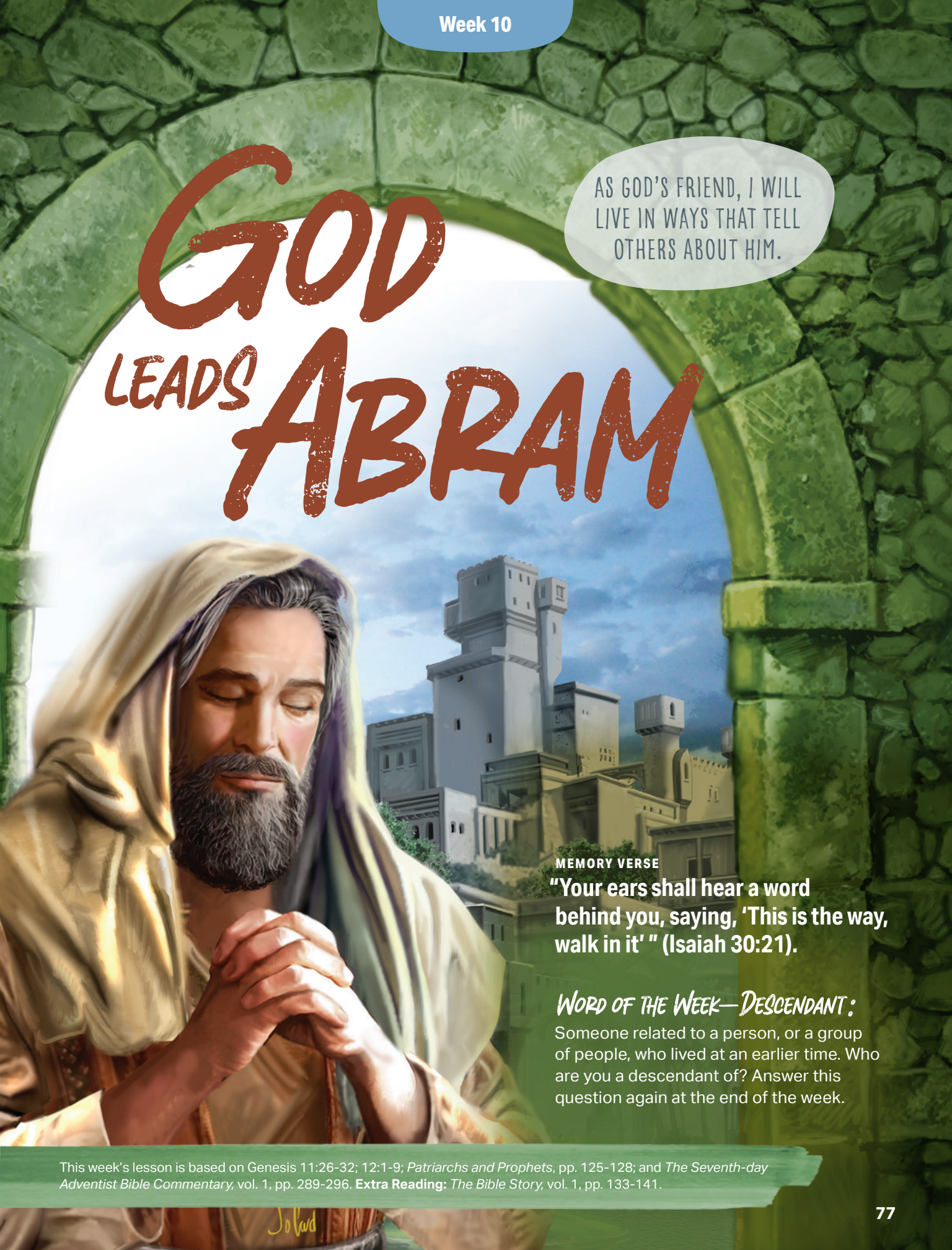
# God Leads Abram

AS GOD'S FRIEND, I WILL LIVE IN WAYS THAT TELL OTHERS ABOUT HIM.



**MEMORY VERSE**

**"Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it' " (Isaiah 30:21).**

## Word of the Week—Descendant:

Someone related to a person, or a group of people, who lived at an earlier time. Who are you a descendant of? Answer this question again at the end of the week.

