



God Makes a Covenant With Abram

Genesis 15:1-18

Preteens like to make their own plans and then convince the adults in their lives to go along with them. They're not happy when plans are made for them, particularly when those plans involve younger siblings or interfere with something they've planned to do. Use this lesson to guide kids' discovery that our plans don't always go the way we imagine, but God's plans are always good and for our benefit.



► **Bible Point**
God has good plans for us.


Key Verse
“ ‘For 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).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Kids will discover that God cares to make good plans for their lives.

LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	The Best Path <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Try to figure out a path on a grid while only one person knows where to go.	masking tape, noisemaker	Use masking tape to make a 6x8-foot grid on the floor. Each square on the grid needs to be about 1 foot wide. Refer to the illustration by the activity for help.
2 Bible Exploration	Abram Meets God <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Prepare and perform a drama of an encounter with God based on Genesis 15:1-18.	Bibles, CD player, black paper, pens, yellow tissue paper, tape, markers, modeling clay Teacher Pack: CD	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	God Meets Us <i>(about 10 min.)</i> List fears they have, and sing a song about the Key Verse (Jeremiah 29:11).	Bible Buzz, CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), pens Teacher Pack: CD, “Key Verse” stickers 	Tear out the Lesson 10 pages from each Bible Buzz student book.
	Future Dreamers <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Discuss their personal plans for the future.	Bible Buzz, pens	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word.	Bible Buzz	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Bible Buzz	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



God Makes a Covenant With Abram

Genesis 15:1-18

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

God Reveals His Plan to Abram

Abram had just returned from defeating a coalition of kings to rescue his nephew, Lot, and God appeared to him in a vision. Notice that in Haran God simply spoke to Abram; later in Canaan God appeared before Abram; now God appeared in a lengthy vision. With each meeting, God's plan for Abram became a bit more clear.

God's first words to Abram were words of comfort. What was bothering Abram was Abram's continuing lack of a son to be his heir. In response to God's words of comfort, Abram poured out his heart—pleading with God to bless him in this one area he'd not yet received God's promised blessing.

Abram Displays Faith in God

When God assured Abram by restating his promise that Abram would have his own son, Abram responded in faith. He believed God, and God declared him righteous because of his faith! Nothing that Abram could *do* in obedience to God could make him righteous, but his faith in God did!

To give Abram complete assurance, God made a covenant with him. In those days a covenant was a very serious thing. The cutting in half of animals described in Genesis 15:10 was to signify that the same would happen to any party breaking the covenant. Notice, however, that Abram wasn't asked to pass between the animals, which would have sealed his commitment to the covenant. Only God, symbolized by the smoking firepot and blazing torch, passed and sealed God's commitment to the covenant. Only God was required to fulfill the covenant.

God Promises to Bless Abram's Descendants

Another interesting note is that each type of animal that was sacrificed was later used in particular cleansing ceremonies and sacrifices.

God's listing of all the things that were to come for Abram's descendants accomplished at least two things: First, it confirmed that God's promise would come true because God could see the results more than 400 years in the future. Second, it assured Abram that even though his people would endure hardship, they would eventually possess the land as God had promised.

The Jesus Connection

Make this your prayer today: *God, your plans are perfect. We thank you for Jesus, who revealed your plans and helped us see that when we follow your direction, you're with us at every step.*

When have you recognized God's plans for you? It's a special feeling when God guides you. Pray for God's guidance for the individuals in your ministry. You can write your prayer here.





The Best Path Supplies

masking tape
noisemaker

The Best Path Easy Prep

Use masking tape to make a 6x8-foot grid on the floor. Each square on the grid needs to be about 1 foot wide. Refer to the illustration for help.

1 GETTING STARTED

The Best Path

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Direct kids to one of the six-square sides of the grid you made.

