



# God's Covenant with Abram

# 10

## Key Themes

- God provides salvation from sin through Jesus—the seed of Abraham.
- God is faithful to His promises.

## Key Passages

- Genesis 15:2–3, 15:5, 17:5a, 17:8; Galatians 3:16

## Lesson Focus

- God promised Abram that Jesus would be part of his family.



## Lesson Overview



### Come On In

Students will draw stars and/or place star stickers on the newsprint-covered tables. They will then try to count all the stars on the newsprint.



### Circle Time

**Prayer**—Using the prayer page of the Flip Chart, discuss prayer and give each child the opportunity to pray after determining what type of prayer you will offer today.

**God's Word**—God made a covenant with Abram. Jesus Christ is the promised descendant through whom all nations have been blessed. He alone brings the hope of redemption to the world.

**Song**—Students will review the lesson by singing an adapted version of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.” They will then rehearse the “Acts 17:26 Memory Verse” song.



### Activity 1: Abraham's Special Family Ribbon

Students will assemble Abraham's Special Family Ribbon. The ribbon includes stars representing God's promise that his descendants would be beyond counting like the stars. It will also include a cross representing God's promise that Jesus Christ is the very special member of Abraham's family—the one who would bless many nations.



### Activity 2: Abraham to Jesus Tunnel

Students will scoot or run through a tunnel beginning at Abraham and ending at Jesus to remind them that God promised Abraham that one day Jesus would be a very special part of his family.



### Memory Verse Review/Snack

Children will review the memory verse while enjoying the snack for the day. You may want to use the snack as incentive to recite and/or repeat the memory verse.

# Lesson Preparation

## WHAT YOU WILL DO

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED



### FOR THE TEACHER

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



### COME ON IN

- Bring newspaper sheets to cover each table.
- Gather various star stickers and bring them to class.

- Newspaper sheet for each table
- Star stickers
- Crayons



### CIRCLE TIME

- Practice the songs on the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.

- Lesson Flip Chart
- Stuffed animal



### ABRAHAM'S SPECIAL FAMILY RIBBON

- Print (preferably on cardstock) and cut out the Abraham's Special Family Ribbon sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student—four cutouts each.
- Bring ribbon cut to at least 15" long and at least 1" wide for each student
- Complete one Abraham ribbon to show the class.

- Abraham's Special Family Ribbon cutouts for each student
- Ribbon pieces (at least 15" long and 1" wide) for each student
- Crayons
- Stapler, tape, or glue
- Completed Abraham's Special Family Ribbon



### ABRAHAM TO JESUS TUNNEL

- Print one Abraham and one Jesus sign from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Bring in a large sheet or cloth to make a tunnel.

- Large sheet or cloth
- Abraham sign
- Jesus sign



### MEMORY VERSE REVIEW/SNACK

- Prepare and bring snacks.

- Lesson Flip Chart for memory verse review
- Snacks



# Prepare to Share

## SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

To prepare for this lesson, read the following passages: Genesis 15:1–21, 17:1–27; Galatians 3:15–18.

Before the beginning of time God established a plan to redeem a people to Himself (Genesis 3:15). According to God's plan this people would descend from His servant Abram. Abram would not only be the physical father of the Israelites (Genesis 12:2) but would serve as the spiritual father of all who would come to faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 4:11). Throughout these chapters in Genesis, God's promise to Abram and his descendants—the Abrahamic Covenant—is given, confirmed, and amplified. The covenant begins in Genesis 12:1–3, where Abram is promised:

- God will make him a great nation (Genesis 12:2).
- God will bless him (Genesis 12:2).
- He will be a blessing (Genesis 12:2).
- God will bless those who bless Abram (Genesis 12:3).
- God will curse those who curse Abram (Genesis 12:3).
- Through Abram all nations will be blessed (Genesis 12:3).

But Abram is childless. How will this promise ever come to pass? His question is finally voiced in Genesis 15:2: “Lord God, what will you give me, seeing I go childless?” God's response? “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars . . . So shall your descendants be” (Genesis 15:5).

