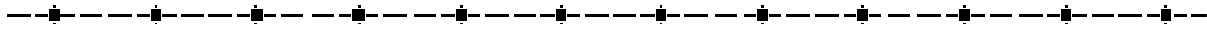


# GOD'S BIG PLAN

## God's Promise to Abraham Genesis 11-18

**Supporting Scriptures:** Joshua 24:2; Psalm 105:6; Nehemiah 9:7; Acts 7:2-5; Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6-9; Hebrews 9:22, 11:8-10



**Lesson Goals:** To see God as provider.  
To remember that God keeps His promises.  
To see God's provision of a Savior through His promise to Abraham.

**Scripture Memory** Abraham believed God. God accepted Abraham's faith, and so his faith made him right with God. Romans 4:3 (NIRV)

**NOTE:** Familiarize yourself so much with this story that it can be told as a STORY, not as "He said. . . She said" or read. But, to reinforce that these ideas are not your own, hold your Bible as you tell the story.

**The Lesson:** What have we learned so far of God's Big Plan? (Review the previous stories. Encourage more and more students to share. This will help them remember and retell the stories.)

What happened during the times of Noah? What were people like? (They did whatever they wanted to; evil, evil, evil all of the time.) Was everyone doing evil? (No. Noah wasn't.) Does God care if people do evil things? (Yes. God wants a friendship with us and the evil things we choose to do separate us from God. What did God do to the people who were doing evil all the time? (He destroyed them and the earth and every living thing on the earth with a flood.) So, what happens when someone constantly disobeys God and refuses to do what He asks? (Separation from God. Punishment and death.)

Is God mean and hateful? (No! He was very patient with all those evil people. God doesn't want anyone to die without Him, but we have a choice.) Is it hard to please God? (No.) What does it take to please God? (Faith. Believing in God and The Son He promised to send.) Is it possible to please God? (Yes. Noah pleased God.) What happens to those who please God? (God spends time with them and talks to them and rewards them. He even makes promises to them.)

**READ: Genesis 12:1-2, 4 (Hold the Bible in your hands throughout the story.)**

There was a man named Abram who lived in a place called Ur. Ur was where Iraq is today. Abram was from the family of Noah's son, Shem. Abram lived with his wife Sarai. They didn't have children because Sarai had never conceived. Abram and Sarai lived near their family. Abram's dad, Terah, did not believe in or worship the One True God. Terah worshipped idols. Idols are anything or anyone, other than God, that we trust in, and believe, and place importance upon. This is what Abram grew up around. Abram didn't know about God from his father, Terah.

But one day, out of all the people in the whole world, all those descendents of Shem, Ham and Japeth, God spoke to Abram. "Abram, get up and move. I want you to leave this place and your family and go to a place that I will show you." Abram was chosen for a special promise. The special promise was about a special people and a special place. God promised to send Abram to a new place and make a new people, or nation, from all of the many descendents He would have. But, did Abram have any children, or descendents? No, his wife had never been able to have children. And by this time, Abram was already 75 years old.

But guess what? Abram believed God! He believed God enough to leave everything He had ever known to follow a God he had just met and whom his father had never trusted!

Abram traveled to many different places before he arrived at the place God showed Him—Canaan. Canaan was where Palestine and Israel are today. When Abram arrived there, the first thing he did was to build an altar. Abram stacked stones together and built a fire. Then he took an animal, killed it, and offered it to God on the altar. Just as God had killed an animal to clothe Adam and Eve after they sinned, and just as Noah had done in thanksgiving after being saved from the flood, Abram did as well. Without blood being offered on the altar, no one could be forgiven of their sin. And because of Adam and Eve's first sin, we have all sinned after them, even Abram who trusted God enough to go to a place he had never seen. God overlooked Abram's sin because Abram chose to believe God and offered a good gift on the altar.

So, God made a promise to Abram. A new people. Part of that promise was a blessing; God would make Abram great! Even though Abram was old and had no children, God was going to make Abram's descendants as many as the dust on the earth. One night, when God spoke with Abram, He told him to go outside and look up at the stars. "Count them, if you can," God said. "Your descendants will be like the stars!" And there are a lot of stars! But that's not all. Part of that promise to Abram was a promise for everyone. "All the families of the earth will be blessed through you, Abram!" Because of one special descendant of Abram, everyone would have the chance to be made right with God.

