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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1794 ~ Children Like the Stars.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

After the defeat of the 4 Babylonian kings and Abram's amazing rescue with God's help, Lot returned to Sodom. He seemed well-content there and Biblical records don't mention one word of thanks that he might have given to his uncle Abram for saving his life. Abram would have been feeling the weight of his age from such an adventure, as he was now well into his 80s. His efforts in the battle may have weakened him, and he may also have feared at some point in time, the Babylonian kings would train up another army and come back to win a score against him.

As owning land was considered to be a man's security, Abram would have despaired that he still didn't own any of the land that he lived on. There was also the problem of still not having a son or heir to take over from him. At that point in time, if Abram died, then Abram's steward, Eliezer, not even one of his own people, would inherit all of Abram's belongings. Abram may have started doubting God's promises at some point, as a depressed state of mind makes a person view everything from a negative way of thinking.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound.](#)

At the beginning of Genesis, Chapter 15, God assured Abram not to be afraid, because God was Abram's protector and his very great reward. It wasn't land or a son that Abram was to look for but God Himself. God also assured Abram that his heir wouldn't be Eliezer, but a son of his own and that his descendants would become as numerous as the stars.

Abram believed God. In this we see the basis of God's acceptance of people: their belief in what God says is the truth. Simple trust and humility are what God is looking for in people first and foremost. In God's eyes, this belief and faith in God's word, that cannot be seen, counts as what He calls righteousness. Unrighteous people cannot find acceptance with a righteous God, but only judgment at the appointed hour. You will notice Abram didn't follow a set of laws to please God, as there was no written law in this time. He didn't make himself right with God by building altars for sacrifices or doing other good works either. Despite his mistakes, doubts and fears, he simply believed God's promise and over time, held to this truth before it happened with more and more certainty. We too, can find acceptance with God and be welcomed into His family by trusting what He says in the Bible about Jesus His Son in the same way.

Abram finally saw fulfilment of God's promise of an heir, even though he had waited many, many years for him. But God's other promises to Abram weren't seen in Abram's lifetime. Abram's example to us is one of patience and perseverance; like Abram, we too, mustn't give up when the answers to our prayers seem completely delayed.

God made a covenant or an agreement with Abram about promising him descendants and the land of Canaan for them. At that time, such agreements were formalised by cutting animals in two and walking through the halves together. This action symbolised a very solemn promise being made by the parties and it meant that if either party didn't keep their side of the agreement, they should be killed just like the dead animals that they had walked between. But after Abram had prepared the animals as God had instructed him to, God put Abram into a deep sleep. This action enabled God to make the covenant with Himself as being unconditional and for God only to keep; for Abram in his flesh, could never meet God's perfect and continual holy standards.

While Abram slept, God gave him a vision of the future for his descendants. They would be slaves in a foreign country for 400 years before coming back to Canaan to possess the land. God described the land as being from the river of Egypt in the Sinai Peninsula, to the Euphrates River in present-day Iraq and Syria. This area also covers present-day Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza. Will modern-day Israel ever have such a large area of land as that? God has promised this will be so and as we know, God's promises will always come true.

Now that Abram had settled with God the matter of the land of Canaan, there was still the problem of having no heir. In Chapter 16, where there was still no sign of an heir, Sarai jumped to a big conclusion: Although God had promised that Abram was going to be the father of many descendants, Sarai wasn't. So she thought how she could help God out as the alternative, as constructing her own death was unthinkable.

Intervening to help God accomplish His work is an all-too-common experience for believers in the Lord Jesus. Failing to see God work as soon as we think He should, we begin to feel that He's waiting for us to do 'our part' before He decides to do His. We then think up various plans and programs to achieve the outcomes wanted, only to find out that all our efforts seem to be in vain, and they possibly did more harm than good at the time.

It was Sarai whose faith weakened first. She felt so keenly the shame of her own childlessness. Seeing no other natural way to solve the problem, Sarai made a decision which must have been extremely distasteful to her! Just as Abram had once been willing to share her with other men as the best solution to save his own life, now Sarai felt it necessary to share her husband with another woman as the only solution to them having a child.

