

# LESSON 9

## ABRAHAM AND THE THREE VISITORS

### BEFORE YOU TEACH

#### Hospitality in Biblical Times

Entertaining others by providing them with food and a place to stay was important for the people of the Bible; the urge to provide hospitality seems to have been rooted in their experience of nomadic life. Nomadic people were conscious of the loneliness of the desert and that the provision of food was often a matter of life and death. When a person went into one's tent or home, he was safe, being under the protection of family.

It is recorded that when Abraham saw three men standing nearby, he ran from his tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground. Prostration before someone's feet was a form of greeting given to a particularly honored person or guest. Other forms of greeting were gestures of the hand or verbal greetings, formal kisses given on both cheeks, and bows.

After the guest had been greeted, a slave would remove the guest's sandals in preparation for washing his feet. A servant would then pour water over them, rub them with his hands, and then dry them with a towel. Next, the guest's head would be anointed with olive oil scented with spices. Water would then be given to the guest as a drink; this indicated that the guest was to be received peacefully. After feasting, departure was delayed as long as possible, for it would be insulting to leave too early as if the hospitality was not to the guest's satisfaction.

Have you ever met someone and felt like that person could have been an angel? Hebrews 13:2 says, "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels."

### UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

Because we can't see God, it is very easy to forget that He is here around us all the time. He is even in our hearts, and knows everything that we think. Oftentimes, this is portrayed as something to be feared. Indeed, it is a dreadful thing for God to know our every sinful thought and action. The simple understanding of God's omniscience is a good way to prevent sin. However, we can remind the students that the Lord not only knows our sins, but also understands our needs and desires. In addition, the Lord loves us despite our sin and knows exactly how to fulfill our needs.

You can assure your students that the Lord is always watching over us and protecting us. At the same time, He is carefully looking at everything we think, say, and do. When your students understand that the Lord is everywhere and knows everything, they will be more watchful of their actions and, at the same time, they will find assurance in His presence.

### BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 15; 17; 18:1-15

### BIBLE TRUTHS

1. God knows everything, even the deepest thoughts of our hearts.
2. There is nothing too hard for God.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To be careful of what we think, say, and do.
2. To show hospitality by being gracious to guests.
3. To understand what it means to believe and trust in God.

### MEMORY VERSE

"I, the Lord, search the heart,  
I test the mind."

(Jeremiah 17:10a)

### PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Thank You, Lord, for protecting us throughout the past week. We come again to worship You and learn more about You. Please help us to understand that You are the almighty God who created every one of us. Because You created every one of us, You know our hearts. Please help us to be more careful about what we think, say, and do. Hallelujah! Amen.

## VOCABULARY

**promise:** to say that you will do something no matter what

## REVIEW/TEACHING IDEAS

Last week, we learned about Lot after he moved away to the city of Sodom. Do you remember who Lot was? He was Abram's nephew. He went to live in Sodom, which was a very sinful city. What happened to Lot after he moved there? (The king of Elam and three other kings came and took him away as a prisoner.) Who came to save him? (Abram and his 318 trained men.) After Abram won the battle against the four other kings, he went back to his home in Hebron.

### Bible Story Preparation

Please try to prepare these materials beforehand to make the Bible story more interactive.

- Paper or cardboard stars
- Flour
- Water
- Paper towels

## BIBLE STORY

### God Promises a Son to Abram

Today we are going to learn more about Abram's life and how God blessed him. In this story we'll see that God knows everything, even things we think about and do in secret. God is a Spirit, so He is everywhere, even though we can't see Him with our eyes. He wants to see if we are good and obedient, even when no one else is watching. We always need to be careful about what we think, say, and do because God is always watching. He rewards those who do what is right and punishes those who do what is wrong so they will learn to change. Let's try to remember this as we go through today's story.

Abram was a very faithful man. He worshiped and obeyed God. One day, the Lord appeared to Abram in a vision. Boys and girls, do you know what a vision is? A vision is when God lets a person see or hear something special. Maybe you have heard testimonies of church members who have seen visions of heaven or have heard God speak to them. In Abram's vision, God spoke and said, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." This means that God was Abram's protector and that God would bless him. Abram was already an old man and he didn't have any children to whom he could pass his things when he died. God promised Abram that He would bless Abram with a child through Sarai. Abram and Sarai's son would have more children, and their children would have more children until his family became as many as the stars in the sky. [Have students take turns pasting paper or cardboard stars onto the board.] "Look up at the heavens and count the stars if you can," God said. "This is how large your family will

be." What a wonderful blessing! God also promised Abram that his children would live in a beautiful and rich land called Canaan.

