

The Promise That Rests on God Alone

Genesis 15:1–21

An Expository Sermon by Dr. Bradley Rushing

Big Idea

God's covenant promises are secure because their fulfillment rests entirely on Him.

I. God meets fearful faith with reassuring presence (v. 1)

- God speaks first. Abram does not bring the fear up before God addresses it.
- “Fear not” shows up all through Scripture when obedience leaves God’s people exposed.
- God’s comfort is personal.
 - “I am your shield.” God does not give protection. God is protection.
 - “Your reward shall be very great.” God guarantees the outcome, even when Abram cannot see it.
- Faith cannot rest on outcomes. It must rest on God’s presence.
- Like a child afraid at night, Abram needs presence more than explanation.
- Obedience does not guarantee ease, but it does guarantee God will not leave you alone.

II. God allows honest faith to voice real questions (vv. 2–6)

- Abram brings his tension to God.
 - “What will you give me, for I continue childless?”
- He is not walking away from God. He is leaning into God’s covenant name.
- The problem is not whether God is faithful. The problem is how the promise will come true.
- God answers clearly.
 - Eliezer will not be the heir. Abram will have a son.
- God lifts Abram’s eyes.
 - “Look toward heaven... number the stars... so shall your offspring be.”
- The turning point is verse 6.

- Abram believed the Lord and God counted it as righteousness.
- Righteousness is credited, not earned.
- Faith does not mean you never struggle. Faith means you take your struggle to God.

III. God grounds His promise in a binding covenant (vv. 7–11)


- God commands Abram to bring specific animals. Abram knows what this means.
- This is covenant ceremony language. Animals are cut and a path is made between the pieces.
- In normal covenants, both parties would walk through the pieces as an oath of death if they break the covenant.
- Abram prepares everything, then waits. Birds of prey come and Abram drives them away.
- The tension builds because Abram does not walk through the pieces.
- The promise will not rest on Abram's performance.
- God is teaching Abram that His covenant will be carried on God's terms.


IV. God alone bears the cost of the covenant promise (vv. 12–21)


- Abram falls into a deep sleep and great darkness. God is about to act without human help.
- Fire and smoke pass between the pieces. This is God's own presence.
- God walks the covenant path alone.
- The meaning is staggering. God is saying that if the covenant fails, the curse falls on Him.
- This is a one sided covenant of grace. The promise rests on God alone.
- God also tells Abram the road will be long, but the outcome is guaranteed.
- This points forward to Christ.
 - In Genesis 15, God takes the covenant curse in symbol.
 - At the cross, God takes the covenant curse in reality.
- Your security does not rest on your grip on God. It rests on God's grip on you.

Mount Gilead Baptist Church

2864 S. Brannon Stand Rd, Dothan, AL 36305

 (334) 792-4842

 YouTube: @mountgilead2065

 Facebook: /mgbcdathan

 www.mgbcdathan.com