

5 Sunday School Lessons in 2 Versions for Older & Younger Students

Lesson 4

Abraham's Call



The Call of Abraham

Read Genesis 12:1-9. Abraham lived during the Bronze Age. During this time period, stone tools were replaced with metal. Tin (or other metals) were added to copper to make bronze. Bronze was harder and more durable than other metals available at that time which made bronze a better metal for tools and weapons.

There were many technological advances during the Bronze Age, including the first writing systems and the invention of the wheel.

The Bronze Age was marked by the rise of states or kingdoms - large-scale societies joined under a central government by a powerful ruler. Bronze Age states interacted with each other through trade, warfare, migration and the spread of ideas. Prominent Bronze Age kingdoms included Sumer and Babylonia in Mesopotamia, and Athens in Ancient Greece.

A prominent city during the end of the Early Bronze Age and the Beginning of the Middle Bronze Age, was the city of Ur. Abram (whose name was later changed to Abraham) lived with his father in the area around Ur. They were a clan of semi-nomadic shepherds. They lived in tents and would move to another area to seek better grazing for their animals. Much of the area was semi-desert. Some areas were more fertile, and the clan would stay for many years. Abraham lived his entire life in tents, even after he reached The Promised Land.

Abraham's ancestors were idolaters and polytheists (worshippers of many gods).

Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River and worshipped other gods. Joshua 24:2.

Abram was 75 years old when God called him to leave his country and his father's house and journey to a land God would show him. At this time, Abram was a monotheist, unlike his polytheist father, Terah, who was the ninth descendant of Noah. Abraham believed God to be the Lord of heaven and earth

And I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of earth, that you shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Cananities, among whom I dwell. Genesis 24:3. (Abraham sending the eldest servant of his house to find a bride for his son.)

Abraham believed God to be the supreme judge of mankind

Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Genesis 18:25. (Abraham is asking for mercy for the city of Sodom where his nephew Lot was living.)

Abraham believed that God was eternal

And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God. Genesis 21:33.

Abraham is recognized as a man of faith. God asked Abram to leave his country and his relatives. It appears that Abram left promptly, without hesitation. It was helpful that Abram was used to packing up his tent and moving with his herds to find better grazing. Gathering together animals, servants, possessions and family members was something Abram had done many times. Along with his wife Sarai (whose name would change to Sarah), Abram brought with him his nephew, Lot, on their journey.

Although Abram did not know where he was traveling to, Abram knew that God had chosen a place for him. Abram had faith that God would direct him to the land that God had already picked out. Abram had faith that God would show him the way.

Like Abraham, God has picked out a destination for us also - Heaven. God gives us a guide book to help us on our way - the Bible. Scripture tells us, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 119:105.

Prayer: God, help me to have faith like Abraham so that I will follow where you lead me. Help me to seek your guidance, and learn from your word. Be a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. Thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus, so that I may live with you in Heaven, a place you have prepared for me. Amen.



Abraham's Journey from Ur to Canaan, by Jozsef Molnar, 1850.

The Call of Abraham

My name is Abram. I live with my father, Terah. He is the ninth descendant of Noah. We are herdsmen.

We live in a group with other family members. Our homes are large tents. Many of the tents have more than one room. There are tents that are the homes of my aunts and uncles. There are tents my cousins live in. Some tents are homes for our servants or the families of herdsmen that help us watch the animals and keep them safe. It is like living in a tent city.

As herdsmen, we sometimes have to move to find better pastures for our animals to eat. We roll up our tents, pack up our possessions, and journey to a new location. We are now living close to the city of Ur. Ur is a large city. Living close to Ur is very helpful. The city is an important trading place. Merchants from far away bring things to sell. We can buy or barter in Ur for items we cannot make in our tent city.

The people who live in Ur are polytheists. That means they worship many gods. The most popular is the god of the moon. His symbol is the crescent moon. They also worship gods of the stars and the sun. The people who live in my tent city are polytheists like the people of Ur. I am different from the people who live in my tent city. I am a monotheist. I worship only one God.