Abram believed that God could do anything. He knew that God would keep His promise and give him a son, even though he was already very old. We know that God created the world and everything in it. He can heal people and make miracles. Raise both hands if you think God can do anything!

After God made these promises, He changed the names of Abram and his wife Sarai. Abram would now be called "Abraham," which means "the father of many." Sarai's name was changed to "Sarah," because she would become the mother of nations. Their new names showed the blessings that God would give them.

### The Three Visitors

One day, many years later, Abraham was sitting in front of his tent near some tall trees. It was the middle of the day and it was very hot. Suddenly Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. He quickly went to meet the three men and bowed low on the ground in front of them. A long time ago, people would bow before their guests to greet them and to show respect. Their bow is like today's handshake. Abraham said to the men, "If it is all right with you, please stop here and rest a while. You can wash your feet and sit under these shady trees. Let me get you something to eat, and after you have eaten and rested, you can go on your way." Abraham was a very hospitable person, which means he cared for his visitors. The Bible tells us to serve one another and we can do this

by being hospitable. When people come to visit you at home or at church, what are some things you can do to be hospitable? [Let the students answer and have them act it out.]

The three visitors accepted Abraham's hospitality and decided to stay.

Abraham ran into the tent where Sarah was. "Quick," he said, "get the best flour and make some bread." [Have some flour and water ready to mix and knead in front of the students. You may choose to provide small chunks of dough to each student so they can try kneading it. Have paper towels available for clean-up.]

Then Abraham ran to the herd of cows and chose a young, tender calf. A calf is a baby cow or bull. They were very expensive and were usually eaten on special occasions or events. We know that Abraham was very hospitable and wanted to bring out the best for his guests. He gave the calf to a servant, and the servant went to prepare it. After the calf was cooked and prepared, Abraham brought it out for the guests. While his three guests were eating, he stood close by under the tree, just in case they needed anything else.

### Sarah Laughs

One of the three men asked, "Where is your wife Sarah?"

Abraham answered, "Here, in the tent."

Now one of the three visitors was actually God! Can you imagine how wonderful it would be for God to be a guest in your house? God said to Abraham, "About this time next year, your wife Sarah will have a son." Do you remember the promises that God had made to Abraham? [Let students answer.] Very good! God had promised that Abraham's children would be as many as the stars in the sky; that they would live in the land of Canaan; and that Abraham would have a son through his wife Sarah.

At this time, Sarah was near the front of the tent and could hear what the men were saying. When she heard what God had said, she laughed to herself. She thought

that Abraham was already an old man, and that she was also too old to have any children. Actually, Sarah and Abraham were older than your grandparents, so it would be hard for them to believe that they could have a baby.

Even though Sarah had laughed in secret, God knew that Sarah had laughed at what He had said. God asked Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too hard for Me? I will return to you at this time next year and Sarah will have a son."

When Sarah heard that God knew what she had been thinking, she was afraid. So she lied and said, "I didn't laugh." But God knew her heart, and He said, "Yes, you did laugh." We know that God is not happy when we lie. He knows what is in our minds and in our hearts, so God sees what we really think and hears what we really say.

God knows everything and we need to remember to be careful about what we say, do, and think. When God told Abraham that he would have a son in a year, Sarah laughed. Why did Sarah laugh? She laughed because she couldn't believe that she could have children now that she was so old. She also laughed because she thought God wouldn't know. Many times, we do things when we are alone and think that no one sees or hears us. Maybe we accidentally break something, and we try to hide it or throw it away, but God knows. Sometimes, we might think or say certain things and tell ourselves that no one knows. We might lie to our parents about finishing our homework so that we can go play a video game or watch TV, but God knows. We need to remember there is always Someone there when we are alone, and that Someone knows our hearts and minds. Who is that Someone? [Let students answer.] That Someone is God, and even though we can't see Him, we know that He is there. He loves us, so He is always watching over us and taking care of us. For that reason, we should always make sure that we think, say, and do things that will please God.

## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

### 1. After the battle with the four kings, God appeared to Abram. What did God promise to him?

A son through Sarai.

### 2. Why did God change Abram and Sarai's names to Abraham and Sarah?

It was a reminder of God's promise. Abraham means "the father of many." Sarai's name was changed because she would become the mother of nations.

