

LESSON 10

God Gives Abram a New Name

GENESIS 17:1-10, 15-21



BIBLE TRUTH

GOD AFFIRMS HIS PROMISE, AND ABRAHAM BOWS TO GOD'S AUTHORITY

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. **OPENING REVIEW** **5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
2. **BIBLE STORY** **10 MIN**
Read Genesis 17:1–10, 15–21 from the Scriptures or read story 10, “God Gives Abram a New Name,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
3. **OBJECT LESSON 1** **10 MIN**
How Long Do Things Last?
SUPPLIES:
✓ flashlight with working batteries
4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** **10 MIN**
5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** **15 MIN**
What’s in a Name?
SUPPLIES:
✓ paper and pencils
6. **WORD BIBLE MEMORY** **5 MIN**
7. **ACTIVITY TIME** **15 MIN**
Covenant
SUPPLIES:
✓ paper
✓ colored pencils
✓ tape
8. **CLOSING PRAYER** **5 MIN**
9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** **10 MIN**
A Multitude
SUPPLIES:
✓ paper
✓ pens or pencils

TOTAL 85 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

A note to the teachers: Chapter 17 includes the introduction of circumcision, which is described as an operation to the foreskins of the males in the house of Abraham. The most explicit verses have been passed over so as to avoid the need to explain what a foreskin is. Should a child inquire as to the nature of circumcision, simply refer them to their parents for a more detailed explanation. It is not that we are afraid of these topics, but rather, we do not want to infringe on the intimacy between a parent and child that can be fostered by discussing these topics.

Abram attempts to fulfill God’s promise—It had been about 24 years since God had called Abram and promised him offspring, but Abram still had no children. His wife, Sarai, was just too old. In those days it was a disgrace for a woman to bring her husband no son to carry on the family name, so Sarai offered her servant, Hagar, as a second wife for Abram. Hagar bore him a son, Ishmael.

But Ishmael was born normally, without a miracle, and this was not God’s plan. (Paul explains this in Galatians 4:22–23.) God didn’t need help from Abram, Sarai, or Hagar to fulfill his promise. He was going to do something amazing!

God renames Abram—God changes Abram’s name (Abram means “father of many”) to Abraham, which means “father of the multitude.” So here was a 99-year-old man named “father of many” who had only one child suddenly telling people his new name was “father of the multitude”! Some people must have laughed, but in Scripture we don’t see Abraham being embarrassed. Instead, he took the name in faith.

Abraham worships God—Abraham was 75 when God first promised to give him many offspring. By Genesis 17 he is 99 years old and his wife Sarai still has no child. But when God visits Abraham again, Abraham does not complain. He worships God by falling on his face.

God repeats his promise about Abraham’s many offspring. God also renames Sarai, Sarah, and gives Abraham the commandment about circumcision. Abram obeys the Lord that very day. In Romans 4:11 Paul says that Abraham “received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised.”

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Everlasting

God can issue an everlasting covenant because he is an everlasting being. Psalm 90:2 tells us from everlasting to everlasting he is God! God's covenant with Abraham will last forever. We are also the beneficiaries of this covenant and will be celebrating this covenant in heaven with Abraham!

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Philippians 2:5–11.

God renamed Abram, Abraham, which means "father of the multitude." The Hebrew meaning of the name shows that God was not just promising that Abraham would have a large number of descendants. God was promising that through Abraham's offspring salvation would come to many people.

Names are important to God, and he chooses them on purpose. God instructed his Son to be named Jesus, which means "Jehovah is salvation." Jesus is the one who brings the salvation of many that God promised when he changed Abram's name to Abraham. Jesus humbled himself on a cross, and God gave to him a name above all names.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW

5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY

10 MIN

Read Genesis 17:1–10, 15–21 from the Scriptures or read story 10, "God Gives Abram a New Name," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 **10 MIN**

How Long Do Things Last?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ flashlight with working batteries

Turn on the flashlight and place it on a table, pointed toward the class. Ask the children how long the light will last. They may guess a day or an hour. Ask the children how this light is like the rest of the things we have in this world. The answer is that the light, like the things of this world, is passing away. Ask the children to guess how long the following things might last. What might happen as they pass away?

- A gallon of milk if left out of the refrigerator
- A gallon of milk if kept in the refrigerator
- A bicycle tire
- A car windshield wiper blade
- A pair of jeans
- An ice cream cone on a hot day
- A pencil eraser
- A brand new baseball cap
- A fresh piece of gum
- An apple tree
- A penny
- God’s covenant with Abraham (“everlasting” [Genesis 17:7])

Abraham would not have known anything to be everlasting. The promises of God, however, are everlasting. Ask, “Is the promise to Abraham still going on today? How? (It is still going on today and is represented in the gospel, which transforms lives. All who believe in the gospel are called Abraham’s children. Therefore, the stars in the sky that have yet to be counted represent Abraham’s children that have yet to be named.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN

What's in a Name?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper and pencils

Divide the children into groups. Have each of the groups develop a short skit depicting when Abraham tells his family of his name change.

Abram explains that even though his wife is barren and very old, he is going to change his name from “father of many” to “father of the multitude.” The people jeer, but Abraham’s faith remains unshaken.

Ask the children whether they think that faith is sometimes difficult to live out in front of family and friends. Ask them to describe a time when they were afraid of the opinions of others. Some areas to explore include sharing the gospel with friends, worshiping with hands raised in public, praying in front of others, etc.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN

Covenant

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ colored pencils
- ✓ tape

Have the children write the word “covenant” in the center of their paper and then with colored pencils write words that relate to covenant. For example, words like promise, everlasting, faithful, many generations, etc. They can fill their paper with a field of stars, coloring the words and stars different colors. Tape their pictures onto a wall, and talk about the words they used.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

A Multitude

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ pens or pencils

Give each student a sheet of paper. The children will be drawing diagrams like family trees, using stars. Have them write the name Abraham at the top of the page. Draw a line below Abraham pointing to a star. Then have two short lines come out of the star and draw a star at the end of each. These two stars represent Jacob and Esau. From Jacob draw twelve lines with stars on the end. Then from each of those stars draw two lines with two stars each. Continue and repeat the pattern of drawing two lines and a star from each star until the whole page is full. Then ask the children to count all the stars. These represent all the descendants of Abraham. If they have difficulty counting all the stars on their page, imagine counting all the stars in the sky! That is how many descendants God told Abraham he would have. This exercise should help them to see how from one man God could bring a multitude.