God was faithful to His promises as He continued to shape Abram's life to His purposes. Chapter 17 revealed God again confirming this covenant made between God and Abram and his descendants (Genesis 17:7). The sign of the covenant was to be circumcision (Genesis 17:10). And it is here that God changes his name—from Abram, meaning *exalted father*, to Abraham, meaning *father of a multitude* (Genesis 17:5). Even in this name change we see God reassuring Abraham of His faithfulness.

Throughout this amazing saga and in spite of apparently impossible circumstances, we know that Abraham “believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness” (Genesis 15:6). In fact, we see these words repeated throughout the New Testament (Romans 4:3, 4:22; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23) as a reminder that it is not our works of obedience but

faith in God—the belief in what He says—that leads to righteousness.

## APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

More and more we are confronted by a culture that refuses to believe that the Bible is God's inerrant Word. Though these people rarely read or study the Word of God themselves, we are often able to present them with historical information and recent findings.

For example, as God described the land Abraham was soon to overcome and inhabit, He mentioned the Hittite people (Genesis 15:19–21). Many skeptics have discounted the accuracy of the Bible and the history of the Old Testament because of the lack of extra-biblical historical information about the Hittites. Archaeologists in 1832 confirmed God's Word when they discovered a city that proved to be the capital of the Hittite empire, Hattusa, at modern-day Boghazköy in Turkey. Now the Hittites are accepted as a once-great civilization, and God has silenced those who would doubt Him in this matter.

At one time skeptics even questioned God's Word because of His statement to Abraham that his descendants would outnumber the stars of the heaven and be as numerous as the sands of the sea (Genesis 22:17). It was thought that no more than 10,000 stars existed. They did not appear to be as numerous as the sand on the seashore and certainly not more than we could count. But with the invention of powerful telescopes, today we can actually estimate the number of stars, and we know that in our galaxy alone there are over 100 billion stars.

With the reliability of the Bible increasingly under attack, it's encouraging to observe God using science and archaeology, not as enemies of His truth, but as confirmation that His Word—every word—proves true (Proverbs 30:5–6).

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It was much more dramatic than a simple handshake. It was a sacred sign that a covenant had been made. It seems strange that God would request a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon after Abraham questioned Him about the land he was to inherit (Genesis 15:7–9).

But this was the requirement of some ancient covenants. A promise between two individuals some-

times involved cutting animals in half and placing them on either side of a pathway. The pledging parties would walk between the freshly killed animals as a sign of the curse they were willing to accept—if they reneged on their agreement, may they too be cut limb from limb just as these animals had been (see Jeremiah 34:18–20).

The covenant with Abram was not a typical ancient covenant; it included the God of Israel. God caused Abram to fall into a deep sleep, and after dark, a smoking oven and a burning torch passed between the animal pieces (Genesis 15:17). While Abram slept, God Himself, represented by the oven and the torch, bound Himself solemnly to His promise. God alone made the commitment because God alone could fulfill it. His promises to Abraham would indeed be kept.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



## BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear Lord, you have shown me what faith in you looks like through your servant Abraham. Abraham never saw the fulfillment of your promise through Jesus Christ—yet he believed and obeyed. I pray, Lord, that you will enable me to learn how to trust you more and rely on your promises—even through distressing trials. Thank you for your amazing plan of redemption that began in Genesis and made its way through history for 4,000 years until the birth of Jesus Christ—my Savior. May the children come to see the hope and the future in that plan and one day submit themselves to faith and obedience to your Word and to Jesus Christ.



## COME ON IN

As children arrive . . .

- They will draw stars and/or use the star stickers to put stars all over the newsprint you have taped to the tables.
- They will then try to count all the stars they were able to add to the newsprint.

During this time you should be at the door welcoming the children as they come in and directing them to sit down at the tables and begin the activity. Have an aid/helper ready to engage the children with the activity.