### 3. What did Abraham do for his three visitors?

He let them rest under the trees, washed their feet, and gave them food to eat.

### 4. What can we learn from how Abraham treated the visitors? We need to show love to others by serving.

### 5. Who was one of the three visitors? God.

### 6. Why did Sarah laugh at what God said?

She thought that she was already too old to have children; she didn't think that God would know.

### 7. Was it wrong of Sarah to laugh at what God said? Why or why not?

Yes, it was wrong. With God, nothing is impossible.

### 8. Why is it important for us to be careful of what we think, say, and do?

God is great and He knows everything.

## MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

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

**“I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind.” (Jeremiah 17:10a)**

## SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

**God knows everything we think, say, and do, so we must be careful.**

God listens to our prayers even when we are praying in silence through our hearts. The Bible tells us that God listens to us when we pray, even when we are in our rooms with the door shut. If God can hear a prayer when no one else can, it's not hard for Him to see everything else we do in our lives. Is there anything you don't want anyone to know?

Sometimes we may be tempted to do something that we know is wrong. For example, our friends may show us something that we should not see (like violent movies) or should not use (like bad words), but we must remember that even if our parents or church brothers and sisters might not see us, God does. Sometimes, we might get angry at our siblings and say something mean or even physically hurt them, and our parents might not hear or see it, but God does. Is there something that you want to pray to God about, so that you can ask for forgiveness even if no one knows about it? [Students can close their eyes and think about it, and then kneel down together to pray as a class.]

God doesn't only see when we do things that are wrong, He also sees when we do things that are right. We have many opportunities to do things for our family members or for church believers, even without them knowing. What are some things that you can do? (We can put the Bibles and hymn books away if someone has forgotten them in the classroom. We can write a Bible verse to encourage someone that is sad or worried, and put it in their desk or bag. We can help do a chore, even if our parents don't ask us to or even if they won't notice that we did it.)

## HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. Sarah
2. stars
3. Canaan
4. father
5. bowing
6. bread
7. God
8. laughed
9. secret
- 10-12. Answers may vary.

## ACTIVITIES

1

### **Job Cards**

**Objective:** To motivate students to serve others in small ways.

#### **Instructions**

1. Have students cut out the job cards and sign their names on each one. (If you have younger students, you can pre-cut the job cards before class.) Students can write their names on the back of those job cards along with ways they can help.
2. Let the students think of people they can help at home, school, church, and so on. They may give these people the "Job Cards." Students may draw pictures of other special jobs they would like to do on the blank cards.

**2 God Sees All**

**Objective:** To help students understand the details of the story.

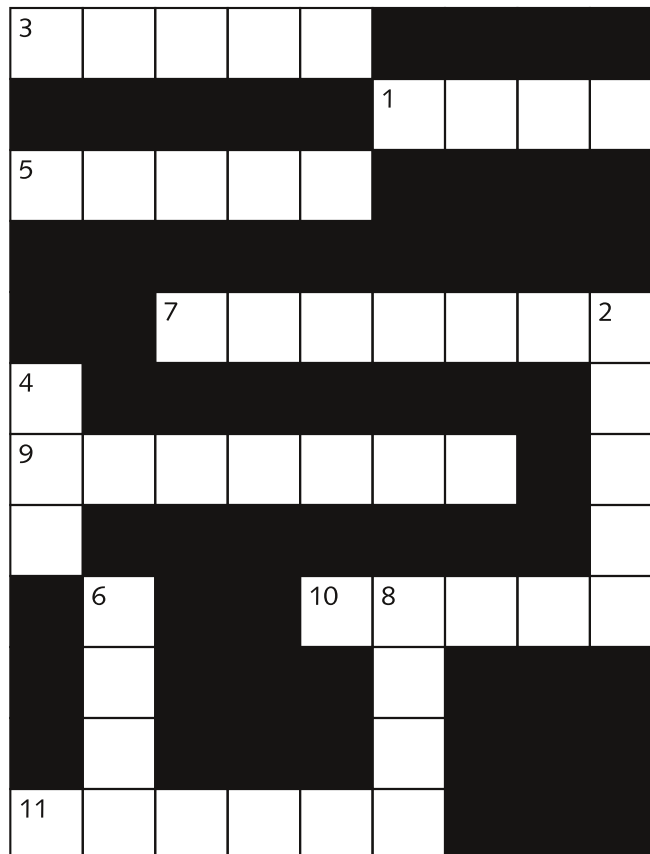
**Instructions:** Fill in the crossword puzzle according to the verses in Genesis chapter eighteen.




