

Bible Stories for Adults

God Calls Abram

Genesis 12 - 14

Opening

Gathering: Give an example of how God reached out to you when you didn't expect it. How did you respond?

Today's Focus: To recognize that God calls us by His grace, just as He called Abram, and we are to respond obediently out of faith, just like Abram.

Key Verses: *"I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* Jeremiah 29:11

By faith Abraham, when called to go ... obeyed and went. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. Hebrews 11:8, 10

Opening Prayer

Lesson

The Cycle of Sin / Judgment / Grace (Genesis 3-11)

| <u>Chapter</u> | <u>Sin</u> | <u>Judgment</u> | <u>Grace</u> |
|----------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 3 = | The Fall | Death | Promise of Savior |
| 4 = | Murder | Expulsion | Mark |
| 6-9 = | Wickedness | Flood | Noah |
| 11 = | Pride | Dispersed | Abraham |

The Account of Terah (Genesis 11:27-30)

Who concludes the list of ten generations in Genesis 5?

Genesis 5:3, 32 = Spans from Adam to Noah

Who concludes the list of ten generations in Genesis 11?

Genesis 11:10, 26 = Spans from Shem to Terah

From what descendant of Shem and ancestor of Terah did the Hebrews (eberi) get their name?

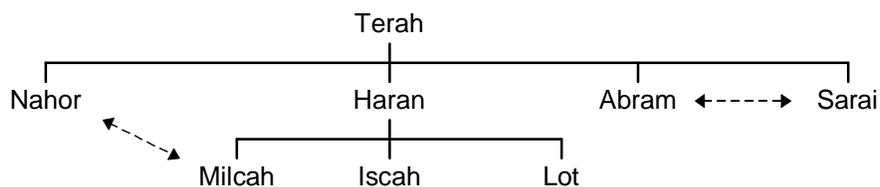
Genesis 11:14 = Eber - Root word avar, - to go, to cross over (Abram told to go)

What do we learn about the family of Terah?

Genesis 11:27-30 = Complete Family Tree on board (except Sarai - Terah line)

How was Abram related to Sarai other than marriage?

Genesis 20:12 = His half-sister - Complete tree



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The Family Goes (Genesis 11:31-12:1)

Did this family stay in Ur of the Chaldeans after the Tower of Babel incident? = Show path on map

Genesis 11:31-32 = Terah, Abram, Lot & Sarai left Ur for Canaan & settled in Haran

Ur = Center of Sumer, 1st great civilization. Modern, wealthy, advanced city

Haran = 600 miles from Ur, Different Hebrew spelling (charan) than Abram's brother (haran)

Why did they leave their great life in Ur?

Genesis 12:1 = God told Abram to go to a land He would show him

Did this call from God come to Abram when he was in Ur or in Haran?

Acts 7:2-3 = When he was in Ur - *Mesopotamia* is Greek for *between the rivers*

Was God calling Abram to go to Haran or to Canaan?

Genesis 15:7 = To Canaan - Genesis 15 takes place in Canaan

How long did Abram stay in Haran before going on to Canaan? = Call was to Abram, not Terah

Acts 7:4 = Until his father died and Then God sent him further

How old was Abram when he left Haran? = Haran delay kept Abram from claiming land in Canaan

Genesis 12:4 = 75 years old; Others had settled in Canaan from the dispersion by this time

The Call (Genesis 12:1-3)

What was God's command to Abram? = Leave home, friends, familiar area, everything he knew

Genesis 12:1 = Leave everything you know & go where I lead you

How was Abram different than the people of Babel?

Genesis 11:4 = Tower to *make a name for ourselves and not be scattered* (stay one nation)

Genesis 12:2 = God said: *I will make you into a great nation and I will make your name great*

Why did God ask Abram to go?

Romans 9:4-5 = His plan for a chosen people through whom to reveal Himself & bring Christ

What else did God promise Abram?