This week's lesson is based on Genesis 11:26-32; 12:1-9; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 125-128; and *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 289-296. **Extra Reading:** *The Bible Story*, vol. 1, pp. 133-141.

SUNDAY

# Spreading Out

Groups of people slowly trudged away from Babel to rebuild their lives. From this city in ruins, "the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth" (Genesis 11:9). Soon little farms, villages, and towns were popping up everywhere, as God had intended.

The family of Noah's son Japheth became known as Japhethites. The Bible tells us that many lived by the sea and sailed on the seas, spreading out all over the world and making new nations.

Ham's family moved across the lands, building many cities and kingdoms. One of Ham's sons was named Mizraim, the Hebrew word for Egypt, and one Canaan—do you recognize these names? Both family groups formed great nations a long way from Babel. Ham's son Cush was the father of the Bible's most famous hunter. What's his name? **Read Genesis 10:9.** This mighty man and his family formed the kingdom of Babylon; then later he built the city of Nineveh. What story do you know that was later set in Nineveh?

Shem's family journeyed southeast through the hill countries and began building villages and the mighty city of Ur on the banks of the beautiful Euphrates River. Shem had many children who had more children. The Bible records nine generations of sons (families, one after the other) from Shem to a very special son, Abram.

What a big family—all different, yet all loved and sent by God. Over time Noah's descendants ended up all over the earth. Why did this happen? **Read Genesis 11:9** (second half).

**Pray:** Thank God that you are part of His big family of children, in all different places, all over the world.

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *Think back to last week's lesson: Why do you think God wanted the families to spread out?*
- *Where might you have liked to go and why?*

**Do:** Learn "Hello, God loves you" in the language of someone who is new to your country and share it with them this week.





MONDAY

# God's Friend in Ur

A busy hum drifted all over the city of Ur. People jostled in the streets, bargained in the shops, worshipped idols in the temples, and shouted as ships were unloaded at the ports. Into this busyness Abram was born. His father, Terah, was a very rich and well-known shepherd who had many servants to look after his large flocks of sheep and cattle.

As Abram grew up, Terah told wonderful stories about great-grandfather Noah and the Flood, Enoch, faithful Abel, and Adam and Eve. These stories lodged a deep and pure love for God in Abram's heart. He wanted to be faithful, like his ancestors in the stories. He also wanted to be kind and good so others would know that God is always kind and good.

While many people in the city, and even in Abram's own home, worshipped idols and invited him to do the same, he didn't want to. What good was an idol? Abram hadn't heard any beautiful stories about how much idols loved him! No. He would stick with God and be His friend.

Sometimes Abram may have felt lonely for a friend in Ur who truly loved God as He did. But even then his love for God didn't change, because he knew something important. What did Abram know? **Read Psalm 145:18.**

**PRAY:** Ask God to help you know Him as a best friend, as Abram did.

As he was growing up, Abram talked with God and listened to God and thought about God. This is why the Bible says in James 2:23, "Abraham believed God. . . . And he was called the friend of God." What a beautiful thing it is to be known as God's friend.

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *What Bible stories help you love God as a friend? Think about your friends. Do you help them love God more?*



**SERVICE CHALLENGE:** What can you do to help your friends love God more? Write down as many ways as you can think of. Choose one of your ideas and put it into action. You may like a family member to help you.

**DO:** Imagine you are a news reporter in Ur. One day you meet the young boy named Abram, who is different from all those around him. Present a positive news report about him to your family.

TUESDAY

# Listening to God

**Parent Faith Talk:** Share a time God has spoken to you in one of the following ways: through the Bible, a godly person, a spiritual song, your conscience, or through nature.

**Pray:** Thank God for speaking to you and ask Him to help you hear what He says.

**Do:** Whisper your memory verse very quietly to a family member. How carefully did they have to listen? We can listen carefully to God too.

God had washed wickedness from the world and then confused languages to try to help His children put their trust in Him as their loving friend. But like fog on a river, that same wickedness had crept back, until it was almost everywhere. Ever since Adam and Eve's choice to disobey God, our world has been in this back-and-forth struggle between good and evil.

