

15:1-2

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram Could this actually be a visage of the pre-incarnate Christ, the Word (John 1:14)? It seems it could be since “Abraham saw [Christ’s] day” (John 8).¹ **in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.”**

2 But Abram said, “Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” “You’ve given me a lot, but to whom do I leave it?” Abraham is acknowledging that God made him wealthy [through inheritance from Terah (chapter 11), the trip to Egypt (chapter 12), and the spoiling of the kings (chapter 14)], and yet he has nobody to whom he may impart it. He’s a little preoccupied with the whole thing because God gave he and his sons land and now he’s going to give it to a Syrian?

In Exodus 18, we find Moses naming one of his sons Eliezer (actually born in Exodus 3). God did not identify Himself as “the God of Abraham” until this chapter. Eliezer is then born and named. Chapter 18 says he received this name because he was “saved from the sword of Pharaoh.” Meanwhile Moses writes both Genesis and Exodus after his begetting and his naming of Eliezer—the 2nd Eliezer—after both Eliezers are born in households of separate men (Abraham & Moses) who were both delivered from Pharaoh (Genesis 12 and Exodus 13-14).

15:3

Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!” Genesis 22:1 speaks of Abraham being 100 years old when Isaac is born. The last verse of Genesis 16 says that Abram was 86 when Ishmael was born. Since Ishmael is not yet born, Abram is not yet 86 years old, and this passage is no less than 14 years before Isaac is born.

We can understand Abram’s concern with having an heir. He wants somebody to leave his riches with and to be recipients of the land after him (Genesis 12:7; 13:15-16). Abram is understandably puzzled. We know he is probably in his 80’s and time seems to be running out.

15:4

And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, This is the 2nd time in four verses it says this and there are no other times in Genesis where it says this. By the way, Galatians 3 says “the Scripture testified.” So Paul calls it “the Scripture” and Moses called it **the word of the LORD**. If what you have is “Scripture,” it is also **the word of the LORD**. “Scripture” is the “spoken Word of God.”

15:6-11

6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. So what did Abraham believe? Galatians 3:8 says he believed “the Gospel” in this very instance. An Old Testament saint had to believe the Gospel to be saved. Nothing has changed. Somewhere, Abram believed the Gospel, and if it is a different Gospel than what we believe, then it was a “false Gospel.” Look at Galatians 1:8-9 and see for yourself. Paul uses the same word two chapters from each other.

There were some weak-faith days for Abraham, but this was not it. Genesis 12 and Sarah? Sure. Here? No. There were many days of nothing amazing going on. He was doing normal things on normal days getting ready for “big days.” Acts tells us this many different ways: “build tents and minister on Sabbath days.” In regards to kingdom expansion, there was nothing significant occurring? Here, we have lots of boring days where Abram is...simply being faith-filled.²

11 And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. A splendid mixture of the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man: God shows up and makes a unilateral covenant—giving everything to Abram and his offspring...but Abram better keep the animals in tact until then.

¹If that Scripture was not fulfilled in Melchizedek (Genesis 14).

²More on Abraham’s faithfulness here: <http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=12212201105> [accessed 12/29/16].

15:17

And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. Two covenanting parties would walk between severed bodies, in that day, to say “if we break our covenant, may we be like unto these animals” (Jeremiah 34:18). This is a unilateral covenant/promise which demonstrates God doing something without another party. Hebrews 6:13 speaks of God doing thing—swearing by Himself because there was no greater by which He could swear. This was a promise to Abraham’s seed, we’re told. Galatians 3:7 seems to put this promise to Abraham not only to seed...but to seed “in Christ”: Jew or Gentile. **18 On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying:**