



www.WORDFORLIFESAYS.com

Sunday School Lesson

TOPIC:

“God Called Abram”

Genesis 12:1-9

VERSE DISCOVERY: Genesis 12:1-9 (KJV, Public Domain)

Prepare

- Who are some people you trust in your life? Why do you trust them? (Give space for answers)
- Ask a volunteer to come forward. We are going to do the famous “trust” exercise where one participant will allow themselves to fall backward into the arms of another. With your volunteer facing forward and you behind, ask, “Do you trust me? Do you trust me enough to not let you fall? Do you trust me enough to let go of what you may feel and fall backward, knowing no matter what, I will not drop you or let you fail?”
- Abram’s step of faith was like this. If he was going to get where God wanted him to go, he literally had to let go, and let God, and just follow wherever He leads.
- Do an internet search of object lessons dealing with Abram’s call.

Explore – Full Lesson Available on pages 6-13

Ur was not the best place where God could do his best work in the life of Abram. Haran too, was just a stop, but where God wanted Abram to follow would require that he turn his back on everything familiar and step out of his comfort zone into a new place of promise where God can grow something beautiful out of his life.

Just because you are used to something doesn’t mean it’s God’s best for you. Repeatedly, the Bible shows us stories and lives that were altered because one decided to answer the call of faith. Often, this required the individual to leave the comfortable and step into the unfamiliar.

Is your comfort zone holding you back? *Stepping Out of Your Comfort Zone* is an article I wrote, encouraging us to take bold new steps in life. It says:

“One thing I have reluctantly had to admit is that I don’t always have Abraham faith. When one really delves into his story, his story was laden with change. Change, often times, is something I have been pretty resistant to.”

Let's face it, leaving your own home is no small feat (Genesis 12:1), especially during the Bible era. In our day we have options to hop back on a plane and usually, there are provisions and backup plans that are available if that adventurous leap of faith didn't work out. And, this could all be done in a matter of hours.

I imagine it wasn't quite that easy back then. But, then again, maybe that's a good thing. Maybe not having easy access to falling back into one's comfort zone is a blessing in disguise for it forces that venture forward. It forces us to take on new terrain and enter new callings as we try to acclimate and navigate our new surroundings and circumstances.

Often I feel the ease of looking back hinders our progress. Uncharted territories can be scary, uncomfortable, and demanding of our time, talent, and emotions. But what if it leads to something greater? What if that step of faith allows you to do something miraculous that you could never see yourself doing? What if it opened new doors of opportunity that you never could have imagined being able to walk through?

I guess that's why it's called faith. Almost blindly, without full perception and without knowing where every piece of the puzzle already fits, we are asked to play along anyway. Engage in the unknown no matter what the current reality says. After all, according to the Bible, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," (Hebrews 11:1).

Comfort zones, though they appear safe, are in fact very dangerous. Walking in the land of familiarity may seem like a sure bet but in them lays unexpected traps. Traps where dreams lose their freshness. Traps where ideas lose their strength to be propelled forward. Traps where talents get wasted in this pit of unseen snares.

God has always wanted the best for all His people. But, when He calls, it is up to them to make the move. He may not be asking you to leave your homeland, but where or what do you feel Him pulling you toward? What area of your comfort zone has become so stale that now it too is very uncomfortable, yet, you're still too afraid to make a move?

If Abraham had not put action behind his calling, he would have never been dubbed the father of faith, and so many things in our biblical history would not be traced back to his stepping out moment." (©WordForLifeSays.com)

I wonder if we boldly step out today, what miraculous future events will point back to our time when we chose to leave the safety of our comfort zones?

One thing is for sure if we stay where we are, and if we keep doing the same thing over and over again, nothing will ever change. Don't substitute comfort and reluctance to change for what can be. Who knows what God wants to write in your future story? Step out of your comfort zone and let Him write something amazing!

Activities

- Each of us have our own journey of faith with God. Using the **Journal Page**, write about one of your journeys and what it meant to you. For kids, in the beginning of the lesson, I wrote a poem about stepping out in faith and journeying with God. Have kids write their own short and simple poem about trust and faith in God (can be as short as two lines).
- Younger students can draw a picture of Abram journeying in the **Draw the Scene** section found on site.
- **Walking Stick Craft:** Gather, if you are able, several good-sized walking sticks from outside such as twigs and sticks that may be laying on the ground. Clean them up a bit and have students decorate their stick. Use ribbons, stickers, paints, or whatever. Really, you are only limited by your imagination.
- Activity sheets such as **Word Search, Memory Verse, and more** are available for those who just want to work with printed materials.

