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## **God's Covenant with Abram**

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance  
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 /1913 Edition  
or Roget's Thesaurus – **October 1, 2017**

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*...We're located just behind Kaufman's Lumber Company in Little Rock Arkansas...*

## **Genesis 15:1-6, 17-21**

**Introduction:** Although **Messiah's** coming was planned from eternity (Eph. 1:4-5; 1 Peter 1:18-20; Rev. 13:8), it was with Abram that God's plan began to take shape.  
(Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator, Union Press Publication-Christian Life Series*)

**Genesis 12:1-4**, Now the Lord (Yahweh) **HAD said** unto **Abram...**

**Thought 1.** Notice that this verse is actually speaking of a time when Yahweh **FIRST spoke** to Abram about leaving his country. At **that time**, he was about 69 years old. As we'll see, this is about 6 years later. (Source: *The Reese Chronological Bible*)

Get thee OUT of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a **land** that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and **make THY name great;** and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram DEPARTED, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and **Abram** was **seventy and five years old** **when he DEPARTED out** of Haran.

**Genesis 15:1**, After these things the word of **the LORD** (Yahweh) came unto Abram in a **VISION**,

**Thought 1.** Here, he's about **85**, **16** years later. (Source: *The Reese Chronological Bible*)

saying, **Fear NOT, Abram: I am thy shield,** and thy **exceeding GREAT REWARD.**

VISION, in Scripture, a revelation from God; an **appearance** or exhibition of something supernaturally presented to the MINDS of the prophets, by which they were informed of future events.

**Thought 2.** The fact that God appeared to Abram in a VISION was **a sign** to him and to **US** of today that he was a prophet of his. Today, this truth is often overlooked due to lack of knowledge of the scriptures that reveal WHY God appears to people this way.

The truth is God gives **dreams** and **visions** to the prophet, prophetess, and the apostle, from time to time. They are **TOOLS of their ministry.** So, as a Christian, IF this SIGN is in your life, God is **saying** you're IN the ministry as a prophet or prophetess.

**Numbers 12:6**, And he (Yahweh) said, Hear now my words: **IF** there be **a prophet**

among you, I the Lord (Yahweh) will make myself **known** unto him in a **VISION**, and will **speak unto him** in a **DREAM**.

**Genesis 20:2-7**, And **Abraham** said of **Sarah** his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and **TOOK Sarah**. But God came to Abimelech in a **DREAM** by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a **dead man**, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. But Abimelech had NOT come near her: and he said, Lord ('Adonay), wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he NOT unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a **dream**, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee NOT to touch her. Now therefore restore the man his WIFE; for **he is a PROPHET**, and he shall pray for thee, and thou **shalt live**: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.

**Thought 3.** Also, within the **DREAM** or **VISION**, **gifts** of the Spirit will be manifested. In Genesis 15:1, we see discerning of spirits. Abram knew it was Yahweh speaking. And then we see prophesy. On the isle of Patmos, John had some well-known visions.

**Revelation 1:10**, I was **IN the Spirit** on the Lord's day...

**NOTE:** ...though John was driven from the house and worship of God, and could NOT join with the saints in the public worship of that day; yet he was **employed** in spiritual contemplations and exercises, and was under a **more** than ordinary influence of the Spirit of God; and his spirit or soul was wholly intent upon, and taken up with divine and spiritual things, with **VISIONS** and representations that were made unto his MIND, which he perceived in his spirit, and not with the organs of his body; he was in an **ECSTASY** of spirit... (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/revelation-1.html>)

Ecstasy, a mental state, usually caused by an intense religious experience; of **exaltation** (brief duration of a sense of UNITY with God) OR domination by an EMOTION such as extreme HAPPINESS, LOVE, etc. [*to include* **WEEPING** and/or **LAUGHING**] OR rapturous delight manifested either openly unrestrained OR in a very deep CALM, during which SELF-CONTROL and sometimes consciousness are LOST OR inattention of the MIND to present objects or surroundings.

**Genesis 15:2-3**, 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? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given **NO seed**: and, lo, **one born** in my house is **mine heir**.

(Septuagint) **Genesis 15:2-3**, And Abram said, Master Lord, what wilt thou give me? whereas I am departing without a child, but the **son of Masek** my home-born **female slave**, this **Eliezer** of Damascus. And **Abram** said, since thou hast given me NO seed, but my **home-born** shall succeed me.

