

# Genesis 15: Faith in the Promise

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Forestgate Presbyterian Church ~ March 25, 2012

What is “faith”? (Heb 11:1)

Contrast the biblical definition of faith with the world’s definition(s) of faith:

Biblical: Faith is **believing God’s promises**.

Worldly: Faith is believing something you know is **not true**.

Or: Faith is believing something for which there is **no proof**.

Are *faith* and *reason* mutually exclusive? Why or why not?

How does faith put us in right standing with God? (WCF XI; Rom 5:21-26)

Faith must have an **object**. Another word that is commonly used for faith is **trust**.

When looking at the stars, Abram sees a **multitude** but God sees **individuals**. The stars become a constant **reminder** of God’s promise.

When Abram looked up at the stars that night about 4,000 years ago, one of the “stars” he saw was **you**. This illustrates the **continuity** of the promise.

This is the first time God’s promise specifically refers to Abram’s **own son**. (Gen 15:4)

What do the bloody animal pieces represent when an oath is being taken?

In what other sense was blood necessary for God to fulfill this covenant promise?

Where was Abram when God was ratifying the covenant?

Did Abram understand enough to anticipate the person and work of Christ? (John 8:56)

Is God lying to Abram when he says (paraphrasing), “*You shall possess the land*”?

What does God mean when He says, “They shall come back here in the fourth generation”? (Gen 15:16, Ex 6:16-20)

From one son (Isaac) comes a nation of **600,000** men in only **six** generations.

Notice how the promise of offspring is accompanied by a promise of **persecution** as well as a promise of **judgment** against those responsible.

Pharaoh’s attempts to suppress the growth of God’s people have the opposite effect. This illustrates how God’s promises are never **thwarted** by man’s evil designs. (Ex 1:10, 12, 20)

One of the tender promises that God gives Abram is for a **long life** and a **peaceful death**.

What is implied by the expression, “You shall go to your fathers”? (Gen 15:15)

Notice that God affirms the practice of burial. How is this significant theologically? (Gen 15:15)

Do we have reason to believe that Abram already believed in a bodily resurrection? (Heb 11:19)

What is the reason that Israel will remain in Egypt 400 years? (Gen 15:16)

*Timeline:* Chapters 12-15 occur in a ten year period from the time Abram enters Canaan. (Gen 16:3)  
Chapter 15 appears to take place in the span of about 24 hours.