

October 20, 2019

Morning Overview

Lesson: *Patriarchs: God Talks to Abraham*

Lesson Objective:

This week we continue on our journey with Abram, soon to be Abraham, discovering more about the promises, or covenant, God makes with him. We discover the promise and gift of a son to come. This would seem outrageous for a pair of elderly people to have a child, but the Lord always keeps His promises. The Lord's promise to Abram is not immediate however. It took 25 years for Abraham and Sarah to hold Isaac. This requires faith from Abraham and Sarah to believe in the promises of God for a very long time. The same is true for every believer; faith is required of every child of God to believe in His promises especially the promise that we are loved, accepted and cherished by God because of Christ.

Teaching Points:

- God chose Abram – and we do not know why – to make a promise (covenant) with and God had a special purpose for him
- God talks with Abram.
- Faith pleases God; people must have faith or trust in God's promises. Christians are told to have faith in God.
- God knows everything.
- God is faithful. God always keeps His promises.
- When God makes a promise, it is called a covenant.
- God's promises (covenant) do not happen immediately. It took 25 years for God's promise to come true for Abram.
- God is sovereign. Nothing is too hard for God.

Scripture: Genesis 15:1-6; 17:1-8, 15-19; 18:1-15

Story: *Vos Child's Story Bible*, Pages 21-23; *Jesus Story Book Bible*, Pages 56-59; *Gospel Story Bible*, Pages 18-23; *The Beginner's Bible*, Pages 44-50; *The Beginner's Story Bible*, Pages 20-25

Scripture Memory for October: Genesis 15:1 (ESV)

Fear not Abram (*wag index finger signaling "no"*)

I am (*point upwards*)

Your shield (*hold forearm out like it has a shield on it*)

Your reward (*rub index and middle finger with thumb indicating money*)

Shall be very great (*stretch arms out to your side*)

Craft: Abraham Counts the Stars

Supplies: Cardstock scene of Abraham, star stickers, verse sticker, crayons/markers

Instructions:

1. Color Abraham and scene.
2. Place verse sticker on back of cardstock.
3. Place star stickers in the sky.

If child has already done craft first hour, have them work on a coloring sheet



Story

Transition

Boys and girls, in our story today we continue to learn about Abram. Abram is now seventy-five years old! That means he is a lot older than you, your siblings and your parents, but maybe the same age as your grandparents. Last week God gave Abram 7 seven promises He, God, would keep. That's right, God *spoke* to Abram. But in our lesson today, God told Abram some more things! But what did God say to Abram? Let's find out in our story for today...

Abram

Abram remembered God's promises to him. God had given Abram seven promises. (1) A great nation would come from Abram, (2) God would bless Abram, (3) God would make Abram's name great, (4) Abram would be a blessing to others, (5) If anyone was kind, helpful, and peaceful to Abram and his family, God would bless those people. (6) But if anyone was ever mean, hurtful, or caused harm to Abram and his family, God would do the same to them. (7) And through Abram and his family everyone on the Earth would be blessed.

Abram, his wife Sarai, and his nephew Lot and his whole family lived outside of Canaan. They would set up camp – tents – and stay in areas raising sheep and interact with the other people living in the land. Abram was waiting on God to fulfill His promises.

Abram Counts the Stars (15:1-6)

One night, Abram had a dream. The Bible tells us God spoke to Abram in the dream, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." Abram wanted to believe this promise would come true, and he asked God, "God, what can you give me? I don't have a child! My closet relative is a foreigner that is my servant."

God told Abram that he would have his own son one day. Abram's son would inherit everything Abram had. God told Abram to go outside his tent and look at the stars. Abram looked into the dark nighttime sky. It was filled with lots and lots of stars. God told Abram to count the stars, and Abram tried but lost count too many times. God said to Abram, "Abram, the number of stars in the sky is how big your family will be!" This meant God was promising Abram would have children and his children would have children, and it would keep going. There would be too many people in Abram's family to count!

And the Bible tells us something very important: "Abram believed God!" Abram believed in God's promise. He trusted God even though it seemed impossible that what God said would really happen. When we believe like that it is called faith. But what Abram did not know was how long it would take to have a son.

A New Name for Abram (17:1-8)

Twenty-five years would pass. Abram wondered when he would have a son. Abram was now ninety-nine (99) years old. That's really old! But when Abram was this old the Lord appeared to him and told him something very important. God said, "I am God Almighty! Abram walk before me and be blameless so I can make a promise (covenant) between you and me. This promise will be that you will have a very large family, you will have many, many, many relatives." Abram fell down on his knees and bowed his head towards God. God spoke to Abram again, "My promise (covenant) is to you. Abram you will be the father of many people (nations). You will no longer be called 'Abram' but your new name will be 'Abraham' because I have made you the father of many people (nations). I will give you lots and lots of relatives. A very large family Abraham! And kings of nations will be part of your family. Abraham, I have made my promise (covenant) to you, to all of your relatives, to your whole family and anyone that comes after you." God went on to tell Abraham that he would have a land to live in and his family could live there too. This land was called Canaan, and all of it was Abraham's and his family's to have forever. God told Abraham what He had promised him years earlier: Abraham would have a very large family, and through that family the whole world would be blessed and know God. But God also told Abraham something very, very important, and it's a promise to us today. God told Abraham that He would be Abraham and his family's God!