Genesis 12:2-3 = *I will bless you...so you will be a blessing...all on earth will be blessed thru you*

How were all nations blessed through Abram?

Matthew 1:1, 17 = Jesus descended from David, who descended from Abraham

Galatians 3:6-9 = All who have faith are blessed along with Abraham

Galatians 3:14 = Blessing given to Abraham comes to the Gentiles through Christ

Was Abram selected because he was righteous or devout?

Joshua 24:2 = No, his family worshipped other gods

Abram's Response (Genesis 12:4-8)

What was Abram's response to God's call?

Genesis 12:4-5 = Abram left, No questions (Not Where, When, How or Why), He just obeyed

How could Abram leave his comfortable home and go somewhere he didn't even know?

Hebrews 11:8-10 = By faith Abram obeyed & went, though he didn't know where he was going

What new promise did God give after Abram obeyed His first command and arrived in Canaan?

Genesis 12:7a = Promise of land of Canaan to Abram's offspring – no foundations in tent cities

Why was *offspring* a significant part of God's promise?

Genesis 11:30 (Acts 7:5) = Sarai was barren (Genesis 12:4 - Abram was 75 yrs old)

How could Abram even consider this impossible promise?

Hebrews 11:11-12 = By faith Abraham became the father of multitudes

Was it easier for Abram to have this faith than for us? = Faith credited as righteousness (Gen 15:6)

Romans 4:18-22 = No, he had hope and faith against all hope, though as good as dead

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Abram's Travels (*Genesis 12:6-10*)

- Where did Abram go from Haran? = Show on map - Oak of Moreh (Canaan holy place)
Genesis 12:6 = Shechem (main Palestine NS/EW crossroads)
- How did Abram show his faithfulness to God in Shechem?
Genesis 12:7 = Built altar and worshipped in response to God's blessing
- Where did Abram go from Shechem? = Show on map - Today Beitin
Genesis 12:8 = Bethel - Ancient name *Luz*, later became a well-known holy place
Bethel means *house of El*, El was Canaanite name for a god - Abram built altar to The God here
- Where did Abram go from Bethel? = Show on map - Beersheba is in Negeb region
Genesis 12:9 = Negeb - Southern dry highland of Palestine
- Where did Abram go next, and why? = Show on map
Genesis 12:10 = Egypt, because of a severe famine

God's Chosen Ones in Egypt (*Genesis 12:10*)

- Who else did God send to Egypt?
Acts 7:11-15 = Jacob & household moved to Egypt from Canaan due to famine
Matthew 2:13 = Joseph took Mary & Jesus to protect Jesus from Herod
- Why did God send each of these chosen ones to Egypt?
Matthew 2:14-15 = *Out of Egypt I called my son* (Hosea 11:1)

Abram in Egypt (*Genesis 12:11-20*)

- What faith and character qualities did Abram display in Egypt?
Genesis 12:11-13 = Didn't trust God to protect him, Stretched the truth (Sarai was half-sister)
- How well did Abram's plan work? = Sarai was 65+ at the time (Genesis 17:17)
Genesis 12:14-16 = Pharaoh took Sarah for his own and gave wealth to Abram
- How did Abram's lack of faith threaten God's plan?
Genesis 17:19 = God's covenant would be through Sarah's son Isaac
- How did God handle this threat to His plan?
Genesis 12:17-20 = Inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh - returned Sarai, told Abram to leave
- Could Abram's sins nullify God's promise? = No, God's promise was unconditional
Job 42:2 = We cannot screw up God's plan no matter how hard we try

The Better Choice (*Genesis 13:1-13*)