Review

- Commit to memory the base verse from the lesson: ***“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).***
- Fill out the review sheet provided (page 14)
- Do an online search for games to help with lesson review. A simple game such as “Hangman” can turn review time into fun time.

Life

Throughout this week, pray that God shows you, you. Pray that He would help you to identify areas that may be hindering your growth but are hard to let go. Ask Him to help you follow with feet of faith wherever He is leading your life. Keep your ears, eyes, and heart open to receive what He has to say.

TOPIC: **“God Called Abram”**
Genesis 12:1-9

VERSE DISCOVERY: Genesis 12:1-9 (KJV, Public Domain)

*What once was
Will not always be,
When we follow the way
The Lord leads.*

*Abandoning the comforts
And safety we know,
Attaching oneself
To the One who speaks, “Go.”*

*Stepping out
In this journey of trust.
By faith, we follow,
Leaving the past in the dust.*

*One foot, one step,
We walk our way through.
Arriving in His promise
Where every word comes true.
©WordForLifeSays.com*

Every journey in life starts with a first step. That step, and the ones that come after it is the way to arrive at the destination that was hoped for.

For most people, when making such a drastic change in life, they have properly prepared for it well in advance. But, when you’re like Abram, there is no such thing. The call was made, what will he do with it? Will he make excuses as to why this is not the right time to uproot his family? Will he reason himself out of what lay ahead because he just doesn’t have enough

NOTES:

details to make a thoughtful and well-informed decision? Or will he go against the norms of rational, and put one foot in front of the other and walk where God says walk?

At this point, we all know that's exactly what he did. Let's examine the story of his call a little closer that we might find the encouragement to move when God asks us to move with nothing but faith as our guide.

GOD CALLED

Genesis 12:1-3 “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: 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.”

In order for there to be a complete blessing, there must be complete obedience. Our God is not a half-way God. He does all things well, and when He pursues individuals and welcomes them into His plans, He expects the same follow-through mentality He possesses. Often, this requires a great deal of faith.

And this, we will find out, is exactly what Abram did and why he is honored by God in the way that he was. At the command of God, he was willing to leave everything behind that attached him to his old life that he may be more attached to his relationship with God. Generally, this action is similar to what every Christian is called to do when God delivers them from what they used to do or be.

Back to Abram. While living life in the land of Ur, minding his business and going about what we assume was his daily routines or normal course of living, Abram's life was interrupted by God. This interruption would cause him to nix any plans he had for himself. This interruption would let him know that he was no longer the most important person in his life, and neither was his family. This interruption would speak of things the eyes have not yet seen but ask to walk that way anyhow. This interruption would change the life of Abram forever, but more importantly, it would help usher in the greatest change the world has ever seen.

NOTES:

In the place he was currently in, God said to leave it. Everything familiar, leave it. Everything you are comfortable with, leave it. Every person you have become attached to, leave them. The life they lived and the place where he was, was not conducive to what God had in store for this man.

Many times, we read stories like this and we think, “Oh, that’s all he had to do.” It’s more to it than that because whether you admit it or not, as humans, we like the familiar. We like the things that we are used to. We like the circle of people who we have come to know their little idiosyncrasies, and they have come to know ours. We like our positions in that circle of people, so leaving everything behind, especially in the most permanent way Abram was called to leave, takes faith.

God commanded him, **“Get thee out of thy country.”** Detach yourself, Abram, from everything that’s not a part of my plan for you. In that country, idol worshipping prevailed. In that country, people were not in a relationship with the one true God. That place would not foster the environment that would grow Abram to be the man that He has designed him to be, nor would it be the right environment for the promises and the people that God has in store for Abram’s future to reproduce and grow.

Some comfortable places are traps. Some of the familiar things that we have a hard time letting go of are keeping us from where God wants to take us. Abram had to choose, follow God or stay put and risk losing everything even though he didn’t know anything about where God was taking him.

Abram’s separation was to be a complete severance from **“thy kindred, and from thy father’s house.”** Walk away from everything and everyone, with only those that belong just to you in tow. Turn your back on that auntie who used to pinch your cheeks in the sweetest fashion every time she saw you. Your cousin, who was more like your best friend, you must leave behind. All familial holds had to be let go of.

