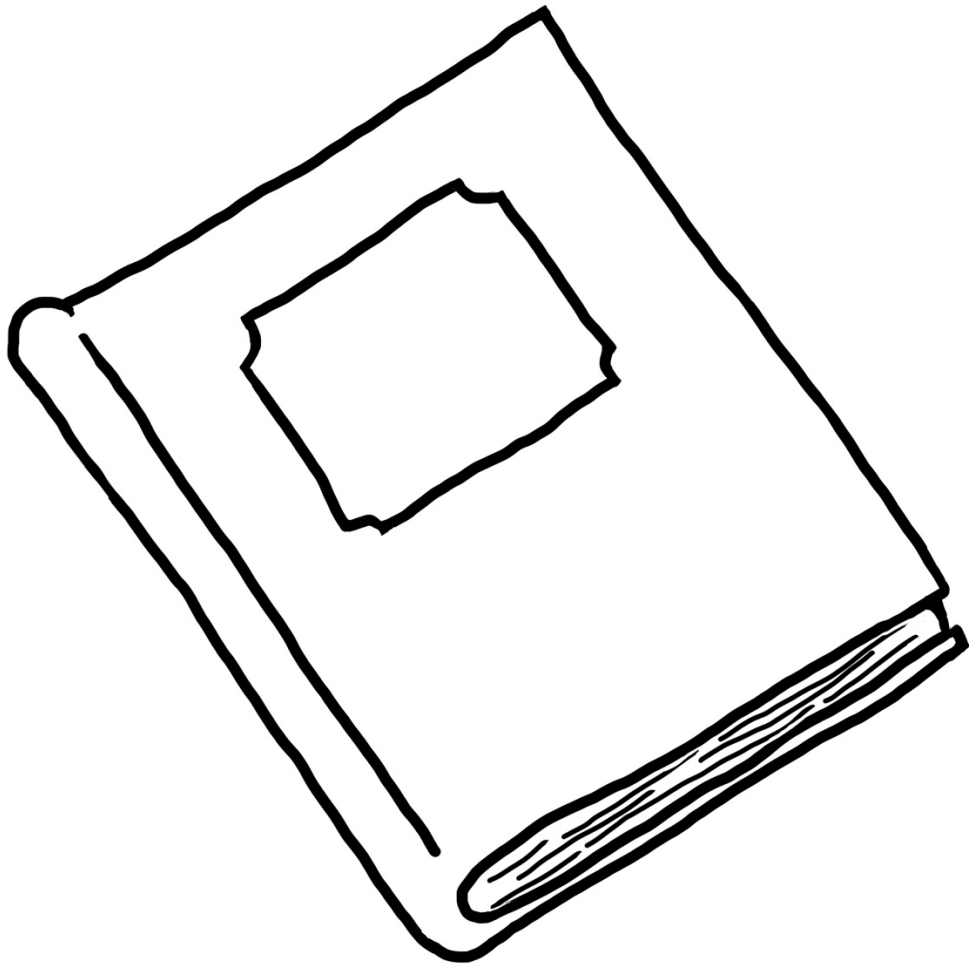


Seeds Bible Curriculum for Children

Book Two



Planting God's Word in Minds and Hearts



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Dear Children’s Ministry Worker,

This curriculum was prepared with the hope of helping churches to be better able to teach God’s Word to children in areas of the world where children’s ministry curriculum is not easily available. This curriculum is made to be adapted for other languages or Bible versions.

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While we believe that Children’s Ministry should be treated as a very important part of church ministry, we realize that many churches are not able to set aside a large budget for children’s ministry, so we have tried to avoid requiring large amounts of extra supplies. These lessons assume that your children’s ministry has a few basic supplies available: crayons, paper, and something large to write on (such as a chalkboard, whiteboard, or poster paper). Those items will not be included on materials lists for the lessons. Other items will be listed and may be marked as “optional” if they are not required to be able to teach the lesson.

Pictures have been included with each lesson. These can be colored in and used as visual aids as you teach. They are also made to be used as coloring pages. You may also wish to keep them and use them to review previous lessons.

We hope that these materials will be a blessing to you as you teach God’s Word to children. Please adapt them to work best for your ministry.

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| | |
|--|----|
| LESSONS..... | 4 |
| Lesson 13: Waiting for the Promise..... | 4 |
| Lesson 14: A Promise and a Punishment..... | 8 |
| Lesson 15: Isaac | 12 |
| Lesson 16: God Tests Abraham | 16 |
| Lesson 17: A Wife for Isaac..... | 19 |
| Lesson 18: Heir of the Promise..... | 25 |
| Lesson 19: Jacob, Heir of the Promise | 29 |
| Lesson 20: Jacob’s Family | 34 |
| Lesson 21: Israel in Canaan..... | 39 |
| Lesson 22: Joseph Is Sold by His Brothers | 43 |
| Lesson 23: The LORD Was With Joseph..... | 47 |
| Lesson 24: God Helps Joseph Interpret Dreams | 52 |
| Lesson 25: Joseph Tests His Brothers | 57 |
| Lesson 26: Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers..... | 61 |
| Review Lesson: What God Has Promised | 65 |
| BIBLE MEMORY PROGRAM..... | 73 |
| Memory Program Instructions | 73 |
| Activity Ideas for Teaching Memory Verses | 73 |
| Memory Verses | 74 |
| HELPS FOR TEACHERS..... | 75 |
| Teaching Lessons to Young Children | 75 |
| Ideas for Involving Older Elementary Kids in the Lesson..... | 76 |
| Easy Ideas for When You Finish Your Lesson Early..... | 77 |
| Avoiding Behavior Problems..... | 78 |
| Tips for Improving Behavior | 78 |
| Guidelines for Dealing with Behavior Problems | 80 |

LESSONS

Lesson 13: Waiting for the Promise

Genesis 15-17

Purpose: To teach about God's covenant with Abraham and how Abraham responded.

Bible Memory: Review any previous verses. When most of the children seem to know the verse, choose another verse from the Memory Verse List. You may choose to practice verses using one of the activity ideas.

Materials:

- Cards with names of God and their meanings written on them (for optional matching activity)
- Star Craft Materials (optional activity)

Teacher Planning:

- **Study** Genesis 15-17. Make sure that you have read it enough times to tell the story accurately. Think about what the children might find hard to understand. Think about how you can tell the events in an interesting and clear way.
- **Find and prepare** the materials you will need.
- **Pray** for wisdom as you plan and teach.

Important Truths:

- God made a solemn promise, a covenant, between Abram and Himself that would last forever.
- Abram believed God, and God counted it as righteousness.
- Abram and Sarai tried to make God's promise come true in their own way, but Ishmael was not the son that God had promised them.
- God gave the sign of circumcision as a sign of His promise.
- God changed Abram and Sarai's names and promised them their own son, Isaac, as the son of His promise.

Teaching Notes:

- There are a lot of verses in Genesis 15-17. You can choose what details you want to teach based on the time that you have and the age of your students. The important parts of this lesson are the promises of God and Abram's faith that God would do what he promised.
- Questions to think about as you prepare to teach:
 - What is God doing in this story?

- What does this story teach us about God?
- What wise choices did Abram make? What foolish choices did he make?

Review Questions from the Last Lesson:

- **Who was Abram's wife?** (Sarai.)
- **Did they have any children?** (No, not yet.)
- **What were the things that God told Abram?** (to leave his home and go to another country, that God would make a nation from Abram, and that God would bless Abram and curse his enemies, that all families would be blessed through Abram)
- **Did Abram believe God?** (Yes, Abram believed God and obeyed.)

Lesson

Introduction: Ask the children if they know how they got their names. Are they named after a family member? Did their parents choose that name for a specific reason? Do they know what their names mean? Allow the children to share as you have time. Explain that, in Bible times, the meanings of names were often important. The name told something about the person. In the Bible passage that we are learning today, God revealed some of His character through His names. God also gave Abram and Sarai new names that would remind them of His promises.

Abram believed God's promises and lived in the land of Canaan. He lived there a long time, moving from place to place. He waited for God's promises. He waited to see how God would make a great nation from him, but even after many years he still did not even have a child.