**Across**





1. Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the \_\_\_\_\_." (v. 9)
3. And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, \_\_\_\_\_ your wife shall have a son." (v. 10)
5. Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make \_\_\_\_\_. (v. 6)
7. And \_\_\_\_\_ ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave it to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it. (v. 7)
9. Therefore Sarah \_\_\_\_\_ within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" (v. 12)
10. So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, \_\_\_\_\_ men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground. (v. 2)
11. But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was \_\_\_\_\_. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!" (v. 15)

**Down**

2. Then the Lord appeared to him by the terebinth trees of \_\_\_\_\_, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. (v. 1)
4. Now Abraham and Sarah were \_\_\_\_\_, well advanced in age. (v. 11)
6. So he took butter and milk and the \_\_\_\_\_ which he had prepared, and set it before them. (v. 8)
8. Is anything too \_\_\_\_\_ for the Lord? (v. 14)



<p>Job Card</p> 	<p>I will sweep the floor. No Charge!</p> <p>Call:</p> <hr/>	<p>Job Card</p> 
<p>I will wash the dishes. No Charge!</p> <p>Call:</p> <hr/>	<p>Job Card</p> 	<p>I will pick up the litter. No Charge!</p> <p>Call:</p> <hr/>
<p>Job Card</p> 	<p>I will take out the trash. No Charge!</p> <p>Call:</p> <hr/>	<p>Job Card</p> 
<p>Job Card</p>	<p>Job Card</p>	<p>Job Card</p>

<p>I will clean the sinks. No Charge!</p> <p>Call:</p> <hr/>	<p>Job Card</p>  <p>A girl with a ponytail is sweeping the floor with a broom. There are some small pieces of trash on the floor.</p>	<p>I will set the table. No Charge!</p> <p>Call:</p> <hr/>
<p>Job Card</p>  <p>A boy is kneeling on the floor, cleaning under a table. There are some papers and trash on the floor.</p>	<p>I will make my bed. No Charge!</p> <p>Call:</p> <hr/>	<p>Job Card</p>  <p>A boy is standing on a stool, washing dishes in a sink. There are plates, cups, and a bottle of soap on the counter.</p>
<p>I will do the dusting. No Charge!</p> <p>Call:</p> <hr/>	<p>Job Card</p>  <p>A girl is standing next to a trash can, holding a bag of trash. She is about to put the bag into the can.</p>	<p>I will clean my room. No Charge!</p> <p>Call:</p> <hr/>
<p>Job Card</p>	<p>Job Card</p>	<p>Job Card</p>

E1 Year 1 Book 1 Lesson 9—Abraham and the Three Visitors

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Truths:** 1. God knows everything, even the deepest thoughts of our hearts.  
 2. There is nothing too hard for the Lord.

**Lesson Objectives:** 1. To be careful of what we think, say, and do.  
 2. To show hospitality by being gracious to guests.  
 3. To understand what it means to believe and trust in God.

**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.

(Jeremiah 17:10a)

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## What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



# Homework Assignment

*Understanding What You Have Learned*

## Fill In the Blanks

(bowing secret bread Sarah God father laughed stars Canaan)

1. God promised Abraham that he would have a son through \_\_\_\_\_.
2. God promised Abraham that his descendants would be as many as the \_\_\_\_\_ of the sky.
3. God promised Abraham that his descendants would live in \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Abraham means "\_\_\_\_\_ of nations."
5. Abraham showed hospitality by \_\_\_\_\_ to the three visitors.
6. Abraham asked Sarah to prepare \_\_\_\_\_ for their guests.
7. One of the three visitors was \_\_\_\_\_.
8. When Sarah heard that she would have a son, she \_\_\_\_\_.
9. God knew that Sarah had laughed in \_\_\_\_\_.

## Life Application

10. Sarah lied to God. Can we ever fool God with a lie? God sees everything and knows everything, even the things we do in secret. Name one thing that you think, say, or do in secret that would make God sad. What can you do differently next time? Name one thing that you think, say, or do in secret that would please God. Why would that make God happy?

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11. Abraham showed kindness to his visitors. What would you do if you a visitor came to your house? What would you cook or prepare for the visitor?

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12. If God came to visit you, how would you show your kindness?

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