

PATRIARCHS

PLEASE NOTE!

The visuals for this series can be purchased from most CEF offices and online shops. For a list of CEF offices and online shops in Europe, please visit www.teachkids.eu and click on "Locations".

Original text: Katherine Hershey
Revised by Lynda Pongracz
Adapted for Europe: Chris and Jennifer Haaijer
(With additional ideas
from the original text)

Text published by: European CEF®
Kilchzimmer
4438 Langenbruck
Switzerland
www.cefeurope.com



Copyright © 1999, 2009 Child Evangelism Fellowship® Inc.
All rights reserved. Used by permission. May be reproduced
for personal, nonprofit and non-commercial uses only.
Visit www.teachkids.eu for full details of permission.

Table of contents

Lesson	Page
Introduction	3
Overview	5
Lesson 1 Call of Abraham	7
Lesson 2 Abraham's gift of his son	17
Lesson 3 Abraham seeks a bride for his son	27
Lesson 4 The birthright and the blessing	37
Lesson 5 Jacob away from home	47
Gospel globe (Gospel activity - lesson 1)	57
Preschool symbols	58
Ruled star (carry-over activity - lesson 1)	59
Footprint template (review game - lesson 1)	60
Footprint concentration (review game - lesson 2)	61
God changes boys and girls (carry-over activity - lesson 5)	62
Summary of steps for counselling the child who wants to come to Christ	64

Introduction

“Patriarchs” is the second set of five lessons from the book of Genesis. This series may be taught following the series “Beginnings” or used independently. Pray that, as you teach, children may come into a personal relationship with the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Teaching Bible truths

We fall short of our responsibility as teachers if we only tell children Bible stories. It is essential that children learn the truths those stories were written down to teach us, and that we then take them a step further to show what that truth means to them in their daily lives. Of course, we cannot in one lesson cover all the teaching any particular story would provide, so in each of these lessons one central truth has been chosen. The teaching of the central truth has been woven throughout the narrative, but to help you in your preparation the teaching sections have been marked “CT”. These are also marked out in the lesson plan.

You will notice that the central truths are marked with a “U” or an “S” to show the kind of children the truth is applied to - unsaved or saved. This is also made clear in the text by using phrases such as, “If you have not trusted the Lord Jesus to forgive your sin ...” or, “Christian, you ...”.

The application of the truth has been highlighted with a line beside the text. You may feel it necessary to adapt the applications to better suit the children you teach. For example, the application may use a boy’s name, yet you have only girls present. It could be that the application given is more applicable to older children, while yours are very young. Make the changes you feel are necessary. The important thing is that the Word of God is applied to their lives.

Make yourself available for counselling

When you present the Gospel message, there will be children who will respond to it independently. They may or may not at a later date tell you that they have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. There will, however, be others who would like some help. They may have questions to ask; they may need help or encouragement in knowing what to say.

As you teach the saved children, there may be times when they would like advice in a difficult situation; they may need clarification on how a particular lesson applies to their daily lives; they may find themselves in a situation where they do not know what the Bible says they should do; they may want to share a difficulty so that you can pray for them, especially if you are the only Christian support they have.

For these reasons it is important that the children know you are available to talk. It is also important that they know when and where to go when they want to talk to you. Finally, it is essential that unsaved children do not confuse coming to the Lord Jesus with coming to you.

In all cases you should not make yourself available at the same time as giving the Gospel invitation, so that the children never get the impression that they cannot come to Christ without coming through you, or that they are saved simply by waiting to speak to you.

An example for use with the unsaved child

“Do you really want to live for the Lord Jesus, but don’t know how to come to Him? I will be glad to explain it from the Bible; come and see me. I’ll be standing by that tree when the meeting is over. Remember, I can’t take away your sin - only the Lord Jesus can do that - but I will be glad to help you understand better how you can come to Him. Just come and sit with me under that tree.”

An example for use with the saved child

“If you have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour and you have never told me about it, please let me know. I’ll be standing beside the piano after the meeting is finished. I would like to know if you too have trusted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, so that I can pray for you and perhaps help you.”

Memory verses

A Scripture verse to teach the children is suggested for each lesson. If you are teaching the lessons as a series over five weeks it would be advisable to choose two or three verses to teach well, which the children will then remember. If you try to teach all five, the children may not really know any of them well.

Practise placing the flannelgraph figures

Practise using the visuals and changing the scenes before you go to teach. Become thoroughly familiar with all the figures and know when you need to use them in the lesson. Scenic backgrounds can be purchased to use with these lessons. We give suggestions before each scene, but they are by no means essential. All your teaching can be done on one plain flannel.

Extra visual aids

On a piece of card print out the words of the central truth for each lesson; back it with pieces of flocked paper. (Use lower case letters, so that even the younger ones can read the words easily.) Put this card on the board at the beginning of the class or when you first teach the central truth in the lesson.

Additional helps

Along the left and right margins additional helps are provided, giving background information and optional ideas on how to add interest to your lesson.

These ideas are designed to incorporate different learning styles. For effective learning, some children need to see or write, others need to hear or speak, others need to touch or handle, and still others need active participation.

You can use these ideas in your club as time allows.

Review questions

For each lesson some review questions are given. These can be used after the lesson or the following week, before teaching the new lesson.

Review time, if conducted in an orderly way, can be an ideal opportunity to reinforce what you have taught, while still being fun for the children. You can use this time ...

- 1 to find out how much the children are understanding and remembering.
- 2 to help you as a teacher to know what you need to emphasise more so that the children will remember better.
- 3 to provide a time of fun in the class. The children like competition and look forward to this part of the programme. But it is more than just a game: it is a time of learning.

In this textbook only questions on the lesson are included. It would be profitable to include questions also on the songs, verse and whatever else you teach. In this way the children realise that every part of the programme is important.

Overview

Lesson	Central truth	Application	Memory verse
Call of Abraham Genesis 11:27 - 12:20 Genesis 15:4-6 Genesis 16:1-4,15 Genesis 17:1-8, 15-17	God keeps His promises	Unsaved: Believe His promises about salvation and come to Christ Saved: Get to know His promises and trust Him to keep them	"... He who promised is faithful" Hebrews 10:23
Abraham's gift of his son Genesis 21:1-8 Genesis 22:1-14	God tests His children to strengthen their faith in Him	Saved: When things are difficult, depend on God for help	"I know also, my God, that You test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness ..." 1 Chronicles 29:17a
Abraham seeks a bride for his son Genesis 24 Genesis 15:2	God guides His children	Saved: Ask God to show you His way in every decision you make	"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye" Psalm 32:8
The birthright and the blessing Genesis 25:21-34 Genesis 26:34 - 28:5	Don't be a deceiver, as Jacob was	Unsaved: Trust God to change your deceitful heart Saved: Depend on God's power to live as a new person	"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ..." Jeremiah 17:9
Jacob away from home Genesis 28:10 - 29:30 Genesis 31:2-7,11, 13-18 Genesis 32:6-31 Genesis 33:1-4 Genesis 35:1-15,27	God changes the lives of those who are His	Unsaved: Receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour, then you will begin to experience God changing your life Saved: Gladly accept the changes God is making in your life	"... He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" Philippians 1:6b

Lesson 1

Call of Abraham

Scripture for teachers

Genesis 11:27 - 12:20
Genesis 15:4-6
Genesis 16:1-4,15
Genesis 17:1-8,15-17

This lesson covers a vast area in Scripture - the lesson text will guide you in details to include

Central truth

God keeps His promises

Application

Unsaved: Believe His promises about salvation and come to Christ

Saved: Get to know His promises and trust Him to keep them

Memory verse

“... He who promised is faithful” Hebrews 10:23

Visual aids

◆ Flashcards: 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5 and 1-6

Or

◆ Figures: P-1, P-2, P-3, P-4, P-5, P-6, P-7, P-8, P-9, P-10, P-11, P-12, P-13 and P-14

◆ Backgrounds (optional): Outdoor scene and plain background

And

◆ Make wordstrips, lettering as follows: “land”, “great nation”, “bless”, “great name”, “be a blessing” and “all families”

◆ Have picture of rainbow (you could use flannelgraph figure B-42 from the lesson series “Beginnings”)

◆ Choose five children, each one to read out one of the promises God gave Abram and also to place the appropriate wordstrip on the flannelboard (see text scene 1 - page 10)

Carry-over activity

◆ Photocopy the star on page 59, so that each child can have one. Have pencils, felt tips and/or crayons ready. Plan that each child will have something to lean on as they draw.

Lesson outline

Introduction

The forgotten promise **CT**

Progression of events

- 1 God speaks to Abram in Ur
- 2 God gives Abram many promises **CT**
- 3 Abram talks with Sarai and other relatives **CT**
- 4 Abram takes God at His Word **CTU**
- 5 Abram leaves Ur
- 6 He arrives in Canaan **CTU**
- 7 Abram goes down to Egypt
- 8 He deceives Pharaoh
- 9 Pharaoh sends Abram back to Canaan **CTS**

Climax

God promises Abram a son

Conclusion

Ishmael is born

God renews His promise about a son **CTS, CTU**

Gospel activity

Gospel globe

Show visual with entire globe showing.

