

LESSON 9

God Makes a Covenant with Abram

GENESIS 15



BIBLE TRUTH

GOD'S GRACE TO US IS REVEALED IN THE CALLING OF ABRAM

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

SUPPLIES: Have someone in the room wearing a wedding ring.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 9)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is Jesus?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is Jesus?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: Snack food/water

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20–30 MIN

Coloring Page 9

SUPPLIES: markers/crayons

Count the Children

SUPPLIES: a sheet of white paper

It’s Hard to Keep a Promise

SUPPLIES: a puppet

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today’s lesson the children will learn how God made a covenant with Abram and promised him many, many descendants—far off grandchildren.

Hold up your left hand and point to your wedding ring. (If you are single, ask for a married volunteer to help out in this exercise.) Ask the children to tell you what you are pointing to, and then ask them to tell you what the ring means. Try to steer their guesses in the direction of “promise.” A wedding ring represents a promise to the person who is wearing it. The promise of marriage or the “covenant” of marriage is to remain faithful for your whole life. That is, to stay married until you die. A wedding ring reminds the person wearing it of the promise he or she made. Ask the children the following questions:

- **Have you ever made promises to your parents?**
- **Have you kept them?**
- **What promises have your parents made to you that they have kept?**
(providing food, clothes, etc.)
- **Have you ever made a promise that you have not kept?**

Talk about how God makes promises to his people and how God always keeps his promises. Remind the children of the rainbow from the Noah story. Once God makes a promise, even if it is hard to believe, it is as good as done. It is guaranteed.

Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 9, “God Makes a Covenant with Abram,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

Note: please remember to use the name Abram instead of Abraham and Sarai instead of Sarah for this lesson.

■ **Why was Abram sad?**

(He did not have any children.)

■ **Why was not having children so sad for Abram?**

(He would have no one to pass on his inheritance and no one to inherit the promise of God.)

■ **What did God promise to Abram?**

(God promised that he and Sarai would have a son and many descendants.)

■ **What did God tell Abram to count?**

(the stars)

■ **Why did God tell Abram to count the stars?**

(He told him to count the stars because there are too many to count, and he wanted to show Abram just how big his promise was!)

SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking:

■ **Has anyone ever gone out in complete darkness and looked up at the sky to see all the stars? Like when you go camping up in the mountains. How many stars did you see?**

(too many to count)

■ **Does God know how many stars there are?**

(Yes, God knows. In Psalm 147:4–5 it says, “He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names. Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.”)

■ **How is God different than us?**

(He is all-knowing and all-powerful. We are limited in what we know and limited in power. He can do all things and knows all things.)

Where Is Jesus? _____

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Passage: John 15:15–17

This passage in John's Gospel tells us that we were chosen by God just as Abram was. God took initiative in calling Abram and then in making a covenant with him. In the same way, God took initiative in calling us and making a covenant with us in Jesus.

God's covenant with Abram was about the future. It pointed forward to the new covenant of salvation in Jesus. Our covenant with Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abram. We are part of the many nations God would bless through Jesus, the offspring of Abram.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS. 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **Why is Abram looking up at the stars?**
(God told Abram that the stars represent all those who would come after him—his children, grandchildren, and all their children after them.)

- **What else did God place in the sky as a promise?**
(his rainbow as a promise that he would never again destroy the world by a flood)

■ **Did God keep his promise to Abram?**

(Yes! Jesus was one of Abram's great, great, great ... grandchildren. Through Jesus, the whole world was blessed and people from every nation can become part of God's family.)

Count the Children

SUPPLIES:

Tell your children that God promised Abram that his descendants would be as numerous as the dust on the earth and the stars of the sky. Find a piece of white paper and go to a corner of your room or a bookshelf and see what dust you can sweep up. Then take it to your children and show them the dust you found just in the room. Count the tiny specks and say, "Wow if there is this much dust in just one part of our room, Abram must have a lot of children."

Do you think you can count all the stars or count up all the dust on the earth? *(no)* That is why God used those examples. He wanted to tell Abram his descendants would be so many he would not be able to count them all.

Then ask the children if they knew that everyone who trusts in Jesus becomes a part of Abram's family and a child of God along with Abram? We join Abram's family by faith.

It's Hard to Keep a Promise

SUPPLIES:

Teacher: *(repeat several times, looking around)* Puppet, where are you? *(to the class)*

Puppet, where are you? I just don't understand it, Puppet promised me he would be here. Puppet, where are you?

(looks over his/her shoulder) Oh, there he is, he is sleeping! Why don't you help me wake him up? Wake up, Puppet!

Puppet: What? Who? What's going on? Where am I? *(looks at the class and then with surprise)* Hello!

Teacher: Puppet, where have you been? You promised me you would wake up in time to help me teach the class today.

Puppet: I'm here. My promise is as good as gold.

Teacher: I'm not so sure about that.

Puppet: Go ahead; test me.

Teacher: Okay. How about you promise me you will pay attention while I teach the children and you will not be looking around and fooling around.

Puppet: Oh, that's easy, as easy as a piece of cake. I promise!

Teacher: Okay. *(to the class)* Who can tell me ... *(Puppet starts looking all around and bumps the teacher.)?* Puppet, what ...? I thought you promised not to look around.

Puppet: *(quickly looking straight ahead)* I'm paying attention, I promise.

Teacher: Okay, we will try again. Okay class, who can tell me ... *(Puppet starts fidgeting with his clothes and tries to distract the children in the front row.)?*

Puppet, what are you doing now?

Puppet: What? Who ... me?

Teacher: Class, is it easy for Puppet to keep his promises?

Class: No.

Teacher: Well, I think we will put Puppet away. Thanks for helping us out, Puppet.

When the skit is complete, ask the following questions:

- **Why is it so hard to keep our promises?**
(We sometimes forget, or we are distracted by other things.)
- **Does God always keep his promises?**
(yes)
- **Does anyone know what we call someone who keeps his promises?**
(faithful)
- **How is God different than we are?**
(God always keeps his promises. He is perfectly faithful.)

PRAY **5 MIN**

Take time at the end of class to thank God for all you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as another way for the children to remember what today's lesson was about.

LESSON 9 - GOD MAKES A COVENANT WITH ABRAM

