

God's Covenant With Abraham

THE BIG YEAR SEASON 1 WEEK 3

1

WHAT YOU NEED

- 2 Bibles
- Piece of paper
- Pen
- "God's Promises" page

LET'S READ THE BIBLE

Take turns reading the following passages:

- Genesis 15:1-7
- Genesis 15:8-15
- Genesis 15:15-21

2

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The word "covenant" is in the Bible 231 times (206 times in the Old Testament and 25 times in the New Testament). What do you think "covenant" means? The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the word "covenant" as "a formal and serious agreement or promise."

Nowadays, whenever we make a formal agreement or promise with someone, it's called a "contract". Both people agree to the terms of the contract and then both people sign the agreement to make it official or binding. *(Give your child an example of a contract/agreement from your own life – keep your language simple and clear).*

The Hebrew word for the action of creating a covenant is carat which literally means "to cut". So what does cutting have to do with anything? In Bible times, the way that people would make a serious agreement or promise (a covenant) with each other would be to take an animal, cut it in half, lay the two halves on the ground and then the two people making the promise would walk in between the two halves of the animal. The penalty for breaking a covenant was death. To make a covenant with someone was a serious thing.

In our reading today we saw that God told Abram to bring some animals to him, cut them in half, and place them on the ground. Abram knew that God was going to make a covenant with him. Then Abram fell into a deep sleep. God made some promises to Abram and then Abram saw a smoking firepot and a blazing torch pass between the halves of the animal carcasses. What do you think is going on here (allow family members to respond)?

Well, because this was a covenant/contract/agreement, you would think that both God and Abram would walk in between the cut up animals. Instead, Abram falls into a deep sleep and God, in the form of a smoking firepot and blazing torch, passes through the cut up animals by Himself. This shows us that God was making this covenant with Abram all by Himself. It is a one-sided covenant. God takes all the responsibility on Himself. No matter what Abram does or doesn't do from this point on, God will keep His promise. He promised to make Abram's decedents into a great nation, to give them the land He had promised, and to bless all nations through Abram's family.

And all of these things happened. Abram's descendants, the Israelites, did become a great nation, they did eventually move into the land God had promised them, and most importantly, all nations on earth are blessed through Abram's family because Jesus was born into Abram's family and He was and is a blessing to all mankind.

God ALWAYS keeps His promises. Do you know what other promise God made to us? That if we believe in Jesus and what He did for us on the cross, God will forgive our sins and we will live with Him forever. And God ALWAYS keeps His promises, so we can trust in Him.

3

4

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

- What is a covenant?
- When God made this covenant with Abram, did Abram walk through the cut up animals? What does this show us?
- What are the 3 things God promised to Abram?
- How did God keep these promises?

5

LET'S GO A BIT DEEPER

- Did Abram live to see all of God's promises fulfilled? *(No, but he still believed in, trusted and obeyed God)*
- Do you think it was easy for Abram to trust that God would keep His promises? Why or why not?
- Is there anything that makes it hard for you to believe in God or to believe the things that God has promised?
- God promised that if we believe in Jesus, He will forgive our sins and we would live with God forever. Do you believe this? Have you put your faith and trust in Jesus? *(Take this opportunity to pray with your child if they would like to accept the gift of Jesus' salvation)*

6

LET'S PRAY TOGETHER

Pray together:

- Thank God that He always keeps His promises, no matter what.
- Thank God for His promise of salvation.
- Ask God to help each of your family members to trust and believe in Him

7

LET'S HAVE SOME FUN

This game is a race to find God's promises. Below are some scripture references of promises God has made to us. Family members will take turns to race against each other two at a time. Mix it up by letting different family members play against each other. Before you start playing, make sure that each family member knows how to look up a scripture in the Bible – show your children the table of contents, how to find the different books, how to find chapters and how to find verses. This is a great opportunity to teach your child this valuable skill. If you have children who are too young to read, pair them up with an adult or older child. Take the piece of paper and write each family member/team's name down so you can keep score.

Here's how to play

- Select 2 players (or teams) to race against each other
- Put a closed Bible in front of each player/team
- Read out a Scripture reference from the "God's Promises" page
- Players/teams race to find the scripture, read it, and then shout out what the promise is.
- The first player/team to shout out the promise, gets a point
- The winner of the game is the person/team with the most points at the end of the game

God's Promises

1 CHRONICLES 16:34

DEUTERONOMY 31:8

JOHN 10:10

JAMES 1:5

JOHN 11:25

JEREMIAH 29:12

PSALM 145:18

JOHN 3:16

1 JOHN 1:9

ROMANS 10:9