

## COUNTING STARS

### Genesis 15:1-6

*"Sometime later, the Lord spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great.' But Abram replied, 'O Sovereign Lord, what good are all your blessings when I don't even have a son? Since you've given me no children, Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in my household, will inherit all my wealth. You have given me no descendants of my own, so one of my servants will be my heir.' Then the Lord said to him, 'No, your servant will not be your heir, for you will have a son of your own who will be your heir.' Then the Lord took Abram outside and said to him, 'Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have!'"*

Here's a verse to remember: 15:6 And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.

### MESSAGE

This text is a curious one. Abraham was bowing down to idols when God found him. It's a beautiful reminder that your past doesn't determine your destiny! This man went from worshipping statues to becoming a father of faith and a friend of the Most High God! And God gives Abram two commands:

1. **"Go to the land that I will show you."** Abram's living comfortable in Haran. He's got his routine. He's got his setup. But God says, "I need you to move!" Some of you need to hear this - God's about to disturb your comfort zone!
2. **"I will make you a great nation."** God not only called him to move - He called him to believe for the impossible!

Here's what gets me excited - look how God works:

- He calls us to the **UNKNOWN!** You can't GPS this journey!
- He calls us to the **IMPOSSIBLE!** Abram and Sarai are in their 70s with no children, but God says, "I'm about to do something supernatural!"

It's still happening today! God is still calling! The question isn't "Will God call us?" The question is "How will you respond?"

### FEAR NOT

Before God gave Abram the promise, before He showed him the stars, before He talked about descendants - God dealt with the giant called FEAR! Fear is not just an emotion - it's a spirit that comes to assassinate your faith! It's a thief that wants to rob you of God's promises!

Say it with me: "FEAR IS THE ENEMY OF FAITH!"

When fear knocked on Abram's door, God stepped in with a command: **"DO NOT BE AFRAID!"** I'm telling somebody - God is speaking the same words over your situation! The Bible is LOADED with this truth:

- Paul declares in **1 Timothy 1:7: "God has NOT given us a spirit of fear!"** If God didn't give it to you, you don't have to keep it!
- **1 Corinthians 16:13** shouts: **"Be men of courage!"** That word 'courage' means to stand your ground when everything's shaking!
- David testifies: **"The Lord is my light and salvation - WHOM SHALL I FEAR?" (Psalm 27:1)** Somebody give God a praise right there!

**300 TIMES** in the Word of God, He tells us **"Fear not!"** That's not a suggestion - that's a command from heaven! Why would God say it 300 times? Because He knows we need to hear it! Don't you dare let fear stop you from your miracle! Don't let fear talk you out of your promise! Our God is a REWARDER (Genesis 15:1) of those who walk in faith!

## REBUTTAL

The Bible says, **"Abram replied..."** (Genesis 15:2)

God Almighty speaks, and Abram talks back! But let me step on somebody's toes tonight - how many of us haven't even RESPONDED to what God's been saying? The King of Kings is waiting on your reply, and His inbox is EMPTY!

SOMEBODY NEEDS TO HEAR THIS! The Creator of the universe is waiting on YOU, and you're still hitting the snooze button on His call! Abram's response wasn't pretty. He comes at God with attitude: **"Lord, what good are these blessings? I DON'T EVEN HAVE A SON! You haven't given me children! My servant's gonna get everything!"**

Look at what Abram does - he tries to help God out! "Time out, God! I've got a better plan! Let me show You how to fix this!" How many times have we done the same thing? God gives us a promise, and we start drafting Plan B! God shows us a vision, and we pull out our calculator! God says "Trust Me," and we say, "Let me figure this out!"

## GOD'S TURN

Then the Lord said to him, "No, your servant will not be your heir, for you will have a son of your own who will be your heir." Then the Lord took Abram outside and said to him, "Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have!" (Genesis 15:4-5)

Abram's response spoke volumes. He knew there was a God in the heavens, but he did not understand God's potential. God's about to give Abram three divine instructions that'll REVOLUTIONIZE his thinking! And somebody in this house needs these same three things tonight!

**NUMBER ONE: GO OUTSIDE!** God had to get Abram out of that tent mentality! I hear the Spirit saying, "Some of y'all are living in TENT VISION!" God says, "Get out of those four walls! Get out of that limited thinking! Get out of that box you've put Me in!" SOMEBODY SHOUT "I'M COMING OUT!"

**NUMBER TWO: LOOK UP AT THE SKY!** The Lord says, "Abram, you think I'm some little wooden idol? Let me show you who I AM! See that moon up there? I HUNG THAT! Those stars? I SPOKE THOSE INTO EXISTENCE! I breathed into dirt and created mankind! QUIT LOOKING AT YOUR WEAKNESS AND START LOOKING AT MY POWER!"

Church, we've got to get rid of this tent vision! We'll never reach this city with tent thinking! We'll never see God's fullness with tent mentality! IT'S TIME TO TEAR DOWN THESE TENTS!