So God decided to do something big and loving to help. He wouldn't use water or languages or lightning this time. No, He would use a man. A very special man who was His faithful friend. If you were God, whom would you use?

God's faithful friend had grown from a boy to a man. And his friendship with God had become even stronger. Abram and God often talked together, trusting each other in beautiful ways.

One day Abram heard God say, "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1).

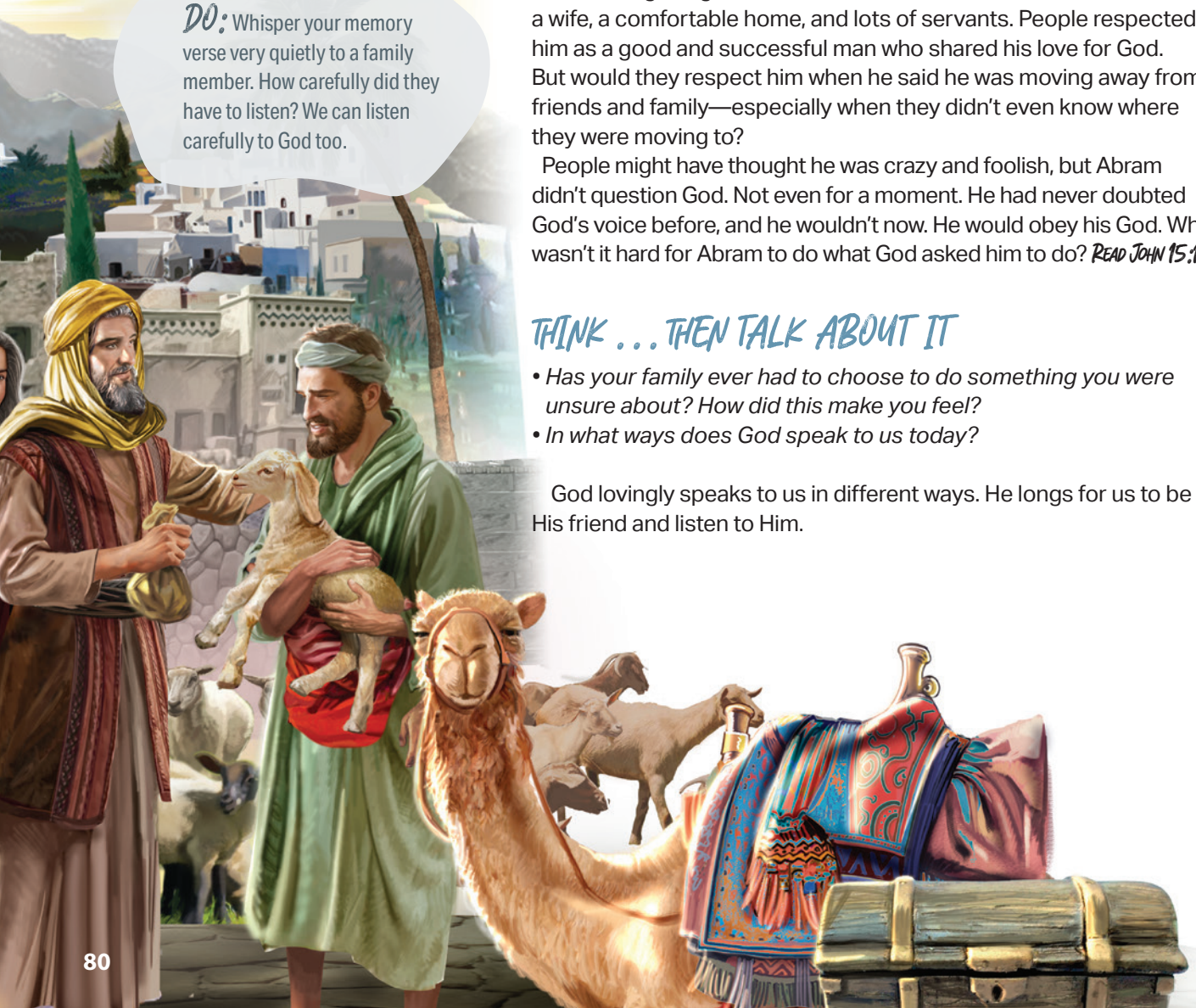
What a big thing to be asked to do! Abram was now a rich man with a wife, a comfortable home, and lots of servants. People respected him as a good and successful man who shared his love for God. But would they respect him when he said he was moving away from friends and family—especially when they didn't even know where they were moving to?

