

LARGE GROUP WORSHIP

Session

3



A NEW LIFE FOR ABRAHAM

Genesis 12:1-9; 15:1-6; 17:1-7

At the end of Genesis 11, Terah, Abram's father, had taken Abram, Abram's wife, and a grandson named Lot to live in the land of Haran. Abram was a man of faith! As Genesis 12 opens, God called Abram to move away from his father's household in Haran to a new land that God would show him. Abram, in obedience to God, moved with his wife, and nephew, Lot, to the land of Canaan.

God's call of Abram is summarized in the first 3 verses of Chapter 12. The Bible does not tell us why God chose Abram, but we know from Hebrews 11 that Abram was a man of great faith. God had a plan for Abram and God told Abram His plan. Have you ever wondered how you respond if in the same situation as Abram?

Genesis 12:2 begins the promissory section of Abram's call. Abram would be a great nation, blessed by God, a blessing to others, and his name would be great. Any nation that blessed Abram would be blessed by God; those who did not would be cursed by God. That's a lot to take in. The very next phrase simply says, "Abram went!" Abram did not stand around making excuses for why he could not possibly go ... he went. Abram trusted in God's plan for him and he obediently followed God's leading.

As Genesis 15 opens, Abram had a vision sent from God. As is typical in vision accounts in Scripture, Abram was warned to not be afraid. Abram and his family had just fought a battle where Abram had to rescue his nephew Lot. God promised Abram that God would be a shield and protector to him. God also promised Abram a great reward.

Later God changed Abram's name to Abraham. The name Abram meant "father is exalted." The name Abraham meant "father of a multitude." Sarai and Sarah meant "princess" and spoke of the fact that kings would come from her sons. God once again told Abraham that a child would be born of Sarah and they would name him Isaac, which meant "laughter."

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 12:1-9; 15:1-6; 17:1-7

MEMORY VERSE

Genesis 12:2

MEMORY VERSE PARAPHRASE

I will bless you and make your name great.

TEXT TRUTH

God chose Abraham for something special.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

The Book of Genesis is a book of beginnings. In the beginning, God created a perfect world. Sin separated mankind from God and showed that people need a Savior. God called Abraham and promised him that one day his descendants would be God's special people and one day, He would send a Messiah—Jesus—to rescue them.

GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

Based on Genesis 12:1-9; 15:1-6; 17:1-7

One day God spoke to Abraham. "Abraham, leave this land. Leave your father's house. Go to a new homeland. I will show you how to get there."

Abraham listened to God. Then God told Abraham that He would bless him. God would make Abraham's name great. God said He would bless the people who were kind to Abraham, and He would punish people who were unkind and did harmful things to Abraham and his family. "All the people on earth will be blessed because of you, Abraham," God said.

So Abraham obeyed God. Abraham packed up all his things. He loaded the wagons and donkeys. Abraham's family packed all their clothes. They traveled until they got to the place where God wanted them to live, a new land called Canaan. When Abraham reached Canaan, he stopped and looked around.

God said, "Abraham, I will give this land to your children."

God told Abraham to look up at the sky and count the stars (as if he could). God told Abraham his family would have children and more children until there were more people in Abraham's family than stars in the sky.

Abraham believed what God said. He knew God had a plan for him.

God was pleased that Abraham believed these things would happen. God said, "I will always keep my promise to you, Abraham. You and your wife Sarah will have a son. Many more children will be born in your family. I will bless you and your family forever."

WELCOME AND SING

- Show excitement as the boys and girls enter the room. Let them know how happy you are to see them. Play a song and lead the preschoolers to move around the room and sing along with the music.
- Turn off the lights. Shine the flashlight around the room. Challenge the preschoolers to follow the light. Shine the flashlight on different places on the ground and walls. Encourage the boys and girls to touch the light. Play a favorite song while the children are following the light.
- Ask: “What are the lights in the sky that we see at night? How many stars can you see in the sky?”
- Explain: “Today we will learn about when God made a covenant promise to Abraham. **God chose Abraham for something special.** God told Abraham there would be more people in his family than there are stars in the sky.”

PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS

- Print the following letters on individual index cards: *G, E, N, E, S, I, S*. Hide the letters around the room.
- Instruct the boys and girls to find the letters. Play a song as the preschoolers search.
- Display the Genesis Bible Book Card. Lead the preschoolers to arrange the letters in order to spell *Genesis*.
- Remark: “These letters spell the word, *Genesis*. Genesis is the name of the first book in the Bible. Genesis is in the Old Testament.”
- Distribute a Bible to each pair of preschoolers. Encourage them to open the Bibles to the Book of Genesis.

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

- Cut out simple star shapes from the paper. Place the stars on the ground. Lead the preschoolers to count the stars.
- State: “You could count the stars in our room, but we cannot count all the stars in the sky. There are too many to count. **God chose Abraham for something special.** Listen to hear what God told Abraham about stars.”
- Open the Bible to Genesis 12. Make eye contact with each child as you tell the Bible story in your own words.
- Pass the Story Picture around the circle. Encourage the children to mention something they remember from the story. Ask: “What did God tell Abraham to do? What did God promise Abraham?”

