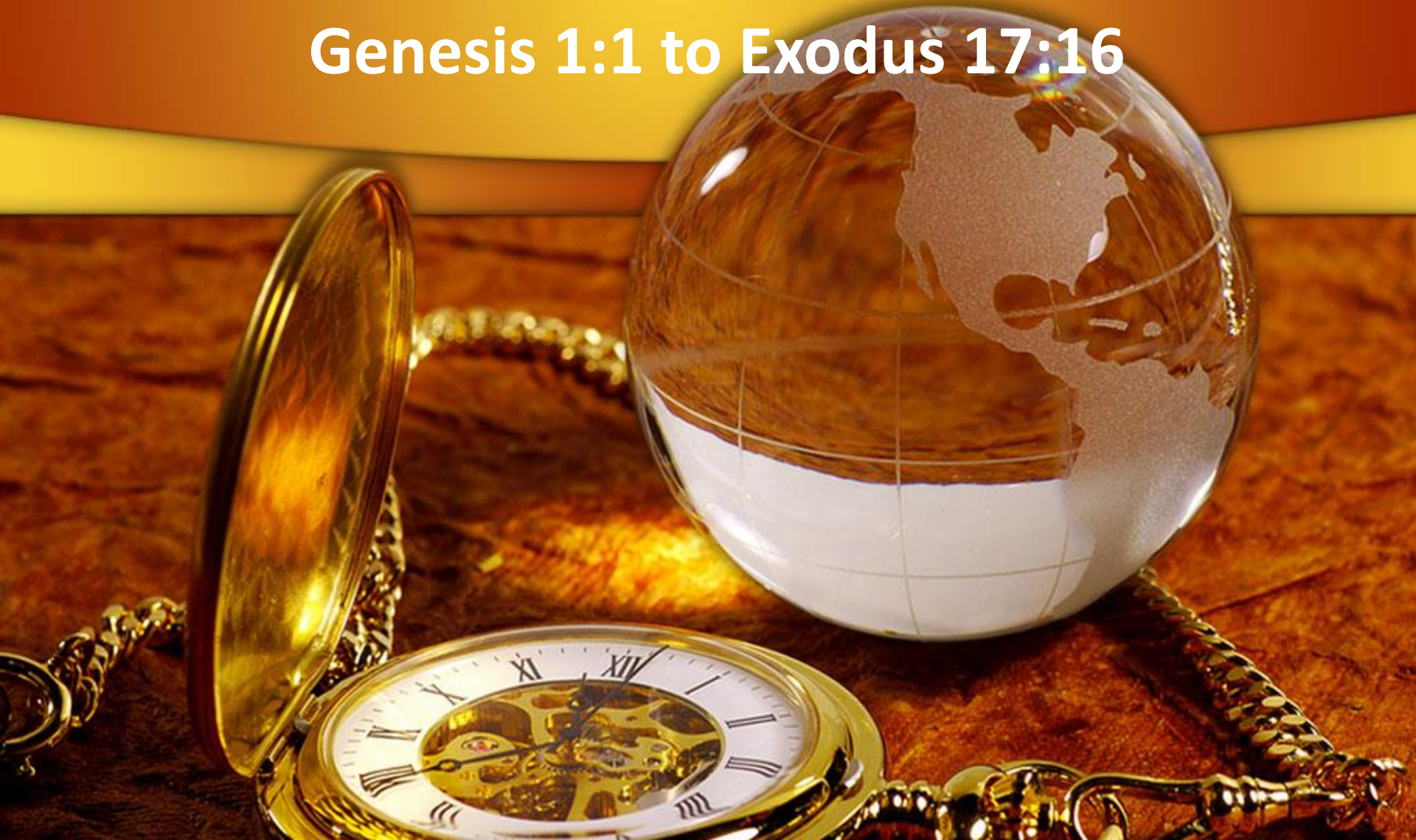
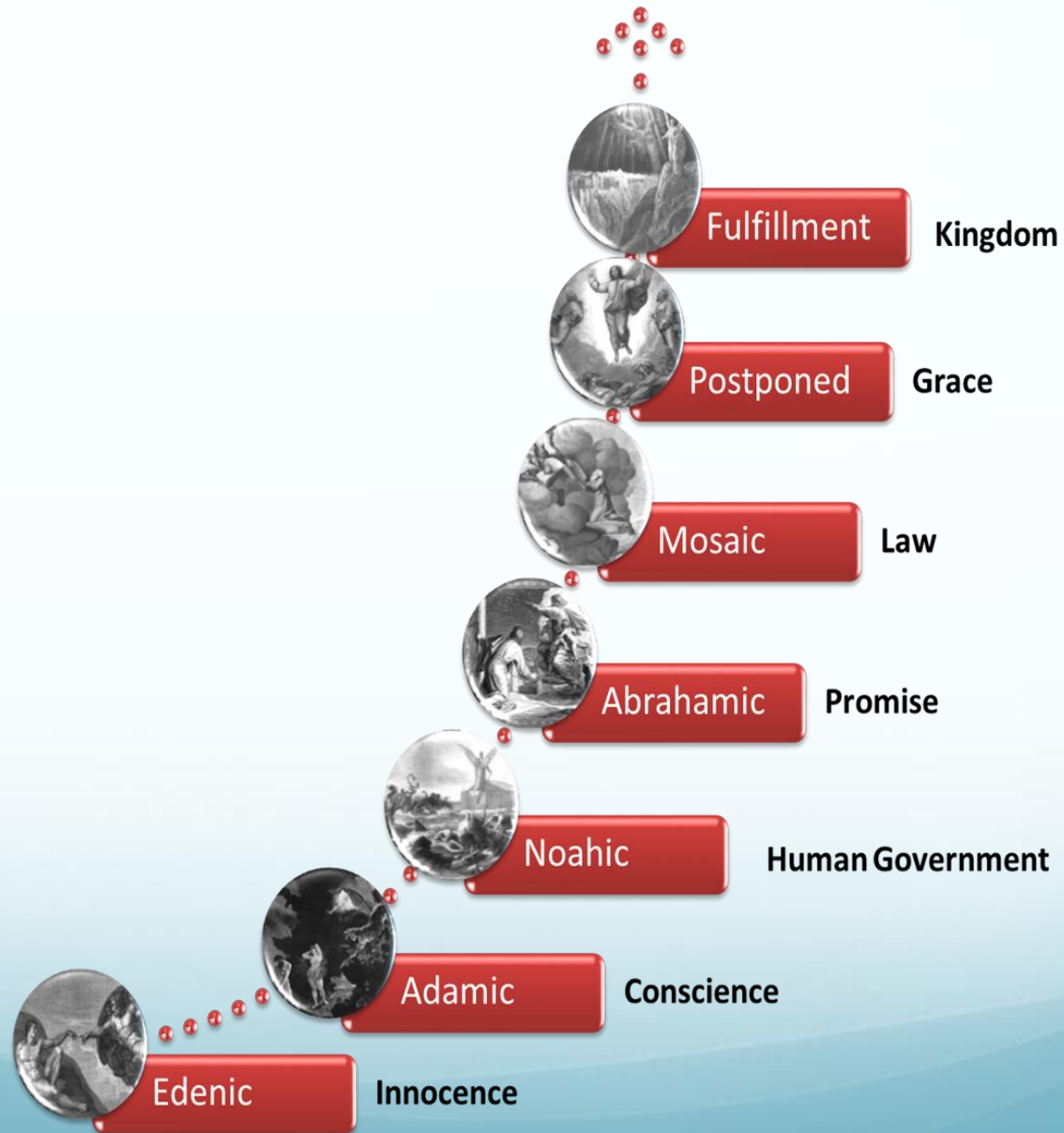


