

LESSON 7

ABRAM OBEYS GOD

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Traveling in Biblical Times

Traveling during biblical times was no easy task. In fact, it was very difficult, and it was never for pleasure. When people traveled, it was either for government affairs, business, or necessity. Therefore, for Abram to leave his comfortable, settled life for a place he had never seen indeed took faith. The estimated distance from his home in Haran to Canaan is about four hundred miles.

There were many reasons why it was not good to travel. The roads were very poor; often they were so faint that they could not be made out or they were uncomfortably bumpy. Even though the invention of the wheel led to the need for good roads, there was still little development. Initially, a road was simply a track where the stones had been removed, the bumps flattened, and the holes filled in.

Another reason travel was avoided was that travelers were in danger from bandits. In addition, travelers were completely at the mercy of the local people. There were no inns or staging posts for travelers to conveniently stop and rest. That was why showing hospitality to travelers was such an important custom at that time.

The last and final problem of traveling was that animals had to be cared for during the journey. The basic pack animal was the donkey. Abram lived at a time when there was a transition from the use of donkeys to camels. The camel was often used for long-distance travel; it was able to store enough water for several days and it was an excellent beast of burden. However, the camel was not used for riding because the swaying movement of the camel induced motion sickness.

The Faith of Abram

In Genesis chapter 12, God told Abram to uproot himself and his family from their familiar surroundings and move to a new land. It was a test of faith and obedience for the 75-year-old man. Abram did as he was told. He went out, "not knowing where he was going" (Heb 11:8). Abram's faith is evident in his willing obedience to God's command to go to the land of Canaan. With no compass, no maps, and difficult traveling conditions, he followed the Lord wherever He led. In Hebrews chapter 11, several verses are devoted to the example of Abram (later renamed Abraham), who Genesis says specifically believed in God (Gen 15:6). He is rightly called "the father of the faithful."

The Heavenly Hope

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they

BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 11:27-13:18

BIBLE TRUTH

God blesses those who believe and do according to His word.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To obey the word of God because God can do anything.
2. To listen to parents and teachers.
3. To work on building our faith because God uses us to do His work.

MEMORY VERSE

"I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I love.

(Psalm 119:47)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. O Lord, we gather here today to worship You and learn more about You. We know that those who believe and follow Your word please You. Give us the strength not only to believe Your word, but to do what it says. May all the praise and glory be Yours, O Lord. Hallelujah! Amen.

would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them" (Heb 11:13-16).

Abram was looking forward to something far more permanent than where he was. In a spiritual sense, we should look to the future reward, not to the circumstances

we are in right now.

God does not want us to view this world as a permanent home, because He has something better for us. We are encouraged to see the future like Abram: he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God (Heb 11:10).

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

As children, obedience to a variety of people—parents, teachers, pastors, and most of all God—is essential. We can help our students understand why it is good to follow rules. They are familiar with rules at home, at school, and at church. At home, rules might include brushing their teeth before going to sleep, washing their hands before eating, or no television on weeknights. Let your students share the kinds of rules they have at home. Then help them understand why those rules are there. Most of the time, they are there for safety or hygienic purposes. Afterwards, move on to the rules they have at school or at

church. Again, let them share what kinds of rules there are, but this time, let them come up with reasons why those particular rules are enforced.

When the students gain a better understanding of why it is good to obey the rules, they will be more likely to do so. Following rules can lead to harmony between the students and the people they interact with. Also talk about how following these rules helps them obey God. It is God's desire for His people to obey His words and these are concrete ways to do so.

VOCABULARY

descendant: the child or offspring of a family

Canaan: the land promised to the children of Abram

herdsman: people who take care of a group of animals, especially cows, camels, sheep, etc.

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about Noah and the flood. How long did the flood last? (40 days and 40 nights.) After the rain had stopped, Noah sent out two birds. Which two birds did he send? (A raven and a dove.) He sent out these birds to check if there was still water covering the earth. The raven never came back and kept flying around, but the dove came back because it couldn't find a place to land. Noah sent out the dove a second time, and this time, it returned with an olive leaf. This meant that there was dry land because the plants started growing again! Noah sent out the dove one last time and it never returned. At this time, God told Noah that it was time for his family and all the animals to come out of the ark. After Noah and his family came out of the ark, they, along with all the animals, began to increase in number and fill the earth again. Noah and his family had more children, and those children had even more children, and the number of people on earth grew and grew.