## REVIEW

Using the Flip Chart, quickly review the previous lessons with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the lesson pages from the Flip Chart. Remind the children of each lesson's focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



## Circle Time

*In an orderly manner, have the children assemble in a circle away from the tables—either on the floor or in their chairs.*

*Bring your stuffed animal, Bible, Flip Chart, completed Abraham's Special Family Ribbon project, and any other props you brought or prepared for this lesson.*

### PRAYER

*This prayer time is designed to get children to begin to understand some simple concepts about prayer and to get them to understand that they can pray. Use a special stuffed animal—prayer bear—or appropriate object to pass around the circle as each child gets his/her turn to pray. Only the child with the stuffed animal is allowed to pray or speak during this time. Using the same stuffed animal or other object all year will add continuity and structure to this time.*

**We start our Bible Study with prayer. Let's pray.** *Turn to the Prayer page in the Flip Chart. Briefly review the different types of prayer presented there. Then determine which type you want the children to pray today.*

- I love you prayers—Adoration
- I'm sorry prayers—Confession
- Thank you prayers—Thanksgiving
- Please prayers—Supplication

*Today Supplication is suggested. You might proceed this way.*

**Today let's say prayers of supplication. God cares so much for us and we can ask Him for anything and about anything!**

*The prayers you begin with should be specific to your needs. This will model to the children that you believe God does care about all the details of your life and you pray to Him about these things. Your example will increase their confidence in praying to God.*

- Prior to making your transition to circle time, we suggest you take time for restroom breaks and hand washing.
- Preschoolers need to move. This is a good opportunity to get them to move. Make an orderly transition to the circle time. You can have carpet squares if you want to sit on the floor, or help them to move their chairs into the circle.

I'll start. Dear God, thank you that you hear my prayer and will answer. Lord, I ask today that you would be pleased to . . . *(enter personal prayer here)*.

*Pass the stuffed animal around the circle giving all the children an opportunity to say a prayer asking God for something.*

Very good! Now let's put our stuffed animal away and we'll get into God's Word.

## GOD'S WORD

*These first four questions will be repeated each week. The repetition of these questions will help to solidify these simple but foundational truths in the children's minds at a young age.*

- ? Before we begin, what is this? *Hold up your Bible. The Bible!*
- ? What is in this Bible? *God's holy Word!*
- ? What does the Bible tell us? *Everything we need to know!*
- ? And all God's Words in this Bible are what? *True!*

► As you teach, refer often to the Flip Chart picture to keep the children engaged.

We have been talking about Abram. God called Abram to leave his family and his father's house. God promised Abram that he would have a great land, a great nation, a great name, and he would be a blessing. God promised Abram that someone in his family would be wonderful and would bless many people and many nations. God promised Abram that Jesus would one day be part of his family. *Refer to the Flip Chart illustration Lessons 9 & 10.*

Abraham trusted God. He believed that one day he would be the father of a great nation and have many, many descendants. God promised Abram that he would have a HUGE family—and that Jesus would be a part of his family. God said Abraham would have lots and lots of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great grandchildren and on and on and on. But Abram had a problem. Can you think what that problem might be? *Allow for answers.*

Genesis 15:2-3

Let me read something to you. Tell me if you can figure out what Abram's problem was. How was he going to have such a very large family? Listen carefully. *Read Genesis 15:2 and Genesis 15:3 from your Bible emphasizing "I go childless" and "no offspring."*

- ? What was Abram's problem? Can you tell me? *Allow for discussion.*

*Reread the verses if necessary.* Well maybe I can help you. Abram said he was childless and had no offspring. Abram didn't have any children of his own. Abram was wondering how he would have all of these grandchildren and great-grandchildren—how could Jesus be a part of Abram's family if Abram didn't have any children yet? That seems like a big problem, but not to God! Listen carefully and tell me what God told Abram to look at. *Read Genesis 15:5 from your Bible.*

Genesis 15:5

- ? What did God tell Abram to look at? *The sky and the stars.*

That's right. He told Abram to look at the night sky and try to count all the stars. And God said that was how many descendants Abram would have. That would be how many people would be a part of Abram's family. And one of those people would be very special. One of those members of Abram's family would be Jesus!