People might have thought he was crazy and foolish, but Abram didn't question God. Not even for a moment. He had never doubted God's voice before, and he wouldn't now. He would obey his God. Why wasn't it hard for Abram to do what God asked him to do? **Read John 15:14.**

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *Has your family ever had to choose to do something you were unsure about? How did this make you feel?*
- *In what ways does God speak to us today?*

God lovingly speaks to us in different ways. He longs for us to be His friend and listen to Him.



**DO:** Draw the moon at the top of a piece of paper. Then spend 30 seconds quickly making as many dots on the page as you can to represent the stars. Can you count them all? God's loving children, through Abram, are too many to count!

**SERVICE CHALLENGE:** Ask a family member to help you shine God's love, like a bright star, to someone on your street or in your area. You might collect their trash cans, bring in their mail, show them something you like, or share a talent to make them happy. (Make sure you do this with your mom or dad close by!)

**PRAY:** Stars have five points. Thank God for five things He promises you in His Word.

☐ **WEDNESDAY**

# TRUSTING A PROMISE

Abram bowed reverently and listened carefully, for God was still talking to him. God had shared an instruction, and now He shared a promise. What promise did God share? READ GENESIS 12:2.

What a wonderful personal message to hear from the voice of God! It was especially meaningful for Abram and his wife, Sarai, as they had no children. So first it was the promise of a baby, and second a promise of many, many descendants.

Later on, when Abram wondered if God really would do this great thing, God took Abram outside into the inky darkness. His voice said softly, "Look at the sky. There are so many stars you cannot count them. And your descendants will be too many to count" (Genesis 15:5, ICB).

Gazing up at the twinkling stars, Abram felt humbled. God was going to bless him so that He could then bless many, many people in the future—so many they could never be counted! And they would shine as stars to show others about God, just as Abram did. He had always tried to live and talk in ways that would show what his loving God was like. Now God was going to help him show the whole world!

God had promised, "And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:3). Abram may have wondered if it could be that the promised Savior would one day come through his descendants to bless "all the families of the earth" (Genesis 12:3). He really wasn't sure, but he may have carried that hope in his heart. Today we know that Jesus did come from Abraham's family line and blessed the world by bringing us the gift of salvation from sin.

## THINK . . . THEN TALK ABOUT IT

- *Which of God's promises do you hold in your heart? What is the main idea of your favorite promise?*
- *How can you show others what God is like?*



**PRAY:** Thank God for Abram's example to faithfully follow instructions. Ask Him to help you follow His instructions in His Word, the Bible.

☐ **THURSDAY**

# Moving Day

With God's promise in his heart, the call to leave Ur on his mind, and courage to drive him forward, Abram got busy preparing for the journey ahead. He rounded up the cattle, gathered the sheep from the pastures, organized the servants, packed the household, and safely stowed his gold and silver.

The neighbors noticed all the activity and likely came to check out what was happening. Confidently Abram told them he was following instructions from the God he loved, to go to another land—a promised land. He couldn't tell them where, but that didn't worry him. He had shared about his love for God in Ur. Now his leaving would tell of his faithfulness too. God had told him what to do, and he knew, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man" (Psalm 118:8).

When moving day dawned, Abram; his father, Terah; and his whole household said their goodbyes and set out in an organized line called a caravan. Donkeys and camels trudged along, loaded down with goods. Servants herded animals, and the big family walked alongside.

By day they traveled, and at night they cooked over the campfire, then drifted off to sleep in their tents.

