



UNIT 3 | SESSION 1

GOD MADE A COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

GENESIS 12-20

CHRIST CONNECTION:

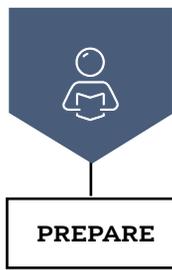
God sent Jesus to earth as part of Abraham's family. Jesus saves people from their sins.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Who makes everything happen? God makes everything happen.

KEY PASSAGE PHRASE:

The Lord is great. Psalm 135:5



YOUR HEART TO TEACH



LEADER Bible Study

Think about all of the choices that we have each day. Just in the morning, we have dozens of different cereals to eat, perhaps that many varieties of milk to pour on top of the cereal, and nearly as many ways to make coffee to go with it. All of these are choices that we often take for granted.

Now think about all of the choices God had as He took a significant step in redemptive history and chose a couple to start a new people from whom the promised Rescuer would come. (Gen. 3:15) We see some of those choices at the tail end of Genesis 11, but we need to remember that God is not confined to choices like we are. He is all-powerful and sovereign; God had an infinite number of choices for this critical couple.

So whom did God choose? A man named Abram and his barren wife Sarai. Now that’s a surprise, isn’t it? This is the couple whom God would give descendants as numerous as the stars? (Gen. 15:5) From the world’s perspective, this was a curious choice at best—and a laughable choice at worst.

But from God’s perspective, Abram and Sarai were a brilliant choice. First, God made it clear from the inception of this new people that He was the One bringing everything to pass. This family was special because

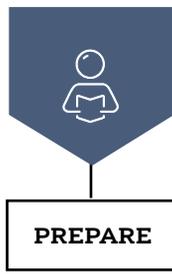
God clearly worked in them to bring forth children. This is what Sarai understood when she said, “Who would have told Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne a son for him in his old age” (Gen. 21:7). That the son of promise, Isaac, married a wife, Rebekah—who was also barren—is not a coincidence. (Gen. 25:21) Nor is it a coincidence that Jesus would be born to a virgin. (Luke 1:34) God is the God who makes possible that which is impossible, including rescuing people from sin.

Second, it took a while, but Abram’s faith in God came to fruition because of his wife’s barrenness. This was his barrier to faith in God. This is what he struggled with for so many years. In the end, Abram’s greatest struggle became the greatest kindling of his faith. God didn’t just begin a people through barrenness; He began a faithful people through it.

God’s covenant with Abram was certainly amazing. But perhaps His choice of Abram in the first place is even more amazing.

TERMS TO KNOW

Covenant: Promise between two people or between a person and God. Sometimes keeping the promise depends on one person’s meeting conditions set by the other person.



YOUR HEART TO TEACH

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Show a family picture

- picture of your family (printed or on electronic device)
- Big Picture Question Poster



LEARN

Sort the animals

- "Animal Sorting Cards" printable, 1 card per child
- brown construction paper, 1 piece
- blue construction paper, 1 piece

Uncover the Bible story picture

- Bible Story Picture Poster
- star shaped sticky notes or square shaped sticky notes with stars drawn on them

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- Key Passage Phrase Marker
- Key Passage Phrase Poster
- masking tape



LOVE

Paint stars

- smocks
- Key Passage Phrase Marker, 1 marker per child
- black heavy weight paper, 1 sheet per child
- cotton swabs
- small bowls or containers
- washable paint (yellow, white, or glow-in-the-dark)

Identify animals

- "Animal Sorting Cards" printable
- gift bag or basket



LIVE

Pack and move

- small suitcase, bag, or moving box
- items to be packed such as play food, toys, dishes, washcloths, towels, and clothes

Buy airline tickets

- "Caldwell Family Photo" printable

Snack and transition

- snacks
- Activity Page, 1 per child



BONUS

Care for baby dolls

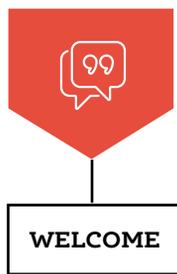
- blankets
- baby care items

Create a starry picture

- black construction paper, 1 sheet per child
- large star stickers

Make a mural of families

- large piece of paper
- pictures of families cut from magazines



Provide as many learning activities as possible from the *Love* and *Live* sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ connection, and key passage phrase in your conversation as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

WELCOME

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the classroom. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the *Love* and *Live* sections of the leader guide.

