your house if you need to. But when we get to the new Jerusalem, we won't have to. Amen? Yeah.

Yeah. That's why Jesus said in John's Gospel, let not your heart be troubled. All right? When he tells his apostles about the reality, he'll be leaving them, their presence.

You believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I'd have told you. He says, I go to prepare a place for you.

All right? If I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again. And I will receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

[ 24 : 28 ] Yeah. Yeah. Now, recognize, he knows what the disciples and the church are going to go through when he said that. He's been their strength, their confidence, have been in their presence.

But now he's going to be gone as far as his presence, physical presence. But he said, don't let your heart be troubled. Now, whatever you go through, don't let it be troubled.

You can believe in me just the same as you believe in the Father. Yeah. And he says, besides that, I'm going to prepare a place for you. One of these days, I'm going to come back and take you to where that place is and let you see it.

Amen? And let you live in that for eternity. All right. Let's pray together. Father, again, thank you for your loving kindness and your goodness and grace in the day today and again, for the opportunity of the time together studying your word.

Again, Father, we are so thankful for your faithfulness, for your love for us in that faithfulness. But Father, also in the confidence that you give to us through your faithfulness, through your faithfulness to Abram, to Isaac, to Jacob, to your son, Jesus, that we can see and rejoice in knowing that that same faithfulness applies to us as well.

[ 25 : 58 ] So, Father, we thank you, praise you, thank you for the picture you've shown us tonight. Now, we thank you again for our class and these sweet, precious folks and their love for you and your word and I pray that you'll bless them and incline upon our hearts those things that you want us to know personally through our study tonight.

and we'll thank you and praise you for what you do until next week. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.