

## GENESIS 15:1-6    ABRAM'S PREDICAMENT – AND OURS

<sup>1</sup> After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward."<sup>2</sup> But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?"<sup>3</sup> And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

<sup>4</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir."<sup>5</sup> He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

<sup>6</sup> Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

It is natural to fear reprisal when you have intervened victoriously in the affairs of others. The hatred of the defeated smolders beneath the surface and could emerge anytime with ruthless and pitiless vengeance. Into the midst of Abram's fear comes God with a reassuring vision that Abram has nothing to fear. That vision becomes the opportunity for Abram to air to God an even greater fear; that he has no posterity. God has promised that Abram's descendants would become a great nation (Genesis 12:2), but real doubt about the validity of the promise is engendered by the lack of a son. God affirms his promise, and Abram, against all physical evidence, believes God's word as true. Abram understands that the responsibility for the fulfillment of the promise rests with the Promise-giver and that One is the subject of his faith. We are reminded that Abram has chosen correctly when we are told, *and he credited it to him as righteousness*.

Christian faith is believing that what has been promised in the future is a reality (no matter how long delayed) because we know the One who makes the promise is eternally trustworthy. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews wrote that the great persons of faith in the Old Testament did not receive the things promised before they died, but *saw and welcomed them from a distance* (11:13). Our ultimate faith must be placed on God and God alone. We hope for the fulfillment of his promises, but we only have that hope because of our faith in God. On our own we cannot achieve righteousness, but by faith in God through Jesus Christ, we can be credited as righteous.

**God, you are the source of the promises which are the only ground of my hope. Help me to see those promises as the fulfillment of your will and hope in them only because they are your will. Give me eyes only for you. Amen.**