

THE BEGINNING

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

FALL

Lesson 04

SEPTEMBER 28, 2025

LESSON TEXT

Genesis 11–25

FOCUS VERSE

Genesis 12:2

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.

TRUTH ABOUT COVENANT

God promised Abraham he would become a nation and inherit the Promised Land.

MY RESPONSE TO COVENANT

I will trust God with everything.

COVENANT CONTEXT

As the world rebuilt after the Flood, they attempted to build a tower to keep God from scattering them once more, indicating they did not trust Him to keep His covenant. God called one man, named Abram, to enter into covenant with Him, even when it could cost him everything.

TEACHING OUTLINE

Icebreaker: In what area of life is it hardest to trust others?

Teacher Tip: Connect the group's answers to show the value of our trust in God who keeps His word.

Lesson Connection: Share the Lesson Connection.

I. BABEL AND UR

A. Another Rebellion

B. Another Savior

***DISCUSS:** Have you ever felt led of the Lord to do something or make a firm decision when you did not have the full picture or all the details?*

C. I will always hope in the gracious mercy of God.

***DISCUSS:** Have you ever felt hopeless about a situation outside your control? How did the Word of*

God help you navigate those feelings?

II. GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

- A. The Most Unlikely Choice
- B. Abraham Believed and Obeyed

DISCUSS: *Have you ever doubted a promise from the Lord, only to be reassured of it in a miraculous way?*

- C. I will seek encounters with God that renew my covenant relationship with Him. (V)

III. ABRAHAM'S FINAL TEST

- A. The Call to Mount Moriah

DISCUSS: *Has your faith ever been tested? How did you respond?*

- B. God's Final Provision
- C. Abraham's Final Act of Faith
- D. I will trust God with everything.

DISCUSS: *Have you had to put to death any promises in your own life? Has it worked out for the better? If not yet, do you believe it will?*

Internalizing the Message (I)

PRAYER FOCUS

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to show us any area of our lives we need to surrender to Him completely
- For God to give us perfect peace about the present and the future when we trust Him

LESSON CONNECTION

The husband and wife could not contain their excitement. They were having another boy. Like the first time three years earlier, a few complications required surgery during delivery. The loud cry of a beautiful, healthy baby boy made those complications seem trivial. Mom's recovery went smoothly. Within a few days, the entire family made their return home to settle into a new normal. Mom and sons would stay home for the rest of the summer, with Grandma helping as much and as often as needed. Dad prepared for his return to work on Monday with an ample supply of pictures to proudly display.

Upon entering the office, he immediately sensed something was wrong. Of course he received the obligatory, but sincere, "Congratulations!" from his coworkers, but he could not shake the feeling that he was missing something. Something had muted the celebratory atmosphere he expected. It did not take long to figure out why. "Mark, can you come into the office for a minute, please?" his manager asked. Mark sat down and his manager continued, "As you know we are a startup company. We have been running on funds from our investors. I hate to have to tell you this now, but those funds are running out next week. We cannot pay you any longer. Your position will be eliminated."

His feelings changed so fast. He was happy; now he was devastated. The company had made him promises. They

helped him plot out his career path. He even ignored other opportunities to start with this startup. Everything changed. Not only did the father have to immediately begin looking for another job, but he had to do so with his wife recovering from surgery, a three-year-old son who would soon have to have his tonsils removed, and a week-old baby. And all of them were depending on him to provide food, clothing, and everything else, not to mention the medical bills that had not yet started arriving.

Overcome with fear, worry, and anxiety, he tried to pray. He knew that, unlike him, God was not in a state of shock over this situation. His words quickly morphed into tears. Just then he remembered his last conversation with his grandmother in the nursing home a few years ago, just weeks before she died. They had talked about living for God, and when he asked her favorite Bible verse, in a cogent moment she replied, “I don’t remember where it is, but I’ve always liked the one that says ‘I was young and now I am old, but I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.’” His grandmother’s paraphrase of Psalm 37:25 instantly became an anchor.

Mark had always trusted God with his family and finances, and trusting God proved fruitful. Between job interviews, Mark helped at home. The insurance covered more of the medical bills than he expected. By the end of the summer, he had a job offer with a higher salary and more benefits than the one he had lost.

Have you ever been in a similar situation? Can you trust God when you cannot track God (understand God)? It is helpful to remember that nothing catches Him off guard. As Paul rightly wrote: “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

BIBLE LESSON

I. BABEL AND UR

A. Another Rebellion

The floodwaters had washed away wickedness from the earth, but humanity’s propensity to sin remained. God desired the descendants of Noah to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Genesis 9:1). Instead, those called to replenish rebelled. Their stated goal is noted in Genesis 11:4: “Let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” Seemingly unaware of God’s covenant and knowingly disobedient of His command, the people set out to establish for themselves a permanent residence with a man-made tower at the center—a source of pride and protection from future floods.

