



Daily Verse and Comment

Genesis 15:7-17

(7) Then He said to him, "I *am* the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it." (8) And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?" (9) So He said to 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) Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. (11) And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. (12) Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror *and* great darkness fell upon him. (13) Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is* not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. (14) And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. (15) Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. (16) But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete." (17) And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.

New King James Version

Sunset is the beginning of Nisan 14, and chronologically we are moving into the daylight portion of that day—[Passover](#) day. As daylight hits, Abraham asks [God](#) for evidence that He will follow through. Abraham receives the command to prepare a sacrifice and a prophecy regarding his family. Verse 12 shows the preparation of the sacrifice was during the *daylight* part of Nisan 14, because when we get to verse 12, the sacrifice has been prepared, and the sun was going down. That brings us up to the *end* of the 14th.

Many have wondered why Christ was sacrificed during the daylight portion of Nisan 14 in the *afternoon* rather than at the beginning, and seemingly more in alignment with Passover. Was not the Passover lamb slain at the beginning of Nisan 14, after *ben ha arbayim* began? Yes, it was. So people think because Christ was sacrificed sometime during the afternoon of the 14th that there is something wrong. The answer as to why He was sacrificed during the afternoon rather than at the beginning of the 14th appears here in Genesis 15: Even as the covenant of promise with Abraham was ratified by the sacrifice Abraham makes here, Christ's sacrifice provides the ratification of the New Covenant. Christ's sacrifice, by God's decree, had to align with the ratification of *the covenant of promise with Abraham*, not the Passover. The time of [the crucifixion](#) aligns *exactly* with Genesis 15.

Verse 12 specifically states "when the sun was going down." Therefore, this sacrifice in Genesis 15, like Christ's sacrifice, took place in the late afternoon. What happened at Christ's crucifixion? A great *darkness* occurred. In Genesis 15, a great *darkness* occurred to Abraham. In addition to that, a great horror fell upon him. Now what does that picture? There are two possibilities.

1. Abraham was made by God to experience a very small taste of the horror that Christ had to face in His crucifixion and burial. *God almost scared him to death* by putting the *fear* in him.
2. It could also be a precursor of the darkness and the earthquake that took place at Christ's crucifixion.

I prefer the first one, that Abraham, as the father of the faithful and the first covenantal ancestor of [Jesus Christ](#), had to experience a bit of what God's Son in the flesh would have to go through 1,700 years later.

Something else appears here that is not so readily apparent at Christ's crucifixion: Abraham had to beat off vultures. When the fowls came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. Vile birds are the Bible's symbol of demons. This gives the impression that, as Jesus was hanging on the cross, a great spiritual battle occurred during which the demons were taunting and persecuting Christ to induce Him to give up. Some of the psalms speak about everybody gawking at Him and taunting Him. It was not only human beings.

We can understand it was demons as well, who were doing everything to break His courage and to break His spirit.

It says very clearly that God forsook Jesus. "[Why have you forsaken me?](#)" Christ asks, because now He was on His own completely and totally for the first time in His life. God made Abraham go through a little bit of that great horror and darkness. Maybe part of the horror that Abraham had to experience was the fear, perhaps, of being buried alive. We can speculate on such things, but it is included so that we will understand what Abraham went through and how it parallels what Christ endured—even to the exact *days* and *times* of the days as the events progressed.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Wavesheaf and the Selfsame Day](#)



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