Finally they stopped and set up home in the city of Haran to give everyone a rest. Just as he had in Ur, Abram lived a kind, good life there. He taught the city dwellers about God, and some began to worship with Abram's family. What else happened here? **Read Genesis 11:32.**

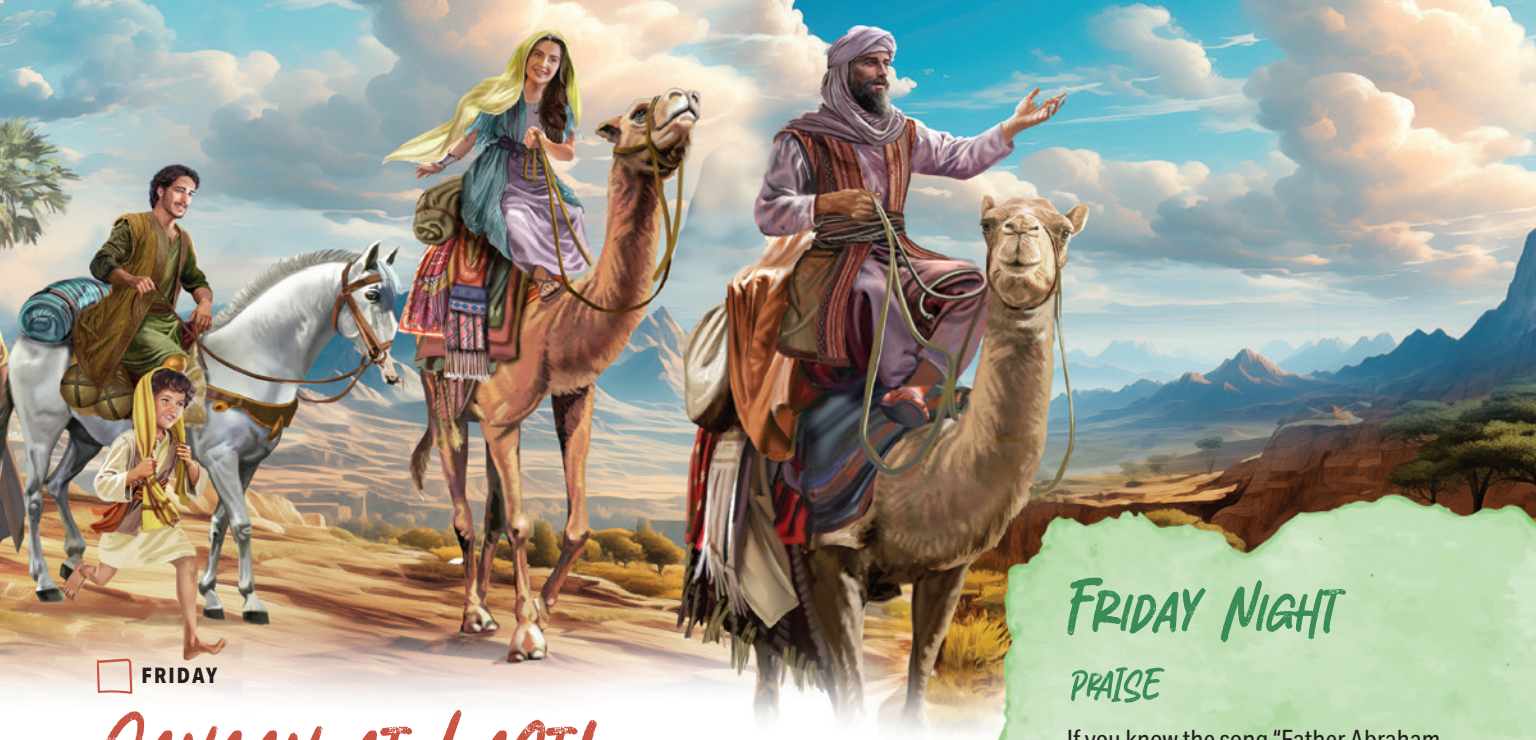
What a sad, sad day. After a time of mourning, Abram again followed the leading of God's voice, and the household moved on. Where was Abram going? **Read Genesis 12:5.**

Now Abram knew where they were going! With renewed energy and a destination on their lips, the travelers set out for Canaan.