He must go **“unto a land that I will shew thee.”** God knew where He was taking Abram, but Abram didn’t. One must wonder, what was it about this call that would inspire Abram to make such a sudden, life-altering choice. We don’t know exactly how God appeared to him or how the call was made, but for Abram, a man raised in idol worship, he was more than willing to do

NOTES:

what God asked him to do, and follow His leading, sight unseen. That's the true definition of faith (Hebrews 11:1).

Ur, he knew. Haran, he knew. Where God was taking him, he knew nothing about it. What would the land be like? Will it be enough to support us? Will it be enough to support our herds and the people I have with me? So many questions must have gone through his mind, yet if there were reservations, they were never allowed to manifest and become a hindrance of following through with where God called him to go. Rather, his faith was manifested in his obedience to go, in spite of it all.

God not only told him He had a land for him, but God also had promises attached to his act of faith in stepping out. God was going to **“bless”** Abram. That word **“bless”** meant there were going to be some good things that would come his way. Things that would be unattainable if he chose to stay where he was.

“I will make of thee a great nation” was one of the blessings attached to his step of faith. The man who didn't even have one heir at the time was promised a whole nation. Considering his age at the time (75), could Abram even fathom this sort of increase on the horizon? God was going to take Abram's nothing (from an heir point of view) and **“make”** it more than he could ever realize. God was going to create an entire **“nation”** from this one man of faith (see Genesis 17:4). God had a definitive plan in mind for this man and when he stepped out in faith, God would accomplish His purposes for him and his future family.

“I will bless thee” was the next portion of the promises for Abram. In general, God was going to honor Abram with His blessings which could really cover every area of his life (compare Genesis 24:1). God's favor would be evident upon Abram. God would be in a covenant relationship with Abram, and eventually, his people, and the state of their blessedness in Him will show (compare Genesis 24:35).

“And make thy name great” is designed around the reputation Abram (who would eventually become Abraham) would be known for. To this day, his name, attached to his steps of faith, is known and honored. He didn't leave for fame, but fame would follow his faith story.

“And thou shalt be a blessing.” All that Abram would be and become was not just for himself or his family. As God has blessed him, he would also bless others. Abram would **“be”** a blessing.

NOTES:

“And I will bless them that bless thee.” When favor was shown to this special man and this special family, God would take special note of it. One cannot bless the people of God and God not be pleased with it. When we treat others right, especially those in covenant relationship with God, God notices and rewards.

At the same time, if one mistreats these same ones, then God would turn their **“curse”** back on their own heads to bear. When God is in a covenant relationship with His people, God protects them.

Lastly, God promised, **“In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”** This was a promise that has been reiterated several times in Scripture (see Genesis 18:18; 22:18, and more). In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul noted in Galatians, “That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith,” (3:14). As Abraham received his promise through faith, so too do those who believe in Christ, be they, Jew or Gentile. When God stated, **“all families”**, that’s exactly what He meant. He left the door open for any believing heart to have access to what Christ has to offer. And Christ would come through the line of Abraham and his family, extending the blessings of God to whoever will receive Him.

ABRAM RESPONDED

Genesis 12:4-5 “So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.”

Abram responded to the call of God in a positive fashion. He obeyed. When he **“departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him,”** it means he obeyed what the Lord instructed him. Abram’s faith, as well as our own, is tied to obedience. Obedience says, I don’t know everything, and he didn’t, but I trust God enough to step into the unknown and do what He has asked me to do.

NOTES:

Abram is seventy-five years old at this point in his life. How difficult would it have been to leave everything when one is probably well-planted and settled where he is? Yet, leave is what he did because this is what the **“Lord had spoken unto him.”** He moved his life and his family under the direction of God.

Many years later, one of Israel’s future leaders will make a bold declaration for him and his house in obeying what God wills for their life. Joshua stood and spoke with his faith, and said, **“As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD,”** (Joshua 24:15). Whether it’s addressing the issue of properly serving God as opposed to those who went after what is false, or as in Abram’s story of faith that has him trekking on an unknown journey because it is what God commands for his life, both scenarios are journeys of obedience, both require faith, and both had the whole family that belonged to them involved.

When Abram departed, he didn’t go it alone. He had responsibilities to those who belong to him to include them in on what God was doing in his life now and in the future. They had to follow him as he followed God. Therefore, Abram **“took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran”** with him and they would witness firsthand what faith in following God looked like through their obedient leader.

