
BIG IDEA: GOD IS A PROMISE KEEPER

DATE: SEPTEMBER 25-26, 2021 — **STORY:** ABRAHAM

BIBLE BASIS: GENESIS 15, 17, 18, 21

SERIES: MADE FOR MORE

Join us throughout October as we learn stories that teach us how God has made us for more than we can ever imagine! We will be reading passages from the book of Genesis.

MEMORY VERSE

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. —ROMANS 8:28

SCHEDULE

0:00–0:10	Welcome Activities/Check-In
0:10–0:15	Transition to Large Group (B100)
0:15–0:30	Large Group (Worship, Memory Verse, Global Partner Spotlight)
0:30–0:35	Transition to Small Group (Back to Classrooms)
0:35–1:05	Small Group (Storytelling, Questions, Big Idea Connection, Respond Activity)
1:05–1:15	Dismiss/Additional Activities (During Check-Out)

SERIES OVERVIEW

Date	Story	Big Idea	Bible Basis
August 21-22	ZONK		Review Weekend
August 28-29	Creation	God is Creator	Genesis 1-2
September 4-5	The Fall	God's Love Never Ends	Genesis 3
September 11-12	Cain & Abel	Turn to God, Not to Sin	Genesis 4
September 18-19	Noah & The Flood	God Helps Us To Obey Him	Genesis 6-9
September 25-26	Abraham	God Is A Promise Keeper	Genesis 15, 17, 18, 21
October 2-3	Isaac	I Can Always Trust God	Genesis 22
October 9-10	Jacob & Esau	God Has A Plan For Me	Genesis 25, 27

SEPTEMBER 25-26

STORY: ABRAHAM

GENESIS 15, 17, 18, 21

DEVOTIONAL

In the book *Streams in the Desert*, author L.B. Cowman tells the following story: There was a boy about 10 years old whose grandma promised him a stamp collecting album for Christmas. The day had come and gone and he didn't receive the stamp album. One day the boy's friends came over to see his Christmas presents and as he listed all his gifts he included "a stamp album from my grandma." After hearing this, his mom called over her son and said "Son, you did not receive a stamp album from your grandma. Why did you say you had?" Confidently and quite puzzled the boy replied, "Well, Mom, Grandma said, and that is the same as." A month passed and he still hadn't received the stamp album. Finally, one day, his mother said to the boy, "I think Grandma has forgotten her promise." "Oh no, Mom," he quickly responded. "She hasn't." Soon after a letter arrived in the mail from Grandma that read:

"Dear Grandson,

I have not forgotten my promise to you for a stamp album. I could not find the one you wanted here, so I ordered one from New York. It did not arrive until after Christmas, and it was not the right one. I then ordered another, but it still has not arrived. I have decided to send you the money so that you may buy the one you want in Chicago. Love, Grandma."

After the son read the letter, his face was full of victory and he said, "Now, Mom, didn't I tell you?" All that time the boy trusted the promise even with nothing seen or heard of the promise. And all the while, Grandma was working, and in due time the boy's faith became sight.

Sometimes when we are waiting for a promise to be fulfilled from God, we have a hard time trusting and truly believing it will become sight. If only we could catch a glimpse of how the promise will be fulfilled, then we could continue to wait patiently. Often we forget to have faith like the boy and believe that God SAID, and that is the same AS.

As you prepare to discuss the story of Abraham with your kids, think about some promises in your life for which you were able to confidently wait on God. What promises are you relying on today from God and how are you doing waiting patiently? Take a minute to ask God to help you confidently wait in His trustworthy hands until all of His promises are fulfilled.

Mindy Rausch

GO! Team Member

PROVIDED RESOURCES

Welcome Activities: Coloring/activity pages; coloring supplies; Bibles

Storytelling: Clay for the kids

Big Idea Connection: None needed

Respond Activity: Beanbag

Additional Activities: Painter's tape (blue tape), beanbags; candy

***If you need any additional resources, please let us know so that we can provide that for you!*

WELCOME ACTIVITIES

OPTION 1: COLORING PAGE/ ACTIVITY PAGE

Allow students to color the coloring page or do the activity on the back.

OPTION 2: FIND THE VERSE

An activity to practice using the Bible.

Split kids into two teams. Make sure every child has a Bible. Call out a verse for the kids to find. The first to find it and read it out loud earns a point. The team with the most points wins. ****When picking verses, make sure they 1) exist (there's no Matthew 32:1), and 2) are appropriate (like, let's stay out of Song of Songs)**

Example verses: John 3:16, Romans 8:28, Jeremiah 29:11, Habakkuk 3:18, Exodus 33:14, Ephesians 2:8-10, Romans 10:9, John 15:13, Psalm 119:105, Genesis 1:1, Revelation 21:4, 2 Timothy 1:7, Acts 4:12, Joshua 21:45, 1 John 1:9

Alternative: For younger kids who struggle to read, keep them in one book of the Bible (maybe Matthew) and have them practice finding big numbers for chapters and little numbers for verses.

