

Chapter 15

Abram doubting and lamenting that he should haue no childe, God promifeth him much ifsue, 6. who beleuing is iuftified, 9. offereth Sacrifice prefcribed by God, 13. and is forewarned that his feede fhall be in ftrange land 400. yeares, 14. fhall be deliuered from feruitude 18. and poffeffe Chanaan.

Vhen thefe things therefore were done, the word of our Lord was made to Abram by a vifion faying: Feare not Abram, I am thy protector, & thy reward exceding great. ² And Abram faid: Lord God, what wilt thou geue me? I fhall goe without children: and the fonne of the ftuard of my houfe is this Damafcus Eliezer. ³ And Abram added: But to me thou haft not geuen feede: and loe my feruant borne in my houfe, fhall be myn heire. ⁴ And immediatly the word of our Lord came to him faying: He fhall not be thy heyre: but he that fhall come out of thy wombe, him fhalt thou haue thin heire. ⁵ And he brought him forth abroad, and faid to him: Looke vp to heauen, and number the ftarres, if thou canft. And he faid to him: So fhall thy feed be. ⁶ Abram beleued God, and it was reputed to him vnto iuftice. ⁷ And he faid to him: I am the Lord that brought thee out from Vr of the Chaldees for to giue thee this land, and that thou mighteft poffeffe it. ⁸ But he faid: Lord God, how may I know that I fhall poffeffe it? ⁹ And our Lord answered, and faid: ^aTake me a cowe of three yeares old, and a shee goat of three yeares, and a ramme of three yeares, a turtle alfo, and a pigeon. ¹⁰ Who taking al thefe, diuided them by the mydes, and laid ech two peeces arowe one againft the other: but the birdes he diuided not. ¹¹ And the foules lighted vpon the carcaffes, and Abram droue them away.

Ro. 4. Gal. 3.
Iac. 2.

^a Thefe three kindes of beaftes and two of birdes fignifie that the Ifraelites fhould be three generations in a ftrange land, the fourth in the defert, the fifth in poffeffion of Chanaan, *Theod. q. 65. in Gen.*

12 And when the funne was setting, a deepe fleepe fel vpon Abram, and a great and darkefome horroure inuaded him. 13 And it was said vnto him: Know and foreknow that a pilgrime shal thy feede be in a land not their owne (and they shal bring them vnder bondage, and afflict them) ^{a)} foure hundred yeares. 14 But the nation, whom they shal ferue, I wil iudge: and after this they shal goe forth with great subftance. 15 And thou shalt goe to thy fathers in peace, buried in a good old age. 16 But in the fourth generation they shal returne hither: for ^{b)} as yet the iniquities of the Amorrhéanes are not at the ful vntil this present time.

Act. 17.

Exo. 12.

17 Therefore when the funne was fet, there arose a darke mift, and there appeared a fornace fmoking, and a flake of fire paffing betwene thofe diuifions. 18 That day God made a couenant with Abram, faying: To thy feede wil I geue this land from the riuer of Ægypt euen to the great riuer Euphrates, 19 the Cineans, & Cenezites, the Cedmonites, 20 and the Hethits, and the Pherezits, the Raphaims alfo, 21 and the Amorreans & the Cananites, and the Gargafites, and the Iebufites.

ANNOTATIONS

6 Beleued God.) S. Hilarie (*li. 9. de Trin.*) and S. Ambrose (*li. 1. de Abraham. c. 3.*) by this example teach vs, what maner of faith is reputed to iustice, to wit, fuch a faith as without tergiuerfation, or requiring of prooffe or reafon, doth fimplly beleue that which God once faith, becaufe he is omnipotent, how farfoeuer the thing that is said furmouteth our vnderftanding. For fo heroical was the act of Abrahams faith, promptly beleuing Gods word in a matter moft hard to his former conceipt, that for the fame he receiued fingular prayfe; and for the like afterwards was called *The father of manie nations (c. 17. v. 5.)* and by

To beleue Gods word without ftaggering is an act of iustice.

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- ^a Abraham and his feed were in ftrange land 400. and odde yeares, but in feruitude and affliction about 140.
- ^b God deferreth to punifh, either that the wicked may amend, or the good be exercifed by them. *S. Aug. Pfal. 54.* or becaufe the iniquity is not come to that great meafure which his wifdome forfeeth, and wil punifh in the end, to his owne more glorie, and more good of others. *S. Greg. ho. 11. in 3. Ezech.*

S. Paul, *The father of al that beleue (Ro. 4. v. 11.)* where the Apofle teacheth that Abraham had no iuftice, nor eftimation of iuftice before God, vntil he beleued in Chrif (v. 18, 19, 20.) becaufe al workes before that faith are infufficient. Neyther was this a fole faith but had other neceffarie vertues of hope, and charitie, humilitie, reuerence, obedience, & the like ioyned with it. Wherefore S. Iames teftifieth that Abraham was iuftified by workes (that is by workes folowing faith, not going before faith.) For *Faith* (faith he) *if it haue not vvorkes, is dead in it felf. (c. 2. v. 17.)* And by vvorkes *Abrahams faith vvas confumat. v. 22.* And concludeth thus: Do yee fee, that by workes a man is iuftified and not by faith only. v. 24.

Not workes before faith but ioyned with faith are meritorious.

Onlie faith doth not iuftifie.