**NOTE:** ...**this Eliezer of Damascus**; who was his **HEAD servant**, perhaps the same with him in Genesis 24:2 called the eldest servant of his house... Some render it, "the son of leaving my house";... to whom he left the care of his house, and should leave the administration of all things in it **after** his **death**, making him **HEIR should he die childless**... (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/genesis-15.html>)

**Genesis 15:4**, And, behold, the word of the LORD (Yahweh) came unto him, saying, This shall NOT be thine **heir**; but **HE** that **shall come forth out**

of thine **own bowels** (of men, the seat of generation [procreation]) shall be thine HEIR.

**NOTE:** but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels... that is, one shall inherit all thou hast, that shall be begotten by thee; an OWN SON of Abram's, and NOT a servant born in his house; one that should spring out of his own loins: the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "out of thy womb", that is, out of his wife's, which was his... (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/genesis-15.html>)

**Genesis 15:5-7**, 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**. And he **believed (TRUST) in** the LORD (Yahweh); and he counted it to him for **righteousness**. And he said unto him, I am the LORD (Yahweh) that brought thee out of **Ur** of the Chaldees, to **GIVE thee this LAND to inherit it**.

**NOTE:** **Ur** appears to have been a **city** of some considerable consequence at that time in Chaldea; but *where* situated is not well known. It probably had its name **Ur** which signifies **fire**, from the *worship* practised there. The learned are almost unanimously of opinion that the ancient inhabitants of this region were **ignicolists** or **worshippers of FIRE**, and in that place this sort of worship probably *originated*; and in honour of this element, the symbol of the Supreme Being, the whole *country*, or a particular *city* in it, might have had the name **Ur**. Bochart has observed that there is a place called **Ouri**, south of the Euphrates, in the way from Nisibis to the river Tigris. The **Chaldees** mentioned here had NOT this name in the time of *which* Moses *speaks*, but they were called so in the time *in which* **Moses wrote**. Chesed was the son of Nahor, the son of Terah, Gen. 22:22.

...Those who dwelt in **Ur** were either **priests** or **astronomers**, Daniel 2:10, and also **idolaters**, ; Josh. 24:2, 3, 14, 15.

And because they were much addicted to **astronomy**, and probably to judicial **astrology**, hence **ALL astrologers** were, in process of time, called **Chaldeans**, Daniel 2:2-5. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/genesis-15.html>)

**Genesis 15:8**, And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall **I KNOW** that I shall inherit it?

**Know** defined 3045 yada` pronounced yaw-dah'; to know (properly, to ascertain by seeing); used in a great **variety of senses**, figuratively, literally, euphemistically and inferentially (including observation, care, recognition; and causatively, instruction, designation, punishment, etc.) (as follow):-- **ANSWER**, declare, **INSTRUCT**, kinsfolk, kinsman, **(CAUSE to make) know**, teach.

**Thought 1.** When we consider that Abram had just believed Yahweh about having an innumerable seed and that it was counted to him for righteousness, it's not reasonable to believe he's in UNBELIEF about inheriting the land. However, when we look at more scriptures and history, we find Abram was asking for a ratification: confirmation of the agreement that's normally done by ALL who enter into COVENANTS.

**Genesis 15:9-11**, And he said unto him, Take me an **heifer** of three years old, and a **she goat** of three years old, and a **ram** of three years old, and a **turtledove**, and a **young pigeon**. And he took unto him ALL these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the **birds** divided he NOT. And when the **fowls** came down upon the **carcasses**, **Abram** DROVE them away.

**NOTE:** The function of the slaughtered animals here was NOT that of a **sacrifice**, but of the **ratification (confirmation)** of a **covenant**. The ritual in view here was actually used in antiquity (ancient times) by numerous ancient people as the **means of ASSURING** the performance of **agreements**. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/genesis-15.html>)

**NOTE:** For whatever purpose **a COVENANT was made**, it was ever **ratified** (confirmed, made valid: having legal strength or force ) by a sacrifice offered to God; and the **passing** between the divided parts of the victim appears to have **signified** that **each agreed**, if they broke their engagements, to submit to the punishment of being cut asunder; which we find from Matt. 24:51; Luke 12:46, was an ancient mode of punishment. This is farther confirmed by Herodotus, who says that Sabacus, king of **Ethiopia**, had **a vision**, in which he was ordered, to cut in two, all the Egyptian priests; lib. ii. We find also from the same author, lib. vii., that **Xerxes** ordered one of the sons of Pythius, to be cut in two, and one half to be placed on each side of the way, that his army might pass through between them. That this kind of punishment was used among the Persians we have proof from Dan. 2:5; 3:29. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/genesis-15.html>)

