

A lit torch with a bright orange and yellow flame, set against a dark blue night sky filled with stars. The torch is positioned diagonally, with the flame pointing towards the upper left.

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18

God seals the covenant with Abram who will later be renamed Abraham.

⁵ He took him outside and said: Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can. Just so, he added, will your descendants be.

⁶ Abram put his faith in the LORD, who attributed it to him as an act of righteousness.

⁷ He then said to him: I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as a possession.

⁸ “Lord GOD,” he asked, “how will I know that I will possess it?”

⁹ He answered him: Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old

female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

¹⁰ He brought him all these, split them in two, and placed each half opposite the other; but the birds he did not cut up.

¹¹ Birds of prey swooped down on the carcasses, but Abram scared them away.

¹² As the sun was about to set, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a great, dark dread descended upon him.

¹⁷ When the sun had set and it was dark, there appeared a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch, which passed between those pieces.

¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the Great River, the Euphrates,¹

Verse 6 Abram put his faith in the LORD, who attributed it to him as an act of righteousness.

Everyone in the Bible was expected to demonstrate his faith in the Lord. This faith, this trust, this confidence and reliance on God is based upon the truthfulness of God's words and deeds.

Once you have faith you have a need to obey God's commandments even when it is not a popular position to take.

A person's faith or lack of it is

clearly shown when the person faces a crises.

Abram believed God would give him a son despite many years of childlessness.

“Righteousness” is a major Old Testament virtue demonstrated by living a godly life and obeying God's laws.

It is the righteous who enjoy God's favor.

Abram's trust in God should be our model of Christian faith.

The participants in a covenant would slaughter animals.

They would swear an oath by calling down on themselves the fate of the victim, death and dismemberment, should they violate the agreement.

The flame, symbolizes God, passing between the pieces, symbolizing that God Himself will bear the penalty if the promise is broken.

Ultimately, Christ bears the penalty for our disobedience.

