



FAMILIES WANDER

GENESIS 12

◦ **Big Idea** *God promises to bless all the people on earth through one family.*

Lesson Summary

Families Wander (2200–1800 BC) During this era, God calls Abraham, makes a covenant with him, and promises to bless all people through him. Years later a son, Isaac, is born to Abraham and Sarah. God gives the land of Canaan to Abraham’s descendants. A severe famine takes Isaac’s son and grandsons to Egypt where the family grows, forming the Hebrew nation.

Through all the mistakes, mishaps, and failings of God’s people, His plan slowly unfolds. In the last half of Genesis, God proved His faithfulness in keeping His promises. Be reassured that God still honors His promises to us, and that He is actively working for our good—just as He did for the Patriarchs long ago.

Bible Background

God called Abraham and Sarah out of Ur in Mesopotamia to begin a new nation, His own covenant people. Ur was a thriving city on a trade route. The people of Ur enjoyed many material comforts—however, they did not know God. They worshiped Nanner, the moon god, at a magnificent ziggurat they had constructed. How unusual that God would choose this couple from Ur to accomplish His global purposes!

Genesis 12-20 records the events that transformed Abram into Abraham, “Friend of God” and “Father of the Faithful.” God promised Abraham that his descendants would inherit the land of Canaan and would become a blessing to the rest of the world. Isaac’s birth, coming to Sarah in her old age, confirmed to Abraham that God would carry out His plan and fulfill all His promises. Isaac’s story unfolds in Genesis 21-26. He inherited God’s promises to Abraham.

Teacher Devotional

Sometimes it is difficult to see God’s overall purposes as we encounter challenges and roadblocks. We want to enjoy God’s perfect plan and will, but we push away from His method of accomplishing our sanctification. We seem to be blind to His grand purposes. It’s painful! Abraham and Sarah faced similar experiences, yet their faith never wavered (Romans 4:20-21).

Father, You are the Master Designer. You confirmed Your promises to Abraham’s children and grandchildren. Thank You for making me Your child, and a spiritual descendant of Abraham and Sarah. Help the kids in my class grasp that You are in control and that You are working all things for good. Help us see You at work. In Jesus’ name, amen.



DISCIPLE TARGETS In this lesson, your children will...

KNOWLEDGE (truths)

- K** • God promised to bless all people through Abraham’s descendants. (Genesis 12:2-3)
- N** • Abraham became the father of all who believe. (Romans 4:16-17)
- O** • God keeps every promise He has ever made. (2 Corinthians 1:20)
- W** • God has a plan for their lives, even though they may not see it now.

CHARACTER (emotions)

- F** • Amazed with the variety of people and events God uses to accomplish His purposes.
- E** • Grateful to be heirs of Abraham’s promises through faith in Christ.
- L** • Secure that God will direct their paths because He is in control.

CONDUCT (actions)

- D** • Complete a personal family tree of their ancestors.
- O** • Discover how God fulfilled His promises to Abraham and Sarah.
- List ways that God has blessed them through Abraham.
 - DiscipleSkill—Identify the 5 Old Testament Poetry Books.

Make Disciples

Teacher—Decide where to place these elements into this lesson.

Opening Prayer

Ask God to encourage the kids to always trust His promises. Pray that the Lord would help the children trust Him to believe that all things work together for good, even those that seem to be bad.

WorldWatch

Missionary Biography 3 of 12—Don and Carol Richardson—Preparations *Missionary stories can have a profound impact on a child. Take 1-2 minutes to read this brief narrative. Download discussion questions at DiscipleLand.com/downloads.*

In 1960, Don and Carol get married. The following summer they receive special training to understand how language and grammar work. Linguistics training is very important for Don and Carol because they are going to a people whose language is unknown to outsiders. No one has ever learned to speak the tribal languages of the peoples in New Guinea. Their language also has no alphabet, so it has never been written down.

Taking the Gospel to an unreached people requires two important things. First, missionaries need to learn to speak a new language. Then, the missionaries need to create an alphabet so spoken language can be written down. Once the language is written down, missionaries get help from Bible translators to provide the unreached people with God's Word in their own heart-language.

