

THE COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

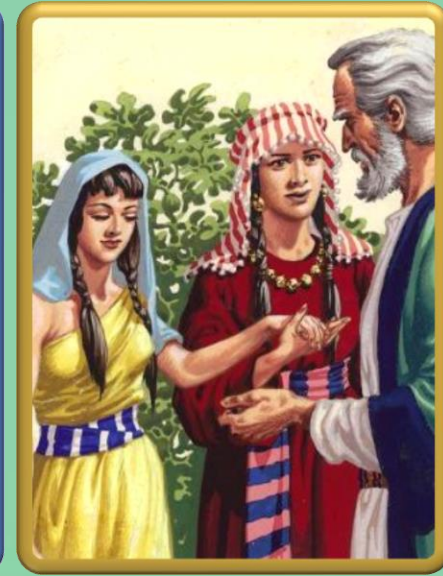
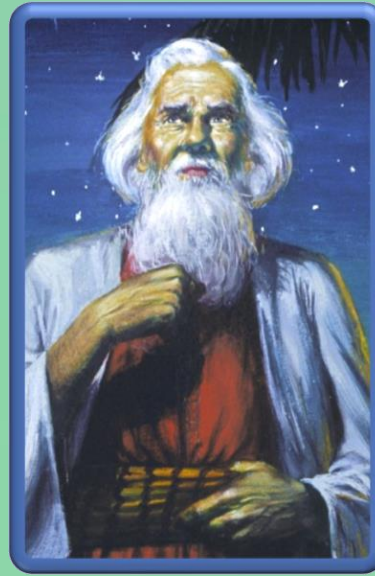
Lesson 7 for May 14, 2022.



Abraham had been travelling through Canaan for some time when God decided to confirm his covenant with him through a series of visions.

Abraham believed it but Sarah got impatient. Eventually, God Himself appeared to clarify the promise.

Abraham didn't think about himself as he was talking with the Lord of the Universe face to face. He interceded for the few righteous people in Sodom instead.



- ➡ Abraham's part. Genesis 15
- ➡ Sarah's contribution. Genesis 16
- ➡ The sign of the covenant. Genesis 17
- ➡ The confirmation of the promise. Genesis 18:1-15
- ➡ The intercession of Abraham. Genesis 18:16-19:29

ABRAHAM'S PART

"And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness."
(Genesis 15:6)

Abram shared his doubts about the promised seed when he met with God again (Gn. 15:2). God assured him that his son would be his heir. Abram believed Him (Rom. 4:20-22).

Then, the covenant was confirmed (Gn. 15:9-18).

Animals were sacrificed (v. 9-10)



Christ died for our sins

Vultures fly around (v.11)



Israel was enslaved (v. 13)

A burning torch (v. 17)

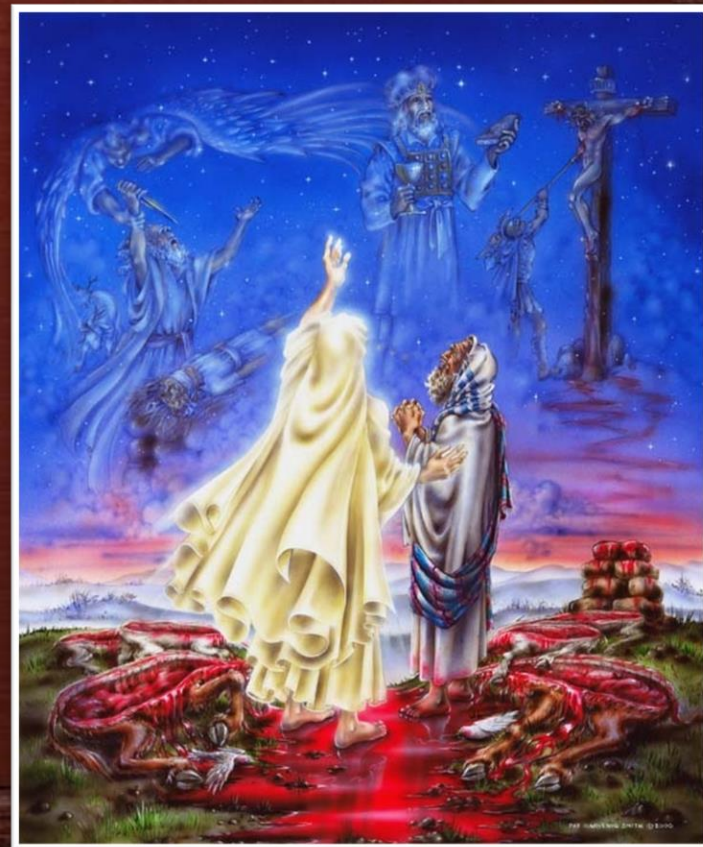


God committed to fulfill His promises

The boundaries of the promised land are set (v. 18)



Getting back to Eden



SARAH'S CONTRIBUTION

"So Sarai said to Abram, 'See now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her.' And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai." (Genesis 16:2)

After waiting for 10 years, Sarai lost all hope of being the mother of the seed. She proposed an alternative: a surrogate mother. Looks like reason won over faith...

