

LESSON AIM: To explain why Abraham was such an important person in the Bible.

KEY SCRIPTURES:

The story of Abraham stretches out over 13 chapters in Genesis (Genesis 12-24) We are especially interested in **Genesis 12:1-7**, and the story of Abraham believing God to give him a son in His old age; **Genesis 15:5-6**, and **Genesis 17:1-5, 15-19, 21:1-3**. There are other stories that can be considered but you will need several lessons to cover them: the story of Abraham and his nephew Lot in **Genesis 13:5-13, 19:1-25** and the story in **Genesis 22** where Abraham is told to sacrifice his son Isaac.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- 1) What was the big event that happened in last week’s story?
- 2) How long did it rain?
- 3) Where did the ark finally land when the waters resided?
- 4) Review last week’s memory verse; have students explain it in their own words.

INTRODUCTION:

- Abraham’s life is important because:
 - 1) Abraham was a man of faith; He believed God. Sometimes his faith faltered but he grew in faith and is known in the NT as “the Father of the Faithful”.
 - 2) God promised that He would give to Abraham’s descendents the land we know today as Israel.
 - 3) Through Abraham’s descendents the Messiah would come. The lesson should cover these three aspects of Abraham’s life.
- God promises Abraham as well as Isaac and Jacob that the land of Israel would be an everlasting possession to their descendents. Today the Israelites, or Jews, live in the very land that God promised Abraham.
- Most importantly, Jesus, the Jewish Messiah and the very Son of God who came to save us from our sins came from the lineage of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob just as God had promised.

LESSON:

Far away in a land called Ur (we know it as Iraq today) there lived a man named Abram. One day God told Abram to move to another country. Abram believed in God, the maker of heaven and earth. He talked to God and God revealed things to him. I don’t know if God talked audibly to him, but in his mind and heart he heard from God because the Bible says he was God’s friend. (How cool is that to be God’s friend!) Abram obeyed God and took his wife, Sarai, his brother’s son Lot and all of his possessions and all people they had hired, along with their sheep, goats, and cows and made the long journey to the land that God showed him. This land was called Canaan. Today we know it as Israel. And God told Abram, “I will give all this land to you. It will belong to you and to your children forever” And God blessed Abram and took care of him. There was just one problem, Abram and Sarah (his wife) were very old and they didn’t have any children. (Gen 11:30)

Read Genesis 12:1-3

So how was God going to bless his family if he had no children of his own? God said “I will make you a great nation”, and verse 7 God repeats again, “To your decedents I will give this land”.

Read Genesis 12:9-13

So Abram, our man of faith, turned to his own understanding and was afraid for his life, so he lied. Who did he forget about, that blessed him and took care of him? Well I think this is written in the Bible so we see clearly Abram is a human just like you and me. So they continued their journey to Canaan.

Read Genesis 13:1-6

At this point, Abram and Lot parted ways because there was just too many and people. So Lot saw the green plain of Jordan and decided along with his wife to head toward Sodom and Gomorrah, but it was not a good move because the people there were exceedingly wicked. (That is a whole other story)

Read Genesis 15:1 and 5-6

God told him again, "I am your friend" Then Abram reminded God that he wanted a son. They had no children. God took Abraham out under the night sky and showed him the millions of stars and said, "You will not only have a son, but many, many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, too. Their families will be like those stars – too many to count. And they will be a great nation. God wanted Abram to trust Him, even though it hadn't happened yet.

Read Genesis 16:1

So they leaned to their own understanding to help God out a little. Sarai decided it would be a good idea for Abram to marry her Egyptian maid, Hagar, and have a family. So Abram did and it brought strife and jealousy to both women and made life very difficult for everyone. This was not the way God was going to bring Abraham the child that he promised. Sometimes we don't understand God's ways, so we come up with our own solution, and that sometimes makes a big mess with bad consequences.

Read Genesis 17:1-5

God changed his name. "Abraham" means "Father of a great nation"

Genesis 21

Sarah and Abraham finally have their promised son when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90! How many people do you know that had a baby when they were 90 and 100 years old?! They named him Isaac, which means "laughter" because Sarah laughed when the Angels came and told Abraham that she would have a baby at 90 years old, but it was true!

Many years go by, and when Isaac was a teenager and God tested Abraham and told him to take his only son and sacrifice him to the Lord. Abraham was devastated, he had waited so long for his promised son, and now God wants him to sacrifice him? But Abraham loved God, so he was going to obey.

They brought the wood, the fire and a knife and walked to mountain that God showed him, which was called Mt. Moriah. Isaac asked his father, where is the lamb to be sacrificed? Abraham answered, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the sacrifice". While they prepared the rocks and the wood, Abraham sadly told his son to lay down on the altar and he lifted his knife... But, the angel of the Lord called out to him, "Abraham, Abraham!" and stopped him.

God knew that Abraham truly loved Him because he was willing to sacrifice the most important thing in his life. God provided a ram for the sacrifice instead of Isaac. Thousands of years later, that would be the same place where God's own son would be sacrificed for us.

Gen. 21:18 says, "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice". God did indeed bless the whole earth by sending His only begotten son, Jesus, who was from Abraham's family! Abraham's faith faltered at times, but he was a man of faith and is written in Hebrews 11 "The Hall of Faith". He is the Father of the nation of Israel. And through Abraham's descendents came our Messiah who came to take away the sins of all people.

MEMORY VERSE:

"And without faith it is impossible to please God." Hebrews 11:6