Create a simple globe by making two photocopies of a map. Leave the map in a rectangular shape or cut into an oval, whichever works best for your chosen map.

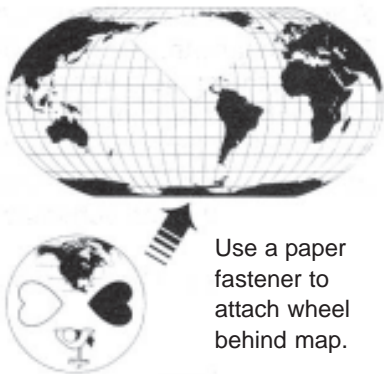
Cut a wedge in the top portion of one map, and the same wedge (only slightly larger) in the second.

Cut out a large circle to fit behind the map and paste the larger wedge on it so that when the wheel is properly aligned, the map looks whole.

Photocopy the Gospel symbols on page 57 and add to the circle as indicated below.

Use a paper fastener to attach the wheel behind the map.

Only one symbol should show through the opening at a time.



Use a paper fastener to attach wheel behind map.

Have you ever thought about how big our world is? Think of all the mountains, fields and rivers. Then think about all the people and animals. Did you know that God created each one of them? He even created you! God is wise and powerful. God is also holy (perfect), and He loves you very much. The Bible says, “For God so loved the world” (John 3:16).

Show dark heart.

You and I are not perfect. We sin by doing wrong things that break God’s laws. The Bible says, “All have sinned” (Romans 3:23). You and I were born with sinful hearts that want our own way instead of God’s way. When you make fun of someone, disobey your parents or think mean thoughts, you sin. God says the punishment for sin is death (separation from God forever).

Show cross/tomb.

That’s why Jesus, God the Son, bled and died on the cross. He came to take your punishment so you wouldn’t have to be separated from God. The Bible says, “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). After Jesus died He was buried, but three days later He came back to life! Today He’s alive in Heaven, preparing a place for everyone who’s been forgiven of sin.

Show clean heart.

Have you been forgiven of sin? There’s only one way your heart can be made clean. The Bible says, “Whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). You must be willing to turn from your sin and believe (trust completely) in the Lord Jesus, who took your punishment. When you do that God forgives your sin and changes you on the inside.

Lesson

You may wish to choose different examples of promises in order to better meet the needs of the children in your group.

Jonathan's friend, Frank, had promised him a ride on his new racing bike. Jonathan hurried to his friend's house and rang the doorbell. Frank's mother opened the door.

"Is Frank at home, please?" Jonathan asked.

"No," she replied. "He went fishing with his dad. I'm sorry," apologized Frank's mother, "but he must have forgotten."

Jonathan was disappointed. Frank hadn't kept his promise. He had forgotten.

It is disappointing when someone doesn't keep his promise. There is only One Who always keeps His promises and that is God. Can you remember the promise of which the rainbow reminds us?

Hold up picture of rainbow and allow children to respond.

God kept that promise. Since Noah's time the whole world has never been flooded again. God will never forget the promises He makes. When He makes a promise, He means it and He will keep it. You find all God's promises in the Bible. It is good to look out for them as you read it. It is wonderful that God can be trusted to keep His Word.

But even after the flood, many people did not trust God. Noah's sons and their wives began to have children, and their children had children, and so on. About 440 years went by. Again there were thousands of people in the world. But many of them did not worship God. Some even worshipped the moon.

One of the places where they lived was a beautiful, rich city called Ur. Archaeologists (men who study the life of the people who lived long ago) have found things buried deep in the ground which show it was a city with large 10-20 room houses with kitchens and bathrooms. The people wore beautiful jewellery and things made of silver and gold. There were schools in the city, and also temples and images to the moon god.

Scene 1

Optional background: Plain board. Place Abram (P-1).

In that beautiful city Ur lived a man called Abram. He too was a wealthy man. We do not know whether or not he ever worshipped the moon. But what we do know about him is exciting.

One day something very special happened in Abram's life - God, the only true God, spoke to him.

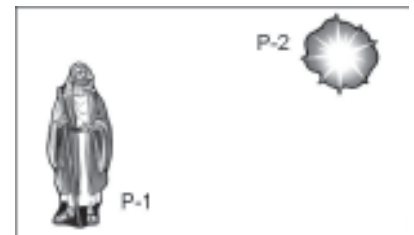
Place symbol for God (P-2).

CT

Show "promise" symbol footprint for preschoolers. Refer to symbol throughout lesson as you speak of God's promises.

Ur was located between the upper end of the Persian Gulf and modern-day Baghdad in Iraq. Archaeologists have discovered much evidence of the wealth and advanced culture of the city. Children will enjoy locating Ur on a map.

Flashcard 1-1



For younger children use the names Abraham and Sarah throughout the lesson.

It is generally believed that God's call to Abram recorded in Genesis 12:1 actually precedes the events of Genesis 11:31. The family had possibly lived in Haran then moved to Ur, where Terah's son Haran was born and died. After God called Abram, they travelled back to Haran. (See Acts 7:2-4.)

CT

God said, "Abram, leave your country, and your people - even your relatives - and go to the land which I will show you" (from Genesis 12:1).

What a strange message! God was telling Abram to leave his city and his home and He did not even give Abram the name of the place he should go to. God commanded Abram, "Go," and at the same time He made a promise to give Abram a land.

Place wordstrip "land".

God's promises are often like that. He tells us something we must do. If we do that thing, He promises something to us. For example He says to His children, "Draw near to God." That is what we must do. Then comes the promise, "and He will draw near to you" (from James 4:8). That is a promise.

God gave Abram other wonderful promises.

Allow the children you have chosen to read them out and place wordstrips on the board - "great nation", "bless", "great name", "be a blessing" and "all families".

- 1 Genesis 12:2a - "I will make you a great nation."
- 2 Genesis 12:2b - "I will bless you."
- 3 Genesis 12:2c - "I will ... make your name great."
- 4 Genesis 12:2d - "You shall be a blessing."
- 5 Genesis 12:3c - "In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

CT

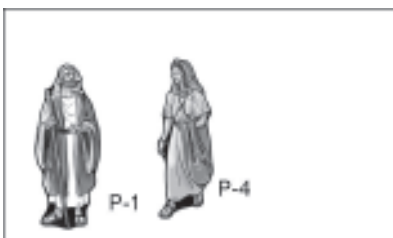
God had a plan for Abram's life and so He gave him these great promises. The wonderful thing was that God could keep every one of them. Sometimes you and I make a promise and later discover that we cannot keep it. But God is so great and powerful that He can always keep His promises. That is not a difficult thing for Him to do. Nor will God ever break a promise.

Abram's father, Terah, was a descendant of Shem and an idol worshipper (Joshua 24:2).

Even though many of his family worshipped the moon, Abram knew that the Lord was God, and he could depend on Him. He had listened to God's command and to His promises. He didn't just say, "What God says is right," and stay in Ur. No, he made up his mind to do what God commanded and trust God to keep His promises.

Remove all figures.

Flashcard 1-2



Scene 2

Optional background: Plain board. Place Abram (P-1) and Sarai (P-4).

First of all he must have talked with his wife, Sarai. "We are going to move. We're leaving this city."

"But Abram, where are we going?"

"I don't know. God said I should leave here and He will show us where to go," Abram would have answered.

Abram no doubt told his father, Terah, his brother, Nahor, and his nephew, Lot, "I must leave Ur, we shall be moving."

They too would have asked, "Where are you going?"

Abram's answer would have been the same as he gave Sarai, "God promised to show me a land which He is going to give me. I don't know where it is. I'll trust God."

You see, trusting is not only knowing that God has promised to do something. It is depending on Him to do it for you. Abram took God at His Word and believed that God would keep all those promises He had made.

Remove all figures.

Imagine how the relatives shook their heads. "How very strange! Leaving and not knowing where you are going. We don't understand." They couldn't understand, for they didn't know God as Abram did. Abram knew that the Lord Who had made those promises, would keep them. That is why he did what God had told him to do.

God wants you to take Him at His Word too. In the Bible there are many promises. Some of the promises are for those who have never trusted Jesus Christ as Saviour, some are for those who have trusted Him. Who is this promise for? "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). It is for Christians, those who know Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

Right now we are going to think of a promise which is for those that have never trusted Jesus Christ. He made the promise and He too is God, so we can be sure He will keep it. He promised, "The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out" (John 6:37b).

Why do you need to come to Jesus Christ? You need to come because the wrong you have done keeps you away from God, and Jesus Christ alone can take away your sin. Perhaps you have seen your need to have your sin forgiven but you think, "I am too bad - nobody knows I have been stealing." Perhaps someone has told you that you are too young to come to Jesus Christ. Listen to the promise again.

Repeat with emphasis.

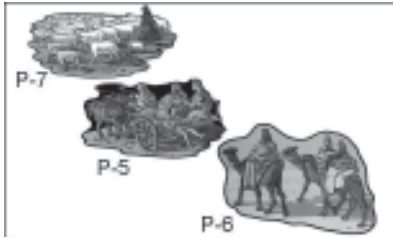
No matter how bad you have been, no matter how young you are, whoever you are, if you come to Jesus Christ, He will not turn you away. That is His promise. You come to the Lord Jesus by asking Him to forgive your sin. Won't you believe this promise and come to Him today? If you want to, but are not sure how, then stay in your seat when the others leave. I'll know you want to talk to me about this and I will be glad to explain more from the Bible. It is very important that you understand and really believe this promise, just as Abram believed the promises God gave him.

