

# God Makes a Covenant with Abram

GENESIS 15

Abram, his wife, and all their herds and flocks settled at Hebron. That was the place where God told Abram he would have so many children that they would be like the dust of the earth. But time went by and still Abram did not have a son to fulfill the promise God gave to him. But the Lord did not forget Abram. He spoke to Abram again and said, “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great” (Genesis 15:1). Abram reminded the Lord that he still did not have any children. “Who will carry on for me after I die?” he asked.

The Lord told Abram he would certainly have a son to carry on after he died. He told Abram, “Look up in the sky and count the stars. Can you even do it? That’s how many children you will have someday.” Abram believed what God told him. The Lord saw Abram’s faith and “counted it to him as righteousness” (Genesis 15:6). Abram was a sinner like us, but he put his faith in God’s plan.

God told Abram to bring some animals to make a sacrifice. When the sacrifice was all ready, according to the Lord’s directions, Abram fell into a deep sleep. Then the Lord told Abram what would happen in the future: Abram’s family would end up in another land as slaves and suffer for four hundred years. After that, the Lord would bring them back to Canaan with many possessions. (And that is exactly what God did through Moses hundreds of

years later when he delivered God’s people from Egypt.)

Later, when the sun was completely down and it was dark, a smoking pot and a flaming torch appeared out of nowhere. They passed down the middle of Abram’s offering as it was lying on the ground. The flaming torch was a sign of God’s promise to Abram. Again, God promised to give Abram’s children all the land around them. God called his promise a covenant, like the promise he made with Noah about the rainbow. And since God always keeps his promises, Abram could be sure he would one day have a son.

Do you know that part of this story is especially for us? The apostle Paul tells us that the words God spoke about Abram’s faith—“counted it to him as righteousness”—were written for us (Romans 4:22–24). If we believe that Jesus died for our sins and that God raised Jesus from the dead, our faith will be counted to us as righteousness just like Abram’s was. That is God’s promise to us. We are not saved by the good things we do. Like Abram, we are saved when we trust in what Jesus did for us. Since God always keeps his promises, we can be sure that if we believe God, we will be saved and spend eternity with God in heaven. Then one day we will even get to talk to Abram!



## Let's Talk About It!

How many stars can you count?

What did God promise Abram?

How are you and I like the stars in the sky?