(Read **Genesis 15:1-5**.) Abram was still waiting for God to fulfill his promises. God reminded Abram of who He is. He told Abram, "I am your shield." Abram asked God if he would have to pass down his possessions to his servant. What did God say? God said that He would give Abram his very own son. God showed Abram the stars. Have you gone outside to look at the stars? Have you tried to count them? There are so many stars that no person can count them. Only God knows how many stars there are. God told Abram that his descendants would be so many that no one would be able to count them.

This was a big promise! And Abram did not even have one child yet! Would Abram believe God, even though he could not see how God would do this?

(Read **Genesis 15:6**.) Abram did believe God. He did not see God doing anything yet, and he did not understand how God would do it. He believed God because he knew who God is, and he trusted God, because God does not lie or ever break His promise. Because Abram did this, he was counted as righteous. Why was Abram counted as righteous in God's eyes? Was it because he was a good person or because he did not sin? No. All people sin. Abram

was also a sinner. He did not always do the right thing. So why did God call Abram righteous? It was because Abram believed God. Abram had faith in God, believed that God was good, and trusted that God would not forget him. Because Abram believed God and knew God, Abram lived and made decisions in a way that pleased God. This is what it means to walk with God.

Do you think it was hard for Abram and Sarai to wait on God? Do you ever have a hard time waiting for something? Abram and Sarai waited many years. As they waited, they were getting older and older. Abram's wife, Sarai, had an idea. She wanted to help God's promise come true, so she told Abram to have a child with her servant, who was named Hagar. This was something that was commonly done in those days, but it was not God's plan. Abram listened to her, and Hagar had a son named Ishmael. But Ishmael was not the son that God had promised.

Many years later, when Abram was 99 years old, God came to him and again made His promise. (Read **Genesis 17:1-8**.) God said to Abram, "I am God Almighty (El Shaddai)." God was reminding Abram that He is able to keep His promises. God changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means "father of a multitude," and changed Sarai's name to Sarah, which means "princess". He also told Abraham that all the men of his descendants must be circumcised, to show that they were part of the promise.

(Read **Genesis 17:15-19**.) When God told Abraham that Sarah would have a son, Abraham laughed! Abraham wanted Ishmael to be the promised son, but God said no. God said Sarah would have a son, and that he would be called Isaac, which means "laughter."

Almost 25 years, and Abraham was still waiting for God's promised son. Would God be faithful to his promise? When would it happen? Abraham waited, and he believed God.

Lesson Extension Options for older children:

- Take some time to study Genesis 16. Abram and Sarai make a choice that has harmful consequences. They try to make God's promise of a child come true in their own way. Because they are impatient and do not wait for God, their family has conflict, and Hagar runs away. Discuss with your students why Abram and Sarai's choice was wrong. However, even though it was not part of God's plan for Abram to have a child with Hagar, God did not punish Hagar for what happened. God sent His angel to help her and bless her and promised that her son would be a great man.
 - Take some time to discuss situations where we also try to do things in our own way instead of waiting on God. You may want to share a time in your life when you tried to fix a problem or make something happen without waiting for God. Help the children realize that this is not God's best for us, but God still loves us. Remind them that God always does what is best, even though we may not always understand His ways or His timing.

- If your students are Christians, take some time to discuss how Christians are like Abraham. What promises has God given us? Do we see those promises coming true now? No. Still, we live believing that God will fulfill His promises. Why do we do this? Because we know God and we trust Him. Living in this way is called living by faith.

Activity Ideas:

- Teach the students some of the names of God. Point out the names that God used in the passage from the lesson today. After they have learned them, you may want to play a matching game to match the names with their meanings.

Names of God:

El Shaddai – God Almighty (Gen. 17:1)

Elohim – God the Mighty and Strong Creator

Adonai – Lord and Master

Jehovah/Yahweh – I AM, The Self-Existent One

Jehovah-Jireh – The Lord will Provide

Jehovah-Rophe – The Lord Who Heals

Jehovah- M’Kaddesh – The Lord Who Sanctifies

Jehovah-Shalom – The Lord our Peace

Jehovah-Shammah – The Lord is There

El Roi – The God Who Sees (Gen. 16:13)

El Elyon – Most High

- Make a list of some of the promises of God. Take some time to praise God for being a faithful God who keeps his promises. You may want to praise God by singing.
- Make a star or a craft with stars on it. (You will need to find your own ideas and materials.) You could draw different types of stars, use star stickers, cut out a star, or decorate a picture of a star with glitter. Tell the students that stars can also be a reminder that God is faithful to keep his promises. Stars remind us of God’s power and faithfulness.

Review Questions:

- **How many descendants did God promise Abram?** (More than the stars.)
- **What did God promise Abram would have?** (A son.)
- **How did Abram and Sarai try to make this promise come true?** (Abram had a son with Sarai’s servant, Hagar.)
- **How long did Abram wait for the promise?** (Many years, 25 years.)
- **What did God change Abram and Sarai’s names to?** (Abraham and Sarah.)
- **Was Ishmael the promised son?** (No.)
- **What happened when Abraham believed God?** (God called him righteous.)

Lesson 14: A Promise and a Punishment

Genesis 18:1-19:29

Purpose: To help the children understand that God must punish sin but shows mercy to those who put their trust in Him.

Bible Memory: Review any previous verses. When most of the children seem to know the verse, choose another verse from the Memory Verse List. You may choose to practice verses using one of the activity ideas.

Materials:

- Blanket or other material to make a tent (for optional activity).

Teacher Planning:

- **Study** Genesis 18:1-19:29. Make sure that you have read it enough times to tell the story accurately. Think about what the children might find hard to understand. Think about how you can tell the events in an interesting and clear way.
- **Find and Prepare** the materials you will need.
- **Pray** for wisdom as you plan and teach.

Important Truths:

- God keeps His promises.
- God is holy and just, yet also merciful.
- God must punish sin.

Teaching Notes:

- The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19:4-11 is probably not appropriate to teach to your students with any detail. It should be enough to explain that the men in those cities were extremely wicked and thought only of pleasing themselves, never thinking of how they might be hurting other people, even to the point of wanting to attack God's angels. Those men were wicked. They did not believe God or want to know God.
- For very young classes, you may want to focus on Abraham and Sarah in the first part of the lesson, rather than on the story of Sodom and Gomorrah.
- As you teach about sin and God's justice, you may want to include a short Gospel presentation at the end of the lesson. As you do that, make sure that the children understand their own sinful state and need for repentance. Don't just use God's punishment for sin as a way to scare them into praying a prayer when they don't truly understand.

Review Questions from the Last Lesson:

- **How many descendants did God promise Abram?** (More than the stars.)
- **What did God promise Abram would have?** (A son.)
- **How did Abram and Sarai try to make this promise come true?** (Abram had a son with Sarai's servant, Hagar.)
- **How long did Abram wait for the promise?** (Many years, 25 years.)
- **What did God change Abram and Sarai's names to?** (Abraham and Sarah.)
- **Was Ishmael the promised son?** (No.)
- **What happened when Abraham believed God?** (God called him righteous.)

Lesson

Abraham was still waiting for God's promised son. It was hard for him to believe God's promises and have faith in God, but he kept choosing to believe God.

Then one day, God visited Abraham (**Genesis 18:1-8**). Abraham was living by some oaks in his tent, when three men appeared. They looked like men, but it was actually God and two angels. Abraham quickly showed these special guests hospitality and served them with food and refreshment.

(Read **Genesis 18:9-15**.) God promised Abraham again that Sarah would have a son. This time God told him that it would happen in just one year. Sarah was listening from inside the tent. Did Sarah believe God? No, she laughed. She was already too old to have children. But God said that it would happen. God is able to do even something that seems impossible! There is nothing that is too hard for God. God always keeps His promises.

(Read **Genesis 18:16**.) Abraham and his guests went to a place where they could look at Sodom. Sodom was a wicked city. It was also where Lot, Abraham's nephew, lived.

(Read **Genesis 18:17-18**.) God chose to tell Abraham what He was planning to do. God did not have to tell Abraham, but He did, because God had chosen Abraham. God was going to go see the wickedness of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and God was going to bring judgment on them. Abraham knew that God's judgment would be great on those wicked cities. Abraham asked God not to punish the righteous people along with the wicked. Abraham continued to ask God to spare the righteous and show them mercy, even if there were only ten righteous men in all those cities. God said that He would not destroy the cities if ten righteous people were living there.