**NOTE:** ... Abram continued **waiting**, and his expectations were raised by the delay; when the **fowls** came down upon the carcasses to prey upon them, as common and neglected things, Abram **drove them away**, believing that the VISION would, at the end, speak, and NOT lie. Note, A very watchful eye must be kept upon our **spiritual sacrifices**, that nothing be suffered to prey upon them and render them unfit for God's acceptance. When **vain thoughts**, like these **fowls**, come down upon our sacrifices, we MUST drive them away, and NOT suffer them to lodge within us... (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mhm/genesis-15.html>)

**Jeremiah 34:18-19**, And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of **the covenant** which they had **MADE before me**, when they **CUT the calf in twain**, and **passed between the parts** thereof, The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which **passed between the parts...**

**Thought 1.** Now, in the light of all this information, we can SEE what PARTS of the definition of "KNOW" should be chosen that fit this verse. The meanings that reveal what was on Abram's mind are: answer, instruct, and cause to make known. I say this because even though, he believed God, he'd have to ANSWER questions, and instruct kinsfolk, and others, causing them to KNOW (understand) he did have a COVENANT with Yahweh. Today, we also ought to be ready and able to give an answer concerning our covenant.

**1 Peter 3:15** ...**be READY** always to give **an ANSWER** to every man that **asketh** you a reason of the HOPE that is in you, with meekness and fear (reverence)...

**Genesis 15:12-14**, And when the sun was going down, a **deep sleep** fell upon **Abram**; and, lo, an HORROR of great **darkness** fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a **stranger** in a land that is NOT theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them **four hundred years**; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will **I judge**: and afterward shall they **come out** with great substance.

(Septuagint) **Genesis 15:13**, And it was said to Abram, Thou shalt surely know that thy seed shall be a **sojourner** in a land NOT their won, and they shall enslave them, and afflict them, and humble them **four hundred years**.

**NOTE:** The **Septuagint** was the **FIRST translation** of the **Hebrew Bible**; and was made in the third century B.C. by Jewish scribes, who were direct descendants of those trained in Ezra's Great Synagogue of Jerusalem. They were complete experts in the text, being very well versed in **Hebrew** and **Greek**.

This translation became very popular among Jews in the first TWO centuries before Christ because many Jews in those days did NOT understand Hebrew. Their ancestors had left Israel centuries before, and

generation after generation gradually lost the ability to read the Scriptures in Hebrew.

Many of the **Jews in Jesus' day** used the **Septuagint** as their **Bible** (book containing the sacred writings belonging to any religion). Quite naturally, the **early Christians** also used the **Septuagint** in their meetings and for personal reading; and many of the New Testament apostles quoted it when they wrote the **Gospels** and **Epistles in Greek**.

...when Jesus quotes the Old Testament in Matthew, He uses the Hebrew text only **10%** of the time, but the **Greek LXX translation — 90% of the time!**

(Source: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/tips/what-bible-did-jesus-use-11638841.html>)

**Thought 1.** Paul, who studied from the “Septuagint”, said that this COVENANT with Abram was 430 years BEFORE the Law was given. So, Yahweh did NOT mean that his seed would be IN SLAVERY 400 years. But, a sojourner in Canaan, where Abram was NOW, receiving the Covenant, and in Egypt, where his seed would later be. And remember, Israel enjoyed prosperity in Egypt, as long as Joseph was alive. Ex. 1:8-14

**Galatians 3:16-18**, Now to **Abraham** and **his SEED** were the **promises** made. He saith NOT, And to **seedS**, as of many; but as of ONE, And to thy SEED, which is Christ.

And this I say, that the **COVENANT**, that was **confirmed** before of God in Christ, the **LAW**, which was **four hundred and thirty years AFTER**, cannot **disannul**, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the LAW, it is NO more of promise: but God **gave** it to **Abraham** by **PROMISE**.

(Septuagint) **Exodus 12:40**, And the sojourning of the children of Israel, while they sojourned in the land of **EGYPT** **AND** the land of **CHANAAN**, four hundred and thirty years.

(KJV) **Exodus 12:40**, Now the sojourning (live in a place as a stranger) of the children of Israel, who dwelt **in Egypt**, was four hundred and thirty years.

**Thought 2.** Notice the obvious discrepancy between the TWO versions. The KJV, which is translated from the “Masoretic Hebrew”, left out the time Abram spent “sojourning” in the land of **Canaan (Chanaan)**. However, the Septuagint has it.