- How had things changed for Abram in Egypt?
Genesis 13:1-2 = He had become very wealthy
- Where did Abram go after reaching the desert land of the Negeb?
Genesis 13:3-4 = Back to Canaan and back to where he had worshipped God at Bethel
- What problem arose when they settled around Bethel?
Genesis 13:5-7 = The land could not support livestock of Abram, Lot and locals
- What solution did Abram suggest that showed his faithfulness? = Knew that God would provide
Genesis 13:8-9 = Suggested that he and Lot separate, Gave Lot the choice where to go
- Where did Lot choose and why? = Zoar was at southeast tip of the Salt Sea (Dead Sea)
Genesis 13:10-11 = The lush and fertile region of the Jordan near Zoar
- How did this apparent best choice turn out to be the worst? = Would tempt and threaten his faith
Genesis 13:12-13 = Lot settled near Sodom & Gomorrah, very wicked cities

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God Blesses Abram's Choice (*Genesis 13:14-18*)

How did God respond to Abram's act of faith?

Genesis 13:14-15 = Promised to give the land that Lot left to him & his descendants

What was the problem with this blessing and what did God promise to do about it?

Genesis 13:16 = Abram had no kids. God promised descendants like the dust of the earth

How did Abram respond to the blessing God gave him? = We are to respond the same way

Genesis 13:17-18 = Only way he could, he obeyed and went and worshipped

Trouble in Siddim (*Genesis 14:1-16*)

What happened at this time in local politics where Lot went to live? = They stopped paying tribute

Genesis 14:3-4 (1-4) = Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim & Zoar rebelled against Elam

What happened as a result of this decision?

Genesis 14:8 (5-9) = Armies drew lines against Elam & its 3 allies

How did this battle in the Valley of Siddim turn out?

Genesis 14:10-11 = The four Elamite armies defeated the five local armies, took spoils

How did this affect Lot and his family?

Genesis 14:12 = They were carried off to become slaves

How did Abram respond to the news about his nephew being captured? = Dan is north of Hazor

Genesis 14:13-14 = He took some select servants and went after them

How did Abram fare against the four powerful armies?

Genesis 14:15-16 = He routed them and recovered everything, including Lot & his family

To God Be the Glory (*Genesis 14:17-24*)

Who met Abram in the Valley of Shaveh (south of Bethel) on his way back home to Hebron?

Genesis 14:17 = The king of Sodom (he had run away from the defeat)

Who else met him there from the nearby town of Salem? (Salem was later known as Jerusalem)

Genesis 14:18-20a = Melchizedek, king of Salem, blessed Abram and gave glory to God

Besides having a name that means "king of righteousness", what was special about Melchizedek?

Hebrews 6:20-7:3 (7:1-22) = He had been called by God as a priest, not inherited (no Levi yet)

How did Abram respond to Melchizedek?

Genesis 14:20b = He recognized him as God's servant and gave him a tithe

How did Abram respond to a reward from the king of Sodom?

Genesis 14:21-24 = He gave all the glory to God, both for victory and for everything he had

Closing Prayer

Response

1. How can I recognize a call from God?
(*Genesis 12:1-4; 1 Samuel 3; Isaiah 6:8; John 8:47; 1 John 4:1-3; Revelation 3:20*)
2. Do I respond in faith when God calls me for something I don't see or know? (*Hebrews 11; Genesis 12:4; 22:2-3; 1 Samuel 15:22; Matthew 7:21; James 1:22-25; 1 Peter 1:10-12*)
3. Do I worship God and see His hand at work wherever I go? (*Psalms 118:15-16; 139; Genesis 8:20; 12:7-8; 13:18; 26:25; 28:18-19; 33:20; 35:7; Joshua 4:20-24; 1 Corinthians 10:31*)
4. Do I make choices that are in line with God's plan, or do I make my own plans ignoring God's will?
(*Genesis 13:10-13; Deuteronomy 18:19-20; 1 Kings 3:9; Luke 10:41-42; Romans 7:15-25*)
5. How do I respond when God blesses me? (*Genesis 12:2; 14:20b; Deuteronomy 26:1-10; 1 Chronicles 29:14,16; Psalm 116:12-18; Jeremiah 33:10-11; Luke 20:22-25*)