TOOLS

Welcome and Sing

Enhanced CD, flashlight

Practice Bible Skills

Bibles, “Bible Book Cards” (print item), index cards

Tell the Bible Story

Bibles, Story Picture: “God’s Promise to Abraham” (print item), yellow construction paper

Pack Suitcases

various clothing items, 2 suitcases, laundry basket

Worship

Enhanced CD, offering basket, rhythm sticks

Learn the Memory Verse

Bibles, “September Bible Verse Markers” (print item)

Listen and Pray

none

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Begins to recognize names of books in the Bible. Knows that Genesis is the first book of the Bible.
- Helps open the Bible to a Bible book.

PACK SUITCASES

- Put the clothing items in a laundry basket. Place the suitcases at one end of the room and the laundry basket at the other. Instruct the boys and girls to line up in two lines behind the laundry basket. Guide the first two children to each choose one clothing item, hop to the suitcases, and pack the clothing items in the suitcases. Continue until all the clothes are packed.
- Remark: **“God chose Abraham for something special.** God told Abraham to pack up his things and move to a new land. Abraham obeyed what God told him to do.”

WORSHIP

- Mention: **“God chose Abraham for something special.** God kept His promises to Abraham. God keeps His promises to us, too. We can thank God by worshipping Him. We can worship God when we give our offerings and sing songs of praise to Him.”
- Guide the boys and girls to place their offerings in the basket.
- Distribute the rhythm sticks. Play a song and lead the children to tap the sticks together to the beat of the music.

LEARN THE MEMORY VERSE

- Place today’s Bible Verse Marker in the Bible at Genesis 12:2. Invite a preschooler to open the Bible at the marker. Read the verse. Guide the boys and girls to say the verse with you.
- Instruct the boys to say, “I will bless you and.” Lead the girls to say, “Make your name great.” Guide both groups to say, “Genesis 12:2.” Repeat several times.

LISTEN AND PRAY

- Mention: “Abraham did what God wanted him to do. We can do what God wants us to do, too.”
- Invite a few preschoolers to pray. Close the prayer by asking God to help you do what He wants you to do.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

DESIGN STAR PICTURES

Tools: black paper, tape, white crayons, white chalk, star stickers, blanket, flashlights

- Tape the paper to the bottom of the table. Spread the blanket on the floor under the table. Instruct the preschoolers to lie on the blanket under the table.
- Guide the preschoolers to use the crayons and chalk to draw a nighttime scene on the paper. Suggest they add star stickers to the pictures. Demonstrate how to shine the flashlight on the paper.
- Comment: **“God chose Abraham for something special.** God promised that Abraham would have children and that they would have more family members than there are stars in the sky.”

EXPLORE MAPS

Tools: maps, globe, paper, washable markers, colored pencils

- Lead the preschoolers to explore the maps and globes. Talk about the places the boys and girls have visited or would like to visit. Direct the preschoolers use the markers and pencils to draw maps on the paper. Suggest the children draw maps of your town or church.
- Say: “God told Abraham to move to a new land. **God chose Abraham for something special.** God would bless Abraham and all the people who were kind to Abraham.”

SPELL NAMES

Tools: wooden blocks, letter blocks, index cards

- Print the name of each child on an index card. Print the names, *Abram* and *Abraham*, on index cards. Guide the boys and girls to use the blocks to build. Display the index cards while they build. Lead them to put the letter blocks in order to spell the names on the cards.
- Explain: “**God chose Abraham for something special.** God changed Abram’s name to Abraham and his wife’s name to Sarah. God told them they would have a son. God had a plan for Abraham and God has a plan for you, too!”

PACK FOR A TRIP

Tools: small suitcase, duffel bags, various clothing items, Bible

- Demonstrate how to fold the clothes. Guide the boys and girls to pack the clothes in the suitcase and duffel bags. Suggest they pack the Bible. Lead the preschoolers to carry the bags to another area of the room. Direct the boys and girls to unpack and repack the clothes.
- Say: “God told Abram to leave his home and go to a new place. Abram packed up all his things and moved to a new land called Canaan. **God chose Abraham for something special.**”

PLAY A COUNTING GAME

Tools: 5 paper cups, chenille stems

- Print the numbers 1—5 on individual cups. Turn each cup upside down. Use a chenille stem to poke the number of holes in the bottom of the cups to match the numbers written on the cups.
- Cut the chenille stems in half. Instruct the preschoolers to push the chenille stems halfway into the holes. Lead the preschoolers to count the chenille stems.
- Mention: “You counted the stems. Abraham counted the stars. **God chose Abraham for something special.** God promised that Abraham’s family would have more people than there were stars in the sky.”