**NOTE: ...a deep sleep fell upon Abram:** through the great fatigue he had had the preceding day, in doing what is before related; or rather through a more than ordinary **influence** of God upon him, which bound up his senses, and cast him into an **ecstasy** or TRANCE, when he had the following prophecy and vision, which more fully explained to him the emblem he had been conversant with; this was such a sleep as fell on Adam, (Genesis 2:21): **and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him;** or such darkness as was horrible and terrible, so it was represented to his mind in vision; which signified the great **afflictions** after expressed by **darkness**, that should come upon his children in Egypt... (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/genesis-15.html>)

**Genesis 15:15-16**, And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the **fourth generation** they shall come hither again: for the **iniquity** of the **Amorites** is NOT yet full.

**NOTE:** Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace... This verse strongly implies the immortality of the soul, and a state of separate existence. He was gathered to his fathers- introduced into **the place** where separate spirits are kept, waiting for the general resurrection. Two things seem to be distinctly marked here: 1. The soul of Abram should be introduced among the assembly of the first-born; *Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace.* 2. **His body** should be **buried** after a long life, *one hundred and seventy-five years*, Genesis 25:7. The body was buried; the soul went to the spiritual world,

to dwell among the *fathers*-the patriarchs, who had lived and died in the Lord. See Clarke on 25:8. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/genesis-15.html>)

**NOTE:** ...wicked people have a **measure** of iniquity to fill up, which is known of God; some are longer, some are quicker in filling it up, during which time God **waits patiently** and **bears** with them; but, when it is completed, he stays no longer, but takes vengeance on them, (Matthew 23:32). The Amorites were only one of the nations of the Canaanites, but were a very strong and powerful one, and are put for them all... (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/genesis-15.html>)

**Genesis 15:17**, And it came to pass, that, when the SUN went down, and it was **dark**, behold a **smoking furnace**, and a **BURNING lamp** that **PASSED between** those pieces.

**NOTE: 1.** The *smoking furnace* signified the **affliction** of his seed in Egypt. They were there in the *iron furnace* (Deu. 4:20), the *furnace of affliction* (Isa. 48:10), labouring in the very fire. They were there in the smoke, their eyes darkened, that they could not see to the end of their troubles, and themselves at a loss to conceive what God would do with them. Clouds and **darkness** were round about them.

**2.** The *burning lamp* denotes **comfort** in this affliction; and this God showed to Abram, at the same time that he showed him the *smoking furnace*. (1.) **Light** denotes **deliverance** out of the furnace; their salvation was as *a lamp that burneth*, Isa. 62:1. When God came down to deliver them, he appeared in a bush that *burned, and was not consumed*, Ex. 3:2. (2.) The lamp denotes direction in the smoke. **God's word** was their **lamp**: this word to Abram was so, it was a light shining in a dark place. Perhaps this burning lamp prefigured (foreshadow: typify [represent by an image] beforehand) the pillar of CLOUD and FIRE, which led them out of Egypt, in which God was. (3.) The burning lamp denotes the destruction of their enemies who kept them so long in the furnace. See Zec. 12:6. The same cloud that **enlightened** the Israelites **troubled** and **burned** the Egyptians. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mhm/genesis-15.html>)

**Genesis 15:18-21**, In the same day the LORD (Yahweh) **made a COVENANT with Abram**, saying, Unto **thy SEED have I given this land**, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

**NOTE: In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram** Which he confirmed by passing between the pieces and accepting his sacrifice: **saying, unto thy seed have I given this land**; he had given it in his purpose, and he had given the promise of it, and here he renews the grant, and **ratifies** and **confirms it**, even the land of **Canaan**, where Abram now was, though only a sojourner in it; and which is described by its boundaries And present occupants, in this and the following verses, as is usually done in grants of lands and **deeds** of conveyance...

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/genesis-15.html>)

**NOTE:** Here are **TEN nations** mentioned, though afterwards reckoned but **SEVEN**; see Deuteronomy 7:1; Acts 13:19. Probably some of them which existed in Abram's time had been blended with others before the time of Moses, so that **seven only** out of the **ten** then remained; see part of these noticed Genesis 10:1-31.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/genesis-15.html>)

**Deuteronomy 7:1**, When the LORD thy God shall **bring thee into the land** whither thou goest to possess it, and hath **cast out** many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, **SEVEN nations** greater and mightier than thou...