CT

CTU

Read, or have an older child read, the verse from your Bible.

Flashcard 1-3



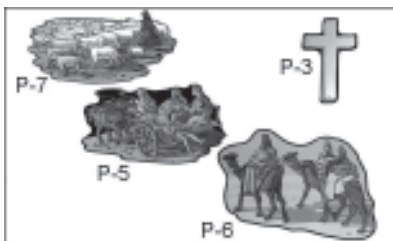
Preschoolers will enjoy making animal sounds and marching in a procession.

Let children locate Haran and Ur on a map, showing the long distance, perhaps requiring ten weeks' travel time.

Abram acquired additional servants in Haran (Genesis 12:5), making him quite wealthy.

Let children locate Canaan on a map. Abram settled in Shechem but gradually travelled south for better grazing lands.

CTU



Read, or have an older child read, the verse from your Bible.

Scene 3

Optional background: Outdoor scene. Place cart (P-5), camels (P-6) and sheep (P-7).

Abram was soon on his way, leaving behind the city of Ur. But who are these others? Some of the relatives decided to go with Abram and his wife. His father and his nephew Lot went. There were servants as well as animals, tents and things they would need along the way. The Bible does not say how God led them, but in some way He did, day after day and week after week. It would have taken them ten weeks or more to reach the city of Haran which was about 1,100 km (700 miles) from Ur. There they stopped. Perhaps Abram's father was too old and too tired to go further, for they stayed in Haran until he died. They may have been there as long as fifteen years.

At last they started again to go to the land God had promised. What a sight it must have been. It seemed like moving a village: Abram and his family riding camels; about 600 servants with their children; donkeys laden with goods and flocks.

After much travelling they came to the promised land, called Canaan. How excited Abram must have been to see it, to walk in it. Yes, God had kept His Word! Can you remember the other things God promised to Abram?

Allow the children to respond.

Let's think of that last one, "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:3). God was promising that, because of Abram, great blessing would come to people all over the world, even to you and me! How would God keep that promise? It was through Abram's family that Jesus came. Jesus Christ, God's Son, was born a Jew. He, Jesus Christ, has been a great blessing to people all over the world. He came to be the Saviour.

Place cross (P-3) on one side of the board.

That means He came to die, to take the punishment for our sins. He rose from the dead and He is alive in Heaven. That is why He can take all your sin away. That is why He can make that wonderful promise, "The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out" (John 6:37b). Take Him at His Word right now. Tell Him, "Lord Jesus, I am sorry for all the wrong I have done. I want to turn from it. Thank You for dying for me. Please forgive me all my sin." He will not turn you away. He will welcome you and forgive you. Won't you discover today in your own life that He keeps His promises, just as God kept all His promises to Abram?

Remove all figures.

Scene 4

Optional background: Plain board. Place altar (P-8), ram (P-9), fire (P-10) and Abram (P-1).

It was because of God's faithfulness to His own promise that Abram was now walking in the land that was to be his. The very first thing Abram did was to worship God. He built an altar. The Bible says, "the Lord appeared to Abram" (Genesis 12:7). What a special time that must have been. How glad Abram must have been that he had trusted God to bring him to this place.

One day Abram was very concerned. "What shall I feed the cattle, the sheep, the camels and the donkeys with? And what shall we live on?" he must have thought. He looked around. There was really not much grass left. This was a famine, and that meant lots of hungry people, hungry animals - but no food.

Remove all figures.

If Abram was trusting God at this time of famine what would he do?

Allow the children to suggest what he would do.

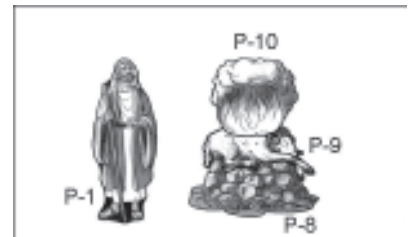
Let's see what he did. He decided to work things out for himself. He left Canaan and travelled to the land of Egypt. God had not told him to go there. Egypt was not the land God had promised him. So Abram got into trouble.

Sarai, his wife, was very beautiful. Abram was afraid that when the Egyptian men saw her they would kill him and take Sarai for themselves. So, not trusting God at all, Abram said to Sarai, "Say you are my sister, so that they won't kill me, in order to have you." But Abram's plan went wrong! The Pharaoh took Sarai into his palace - he wanted her as his wife. But God sent sickness to the people living in the palace. Soon Pharaoh discovered that Abram had not told all the truth. He was very angry and sent Abram and Sarai back home in a hurry.

But God didn't give up on Abram. He did not say, "Abram, you failed Me, so I am finished with you." He is a very faithful God. He cannot break His promises, even if His children have been disobedient.

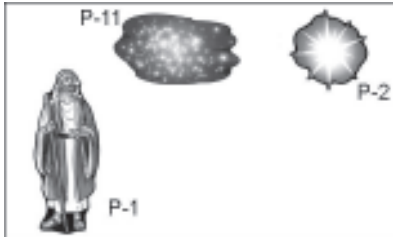
Perhaps you are a child of God, Jesus Christ is your Saviour, but like Abram, you too have not told the truth. Your older brother helped you with some schoolwork. When the teacher read it she was very pleased and asked, "Is that all your own work?" and you answered, "Yes". You lied. You feel unhappy, for you know you have displeased God. Is there a promise from God for you, a Christian who has displeased God? Yes! Listen to this, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). If you are sorry for what you have done wrong and tell God about it, He will forgive you, that is His

Flashcard 1-4



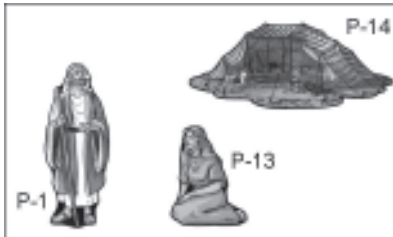
CTS

Read, or have an older child read, the verse from your Bible.

**Flashcard 1-5**

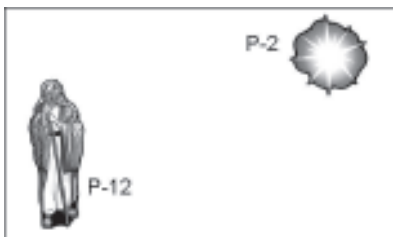
Preschoolers will enjoy pretending to look up at the sky and count the stars.

This is the first mention of the word “believe” in Scripture. God credited Abram’s belief to him for righteousness (Romans 4:3, Galatians 3:6, James 2:23, Hebrews 11:8-12). Abram’s faith began when God called him in Ur. His obedience was a result of that faith. As clearly taught throughout Scripture, salvation (imputed righteousness) is by faith alone.



Hagar was an Egyptian servant, possibly acquired with the riches given by Pharaoh.

God blessed Ishmael and promised that his descendants would also be great in number (Genesis 17:20). The twelve princes from Ishmael’s line formed the Arab nations. The strife

Flashcard 1-6**CTS**

promise. Of course you should put it right with your teacher. But, Christian boy or girl, when you sin, always remember God wants you to tell Him that you are sorry. He promises to forgive you. Once you have told God about it, you don’t need to go on and on feeling guilty. He is faithful, even when we fail Him. How glad Abram must have been about that.

Place Abram (P-1), symbol for God (P-2) and stars (P-11).

One night God spoke to Abram, “You will have a son. Look up into the sky and count the stars. Your family will be like that, more than can be counted.” It was a promise - Abram would have a son. The Bible says that Abram believed God (from Genesis 15:6).

Remove all figures.

Scene 5

Optional background: Outdoor scene. Place Abram (P-1), Sarai (P-13) and tent (P-14).

But the years went by and still there was no son. Had God forgotten? No, He never forgets a promise. Had God changed His mind? No, God does not change. Did God discover that He couldn’t keep that promise? No, there is nothing too difficult for God. He would keep His promise in His time. But Abram and Sarai couldn’t understand why God hadn’t given them the promised child. Sarai was tired of waiting.

One day she said to her husband, “I am too old to have children. Take my maid, Hagar, as a second wife, and she may give you a son.”

This was not God’s way, but Abram did it. He was tired of waiting for God to keep His promise too; he forgot to trust God. God does not fulfil every promise immediately, but He will keep them, that is certain.

Remove all figures.

Hagar did have a son called Ishmael. But he was not the promised son. When Ishmael was 13 years old, God spoke to Abram once more, repeating the promise, “Sarai shall have a son” (from Genesis 17:16).

Place Abram (P-12) and symbol for God (P-2).

Abram laughed and said to the Lord, “Shall a son be born to me who is 100 years old? Shall Sarai, who is 90, really have a son?” It seemed impossible! But God made the promise, because nothing is impossible with Him. God even changed Abram’s name to Abraham, which means “father of many nations”. And Sarai’s name was changed to Sarah (“princess”). These new names must have helped them to remember God’s wonderful promise.

Aren’t you glad that God will keep every promise He has made? If you are a Christian, you might like to underline the promises you

find in the Bible. That might help you to remember them. Most important of all, trust God to keep them.

