

God Calls Abram

Bible Verse

I will make of you a great nation and will bless you. I will make your name respected, and you will be a blessing. (Genesis 12:2)

Bible Story

Genesis 11:27–12:10

FaithPoint


God calls us to be a blessing to others.

What You Need to Know

The story of Abram (Abraham) is the Bible's account of the beginning of Israel, God's chosen people. The Bible even begins the story by tracing Abram's lineage back to Shem, one of Noah's sons. Terah and his three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran, along with their wives and families, lived in the thriving seaport city of Ur of the Chaldeans. After Haran died in the land of his birth, Terah took Abram and Abram's wife, Sarai, along with Haran's son, Lot, to the city of Haran, located in the upper Mesopotamia (what is now southeastern Turkey). God's call spurs Abram to complete the journey and continue on to the land that God had promised them: Canaan. Abram's call sets up a familiar theme through the Bible: Follow me and I will be your God; you will be my people. Abram's response to God's call shapes the future of what Israel will become, even though Abram will never see this future. But Abram's trust in the promise and his move to Canaan certainly provides a new meaning of life for him. And we know from other stories that God does indeed keep promises.

Our children live in a world of instant gratification. It must be difficult to comprehend a story where the future is so many years away that the main characters don't even get to see the final chapters. Abram and Sarai responded to God out of trust. God was committed to them, just as God is committed to us. The story of Abram is much the story of our Christian life journey. We believe the promise, we follow God, and we reach out to a promised future. God will bless us with good things along the way, if we remain faithful and obedient and watch for blessings. And, by doing so, we can become a blessing to others.



Activities marked with  contain options to use recycled or repurposed materials.



Activities marked with  will require extra preparation.

Arrival

There are more activities than your session time allows. Select activities based on time, group size, and available supplies.



Welcome

SUPPLIES: Resource Pak—pp. 13 & 20, markers or stickers, offering basket

- Welcome the children and have them mark their attendance.
- If any have brought an offering, have them place it in the basket.
- Invite the children to select a Time to Begin activity.

Time to Begin

Choose one or more of these activities and prepare as needed.

Bible Puzzles

SUPPLIES: Bibles (CEB), Bible Brain Pak—pp. 3-4, pencils

- Complete the puzzles to discover today's Bible and faith challenges.

Part of the Puzzle

SUPPLIES: posterboard, scissors, markers

🕒 Create a large jigsaw puzzle by cutting a piece of posterboard into puzzle pieces, one piece per child.

- Give each child one piece of the puzzle. Have the children each write on the piece his or her name and draw a symbol that represents him or her.
- Have them put the puzzle together.

Who Would You Call?

SUPPLIES: Resource Pak—p. 5, scissors, pencils

🕒 Cut out the "Who Would You Call?" Cards," and lay them face-down on a table for a concentration-type game.

- Have the children, one at a time, select two cards. If the cards match, the child keeps the cards. If not, both cards are turned back over and play moves to the next child.

PREPARE MINI

Take apart The Mini, placing each session in a separate folder or large envelope.

COOL OPTION

Purchase a blank jigsaw puzzle from a craft store.

In order to let all children have a chance to play, have them continue to take turns whether or not a match is made.

Let's Talk

- Have the children tell about something they think they might be called to do. Acknowledge any who are celebrating a birthday this week.
- Pray for your group.

Bible Time

Get Ready

SUPPLIES: *Leader's Guide*—p. 83, Optional: CD and CD player

- Invite the children to bring their Bibles to the storytelling area. Have extras for those who need one.
- Play music to bring the group together.

SAY: Today is the first day of our new Sunday school year. This is an exciting time as we look at stories of faith in our Bible. For the first few weeks, our stories will come from the Old Testament.

PRAY: Creator God, you are awesome. Be with us today as we grow in our faith and learn more about how to live as your children. Amen.

This prayer is repeated each week before the Bible Story. Make a photocopy of the prayer on page 83, cut on the lines, and display it so the children may pray it together.

The Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bibles (CEB), *The Mini*—pp. 1-2

SAY: Our story today tells about a man who is the great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandson of Noah. That's eight greats, or ten generations later. You may remember that Noah was very faithful to God, and many, many years later Noah's ancestor was still faithful. God had called Noah, and now God was calling Abram to help carry out a special plan.

- Have the children locate Genesis 11:27–12:10, and tell them that the story comes from these verses.
- Have them turn to "God Calls Abram," and ask for volunteers to be the five Readers and the Scripture Reader. Have the Scripture Reader locate the specific verses within the story in order to be ready to read them at the appropriate times.

SAY: God told Abram to go to a land that God would show him.