Don and Carol do their very best to study and learn everything they can at the linguistics institute. They know their classes are preparing them to serve Jesus as missionaries.

Missions Education—The Target

To add this component to the lesson, download the teacher script at DiscipleLand.com/downloads.

DISCIPLESHIP TIP

Be sure that you know your students' names, and that you use them. By showing individual attention to children, you will build a relationship with them that can lead to trust and greater commitment. Your personal concern will encourage them to listen, follow directions, and do their best on the lessons. When children are absent, let them know that you missed them. Send a card or email or give them a call or visit.

KeyVerse

Topic: Families Wander

Reference: *Genesis 17:7*

Memorization Activity: Write the words of the verse on the board. Have students say the verse. Erase one or two words and see if the children can still remember the verse. Erase one or two more and recite the verse again. Continue until all the words have been erased. Don't erase them in order: randomly choose words to erase.

Bonus Resources

Access free downloads for this lesson at DiscipleLand.com/downloads.

- More activity ideas
- Activity templates and resources
- *Explore Scripture* teacher notecards

SUPPLIES

General Supplies

Bibles, Disciple Guides (pages 9-12)
Pencils, markers, paper
Notecards, scissors, tape, glue

Make Disciples

None

Spark Interest

- COVENANT PROMISE: official contract or license
- GOOD NEWS/BAD NEWS: none

Explore Scripture

Video camera, costumes
Teaching Picture 5A.5—Era 3—Families Wander
Teaching Picture 5A.6—Abraham and Sarah

Inspire Action

- PROMISES, PROMISES: quality paper, sealing wax, objects for seal
- BEFORE AND AFTER: none

Spark Interest

Teacher—Choose one activity that will involve students and grab their attention.

Covenant Promise (10 minutes)

This object lesson helps kids understand the binding nature of the covenant that God made with Abraham. **Supplies:** an official covenant or contract (marriage license, mortgage agreement, job contract, etc.)

Show children the document that you have brought. Discuss with them what this document symbolizes (a formal agreement between two people). Emphasize the binding quality of the document and the consequences for breaking this contract. Introduce kids to the fact that God established covenants or special agreements with His people in the Old Testament. **These special promises were called “covenants.” They helped God’s people know that God would be faithful and would never go back on His Word.**

OR

Good News/Bad News (10 minutes)

This word game shows kids that even though circumstances may appear to be difficult, God is still in charge.

Play a round of “Good News/Bad News.” One person gives the first line of a story containing a fortunate incident: “The good news: it was a beautiful day for a plane ride.” The next person adds the next line which contains an unfortunate incident: “The bad news: there was no pilot in the plane!” Students work together to add lines to the story, following the Good News/Bad News pattern: “The good news: I was sitting at the controls.” “The bad news: I didn’t know how to operate them.” “The good news: a man came forward and said he knew how to fly the plane.” “The bad news: he was blind.” End the story when you come to a good ending place, or run out of clever ideas. Explain to the kids that in every circumstance they face, however good or bad, God is working behind the scenes to accomplish His purposes. We can rejoice and trust Him—no matter what!

Disciple Guide—page 9

Draw your personal family tree on the board so kids will have a good idea of how to construct their own. Complete this page at the beginning of class or after a *Spark Interest* activity.

9

God will bless all the people on earth through one family.

FAMILIES WANDER

Great-grandparents

Great-grandparents

Grandparents

Grandparents

Dad

Mom

Me

answers will vary

Fill in names of people on YOUR family tree!

5A • Old Testament Champions • Lesson 3

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Explore Scripture

Teacher—Teach the Bible lesson. Include Teaching Pictures and exercises from the student Disciple Guides.

Genesis 12

Era #3: Families Wander

We are building an Old Testament timeline and learning about champions who lived during each era. Today's era is about God choosing one family to bless everyone on earth. God started it all when He called Abraham and Sarah to leave their home and to follow Him to an unknown destination! Show the Teaching Picture 5A.5 of Era 3—Families Wander.