From God's Creation to God's Nation

Genesis 1:1 to Exodus 17:16



Review of Covenants in the Bible & Dispensations



Chapter 15 Audio



Genesis 15 Outline

- VII. The Covenant with Abram (15:1–21)
 - A. **Abram's faulty assumption (15:1–3)**
 - B. **God's faithful assurance (15:4–21)**
 - 1. *The revelation (15:4–5)*
 - 2. *The response (15:6)*
 - 3. *The ratification (15:7–17)*
 - a. The details (15:7–11)
 - b. The dream (15:12)
 - c. The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)
 - d. The descent (of God himself) (15:17)
 - 4. *The real estate (15:18–21)*

Abrahamic Covenant (12–17)

- Abrahamic promises (12)
- Abraham's sanctification (13–14)
- Abrahamic Covenant (Formal ratification of it, or as Constable says “formalizing the promises and making a covenant” (15)
- Ishmael's line (16)
- Circumcision (17)
 - Taken from Andy Woods power point on Genesis (edited/added to by RR)

Abrahamic Covenant

ABRAHAMIC
Genesis
15

LAND

SEED

BLESSING

LAND
Deuteronomy
29-30

DAVIDIC
2 Samuel
7:12-16

NEW
Jeremiah
31:31-34



Unconditional covenant with a conditional blessing (Deut. 28; Lev. 26)

Introductory Comments on *The ratification (15:7–17)*

- These verse are formalization of the Covenant
- Foreshadows the Sinaitic Covenant
- In YHWH's declarations
- And in coming of YHWH in fire & darkness (15:12,17)
- & at Sinai (Ex 19:18; 20:18; Dt 4:11)
- 4 divine speeches (vv. 7, 9, 13-16, 18-21)
- These speeches encompass land & seed promises confirmed by a divine covenant
- Abram's 2 responses (vv. 8, 10-12) & the covenant ceremony (17)

The details (15:7–11)

- God comes to Abram using name YHWH
- Designates covenant keeping God
- “I am” attested A.N.E as royal proclamation/connotes unimpeachable authority
- “Who brought you out”...remember this foreshadows Exod. 20:2 & Mosaic Covenant
- Purpose? The Land..earlier was on the seed, now it is on the Land
- Land promise was to both Abram individually as well as his seed

The details (15:7–11) (Cont.)

- Verse 8 Abram's question on possessing the Land
- “Oh Lord God, how may I know”
- *O Lord Jehovah, and once again, it is Adonai YHVH (Fructenbaum)*
- This not a question in unbelief or lack of faith
- Honest question for explicit details
- Hamilton, “For the use of *bammá* in similar contexts where further supporting data is desired, see *Exod. 33:16; Mal. 1:2, 6, 7; 2:17; 3:7–8*”
- Waltke: “More likely, Abram's request for a sign is motivated by faith (see 15:6; cf. Isa 7:10-14)
- Mathews: “The Lord responds by the presentation of a formal treaty with the passing of the torch (v. 17), and later he similarly answers Moses at the burning bush by a “sign” (Exod 3:11–12)”

The details (15:7–11) (Cont.)