OPTION 3: STUDENT CHOICE

Allow students to choose which option they would like to do.

STORYTELLING

***Kids will use clay to make objects to help tell the story. Give each kid a card that has a picture and a group number. Give a bit of time or allow them to shape the clay as you teach. The story will say "Allow Group # to share clay object" to indicate that the next group can share their creation with the class before the story continues.*

Before we get to today's story, let's recap really quickly what's happened in The Big Bible Story up to this point. In the beginning, God had made a perfect world, but people wrecked it with sin. When that happened, our perfect relationship with God was broken. Things eventually got so bad that God decided to send an enormous flood that wiped everything away except for Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark. Problem solved—right? Well, not exactly. As time passed, the world was still filled with sin and our relationship with God was still broken. So God came up with a plan to save the world with one very special promise through one very special family. And that's where today's story picks up.

In the Book of Genesis, we hear about a man named Abraham who had a wife named Sarah. Abraham and Sarah were getting to be pretty old and they still didn't have any kids. In fact, Abraham was 75 years old when he said to God, *(speak in an old man's voice)* "Hey, what good are all of these blessings you're giving me if I don't have any kids to pass them on to?" So God made a promise to Abraham. Let's figure out what that promise was. *(Allow Group 1 to share clay stars). (Have a volunteer read Genesis 15:4–6).*

So you see, God promised Abraham that he would have as many family members as there are stars in the sky. That was God's way of saying, "You're going to have a huge family." *(For this next line, tell the kids to click their tongues like a ticking clock.)* Abraham and Sarah waited and waited and waited for God's promise to come true, but they still didn't have a baby. They started to get really impatient and even took things into their own hands. So God talked to Abraham again. Let's see what He said. *(Allow Group 2 to share clay clocks). (Have a volunteer read Genesis 17:1–2).*

Have you ever heard of a 99-year-old having a baby? Say "I'm too old" in your old geezer voice. *(Kids respond.)* That's way too old to have a baby, but God still promised that Abraham would be the father of many nations. So Abraham kept on waiting. More time passed and Abraham and Sarah began to wonder again if they would ever have a baby. So God spoke to Abraham one more time. *(Allow Group 3 to share clay laughing faces). (Have a volunteer read*

STORYTELLING (CONT.)

Genesis 18:10–12).

By this time Sarah was so old that she laughed when God told her she would have a baby, but God told her that nothing was too hard for Him and that He never forgets His promises. And you know what? It's true! Look at what happened next. *(Allow Group 4 to share clay babies).* *(Have a volunteer read Genesis 21:1–3).*

Sarah finally had a baby and named him "Isaac" which means "laughter." Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter. All who hear about this will laugh with me." One day, Isaac would grow up and have kids, and then those kids would have kids, and then those kids would have more kids until eventually God's promise came true. Abraham's family became so big it was like the number of stars in the sky. God's promises always come true.

QUESTIONS

This can be done as a large group or in table groups

For Younger Kids:

1. Why do you think God waited so long to give Abraham and Sarah what He promised?
2. Why do you think Abraham and Sarah had a hard time waiting patiently?

For Older Kids:

1. What do you think this story teaches us about God?
2. Why do you think God waited so long to give Abraham and Sarah what He promised?

BIG IDEA CONNECTION

There's one more thing I want to point out about this story. In the Bible, the promise that God made with Abraham was known as a "covenant." A "covenant" is like an agreement between 2 people. And whenever someone made a covenant in the Bible, it was...um...well...a little messy.

A cow, a goat, and a ram walk into a butcher shop. Sounds like a joke, right? It's not. In the Bible, in the book of Genesis, chapter 15, God promised Abraham that one day he would have as many descendants as there are stars in the sky. Dude—talk about a big family reunion! To show Abraham how serious he was about this promise, God told Abraham to get a cow, a goat, and a ram. Here's where things get a little messy. Abraham cut the animals in half. He then laid each half on the ground with space in-between. After, in order to seal the deal, Abraham would have walked between the animal parts. Yuck! So you might be wondering why in the world God would have Abraham do that. Well, in the Old Testament, this was people's way of saying, "if I don't come through on my promise, may I be like those animals." You know—kick the bucket. Bite the biscuit. Take a dirt nap. Dead! In other words, I swear on my life that I'll do it. That's how serious God was about His promise. Nowadays, when people make promises, they just shake hands or hold pinkies.