In Romans 8:28 there is a wonderful promise for every Christian, “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God.” That means that whatever happens in your life - sad things, happy things, disappointments - God has a purpose for allowing them to happen and He will work it out for your good. He often uses these things to make us more like the Lord Jesus. Trust God when things are hard. It is so easy to blame God when your Mum or Dad are sick, or even die. If you blame God and stop talking to Him, that is not trusting His promise. If you blame yourself and think if you had been kinder it wouldn’t have happened, you are not trusting God’s promise. When things are difficult or sad, tell God that you believe He is working it out. Trust Him to keep His promise.

If you are not a Christian, if you have never trusted Jesus Christ as your Saviour, remember that special promise He made - “The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” (John 6:37b). Come to Him now to have all your sins forgiven. He promises not to turn you away.

Review questions

- 1 What did God tell Abram to do when he lived in Ur? (“Abram, leave your country, and your people - even your relatives - and go to the land which I will show you.”)
- 2 Why did Abram obey? (Because God had promised to give Abram a land and he trusted God to keep His promise.)
- 3 What does it mean to “trust” God? (Depend on God to do what He has promised.)
- 4 Can you tell one of God’s promises? (Eg “I will never leave you nor forsake you” Hebrews 13:5; “The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” John 6:37b.)
- 5 Who went with Abram and Sarai? (Abram’s father Terah, his nephew Lot and their servants.)
- 6 What did Abram do wrong in Egypt? (He did not trust God and said that Sarai was his sister.)
- 7 What were some of the promises God gave Abram? (“I will make you a great nation; I will bless you; I will make your name great; you shall be a blessing; in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed; I will give you and Sarai a son.”)
- 8 Why did it seem impossible that Abram and Sarai would have a son? (Abram and Sarai were too old to have children.)
- 9 Why can you be sure that God will keep His promises? (Because He is God and nothing is impossible for Him.)
- 10 Where do you find God’s promises? (In His Word the Bible.)

that would come between Ishmael and Isaac foreshadowed the ongoing strife between Israel and the Arab world today.

CTU

Review game

Footprint race

Cut out two footprints (a right and a left) per team - see page 60.

Line up the footprints for each team on a flat surface, or back them with flocked paper scraps or paper towel and place on a flannelboard.

Divide the class into two teams and ask questions, alternating between the teams.

If a child answers correctly he moves one of his team’s footprints forward, end to end, as if taking a step.

The team that travels farthest wins.

Preschool review game

Footprint race

Follow instructions above but use only one set of footprints and do not divide into teams.

Continue asking questions (using each more than once) until both footprints reach the other side of the flannelboard.

Preschool review questions

- 1 What is a promise? (Something a person says he will do.)
- 2 What are two promises God made to Abraham? (God would guide him to a new land; he would have many children, grandchildren and other relatives; he would become an important man; God would be good to those who treated his people kindly and punish those who mistreated them; the Saviour would come through his descendants.)
- 3 What was the name of Abraham’s son? (Ishmael. Also Isaac, although not mentioned in this lesson.)
- 4 What does God promise to do for you if you believe on Jesus as your Saviour from sin? (“The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” John 6:37b. He promises to forgive you of your sin so you can go to Heaven someday.)

Carry-over activity

Ruled star

Supply each child with a star as shown on page 59.

Each child should choose one of God’s promises and write it on the star as a reminder.

Encourage the children that each time they see it, they should thank God that He always keeps His promises.

Lesson 2

Abraham's gift of his son

Scripture for teachers

Genesis 21:1-8

Genesis 22:1-14

Central truth

God tests His children to strengthen their faith in Him

Application

Saved: When things are difficult, depend on God for help

Memory verse

"I know also, my God, that You test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness ..." 1 Chronicles 29:17a

Visual aids

- ◆ Flashcards: 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 2-4, 2-5 and 2-6

Or

- ◆ Figures: P-3, P-8, P-9, P-10, P-12, P-13, P-14, P-15, P-16, P-17, P-18, P-19, P-20, P-21, P-22 and P-23
- ◆ Backgrounds (optional): Outdoor and mountaintop scenes
- ◆ If you use this lesson as a special evangelistic lesson (see notes - page 18), you may want to include figures of the Lord Jesus Christ as well, and a picture of a baby

Carry-over activity

- ◆ If possible have a cassette recorder and microphone to interview Abraham and Isaac after the lesson.

Lesson outline

Introduction

Isn't it hard to wait for something special?

Progression of events

- 1 Birth of Isaac **CTS**
- 2 Isaac grows up
- 3 Abraham teaches Isaac
- 4 God asks Abraham to sacrifice Isaac **CTS**
- 5 Abraham, Isaac and servants set off **CTS**
- 6 Abraham and Isaac leave servants and travel on **CTS**
- 7 Isaac asks, "Where is the lamb?"
- 8 Abraham replies, "God will provide" **CTS**
- 9 Abraham places Isaac on altar **CTS**

Climax

Abraham raises his knife

Conclusion

Angel says, "Do not harm the boy"

God provides a lamb

Abraham and Isaac return home together

CTS

Application for unsaved children

This can be a special evangelistic lesson to show how God gave His Son for us. As given here, the lesson does not have a main application for the unsaved children. We suggest therefore that you use the following to teach about who are God's children during another part of your programme.

Show a picture of a baby.

It is an exciting day when a new baby arrives into a family. Perhaps you have a little brother or sister and you well remember the day he was born.

It is even more special to be born into God's family and so become God's child. How does that happen?

- ◆ Not when you are born as a little baby.
- ◆ Not by going to church.
- ◆ Not when you die.

The Bible tells us when it happens. Listen to this.

Read John 1:12.

Those who receive Jesus Christ as Saviour are born into God's family. The wrong things in your life keep you outside of God's family, but Jesus Christ can take those things all away for He died to take away sin. He is alive and can come into your life. If you want to turn from the wrong things, and want to be in God's family, then you must depend on the Lord Jesus to take away all your sin. He will do it when you ask Him, and you will be born into God's family. God will make you a new, different person. He will be your loving Heavenly Father. That is how you become God's child.

Special evangelistic lesson

If you wish to teach this as a special evangelistic lesson, you could use it as a picture of the death of the Lord Jesus, using the following points:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ◆ Isaac was the beloved son | The Lord Jesus, the beloved Son of God |
| ◆ Isaac did as his father said and went | The Lord Jesus' obedience to the Father |
| ◆ Isaac carried the wood | The Lord Jesus carried the cross |
| ◆ Altar on mountain | Cross on Calvary Hill |
| ◆ Isaac's death was undeserved | The Lord Jesus had done nothing wrong, He died for sinners |
| ◆ Isaac was given back from death | The Lord Jesus was raised from the dead |

Do not try to include all this teaching along with the truth taught in the text. It is best to teach one or the other.

Lesson

Isn't it hard when you have to wait for something special? You have been promised a computer game for your birthday - but you must wait. You and your family are going on an exciting holiday - but you have to wait for weeks. It seems like the time will never come.

I am sure it was hard for Abraham and Sarah to wait for the son God had promised. They had to wait for twenty-five years! By this time God had changed Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's to Sarah. So that is what we will call them from now on.

Scene 1

Optional background: Outdoor scene. Place tent (P-14) and Abraham (P-12).

At last the waiting was over! Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 years old, when their son was born.

Place Sarah (P-13) and baby Isaac (P-15).

One of the first things mums and dads do is to give their baby a name. Abraham and Sarah named the baby Isaac, because that means "laughter." Both Abraham and Sarah had laughed when they heard that a son would be born to them when they were old. Sarah said, "God has made me laugh, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me" (from Genesis 21:6).

As they looked at their precious boy Abraham and Sarah must have felt that all the waiting had been worthwhile. Their faith in God was made stronger as they waited for Him to keep His promise.

It is not always easy to wait. Perhaps you are the only Christian in your family. You have asked God to save your mum and dad, brothers and sisters, but they are still not Christians. You keep asking and waiting. It would be much easier if God would do it at once. But as you wait for God to answer, you can learn to trust Him more. Each day you have to depend on His help to live as a Christian in your family. You discover that God really does help you. God gives us these "tests" or hard times so that we will trust Him more.

Scene 2

Replace Isaac (P-15) with figure P-16.

But for Abraham the waiting was over, this "test" was finished. The Bible says that he invited his friends to a big party for Isaac, when he was still a tiny boy, perhaps when he was four or five years old. How proud Abraham must have been of his son.

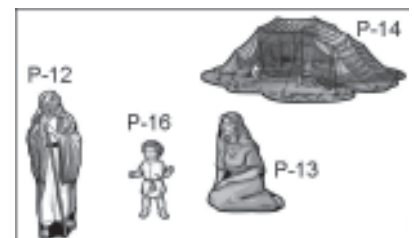
As Isaac grew up, his life must have been interesting and exciting. His family did not live in a house, but in a tent, no doubt a beautiful tent. But when Abraham needed to move to get fresh grass and water for his cattle, camels, donkeys, sheep and goats, the tent had to be taken down. Isaac must have enjoyed this way of living.



Read, or have an older child read, the verse from your Bible.