- Verses 9-11 deals with the division of the animals as the prelude to the covenant ratification
- Fructenbaum: *“The Midrash on this passage interprets this as God’s answer to Abram’s fear: Even if his descendants sin, God has provided atonement for them. Moreover, the nature of these animals as having atoning value was recognized by the rabbis, and they called these the korbanot, meaning “sacrifices.”*
- Rabbinic tradition says: 11 offerings total
 - 3 heifers:
 - 1 Yom Kippur (day of Atonement) (Numbers 29:8)
 - 1 for halachah (rabbinic law) (Leviticus 4:13-14)
 - 1 of which the neck be broken to acct for a dead & murderer not known in accordance with (Deut. 21:4)
- Other “Rabbinical traditions” read back into the text over the centuries in keeping with an increased elevation of rituals over sincere worship....see Hosea 6:6;10:1-2; Isa. 1:11-15; Micah 6:6-8; NT Jesus confirms this Matt. 9:13;12:1-8 (read these)

The details (15:7–11) (Cont.)

- An Apt point by Fructenbaum: “While the claim that Abram sacrificed three of these animals is not true to the Genesis text, the main thing to observe from the rabbinic interpretation of this passage is that they connected all these animals with blood atonement, and they recognized the principle of blood atonement even though in this passage that is not clearly stated. In this passage, blood was used to make a blood covenant”
- 15:10 Abram’s immediate obedience
- This seems to have been a A.N.E (Ancient Near East) contractual agreement ceremony
- 2nd millennium Hittite texts use a similar procedure for purification
- Some 1st mill. Aramaic treaties use for placing a curse on any violation of a treaty

The details (15:7–11) (Cont.)

- Verse 10 (ANE ceremonies Cont.)
- Texts from Mari & Alalakh feature the killing of animals a part of the ceremony of making a treaty
- In all of these ANE treaties, BOTH parties walked between the animal parts...i.e. a bi-lateral/binding on both parties covenant/agreement/contract
- Any Biblical evidence of such a ceremony?
- Jeremiah 34:18 “The men who have violated my covenant and have not fulfilled the terms of the covenant they made before me, I will treat like the calf they cut in two and then walked between its pieces”
- Morris: “This arrangement was evidently intended to conform to the custom of the day, when a covenant was made between two parties; each would pass between the two rows, as a sign that he was bound by the terms of the contract”

The details (15:7–11) (Cont.)

- Verse 10: “& cut them in 2, & laid each half opposite the other..”
- Abram cut the animals in half, lining them into 2 rows
- This required the shedding of blood (established in the Garden in 3:21)
- Fructenbaum: “This was all in keeping with the ancient methods of making a blood covenant. For example, in the *Mari Tablets*, to make a covenant was “to slay an animal.” Normally, when two men made a blood covenant, only one animal was used. Here, a total of five animals were used, showing the solemnity of the covenant”
- The birds are slaughtered, but not split in two
- Unlike the threat of a curse in Jer. 34 for failure to observe the covenant is not explicit in 15:9-11.....this shows the immutable nature of the covenant, and if anything if 15: 7-11 is read in light of the Jeremiah 34’s imprecatory character, it implied God submits to His own “self-imprecation”...so this further solidifies the assurance of the covenants success since God cannot lie, and cannot change

The details (15:7–11) (Cont.)

- Matthews here explains the 2nd Millennium Alalakh description of this type of ceremony is closer to a parallel
- “second-millennium texts from Alalakh involving an oath by a superior that is confirmed by slaying a lamb or sheep. If the Abram incident compares to these promissory oaths, Genesis describes a covenant pledge undertaken by God that is formally ratified by animal slaughter (cp. Exod 24:3–8).”
- Verse 11 “The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away”
- Seemingly, since the context fits upon what YHWH will describe for the future of Israel, this is most certainly a picture/prediction of the coming Egyptian bondage
- Waltke: “The verbal root may mean to fall upon with shouting (1 Sam. 15:19). The noun, denoting a powerful and swift bird of prey that swoops upon carrion, is used as a metaphor for a conqueror in Isa. 46:11. Here the noun may be singular or collective (see Isa. 18:6; Jer. 12:9) and accordingly represents either Pharaoh^{or} the Egyptians who will threaten the emergence of the nation”

The details (15:7–11) (Cont.)

- A good summary offered by Fructenbaum
- At this point, it might be helpful to explain exactly what a blood covenant was and how it differs from other covenants. The nature of a blood covenant is spelled out in Jeremiah 34:8–11 and 17–20. A blood covenant pledged the lives of the ones making the covenant to the covenant: If one failed, his blood was to be poured out just as the blood of the animal had been poured out. In other words, he would invoke upon himself the death penalty. The animal sacrificed was the substitute in death for the two making the covenant. Once the covenant was made and once both parties walked between the pieces of the animal, the terms of the covenant could not be changed

The details (15:7–11) (Cont.)