I worship the Almighty God, the God who is the creator of the earth and the heavens. My God is eternal - he is everlasting. My God is the supreme judge of all mankind. My God is in control of nature. I worship him, and he is to be highly exalted.

God spoke to me and told me to leave this country and my father's household. God said he would show me a new place to live.



The Caravan of Abraham, watercolor by James Tissot

God also said that he would bless me and make of me a great nation. That is a little confusing. That would mean that my children, and my children's children, and their children would become so many that they would become a great country. I am 75 years old. My wife, Sarai, is 70 years old. We have no children, and we are past the age when people have children; but if God said we will have children, I will believe God's promise.

I have packed my tent. My nephew, Lot, is going on this journey with us. Also coming is our servants and their families, our herdsmen with their families, and all our animals. We make a large caravan, which is good. Robbers will often attack small groups. Our large group will help to keep us safe.

I do not know where the land is I am going to, but God knows. I have faith that God will guide me to my new homeland.



"Die Bibel in Bildern", wood cut by Julius Schnorr van Carolsfeld, 1860

Abram would travel on his journey to the promised land for many years. Abram had to wait 25 years for the birth of his son, Isaac.

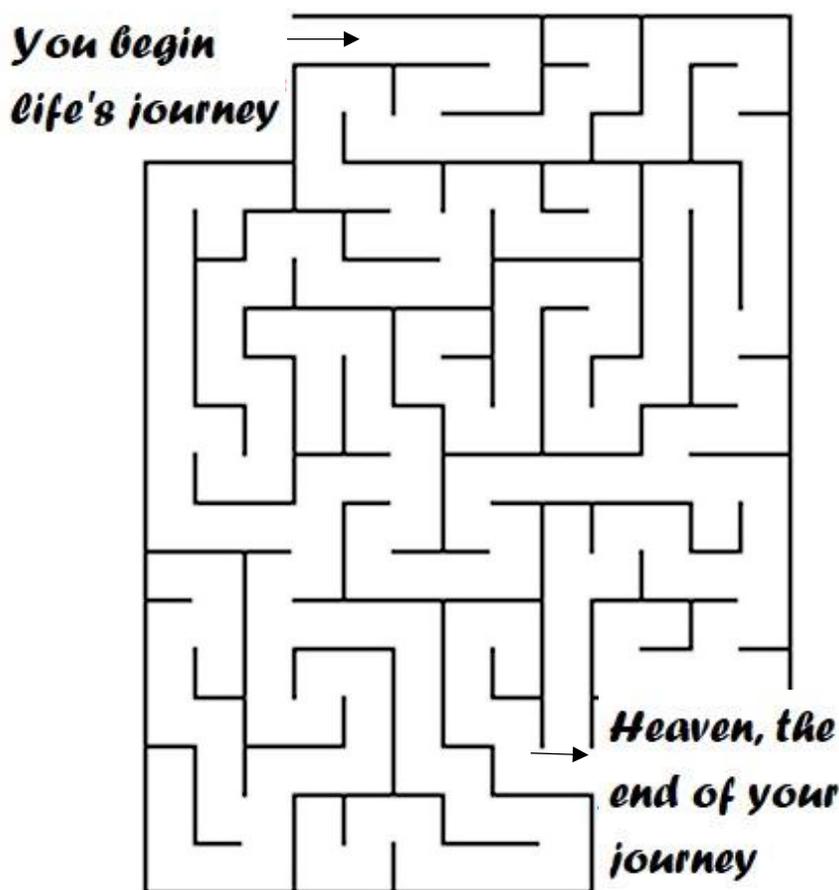
God changed Abram's name to Abraham. God changed Abram's wife's name to Sarah. During the 25 years that Abraham waited for the birth of a child, God came to Abraham several times and reminded him of the promise. Once God told Abraham, "Look at the sky and try to count the stars; you will have as many descendants as that." Genesis 15:5.

Many descendants of Abraham are important persons we know from the Bible. Moses, who led the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt was a descendant of Abraham. The mighty warrior, King David, was Abraham's descendant. Wise King Solomon also was a descendant.