BIBLE STORY

Abram Goes to Haran

[Prepare a poster-sized map and puppets to represent Abram and Lot. Point to the places as you tell the story.] Among those people was a man named Abram. He was a descendant of Noah. Abram lived with his father Terah in a place called Ur. One day, Terah decided to move to a place called Canaan. Terah also brought Lot, Abram's nephew, with them. It was a very long journey, and Canaan was far away, so before they reached Canaan they stopped at a place called Haran. But they didn't just stay there to rest. They ended up living in Haran for many, many years, and it was there that Abram's father died.

God Calls Abram

But the Lord did not want Abram to stay in Haran forever. He wanted Abram to go to Canaan. One day, when Abram was seventy-five years old, the Lord spoke to him. "Leave this place, leave your people and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation and bless you greatly." Abram was surprised. He was already seventy-five years old—he was an old man! He had become rich in the land of Haran and had many possessions and animals. How could he leave the people and the place he knew, and travel to a new place so far away?

But God wanted Abram to go to the land of Canaan, the place they were originally heading to before they stopped at Haran. God promised to bless Abram and his children.

If you were Abram, how would you feel? [Give students an opportunity to put themselves in Abram's shoes and express how they would feel to be asked to move away from their homes and friends.] Now let's find out what Abram did.

On the Way to Canaan

Because Abram was obedient to God and believed in His promise, he listened to God. So Abram packed all of his belongings and began the long journey along with all his animals and servants. He, his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and the rest of the household started off for Canaan.

Abram and his whole family traveled and traveled. [Move Abram and Lot along the map as you tell the story.] It was a long bumpy journey. In Abram's days, did they have planes, trains, or cars? Certainly not! Traveling in those days took a long time—people traveled on foot, on camels, or on donkeys. They loaded up all their things in big wagons that were pulled by animals. Imagine how many donkeys and camels Abram had to use to carry everything he owned.

Today, when we travel to new places, we have maps to show us how to get there. We can also see where Abram went by looking at this map of ancient Israel. But Abram didn't have a map to guide him as he traveled. In fact,

Abram wasn't even sure of how to get to Canaan, but he knew that God would lead them. What do you think could go wrong on a long journey to an unknown place? (Possible answers include being robbed, encountering bad weather, animals or people getting too tired, or not finding a place to sleep.) Even though it was not easy to travel, Abram was not scared because he knew that God would protect them. He trusted that the Lord would bless him greatly if he obeyed. What great faith!

In Canaan

At last Abram and his whole family arrived in Canaan at a place called Shechem. There, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I will give this land to your descendants." God wanted Abram to know that He would keep His promise. Abram was grateful that God had led his family safely to Canaan. Abram built an altar of stones there to worship the Lord. [Make a model of an altar and choose a student to attach a picture of an altar to this place on the map.]

From Shechem, Abram went to a place called Bethel. Abram pitched his tents there and built an altar to the Lord. He and his family stayed there for a while. [Attach pictures of tents and an altar to this place on the map to help track the journey.]

Fighting Between the Herdsmen

At that time, Abram had become very wealthy and had many flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, camels, and donkeys. [Choose some students to attach pictures of sheep onto the map.] Abram's nephew Lot, who was moving with them, also had his own flocks, herds and tents. [Choose some more students to attach even more pictures of sheep onto the map. Tell them to try to put all the sheep in the same place. The students will find out quickly that the sheep need to overlap.] Do you see how there isn't enough room for all these sheep? All of these animals required a lot of grass to feed on, and soon they ate all the grass in the area. There wasn't enough grass and water to feed both Abram's and Lot's animals. So not long after, Abram's herdsmen and Lot's herdsman began to fight over water and grass for their animals.

[Demonstrate with a few cups of water and snacks. Purposely prepare less so that there will not be enough for everyone. Ask the students what they would do when there isn't enough water and snacks for everyone. You may wish to save the snacks for after the lesson.]

Abram and Lot Separate

Abram and Lot realized that they couldn't stay together because they had too many animals and belongings. It was getting really crowded. So Abram said to Lot, "We and our herdsman really shouldn't fight, because we're of the same family. Why don't we go our separate ways?"

You can have your choice. If you go to the left, I will go to the right; if you go to the right, I will go to the left."

Abram loved Lot so he let Lot choose first. Lot was happy that his uncle was so generous. Lot looked at the beautiful flat land of the Jordan. This land was very fruitful and had plenty of water, but it was near some very wicked cities. But because the land looked so good, Lot decided to move there even though he would be very close to these wicked cities.