- Other ceremonial covenants were: the hand covenant, which was the shaking of hands or striking of the pelvis (Ezra 10:19; Ezek. 17:18); the shoe covenant, where 2 parties making the agreement exchange sandals, and that covenant was in force until they exchanged them again (Ruth 4:7-12); the salt covenant, one would put his thumb into a salt pouch of the other, then put it into his own salt pouch...and so the original pinch of salt could never be retrieved (Lev. 2:13; Num. 18:19; 2 Chron. 13:5)
- Of these four types of covenants, the blood covenant was by far the most solemn

The dream (15:12)

- This marks the beginning of the 2nd encounter
- The scene of “terror & great darkness” matches/foreshadows Israel’s darkening & declining fortunes upcoming in Egypt
- Stephen in Acts 7:6-7 summarizes this entire vision (read it)
- “when the sun was going down”...meaning dusk, which means a whole day had transpired since verse 5
- the vision moves from night to day until night, covering a large number of hours
- “a deep sleep fell upon Abram”.....this was a visionary sleep, for which Abram was fully conscious of what was taking place
- Fructenbaum: “The Hebrew word for *deep sleep* is *tardeimah*; it was a *supernatural deep sleep that fell upon Abram*”

The dream (15:12)

- It was the same *deep sleep that fell upon Adam (Gen. 2:21) in preparation for the creation of Eve*
- It also fell upon Saul (I Sam. 26:12)
- Daniel in (Dan. 8:18; 10:9)
- It is also mentioned in Job 4:13 and 33:15. Then: *A horror of great darkness fell upon him*
- This again shows that Abram was fully conscious in the midst of the *deep sleep, because he felt horror; he felt fear...Fructenbaum, p. 280*
- Hamilton on “terror” is excellent
- The Hebrew word for “terror” (*’êma*), which we have translated *frightening*, reflects a human emotion that is inspired most often by *Yahweh’s presence (Exod. 15:16, where it is parallel to paḥad; 23:27; Deut. 32:25; Ps. 88:16 [Eng. 15]; Job 9:34; 13:21)*

The dream (15:12) (Cont.)

- Such terror is destructive (Exod. 23:27; Deut. 32:25; Ps. 88:16), immobilizing (Exod. 15:16), intimidating and coercive (Job 9:34; cf. 33:7), or unnerving (Job 13:21). None of these nuances, however, is found in the use of *'êmä* in *Gen. 15:12*. *In fact, we would know of no terror that seized Abram in this narrative, had v. 12 not stated it so*

The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)

- V. 13 YHWH clarifies the vision
- Abram's descendants (Israel) indeed will possess the Land, but only after being “strangers in a land not theirs” & enslaved for 400 years
- The slavery will come with affliction: *and they shall afflict them. The Hebrew word for afflict is anah, the same word used in Exodus 1:11–12, where the Egyptians afflicted Israel, whereby this prophecy finds its fulfillment*
- The duration is: *four hundred years. This figure is also mentioned in Acts 7:6, and the dates would be 1876–1476 b.c. Another figure, 430 years, is given in Exodus 12:40–41 and Galatians 3:17, which would cover 1876–1446 b.c.; and so there is an apparent contradiction*

The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)

- There are two options in reconciling the figure 400 and the figure 430 years
- The first option is that the Egyptian sojourn lasted a total of four hundred thirty years while the affliction itself lasted four hundred years
- That means the enslavement began thirty years after the sojourn into Egypt began
- The second option for reconciling the two figures is that the 430-year period lasted from the sealing of the covenant until the Exodus from Egypt. The actual Egyptian Bondage itself was 215 years. The figure *four hundred years began with the weaning of Isaac until the Exodus*

The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)

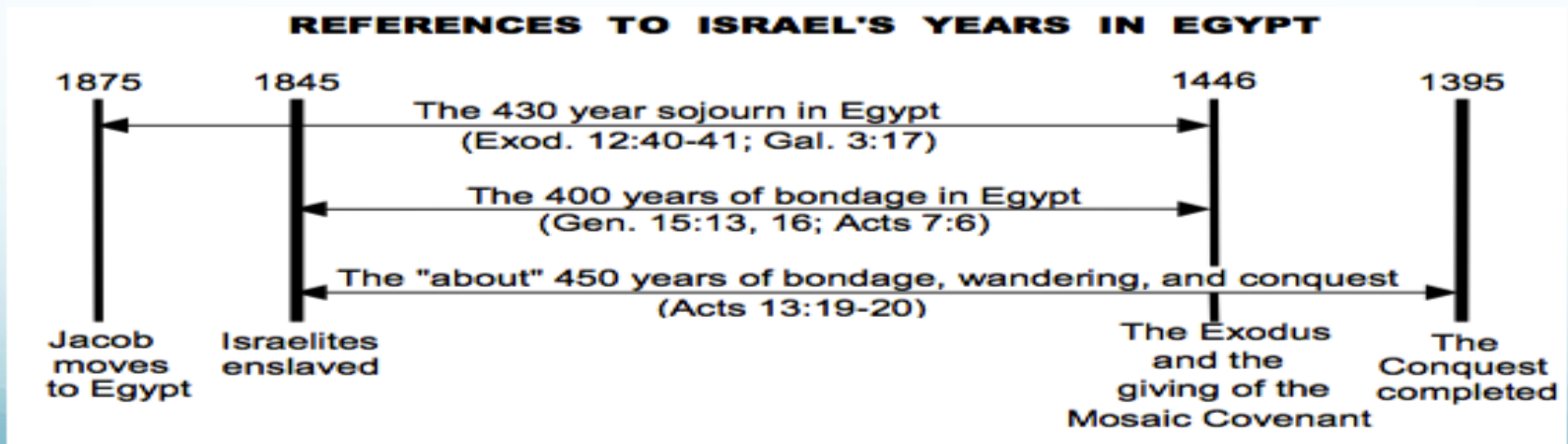
- Morris explanation on this dating
- God said they would be in an alien land 400 years, a round number which was later seen to be exactly 430 years (Exodus 12:40). This was indicated to be equivalent to “four generations,” perhaps since men were still living to be one hundred years of age and older as a general rule at that time. That is, among those leaving Egypt after the captivity would be old men whose great-grandfathers had been among the seventy Israelites who entered Egypt
- Galatians 3:17, however, suggests that the 430-year period was from the time of the covenant with Abraham until the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. This, in turn, suggests that Genesis 15:13 can be interpreted: “Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and [all the people among whom they dwell, both Canaanites and Egyptians] shall afflict them four hundred years.” Similarly, Exodus 12:40 can be understood as follows: “Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was [altogether, that is, from the time of the covenant until they left Egypt] four hundred and thirty years.