This era can be divided into four major sections:

- **Covenant** (2165–1990 BC) *God calls Abraham and promises to bless him (Genesis 12-20).* Key People—Abraham and Sarah; Key Place—Ur (Fertile Crescent)
- **Son** (2065–1885 BC) *Isaac is born to Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 21-26).* People—Isaac, Rebekah, Ishmael; Place—Canaan
- **Land** (2005–1860 BC) *God gives the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants (Genesis 27-36).* People—Jacob, Rachel, twelve sons; Place—Canaan
- **Nation** (1915–1800 BC) *Jacob's family grows in Egypt, forming the Hebrew nation (Genesis 37-50).* People—Joseph; Place—Egypt

Read or ask a volunteer to read Genesis 12. **God calls to Abraham and Sarah, who begin their journey of faith when they depart from Ur and follow God to an unknown location. It is hard to imagine what went through their minds along the way. Where would their journey lead? How would God's blessings come?**

Champions: Abraham and Sarah

Lead a discussion about some of Abraham and Sarah's exciting adventures: international travel and intrigue, organizing a guerrilla warfare campaign, meeting the mysterious priest-king Melchizedek, and begging God not to destroy righteous people who lived in wicked towns. **After becoming parents at the age of 100 (Sarah was 90), Abraham was even prepared to carry out God's bizarre command to sacrifice his promised son! Through it all, Abraham believed. Show the Teaching Picture 5A.6 of Abraham and Sarah.**



Welcome students to OTTV & Radio. Explain that they have been chosen to do an exclusive interview with Abraham, the father of our faith, and his wife, Sarah. (Exclusive means that Abraham isn't talking to anyone else!) Tell them that the station managers want to screen the questions before the interview, though, so it's time for a news crew meeting.

Gather questions from students for the interview and help them find answers from Genesis 12-25.

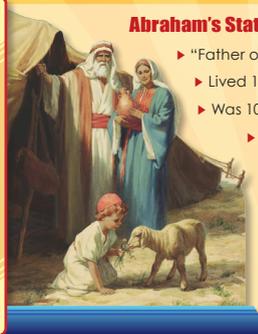
Let one child pretend to be Abraham and another Sarah. Others can be reporters. Use creativity (costumes, etc.) in planning and performing the interview while still emphasizing Biblical accuracy. Record or pretend to record their interviews.

Disciple Guide—page 10

Talk about Abraham and Sarah and why they are "champions of faith." Look up the Bible references together and discuss each blessing from God.

10

Faithful Family



Abraham's Stats

- ▶ "Father of many nations"
- ▶ Lived 175 years (about 2165—1990 BC)
- ▶ Was 100 years old when Isaac was born
- ▶ Genesis 18:18

Sarah's Stats

- ▶ "Mother of all who believe"
- ▶ Lived 127 years (about 2155—2018 BC)
- ▶ Was strikingly beautiful
- ▶ Genesis 21:6

Match the references below with the promises God made to Abraham and Sarah.

<p>(B) I will give you all the land you can see.</p> <p>(E) Sarah will be blessed and will become the mother of nations and kings.</p> <p>(D) You will be the father of many nations and kings. This agreement will last forever.</p> <p>(F) I will bless you and give you more descendants than stars or grains of sand.</p> <p>(A) I will make your name great. All people on earth will be blessed because of you.</p> <p>(C) You will have more offspring than there are stars in the sky.</p>	<p>A. Genesis 12:2-3</p> <p>B. Genesis 13:15-16</p> <p>C. Genesis 15:5</p> <p>D. Genesis 17:4-8</p> <p>E. Genesis 17:16</p> <p>F. Genesis 22:17-18</p>
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GOD REIGNS
eternity



GOD CREATES
before 4000—2200 BC



FAMILIES WANDER
2200—1800 BC





God gave Abraham and Sarah land, material possessions, descendants, and His presence. But the final blessing “for all nations” would come much later! Emphasize that Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham and Sarah. All who trust Christ inherit all of Abraham’s promises and are heirs to heaven, too!

Disciple Guide—page 11

Explain that Matthew’s Gospel opens with a partial genealogy of Abraham and Sarah’s descendants. Help the kids understand that through Christ, all people who believe are Abraham’s descendants and heirs to God’s promises. Complete the HeartBeat together.