**DO:** Design a luggage label with the words "God is leading to the Promised Land" on it. Make the words "Promised Land" big. Attach your label to a backpack as a reminder of God's leading. Place water and snacks in the backpack and go for a long walk outside. Think about Abram's faithfulness on his long journey.

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *Read your memory verse. How might things have turned out if Abram hadn't listened?*
- *If you were journeying with Abram, what would you have done to help the household follow God's leading?*



FRIDAY

# Canaan at Last!

Headed south toward Canaan, the long caravan made the dangerous journey through the desert. Those who had learned of Abram's God in Haran came too. They experienced God's leading and protection as they traveled with Abram.

When the caravan finally entered Canaan, the Promised Land, Abram stopped in a wide grassy valley under a grove of spreading trees. As the weary travelers rested, Abram heard God's familiar voice say, "To your descendants I will give this land" (Genesis 12:7). In awe Abram looked at the fields of grain, rows of grapevines, and olive groves that surrounded them. God was so good! How did Abram respond to God's goodness? Read Genesis 12:7 (second half).

Imagine the Canaanite people watching this scene. They remembered little of God and worshipped idols made of wood or stone. For these people the most important things in life were things that would give them pleasure, and they would give up anything to get what they wanted. Seeing all of Abram's household bowed in reverent worship was a beautiful witness to the true God. The Canaanites were distant cousins, descendants of Noah's son Ham. God's promise to bless all the families of the earth was for them too, if they would choose to believe (Genesis 12:3). Abram hoped they would.

Gazing up at the stars in Canaan, Abram quietly thought about the descendants God had promised him. Each star shone brightly, reminding him that all those who would be God's friend, right down through time, would shine as his descendants. He was a star. His wife, Sarai, was a star. His household members were stars. You are a star. How amazing to be a star descendant!

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *Can you think of another time God used a star in a special way in the Bible? Whom did the star tell of?*
- *Why do you think God chose a star again?*

## Friday Night

### Praise

If you know the song "Father Abraham Had Many Sons," enjoy singing it together. Alternatively, sing hymn no. 290, "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus," from *The Seventh-day Adventist hymnal*, or a song that reminds you that you are God's child.

### Family Journal

- Think back over this week's lesson. What is God inviting you to do in this story?
- What can you do to shine as God's star this week?

### Do

Plot Abram's journey on a Bible map.

### Pray

Reflect on this week's lesson. Pray about what has been meaningful for you. Thank God that you can be God's friend, as Abram was.

### For You, Parents

You too are a shining descendant of Abram's. God has you on His heart as you parent your precious children. "Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever" (Daniel 12:3).



SABBATH SPECIAL

# Shine Bright

When God took Abram outside of his tent on that unforgettable night of promise, the stars filled the huge inky-black sky. There were no streetlights or city glow to dim their brightness, and Abram must have admired the flash of colors and twinkling of light for as far as he could see. Remember God's promise from Wednesday's lesson?

"Look at the sky. There are so many stars you cannot count them. And your descendants will be too many to count" (Genesis 15:5, ICB).

Scientists have tried to count all the stars but admit there are just too many! They think there are about 100-400 billion stars just in our Milky Way Galaxy. There are approximately 100 billion other galaxies, filled with stars too!

If you've tried stargazing on a clear, cool night, you might have tried to count them yourself. It's nice to dream of reaching up and touching one. But while they look like sparkling jewels to us, stars are actually huge, glowing balls of hot gases. Gravity, the invisible force that keeps you standing on the ground, pulls the gases together. The cloud of gas then gets hotter and starts to glow.

Have you noticed that some stars flash a color? The color tells us how hot the star is. From coolest to hottest, stars can glow brown, red, orange, yellow, white, or blue. The sun is an example of a yellow star. It's the closest star to earth, and while it is enormous, the sun is only an average size for a star.

To see a star with its cloud of colorful gases up close, check out this video from NASA: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8X-QIePGKM.*

Your family might also like to search for a local stargazing app. With it you can hold your device to the sky to identify all the different stars and planets.

Whenever you see the stars, remember God's promise. His love is so big that it can't be counted or limited. Because Jesus, a descendant of Abram's, died for our sins, we can all be in God's family of love forever. And with His love inside, we'll shine as brightly as the stars.