By this time, Abram was 85 years old and Sarai 75. Sarai's maid Hagar, an Egyptian girl perhaps acquired during their stay in Egypt, was in effect Sarai's own property. Thus any children Hagar might bear to Abram would legally belong to Sarai, as were the customs of the day. Abram listened to Sarai's counsel and did as she wished. But the whole thing was one big mistake, still evident in the warring Middle Eastern countries to the present-day.

Abram's role as Sarai's husband should have been to lead her to a stronger faith in God. Since the beginning in the Garden of Eden, Adam as the husband, was given the leadership responsibility of the family. When a husband abandons his God-given responsibility as head of his household and priest of God to them, there'll be unhappiness in the home. Abram should have been more sympathetic to his wife's plight and interceded with God on her behalf; not agreeing with her self-made and faithless plan.

In modern times, men have interpreted leadership to mean dictatorship. Godly headship for a husband results from walking with God. A godly husband leads his wife, not by giving commands, but by the character of who he is. Exercising authority for the sake of authority may only disclose an unreasonable and insecure husband who has to dominate to bolster his own ego. Godly leadership, however, is exercised by husbands who speak with spiritual authority, revealing something about the inner life of the man who is walking in God's Spirit. Obedience to God underpins the very structure of marriage.

It wasn't long before Hagar, as a secondary wife to Abram, was pregnant and who soon despised her mistress. God's creative purpose included only being married to one person at a time. The situation eventually became almost unbearable for Sarai. In response to her complaining, Abram allowed her to deal so harshly with expectant Hagar that Hagar ran away.

Because Hagar was less blameworthy than Abram and Sarai, the Lord dealt compassionately with her. Hagar had started home to Egypt but the journey through the wilderness was too much for her. An angel spoke to her and persuaded her to return to Abram. This angel has been considered as one of many pre-incarnate appearances of the Lord Jesus.

The Lord addressed Hagar by name. God is interested in every individual, including the slave girl Hagar and the child she would bear. It hadn't been God's will for this marriage between Abram and Hagar to take place; but now that it had, He would give a gracious promise of many descendants to Abram's slave-child as well. God promised Hagar a son and even gave her the name for him: 'Ishmael'. This name means 'God hears' and would always remind Hagar of how the God of Abram had met her need; not the old gods in Egypt to which she had started to return.

God also told Hagar that Ishmael would be a wild man who would always be in conflict with others. The long history of the Arab people, who are descendants of Ishmael, is an obvious fulfilment of this prophecy. After this encounter with the Angel, Hagar did return to Hebron, to Abram and Sarai, no doubt telling them about her experience with God. When the child was born, Abram named him Ishmael and raised him as his son. This was the right and necessary thing for Abram to do at the time.

The next 13 years passed by with nothing more recorded of Abram's household. Now Abram was 99 and the Lord appeared to him again. God called on Abram to walk blamelessly before Him and made another covenant with Abram. God changed Abram's name to Abraham. The meaning changed from 'exalted father' to 'father of a multitude.' God also changed Sarai's name to 'Sarah', meaning 'princess.' God promised Abraham that God would give him a son by her and that she would be the mother of nations.

When he heard God say this, Abraham bowed down low in respect but inside, he laughed at the idea. He asked himself how a man 100 years old and his wife, who was 90 years old, could have a child, as Sarah was well past the child-bearing years. Abraham responded by asking if God would accept Ishmael. God said that Sarah would have a child of her own who would be named 'Isaac', and that God too, would make an everlasting covenant with him and his descendants.

Why did God wait so long to give Abraham and Sarah a child? God revealed Himself to Abraham this time by a new name: 'Almighty God', stressing His unlimited power and ability to achieve whatever He sets His mind to.

God was in the process of creating a nation who would be faithful to Him and who He could raise up as a blessing and light to all other nations of the world. All those who believe in the Lord Jesus and live daily in God's Spirit are part of Abraham's spiritual offspring from all those times long ago. Today we still learn from Abraham to be patient and to wait on the Lord, for God will fulfil His plans for our lives as we serve Him.

In Hebrews, Chapter 10, Verse 36, it says: "You need to be patient, in order to do the will of God and receive what he promises."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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