When God's angels got to Sodom, they met Lot there. Lot had a hard life in Sodom. He was a righteous man who believed God and tried to please God, but he was surrounded by wickedness and saw terrible things every day. God's angels told Lot to take his family and

leave Sodom. When he was too slow, the angels took Lot, his wife, and his daughters outside the city, because God wanted to show them mercy. The angels told them to flee without looking back. Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt.

(Read **Genesis 19:23-29**.) God was just. He punished the wicked but showed mercy to those who obeyed Him. God completely destroyed those wicked cities, and everyone who was in them died. Lot and some of his family were the only ones to escape.

Because God is holy and just, He must punish sin. If someone in class today pushed you down and broke your arm, you would expect the teachers and their parents to punish them and have them apologize, right? It wouldn't be fair to you if everyone just said, "OK, we'll just forget about it, even though you got hurt." That wouldn't be just or right. God is just, so He must punish sin. All of us have sinned (**Romans 3:23**). We all deserve God's punishment. The punishment for sin is death (**Romans 6:23**). But God is also merciful. God sent His son, Jesus, to take the punishment for our sin, so that anyone who puts their trust in Jesus for salvation will not be punished (**John 3:16**). Just as God showed mercy to those who obeyed Him in our lesson today by saving Lot, God offers mercy to us too when we put our faith in Jesus.

Lesson Extension Options for older children:

- Where you live, are there certain sin problems that are especially strong? Maybe it is immorality, or drunkenness, or those in power are corrupt and abuse their power. Perhaps there is a lot of crime or violence. Encourage your students to think about God's justice. God promises to punish the wicked. God is just. God will also rescue the righteous from their difficulties, and God will show them mercy. Even if we cannot see God's justice now, we can know that God will bring it. God sees what is happening. God is not blind. Help your students think about living by faith in God. We might not see God's justice today. Today it might look like evil is winning. It might look like righteous people are being punished. It might seem like God's promises will never come true. But having faith in God is to believe that what God says is true. Having faith in God is believing that God is who He says He is. We must believe God and live as though we do.

Activity Ideas:

- Use a blanket or other material to make a tent (you may put the blanket over chairs or a table). Act out the first part of the story. Choose children to play the parts of Abraham, Sarah, and the three visitors. If there are many children, you may do it a few times with different children playing the parts each time. Remind the children that God would keep His promise, even though Abraham and Sarah had already waited so long for a child, and it seemed impossible.

- Use the “Waiting” visual to talk about times that we might have to wait. The boy had to wait for the tree to grow before he could get fruit from it. We have to wait for special days and holidays. Things don’t just happen because we want them to happen. Sometimes, we need to wait. But we can trust that God always does what is best, even when we must wait. Give each student a piece of paper and some crayons. Ask them to draw a time that they had to wait for something. You may need to give them a time limit. When they are finished, allow students to tell about their drawings. Ask questions, such as, “Was it hard to wait so long for that?” “How do you think Abraham and Sarah felt as they waited for God to give them a son?” “Does God keep His promises?” “Can we trust God to take care of our needs?”

Review Questions:

- **Who visited Abraham by the oaks?** (God and two angels.)
- **When did God tell Abraham Sarah would have a son?** (In one year.)
- **What did Sarah do?** (She laughed.)
- **What was God going to do to Sodom and Gomorrah?** (Punish them/destroy them/judge them.)
- **What did Abraham ask God to do?** (Spare the righteous.)
- **Who did God save from Sodom?** (Lot and some of his family.)
- **What is the punishment for sin?** (Death.)
- **How can we be saved from our sin?** (By trusting Jesus for salvation.)

Lesson 15: Isaac

Genesis 20-21

Purpose: To tell of how God fulfilled his promise and gave Abraham and Sarah a son, and how God continued to bless Abraham and his family in the land.

Bible Memory: Review any previous verses. When most of the children seem to know the verse, choose another verse from the Memory Verse List. You may choose to practice verses using one of the activity ideas.

Materials:

- Copy of “God Sees” picture (Optional, for lesson extension)
- Copies of “God Sees” picture for each child (Optional, for activity)

Teacher Planning:

- **Study** Genesis 20-21. Make sure that you have read it enough times to tell the story accurately. Think about what the children might find hard to understand. Think about how you can tell the events in an interesting and clear way.
- **Find and prepare** the materials you will need.
- **Pray** for wisdom as you plan and teach.

Important Truths:

- God protected Sarah from the king Abimelech and blessed Abraham.
- God gave Abraham and Sarah a son, Isaac.
- God protected and blessed Hagar and Ishmael.
- God keeps all His promises.
- God is omnipresent (present everywhere) and omniscient (all-knowing).

Teaching Notes:

- The chapters in this lesson are full of blessings from God. You do not have to teach each event in detail. Help the children understand that God kept His promise by giving Abraham and Sarah a son. You may choose what other events to teach based on the time that you have.

Review Questions from the Last Lesson:

- **Who visited Abraham by the oaks?** (God and two angels.)
- **When did God tell Abraham Sarah would have a son?** (In one year.)
- **What did Sarah do?** (She laughed.)
- **What was God going to do to Sodom and Gomorrah?** (Punish them/destroy them/judge them.)

- **What did Abraham ask God to do?** (Spare the righteous.)
- **Who did God save from Sodom?** (Lot and some of his family.)
- **What is the punishment for sin?** (Death.)
- **How can we be saved from our sin?** (By trusting Jesus for salvation.)

Lesson

Introduction: Have you ever wondered if God sees what is happening in your life? He does! God is omnipresent. That means that He is everywhere. God is also omniscient. That means that God knows everything. God sees and knows everything that happens. God also loves you and cares about you. In our lesson today, God showed several different people that He saw what was going on and that He cared for them. Listen to how God showed that He sees and cares.

Abraham traveled to a place called Gerar and lived there. The king there was called Abimelech. Do you remember when Sarah pretended to be Abraham's sister, and Pharaoh took her to make her his wife? Abraham and Sarah did this again, and Abimelech took Sarah to his house and planned to make her his wife. But God warned Abimelech in a dream that Sarah was actually Abraham's wife. Abimelech was afraid and sent Sarah back to Abraham without doing anything to her. (Read **Genesis 20:9-11, 14-15.**) Abimelech also gave Abraham some animals and silver, and Abimelech allowed Abraham to live wherever he wanted. God protected Abraham and Sarah and blessed them.

God kept His promise about blessing Abraham, and He also kept His promise about a son! (Read **Genesis 21:1-7.**) Finally, after 25 years of waiting, God gave Abraham and Sarah a son! Abraham was now 100 years old. Sarah saw God's promise fulfilled, and now she laughed from happiness. Abraham and Sarah named their son Isaac, which means "laughter."

Abraham threw a great feast for Isaac. At this time, Sarah saw Hagar and Abraham's other son, Ishmael, who was not God's promised son. Sarah wanted Abraham to cast Hagar and Ishmael out and to make them leave.

(Read **Genesis 21:11-13.**) Abraham was not happy about this, but God told him that he should do it. So, Abraham gave Hagar some food and water and sent them away. Ishmael was not the promised son. Did God care about Hagar and Ishmael? Yes, He did.

(Read **Genesis 21:15-21.**) Hagar ran out of water and thought that she and Ishmael would die. She cried out to God, and God showed her a well of water. God took care of Hagar and Ishmael. He saw them, and He did not let them die. Ishmael would grow into a man and become the leader of a great nation. It would not be God's chosen nation, but it would still be a great nation. God blessed Hagar and Ishmael because of Abraham.

The king, Abimelech, and other powerful men made alliances with Abraham because they knew that God was with Abraham. These men wanted to have peace with Abraham, so that God would not deal harshly with them. In this way, God blessed Abraham and blessed the peoples who were good to Abraham.

All these things were as God had promised. God keeps His promises.

Lesson Extension Options for older children:

- Using the “God Sees” picture, lead a discussion about how God showed His love and care to each of those people.
 - How can we tell that God was in control of the situation in this person’s life?
 - How did God communicate with this person?
 - How did God show His love and care for this person?
 - How did God keep His promises?
 - What did God do for this person?
 - How do we see God’s love and care to us today?
 - In what ways does God show that He still sees and controls the situations in our lives?