SHOW A FAMILY PICTURE

Print a personal family photo or locate one on an electronic device. Show each preschooler the picture as you welcome him to class. Point to and name each person in the picture. Remember to be sensitive to children's family situations. Talk about the big picture question and answer.

SAY “ I am excited you are here today. I showed you a picture of my family. God made families! God made a promise to a man named Abraham. He told Abraham he would have a big family. God kept His promise to Abraham. Let's learn more about Abraham and his family. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 SORT THE ANIMALS

Print and cut the “Animal Sorting Cards” printable. Place blue and brown pieces of construction paper beside each other on the floor near the Bible story area. Give each child an “Animal Sorting Card” as he comes to group time. Instruct each child to look at the animal on his card. Encourage him to think about if the animal lives on land or has wings and can fly in the sky. Ask him to place it on the brown paper if the animal is on land and on the blue paper if the animal can fly in the sky. Give simple clues to a child if he needs help deciding if the animal is on the land or in the sky.

SAY “ God made a wonderful promise to Abraham. The promise was to give him a family. God used some animals to show Abraham that He would be faithful in keeping His promise. Let’s listen to the Bible story and hear about the promise God made to Abraham. ”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Genesis 12. Tell the Bible story using the provided story below.

GOD MADE A COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

SAY “ Abram and his wife Sarai (SEHR igh) were part of Noah’s family. God made a special promise, or covenant, with Abram. First, God told Abram to move far away from his home. He promised to give Abram a big family and land to live on. God said, “All the people of the earth will be blessed because of you.” Abram obeyed God.

One night, God led Abram outside. “Count the stars, if you can,” God said. “That is how many people will be in your family.” Abram believed it would happen because God said so.

God did something special to show that He would keep His promise. First, God told Abram to get some animals. Abram obeyed God. Then Abram fell asleep and God told him what would happen. When it was dark, God moved between the animals. He showed that keeping the promise was His job, not Abram’s job.

When Abram was 99 years old, God said, “Your name is Abraham now. I will give you a big family to live in this land, and I will be their God.” ”

Christ Connection: God sent Jesus to earth as part of Abraham’s family. Jesus saves people from their sins.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 UNCOVER THE BIBLE STORY PICTURE POSTER

Cover the Bible story picture poster with star shaped sticky notes. If star shaped sticky notes are not available, consider drawing stars on sticky notes. Invite a child to remove a sticky note and tell one thing he remembers from the Bible story. Continue the activity, allowing each preschooler an opportunity to participate.

SAY “ These sticky notes are shaped like stars. They remind me of stars in the sky. God told Abraham to count the stars in the sky. God told Abraham he would have that many people in his family. God kept His promise to Abraham. He gave Abraham a big family and land to live on. God sent Jesus to earth as part of Abraham’s family. ”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It.”

“I know the Lord is great, I *clap my hands. (clap hands two times)
Yes, I know the Lord is great, I *clap my hands. (clap hands two times)
Yes, I know the Lord is great. Yes, I know the Lord is great.
Yes, I know the Lord is great, I *clap my hands. (clap hands two times)”

*Repeat with different motions such as stomp my feet, wave my hands, shout Amen.

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Make a simple path with masking tape on the floor near the group. Place the key passage phrase marker in the Bible at Psalm 135:5. Invite a child to open the Bible to the key passage phrase. Say the phrase. Invite a child to walk the taped path while the group repeats the phrase. Repeat the process, allowing each child the opportunity to follow the taped path.