A Child Promised (17:15-19)

God kept telling Abraham of the promises to come. But Abraham was not the only person to have their name changed. God changed Sarai's name to Sarah. God told Abraham, "I will bless Sarah, and I will give her a baby boy. He will be yours and Sarah's child together. From her many, many, many people will come; kings, princes and royalty will be part of her descendants." Once Abraham heard this, he fell to the ground and began to laugh. He said to himself, "I am too old, nearly 100 years old, how can I have a child at this age? Sarah is too old too! How can she have a baby?!?" Abraham thought it was funny, but God was serious. Abraham said to God, "What about my other son, Ishmael, maybe the promises would be for him!" But God responded, "No, they are not for Ishmael. Sarah your wife will bring a baby boy into this world, and you will call his name Isaac. I will make promises (covenant) with him, and my promises to him will be for forever. My promises to him will also be for his children, his grandchildren, and his great-grandchildren. It will be for everyone related to Isaac."

Visitors Come to Abraham and Sarah (18:1-15)

One day Abraham was sitting at the door of his tent. The tent was near some very large trees. Those large trees offered a lot of shade from the hot sun. It was a hot afternoon, and Abraham was resting right inside his tent. Suddenly Abraham looked up, and the Bible tells us he saw three men walking towards him. As soon as he saw them, he hurried from the opening of the tent to greet the three strangers.

Abraham stopped and bowed low to the ground in front of the strangers. He bowed like this (demonstrate). Abraham bowed to be polite and kind to the strangers. Then Abraham said to one of the strangers, "My Lord, come and stay under the tree here. Rest yourself and I will bring a little water to wash your feet and some bread that you might eat." The strangers said, "Very well."

So, Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, his wife, and said, "Hurry, hurry Sarah, make some fresh bread for our guests. Then Abraham ran quickly out to his animals and found the very best calf he could find. He said to one of his servants, "Prepare this for our guests." And the servant did. Then after Abraham got some milk he brought the delicious meal and sat it down before the three guests. While they ate, Abraham stood near them under the tree.

"Where is your wife Sarah?" the strangers asked. "Over there, in the tent," Abraham told them.

What Abraham did not know was that one of the strangers was God. God had come to Abraham's tent that day to give Abraham a special message. The other two strangers were angels. Abraham had prepared a meal for God and two angels. And God was talking to Abraham!

Then God told Abraham his very important message, "I will surely come back to you about this time next year, by then, Sarah, your wife, will have a baby boy!" Remember, Abraham was ninety-nine years old and Sarah was very old too. It is not often that people live to be that old. It is also almost impossible that they could have children in their old age. But God had said Abraham and Sarah would have a baby boy. God had made a promise.

The Bible tells us Sarah was listening to Abraham's conversation with the three strangers. She stood right inside the tent by the door. Sarah was probably very curious as to who the three visitors were. She didn't know that those visitors were God and two angels. She had been very quiet, but when she heard the stranger say, "Sarah will have a baby," Sarah thought to herself, "I am way too old! Younger ladies have babies, but not me!" Sarah did not believe that something like that would happen to her! And so, the Bible says she laughed. It was not a big burst of laughter, but she laughed quietly to herself (demonstrate a soft giggle). Surely nobody would hear Sarah, she just made a tiny sound while standing inside the tent. And Abraham and his guests were way outside under the tree.

But what Sarah did not know is that God hears everything, and God knows everything. It doesn't matter if we laugh loudly or make a little sound, He knows. Whatever we think, say, or do, God knows! God knows if people believe His word is true or if they don't believe Him at all. God knows all the people who believe and have faith in Him. God knew that Sarah didn't believe that she would have a son just like He had said.

So, God said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, “Will I really have a child now that I am old?” Before Abraham could respond God said to him, “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” People rarely live to be one-hundred years old, and even if they do, they do not have children. But if God said this elderly couple was to have a child, then they were going to have a child.

It was a miracle that Sarah and Abraham could have a little baby. A miracle is something great that only God can do. But God can do it because He is sovereign and in control of all things. Abraham believed that God could do this hard thing, but not Sarah. She did not believe what God had said. When Sarah heard God say those words about her, she was afraid, so the Bible says she lied. Sarah did not tell the truth. Sarah said, “I did not laugh.” But God knows everything, and He knew Sarah laughed.

Sarah had trouble trusting in God’s promise for a son. It was probably a hard thing to believe since she was so old. But despite everything, our age or even our lack of belief, God always keeps His promises. God promised Abraham and Sarah a son, and next week we are going to find out if God does keep His promise!

Questions for Review with Younger Children

Have children answer “yes” or “no.”

1. God told Abram to go outside and count the bugs in the air. (No! Abram counted the stars.)
2. God told Abram that he would have a very, very large family. (Yes)
3. God changed Abram’s name to Abraham. (Yes)
4. God changed Sarai’s name to Stephanie. (No! God changed it to Sarah.)
5. God promised Abraham and Sarah a baby boy. (Yes)
6. Three visitors came to Abraham at nighttime. (No, during the daytime)
7. One of the visitors was God, and the other two were angels. (Yes)
8. Abraham and Sarah prepared a meal for God and the two angels. (Yes)
9. God told Abraham that in one year Sarah would have a baby kitten. (No! A baby boy named Issac.)
10. Sarah laughed at God’s promise. (Yes)
11. God told Abraham that nothing is impossible for God. (Yes)
12. Abraham believed in God’s promise to him. (Yes)