The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)

- Morris concludes:
- If this is the intended meaning, then the actual sojourn in Egypt itself would only be approximately 215 years, taking the entry of Abram into Canaan as the effective date of God’s covenant promise. This interpretation is also supported by the Septuagint translation of Exodus 12:40, which substitutes the words “in the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan” for the words “in Egypt.” In this case, the “four generations” could refer to the 215 years, rather than the four hundred years.
 - Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1976), 328.

The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)

- Constable explains this dating well
- Moses gave more detail regarding the history of the seed here than he had revealed previously (cf. vv. 14, 16). The 400 years of enslavement were evidently from 1845 B.C. to 1446 B.C., the date of the Exodus. This promise, read by the first readers of Genesis after the Exodus, would have encouraged them greatly (cf. Exod. 12:40-42). They experienced the fulfillment of this promise. That generation did indeed come out from Egypt with many possessions, also promised here, having "spoiled" the Egyptians (cf. Exod. 12:31-36).



The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)

- Verse 14 “But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions”
- Genesis 15:14 predicts the Exodus, beginning with the judgment of Egypt: *and also that nation [Egypt], whom they shall serve [as slaves], will I judge. Here again is the outworking of the cursing aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant*
- This will be followed by the enrichment of Israel: *and afterward, meaning after the sojourning as strangers and after the enslavement, shall they come out with great substance, fulfilled in Exodus 3:21–22 and 12:35–36*
- One wonders if the sentence *they will depart with abundant provision did not remind Abram of the day when he too left an alien land with enormous provision (Gen. 12), though he had gained it at great cost...Hamilton, p.435*

The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)

- Verse 15: “As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age”
- Abram will be spared a turbulent future. To go to one’s grave *peacefully means to come to the end of one’s life with a sense of contentment and fulfillment*
- Advanced age alone is not what makes this prediction so intriguing. Rather, it is that the advanced age is qualified as *ripe (ṭôḇá)*. *Jacob illustrates that the elder years of one’s life can be those of misery (42:38; 44:29, 31)*
- The patriarchs all died in old age and in prosperity (Isaac, 35:29; Jacob, 43:27; 44:20; 49:33; Joseph, 50:22, 26), which was an expression of divine favor (Ps 126:6); however, it is only said of Abram that he will die “in peace” (*běšālôm*)
- Jacob illustrates that the elder years of one’s life can be those of misery (42:38; 44:29, 31). For the expression *śēḇá ṭôḇá* see *Gen. 25:8 (Abraham); Judg. 8:32 (Gideon); 1 Chr. 29:28 (David)*

The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)

- Verse 16: “Then in the 4th generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete”
- *Four generations of sojourning and enslavement will end and they will return to the land*
- Fructenbaum’s interpretation: Abram’s descendants will return in the fourth generation, and the four generations are found in Exodus 6:16–21: (1) Levi, (2) Kohath, (3) Amram, and (4) Moses and Aaron
- *This verse shows that the word *generation* does not always mean forty years, which has been too common of a teaching. Actually, the Bible never specifies only one span of time for a generation*
- *Here, it is a hundred years, since four generations with an overall span of four hundred years means each generation in this instance is a hundred years. In most cases, the term *generation* is not a time span but rather a word that is used the same way it is used today, meaning “contemporaries.”Fructenbaum, p. 282*

The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)

- V. 16 b: “for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete”
- This was the reason for the delay in giving Abram and Abram’s descendants the Land. The cup had not yet overflowed
- *The iniquity of the Amorite is described in Leviticus 18:24–30 and 20:22–27; and in Deuteronomy 18:9–14. Thus Joshua’s future conquest of the Land would be not only militaristic, and not only nationalistic, but also judicial, a divine judgment, because by then the iniquity of the Amorites would be full*
- God’s waiting until four generations had transpired shows the extension of His grace, leaving the Amorites without excuse
- Hamilton also puts it well: This last half of the verse articulates the idea that the fixing of times is conditioned not on necessity but on morality.