CTS

Flashcard 2-1



Preschoolers will enjoy pretending to help Abraham feed the animals.

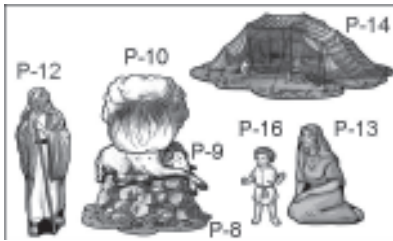
Scene 3

Place altar (P-8) and ram (P-9).

Isaac must have seen that Abraham knew and loved the Lord God. I am sure that Abraham was careful to teach Isaac about God. He would have taught him the way of worship and of forgiveness through the sacrifices. So Isaac often saw his father gather stones to build an altar. He saw him take a lamb, tie its feet, and place it on the wood. Then, with a quick stroke of his big knife, the lamb would be killed and the blood would flow over the altar.

“The animal is dying for our sin,” Abraham would have explained. “God had said that blood must be poured out so that sin can be forgiven.” (See Leviticus 17:11 and Hebrews 9:22.) After the blood of the animal was shed, then the sacrifice was burned. It was called a “burnt offering.”

Place fire (P-10).



Scene 4

Remove Abraham (P-12), Isaac (P-16) and Sarah (P-13). Place cross (P-3) above altar (P-8).

Today we must not worship God in this way. The lamb on the altar was just a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ who was to die on the cross for sin. He is called “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). He gave His blood that not only your sin and mine could be forgiven, but also the sins of Abraham and Isaac. Of course the Lord Jesus came long after the time when Isaac was learning about these animal sacrifices.

Remove cross (P-3), altar (P-8), ram (P-9) and fire (P-10).

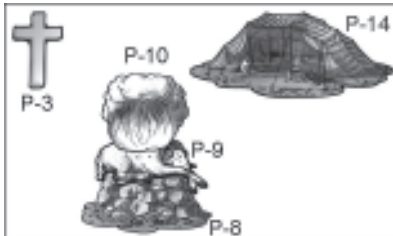
One morning, very early, Abraham wakened his son. “Isaac, get up! It’s time to get up!” Why was he wakening Isaac so early?

God had spoken that night. “Abraham.”

“Here I am,” Abraham had answered.

“I want you to take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love. Go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering. I will tell you upon which mountain to sacrifice your son, when you arrive.”

The Bible says, “God tested Abraham” (Genesis 22:1). What a test! What a difficult thing for Abraham to do - to sacrifice his own precious son. This must have been the hardest time in Abraham’s life. I am sure he was sad and puzzled. If you love the Lord Jesus Christ, life will not always be easy. God never promised an easy time. Indeed the Lord Jesus said, “In the world you will have tribulation” (John 16:33). A tribulation is a time of testing. Perhaps right now there is something very difficult in your life: your grandmother is very ill; there is schoolwork which you just cannot understand; your parents quarrel



For preschoolers show “provision” symbol footprint.

Historian Josephus estimates Isaac was about 25 years old at the time of this story.

Flashcard 2-2

Ishmael was also Abraham’s son, but only Isaac was the son of the promise (Hebrews 11:17-19).

Moriah - a range of mountains outside Jerusalem, about a three-day journey from Beersheba, where Abraham and Isaac lived.

CTS

This is the same site where Solomon later built his temple. The Jews

a lot. You are puzzled about why God allows these things to happen to you, as His child. But the Bible tells us that He often sends these tests to strengthen our faith in Him. When you have a hard time, ask God for His help. He will help you, you will prove Him for yourself and you'll be a stronger Christian. So don't fight against God; don't blame Him for difficult things. Instead trust Him to help you through them. That is what Abraham had to do as he faced this great test.

"God has asked us to go to one of the mountains of Moriah to worship Him," Abraham might have explained to Isaac, early that morning. "It is a three-day trip, so we must leave early."

Scene 5

Place Isaac (P-17), Abraham (P-12), donkey (P-18), wood (P-19) on donkey's back, in front of tent (P-14).

Preparations for the journey were made. Abraham split some wood, tied it into a bundle and loaded it on the donkey. Two servants were preparing to go too. They would need sleeping mats and blankets. Perhaps Sarah was packing some food for the trip. She was not going with them.

Soon they said goodbye to her and set out for Moriah.

Remove tent (P-14) and place figures in "travelling" position.

Abraham was probably very quiet, perhaps his eyes sometimes filled with tears, as he thought of sacrificing Isaac. Was it because God did not love Abraham that He asked him to do this thing? No. Abraham knew God loved him. It was because he was sure of that, he could trust Him even in this hard test. It is not that God does not love you, when He allows hard things in your life. God never stops loving you. Sometimes He permits hard things, just because He loves you so much. God will give you the courage to face the tests. He will never allow a difficulty that is too much for you. Perhaps your father is out of work; perhaps you were not accepted for the school you wanted to go to. When things like that happen, trust God. If you do, your faith in Him will become stronger. Through this test Abraham's faith was being strengthened.

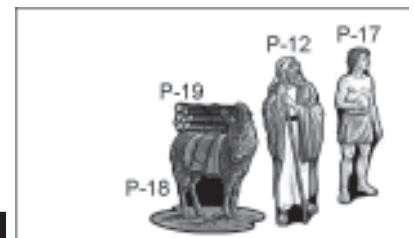
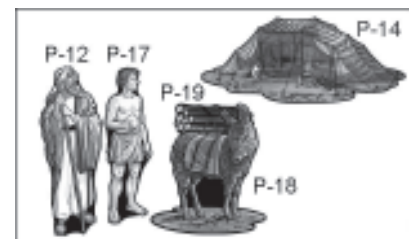
One day. One night. Two days. Two nights. Three days. On the third day they saw the mountain of Moriah. Perhaps Abraham pointed it out to his son. "There is where we will worship God, Isaac."

He spoke to his servants, "You wait here, with the donkey. Isaac and I will go over to that mountain. We will worship God, and then come back to you."

Remove all figures.

believe that the altar of burnt offering in the temple was situated on the exact site of Abraham's altar. A Muslim mosque, the Dome of the Rock is presently situated on this site. (*Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1986.)

Flashcard 2-3



CTS

For preschoolers a hard test might be having mum leave them at daycare or taking a nap without fussing.

Have preschoolers count the days and walk with Abraham.

You may want to have a child prepared to read Abraham's words.

Flashcard 2-4

**CTS**

You may want to provide cards with a suggested dialogue and have two children role-play this exchange between Abraham and Isaac.

Scene 6

Place Abraham and Isaac (P-20), and wood (P-19) on Isaac's back.

What was it he said? "We will come back to you." If God wanted Isaac for a burnt offering, how could he come back? The Bible tells us that Abraham believed that "God was able to raise him [Isaac] up, even from the dead" (Hebrews 11:19). If Isaac was sacrificed, God could bring him back to life. How strong was Abraham's faith!

Through the hard times he had learned to trust God. Through your disappointments, or times when you are hurt or sad, your faith in God can become stronger by trusting Him to work it out for good. If everything was always easy, your trust in God would be weak. In a way it is rather like what happens to a tree. During a dry time when there is no rain the tree roots push deeper and deeper into the damp parts of the earth. Of course this makes it a stronger tree. When the storms come it can stand up straight, for its roots have gone deep into the earth.

A Christian boy called Mike was rather like that tree. He loved the Lord Jesus but his brother didn't and he gave Mike a hard time. He turned on his radio when Mike read his Bible, he called him names, he told lies about him. Sometimes Mike said to the Lord, "God, why is it hard? I feel like giving up. Please help me to live for You." Depending on God for help was like the tree pushing its roots deep into the earth. God did not make it easy, but He helped Mike not to fight back. One evening Mike had a chance to tell his brother what a real Christian was. It was a hard time for Mike, but he depended on God more than ever. Yes, tests like that are hard, but God has good reasons for allowing them. God had His reasons for asking Abraham to sacrifice his son.

Together they left the servants and set off. Isaac carried the wood. Abraham took the big knife which he used to kill the animals for the sacrifice. For a while, neither spoke. But Isaac too had been thinking and he could no longer keep his thoughts to himself.

"Father," he said.

"Yes, son," Abraham answered.

"Look," said Isaac, "here is the fire and here is the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

It must have taken Abraham a long time to answer. He must have swallowed hard and squeezed back the tears. Then, he said, "God will provide Himself a lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And they kept walking along together.

CTS

God will provide. Those wonderful words showed Abraham's faith in God, in the hardest test he ever had. If you are a Christian, you too can depend on God for help, whatever your problem is. If you

do, you will find that He gives you the courage and help you need to do what is right.

Remove all figures.

Scene 7

Optional background: Mountaintop scene. Place Abraham (P-12) and Isaac (P-17).

The further they went, the harder Abraham's test became. Finally they were at the top of the mountain.

Abraham began to gather stones to build an altar. Isaac helped him. At last the altar was built.

Place altar (P-8) and wood (P-19).

Then Abraham took the bundle of wood and laid it on the altar. The Bible does not tell us exactly what happened next, but it must have been something like this.

Abraham explained what he was going to do, and why he was doing it. "God has asked me to do a strange thing today. I do not understand; I only know I must obey." Tears were probably running down Abraham's cheeks as he explained, "God has asked me to bring you to this mountain and offer you as a burnt offering. I don't know what God is going to do. But I know we can trust Him. I'm sure He will provide for us. I must obey God."