Activity Ideas:

- Give each child a copy of the “God Sees” picture. Allow them to color and cut out each of the people in the picture. Before starting, review each of the people in the picture and make sure that the students know who the pictures represent. Ask questions or give descriptions about the people. Have the students use their pictures to hold up the correct answer. Example: Who was Ishmael’s mother? (The students should hold up the picture of Hagar.) Here are some questions to get you started:
 - Who did God promise to give a son to? (Abraham and Sarah)
 - Who convinced Abraham to have a son with Hagar? (Sarah)
 - Who was the promised son? (Isaac)
 - Who was Abraham’s first son? (Ishmael)
 - Who cried out to God when she thought her son was dying? (Hagar)
 - Who did God promise to bless? (Abraham)
 - Who tried to take Sarah as his wife? (Abimelech)
 - Who did Abraham send away? (Hagar and Ishmael)
 - Who laughed when God said she would have a son? (Sarah)
 - Whose name means “laughter”? (Ishmael)
 - Who was a king? (Abimelech)
 - Who did God show that He could see her and provide water for her? (Hagar)
 - Who gave riches to Abraham? (Abimelech)
 - Who lied to Abimelech about Sarah? (Abraham and Sarah)

- Who was Isaac's mother? (Sarah)

Review Questions:

- **How did God protect Abraham and Sarah from the king?** (He warned the king in a dream.)
- **How old was Abraham when Isaac was born?** (100 years old.)
- **Did God keep His promise?** (Yes.)
- **How did God bless Hagar and Ishmael?** (He took care of them and made a nation from Ishmael.)
- **How did the rulers of the land try to be blessed?** (They made peace with Abraham because they knew God was with him.)

Lesson 16: God Tests Abraham

Genesis 22, Hebrews 11:17-19

Purpose: To tell of Abraham's faith in being willing to sacrifice his son and to help the children understand that God can be trusted.

Bible Memory: Review any previous verses. When most of the children seem to know the verse, choose another verse from the Memory Verse List. You may choose to practice verses using one of the activity ideas.

Materials:

- Small snack or treat (Optional, for activity)

Teacher Planning:

- **Study Genesis 22 and Hebrews 11:17-19.** Make sure that you have read it enough times to tell the story accurately. Think about what the children might find hard to understand. Think about how you can tell the events in an interesting and clear way.
- **Find and prepare** the materials you will need.
- **Pray** for wisdom as you plan and teach.

Important Truths:

- God tested Abraham by telling him to sacrifice his only son.
- Abraham obeyed, believing that God would still keep His promise.
- God kept His promise and provided a way.
- God can be trusted at all times.

Teaching Notes:

- What is a burnt offering? Remind your students what it means to offer a sacrifice. Usually it means killing an animal and burning it on an altar before God. Such offerings can show praise to God, sorrow for sin, etc. God told Abraham to offer up Isaac! This would mean that Abraham would have to kill Isaac and burn him on an altar. Does God take human sacrifices? No! Later in the Bible we can see that God hates it when people kill other people and sacrifice them to gods. So why did God say this to Abraham? God was testing Abraham to see if Abraham trusted God even when God said something that was very hard to believe.
- Help your students imagine how hard it would be for Abraham to hear this command from God. Abraham waited for so many years to have a son. Isaac was the promised son! God said that a nation would come from Abraham, through Isaac and Isaac's children! Was God changing His mind? Why would God say such a thing?

Would Abraham turn back from God now? Would Abraham disobey God, thinking that God was not going to keep His promise?

Review Questions from the Last Lesson:

- **How did God protect Abraham and Sarah from the king?** (He warned the king in a dream.)
- **How old was Abraham when Isaac was born?** (100 years old.)
- **Did God keep his promise?** (Yes.)
- **How did God bless Hagar and Ishmael?** (He took care of them and made a nation from Ishmael.)
- **How did the rulers of the land try to be blessed?** (They made peace with Abraham because they knew God was with him.)

Lesson

Introduction: Have you ever been asked to do something hard? Maybe it was something that you had never done before? Or maybe it was something that you just really didn't want to do? In our lesson today, God asks Abraham to do something really hard!

(Read **Genesis 22:1-2.**) God told Abraham to take Isaac and offer him as a burnt offering! God was testing Abraham.

This was a hard thing. Would Abraham obey God?

(Read **Genesis 22:3.**) Abraham obeyed! He immediately left to go to the mountain like God had said. Abraham did not stop trusting God. Abraham believed that God knew what He was doing.

(Read **Genesis 22:4-8.**) Abraham and Isaac went to the mountain. When Isaac asked Abraham where the lamb was for the offering, Abraham said that God would provide a lamb. Abraham believed that God would keep His promise. (Read **Hebrews 11:19.**) Abraham believed that even if Isaac did die, God could bring Isaac back from the dead. Abraham never stopped believing that God was good, and that God would be faithful to His promises.

What would happen?

(Read **Genesis 22:9-14.**) Abraham obeyed God all the way to the point of almost killing his only son, but the angel stopped him. Abraham had showed that he believed and trusted God, even with the person that he loved the most. God did provide a sheep, just like Abraham had said, and Abraham offered the sheep instead of Isaac. Isaac did not have to die. God made a way for Isaac to live.

(Read **Genesis 22:15-19.**) Because Abraham obeyed and showed how much he trusted God, God again reminded Abraham of the promises. God would bless Abraham and make a great nation from him, and all the people on the earth would be blessed because of Abraham.

God can be trusted. We must obey God, even when it looks like something bad or hard might happen if we do. God is always faithful.

Lesson Extension Options for older children:

- **Read James 2:20-24.** Discuss with your students what faith in God looks like. Faith in God must have actions with it. Abraham showed his faith in God by obeying God even when it was hard. In this way, he was called righteous by God, and was also called God's friend. Christians must not only say that they believe God and trust Him. They must live and show by their actions that they truly do believe God and have faith in Him. Our actions, or works, are not what saves us from sin, but if we truly have trusted Jesus for salvation, our faith will be seen in our actions. A true Christian will want to obey God.

Activity Ideas:

- Give a small snack or treat to each student. It can be a candy, a marshmallow, or some other tempting snack. Ask them to hold it, but tell them not to eat it. As they hold it, review the story. Do not say anything to any students who eat their treat. After a while, see who is still holding their treat. Explain to the students that God had tested Abraham's obedience in the lesson today, so you decided to also test their obedience. See who obeyed and continued to hold the treat without eating it. Discuss whether it was hard to obey. Without embarrassing individual students, point out that some did not obey or found it difficult. Remind the students of how much more difficult it would have been for Abraham to obey. Allow those who still have their treat to eat it. You may want to continue to use this as an opportunity to talk about sin, temptation, and obedience. Help the students understand that obedience is often difficult. We need God's help to obey. Remind them that although obedience is difficult, there are consequences when we choose to sin.

Review Questions:

- **What did God tell Abraham to do?** (Offer Isaac as a burnt offering.)
- **Why did God say this?** (To test Abraham.)
- **Did Abraham obey?** (Yes.)
- **Why did Abraham obey God?** (Abraham trusted God/had faith/thought God might bring Isaac back from the dead.)
- **What did the angel do?** (He stopped Abraham.)
- **What did God provide?** (A sheep.)
- **Will God keep his promises to Abraham?** (Yes!)

Lesson 17: A Wife for Isaac

Genesis 23-24

Purpose: To tell of how God provided a wife for Isaac and showed His faithfulness to Abraham's family.

Bible Memory: Review any previous verses. When most of the children seem to know the verse, choose another verse from the Memory Verse List. You may choose to practice verses using one of the activity ideas.

Materials:

- Prayer List Handouts (for optional activity)

Teacher Planning:

- **Study Genesis 23-24.** Make sure that you have read it enough times to tell the story accurately. Think about what the children might find hard to understand. Think about how you can tell the events in an interesting and clear way.
- **Find and prepare** the materials you will need.
- **Pray** for wisdom as you plan and teach.

Important Truths:

- God answers prayer.
- God cares about marriage.
- God provided Isaac a godly wife.
- It is important for someone who knows God to marry someone who also knows God.