Sarai doubted and acted against God's will, as Eve did. Abram compromised and followed her, as Adam did.

The consequences of that mistake are still affecting the inhabitants of Canaan. However, God always shows His love, even when we make bad decisions. He promised protection to Hagar and Ishmael (Gn. 16:10-12).



THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT

"and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you." (Genesis 17:11)



God remained silent for more than 10 years. Then He explained the conditions of the covenant. He began by establishing a sign.

Moses, Jeremiah, and Paul understood this sign as something more than a physical act (Dt. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4; Rom. 2:28-29).



The covenant goes beyond the physical descendants of Abraham. It's about the work of the Seed, the Messiah. The sacrifice of Jesus brings eternal life to all those who accept it by faith.

Names were changed to reflect this promise:

Abram
["exalted father"]

Abraham ["father of many nations"]

Sarai
["my princess"]

Sarah ["the princess for everyone"]

THE CONFIRMATION OF THE PROMISE

"Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

(Genesis 18:14)

Abraham was perplexed. Sarah was 90 years old; how could she bear a child? Abraham laughed (Gn. 17:17).

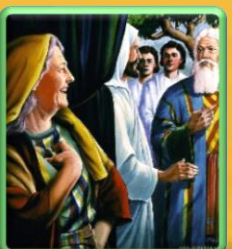
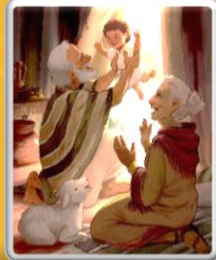
God decided to speak about this with them. He came before Abraham in human form, along with two angels (Gn. 18:1-2).

Abraham was hospitable, so he was eager to take care of the travelers (Heb. 13:2).



God Himself talked about the promise, and Sarah heard Him. Sarah also laughed (Gn. 18:12).

God's promise was sure, and Sarah believed (Heb. 11:11). Eventually, God also laughed with the son of faith (Isaac means "he will laugh").

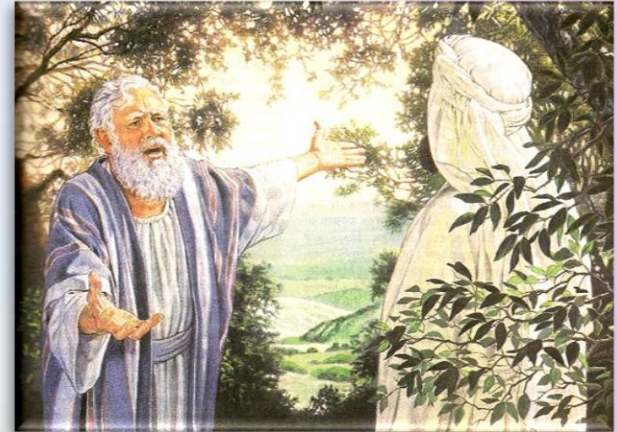


THE INTERCESSION OF ABRAHAM

“Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Genesis 18:25)

The angels left for Sodom. God stayed speaking with Abraham (Gn. 18:22). Abraham interceded for Sodom. He negotiated the minimum number of righteous people in Sodom for God to forgive the city (Gn. 18:23-32).

50, 45, 40, 30, 20, 10... then the bargaining stopped. Ten is a symbol of minimum. For example, a synagogue could only be opened if at least 10 men were present.



Only 4 people were saved (and only 3 survived). Not even five righteous people were found. Only Lot, his wife, and their two daughters (2P. 2:7-8).

The destruction of Sodom is a symbol of the eventual destruction of the wicked (Jude 7).



E. G. W. (The Great Controversy, cp. 39, p. 631)

“In the form of men, angels are often in the assemblies of the righteous; and they visit the assemblies of the wicked, as they went to Sodom, to make a record of their deeds, to determine whether they have passed the boundary of God's forbearance. The Lord delights in mercy; and for the sake of a few who really serve Him, He restrains calamities and prolongs the tranquillity of multitudes.”

“Faith is trusting in God,—believing that He loves us, and knows what is for our best good. Thus, instead of our own way, it leads us to choose His way. In place of our ignorance, it accepts His wisdom; in place of our weakness, His strength; in place of our sinfulness, His righteousness. Our lives, ourselves, are already His; faith acknowledges His ownership, and accepts its blessings.”

E. G. W. (Gospel Workers, p. 259)