As gross as that is—isn't it cool how serious God is about keeping His promises? In fact, that's exactly what Psalm 145:13 says. Take a look! Let's read this together: (*Encourage kids to open their Bibles to Psalm 145:13.*)

Do you see that? God keeps ALL of his promises, not just some. It might not happen today, or next week, or even next year, but If God says He'll do it, he WILL do it. Does anyone remember how long Abraham had to wait for God's promise to come true? Abraham was 75 years old when God promised Him a son, but he didn't get a son until he was 100. How many years did Abraham have to wait? (*Kids answer.*) That's right—25 years!

God kept His promise with Abraham and He keeps His promises with us too. We can wait patiently for God because we know He always keeps His promises. In fact, there's one promise that God kept that's greater than any other. Not only did God give Abraham a big family, He gave him a special family. Abraham's family would one day become known as the "Israelites." The Israelites were special because God gave us the Bible through them. They were special because they showed the world who God was. But most of all, they were special because one day the Rescuer would be born through that family. Who is the Rescuer? (*Let kids respond.*) That's right—it's Jesus. This was all a part of God's promise to fix our broken relationship with Him. Abraham didn't know it, but God was going to use his family to save the world. Sin had separated us from God, but God is faithful; **He always keeps His promises.**

RESPOND ACTIVITY

In today's story, kids learned about the promise that God made to Abraham. God kept His promise and Abraham and Sarah had a son and had many, many descendants. Through Abraham's family, Jesus would come, our Redeemer, to reconcile us to God.

IS IT A PROMISE?:

Say: Sometimes we can get frustrated with God because we think He has promised us something that He really hasn't. If we're going to wait patiently for God, it's important for us to know what God does and does not promise to give us.

Directions: Place a beanbag in the middle of a table. Choose two kids to face off. Have each of them sit or kneel on either side of the table with their hands behind their back. Read one of the statements below. The two kids will have to quickly decide if that statement is a promise from God or not. The first kid to slap their hand on the beanbag will answer. Ask the rest of the kids in the group if they agree and why or why not. After they've talked about it, tell them the answer. If the statement was a promise from God, and if time permits, have someone in your group look up the Bible reference and read it aloud. You can break kids up into teams and keep score if you'd like.

STATEMENTS:

1. If you pray to God. He will always hear what you say. **PROMISE** (Ps 116:1)
2. If you follow God really closely, your life will be really easy. **NOT PROMISE**
3. God will always give you everything you need. **PROMISE** (Phil 4:19)
4. God will comfort you when you are sad. **PROMISE** (Jer 49:13)
5. If you love God with your whole heart, you will never be sad. **NOT PROMISE**
6. If you pray for something really hard, God will give it to you. **NOT PROMISE**
7. God will love you always, no matter what you do wrong. **PROMISE** (Rom 8:39)
8. God will always give you everything you want. **NOT PROMISE**
9. God will stop people from ever hurting you. **NOT PROMISE**
10. God will always be with you, no matter where you go. **PROMISE** (Josh 1:9)
11. God will make you good at everything you try. **NOT PROMISE**
12. If you believe Jesus has died for you and you choose to follow Him, you'll have eternal life. **PROMISE** (Rom 6:23)
13. God will give you strength when you feel weak. **PROMISE** (Isa 40:29)
14. Everyone will go to heaven, no matter what they believe. **NOT PROMISE**

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

These additional activities are completely optional. These activities are meant to fill any time that you may have left. Students can participate or finish their respond activity. Have your adult helper check-out students while you do one or more of the options with the students who are waiting to be picked up by their parents.

BEAN BAG TOSS:

Bible Story Review Game

Use blue painter's tape to create a square target on the floor with multiple rings at different point values. Split the kids into two teams and have them line up on either side of the target. Ask the kids at the front of the line a bible question, alternating between teams. Only the person in the front of the line can answer. If they get it right, they can toss the bean bag and earn points for their team if it lands on one of the target's sections. If they answer wrong, the other team gets the opportunity to answer and toss a beanbag. If both answer incorrectly, reveal the correct answer and ask the question again later. Team with the most points wins.

Possible Questions:

1. What promise did God make to Abraham?
2. What did Sarah do when she heard that God would give her a baby when she was old?
3. What was the name of their son?
4. Did God keep His promise to Abraham?
5. How long did Abraham have to wait for God to fulfill His promise?
6. Does God ever break a promise?
7. What was Abraham's family eventually called? What people group?
8. Why were the Israelites special or set apart from others? (*Various answers*)
9. What important person came from Abraham's family?
10. How does Jesus fix our broken relationship with God?

CANDY PASS:

Bible Memorization Activity

Have kids sit in a circle. Give one child a bowl of candy. Have them pass the bowl around the circle as they say the verse. At the end of the verse, the kid holding the bowl says the whole verse and gets a piece of candy. Continue until everyone has had a piece of candy. You can change this up by making them pass faster or slower or pass with each word of the verse.