Teaching Notes:

- The account of how Abraham's servant found Rebekah is interesting and can be easy to tell to children. Some parts repeat, so think about what is important to say.
- Why was it so important to Abraham that Isaac not marry a Canaanite? The people who lived in the land of Canaan did not worship God. They did not know God or try to follow what God said. They worshiped idols and false gods. Isaac knew God. He was the child of God's promise. If Isaac married a Canaanite woman, she would influence him to disobey God and worship false gods. It was very important to Abraham that this would not happen. It was important to God as well. Isaac needed to put God first.
- Why did Abraham not want Isaac to leave Canaan in order to be married? Remind your students that Canaan was the promised land that God was going to give to Abraham's descendants. God had told Abraham to live there. It was important that Isaac also obey God and live in the land of Canaan, even though it was in tents as a

foreigner. Isaac's wife would have to leave her family to go be with Isaac in Canaan. She would have to be willing to live in a tent and be a foreigner with Isaac for the rest of her life.

Review Questions from the Last Lesson:

- **What did God tell Abraham to do?** (Offer Isaac as a burnt offering.)
- **Why did God say this?** (To test Abraham.)
- **Did Abraham obey?** (Yes.)
- **Why did Abraham obey God?** (Abraham trusted God/had faith/thought God might bring Isaac back from the dead.)
- **What did the angel do?** (He stopped Abraham.)
- **What did God provide?** (A sheep.)
- **Will God keep his promises to Abraham?** (Yes!)

Lesson

Introduction: Have you ever been in a situation where you didn't know what to do? Maybe you were in a new place and didn't know where to go. Or maybe you didn't understand the directions for a school project. What did you do? (Allow students to share.) What should we do? (Allow responses.) It is usually a good idea to ask someone who knows. In our lesson today, Abraham's servant didn't know what to do, so he asked God. We have a God who knows everything. We can go to Him in prayer anytime. Let's look at God's Word to see what Abraham's servant prayed about.

Abraham and Sarah were getting very old. When Sarah was 127 years old, she died. Abraham buried her in a special cave in a field that he purchased for a lot of money.

(Read **Genesis 24:1-4**.) Isaac grew to be a man. Because Abraham was old, he was concerned about Isaac, and Abraham wanted Isaac to marry and have a good wife. Abraham made his servant promise to find Isaac a wife from Abraham's relatives, people who also knew God, and not from the people of Canaan, who did not know God.

Abraham's servant knew that many women would not want to leave their families to go live in a strange country. He asked Abraham if Isaac should go to live with her. Abraham said no. It was very important that Isaac stay in Canaan. Abraham told his servant that God would help him, and if he didn't find a woman who would be willing to come, the servant would be free from his promise.

(Tell the events of **Genesis 24:10-66**. You may want to have students read some key verses).

So, Abraham's servant packed up ten camels and travelled to Mesopotamia to look for a wife for Isaac. The servant did not know who to ask. How would he find the right woman? He waited by a well outside the city and prayed. He asked God to show him the wife that God would choose for Isaac. He asked God to have that woman come draw water from the

well and give him water and also draw up water for his camels. The woman who would do this would be the one God had chosen, and the servant would ask her to come with him and marry Isaac. Before he had even finished praying, a woman named Rebekah came to get water from the well. The servant asked Rebekah for some water. She said, "Drink, and I will draw water for your camels also." Abraham's servant wondered if she could be the one God had chosen.

He gave her some gold jewelry and asked her if her family had any place for him to stay. She invited him to stay with her family and told him that she was a descendant of Abraham's brother. Abraham's servant bowed down and worshipped God. God had led him to his master's family!

Rebekah ran home and told her family about the servant. Rebekah's brother, Laban, ran out to meet him. They took care of the camels and gave food to Abraham's servant. The servant told them about the promise he had made to Abraham about finding a wife for Isaac and about how God had led him to Rebekah. The family agreed that God had done this and was willing to let Rebekah go to become Isaac's wife. Rebekah also agreed to go!

As they arrived near where Isaac was living, Isaac saw the camels coming. Rebekah also saw Isaac out in the field and asked the servant who that was. When she heard that it was Isaac, she got down from her camel. The servant told Isaac about all that had happened. Isaac was happy to take Rebekah as his wife, and he loved her. Isaac and Rebekah were married, and God was the one who made it happen.

Abraham's servant trusted God. He prayed to God, and God answered him. God led Abraham's servant right to Rebekah, and Abraham's servant was glad and thanked God. When Rebekah and her family heard how God had answered the servant's prayer, they also were able to praise God and were glad to send Rebekah to be Isaac's wife. God was very involved in this account, and He made it possible for Isaac and Rebekah to be married. God showed love and faithfulness to Abraham and to Isaac.

Rebekah also trusted God. Abraham's servant prayed that the young woman who showed him extra kindness would be the one. Rebekah served Abraham's servant and showed great kindness to a stranger. She even invited him to stay with her family. When Rebekah knew who the servant was, she agreed to go with him, even though she had never met Isaac before. She also agreed to leave quickly, without having a long time to say goodbye to her family. Rebekah showed courage and kindness.

Abraham's servant turned to God when he didn't know how to find a wife, and God led him to the right one. We can also turn to God and trust Him to lead us.

Rebekah was willing to follow God's will for her life, even though she had never met Isaac. She trusted God's plan for her marriage and God worked everything out. We can also trust God and be willing to follow his plan for us.

Lesson Extension Options for older children:

- **Discussion:** A very big struggle for Christian young people today is the idea that they should not marry people who are not Christians. Many young people live in places where there are not many Christians, and they think that if they only are able to marry a Christian, then they will never get married! Other Christian young people start to like someone who does not believe in God, and they think, 'I will help them become a Christian after I marry them.' Discuss the problems with this kind of thinking with your students. You may want to look at **2 Corinthians 6:14**. Many Christians are deeply hurt when they disobey God and marry others who do not worship God. They have strife in their homes, and many times they stop obeying God themselves. This account that we are studying today shows us that God cares about who you marry. God wants you to marry someone who loves God. If God wants you to marry a certain Christian young person, God will make sure that it happens. It is important for a Christian to trust God about marriage. This is an area for Christians to show that they have faith that God will take care of them.
- **Discussion:** Talk about what love means. Isaac and Rebekah had never met each other before. Their marriage was based on faith, not on feelings. They made a choice to love each other and marry. Many times, people try to base their marriage on their feelings toward the other person. The problem is that our feelings change. True love is not just a feeling. Look at the description of love in **1 Corinthians 13**.

Activity Ideas:

- Prayer Time. Think of some situations that you can pray about or some people that you can pray for and take some time to pray. You may want to pray as a large group or break into smaller groups for prayer time.
- Use the Prayer List handouts to make a prayer list. Let the students take their lists home to pray about those things during the week.

Review Questions:

- **Why didn't Abraham want Isaac to marry a Canaanite woman?** (They worshipped false gods/they did not know God.)
- **Why was it so important for Isaac to stay in Canaan?** (It was God's promised land.)
- **How did Abraham's servant find Rebekah?** (He prayed to God/asked God to let the young woman who gave him and his camels water to be the one.)
- **How did Rebekah show that she was a godly woman?** (She showed kindness/watered the camels/agreed to go to Canaan.)
- **Did God show His love and faithfulness to Abraham and Isaac?** (Yes.)

MY PRAYER LIST

Make a list of things to pray about.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

MY PRAYER LIST

Draw some things that you can pray about.

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Lesson 18: Heir of the Promise

Genesis 25-26, Hebrews 11:9

Purpose: To tell of how God was faithful to Isaac and gave Isaac the same promises.

Bible Memory: Review any previous verses. When most of the children seem to know the verse, choose another verse from the Memory Verse List. You may choose to practice verses using one of the activity ideas.

Materials:

- Blank paper, enough for each student (for optional activity)

Teacher Planning:

- **Study Genesis 25-26 and Hebrews 11:9.** Make sure that you have read it enough times to tell the story accurately. Think about what the children might find hard to understand. Think about how you can tell the events in an interesting and clear way.
- **Find and prepare** the materials you will need.
- **Pray** for wisdom as you plan and teach.

Important Truths:

- Abraham died without seeing many of the promises, but still believed.
- Isaac also had the promises.
- Isaac had faith that God would fulfill His promises.
- God blessed Isaac.
- Esau despised and sold his birthright.