Sometimes it is very hard to choose to obey God. Nancy found it very difficult. She wanted to go on a school trip with her class, but her parents didn't have the money. One day on the way to school Nancy found the exact amount needed lying on the pavement. Someone in her class must have lost it. No-one knew she had found it. She could use it for the school trip or she could give it to the teacher to find out whose it was. If she was going to obey God what would she do and why?

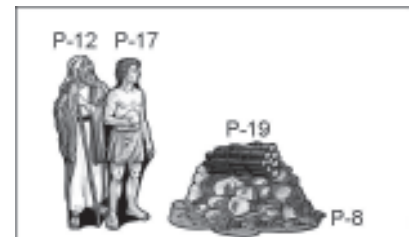
Allow children to respond.

It was a hard test for Nancy but God helped her to obey Him and she was a better Christian, because of this test. If you who love the Lord Jesus face tests like that, depend on God to help you to obey Him. That's what Abraham did.

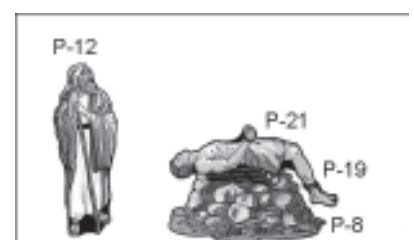
Scene 8

Remove Isaac (P-17). Place Isaac (P-21) on altar and wood (P-8 and P-19).

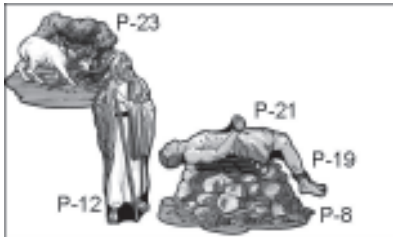
As Abraham explained what he was doing, he was tying the rope, binding Isaac's hands to his sides. Isaac did not try to stop him. He could have. He was stronger than his father. He could easily have run away. His heart must have been full of questions, but he obeyed and allowed Abraham to tie his ankles as he lay upon the wood on the altar. Many times he had watched the animals die on the altar. Isaac must have closed his eyes when he saw his father raise his big knife.



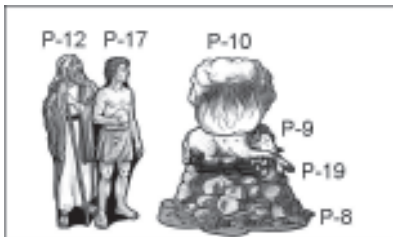
CTS



Flashcard 2-5



Flashcard 2-6

**CTS**

Jehovah-Jireh (Genesis 22:14) - The word jireh literally means "to see". It carries with it the idea of foreknowledge. This name of God could be translated "God will see to it." God knows the need beforehand and has already provided for it. (*Names of God*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1944.)

Review game**Footprint concentration**

Cut out 12 footprints to be used for lessons 2-4.

Photocopy and cut out two sets of the symbols on page 61, and then

Replace Abraham (P-12) with figure P-22.

Suddenly a voice called, "Abraham!"

Isaac opened his eyes. He heard his father answer, "Here I am."

The Angel of the Lord was calling to him from Heaven.

He said, "Do not touch the boy; do not do him any harm! Now I know that you fear God, for you have not kept back your only son from me."

How glad Isaac must have been to hear that voice!

Scene 9

Place ram in thorn bush (P-23). Replace Abraham (P-22) with figure P-12.

Abraham turned around. "Isaac, look! A sheep! A ram caught in a bush by its horns."

There was the sacrifice! God had provided a burnt offering. Abraham took the ram and placed it on the altar in place of Isaac.

Remove ram in thorn bush (P-23). Replace Isaac (P-21) with figure P-17. Place ram (P-9) on altar and wood (P-8 and P-19).

He lit the wood with the fire.

Place fire (P-10).

The sacrifice was offered - a burnt offering. As Isaac stood by the altar, he surely thanked God with all his heart. The ram had died in his place. You too should remember to thank God when He helps you in the hard times.

Father and son returned home together. Neither would ever forget that day, that very difficult test. Abraham passed the test. He showed that his faith in God was real. God gives us those hard times to show others and ourselves that we truly depend on Him (1 Peter 1:7). It is easy to talk about trusting God when everything is easy, but only true Christians can trust Him in the hard times. If you love the Lord Jesus, remember God has wonderful, special reasons for allowing you to have problems and hard times. He will use them to make you a stronger Christian. As we close, let's thank Him that He knows why the problems come. Let's ask Him to help us to become more like the Lord Jesus through them.

Close in prayer.

Review questions

- 1 I was 90 years old when something happened to me that made me laugh. Who am I? (Sarah.)
- 2 I am the son of Abraham and Sarah. My name means "laughter." Who am I? (Isaac.)
- 3 Why do we no longer offer animal sacrifices to God? (Because the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God died on the cross for the sin of the world.)

- 4 Why does God allow difficult things in the lives of His children? (To test us and strengthen our faith in Him.)
- 5 What question did Isaac ask Abraham as they went to make the sacrifice? (“Where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”)
- 6 What was Abraham’s reply to Isaac? (“God will provide Himself a lamb for the burnt offering, my son.”)
- 7 Why did Abraham say to the servants, “We will come back”? (Abraham believed that God was able to raise Isaac up, even from the dead.)
- 8 What died in Isaac’s place? (A sheep or ram.)
- 9 Describe a wrong way in which a Christian can react to difficulties in his life. (Eg blame God for the difficulties.)
- 10 Describe the right way for a Christian to react to difficulties in his life. (Eg ask God for help and trust Him to work it out for good.)

Preschool review questions

- 1 Who stopped Abraham from offering Isaac on the altar? (The Angel of the Lord.)
- 2 What did God provide for Abraham to put on the altar instead of his son? (A sheep or ram.)
- 3 Who did God provide to die for your sin? (His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.)
- 4 When you believe in Jesus what does God provide? (Salvation; forgiveness of sin.)

Carry-over activity

If possible have a cassette recorder and microphone to interview Abraham and Isaac after the lesson. Half the children may be Abraham and the others may be Isaac. You or your helper may ask them questions, such as

- ◆ Isaac, what questions did you have for your father, as you went up the mountain together?
- ◆ Abraham, if you love your boy, how could you ever sacrifice him?
- ◆ Isaac, what was the worst moment for you?
- ◆ Isaac, how did you feel just then?
- ◆ Abraham, why were you so sure that both of you would come back home?
- ◆ Isaac, what part of today will you always remember?
- ◆ Abraham, how is it that you trust God more as you become older?

paste each on a footprint to create six matching pairs. (Point values will be used for lesson 3.)

Arrange the footprints face down on a flat surface, or add flocked paper or paper towel scraps to the symbol side and arrange on a flannelboard.

When a child answers a question correctly he may turn over two footprints. If the symbols match, he may hold them until the game is over. If the symbols do not match, the footprints are turned back over and the next question is asked.

Play continues until all questions have been answered.

Preschool review game

Footprint concentration

Follow instructions above. Use preschool questions from lessons 1 and 2.

Carry-over activity*Choosing obedience*

Discuss difficult situations children might face (see below). For each one let children suggest ways they could obey God and the possible positive and negative results. Then talk about why God might allow the trial (eg to strengthen their faith, help others see Jesus in them, enable them to help others, etc). Emphasise that often we won't know why things happen, but we should always obey God and allow Him to use even difficult situations for good.

- ◆ Your football practices are moved to Sunday mornings.
- ◆ Your best friend starts hanging around children who smoke.
- ◆ A classmate asks you to help him cheat on a test.
- ◆ Your parents stop going to church.

Lesson 3

Abraham seeks a bride for his son

Scripture for teachers

Genesis 24

Genesis 15:2

It is generally believed that Eliezer is the servant sent to seek a bride for Isaac

Central truth

God guides His children

Application

Saved: Ask God to show you His way in every decision you make

Memory verse

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye” Psalm 32:8

Visual aids

◆ Flashcards: 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4, 3-5 and 3-6

Or

◆ Figures: P-6, P-14, P-24, P-25, P-26, P-27, P-28 and P-29

◆ Backgrounds (optional): Outdoor scene; for scene 1 you could substitute a tent background and omit tent (P-14)

And

◆ Make wordstrips: “God guides through prayer”, “Bible”, “other Christians”

◆ Instruction manual for an electric appliance

Lesson outline

Introduction

Introducing the concept of guidance

Progression of events

- 1 Abraham instructs his servant about getting a wife for Isaac **CTS**
- 2 Eliezer leaves Abraham’s home
- 3 Eliezer arrives at the well near the city of Nahor
- 4 He asks God for guidance **CTS**
- 5 Eliezer asks Rebekah for a drink and she responds **CTS**
- 6 Eliezer thanks God **CTS**
- 7 Eliezer goes to Rebekah’s home
- 8 He tells all that has happened
- 9 Rebekah’s father and brother say, “It’s from the Lord” **CTS**
- 10 Next morning Rebekah’s family want to delay departure
- 11 Rebekah says, “I will go”

Climax

Isaac and Rebekah meet

Conclusion

Rebekah becomes Isaac’s wife **CTS**

Application for unsaved children

This lesson does not have an application for the unsaved children. We suggest therefore that you use the following for the unsaved children during another part of your programme.