The destiny (of Israel) (15:13–16)

- Mathews summarizes verse 16b well
- The extent of Amorite depravity is condemned in Mosaic legislation (Lev 18:24–25; 20:22–24; Deut 18:12; cf. 1 Kgs 14:24; 21:26; 2 Kgs 21:11) and illustrated by the violence and sensuality of their religious myths (e.g., Baal cycle from Ugarit). By delaying his judgment against the Amorites, the Lord expresses forbearance toward the nations. Retribution against their sins only at “its full measure” attests that judgment is neither capricious nor unwarranted (cf. 18:20–25). Nevertheless, divine temperance toward their iniquity reaches an appropriate point of intolerance
 - K. A. Mathews, Genesis 11:27–50:26, vol. 1B, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 175.

The descent (of God himself) (15:17)

- Genesis 15:17 records the actual signing and the sealing of the Abrahamic Covenant; and it came by means of the *Shechinah Glory*
- This is the official “ratification ceremony” of the Abrahamic Covenant
- It was now dark... “when the sun had set”
- “a smoking oven & a flaming torch”symbols
- The *Shechinah Glory* is the visible manifestation of God’s presence, usually appearing as a light, as a fire, as a cloud, or as some combination of these three things
- The *smoking fire pot* and the *flaming torch* remind one of the smoke and fire that surrounded the summit of Mt. Sinai
- Fire in the Bible is often a symbol of the presence of God. (We have already drawn attention to the close parallel in form between 15:7 and Exod. 20:2.)

The descent (of God himself) (15:17)

- Here is the absolute most important truth about the nature of the Abrahamic covenant that will flow through the rest of the Bible and is the basis for/and expression of YHWH's love for His people, Israel
- That only something representing deity passes between the rows of flesh shows that this covenant is unilateral. If it were bilateral, we would have expected something representing Abram as well to pass through, as we saw in the Hittite text discussed above on vv. 9–11.
- Fructenbaum: “The normal procedure was for both persons making the covenant to walk between the pieces of the animal, rendering the terms of the covenant obligatory to both parties. This procedure also rendered the covenant conditional: If one party broke the terms and forfeited his life, it would exempt the other party from keeping his part of the covenant. Since the covenant was between God and Abram, it was normal here that God passed *between these pieces*.”

The descent (of God himself) (15:17)

- It was not God and Abram that walked between *these pieces of the animals, but it was God alone Who passed between the pieces of the animals, which rendered the covenant unconditional*
- Fructenbaum: “Abram’s lack of participation emphasizes the unconditionality of this particular covenant. So Abram did not become an active participant in the signing and sealing of the covenant as such; he was only the recipient of the covenant and the covenantal promises. It meant that no matter how often Abram failed (and he will fail in the next chapter), and no matter how often his seed, the Jewish people fail, the Abrahamic Covenant cannot be rendered null and void”
- Hamilton in NICOT commentary explains these important observations
- Of special significance here is the idea of Yahweh, represented by fiery symbols, passing between (*‘āḇar bēn*) *the rows of animal flesh. Here ‘āḇar is clearly a theophanic term*
 - Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis, Chapters 11-50*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 437.

The descent (of God himself) (15:17)

- As such, the verb may be compared with two other important OT passages, Exod. 33–34 and Josh. 3–4. The first of these deals with the renewal of the covenant after the sin with the golden calf, and the second with the start and completion of Israel’s crossing the Jordan
- The three references have the following items in common:
 - (1) a proclamation of Yahweh’s name: Gen. 15:7; Exod. 34:5, 6; Josh. 3:9
 - (2) something is “cut”: Gen. 15:18, a covenant; Exod. 34:4, tablets; Josh. 3:16, the waters of the Jordan
 - (3) Yahweh’s appearance expressed through *‘āḇar*: Gen. 15:17; Exod. 33:23; Josh. 3:11
 - (4) a justification for the theophany: Gen. 15:8, to confirm to Abram that he will possess the land; Exod. 33:16; to demonstrate that Moses and his people have found Yahweh’s favor; Josh. 3:10, to convince the Israelites that there is among them a living God. (Note how each of these theophanies supplies knowledge for one who does not have that knowledge yet: “how am I to know?” [Gen. 15:8]; “for how shall it be known?” [Exod. 33:16]; “you shall know” [Josh. 3:10].)

The descent (of God himself) (15:17)

- (5) a list of nations Yahweh is to expel (in the form of a promise): Gen. 15:18–21; Exod. 34:11; Josh. 3:10–11
- (6) each is in the context of a covenant, or covenant renewal
- Ross summarizes this excellently:
- In forming such a covenant, the one who passed through was binding himself by the symbolism, under punishment of death, to fulfill the oath or promise. The holy God would thus be zealous to fulfill his promises, notably concerning the land. He had come down to make this formal covenant, and since he could swear by none greater, he swore by himself. The promises were forever sure

The real estate (15:18–21)

- Animals are cut and now a covenant (*binding promise*) is cut. V. 18 provides the only instance of the word “covenant” in the chapter
- This was the formal "cutting" of the Abrahamic Covenant. God now formalized His earlier promises (12:1-3, 7) into a suzerainty treaty, similar to a royal land grant, since Abram now understood and believed what God had promised. God as king bound Himself to do something for His servant Abram. The fulfillment of the covenant did not depend on Abram's obedience. It rested entirely on God's faithfulness
- God obliges himself to give to Abram's descendants the land of ten nations, all of which fall within the land of Canaan proper. The *river of Egypt* (see Num. 34:5; Josh. 15:4, which use *naḥal* instead of *nāhār*) is not the Nile but the modern Wadi el-Arish, the dividing line between Palestine and Egypt