Lot moved off to the flat lands of the Jordan, and Abram decided to stay in the land of Canaan. This is the land that the Lord had promised to Abram, and this was the land where Abram's children would live.

God's Promise

After Lot moved away, God spoke to Abram again. "Don't

worry, look up! Look around you—north, south, east, and west. I will give you and your descendants all the land which you see. I will give you many children and descendants, as many as the dust of the earth. And I will give this land to them forever." God remembered Abram and His promise. Even though Abram let Lot choose what looked like the better land, God promised to give Abram many more blessings. One of them was to have as many descendants as the dust of the earth. That would be much more than he could count! Abram was really happy and he thanked God. If Abram had been too afraid to leave Haran and move to a new and unfamiliar place, he would not have received God's great blessings.

Today we learned that if we listen to God and believe in Him, like Abram did, God will lead and bless us.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. **Why did Abram leave Haran?** God called him to leave.
2. **Where did God want Abram to go?** Canaan.
3. **How old was Abram when God asked him to leave Haran?** Seventy-five years old.
4. **How did God say He would bless Abram?**
He would make Abram into a great nation. He would give Abram's descendants the land of Canaan.
5. **When Abram got to Canaan, what did he do?** He built an altar to the Lord.
6. **What happened between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot?** They began to fight.
7. **What did Abram and Lot decide to do?** To separate.
8. **Where did Lot choose to live?** In the flat lands of the Jordan.
9. **Where did Abram choose to live?** In the land of Canaan.
10. **What happened to Abram after Lot moved away?**
God spoke to Abram again and promised to give him and his descendants the land.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I love." (Psalm 119:47)

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. A
2. B
3. C
4. nation, Canaan
5. altar
6. fight
7. separate
8. Jordan
9. Canaan
10. promised, land
11. Abram was a kind and considerate person and he loved Lot.
12. He was a selfish person. He only thought about himself and not about his uncle Abram.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

- 1. Trust and obey God and He will take care of you. Just like Abram was willing to leave his home and journey far away, we should be willing to do what God commands even when it is difficult. Just as God took care of Abram and blessed him, God will also take care of us.**

Follow the rules. Your parents, teachers, and pastors give you rules to follow for your safety and wellness.

What rules do you need to follow at home, at school, and at church? For each rule, come up with a reason why following that rule is important.

- 2. God blesses those who put Him first. Abram let Lot choose what looked like the better land, but Abram was promised many more blessings.**

Always do the right and kind thing, even when it is difficult.

Are there times when being kind or following the rules is hard? Let's brainstorm ways to act in each case.

ACTIVITIES

1

Follow the Leader

- Objectives:** 1. To learn to trust that God can do anything.
2. To work on building our faith because God uses us to do His work.

Instructions

Ask the students to pair up. One student in each pair will be blindfolded and will have to ask his/her partner to lead him/her around. Ask the blindfolded students to imagine how Abram must have felt when he left Haran without knowing how to get to Canaan. Remind them of how much trust Abram had in God to lead him there. If space and time permits, create a small obstacle course to make the activity more fun.

2

How Can I Please Jesus?

- Objective:** To learn to obey.

Instructions: Number the following statements in order of difficulty, with "1" being the most difficult to do and "6" being the easiest.

Teachers can also write the following on the board and ask the students to number. The key is to talk about why they need to listen and obey, just like Abraham did.

- _____ Doing my work every day without grumbling.
- _____ Not fighting with other children.
- _____ Not getting angry and throwing things on the floor.
- _____ Being kind to my brothers and sisters.
- _____ Not begging for things when Mom or Dad says no.
- _____ Answering right away when my parents call me.

3 Examples of Faith

Objective: To familiarize students with people in the Bible who showed great faith.

