

## WARM-UP

- If money weren't an issue, what is one thing you would like to own?
- As a child, what was one thing you always looked forward to?
- Share about a time you made a sacrifice to keep a promise.

## WORD

*<sup>17</sup>When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. <sup>18</sup>On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land . . ."*

**GENESIS 15:17,18**

(Read also **GENESIS 15:1-20.**)

God promised Abraham that He would bless his offspring. In this story, Abraham asked God how this promise could happen when he had no offspring, and how God would give them the land He promised. God responded by making a covenant with Abraham. Today, we will look at the meaning of a covenant and how we should respond to the covenant God made with us in Christ.

## 1 God made a covenant.

*1After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." . . . 18On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land . . ."* **GENESIS 15:1,18**

In the Old Testament, a covenant was the way people sealed a deal or a transaction. They would cut animals in half and both parties would walk between the two halves, legally binding themselves to fulfill their end of the deal for fear of ending up like those animals. Although God is already faithful, He made a covenant with Abraham, thereby assuring him that He would do exactly what He said. For us today, God made a covenant through Jesus' death and resurrection, where He extended His promises to those who will receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior. According to Galatians 3:29, how are we part of God's covenant with Abraham?

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## 2 God's covenant stands despite our doubts.

*But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"*

**GENESIS 15:2**

Sometimes when we receive a promise from God, we tend to look at ourselves and see only what we have or do not have. But God's covenant is based on who He is and what He can do. God did not change His mind nor retract His promises when Abraham's initial reaction was doubt instead of faith. Instead, God reassured him that his present situation will not stay the same. What does Job 42:1,2 say about what God can do in our lives and why He would do things for us?

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### 3 Faith is our response to the covenant.

*<sup>5</sup>And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."<sup>6</sup>And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness. **GENESIS 15:5,6***

Abraham eventually responded in faith as God assured him of His promises. He *believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness*. It is only appropriate for us to respond to God's covenant by putting our faith in Him. We must put our faith in Jesus, showing our confidence in God as we claim His promises which are extended to us through this new covenant in Him. According to Hebrews 8:10-12, what are some of the promises of God in His covenant with us through Jesus?

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#### APPLICATION

- Have you received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? Do you want to put your faith in Him today?
- Knowing that God is serious in fulfilling His promises to us, how does this help your faith in Him grow deeper every day? What is one thing you can do this week to completely depend on God?
- Do you have a family member or friend who needs to be reminded of the faithfulness of God to fulfill His promises? How can you encourage him or her to seek God and have faith in Him this week?