Say: **You're going to work together to get through this path, but there are only certain squares you can step on. Your goal is to figure out which squares you can step on to get through the path. If you step on a wrong square, you'll have to turn around and come back.** Demonstrate. **You'll go through the path one at a time by stepping on individual squares. If you step on the correct square, you can take another step to a connecting square. If you step on the wrong square, you'll hear this noisemaker.** Demonstrate the noisemaker. **Then you'll have to follow your path back off the grid. It will then be the next person's turn to continue where you left off. That person will have to follow what you know to be the right path to that point and take the next step.**

Here's a clue: Watch where your teammates step so you know which squares are safe. You can follow that path, because you'll already know it's safe.

But here's the catch: None of you can make a sound. You have to figure out how to work together in other ways.

The first person to go will start by stepping on one of the outside squares. When you have figured out the correct path, you'll all need to follow the path through the grid.

Invite the person with the closest birthday to go first. Follow the Xs in the illustration for the correct path. If a child steps on a square that isn't marked with an X, sound the noisemaker. When a child steps on a correct square, do nothing. Remind kids when they hear the noisemaker that they need to move back in the direction they came from and give the next person a try.

			X		
		X			
		X			
		X	X		
				X	X
					X
				X	X
			X		

Talk With Kids ■■■■

When everyone has gone through the path, have kids sit in a circle to talk about the experience. Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why was it difficult for you to determine the correct path?



- What did you do to help each other through the maze?
- What would've made it easier?
- In what ways is this game like or unlike God's plans for us in our lives?



Say: **We have plans for ourselves, but we have no way of telling what's ahead or where to go. ► GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US** because God knows what's best for us and where best to lead us. Today we're going to hear about a man who learned about God's good plans.

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Abram Meets God

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **We're going to look at the way God revealed his plan for Abraham's life. Abraham is called the father of our faith because he believed in God's plan. In fact, Abraham's name originally was Abram, but God later changed it to Abraham, which means "father of many." Today we're going to revisit God's encounter with Abram, when God revealed his plan for Abram's future.**

Have kids open their Bibles to Genesis 15:1-18. **Everything we'll hear today comes from Genesis 15:1-18. As we dig into today's Bible passage, let's re-create with the art supplies what we hear on the CD. We'll make 3-D representations as we go.**

Set out the art supplies and play "Abram Meets God" (track 18 on the CD), pausing the CD when you're prompted.

After the first pause, say: **God gave Abram an example of the number of offspring, or family, he would have by looking at the stars in the night sky. Poke some holes in a piece of black paper. Then rip small pieces of yellow tissue paper and pull them through the holes so just a little end sticks out. These will represent the stars.** Allow two minutes. **Now fold your paper in half and unfold it so you can stand it up.**

Play the next segment of the track, pausing again when you're prompted.

After the second pause, say: **As part of the covenant God made with Abram, God asked him to sacrifice animals—something that was common in Abram's time. With the modeling clay, make two of the animals Abram was asked to sacrifice. Stand them up in front of your night sky.** Allow two minutes. Then play the next segment of the track, pausing again when you're prompted.

After the third pause, lower the lights in the room to simulate the darkness that surrounded Abram. Then play the last segment of the track. After the fourth pause, say: **God's way of sealing or making his covenant with Abram official was to pass**

Abram Meets God Supplies

- Bibles
- CD player
- black paper
- pens
- yellow tissue paper
- tape
- markers
- modeling clay
- Teacher Pack**
- CD: "Abram Meets God" (track 18)





a smoking firepot and a blazing torch between the pieces of the animals Abram sacrificed. Use the tissue paper and tape to create representations of these items, and tape them on your sky between the clay animals you created. Allow three minutes.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- If you could, what would you ask Abram about this experience?
- What about God's plans and what God asked Abram to do seem odd to you?
- What makes it difficult to follow plans you don't understand?
- Abram believed God's signs. Tell about a time you felt like God was clearly speaking to you.