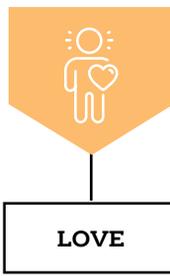
SAY “ God promised Abraham a family numbering more than the stars in the sky. God used animals to show Abraham that He would be faithful to keep His promise. Abraham believed God and obeyed Him because Abraham knew that the Lord is great. ”

6 PRAY

Pray, naming each child and thanking God for her family. Thank Him for keeping His promise to Abraham.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 RAISE YOUR HAND



Invite preschoolers to play a game about families. Explain you will name a family member. Instruct preschoolers to raise their hands high if they have the named relative in their family. Name family members one at a time. Some examples may include, brother, sister, mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, aunt, uncle, and cousin. Be sensitive to children's family situations. Additionally, recognize some children may have nicknames or special names for their family members. Encourage preschoolers to talk about their families. Talk about the Bible story.

SAY “Each family is special. God made Abraham a promise to give him a big family. God kept His promise. Abraham had a big family. God sent Jesus to earth to be part of Abraham’s family.”

2 PAINT STARS

Pour different colors of washable paint into separate containers. Place the paint, key passage phrase markers, glue sticks, black construction paper, and cotton swabs on the table. Invite children to paint stars on their papers. Help them put on paint smocks and roll up their sleeves to avoid getting paint on their clothes. Suggest they use glue sticks to attach a key passage phrase marker to their papers. Guide children to dip one end of a cotton swab in one color of paint and then on their papers to make stars. Instruct preschoolers to use a new cotton swab if they choose to use another color of paint or if the cotton swab needs to be replaced.

SAY “You have painted stars on your paper. How many stars did you paint? God asked Abraham to count the stars in the sky. The sky has so many stars that Abraham could not count them all. How many stars do you think were in the sky? God made a special promise. He told Abraham his family would be many people, more than all the stars. God kept His promise to Abraham. He gave Abraham a big family!”

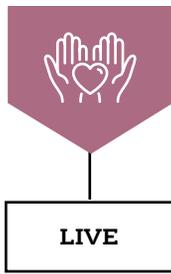
3 IDENTIFY ANIMALS

Print and cut the “Animal Sorting Cards” printable. Place the cards in a bag or basket. Instruct a preschooler to choose a card. Then, ask the child if the animal on the card is in the sky or on land. If it's in the sky, the preschooler should lead the other preschoolers to stand and raise their hands high. If it's a land animal, she will guide the children to touch the ground. Allow each preschooler an opportunity to select a card and lead the group in reaching high or touching the ground.

SAY “We saw different animals on the cards. Some fly high in the sky, and some live on land. God told Abraham to go and collect animals. Abraham obeyed God. Do you think it was hard for Abraham to obey God and collect the animals? Is it hard for you to obey God?”

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 PACK AND MOVE

Collect items to pack in a suitcase such as clothes, shoes, towels, washcloths, play food, plastic dishes, and toys. Lay the items near a small suitcase or moving box on the floor or a table. Guide preschoolers to work together to pack items in the suitcase. Talk about the length of time it takes to pack all the items to move to a new place. Ask preschoolers what items they would pack if they were moving or going on a trip.

SAY “ We have worked together to pack items in the suitcase. The items in the suitcase could be helpful if we were moving or going on a trip. God told Abraham to move far away from his home. He promised to give Abraham a big family and land to live on. Have you ever moved to a new place to live? Were you happy, sad, excited, or scared? How do you think Abraham felt when God told him to move to a new land? ”

2 BUY AIRPLANE TICKETS



Cut strips of construction paper to resemble airplane tickets. Prepare enough tickets so preschoolers can select for their family members. Print and show the children the “Caldwell Family Photo” printable. Listen as preschoolers tell you about times they may have flown on an airplane. Ask each preschooler to think of how many people are in his family. Invite preschoolers to pretend to buy plane tickets for their families. Count and give each preschooler the number of tickets needed for his family. Pray for missionaries in Ecuador and other missionaries as they tell people about Jesus.