The real estate (15:18–21)

- The wadi is usually identified with either the Wadi el ‘Arish or the most eastern arm of the Nile delta (Pelusiac branch), the Shihor River (e.g., Josh 13:3; 1 Chr 13:5; Isa 23:3; Jer 2:18). The Wadi of Egypt and the Euphrates mark the outer limits of the land of Canaan (Num 34:5; Deut 1:7; Josh 1:4; cp. 2 Kgs 24:7). The land mass demarcated in vv. 19–21 is probably the ideal standard (cf. Isa 27:12), a portrayal the author of Kings equated with the golden era of Solomon (1 Kgs 4:21[5:1]) though he did not fully dispossess the indigenous populations
- *The river of Egypt (see Num. 34:5; Josh. 15:4, which use naḥal instead of nāhār) is not the Nile but the modern Wadi el-Arish, the dividing line between Palestine and Egypt. The geographical extremes of the promise obviously extend beyond Canaan, witnessed especially by the phrase to the great river, the river Euphrates. In fact, only during the apogee of David’s reign, many hundreds of years later, was this promise actualized. But even then the empire was maintained only for a generation. By Solomon’s time cracks appeared in the empire, and portions of the empire rebelled and reclaimed their own land for themselves*

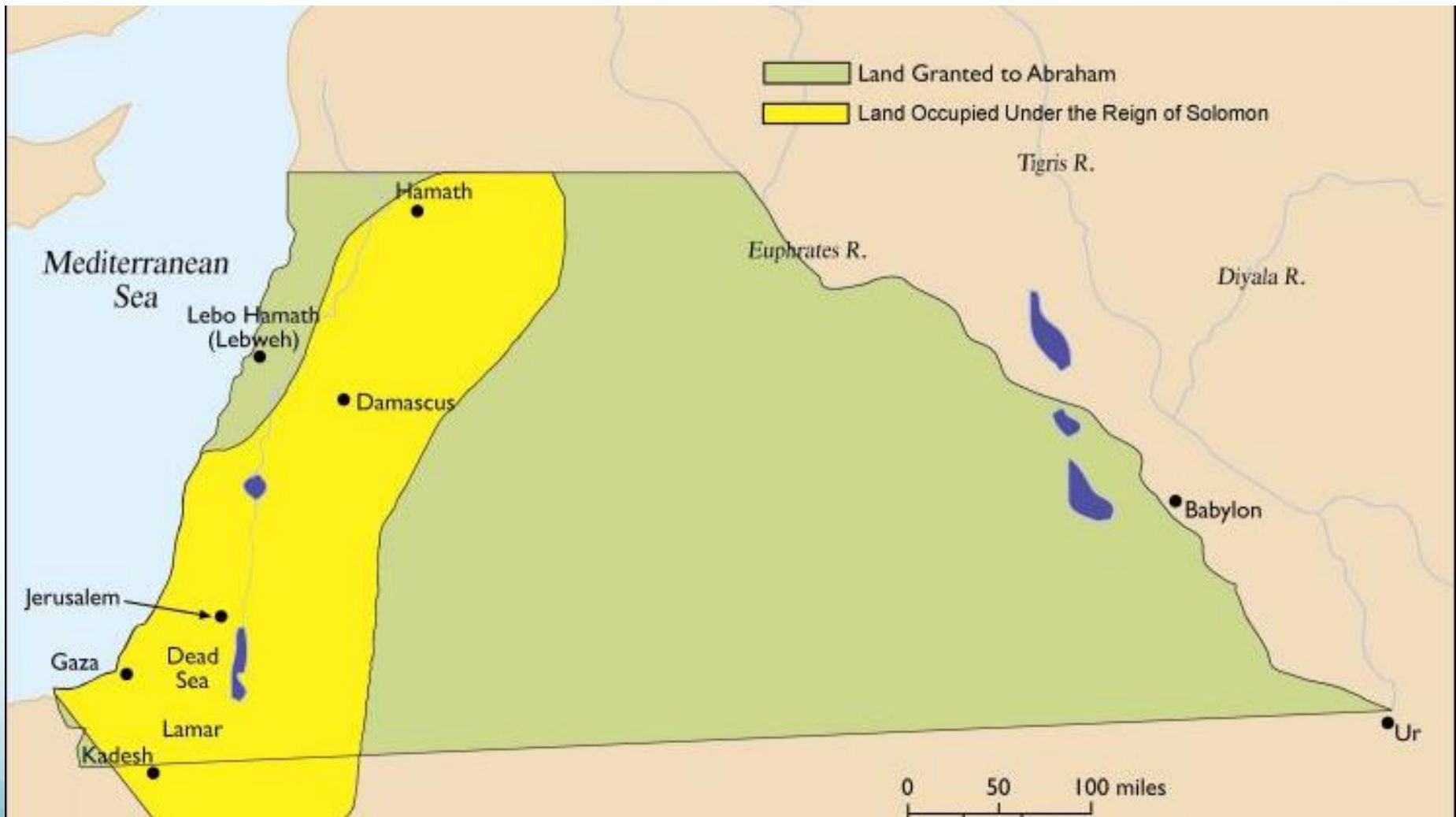
The real estate (15:18–21)

