Preschool–Grade 6

God's Promise to Abraham

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Abram believed God and obeyed Him. I can believe what God says, too.
Bible passage: Genesis 12–15. Read Genesis 12:1–9, 13:5–18 and 15:1–6 before class.
Memory verse: "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." *Genesis 15:6 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, 5 paper stars, a marker, tape, 4 paper signs (North, South, East, West), crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 5 paper stars (see part 4). Tape the 4 signs on the 4 walls of the room. Put a bookmark in your Bible at Genesis 15:5.
The names: in this part of the Bible, Abraham is called **Abram** and Sarah is called **Sarai**. God gave them their new names later (Genesis 17:5, 17:15).

1. Opening game: Follow Me (5 minutes)

Say: "Line up behind me. I'm going to a place, but I won't tell you where. Just follow!" Walk around the room, over and under things, and stop somewhere surprising. Do it two or three times, letting a child lead. Then ask: *Was it hard to follow when you didn't know where we were going?* Say: "Today we will meet a man who left his home when God said, 'Go,' even though he did not know where he was going."

2. Bible story: Abram Believes God (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Genesis 12, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

A long, long time ago, a man named **Abram** lived in a place called Haran with his wife **Sarai** (Genesis 11:31). One day the LORD said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee" (12:1). That means: leave your country, your family and your father's house, and go to a land God will show you. God did not tell him where! But God made Abram a big promise: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee" (12:2). A **nation** is a whole big people, like a country full of people.

Read Genesis 12:4 from your Bible: "So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him." Say: "**Departed** means he left. Abram obeyed God!" And Abram was seventy-five years old (12:4). He took Sarai, his nephew Lot, and everything they had, and they came to the land of Canaan (12:5). There God said, "Unto thy seed will I give this land" (12:7). **Seed** means Abram's children and grandchildren and all the family after them. Abram built an altar, a place to worship God, and he lived in a tent (12:7–8).

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The story continues: Abram and Lot had so many sheep and cows that there was not enough room for all of them, and their helpers started to fight (13:5–7). Abram said, "Let there be no strife," which means "let's not fight," "for we be brethren" (13:8), which means "we are family." Abram let Lot choose first, and Lot chose the well-watered plain by the Jordan River (13:9–11). Then God told Abram to look north, south, east and west. God said He would give all that land to Abram and his family, and his family would be as many as the dust of the earth (13:14–16).

One day some kings took Lot away. Abram took 318 of his men, went after them, and brought Lot back with all his things (14:12–16).

After that, God spoke to Abram: "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield" (15:1). A **shield** protects you. But Abram told God that he had no children (15:2–3). So God brought Abram outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them" (15:5). **Tell** means count. Then God said, "So shall thy seed be" (15:5). That means: "Your family will be as many as the stars!" Abram was old, and he had no children yet. **Read Genesis 15:6 from your Bible:** "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Say: "Abram believed God! And God counted Abram right with Him." That same day the LORD made a **covenant** with Abram, a promise God makes and keeps (15:18).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What did God tell Abram to do? *(Leave his home and go to a land God would show him, Genesis 12:1)*
2. How old was Abram when he left? *(Seventy-five, 12:4)*
3. Who got to choose the land first, Abram or Lot? *(Lot. Abram let him choose, 13:9–11)*
4. What did God tell Abram to count? *(The stars, 15:5)*
5. What did Abram do when God made His promise? *(He believed the LORD, 15:6)*

4. Memory verse: Star Verse game (5 minutes)

Tape the 5 stars up in order: *And he believed / in the LORD; / and he counted it / to him for righteousness. / Genesis 15:6.* Explain the words: **believed** means he trusted that God would do what He said. **Counted it to him for righteousness** means God took Abram's believing as being right with Him. Read the verse together. Then take one star away and read it again. Keep taking stars away, one each time, until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Abram believed God, and he showed it by obeying. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: when you see the stars at night, say, "God keeps His promises, and I believe Him!" When a grown-up asks you to do something, obey the first time, like Abram.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Abraham and Sarah word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/abraham-word-search), the crossword, maze, worksheet, coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/abraham), or **Which Way, Abram?:** kids stand in the middle of the room. Call out a direction: "North!" and everyone points to the North sign and takes one step that way. Mix them up faster and faster: "South! East! West!" When you say, "Look up!", everyone stops, looks up and says, "So shall thy seed be!" Anyone who goes the wrong way helps you call the next round. Remind kids that God told Abram to look north, south, east and west, because the land was a gift from God (Genesis 13:14–15).

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You always keep Your promises. Help us believe You and obey You like Abram did, even when we don't know what comes next. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

Parts left out on purpose: this lesson leaves out Abram's time in Egypt (Genesis 12:10–20), the battle of the kings (14:1–11) and the animals Abram prepared for the covenant (15:9–17). Read them yourself before class. **If a child asks whether Abram and Sarai ever had a baby:** yes! God kept His promise, and their son Isaac was born (Genesis 21:2). That is next week's story.

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