Teaching Notes:

- Take some time to remind your students about how special it was that God chose Abraham. It is easy to be distracted by the many events in Abraham's life and forget why they are so important for the Bible. The world used to be perfect, but sin entered into the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed God. God did not abandon people though. God promised to make a way for people to know Him and be saved from sin and death. Certain people throughout the Bible knew God and obeyed Him. One of those people was Abraham, whom God chose to be the father of a great nation. God had a plan to make a special nation for Himself. This special nation would be a part of the way that God would save the world from the curse of sin and death.
- What is a birthright? A birthright is something special that a father would give to the oldest son. It would be the son's inheritance. When the father was old or dead, the oldest son would get a larger amount of land or belongings from his parents and

would become the head of the family. This was the birthright. The birthright was something very special and important. Esau had the birthright because he was the oldest brother. Jacob wanted to have it, so he bought it from Esau for a bowl of soup.

Review Questions from the Last Lesson:

- **Why didn't Abraham want Isaac to marry a Canaanite woman?** (They worshipped false gods/they did not know God.)
- **Why was it so important for Isaac to stay in Canaan?** (It was God's promised land.)
- **How did Abraham's servant find Rebekah?** (He prayed to God/asked God to let the young woman who gave him and his camels water to be the one.)
- **How did Rebekah show that she was a godly woman?** (She showed kindness/watered the camels/agreed to go to Canaan.)
- **Did God show His love and faithfulness to Abraham and Isaac?** (Yes.)

Lesson

Introduction: Do you have siblings? Are you and your siblings alike or different? Do you have any twins in your family? Have you met any twins? In our lesson today, we will learn about some brothers who were twins, but were very different.

Abraham died when he was 175. He was buried with Sarah.

(Read **Genesis 25:11.**) When Abraham died, God blessed Isaac.

At this time, Rebekah was not able to have children. Isaac prayed to God for her, and God let Rebekah have twins.

(Tell the events in **Genesis 25:22-34.**) God told Rebekah the future. He said that the twin boys would become two different nations, and that the younger son's nation would be stronger than the older son's nation. God knows everything, even things that have not happened yet.

Isaac's two sons, Jacob and Esau, were very different. The Bible tells us that the oldest twin, Esau, was red and hairy. He was a good hunter and liked to be outdoors. Jacob was a quiet man, who preferred to stay in the tent. Isaac and Rebekah each had a favorite son. Isaac loved Esau more because he ate what Esau hunted, but Rebekah loved Jacob more. It is not good for parents to choose favorite children, because this causes trouble in the family. In a later lesson, we will see that it caused trouble in Isaac's family.

Since Esau was the oldest son, he would get the birthright. The birthright meant that he would get a larger inheritance from his parents and that he would become the head of the family when his father died. The birthright was very special.

One day, Jacob was making soup, when Esau returned from the field. Esau was very hungry and asked for some of Jacob's soup. Jacob asked Esau for his birthright. Esau sold Jacob his birthright for just a bowl of soup! The Bible says that Esau was very wrong to do this. Esau did not care about his birthright. He despised it. He was happy to give it away for just a little bowl of soup. The birthright should have been important to him, but it was not.

Esau also married Canaanite women (**Genesis 26:34-35**). Remember that it is important for those who follow God to marry others who also follow God. Esau cared more about what he wanted to do than about following God, and he married women who worshipped false gods. When Esau did this, he made his parents very sad.

Just like God had spoken to Abraham, God also spoke to Isaac. (**Read what God said to Isaac in Genesis 26:3-5.**) God told Isaac to stay in the land of Canaan and live there, because it was the promised land. God gave Isaac the same promises that He had given Abraham. From Isaac would come God's chosen nation, and through him all the peoples of the earth would be blessed.

Isaac obeyed God and listened to God. He had faith that God would keep His promises, just like Abraham (**Hebrews 11:9**). Isaac was an heir of the same promise as Abraham.

(Tell some of the events in **Genesis 26**.) Isaac and his family lived in Canaan, travelling from place to place. God blessed him, and Isaac became very rich and powerful. The people in Canaan became jealous of Isaac and asked him to go away!

In some places Isaac had trouble with the people who lived there, but God was with Isaac and protected him. Later, those same people came to Isaac to make a treaty of peace with him, because they knew that God was with Isaac.

In many ways, Isaac's life was like his father Abraham's life. He did many of the same things, and he trusted in the promises of God. God would continue to bless Abraham's descendants. God had a plan to make a special nation for Himself. This special nation would be a part of the way that God would save the world from the curse of sin and death.

Lesson Extension Options for older children:

1. **Discussion:** Abraham died without seeing some of the promises of God come true. Even though Isaac was born, and God had blessed Abraham's life, Abraham still did not see the great nation, and the promised land still did not belong to him or to Isaac. They still lived in tents as foreigners in the land. Even so, Abraham had faith that God would fulfill His promises. **Read Hebrews 11:13-16.** Discuss these verses with your students. Abraham and Isaac had faith that God would answer His promises in the future, but what were Abraham and Isaac looking forward to? They were looking forward to a heavenly city. They knew they were foreigners on the earth, looking forward to a home country that they had never been to. Are Christians today like Abraham and Isaac?

2. **Discussion:** Esau chose to do what he wanted without thinking about what God wanted. How can we make sure that we consider what God would want and follow God in our everyday lives? Do we take time to pray about decisions? Do we read God's Word, so that we know what He would want us to do? What are some situations where we might be tempted to choose our own way instead of God's way? How can we help each other follow God? What are some things that might distract us from thinking about God? What changes can we make to be sure that doesn't happen?

Activity Ideas:

- Give each student a blank sheet of paper. Ask them to draw their family. If time, allow students to show their pictures and share what is special about each of their family members. Discuss how we are all different, with different talents and abilities. Remind the students that God made each person to be special and has a plan for each of them. We can each use our talents for the Lord, but we should be careful to follow God's plan and not our own. Esau chose to follow what he wanted instead of following what God wanted.

Review Questions:

- **What did God promise Isaac?** (The same as Abraham/he would become a great nation/he would have the land/all people would be blessed.)
- **Did Isaac have faith in God's promises?** (Yes.)
- **How did God bless Isaac?** (Isaac became wealthy/people made peace with him, etc.)
- **How many children did Isaac have?** (Twins, Jacob and Esau.)
- **How did Esau show that he did not value God's ways?** (He sold his birthright and married Canaanite women.)

Lesson 19: Jacob, Heir of the Promise

Genesis 27-28, Hebrews 11:20, Romans 9:10-13

Purpose: To tell of how Jacob stole the blessing from his brother and that God made Jacob the heir of the promise.

Bible Memory: Review any previous verses. When most of the children seem to know the verse, choose another verse from the Memory Verse List. You may choose to practice verses using one of the activity ideas.

Materials:

- Objects and costumes to act out story, such as bowls or plates, animals skin or fuzzy clothing, ... (optional teaching/activity idea)
- Blank paper for each student (optional, for activity)

Teacher Planning:

- **Study Genesis 27-28, Hebrews 11:20, and Romans 9:10-13.** Make sure that you have read it enough times to tell the story accurately. Think about what the children might find hard to understand. Think about how you can tell the events in an interesting and clear way.
- **Find and prepare** the materials you will need.
- **Pray** for wisdom as you plan and teach.

Important Truths:

- God chose Jacob to be the heir of the promise before he was born.
- Jacob and Rebekah sinned when they deceived Isaac.
- God brought about His plan to make Jacob the heir of the promise, despite their wrongdoing.
- God gave to Jacob the promises that he had given to Abraham.
- God is still in control, even when people do wrong.

Teaching Notes:

- This lesson can be fun to teach. The events are interesting to young children, and it can be fun to act out the story. You may be able to use objects to help you tell the story. You might be able to have your students help you. Maybe one can pretend to be blind Isaac. You might have something hairy to use like the goatskins or bowls of food. There are many ways to make this lesson interesting.
- Remind your students how God has worked in Abraham and Isaac's lives. God chose them. God gave them both important promises for their descendants. First God made the promises to Abraham, and then to Isaac. God is going to continue the

promises through one of Isaac's sons. Would it be Jacob or Esau? Esau already sold his birthright to Jacob. Remind your students of this if they have forgotten. This means that Jacob gets the inheritance. But who would get the promises of blessing?