- Fructenbaum seems to conclude a larger area as the Promised Land
- *The river of Egypt refers to the most eastern branch of the Nile Delta. As the Nile River flows from south to north before emptying into the Mediterranean Sea, it breaks up into various branches flowing through the Nile Delta, and the most eastern branch was known as the River of Egypt. This is known today as the Pelogiac branch of the Nile Delta, which flows into Lake Sironbis. It is also known as the River Shihor, the fourteenth nome of Egypt. The northern border is the great river, the river Euphrates*
- *The list is comprised of ten tribes, and this is the most complete list. Other passages list six nations (Exod. 3:8, 3:17, 23:23; Deut. 20:17) or seven nations (Deut. 7:1, Josh. 3:10). The Kenite inhabited the Arabah. The exact location of the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite is unknown. The Hittite originally came from Asia Minor (Turkey) but migrated to the Land. The location of the Perizzite is unknown. The Rephaim lived on both sides of the Jordan. Amorite is a word in Hebrew that means “western.” These western people flooded the Land around 2000 b.c. Canaanite may refer to the inhabitants in general but to the Phoenician area in particular. The Girgashite may be the same as the Karkisha of Asia Minor that migrated south. The Jebusite inhabited the area of Jerusalem*

Some maps of views of promised land



Some maps of views of promised land



Important Distinctions in the Interpretation of the (un) conditionality of the Ab. Cov. In Premillennial view vs. an Amillennial viewpoint

- Some amillennialists take these boundaries as an ideal expressing great blessing and believe God never intended that Abram's seed should extend this far geographically.⁵⁹³ However such a conclusion is subjective and finds no support in the text.
- The Abrahamic Covenant is basic to the premillennial system of theology.
- "How one understands the nature and function of this covenant will largely determine one's overall theology and most particularly his eschatology."
- This covenant has not yet been fulfilled as God promised it would be. Since God is faithful we believe He will fulfill these promises in the future. Consequently there must be a future for Israel as a nation (cf. Rom. 11). Amillennialists interpret this covenant in a less literal way. The crucial issue is interpretation. If God fulfilled the seed and blessings promises literally, should we not expect that He will also fulfill the land promises literally?

Some Excellent “take aways” from Ch. 15

- The principles in this chapter are essentially the same for any age. Today people become the people of God by faith as well, and their faith brings righteousness before God (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6). To New Testament believers God has also made great promises (Heb. 9:15 et al.), but those promises seem to be greatly delayed in the face of suffering and death (2 Peter 3:9). By his covenant which he made by his own blood, however, our Lord has guaranteed that his Word is sure and that neither death nor oppression can destroy his promises (Heb. 7:20–25; Rom. 8:31–39).
- Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 313.

Final Comments/ “take aways” (Cont.)

- From Waltke
- Genesis 15:6 is foundational to the doctrine of justification by faith, not by works (see Gal. 3:6–14). Abraham is not sinless, but he believes the promise of the birth of an heir from the dead (see Rom. 4:17–21; Heb. 11:11–12), and God counts that equivalent to meeting the moral demands later stipulated in the Mosaic covenant (see Ps. 15). According to Nehemiah (Neh. 9:8), God makes a covenant with Abraham because he finds Abraham’s heart faithful. Abraham is the model for our faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, faith that God will credit to us as righteousness (Rom. 4:22–25)
 - Bruce K. Waltke and Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 246–247.
- Bruce K. Waltke and Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 246–247.

Final Thoughts from Waltke (Cont.)

- God will remain faithful to his covenants, despite the weaknesses of his human partners. As the next scene (Gen. 16) of Abraham's story will show, Abraham and Sarah's faith is "defective." Likewise, Noah, Israel, David, and Peter fail after God covenants with them. Nevertheless, God's covenant stands. He remains faithful.
- In passing through the carcasses, he commits to death if his word is untrue. The reason the God of Israel lives in the petitions and praises of his people is that he keeps his prophetic promises. God's prophecy also reveals his sovereign control over history. To be sure, other religions have seers and prophets, but none has prophets who give such a comprehensive view of history and such specific detail as Israel's prophets. No other god of the ancient Near East survives; all passed away, for none could reveal history or speak truth like the God of Israel (cf. Isa. 41:21–29)
- Bruce K. Waltke and Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 247.

My Final Observations/ “take aways”

- The Lord was Abram’s comforter, & we have God as our comforter in the 3rd Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit!
- The Lord was the object of Abram’s faith, & not the quantity....as it is for us in the Church/age of grace
- The Lord may bless us in material ways like Abram, but the important blessing is a relationship with the Lord, and eternal life with Him
- The Lord imputed His righteousness on Abram through faith, the Lord imputes His righteousness to us in the same way, by believing in Jesus Christ
- The Lord, unlike man, can never break His promises
- The Lord, like He did Abram’s descendants, will punish lack of faith, so faith is vital both in justification & sanctification

Important Interpretive Note for **All** of the Bible

Ch. 15:7-21...YHWH's promises ratified & explained

Seed of the Woman

God's Wisdom/Imputed righteousness

fulfillment

Jesus Christ



God

Gen. 3:15

Serpent

15:7-21.Abram's descendants will experience exile & trials

Seed of the Serpent

Human reasoning/self-righteousness

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