ASK: How do you think Abram might have felt when he realized that God was calling him to go to an unknown destination? What did God promise to do for Abram in return? (*bless him and make his name great, so that Abram would be a blessing*) What do you think you would do if God told you to go someplace and you didn't know where you were going? What if God promised that you would be blessed and would be a blessing to others?



“God’s People” Mural

SUPPLIES: Bible (CEB), Resource Pak—pp. 3 & 30, Leader’s Guide—p. 84, dark blue or black mural paper, yellow or white construction paper, scissors, glue or tape, masking tape, marker

 Cut a sheet of mural paper that is large enough to hold the stars for each of the thirteen weeks, plus additional stars with the children’s names. (These will be added in a later session.) Cut out the “God’s People” title strip and the Session 1 stars (Abraham and Sarah). Photocopy and cut apart the Bible verse references. Set aside the references for Sessions 2–13.

- Have the children place mural paper on a wall to begin making a night sky mural.
- Attach the “God’s People” title strip to the top center of the mural.
- Cut a moon out of construction paper and place it in the sky.
- Place the Abraham and Sarah stars in the sky.
- Using the Bible verse reference, have a child look up today’s verse and write it on a piece of paper. Place it on or next to the mural. (Each week, you will add another verse to your mural display. If you prefer, you may just attach the reference either directly on the mural or on a star cut from construction paper.)

OPTION

Make the mural on a bulletin board by covering the board with dark mural paper.

In Session 3, the children will hear the story of when Abram and Sarai’s names were changed to Abraham and Sarah.

Live God’s Word

“Everyone Is Called” Game

SUPPLIES: none


- The children stand in circle, with one in the center.
- The first child says, “I call _____,” who then links arms with that child.

- The second child then calls another person, who connects with the first two.
- Play continues until all children are connected.

SAY: Just as God called Abram, God calls each of us. Because of that, we are all blessed and can be a blessing to others.

Blessing Opportunities

SUPPLIES: Resource Pak—pp. 8, 28; scissors; Optional: masking tape

 Cut out the “Blessing Opportunities” titles and situation cards. Lay the category titles face-up on a table or floor, or attach them to a wall.

- One at a time, have the children pick a situation card and read it aloud.
- As a group, decide under which category the situation goes, and place the card under that title. There are two situations for each category; however, some situations could go under more than one category. The children may talk about the possibilities, and then the child who drew the card may place it wherever he or she feels is best. *(Suggested answers are on page 112.)*


Be a Blessing!

SUPPLIES: The Mini—pp. 3, 4; pencils

- Have the children look at “Be a Blessing” and think of specific ways they could be a blessing to others through each category.
- Ask them to turn the page and write, in the circles, two of these ways as a commitment to be a blessing to someone this week.

“Blessing One Another” T-Shirts

SUPPLIES: solid T-shirts, newspaper, large paint shirts (for cover-ups), fabric markers, fabric paints, pie tins, bowl of water, towels, Optional: cardboard

 Purchase an inexpensive T-shirt for each child. Cover work tables with newspaper. Place newspaper or cardboard inside each shirt to prevent bleeding through. Pour a variety of colors of fabric paint into pie tins.

- Have each child put on a large “paint shirt” and write his or her name on a T-shirt with a fabric marker.
- Have the children, one at a time, dip their hands in the paint and make a handprint on each person’s T-shirt. (Have a bowl of water and towels available for easy clean up.)
- Set the T-shirts aside to dry. The children will take them home next week.

If you prefer, you may have the children just sign each other’s T-shirts using fabric markers.



Sending Forth



Worship

SUPPLIES: Bible (CEB); The Mini—p. 4; Optional: CD and CD player, candle, matches or lighter

- Play music to call the children to worship.
- Have a volunteer light the candle, if this is permitted in your room.
- Have a volunteer locate and read Genesis 12:2.

SAY: Abram was faithful to God, and God blessed him. God made a promise to Abram, and that promise extends to us today. When we live as people of God, the world will be filled with goodness and joy. There will be plenty of blessings! As God promised to bless Abram, God also blesses each of us.

- Teach the American Sign Language for “God bless you.”
- Have the children take turns naming one way he or she committed to being a blessing to others.
- After each child names a way, call the child by name and together sign “God bless you.”

PRAY: Dear God, we are so thankful to be your people. Thank you for the many blessings you give us every day, and use us so that others will be blessed. Amen.

Go in Peace

- Blow out the candle.
- Give each child an “Introducing... The Common English Bible (CEB),” and encourage them to read it with their parents.

Peek at Next Week

Look through Session 2 and decide which activities you will be doing. Collect all supplies, photocopy all reproducibles, cut out all pieces, and complete all necessary preparations.