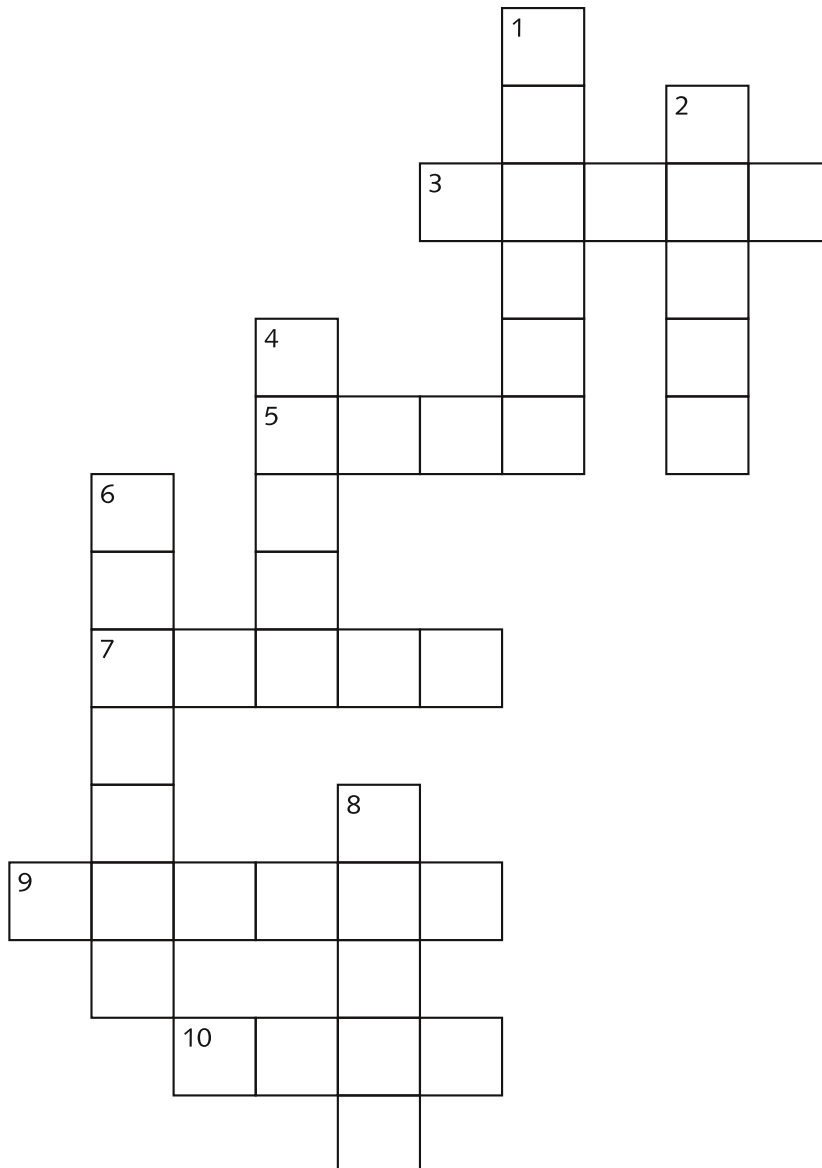
Instructions: Complete the crossword by filling in the names of people who all showed great faith in God. Use the clues to help you. All the names recorded in Hebrews chapter eleven.

Across

- 3. Blessed his twin sons (11:20)
- 5. Saved his family from the flood (11:7)
- 7. Received Israel's spies (11:31)
- 9. Strongest man on earth (11:32)
- 10. Offered a better sacrifice than Cain (11:4)

Down

- 1. Commanded that his bones be taken from Egypt (11:22)
- 2. A man after God's own heart (11:32)
- 4. Never saw death (11:5)
- 6. Received a son in his old age (11:8)
- 8. Refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter (11:24)



E1 Year 1 Book 1 Lesson 7—Abram Obeys God

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: God blesses those who believe and do according to His word.

- Lesson Objectives:**
1. To obey the word of God because God can do anything.
 2. To listen to parents and teachers.
 3. To work on building our faith because God uses us to do His work.

Bible Reading: Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a checkmark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Psalm 119:47)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

Multiple Choice

1. ____ : Why did Abram leave Haran?
 - a. God called him to leave.
 - b. His father called him to leave.
 - c. His friends called him to leave.
2. ____ : Where did God want Abram to go?
 - a. Israel
 - b. Canaan
 - c. Ur
3. ____ : How old was Abram when God asked him to leave Haran?
 - a. fifty-five years old
 - b. eighty-five years old
 - c. seventy-five years old

Fill In the Blanks

(fight promised Canaan separate Jordan altar Canaan land nation)

4. God said that he would make Abram into a great _____. He would give Abram's children the land of _____.
5. Abram built an _____ to the Lord when he arrived in Canaan.
6. Since Lot and Abram had many animals, Lot and Abram's herdsman began to _____ over the land.
7. Abram wanted to make peace, so Abram and Lot decided to _____.
8. Lot chose to live in the flat lands of the _____.
9. Abram chose to live in the land of _____.
10. After Lot moved away, God spoke to Abram again and _____ to give him and his descendants the _____.

Life Application

11. Why do you think Abram allowed Lot to have the first choice?

12. Since Lot chose the beautiful land for himself without thinking of Abram, what kind of person would you say Lot was? Why?