Inspire Action

Teacher—Choose one activity that will encourage learners to apply the Bible truth to their lives.

Promises, Promises (15-20 minutes)

*This craft activity reinforces the importance of making and keeping promises. **Supplies:** sheets of good quality writing paper, pens, sealing wax, objects to press into the wax*

Look up verses that contain God’s promises to His people (Isaiah 41:10, Isaiah 43:1-2, Isaiah 54:10, John 14:2-3, Romans 10:9, 1 John 1:9, etc.). Discuss God’s faithfulness in keeping His promises. Have students make a covenant between themselves and God. Select one of God’s promises and write it on their paper. Then kids should carefully make a promise to the Lord and also write it on their paper. When they are finished, seal the covenant with sealing wax and imprint an object into the wax as a way of signing the covenant.

OR

Before and After (10 minutes)

This testimonial activity encourages kids to see that God causes all things to work together for His good purposes.

When you look at a canvas that an artist has just begun, you see confusing lines or blobs of color. It doesn’t make sense. But when you look at the completed painting, you can see how those lines or colors have become part of a beautiful picture. God is like the artist who is painting a Masterpiece, the picture of our lives. Many times we just see individual blobs of color and don’t see how the painting fits together. God wants us to trust Him to create something beautiful in our lives. Tell your students about a time in your life when God worked something good from a painful or difficult incident. Explain that at the time you couldn’t understand why God would allow that to happen. Maybe you still don’t know why He let it take place the way He did, but you have learned to accept it and trust His wisdom. Share your story and ask if the kids have had similar experiences.

11

Abraham’s Heirs

God continues to fulfill His promise to bless Abraham’s descendants.

Scan Matthew 1:1-16. Which names from this list of Abraham’s descendants are familiar to you? Write their names on this tree.



Are YOU one of Abraham’s descendants (Galatians 3:29)? **YES / NO / NOT SURE.**

Why or why not?

answers will vary



God promises to bless all the people on earth through one family. List ways God has blessed YOU as an heir to Abraham’s promises.

answers will vary



Closing Prayer

Pray that the kids will remember to trust God during the difficult times. Ask the Lord to show them that He is trustworthy and that He keeps His promises. Pray that students will be aware of and pray for others in trouble around them. Pray for the personal requests of students. Encourage children to voice their prayer concerns. Be sure to pray for each one.

Closing Words

Today we learned that God will ultimately bless all people on earth through Abraham and Sarah. Next time we will see how that family grew into a nation of more than two million people, and how God got them out of a very difficult predicament!



Teacher—Children should complete this page on their own or at home with a parent.

DiscipleSkill

How to Navigate the Old Testament

For 4,000 years, the Old Testament has molded Jewish civil, religious, social, and economic life. Never has one Book so greatly influenced the way of life of an entire nation!

During this quarter, kids will learn how the Old Testament fits together. Seventeen History books illumine the past, five Poetry books imprint the present, and seventeen Prophecy books inspire the future. Each one has a theme and message for today!

DiscipleZone.com

Direct children to DiscipleZone.com/5A3 for:

XploreMore *Discover more about the era of wandering.*

SwordWork *Read Psalms 45-46.*

WorldWatch *Experience Sawi culture.*

KeyVerse *Memorize Genesis 17:7.*

HymnNotes *Discover the lyrics to “O God, Our Help in Ages Past.”*

Lesson 3

12 Class C

DiscipleSkill

How to Navigate the Old Testament Poetry

Old Testament **History** books illumine the past; **Poetry** books impact the present; and **Prophecy** books inspire the future. Each one has a theme and message for today!

5 **Poetry** books (Job through Song of Songs) are the most ancient **SONGS**. These songs express personal insights about God and His people.

Song of Songs

- Job
- Psalms
- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Songs

Find the answer to **God's throne** at DiscipleZone.com/5A3

KeyVerse Genesis 17:7

SWORD WORK What will last forever?

28

Disciple Guide—page 12

Encourage kids to complete DiscipleZone before the next lesson. Explain that activities are available at a special website—

DiscipleZone.com—where kids go to grow! Children should visit the website with their parents to complete the online activities.