- Remind your students that when Jacob and Esau were not yet born, God told Rebekah the future. The younger son would be more powerful than the older son, and the older son would be a servant to the younger son. Which boy was younger, Jacob or Esau? (Jacob.) God knew that He was going to choose Jacob before Jacob was even born. **Romans 9:10-13**. However, Esau was Isaac's favorite son.

Review Questions from the Last Lesson:

- **What did God promise Isaac?** (The same as Abraham/he would become a great nation/he would have the land/all people would be blessed.)
- **Did Isaac have faith in God's promises?** (Yes.)
- **How did God bless Isaac?** (Isaac became wealthy/people made peace with him, etc.)
- **How many children did Isaac have?** (Twins, Jacob and Esau.)
- **How did Esau show that he did not value God's ways?** (He sold his birthright and married Canaanite women.)

Lesson

Introduction: Does your family have anything special that is passed from generation to generation? Maybe it is a special family trait, or an object, or maybe even a name? (Allow students to respond.) In our lesson today, it is a blessing that is passed from father to son. Let's look in the Bible to learn more.

(Tell your students what happens in **Genesis 27:1-13**.)

Isaac was old, so he wanted to give his oldest and favorite son the blessing. Why was the blessing so important? The father's blessing was something that was very special in those times. This blessing was even more special because of the promises of God that were passed down from Abraham to Isaac and would now be passed to Isaac's son. Isaac believed that God would keep His promises in the future for his son. Isaac had faith in God's promises, so he was able to speak about the future for his children. (**Hebrews 11:20**). Both Jacob and Esau knew that having God's promises was very important and special. Both Jacob and Esau wanted to be the one who would have God's promises.

Isaac told Esau to go hunting and bring back some meat to make him a meal. He planned to eat Esau's meat and then give him the blessing. Rebekah heard the plan.

God had already told Rebekah that Jacob would be the chosen son. When Rebekah heard that Isaac was going to bless Esau, she was afraid that God would not keep His word. Rebekah did not trust God. She thought that she had to make sure that Jacob got the

promises. So, she and Jacob made a plan to trick Isaac and get the blessing by lying. This was wrong, and Rebekah knew it. They should have waited on God and trusted Him. Rebekah told Jacob to bring two goats for her to cook, so that he could bring them to Isaac and pretend to be Esau. Jacob was worried that Isaac would know he was not Esau because Esau's skin was hairy and Jacob's skin was smooth.

(Tell what happens in **Genesis 27:14-40.**)

Jacob went and got the goats. Rebekah prepared them the way that Isaac liked. Rebekah put the goat skins over Jacob's arms and neck, and she put some of Esau's clothes on Jacob. Jacob went in to Isaac. When Isaac asked him who he was, Jacob lied. Isaac doubted because he heard Jacob's voice, but Jacob's arms felt hairy like Esau's arms. Jacob tricked his father, and Isaac gave Jacob the blessing.

When Esau returned and learned what had happened, he cried and begged Isaac to bless him also. But Isaac had already given the blessing to Jacob.

Jacob did wrong when he tricked his father. Jacob lied. He and Rebekah did not trust God to help them. Still, God used their wrongdoing. God allowed this to be the way that Jacob got Isaac's blessing. God can use our wrong decisions to accomplish His plan, even though it is not the best way. Did this mean Jacob got away with doing wrong? No. There were consequences for what Jacob did. Sin always brings sad things.

(Tell what happens in **Genesis 27:41-28:9.**)

Esau was so angry at Jacob that Jacob had to leave his home, or Esau would kill him! Jacob had to travel to where his uncle lived. Jacob had to leave the promised land of Canaan.

Was God with Jacob? Had God still chosen him? (Tell what happens in **Genesis 28:10-17.**)

On the way to his uncle's land, Jacob stopped to sleep with his head on a rock. God spoke to Jacob in a dream. Jacob saw a ladder going from earth to heaven. Angels were going up and down the ladder. Then God spoke to Jacob. (Read **Genesis 28:13-15.**) God gave Jacob the same promises He had given to Abraham and to Isaac. God promised to give Jacob many descendants and to make Jacob a great nation. God promised Jacob a land and said that all the peoples of the earth would be blessed through Jacob.

God also promised to be with Jacob and to bring Jacob back to the promised land of Canaan, even though now Jacob had to leave it.

Jacob made a promise to God too. (Read **Genesis 28:18-22.**) Jacob promised that if God kept his promises, Jacob would have God to be his God, and Jacob would give God one tenth of everything that God gave him.

In this way, God chose Jacob to be the heir of the promise. Rebekah and Jacob should have waited on God, instead of lying to Isaac. Even though they did the wrong thing, God was still in control and would still work out His plan.

Lesson Extension Options for older children:

- Help your students think about **Romans 9:10-13**. God knew which brother He was going to choose even before they were born. Jacob and Rebekah did not trust that God would give Jacob the blessing, so they lied and tricked to get it. God knows what He has chosen your students for. He has known it since before they were born. He has known it even before the world was made. God has created each of your students. Your students can trust God to take care of them and to show them what to do. Your students do not need to cheat or do wrong to get something. If God has chosen you for something, He will make sure that it happens. He can use any circumstance to accomplish His will, but just like it would have been better for Jacob and Rebekah to trust God and do right, it is better if we trust God and do right. Jacob would have a harder life because he did not trust God. There were consequences for his actions. Discuss this with your students.
- Take some time to discuss lying and deception. Help your students to understand that it is sin. Even though we often hear things like, “It was just a little lie,” we need to understand that all lying is sin. Even if what we say is mostly true, if we add anything that is untrue or twist the truth a little bit, it is still a lie. Making someone think something is true when we know it isn’t true is also a form of lying or deception. Jacob let Isaac feel the animal skins and think that he was Esau. What are some ways that we might deceive people by letting them think things that aren’t true? Do we see advertisements trying to do things like that? Talk about some ways that lying makes its way into your culture or daily living. How can we guard against lying? Look at some of the following verses to see what the Bible says about lying.
 - Proverbs 12:22
 - Psalm 34:13
 - Colossians 3:9-10
 - Ephesians 4:25

Activity Ideas:

- Act out the story. If time, act it out a few times, allowing different students to play the characters.
- Give each student a blank piece of paper. Assign each student to draw a different part of the lesson. When they are done, have them put themselves in order and each tell their part of the story.

Review Questions:

- **Who did God choose to be the heir of the promise?** (Jacob.)
- **Who was Isaac planning to bless?** (Esau.)
- **Did Rebekah and Jacob trust God to give Jacob the blessing?** (No.)
- **What did they do?** (They tricked Isaac/lied.)
- **Did God still choose Jacob?** (Yes.)
- **What happened because Jacob did wrong?** (He had to run away/leave home/leave the promised land/Esau wanted to kill him.)
- **What did God tell Jacob in the dream?** (He gave Jacob the promises/told Jacob he would bring him back to Canaan/told Jacob that God would always be with him.)
- **What did Jacob promise God?** (That God would be his God/that he would give God a tenth of everything he had.)

Lesson 20: Jacob's Family

Genesis 29-31

Purpose: To tell of how God blessed Jacob when he lived with his uncle.

Bible Memory: Review any previous verses. When most of the children seem to know the verse, choose another verse from the Memory Verse List. You may choose to practice verses using one of the activity ideas.

Materials:

- Small prize (stickers, candy, or something else that the students would like)
- Something worthless or unwanted (candy wrapper, broken pencil, or something else that the students would be disappointed to receive)

Teacher Planning:

- **Study Genesis 29-31.** Make sure that you have read it enough times to tell the story accurately. Think about what the children might find hard to understand. Think about how you can tell the events in an interesting and clear way.
- **Find and prepare** the materials you will need.
- **Pray** for wisdom as you plan and teach.

Important Truths:

- Even though Jacob's uncle Laban treated Jacob badly, cheating and deceiving him, God blessed Jacob in spite of his circumstances.
- God gave Jacob wealth and children.
- God told Jacob to return to live in the promised land, as Abraham and Isaac had before him.