Say: Abram experienced God's plans at work in his life. We all have a chance to experience God's plans in our lives, too. From the beginning of time, God planned to send Jesus to have a relationship with each of us, and he followed through on that plan. When we get to know Jesus and have a relationship with him, we experience the greatest plan God ever had! Let's look at a promise from the Bible about how ► **GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

God Meets Us

God Meets Us Supplies

Bible Buzz
CD player
copies of the lyrics page
(at the end of this
lesson)

pens

Teacher Pack

CD: "The Plans I Have
for You" (Jeremiah
29:11) (track 19)
"Key Verse" stickers

God Meets Us Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 10
pages from each Bible
Buzz student book.

What You'll Do ■■■■

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and make sure everyone has a pen. Invite a willing child to read aloud the Key Verse, Jeremiah 29:11, from the Bible Buzz page: " 'For 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.' " Then play "The Plans I Have for You" (Jeremiah 29:11) (track 19 on the CD). Sing along with the kids, and refer to the lyrics page for the words.



(Chorus)

"For I know the plans I have for you,"

Declares the Lord.

"I know the plans I have for you,"

Declares the Lord.

(Repeat.)

**They are plans to prosper you
And not to harm you,
Plans to give you hope and a future.**



**They are plans for good and not disaster.
Why? Because he tells us so.**

(Repeat from the beginning; then repeat chorus.)

“The Plans I Have for You” (Jeremiah 29:11) by Ben Glover. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

After the song, give each person a “Key Verse” sticker. Then have kids write on their stickers a fear they have about the future.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you think the Key Verse tells us about the purpose behind God’s plans for our lives?**
- **What makes this verse sometimes hard to believe?**
- **How can the promise in the Key Verse help you with the fear of the future you wrote?**

Say: **Take your “Key Verse” sticker home, and stick it to a notebook or wear it for the day to remind you that ► GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US no matter the fears we may have about the future. As you look at your sticker, remember what God planned for Abram and how God’s plans brought about the best things for Abram’s life. God has the same kind of plans to bring about the best for *your* life, too. Let’s dream a little about what those plans could be.**

Future Dreamers

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Have kids form pairs and find the “My Plans” section on their Bible Buzz page.

Say: **Work with your partner to follow the directions on your Bible Buzz page and complete this section. When you’re finished, talk with your partner about the questions at the end of the activity.** Allow time.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What’s hard about planning for the future?**
- **What are simple ways you can invite God into your plans?**
- **If God’s plans are different from yours, why would you or wouldn’t you trust God’s plans to be better?**



Future Dreamers Supplies

.....
Bible Buzz
pens





Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Buzz

Say: **We all have our own plans for our lives, and that's great. But ► GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US, too. We can work to make sure our plans line up with God's by consistently talking to God about our plans. Abram talked to God all the time along his journey, and God led him to the best things for his life. Let's consider how to trust in God's good plans this week.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's decide on ways we can trust that ► GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US this week.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Buzz page and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Talk to God about the plans you wrote on your Bible Buzz page.**
- **As you make plans, consider what God would like or dislike about the plans.**
- **Ask God to guide you in making your dreams for your future come true.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas. Allow time.**

Say: **Even though it was hard to believe Abram could have a son, God had good plans for him. Let's keep dreaming about the future, remembering that ► GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**



Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about God’s good plans for our lives. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Buzz pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.

Have kids pick a plan from the “My Plans” section on their Bible Buzz page that they’re most excited about. Then close with this prayer.

Pray: **God, thank you for making good plans for us that’ll bring about the best for our lives. Please help us to trust in your plans and the way you made us to carry out those plans. Guide us as we work toward our plans for this week, like...** Invite kids to share what they chose from their Bible Buzz page. **In Jesus’ name, amen.**



Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

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Bible Buzz



**Lyrics** ■■■■**The Plans I Have for You (Jeremiah 29:11)**

(Chorus)

“For I know the plans I have for you,”

Declares the Lord.

“I know the plans I have for you,”

Declares the Lord.

(Repeat.)

They are plans to prosper you

And not to harm you,

Plans to give you hope and a future.

They are plans for good and not disaster.

Why? Because he tells us so.

(Repeat from the beginning; then repeat chorus.)

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