Many, many years later came Jesus, who was called the Christ, the Messiah, who came to take away the sins of the world. Jesus was a person - but Jesus was also God. As God, Jesus could do what you and I cannot. Jesus was able to pay the price for all the sins of the whole world, so that all our sins are forgiven. Because Jesus took the punishment for our sins, we can live in Heaven with God when we die.

Prayer: Dear Lord God, Abraham was a man of great faith. Help me to believe in you and have faith that you are with me, like Abraham believed in you and walked in your ways. Thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus, who died on the cross to take away the sins of the world. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Life Can Be Like a Maze



Like a maze, our life can take many turns. We think we have things all planned out, then something unexpected happens; and we find ourselves on a different path with new challenges.

Sometimes we take a wrong turn in our life, just like in a maze we run into a dead end. When something like this happens, God can help us to figure out what went wrong, and God will stay by our side as we find the correct path to take.

It doesn't matter how many wrong turns we take, God is there to help us and support us. Everytime we fall and fail, Jesus' death on the cross pays the price to wash away all our sins. By asking for forgiveness, and trying hard to walk in the ways we know will please God, God promises to remember our sins no more.

Just like a maze, life can be confusing. It can be hard to find the right path. If you keep trying, you will find the right path and make it out of the maze. You will reach the finish.

Like a maze can be hard, God doesn't promise that our life will be easy. But just like Abraham, God promises that he will help guide us. He will be there to comfort and support us. God can speak to us through his words in the Bible. He can whisper in our hearts when we pray to him.

No matter how hard life might seem at times, we know what awaits us at the finish - life in Heaven.

***For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth in him should not perish,
but have everlasting life.***

***For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world;
but that the world through him might be saved.***

John 3:16-17

Abraham

God told Abraham, "Get out of the country you now live in.
Go to a land I will show you." So Abraham gathered his sheep.
His servants packed their tents, and the herdsmen did the same.
Abraham said, "Bring everything you want to keep."

Pack up clothes, and food, and pots and pans.
Bundle up the poles, lamps, blankets and rugs.
Bring all your tools, and strap on your swords.
Tell everyone good-bye and give them hugs.

Abraham's nephew, Lot, joined the group.
All the wives were there. The children came too.
There were shepherd dogs and many goats.
With donkeys and camels, the caravan grew.

The journey was long, but Abraham had faith.
The Promise Land was their destination.
Abraham trusted in God to lead the way.
God said, "You will become a great nation."



Portrait of patriarch Abraham, painted by Guercino in 1657.

Important Words to Remember

In Genesis 12:2-3, God makes many promises to Abram (whose name was later changed to Abraham). God told Abram: 1) I will make of you a great nation. 2) I will bless you and make your name great. 3) I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse.

These were promises God made specifically to Abram. Abraham's descendants became the nation of Israel. Abraham became a rich and important man.

There was one more promise that God made to Abram in Genesis 12:3 - "and in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed." This promise wasn't just for Abram, it was for all of us. This was a prophecy foretelling that from the descendants of Abraham would come the Messiah, the Christ, who would take away the sins of the whole world through Jesus' death and resurrection. The promise of the Messiah wasn't just for Abram and his descendants, it was for all the families of the entire world; for everyone, no matter what country they live in or what century they are born in.

God reaffirms the promise of salvation for all many times in the Bible.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. John 5:24

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people. Titus 2:11

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Romans 10:13

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved. Mark 16:16

God's love is for all. Jesus' death on the cross to pay for the sins of the world is for all. God's mercy is for all.

But just as wonderful is that God's love is for you - individually. He cares for you specifically. He watches over you personally. You are important to him. God knows you by name. He calls you his child - a member of his family. You are an heir of salvation.

Review

1. What were the things that God asked Abraham to leave? Genesis 12:1.
2. Did Abraham know where he was going? Who knew where Abraham was going?
3. Who came with Abraham on his journey?
4. What promises did God give to Abraham in Genesis 12:2-3?
5. What does it mean when God said in Genesis 12:3 "in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Suggested Coloring Sheet



God guided Abraham.

The coloring page, God Guided Abraham, can be downloaded at SundaySchoolZone.com. The coloring page is free to duplicate for church or home use.