**Abram Becomes Abraham**

**A Bible Story From**

**Genesis 17:1-27**

**Bible Story Number: 1010190**

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**Abram Becomes Abraham**

**Bible Story**

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**Background**

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, and he obeyed.

In this story, God gives Abram the name Abraham. His new name means “father of many,” and represents the covenant that God was promising that day.

**Story from the Bible**

**Genesis 17:1-27**

This is what the Bible says.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, God appeared to him again. God said to him, “I am God Almighty. Live in My presence and be blameless. I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you greatly.” Abram bowed facedown before God and worshiped.

God reminded Abram of His promise (His covenant). He told Abram he would be the father of many nations. He then gave Abram a new name, Abraham. God told Abraham he would be very fruitful, that his descendants would include many nations and many kings. God said that His promise (His covenant) with Abraham would last forever and God’s promise (His covenant) would extend to the future generations of Abraham’s descendants.

God summed up His promise by saying, “I will … be your God and the God of your offspring after you.”

God told Abraham that he and his descendants would have to keep the covenant. Every male was to be circumcised as a sign of the covenant. God told Abraham that every male, including his sons and even his male slaves were to be circumcised. In the future, every male child was to be circumcised when he was eight days old. Any uncircumcised male would not be included in the promise that God had made.

God told Abraham that Sarai was now to be called Sarah. She would have a son by Abraham and she would be the mother of many nations, and kings of peoples would come from her.

Abraham bowed facedown before God. He laughed and said to himself, “Can a child be born to a hundred-year-old man? Can Sarah, a ninety-year-old woman, give birth?” He said to God, “If only Ishmael were acceptable to You!”

God agreed that Ishmael would live under his blessing. But, that did not change His promise. He told Abraham that Sarah would have a son by this time next year. He told Abraham to name him Isaac. He told Abraham that His covenant would last forever and extend through Isaac.

God said that Ishmael would be blessed. He would become the father of twelve rulers and he would become a great nation. But God also said that the covenant with Abraham would be fulfilled through Isaac.

The very same day, after God had finished speaking with Abraham, Abraham took his son Ishmael and all the men born in his household and circumcised them. Abraham and Ishmael were both circumcised that day. Abraham was ninety-nine years old and Ishmael was thirteen.

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 old was Abram when God changed his name to Abraham?
* How old was Sarai when God changed her name to Sarah?
* How did Abraham respond to God when he was told that he would have many descendants?
* What was Abraham’s obligation in the agreement (covenant) with God?
* How old were Abraham and Ishmael when they were circumcised?
* 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.