Yet again, humanity deserved full and final judgment. And yet again, God chose to bestow mercy instead. In another example of undoing what He had done initially, the one who brought order to disorder in the days of Creation introduced disorder to the rebellious people by confusing their language. They were unable to communicate with one another, so they had no choice but to stop their ill-advised tower building program and spread out over the earth as the Lord had commanded them to do in the first place. God continued to prove Himself faithful to His covenant despite what humanity deserved.

B. Another Savior

As the population of the replenished world increased, so did sin. Another flood was justified. Perhaps the first few

times it rained, they breathed a sigh of relief when the rain stopped falling short of a flood. But after each thunderstorm, arched in the sky as if suspended from heaven itself, hung a rainbow as a sign of God's covenant. It reassured humanity that God was faithful to His promise. Free will remained one of God's greatest gifts to humanity. Those who willingly obeyed the Lord reaped the blessings. Prior to the Flood, Noah found grace in the eyes of God, and his obedience brought salvation for himself, his family, and the animal kingdom. Generations later, God's call for obedience was heeded by another man—Abram.

“Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee” (Genesis 12:1). We learn a few verses later: “So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him” (Genesis 12:4). Abram heard a command from God, and he obeyed that command without knowing exactly where he was going. His obedience resulted in a covenant with a promise from God to make him a blessing to all nations.

***DISCUSS:** Have you ever felt led of the Lord to do something or make a firm decision when you did not have the full picture or all the details?*

C. I will always hope in the gracious mercy of God.

We can be eternally grateful God does not give us what we deserve. Truthfully, we deserve judgment; He gives us mercy. We deserve death; He gives us life. Like a judge allowing a guilty person to go free, the mercy of God allows us to escape the death penalty of sin.

But since God is holy, He cannot just ignore sin; someone has to pay the penalty and suffer the sentence we deserve. The gospel—the beautiful covenant God's Word keeps pointing toward—teaches us that God Himself took our sins and our sorrows on Himself. He paid our penalty; He suffered our sentence. The covenant blessings of God go beyond a spiritual pardon. Not only do we not get what we deserve because of His mercy, but we get what we do not deserve because of His grace. Jesus announced: “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

***DISCUSS:** Have you ever felt hopeless about a situation outside your control? How did the Word of God help you navigate those feelings?*

II. GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

A. The Most Unlikely Choice

In Genesis 17:5, God renamed Abram as “Abraham,” a name that means “father of many nations.” Ironically, when God first called them, Abraham and Sarah were advanced in age and childless—not the optimistic scenario for a multitude of descendants. But God proved yet again that He can make something out of nothing. God cured Sarah's barrenness and gave her their promised son, Isaac. What Abraham and Sarah hoped would be an unveiling shortly after receiving the promise, proved to be more of a slow, twenty-five-year unfolding of God's prophetic word as they walked in covenant with Him.

God promised the following to Abraham: “And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make

thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:2–3). The rest of the Bible’s grand story invites readers to observe Abraham’s journey of faith as God’s fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant unfolds with each faith-filled step. Thanks to Abraham’s obedience and God’s faithfulness, we remain beneficiaries of God’s plan to bless the nations through Abraham.

B. Abraham Believed and Obeyed

Believe and obey are action words. Like Noah, Abraham put feet on his faith. When God told Abraham to go, Abraham went. As Abraham walked with God, God continued to reiterate and refine His covenant. Not surprisingly, Abraham battled fear and doubt throughout this long journey. He even sired a son named Ishmael when God did not answer as quickly as Abraham had hoped. During one moment of doubt, God instructed Abraham to look up toward heaven and count the stars. This was enough reassurance for Abraham. “He believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness” (Genesis 15:5–6).

***DISCUSS:** Have you ever doubted a promise from the Lord, only to be reassured of it in a miraculous way?*

The sign of the covenant for Noah was a rainbow in the sky; for Abraham and his descendants, it was circumcision. God commanded: “And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you” (Genesis 17:11). Then, God unfolded another prophetic page in His great master plan: “But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year” (Genesis 17:21). Abraham obeyed immediately; he and his entire household were circumcised.

C. I will seek encounters with God that renew my covenant relationship with Him.

Thanks to Abraham’s faithful obedience, this multi-generational covenant blessing reverberates still today. Abraham’s relationship with God serves as an example of how God desires to interact with humanity. He directs; we follow. He has a master plan for all of humanity collectively, but it unfolds in our lives individually.

The New Testament opens with these words: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matthew 1:1). When Abraham looked up at the night sky to count the stars, little did he know that one of his descendants would be Jesus Christ, God manifested in flesh, the “bright and morning star” (Revelation 22:16). All nations of the earth are blessed through the salvation offered in Jesus Christ, a salvation obtained through belief in and obedience to His gospel—His death, burial, and resurrection.

III. ABRAHAM’S FINAL TEST

A. The Call to Mount Moriah

Abraham’s walk of faith was not always easy. After Abraham received his promised son, God instructed Abraham to take Isaac up to Mount Moriah and sacrifice him as a burnt offering. Child sacrifice was a deplorable but common practice among the pagan tribes of the surrounding area, but never had the God of creation commanded such an act. Was Abraham willing to do for his God what pagans did for theirs? Abraham gathered the materials for the

sacrifice, and when Isaac asked about the lamb, in a bold prophetic statement of faith Abraham announced: “My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering” (Genesis 22:8).