“They went forth to go into the land of Canaan.” **“They”**, all those journeying with Abram followed Abram and **“they”** all **“went forth to go into the land of Canaan.”** They may have not understood but they followed Abram. They all left Haran.

“And into the land of Canaan they came.” As Abram would soon find out, this place they were entering was going to be the same place God said He would show him. This place was going to be a pivotal place throughout their history for so many wonderful things of faith. This place was going to belong to him and his people. Others may live there now, but it would be their Promised Land.

ABRAM’S JOURNEY AND WORSHIP

Genesis 12:6-9 “And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the Lord appeared unto

NOTES:

Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.”

If you have ever journeyed on a long trip, you know the sheer joy of arriving. Arriving means your destination has been reached. Arriving means whatever travail occurred during the trip can be put into the back of your mind because you are here now and that’s all that matters.

Abram’s journey started on nothing but pure faith in what God promised, and now he is in that very place of promise. How awesome!

Coming into the land, Abram **“passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh.”** He was walking through his promise. Every step he took, every piece of land he crossed in that place was already his. This land, though inhabited by **“the Canaanite”** at that time, his descendants will rightfully claim as their own because he stepped out in faith.

Verifying all of this, **“the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.”** **“This land”** was promised by God. **“This land”**, the very parcel of ground where he stood, and all the borders of the region God would lay out for him was his and his **“seed.”** God gave it to them. God promised it to Abram (see also Genesis 15:18-21). He may be a *“stranger”* in this place right now, but God was giving it to him for an *“everlasting possession”* (Genesis 17:8).

Many, many other verses in the Bible verify this land of promise by God belongs to Abram and his descendants. God spoke to Isaac, his future son, when a famine hit the area, saying, “Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father,” (Genesis 26:3). And unto Jacob, He said, “I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed,” (Genesis 28:13). With many more references throughout God’s holy Word, Abram has the assurance that he is in the place God had for him. His step of faith led him into what was previously unknown territory into the remarkable position of standing in that very place of promise.

NOTES:

The leaving was worth it. The journey was worth it. The stepping out into the unknown was worth it. God did exactly what He said He would do, and as he looked around the land, and the mountains, and the plains and seeing all the places of **“Moreh”, “Bethel”, and “Hai”** in his journey, he could see nothing but the fulfillment of everything he hoped for in God. It was no longer just a dream, but the expectations of that dream had been rewarded to him for his faith. Physically, and literally, he could see all God had in store for him.

And so, he worshipped. Worship should always be a part of one’s journey with God, and worship should also be prevalent when we get to where God was leading us (before, during, and after – at all times, Psalm 34:1). Abram built **“an altar unto the LORD, who appeared to him.”**

Abram, through his faith, through his obedience to go, and through his worship, centered his life on the **“LORD.”** Herein is a great example to live by. Knowing and recognizing who it is that has authored not only our lives, but everything in between, and giving Him the proper glory that is due to His name.

Abram **“called upon the name of the LORD”** and blessed and honored publicly the same God who so blessed and honored him. He stepped out in faith, and in that same faith, he is declaring his devotion to God alone.

One man out of all the men of the earth. Taken out of one nation to begin a new nation. Out of this, one family will increase and grow until centuries later it gives birth to one Savior who will save all mankind from their sins when they turn to Him in faith.

All this started, by faith. That faith led to obedience, which then led to the fulfillment of everything God promised.

As he continued **“toward the south”** one can imagine him taking in more and more of the land in utter amazement. What an awe-inspiring feeling that must have come over him as he took it all in.

One step. One journey. One very happy result in the end.

Everybody is not called to take the same journey as Abram did, but when God calls, we are all to respond the same way: in faith and obedience.

NOTES:

TOPIC:

“God Called Abram”

Genesis 12:1-9

Please Answer the Review Questions Below

1. **T or F.** Abram had to leave his land and his family to follow God’s call. (Gen. 12:1).
2. “I will make of thee a great _____.” (Gen. 12:2)
A. Nation B. People C. Man D. None
3. What are some of the blessings God was going to give to Abram? (Gen. 12:2-3)

4. Who are some of the people Abram took with him? (Gen. 12:5)

5. The name of the land of promise was _____. (Gen. 12:5)
A. Bethel B. Hai C. Canaan D. None
6. **T or F.** Abram was 100 years old when Abram departed from Haran. (Gen. 12:4)
7. What are some things you took away from this lesson that focuses on our faith to follow God wherever He leads us?

