

Bible Story 6: ABRAHAM, A FRIEND OF GOD

SCRIPTURE: GENESIS 12:1-10; 13; 17:1-8,15; 21:1-8; 22:1-18; 25:7-8

MEMORY VERSE: "BY FAITH ABRAHAM, WHEN CALLED TO GO TO A PLACE HE WOULD LATER RECEIVE AS HIS INHERITANCE, OBEYED AND WENT, EVEN THOUGH HE DID NOT KNOW WHERE HE WAS GOING." HEBREWS 11:8 NIV

BIBLE STORY:

Many, many years have passed since God stopped the people in Babel from building a tower. Because God had confused their language, they had scattered to different parts of the earth.

One day God talked to a man named Abram, who was seventy-five years old. God told him to leave his country, his family and his father's home and go to a place that he would show him. God promised to bless him. His name would be famous, and he would be a blessing for all people. Abram obeyed. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and everything that he owned. By faith Abram left his city of Ur, going to a land that he did not know, the land of Canaan. When he arrived there, Abram built an altar and worshiped God.

Then there was a severe famine in Canaan. Therefore, Abram went to live for a period of time in Egypt and afterwards returned.

After a while Lot's shepherds began to fight with his uncle's shepherds. Abram decided that it was better if they separated. He let his nephew Lot choose the land that would belong to him. Lot chose to go east toward the fertile plain of Jordan, which was close to the city of Sodom, where evil people lived. *(Later the city of Sodom was destroyed because of their wickedness and cruelty. But the Lord remembered Abram and saved Lot and his daughters' lives.)*

Abram moved in the opposite direc-

tion, to the mountainous and less fertile areas. God again promised to be with him. In Hebron, Abram built an altar to worship the Lord. God was with Abram and blessed him.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, God changed his name to Abraham and he also changed Sarai's name to Sarah. God promised that Abraham would be the father of many nations.

A long time passed and Abraham and Sarah were discouraged, because she still had not given birth to a child. But finally God blessed them, and Sarah gave birth to a son, and they called him Isaac. Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was ninety-one years old.

One day God tested Abraham, asking him to sacrifice his son Isaac. Abraham placed Isaac on the altar, ready to offer his son to God. But God spoke to Abraham and ordered him not to hurt his son or do him harm. Abraham saw a ram that was caught in a thicket, and God told him to use this animal as a sacrifice on the altar and not his son.

Abraham died when he was a hundred and seventy-five years old. He had faith in God, obeyed and worshiped him. God blessed him. His descendants, later known as the Israelites, multiplied, and are dispersed everywhere in the world. Abraham was known as a man of faith and was called God's friend (James 2:22-23).

LIFE-LESSONS:

1. God told Abraham to leave his country, family and home for a land that he would show him. Abraham obeyed. Follow Abraham's example and obey the commandments of God. Go where the Lord leads.
2. Abraham trusted God when he left his country, family and home to live in a new place. God was with him, protecting and blessing him in all his journeys. Trust God to be with you everywhere you go: within your home, work, neighborhood and school, moving to a new locality, new job, school or church.
3. Abraham is known as a man of faith. Believe in God and his promises for your life.
4. Abraham was known as God's friend (James 2:23). Be known as God's friend, too.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What did God ask Abram to do? What was Abram’s reaction? How old was Abram?
2. Are we ever too young or too old to serve God? How can we obey God today? Give examples.
3. Why was Abraham known as a man of faith?
4. What is faith? How is it that we can have and show faith in God? Give some examples.
5. Was God with Abraham everywhere he went? How do we know that God was with him?
6. Is it hard to make a move from one home to another? Why? What are some ways that God will help us when we move, wherever it may be? How can we help others make a move? Help ones who move into our community?
7. Abraham was known as God’s friend. How can we be known as God’s friend to our family, friends, neighborhood, colleagues and church family?
8. Did God fulfil his promise to Abramham that he would have a child? Did he have to wait a long time? How old was Abraham and Sarah when Isaac was born?
9. Will God fulfil His promises to us? How do we know this? Share some examples.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THIS BIBLE STORY:

Choose activities that may be used in your specific situation. Consider the age and maturity of each person, locality where the story will be told (customs and traditions), and available resources, time and space.

PRIOR TO TELLING THE STORY:

- Show pictures of people moving. Talk about making changes: leaving relatives and friends in one’s neighborhood, school and church; beginning all over again with a new job, new school, new friends; missing your old home, relatives and friends; etc. Discuss also that if you move to a new place or country, often there are customs that are different, scenery is different, foods may be different. Ask, *“Is it hard to make these changes? Why?”* Share with the group that a man named Abraham was called to leave his home and country for a new place, a promised land called Canaan. Abraham had great faith in God, trusting and obeying him.
- Now tell the Bible story with appropriate words and expressions.

- ...Give rides to church;
- ...Take tapes of the worship services each week to a home-bound person;
- ...Read their favorite Bible verses, tell Bible stories, sing music and/or play their favorite songs;
- ...Mow their yards, rake their leaves and shovel snow off their porches and sidewalks;
- ...Build railings up outside steps and/or a ramp for a wheel chair;
- ...Clean up someone’s house or apartment;
- ...Send cards on their birthdays and holidays;
- ...Help an elderly person write letters to his/her family and friends;
- ...Take the person(s) grocery shopping;
- ...Prepare a home cooked meal for him/her;
- ...Help pick up his/her medication at the pharmacy and make sure he understands how to take the dosage.

WELCOME A NEW NEIGHBOR:

- Welcome someone new in your neighborhood, school or church, such as helping move their furniture, giving home baked bread, cake or pie, offering to show them locations of stores, inviting them over for a neighborhood barbeque, etc.

GAME: “TAKING A TRIP”

- Divide into two equal groups. Distribute newspapers (or tree branches) to the first player on each team. Begin the game. The first player on each team must walk on the newspapers until he reaches a designated place (such as a chair, tree, etc.) and returns to his team mate, continuing to walk on the newspapers. The first team to finish, wins.

HELPING THE ELDERLY:

- Help an older person or new comer in your neighborhood or community, such as:

DAILY BIBLE READING - Genesis 25:19-20,24-34; 27:1-27,41-45; 28:10-22; 30:25-26; 31:3,22,38,41; 32:11,22-30; 33:1-17

1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	4 TH	5 TH	6 TH	7 TH
Genesis 25:19-20,24-26	Genesis 25:27-34	Genesis 27:1-27, 41-45	Genesis 28:10-22	Genesis 30:25-26; 31:3,22,38,41	Genesis 32:11, 22-30	Genesis 33:1-17