**NUMBER THREE: COUNT THE STARS IF YOU CAN!** The Lord says, "You think having a baby at 75 is impossible? I CREATED THESE STARS! You think your situation is too hard? I SPOKE LIGHT INTO EXISTENCE! You think it's too late? I'M THE GOD OF THE IMPOSSIBLE!"

Do you want to live life in a tiny tent or under open skies? We will never reach our community for Christ with tent vision! We will fail to experience the fullness of God with tent vision. We will miss the immeasurable blessing of the Almighty with tent vision. It's time to pull up the stakes and tear down the tent! And all God needed from Abram was a "K." Just a simple yes! Just a nod of agreement!

## **HE BELIEVED**

Look at our key verse: ***"And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness." (Genesis 15:6)***

The Hebrew word here is 'awman'. It is where we get the word Amen. It means to trust. At its root, it has this idea of being held in a mother's arms like a suckling baby. It is complete and utter abandonment in trust. God said, "I got this." Abram said, "Amen."

Go outside. Look at the sky. Count the stars if you can. Simple, yet transformative. This brief encounter with God changed Abram, and it changed the course of history. Here is how the Apostle Paul explained it:

***"Just as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness, so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you.' For this reason, those who believe are blessed with Abraham who believed." (Galatians 3:6-9 NRSV)***

## **COUNTING STARS**

Robin and I started our lives together in poverty status. Two weeks prior to our marriage, I did not have a job, she did not have a job, we had no money, and we did not have a place to live.

A friend suggested we postpone until things were better suited. To that I declared in faith, "By the time we get married, I will have a job, Robin will have a job, we will have a place to live, and we will have enough money to go on a honeymoon."

**Count the stars, 1,2,3,4... We did, and God provided!**

While still in poverty status, we attended a revival. God told us to give away everything we had with bills due and zero knowledge of where our next dollar would come from.

**Count the stars, 1,2,3,4... We did, and God provided!**

The state Overseer called me and offered us a full-time, full-pay lead pastor position at a church in Cadillac, MI, that also had a house to live in. On the same weekend, we were offered a full-time, low-pay position as an associate pastor at a smaller church. We felt led to take the full-time, low-pay, no-house position.

**Count the stars, 1,2,3,4... We did, and God provided!**

A missionary called while I was serving as lead pastor of a small, struggling church. Their car was totaled, and they needed a new one. God challenged me to do more than pray. I was to purchase them a vehicle.

**Count the stars, 1,2,3,4... We did, and God provided!**

George Mueller was a man of tremendous faith, a giant of prayer. In his later years, he supported countless missionaries overseas while ministering to over 2,000 orphans in Bristol, England. It's estimated that in his lifetime, solely in answer to prayer, God provided between \$9 and \$17 million for his work with orphans. Over 5,000 of his prayers were answered according to his personal journal.

On several occasions, the orphans would be sitting at the table with no visible sign of food. Once, a man knocked on the door after they had thanked God for the food they were about to eat, though nothing was on the table. The man was a caterer who had prepared food for a large banquet but had written down the wrong date. He asked if the orphanage could use the food. Dr. Mueller replied, "Well, you're a few minutes late - since we have already blessed it - and we are ready to eat."

**Count the stars, 1,2,3,4... They did, and God provided!**

I don't know what your story is. I don't know what God has called you to do. All I can say is, "Count the Stars. You can trust God because He is trustworthy." Amen.

## **Counting Stars: Faith Beyond Our Vision**

### **Genesis 15:1-6**

#### **Key Kingdom Principle**

"And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith."

#### **God's Instructions to Abram**

##### **1. Initial Commands**

- "Go to the land I will show you"
- "I will make you a great nation"
- Calls us to the unknown
- Calls us to the impossible

##### **2. Overcoming Fear**

- "Do not be afraid" appears 300 times in Scripture
- Fear is the enemy of faith
- God is our rewarder
- Fear attempts to:
  - Assassinate faith
  - Rob promises
  - Limit vision
  - Stop miracles

##### **3. Breaking Tent Vision** God's Three Divine Instructions:

- Go Outside
  - Leave limited thinking
  - Break free from constraints
  - Step beyond comfort zones
- Look Up at the Sky
  - See God's power
  - Recognize His majesty
  - Understand His capabilities
- Count the Stars

- Embrace impossibilities
- Trust His promises
- Accept unlimited potential

## **Practical Faith Applications**

### **The Power of Belief**

- Hebrew word 'awman' (Amen)
- Complete trust like a child
- Simple agreement with God
- Faith activates righteousness

### **Characteristics of True Faith**

- Responds to God's voice
- Moves beyond human logic
- Trusts despite circumstances
- Acts on God's promises
- Persists through challenges

### **Living Beyond Tent Vision**

- Reject limited thinking
- Embrace God's possibilities
- Trust His timing
- Follow His leading
- Expect supernatural provision

### **Remember**

When God calls us to count stars, He's inviting us to see beyond our current reality into His realm of possibilities. Every star represents a promise, and every promise carries God's power to fulfill it.

"Just as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness, so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham... For this reason, those who believe are blessed with Abraham who believed." (Galatians 3:6-9)