**Abram and the Covenant**

**A Bible Story From**

**Genesis 15:1-20**

**Bible Story Number: 1010170**

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**Abram and the Covenant**

**Bible Story**

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**Background**

Abram’s name will be changed to Abraham (Gen. 17:5) and his wife Sarai became Sarah (Gen. 17:15).

God made a profound promise to Abram (called a covenant):

I will bless you and make you the father of a great nation.

I will make you famous throughout history.

I will protect your allies and punish your enemies.

I will bless the entire world through your descendants.

God told Abram to leave his country and go to the place God would show him. Abram obeyed.

Abram knew what to do with the animals. This was how a covenant agreement was made. In today’s world, an agreement is signed, witnessed, notarized, and filed in the courthouse. The event described in this story was how an agreement was legally and morally confirmed in their day.

The cutting of the animals in half and walking between them was how the agreement was made. It also was a symbol that if the agreement was broken, the person who broke the agreement would deserve to have the same thing happen to himself and his animals (his possessions). The passing of the smoking firepot and the blazing torch represented God walking through the parts, making his commitment (covenant) to Abram.

**Story from the Bible**

**Genesis 15:1-20**

This is what the Bible says.

God told Abram to leave his home and go to the land He would show him. Abram obeyed God. After he had rescued his nephew Lot, he gave one tenth of everything he had as an offering to God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.

God spoke to Abram and said, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield; your reward will be very great.” Abram responded by asking what God could give him since he had no children. His inheritance would go to a servant in his household.

God told Abram that he would have a son, an heir, come from his own body. He told him that his inheritance would not go to someone else, but to his own son. God told Abram to look at the stars, and told him that if he could count the stars, that’s how many descendents he would have.

Abram believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. God considered Abram right before him, forgiven of his sin, because he believed, because of his faith.

God reminded Abram of God’s own promise. God had brought Abram out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give him the land that He had now shown him. Abram asked God, “How can I know that I possess it?” God told Abram to bring a heifer (a young cow that has not yet had a calf), a goat, a ram (adult male sheep), each three years old, and a dove and a young pigeon. Abram prepared these for the sacrifice by cutting each of the animals in half and arranging the halves opposite each other on the ground.

While he waited, birds of prey came down and Abram drove them away. At sunset, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came upon him. Then God spoke to Abram again. “Know this for certain: Your offspring will be foreigners in a land that does not belong to them; they will be enslaved … afterward they will go out with many possessions. But you will go to your fathers in peace and be buried at a ripe old age. In the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”

After sunset, when it was dark, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. On that day, the Lord made a profound promise to Abram (a covenant). He promised to give Abram all the land from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates.

That concludes this story from the Bible.

**Retelling the Story**

Let’s review this story by retelling it as a group. We want to retell it as faithfully as we can to the story from the Bible. We do not want to add to it or leave out anything important. Who will get us started?

**Questions**

* How did Abram respond to what God told him to do?
* What question or concern did Abram express to God?
* Why was righteousness credited to Abram?
* How did Abram prepare for the agreement between God and himself?
* How did God demonstrate his commitment to Abram? What did God say to Abram?
* What did you like about this story?
* What did you not like about this story?
* What did you learn about God from this story?

**Prayer**

Prayer is more than a way to end the session. It is time to talk to God. Public prayer is a model for others. Boldly ask God to guide participants to use the Bible story with others. Ask God to give you and the participant’s insight and understanding as you think about this biblical event.