Teaching Ideas:

- There is a lot of information in these chapters. The focus of this lesson is on how God blessed Jacob even though Laban treated Jacob poorly. It is not necessary to cover everything. Choose what sections you think would be best for your students to understand.
- Even though God continued to bless Jacob, it is interesting to see how Laban cheats Jacob. Jacob cheated his brother Esau and his father Isaac, and now he is the one being cheated. Just like Jacob listened to Rebekah and pretended to be Esau, Leah listened to Laban and pretended to be Rachel. The similarity can be interesting to talk about with your students. This could have been a way for Jacob to learn how it feels to be tricked. Maybe God was allowing more consequences for Jacob's wrongdoing.

- This may be a good place to explain to your students about having multiple wives. At this time, it was common for many people to have more than one wife. This is also still common in some countries today. Perhaps this is also common where you live. This is not God's best plan and does not work out well. God created marriage to have one man and one woman. When God's plan is broken, there is trouble. We will see trouble happen in Jacob's life because he has more than one wife. Although there are many times in the Bible that men have multiple wives, it never turns out well. There is always strife.

Review Questions from the Last Lesson:

- **Who did God choose to be the heir of the promise?** (Jacob.)
- **Who was Isaac planning to bless?** (Esau.)
- **Did Rebekah and Jacob trust God to give Jacob the blessing?** (No.)
- **What did they do?** (They tricked Isaac/lied.)
- **Did God still choose Jacob?** (Yes.)
- **What happened because Jacob did wrong?** (He had to run away/leave home/leave the promised land/Esau wanted to kill him.)
- **What did God tell Jacob in the dream?** (He gave Jacob the promises/told Jacob he would bring him back to Canaan/told Jacob that God would always be with him.)
- **What did Jacob promise God?** (That God would be his God/that he would give God a tenth of everything he had.)

Lesson

Introduction Activity: Tell the students that you want to have a contest. Have them compete to do something that you choose (stand on one foot the longest, jump the farthest, solve a riddle...). Announce that the winner will receive a prize and hold up the prize that you brought for them to see. After the contest, have the winner come to the front to receive the prize, but tell them that you decided to give them something else instead. Give them the worthless item that you brought. They will probably be disappointed. Ask the students what they think about you changing the prize. Was that right? Was it fair? Is the winner disappointed? Give the winner the original prize that you held up. Tell the students that something like this happened to Jacob many times in our lesson today.

(Tell what happens in **Genesis 29:1-29.**) God helped Jacob find his relatives! Jacob met Rachel and was able to stay with his uncle, Laban. Jacob wanted to marry Rachel. He agreed to work for seven years in return for marrying Laban's daughter, Rachel. Laban agreed, but when the time came, Laban tricked Jacob and gave him Leah as a wife instead. When Jacob found out, he was angry. Laban made an excuse about the customs of his people, but he

still chose to trick Jacob. He wanted Jacob to keep working for him. Jacob worked another seven years so that he could marry Rachel.

(Read **Genesis 29:31**.) Jacob hated Leah because he had been tricked into marrying her. But Jacob loved Rachel. God saw this, and God showed Leah kindness. He allowed Leah to be able to have children, but he kept Rachel from having children, even though Rachel was the one that Jacob truly loved.

(Tell the events of **Genesis 29:32-30:21**.) Even though there was much trouble and jealousy in Jacob's family because of his two wives, God still blessed Jacob's family and allowed Jacob to have many children. Leah had six sons and one daughter: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Dinah. When Rachel saw that she wasn't able to give Jacob children, she gave her handmaid, Bilhah, to Jacob as his wife. Bilhah had two sons: Dan and Naphtali. Leah had stopped having children and saw that Rachel's handmaid was giving Jacob sons, so she also gave her handmaid, Zilpah, to Jacob as a wife. Zilpah gave Jacob two more sons: Gad and Asher. (Read **Genesis 29:22**.) Finally, God allowed Rachel to have a son. She called his name Joseph.

(Tell of what happens in **Genesis 30:25-43**.) After Rachel had Joseph, Jacob wanted to go back to the promised land of Canaan. But Laban did not want him to go. Laban knew that God was blessing Jacob. As long as Jacob lived with Laban, God was blessing Laban too! Laban was getting rich. He did not want Jacob to leave. He said that he would give Jacob payment to stay. So, Jacob and Laban made a deal. Jacob would get all the speckled and spotted animals from Laban's flocks. But Laban took out all those animals and sent them away to his sons, so that Jacob could not get them! Laban cheated Jacob again! Even then, when Laban kept cheating Jacob, God still blessed him and made him wealthy. While Jacob took care of Laban's animals, they began having babies that were speckled and spotted. Laban kept changing which kind of animals would go to Jacob, but God kept blessing Jacob and allowing the new animals that were born to be the kind that would go to Jacob.

(Tell what happens in **Genesis 31:1-21**.) Because God was making Jacob rich, Laban's sons were starting to feel jealous. God told Jacob in a dream that it was time to go back to Canaan. Jacob told his wives how God had blessed him, even when Laban kept trying to cheat him. He told them what God had said. Rachel and Leah agreed that it was time to go, so Jacob took his whole family and all his possessions and secretly left without telling Laban.

(Tell what happens in **Genesis 31:22-55**.) Laban was angry when he found out he had been tricked, so he chased Jacob. But God would not let Laban hurt Jacob. God kept his promises and protected Jacob. He told Laban not to do anything. Jacob and Laban agreed to make peace. They made a promise that they would not hurt one another, and Jacob promised to be a good husband to Rachel and Leah. Then Laban said goodbye.

God was with Jacob. He blessed Jacob and protected him, even though Jacob's life was hard.

Lesson Extension Options for older children:

- Discussion: There were many problems in Jacob's family. There was conflict between Jacob and Esau, between Jacob and his parents, between Jacob and Laban, and between Jacob's wives. Later we will see how even Jacob's children have strife. Discuss how sinful choices affect families. Even when God has chosen people, and God blesses them, sin can still cause serious problems. When we choose to wrong family members, we can hurt many people. Discuss how we can learn from this today.

Activity Ideas:

- Jacob's Family Game (needs 15 or more students)
 - The teacher, or a student starts at one side of the room as Jacob. All other students stand on the other side of the room.
 - "Jacob" will go and choose a student to be "Leah" (or, if you have more than 15 students, you may add "Laban" as the next family member). Jacob will take Leah (or Laban) back to his side of the room.
 - Next, "Leah" will choose a "Rachel" and bring her back to the other side.
 - Rachel will choose a "Reuben" to bring back.
 - Reuben will choose a "Simeon" to bring back.
 - Continue to bring family members in order until all of Jacob's family is on one side of the room.
 - Simeon- Levi- Judah- Bilhah- Dan- Naphtali- Zilpah- Gad- Asher- Issachar- Zebulun- (Dinah- Optional, if you have enough students)- Joseph
 - After they are all on one side, review some of the things that you have learned:
 - God had promised Abraham that his descendants would number as the stars. Do you see God beginning to give Abraham many descendants?
 - Jacob had more than one wife. Did that work out very well? How can we tell that there was jealousy in this family? Why did Rachel and Leah have Jacob take their handmaids as wives? Was this a good competition? Do you think this is the way that God wanted it? (No.)
 - How do we see that God was still in control, even though this family had many problems? (God gave children to Leah, God closed Rachel's womb for a time, God continued to keep his promise to bless Jacob even when Laban tried to cheat him)
 - If you have time and want to play again, try having each wife go get their children and group them. You may want to put everyone in the middle of the room and have one wife on each wall.
 - Leah: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dinah

- Bilhah: Dan, Naphtali
- Zilpah: Gad, Asher
- Rachel: Joseph, (and later, Benjamin)

Review Questions:

- **What was Jacob's uncle's name?** (Laban.)
- **Who did Jacob want to marry?** (Rachel.)
- **In what ways did Laban cheat Jacob?** (Made him work longer/marry both daughters/hid the spotted animals/didn't let Jacob leave.)
- **Why did Leah have children and not Rachel?** (God showed her kindness because Jacob hated her.)
- **How did God bless Jacob?** (Made him wealthy/kept him safe from Laban.)
- **What did God tell Jacob in the dream?** (To go back to Canaan.)
- **How did Laban and Jacob end their relationship?** (They promised that they would not harm each other.)
- **Did God take care of Jacob?** (Yes.) **How did God show His care?** (Making Jacob wealthy, blessing him, protecting him.)