**GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAM**

Genesis 15:1-21                                                                                                   **Lesson 11**

Key verse: 15:6**6**Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

God helped Abraham to overcome security and safety problem.

Abraham was credited because of his faith.

**1. Look at verse 1. What was God's word to Abram in a vision? Why might he have been afraid? Why might he have needed assurance about a reward? (Think about the events of the previous chapter.) (Mt 4:5-7)**

**15**After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

“Do not be afraid, Abram.
    I am your shield,[a]
    your very great reward.[b]”

**5**Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. **6**“If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:

“‘He will command his angels concerning you,
    and they will lift you up in their hands,
    so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’[a]”

**7**Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’[b]”

**2. Look at verses 2-5. What was the real problem in Abram's heart? What was God's specific word of promise regarding Abram's "no son" problem? Why did he take Abram outside and show him the stars? (Heb 11:1)**

**2**But Abram said, “Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit[c] my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” **3**And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.” **4**Then the word of the Lord came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” **5**He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring[d] be.”

**11**Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

**Abraham wanted to compromise.**

**3. Look at verses 6-9. How did Abram respond to this word of promise? What do the words, "(God) credited it to him as righteousness" mean? (Ro1:17)**

**6**Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

**7**He also said to him, “I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.” **8**But Abram said, “Sovereign Lord, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?” **9**So the Lord said to him, “Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.”

**17**For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last,[a] just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”[b]

**Abraham believed that God would keep his promise.**

**Bank credits us because they believe that we will pay it back. God approved Abraham’s ‘right’ because of his faith.**

**What does “live by faith” mean? The answer is from Heb 11:1, which says, “Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”**

**Abraham believed that God would send his children as numerous as stars in the sky, even though he could not see any. Abraham pleased God because of his faith in God’s promise.**

**4. Look at verses 10-16. How did Abram prepare for the covenant ceremony? What prophecy about the future of Abram and his descendants did God give him? When and how was this fulfilled? (Ac 7:6-8)**

**10**Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. **11**Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away. **12**As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. **13**Then the Lord said to him, “Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. **14**But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. **15**You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. **16**In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”

**6**God spoke to him in this way: ‘For four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated. **7**But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves,’ God said, ‘and afterward they will come out of that country and worship me in this place.’[a] **8**Then he gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision. And Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him eight days after his birth. Later Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob became the father of the twelve patriarchs.

**The two parts’ Passing through between the half-cut animals was the covenant ceremony in the ancient days.**

**Four hundred years…..Read Ex 12:40**

**5.Look at verses 17-20. After sunset, when darkness had fallen, what else happened? What does this show about the covenant? (He 6:13)**

**17**When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. **18**On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, “To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi[e] of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates— **19**the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, **20**Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, **21**Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites.”

**13**When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself,

A smoking firepot was the symbol of the presence of God.

Hebrews 6:13-18.

God made his covenant with Abraham and sealed it by his oath.

God does not lie. His character does not allow him to lie. God’s call and his gift are irrevocable (Ro 11:29) God does not change his mind in his calling. What promise of God do you have?