SAY “ The Caldwell family took a mission trip all the way to a country called Ecuador. They needed tickets to ride on the airplane to go to Ecuador. What if your family went on a mission trip? If you traveled with your family to another country, you might have to buy an airplane ticket and fly there. These tickets are only pretend, but one day God may ask you or your whole family to take a mission trip. I hope you will say yes to God and go where He tells you to go. ”

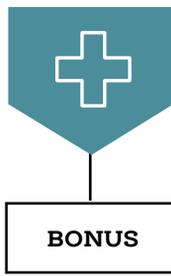
3 SNACK AND TRANSITION



Post an allergy alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ connection.

SAY “ God sent Jesus to earth as part of Abraham’s family. Jesus saves people from their sins. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute the big picture cards for families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 FOLLOW THE TEACHER

Invite children to follow you in a line. Mimic the actions of an animal. Direct preschoolers to pretend to be the same animal. Walk a path around the room, ending at the group time area.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Genesis 12 and talk about the Bible story using the points below.

GOD MADE A COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

- God made a special promise, or covenant, with Abram.
- God told Abram to move far away from his home. He promised to give Abram a big family and land to live on.
- One night, God led Abram outside. “Count the stars, if you can,” God said. “That is how many people will be in your family.” Abram believed God.
- God told Abram to get some animals. When it was dark, God moved between the animals. He showed keeping the promise was His job, not Abram’s.
- When Abram was 99 years old, God said, “Your name is Abraham now. I will give you a big family to live in this land, and I will be their God.”

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song below to tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It.”

“I know the Lord is great, I *clap my hands. (clap hands two times)
Yes, I know the Lord is great, I *clap my hands. (clap hands two times)
Yes, I know the Lord is great. Yes, I know the Lord is great.
Yes, I know the Lord is great, I *clap my hands. (clap hands two times)”

*Repeat with different motions such as stomp my feet, wave my hands, shout Amen.

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Guide preschoolers to learn the American Sign Language sign for great. Hold both hands, with palms facing out, chest high. Push hands away from the body two times quickly. Lead children to sign the word great. Open the Bible to Psalm 135:5 and say the key passage phrase aloud. Sign the word great as you say the key passage phrase as a group.

5 PRAY

Pray, acknowledging the Lord is great in all He does.



BONUS

TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 CARE FOR BABY DOLLS



Lay dolls and any doll care items near a table. Guide preschoolers to care for the dolls. Suggest they clothe, feed, and rock the dolls. Encourage them to wrap the dolls in blankets. Talk about the Bible story.

SAY “ You cared for baby dolls. God promised to give Abraham a family. He gave Abraham and Sarah a baby. You were a baby in your family. Jesus was a baby in His family too. Does your family have a baby? Can you show me how you might care for this baby? God sent Jesus to earth to be a part of Abraham’s family. ”

7 CREATE A STARRY SKY PICTURE

Place black construction paper and large star shape stickers on the table. Invite preschoolers to make a starry sky picture. Encourage children to select stickers and place them on their picture. Assist them by peeling off the back of the stickers if needed. Write each child’s name on his paper using a white crayon.

SAY “ God showed Abraham the stars in the sky. God promised Abraham many people would be in his family. Have you ever looked up at the sky at night and tried to count the stars? How many stars do you think are in the sky? When Abraham saw the stars, there were more than he could count. God kept His promise to Abraham. Abraham had a big family. ”

8 MAKE A MURAL OF FAMILIES

Tape a large piece of paper on a table or a wall at the preschoolers’ eye level. Gather glue sticks and pictures of families cut out from magazines. Instruct children to select family pictures they would like to add to the paper. Guide preschoolers to use glue sticks to attach pictures to the paper. Allow boys and girls to talk about their families. Be sensitive to preschoolers’ family situations.

SAY “ These are pictures of different families. I see pictures of families glued on our paper. We can thank God for families. We learned in our Bible story today that Abraham had a big family. There were more people in Abraham’s family than stars in the sky. God sent Jesus to earth to be a part of Abraham’s family. ”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.