By this point in Abraham’s covenant walk with God, he had learned to trust God completely. The writer of Hebrews provided insight into Abraham’s perspective. “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead” (Hebrews 11:17–19). How could a father obey a command to sacrifice his promised son? Abraham had unshakable faith that the God who gave him his son could raise his son back to life.

DISCUSS: *Has your faith ever been tested? How did you respond?*

B. God’s Final Provision

God honored Abraham’s faith, and the angel stopped him before he could sacrifice his son. As this relieved father of the faithful lifted up his eyes, he saw a ram caught in the thicket. Truly the Lord had provided a sacrifice. In that moment, Abraham glimpsed God as Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord who provides.

In beautifully prophetic form, this episode foreshadowed a future moment when God incarnate, Jesus Christ, would willingly offer Himself at Calvary as a sacrificial lamb for the sins of humanity. He quite literally provided Himself as a sacrifice—the only sufficient substitute for the death humanity rightly deserved. Abraham believed God could raise his promised son after death; Jesus’ empty tomb proved Abraham’s faith was justified. The promised Son of God rose victorious over death after three days.

Peter made it clear while preaching at the Temple that the Abrahamic covenant was fulfilled through Jesus Christ and sealed with the promise of the Spirit. “Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” (Acts 3:25–26).

C. Abraham’s Final Act of Faith

One wise man or woman said, “A faithful man walks by faith in the present while preparing for the future.” Years later, Abraham’s sweet Sarah died, and Abraham once again proved his exemplary faith. He purchased the cave of Machpelah in the Promised Land as a place to bury her. Generations later, Jacob charged his sons to bury him there as well. Over four centuries later, when the Israelites eventually made it into the Promised Land, they did so by following in Abraham’s footsteps. In a final act of faith, Abraham purchased land and therefore staked a claim of faith on the promise of God.

D. I will trust God with everything.

Abraham was human. He dealt with impatience, doubt, and frustration—like we do—while waiting for God’s promises to come to pass. Being in covenant with God does not always mean everything will make perfect sense. We must remind ourselves that God does not call us to understand; He calls us to trust. God proves Himself

trustworthy every day with each new sunrise. With His Spirit inside us and His Word to guide us, we have every reason to put every season into His nail-pierced hands. They hold us well. Speaking of Jesus, the writer of Hebrews wrote: “And again, I will put my trust in him” (Hebrews 2:13). Is there an “and again” step you need to take today?

DISCUSS: *Have you had to put to death any promises in your own life? Has it worked out for the better? If not yet, do you believe it will?*

Teacher Option: *Tell the story below or share one of your own to illustrate the value of trusting in God wholeheartedly—He will not let us fall.*

INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

On November 16, 2017, *CBS News* released a story on their website with the following headline: “Australian diplomat, playing a game of trust, dies in fall off terrace.”

Julian Simpson and several other people wanted to see the lights of the Empire State Building. While on a terrace on the seventh floor of an apartment building, a disagreement broke out between Julian and another man. Thirty-year-old Simpson leaned over the ledge to play the trust game, hoping to show his trustworthiness.

The friend, James Waugh, told police he held out his arm to catch Simpson, but the diplomat lost his grip and toppled over the ledge about 1:35 a.m., coming to a stop on a second-story landing outside the building. He was pronounced dead at the scene (cbsnews.com). The harrowing ordeal illustrates the limitations of our trust in other humans (if not the limits of our human wisdom).

There will be people in our lives whom we can trust, and we endeavor to reciprocate by being trustworthy for them. But there is only one who is perfect in all His ways. Proverbs tells us we are to trust in the Lord. He does all things well, and His timing is perfect.

Trust is easy when we feel close to God. It is easy when we can hear His still small voice and see His plan clearly. It can be considerably harder when we realize we are commanded to trust Him even when we do not understand what He is doing. In these times, trust becomes inconvenient.

Like Abraham and Noah discovered, learning to trust God is a process. Faithful obedience to the Word of God was a pivotal part of the learning process for them, as it is for us. It is likely we have made the mistake of trusting the wrong people in our lives. It is even more likely we have trusted ourselves to our own detriment.

We must learn from our trust falls and fails and remember that the only one we can trust completely and without inhibition is the Lord Jesus Christ. We often find it easier to trust Him with our future than we do our present—with the eternal more so than the temporal. We must trust Him with both.

Tragedy ensues when trust is betrayed. When we try to lean on something that is not reliable, true, able, or strong enough to hold us, it never works out in our favor. The Bible is definitive on whom we can trust: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct

thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5–6).

What about you? Is there something you are withholding from God? Is there an area of your life that has been off-limits to the Lord? He has proven Himself faithful to His covenant and to those walking with Him in covenant. Let the God of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob be God in your life today.