God had also promised a new place. And after Abram offered his gift on the altar, God said, "Look around Abram. Look to the north; then to the south. Look to the east and the west. Everything you see belongs to you and your descendants after you. This is your new place, your special place!" Then God told Abram to walk around the land and check it out. What a wonderful promise; a new people, God's chosen people, in this new place, Canaan.

And as if that weren't enough, God changed their names! Abram's name was changed to Abraham, because he would father many nations. And Sarai, whose name meant quarrelsome and contrary, became Sarah, or princess. What an amazing God. He gave Abraham and Sarah, a new place for a new people and then gave them new names.

**Review:**

Now, let's review what you have learned. Who wants to retell the story? (Ask your group if anything was left out or told inaccurately.) Would anyone else like to try?

Did Abraham grow up in a home learning about God? (No.) Did Abraham's dad believe in God? (No. He worshipped idols.) Who did God choose to make His promise with? (Abraham.) What did God promise Abraham? (New people and a new place.) What did God ask Abraham to do? (Leave his family and everything he had ever known and go to a place that God would show him.) What did Abraham do? (Abraham believed God.) What did Abraham do when he got to the land God gave him? (He built an altar and worshipped God.)

How was God going to bless Abraham? (With lots of descendants.) Was God's blessing only for Abraham? (No. It was for all people.) God's blessing was a promise to send His One and Only Son as one of Abraham's descendants. Through Abraham (and His Son, Jesus), God would offer a way for everyone to be made right with Him again.

What did God do after He promised Abraham a new people in a new place? (He changed his name.) One day, if we believe as Abraham did (Gal 3:6-9), our name will be changed, as well. (Rev 2:17)

**Planning for Next Week**  
**Lesson 9 • God Gives Abraham a Son**  
**Genesis 18, 21-22**

# PRESCHOOL LESSON

**SING:** “Father Abraham”

**SHARE:** There was once a man named Abraham who lived in a land called Ur. Abraham was from Noah’s family. He lived with his wife Sarah. Abraham and Sarah couldn’t have children. They lived near Abraham’s dad, Terah. He did not believe in God. Abraham didn’t learn about God from his dad.

But one day, out of all the people in the whole wide world, God spoke to Abraham. “Get up,” God said, “and move. I want you to leave this place and your family and go to a place that I will show you.” God chose Abraham and promised him something very special. The special promise was about a special people and a special place. God promised to send Abraham to a new place and make a new people, or nation. But, did Abraham have any children? No, his wife had never been able to have children. And by this time, Abraham was already 75 years old! But guess what? Abraham believed God! He believed God enough to leave everything He had ever known!

Abraham traveled to many different places before he arrived at the place God showed Him. When Abraham got there, the first thing he did was to build an altar. The altar was a way to meet with God. Abraham chose to believe God, and offered a good gift on the altar. So, God made a promise to Abram. A new people. God wasn’t just talking about one or two people. God promised to give Abraham as many “people” as there is dust on the earth. That’s a lot, huh? And then one night, when God talked to Abram, He told him to go outside and look up at the stars. “Count them, if you can,” God said. “Your ‘people’ will be like the stars!” And there are a lot of stars!

God had also promised a new place. And after Abram offered his gift on the altar, God said, “Look around Abram. Look to the north; then to the south. Look to the east and the west. All the land that you see belongs to you and your “people”. This is your new place, your special place!” What a wonderful promise; a new people and a new place.

**PRAY:** Thank you, God, for taking care of Abraham. Thank you for taking care of me.

# LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Memory Verse Activity - Print each word of the memory verse on stars. Hang a string, with clothespins, across a section of your study area. Have students take turns clipping the stars in order to practice the memory verse.
- Do you know your granddad's name? What about your great granddad? Well, who knows the name of their great, great, great, great, great grandfather? We don't keep up with that very much, do we? Some people do, though - those who have Abraham as their grandfathers can remember, because of God's great promises to him.
- Sing "Father Abraham."
- Make sure that your students are aware that "Father Abraham" and Abraham Lincoln are two completely different people who lived almost 4,000 years apart.
- Discuss Names. We have already talked about the importance of Bible names. Names weren't chosen because of how they sounded or if they were popular at the time. In Bible times, when a child was given a name, the name was chosen for its meaning. The name described the person. So, when we see name changes in the Bible, as we have in the current lesson, it's a big thing; it's like a news-flash! It's not just the name that is being changed; what the person is like is changing, too. For example:

Abram - "high father"	Sarai - "contentious"
Abraham - "Father of many nations"	Sarah - "princess"
- Sing "I Will Change Your Name" by D.J. Butler.