? Can you count the stars in the sky at night? Have you ever tried? *Allow for discussion.*

We tried to count all the stars we put on the paper this morning. But we could never begin to count all the stars in the sky. And God was saying that just like we can't count the stars in the sky, Abram wouldn't be able to count all of the family members that God would bless him with. Abram was going to be the father of many nations!

God promised Abram something else. Listen again as I read out of God's true Word and tell me what else God promised Abram. Are you ready? Listen carefully. *Read Genesis 17:8 from your Bible. Emphasize "land of Canaan" as you read.*

? Did you hear it? What else did God promise to Abram? *Land. The land of Canaan.*

God promised that Abram would be the father of many nations and one day live in a special land—the land of Canaan.

? God did something else. And I am going to read right out of the Holy Bible. God changed something about Abram. What was it? Listen. *Read Genesis 17:5 emphasizing "name." God changed his name!*

The Bible is God's true Word. It tells us that God changed Abram's name to Abraham. When you hear people talk about Abram in the Bible you will know that they mean Abraham. God promised that Abram—or Abraham—would be the father of many nations. God changed Abram's name to Abraham.

Now remember, I said that Jesus would one day be a part of Abraham's family. That is what God promised to Abraham. Jesus was the one who would bless many people. I am going to read one more verse. Look here at my Bible. We have been reading about Abraham. God tells us about him in the very beginning of the Bible in Genesis. But the Bible also tells us about Abraham way back here—in Galatians. *Show the children Genesis and Galatians.*

Galatians tells us about Jesus being the very, very special person in Abraham's family. Jesus came so He could be a blessing to many, many people. Listen carefully while I read. *Read Galatians 3:16 emphasizing "Christ."*

God promised Abraham that someone in his family would bless many nations and people. And many years later, Jesus Christ was born. Jesus Christ was a member of Abraham's family. Jesus is God's Son. Jesus is the Savior and will give eternal life to everyone who believes in Him and trusts Him.

Genesis 17:8

Genesis 17:5

Galatians 3:16

God had a plan. He called Abram (later named Abraham) to be the father of many nations. He promised Abraham that his family would be HUGE! Just like we can't count all the stars in the sky, we could never count all of Abraham's family. God promised Abraham special land—the land of Canaan. And, God promised that one very special man, Jesus Christ, would be a part of Abraham's family. And He would come to save His people from their sins.

## SONG

➤ Musical instruments, marching, and motions can be added to this section to add interest and help learning.

Everyone stand up. We are going to sing Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star—but the words are a little different! We have learned that God promised Abraham a huge family. He would be the father of many nations. God told Abraham to look in the sky toward heaven and count the stars. Abraham couldn't count all the stars. And God told Abraham that is the way his family would be. It would be so large, no one could count everyone in it.

*Turn to the Flip Chart Song page. Sing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." Move in a circle as you sing, and switch directions. Have children move in and out and around the circle, etc. Lyrics to today's songs can be found on the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.*

**Great! Let's sing our Memory Verse song.** *Turn to the Memory Verse Flip Chart page and sing with the children.*

*Show children your completed Abraham's Special Family Ribbon. OK. Now we are going to go back to our tables and make this Abraham's Special Family Ribbon. Let's move quietly back to our tables to make this ribbon.*



## Abraham's Special Family Ribbon

### MATERIALS

- Ribbon pieces at least 1" wide and 15" long, cut for each student
- Abraham's Special Family Ribbon star cutouts including Abraham, two stars, and a cross for each child
- Crayons
- Stapler, tape, or glue

### INSTRUCTIONS

*Children will color the four stars for their ribbon. They will attach the stars to the ribbon with a stapler, glue, or tape.*

We are going to make an Abraham's Special Family Ribbon. We will color the four stars and attach them all to the

piece of ribbon you have. Abraham will go on top, followed by the stars showing his family, and last, put the star with the cross. Jesus was Abraham's special family member.

