

Abram's Shield and Reward

(Genesis 15:1-6)

v. 1.

- A. “After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram...”
- B. Abram had just completed a successful armed engagement against the confederacy of kings which had taken Lot captive. **GEN 14:1-16.**
1. What the military of corrupt Sodom and Gomorrah had not been able to accomplish (**GEN 14:10-11**), a small trained force under God-honoring leadership had done. **GEN 14:14-16.**
 2. An observation:
 - a. God's compromising children, like Lot, are likely to be taken captive. **2TI 2:26.**
 - b. They need unvarnished truth if they are to be liberated. **1TI 4:16; JOH 8:32.**
 - c. They won't get the unvarnished truth they need from “bibles” that are, in essence, the spiritual military arm of Sodom.
 - (1) sodomite: One who practises or commits sodomy.
 - (2) sodomy: An unnatural form of sexual intercourse, esp. that of one male with another.
 - (3) The word *sodomite(s)* appears five times in the KJV (and all are censorious usages) but does not appear at all in the CEV, ESV, GNB, GW, NIV, etc.
 - (4) Terms like *male temple prostitute*, *cult prostitute*, *shrine prostitute*, etc., are commonly substituted for *sodomite* in modern bibles. These terms only condemn exploitation of the act of sodomy, not the act itself.
- C. Abram was then met by God's priest, Melchizedek, who blessed God and Abram. **GEN 14:18-20.**
- D. Abram, on principle, had just turned down a substantial reward from the king of wicked Sodom. **GEN 14:21-24.**
1. This may have been an affront to the king of Sodom, but Abram would make it clear that his motives were righteous. **DAN 5:17 c/w ICO 9:14-15.**
 2. Accepting loss for righteous principle is no real loss. **2CH 25:9; HEB 10:34.**
- E. God made a revelation to Abram suited to what had just transpired. Abram had just demonstrated righteous warfare, worship and works. Those who do likewise may expect God to manifest Himself unto them in some way. **JOH 7:17; 14:21.**
1. “...the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying...”
 - a. This is the first time the phrase, “the word of the LORD” appears in Scripture.
 - b. The word of the LORD came and *spoke*.
 - c. The word of the LORD came *in a vision*.
 - (1) vision: Something which is apparently seen otherwise than by ordinary sight; esp. an appearance of a prophetic or mystical character, or having the nature of a revelation, supernaturally presented to the mind either in sleep or in an abnormal state.
 - (2) In a vision something is seen. Here it was *the word of the LORD*.
 - d. The word of the LORD here is identified as a Person in v. 5: “And he [the word of the LORD] brought him forth...”
 - e. In v. 2, Abram addressed this word of the LORD as “Lord God.”
 - f. Jesus Christ in His divine nature is *the Word of God*. **JOH 1:1-3; REV 19:13.**
 - g. The preincarnate Christ appeared to Abram and spoke to him.
2. The word of the LORD proclaimed Himself Abram's *shield*.
 - a. shield: An article of defensive armour carried in the hand or attached by a strap to

- the left arm of a soldier, as a protection from the weapons of the enemy. *transf.* and *fig.*: Something serving as a defence against attack or injury.
- b. Christ revealed Himself as Abram's Savior. **DEU 33:29; 2SAM 22:2-3; PSA 84:11.**
 - c. With God, the Most High, as our shield, nothing can get through to us without His permission. **JOB 1:12.**
 - d. With God as shield, His commandment, "Fear not, Abram..." is altogether reasonable.
3. Christ also proclaimed Himself Abram's *exceeding great reward*.
 - a. Christ revealed Himself as Abram's most valuable Possession.
 - b. The Lord Himself is the believer's portion and inheritance! **PSA 16:5-6.**
 - c. God is our Savior and He is that unto which we are saved. He is the means and the end of salvation! **EPH 1:5; 2CO 5:19; 1PE 3:18; REV 5:9.**
 - d. With the Possessor of heaven and earth as one's reward, what more could one want?
 - (1) Realizing this should greatly affect our desires. **PSA 73:25-26.**
 - (2) If one has the Lord, he has all that is genuinely needful or desirable. **PSA 23:1.**
 4. The realization that God is one's *shield and reward* breeds contentment, which is the cure for covetousness, and relieves fear. **HEB 13:5-6.**
 - a. covetousness: Strong or inordinate desire.
 - b. content: Having one's desires bounded by what one has (though that may be less than one could have wished); not disturbed by the desire of anything more, or of anything different.
 - c. The commandment prohibiting covetousness is a commandment against lusting after what God has not given us. **DEU 5:21.**
 - d. Covetousness stands in contrast to contentment.
 - e. The covetous man can never be content. **ECC 5:10.**
 - f. The covetous man has the wrong idea of what it means to have a life. **LUK 12:15.**
 - g. Covetousness is idolatry and leads to erring from the faith. **EPH 5:5; 1TI 6:6-10.**
 - (1) The covetous man thinks he knows better than God what he ought to have.
 - (2) The covetous man makes something else other than God his confidence and hope, which is idolatry. **JOB 31:24-28.**
 - h. The covetous man who trusts in riches will fear man who may take his riches away.
 - i. With God as his exceeding great reward, Abram could without reservation turn down the reward of Sodom's king! **2CO 4:17-18.**

vs. 2-4.

- A. Though blessed so much already, Abram raised a question about his still being childless.
 1. God had promised Abram an innumerable seed and He promised to give the land of Canaan to that seed. **GEN 13:12-16.**
 2. But Abram still had no child.
 3. Although Abram was walking by faith, he had his moments of wondering how God was going to work things out. Sound familiar?
 4. Abram even suggested to God a possible solution to the problem when he mentioned his steward Eliezer as an heir.
- B. The word of the LORD informed Abram that one out of his own bowels would be his heir. **v. 4.**
 1. God thus clarified His intentions to Abraham.
 2. It is a comfort to know that God will clarify things to the person who walks in faith.

JOH 7:17; PHIL 3:15 c/w HEB 11:6; JAM 1:5-6.

vs. 5-6.

- A. Abram was promised that his seed would be as numerous as the stars.
1. tell: To mention numerically, to count, reckon.
 2. The word translated *tell* in v. 5 is also translated *number* in the same verse.
 3. This is fulfilled in Abram's natural posterity (**DEU 1:9-11**) and in his spiritual posterity. **ROM 4:16-18; GAL 3:29; REV 7:9.**
- B. Upon believing this promise, Abram believed in the LORD and God *counted it to him for righteousness*.
1. The LORD in Whom Abram believed was *the word of the LORD* speaking to him. Thus Abram believed in Christ as saved people do today. **JOH 3:14-18; ROM 3:26.**
 2. Like Abraham's faith, our faith is *counted for righteousness*. **ROM 4:3-5, 22-25; GAL 3:5-7.**
 3. **GEN 15:6** was spoken *after* Abram departed from Ur of the Chaldees by faith. **HEB 11:8.**
 - a. Since it is the just who live by faith (**HEB 10:38**), Abram was already just before **GEN 15:6**.
 - b. Abram's faith in **GEN 15:6** evidenced that he was already righteous.
 - c. Therefore, one's faith is the *evidence* of his righteousness, not the *means* of becoming righteous! **HEB 11:4.**
 4. Christianity is Abram's religion. **JOH 8:56.**