Here I have an instruction manual for my *(name electric appliance of which you show manual)*. When I bought my ____, I carefully read the instructions from the makers. The people who made it know best how it works! If I do not read and follow the makers' instructions I will have problems.

Here I have another, more important, instruction manual.

Hold up Bible.

It is the instruction manual for you and me and it is from our Maker, God. Of course He knows best how we should live.

This instruction manual tells us very important things. It tells us we have all gone away from God and disobeyed Him.

We read that Jesus Christ, God's only Son, died on the cross and was punished by God for our disobedience.

Show visual of cross.

But He isn't dead now. He came back to life and is alive for evermore.

Show visual of tomb.

He can make things right between you and God. He can forgive all your sin and help you to follow the instructions in the Bible. The Bible says, "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

Show "turn around" visual.

Turn from the wrong way. Trust Jesus Christ to make you right with God. Then all your sins will be blotted out. It is very important that you obey your Maker's instructions.

You may make these simple visuals and take them out of your Bible to show them as you teach.



Lesson

When you are building a model aeroplane from a kit, how do you know what piece to glue where? Or when you are knitting something, how do you know what stitch to do, or the number of stitches to have on the needle?

Allow the children to respond to the questions.

You follow the directions. When your family goes somewhere they have never been before they need directions. They need someone to tell them, or write down, the right way to go. Another word that means the same as “following directions” is “guidance”. Both mean “what to do” or “how to go”.

Abraham’s chief servant, a man whom we think was called Eliezer, had a very important job to do for Abraham. He would certainly need guidance.

Scene 1

Optional background: Outdoor scene with tent (P-14) or tent background. Place Abraham (P-24) and Eliezer (P-25).

Sarah was dead and Abraham was getting old. Abraham had been thinking about his son Isaac. “Isaac needs a wife,” Abraham thought to himself.

So he called his chief servant, Eliezer. “Give me a solemn promise,” Abraham said to his servant, “that you will not get a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanites who worship idols and do other wicked things. I want you to go to my country, to my relatives, and get a wife for Isaac.”

At that time it was not strange for parents to decide about who or when a son or daughter should marry. Eliezer was not surprised that Abraham was going to do something about a wife for Isaac. But already he could think of problems.

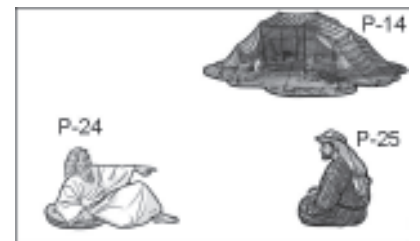
“Suppose I can’t get anyone to come with me?” he asked. “Shall I come back and get Isaac and take him there?”

“No, never do that,” Abraham answered. “God called me out of that land. Don’t ever take Isaac back there. God will send His angel ahead of you to guide you, so that you can get a wife for my son there. If the woman refuses to come back with you, then you will be free from your promise.”

Abraham knew that God would show Eliezer the right wife for his son. God would make it clear to him “what to do” and “how to go”. God is a God Who guides His children. If you have received Jesus Christ as your Saviour, you are God’s child. God wants to help you make the right choices and decisions. In the Bible He promises, “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye” (Psalm 32:8). Perhaps you have to decide “Should

Most commentators believe this servant was Eliezer of Damascus (Genesis 15:2). He was Abraham’s chief servant and was so close to Abraham that if Abraham had never had a son, Eliezer would have been his heir.

Flashcard 3-1



In an arranged marriage the bride became part of her husband’s clan, under the authority of the groom’s father. The choice of a bride was therefore very important.

You may want to have two children role-play the conversation between Abraham and Eliezer.

CTS

For preschoolers introduce “guidance” symbol footprint and refer to it throughout the lesson.

**Flashcard 3-2**

Scripture refers to this as the city of Nahor. It's unclear whether this was Haran (where Nahor remained after Abraham and Lot left for Canaan) or a city near Haran.

Children would enjoy seeing and touching gold costume jewellery.

Let preschoolers pretend to journey with Eliezer - walk through the hot desert, stop to eat and rest, ride a camel, etc.

Flashcard 3-3

I go to gymnastics instead of Sunday School?" or "Should I watch that horror video that the rest of the family will watch?" God knows the right way. He wants to show it to you. He guides His children. Abraham was sure about that and told Eliezer so.

Remove all figures.

Scene 2

Optional background: Outdoor scene. Place camels (P-6).

Eliezer got ready to go. Ten camels were loaded with things for the 725 km (450 mile) trip to Haran, which would take several weeks. Food, blankets and tents would be needed as they travelled. He took all kinds of good things from Abraham - perhaps precious jewellery, gold, silver and beautiful clothing - to show that Abraham was a great wealthy man. Eliezer also took servants, for his trip through the hot, lonely country could be dangerous.

As they travelled Eliezer must have been thinking, "How will I know when I meet the one who is to be Isaac's wife? What will I say to her?" He knew he needed God to guide him. Eliezer had directions from Abraham. But he needed more. He needed God to show him the right person.

Remove all figures.

Scene 3

Optional background: Outdoor scene. Place Eliezer (P-25), camels (P-27) and well (P-26).

It was evening when they came near the city of Nahor, to which Abraham sent them. They stopped by the well to rest - and probably to decide what to do next. As Eliezer looked toward the city he saw the women on their way to the well, carrying their water jars. He must have remembered Abraham's words, "God will go ahead of you." Would he see an angel? Sometimes God did let His people see angels, but often they were not seen even though they were there. Eliezer knew he needed God to guide him.

So he prayed, "Oh Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray that You will show kindness to my master and make my journey worthwhile. Here I am by the well, and the girls are coming from the city for water. I will ask one of them for a drink of water. If she gives me a drink and then says 'I will get water for your camels to drink too,' I will know she is the one you have for Isaac to marry." (From Genesis 24:12-14.)

CTS

It is always wise to ask God for guidance. One way in which God guides His children is through prayer.

Place wordstrips "God guides through prayer" on board.

When you love the Lord Jesus remember to ask God to show you His way, when you have a choice or decision to make. So when you

go shopping for that present for your mum, ask Him to help you find the right one. Then, as you look at different things, you see something and inside you know it is just right. Or ask God about that horror video. Your thoughts may be muddled. You don't want to be laughed at because you don't watch it. Yet you feel unhappy about watching it. As you talk to God about it the thought might come to your mind, "The Lord Jesus would not watch it." Then you know what you must do. God has guided you as you prayed. Eliezer was wise to pray, and to pray in the way he did.

It would not be easy for it to happen as he asked the Lord, because in that country it was very unusual for a man to talk with a woman who did not know him. So, most women probably would pay no attention to him. If the one he asked would not only give him a drink, but water his camels too, that would be very unusual. Also, it would show that she was a kind, thoughtful person, a person who was not afraid to work. Pulling big pitchers of water up from the well, carrying them up steps, pouring them into a trough - and doing it for ten camels - was a lot of work. Camels can drink a lot of water!

Place Rebekah (P-28).

Eliezer had not even finished his prayer when he saw the one he wanted to ask. She was beautiful - a lovely young woman. Was she the one? He watched her go down to the well and fill her pitcher.

As she came up from the well he asked, "Please, may I have a drink from your pitcher?"

She took the pitcher from her shoulder. "Drink," she said.

This was the first answer! Eliezer drank.

And then she said, "I will give water to your camels too, until they have enough to drink."

That was the second answer! It happened just as Eliezer had asked. God was guiding him.

Often when we pray for guidance, God lets something happen so that we know just what to do. Suppose you have prayed and asked God, "Who can I tell about you?" Then one day someone says, "Why do you always want to go to Good News Club[®], or church and Sunday School?" or "Since your mother won't let you go canoeing because you can't swim, why don't you go without telling her?" What would your answer be?

Discuss with children.

This can be your chance to tell someone about the Lord. God answered your prayer for guidance by sending someone to you with questions.

Since Eliezer had the two answers to his prayer for guidance, he must have found it difficult not to say why he was there. But he



Preschoolers can use a plastic milk container to play-act this part. You may want to plan for drinks of water at this time.

Flashcard 3-4

There are various types of wells in Palestine. This particular well probably had descending steps that allowed a person to dip directly from the pool of water.

Each of a camel's three stomachs can hold 19 litres (5 gallons) of water. With ten thirsty camels, it's likely that Rebekah made multiple trips, showing great energy and determination.

CTS

didn't tell. He had to find out some other things first. While he was thinking about asking the young woman to what family she belonged, he began to unpack some of the precious things he had brought. The gold jewellery, the ring and bracelets would show something about the man who had sent him. After the young woman had watered the camels, Eliezer gave the precious things to her. He learned that her name was Rebekah.

"Whose daughter are you?" he asked.

When she told him he was more excited than ever. She was a relative of Abraham!

"Would there be room for us to stay at your home tonight?" he asked.

"We have plenty of room," she replied, "for you and your camels."