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

God made Abraham a promise. He said your family will be like the stars—there will be too many to count. And God promised Abraham that Jesus would be a part of his family. Abraham did have a very large family and Jesus was part of that family—just like God promised.



## Abraham to Jesus Tunnel

### MATERIALS

- Abraham and Jesus signs
- Large sheet to make a tunnel using the tables, chairs, or something else in the room

### INSTRUCTIONS

*Make a tunnel with the large sheet or fabric. Put the Abraham sign at one end of the "tunnel." Put the Jesus sign at the other end of the "tunnel." Have the children take turns going from Abraham to Jesus.*

*You can time them or set it up as a relay race. Have the first child pick up the Abraham sign go through the tunnel, pick up the Jesus sign and pass them both to the next child in line. That child will put the Abraham sign down at the beginning of the tunnel and put the Jesus sign down at the end. The next child will pick them up. And so on.*

I am going to create a tunnel with this sheet and the chairs. I want to see how long it will take you to get from Abraham to Jesus! Remember, Jesus was a part of Abraham's family just like God said. Jesus was born long after Abraham—and Jesus was a relative (or descendant) of Abraham.

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

God promised Abraham that Jesus would be part of his family. Jesus was the very special one who would come into the world and offer forgiveness and eternal life to everyone who would believe in Him.



## Memory Verse Review/Snack

**Acts 17:26** And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth.

*After thanking God for your snack, review the memory verse with the children while enjoying the snack for the day. You may want to use the snack as incentive to recite and/or repeat the memory verse.*

*Use the Memory Verse page in the Flip Chart. Explain the verse to the children as you go over the verse together. Say the verse and point at each picture several times. Ask the children if anyone wants to try and say it on their own.*



## Applying God's Word

### WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

God promised Abraham that he would have many, many descendants—so many that he wouldn't be able to count them all. God promised that Abraham would be the father of a great nation and that he would have a special land. God also promised Abraham that Jesus would one day be the very special descendant of Abraham who would bless all nations by offering the forgiveness of sins and eternal life for everyone who believes and trusts in Him.

## GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

Abraham had faith in God even though God asked him to do some hard things. Abraham believed God's promise to him. God sent His son Jesus through Abraham to die for our sins so that whoever would believe in Him, turn away from their sins, trust Him, and humbly accept the free gift of forgiveness would be His forever!

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



### Group Prayer Time

- Thank God for His Word and for the account of Abraham's faith and trust in God's promises.
- Thank God for Jesus—the special descendant of Abraham who came to offer forgiveness to those who would believe in Him.
- Pray that one day the children will see Jesus clearly and find that forgiveness and eternal life He promises.

**Do you still have more time? Review the past quarters using the Flip Charts, add another coloring page, recite and review the current and past memory verses, sing more songs, bring out play dough. Keep the children occupied with intentional, God-centered activities until their parents come to pick them up.**

# Song Sheet

## **ACTS 17:26 MEMORY VERSE**

*(To the tune of "Are You Sleeping?")*

**And He has made,**

*(Are you sleeping?)*

**From one bloo-ood,**

*(Are you sleeping?)*

**Every nation, every nation.**

*(Brother John. Brother John.)*

**To dwell on all the ear-earth.**

*(Morning Bells are ringing!)*

**To dwell on all the ear-earth.**

*(Morning Bells are ringing!)*

**Acts Seventeen: Twenty six.**

*(Ding, ding, dong. Ding, ding, dong.)*

## **TWINKLE, TWINKLE LITTLE STAR**

Twinkle, twinkle little star.

We can't count how many there are!

And the Bible says it's true,

Abraham's family is like you.

God said, "Look into the sky.

Can you count the stars up high?

So shall your descendants be;

Too many to count you'll one day see."

Twinkle, twinkle little star.

We can't count how many there are!

