

**THE COVENANT WITH ABRAM**

Old Testament Lesson #10

Abram became concerned about God's promise that he would make of Abram a great nation. Abram and Sarai were childless, and Sarai was past childbearing age. Abram thought his servant Eliezer (el-I-E-zer) might inherit his estate. God said that Eliezer would not be the heir, but that the heir would come from Abram's own body. He then took Abram outside and told him to count the stars — Abram's offspring would be as numerous. Abram believed God.

In order to assure Abram, God made a covenant with him by sacrifice. Abram brought the specified animals and sacrificed them. He laid the animals out before God. He then watched over them to keep the birds away. Later, as the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep. In a vision, God told Abram that his descendants would be made slaves and mistreated by another nation for 400 years, after which God would punish that nation and Abram's descendants would be freed with great possessions.

After the sun had set completely, Abram saw a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appear, which passed between the pieces of the sacrifice. The firepot and torch represented God, and by passing through the sacrificed pieces, it demonstrated that God was binding the sacrifice with Abram. God then again promised the land to Abram and his descendants. God said the land would reach from the river of Egypt (Nile) to the great river, the Euphrates (u-FRA-teze).

**POINTS TO CONSIDER:**

- Abram's faith was being developed by God over a period of many years. He was 75 years old when God first made a promise to him concerning his offspring and the land promised to them. Time passed, and Abram and Sarai were still without any children.
- A covenant is a promise or pledge between two parties.
- Abram's belief in what God had promised was an example to all men of faith who lived after him (see Hebrews 11:8-26).

**The Covenant with Abram**

- I. Abram wondered how God's promise would be fulfilled.
  - A. He and Sarai had no children.
  - B. He thought his servant might inherit his land.
- II. God answered Abram's concerns.
  - A. The servant would not inherit Abram's estate.
  - B. Abram would have many offspring; as many as the stars.
  - C. Abram believed God's promises.
- III. God made a covenant with Abram.
  - A. Abram was required to take animals and sacrifice them.
  - B. While watching over the sacrifices, Abram fell asleep.
  - C. In a vision, God told Abram that his descendants would be mistreated for 400 years. Then God would free Abram's people.
  - D. A smoking pot with a blazing torch passed between the pieces of the sacrifice.
  - E. After Abram awoke, God again promised Abram that his descendants would inherit large portions of land.

**ANSWER KEY:**

"Look up at the heavens and count the stars – if indeed you can count them. So shall your offspring be."

covenant, sacrificed, animals, laid, darkness, pass, between, pieces, smoking, firepot, blazing, torch, give, land, offspring