Eliezer bowed his head and thanked God for His guidance. "Blessed be the God of my master Abraham. He has led me to the right place," he said. God is just the same today. If you are His child He wants to show you His way. He wants to help you make the right decisions. Remember what He says in Psalm 32:8

Read the verse again.

He will guide you as you pray. Sometimes God guides you as you read the Bible.

Place wordstrip "Bible" on the board, underneath "prayer".

The more you read and remember what is in the Bible the more you will understand what pleases God and what He wants His children to do. That is a real help when you have to make decisions. For example, if you have to choose between going to gymnastics or Sunday School, it helps when you know that the Bible teaches that you should meet together with other Christians. It is very important that you read the Bible in order to understand God's ways and then do what He wants you to do, for God will never lead you in a way which is against what He says in the Bible. This is one of the ways in which God guides His children. He guided Eliezer in another way. Although He chooses to use different ways, He does guide. We should be thankful for that, just as Eliezer was.

As Rebekah hurried home she too was excited. This man was a servant of Abraham! She had often heard her family talk about Abraham.

Remove Rebekah (P-28).

Rebekah's brother looked at her expensive jewellery and listened to what she told. Immediately he hurried to the well and invited Eliezer to his home.

Remove all figures.

CTS

Read, or have an older child read, the verse from your Bible.

Scene 4

Optional background: Plain board. Place Eliezer (P-25), Rebekah and family (P-29) and wordstrips "God guides through prayer" and "Bible".

Eliezer, the servants and the camels came to Rebekah's home and a meal was prepared for them.

"I will not eat until I tell you why I am here," Eliezer explained.

God had guided him to the right place, and the right person. Now he trusted God to help him to say the right thing. He told his story beginning with Abraham.

"The Lord has blessed my master greatly," he said. "He is an important man, and very rich. God has given him flocks and herds and camels and donkeys, much silver and gold and many servants, both men and women. Abraham and Sarah had a son when they were old and Abraham has given all his riches to his son."

He went on to tell of how his master said, "I do not want my son to marry a girl from among the wicked Canaanites. Get a wife for my son from among my people."

At last Eliezer told of his prayer at the well. "I prayed that when I said, 'May I please have a drink?' she would say, 'Drink, and I'll give water to your camels too!' Before I finished praying, Rebekah came. When I spoke to her she said exactly what I had prayed."

Can you imagine how Rebekah felt when she heard that?

Eliezer continued to explain, "I bowed my head and worshipped the Lord God of my master Abraham, who led me in the right way. God has guided me to your house and your daughter. Now, tell me, will you be kind to my master or not? Is your answer 'yes' or 'no' so that I may know what to do."

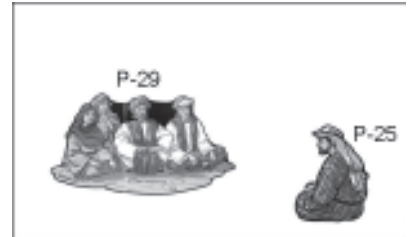
Rebekah didn't answer. But her father and brother answered for her. "This must be from the Lord," they said. "Take Rebekah and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son."

God was using Eliezer to show Rebekah, her brother and her family that this was God's way. He was using the servant to guide them. God often uses other Christians to help us know His way - especially when we are children.

Place wordstrip "other Christians" on the board, under "Bible".

Perhaps you have questions like, "What should I do when I'm bullied at school?" or "Should I tell a lie and say my dad isn't at home, when he is?" You just don't know God's way. Do you know someone who loves the Lord Jesus, a person whom you trust? Why don't you talk with that person and he or she will help you understand what is God's way. Remember I would be glad to talk with you, if you wish. Just wait after the club, stay in your seat and I will know that you want to

Flashcard 3-5



As time allows, you may want to have a child role-play Eliezer telling his story to Rebekah's family. Provide a suggested script or let him tell the story in his own words.

CTS

talk with me. God often uses other people to guide us just as He used Eliezer to guide Rebekah.

When Eliezer heard that Rebekah would go back with him he bowed himself to the ground and worshipped God, thanking Him for His guidance.

Then he unpacked more of the “precious things” he had brought. He gave more rich jewellery to Rebekah. After they had eaten a meal they went to bed.

Remove all figures.

CTS

Do you think Rebekah went to sleep? This was an evening that changed her life forever. God had clearly shown that Isaac was to be her husband. If you love the Lord Jesus, you will have very big decisions to make as you grow up. What will you be - a nurse, a farmer, a train driver, a missionary? Ask God to lead you. Who will you marry? Ask God to guide you. He will show you, if you truly want to go His way. He has promised to guide and He will do it, in little decisions and in big ones.

He led Eliezer. Now Abraham’s servant knew who Isaac’s wife should be.

Place Eliezer (P-25) and Rebekah and family (P-29).

So, next morning, he wanted to start the journey back to Abraham. Of course he wanted to take Rebekah with him, but Rebekah’s mother and brother said, “Oh no, don’t go yet. Let Rebekah stay with us about ten days. Then you may go.” But Eliezer wanted to go immediately.

“We will call Rebekah and see what she wants to do,” they said.

“Will you go with this man?” they asked her.

Rebekah was going to have to speak for herself. “I will go,” she replied.

Rebekah knew in her heart that this was God’s plan for her. She was eager to go and meet the man who would be her husband.

Remove all figures.

Preschoolers can slowly count the days.

Flashcard 3-6



Scene 5

Optional background: Outdoor scene. Place camels (P-6).

What excitement there must have been when Rebekah and Isaac met. The Bible says Eliezer told Isaac everything that happened. Hearing that, Isaac knew the Lord had sent Rebekah just for him. He took her into his mother’s tent and she became his wife. Both must have been so happy that God had guided. They had lived far away from each other but God had brought them together. Their love for each other grew daily.

Christian boy and girl, God wants to show you His way. He wants to guide you. So talk to Him about the choices and decisions you must make. Perhaps right now there is something you need to ask Him about. We'll be quiet for a short time so you can do that - not talking out loud, just quietly in your heart. Remember His promise, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye" (Psalm 32:8).

Have a short time of quietness, then close in prayer.

Review questions

- 1 Why did Abraham not want Isaac to marry a Canaanite woman? (Because the Canaanites served idols and did other wicked things.)
- 2 Where did he send his servant to look for a wife for Isaac? (To the country where Abraham's relatives lived, to the city of Nahor.)
- 3 Why did Eliezer pray at the well? (Because he needed God's guidance to find the right wife for Isaac.)
- 4 How will God guide His children? (Through prayer, through the Bible, through other Christians.)
- 5 How do we know that God will guide His children? (Because He promises this in the Bible, eg Psalm 32:8.)
- 6 What was the name of the woman whom God wanted Isaac to marry? (Rebekah.)
- 7 What important thing did Eliezer do first before he went to Rebekah's home? (He thanked God.)
- 8 How did Eliezer prove to Rebekah's family that Abraham and Isaac were great men? (He gave expensive jewellery he had brought with him to Rebekah and told about the flocks Abraham owned.)
- 9 What did Rebekah's father and brother say when they heard Eliezer's story? ("This must be from the Lord. Take Rebekah and go and let her become the wife of your master's son.")
- 10 Tell me one of the "big things" in which you will need God's guidance as you grow up. (Career, marriage, etc.)

Preschool review questions

- 1 Why did Abraham's servant need God's guidance? (He needed help finding a bride for Isaac.)
- 2 What did the servant do by the well before Rebekah came? (He prayed.)
- 3 How did the servant know Rebekah was the right young woman? (She did what he had asked in prayer.)
- 4 When you need God to guide you, what should you do? (Pray.)

CTS

Review game

Footprint points

Place Gospel symbol footprints from lesson 2 in a shoe box, sack or envelope.

Divide the class into teams. Ask review questions, alternating between the teams.

When a child answers a question correctly he may draw a footprint. His team then earns the number of points on the footprint, or if it says "double" his team doubles their existing point total. The child then returns the footprint and play continues until all questions have been answered. The team earning the most points wins.

Preschool review game

One step at a time

Place footprints on the floor, then ask preschool questions from lessons 1-3.

When a child answers a question, he stands on the first footprint. When the next child answers a question he stands on the first footprint while the first child moves to the second footprint.

When a child has stood on all the footprints, he sits down to wait for his next turn. Continue until all children have had a chance to participate.

Lesson 4

The birthright and the blessing

Scripture for teachers

Genesis 25:21-34

Genesis 26:34 - 28:5

Central truth

Don't be a deceiver, as Jacob was

Application

Unsaved: Trust God to change your deceitful heart

Saved: Depend on God's power to live as a new person

Memory verse

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ..." Jeremiah 17:9

Visual aids

- ◆ Flashcards: 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4 and 4-5

Or

- ◆ Figures: P-14, P-24, P-31, P-32, P-33, P-34, P-35, P-36, P-37, P-38 and P-39
- ◆ Backgrounds (optional): Outdoor background may be used for all scenes. For variety use outdoor background only for scenes 1 and 3, and tent background for other scenes. (If you use the tent background, simply omit tent - figure P-14.)

And

- ◆ A week ahead give two of the older children the details of the story from the beginning of the lesson and have them act it out in the meeting.

Lesson outline

Introduction

Phil wins a race

CT

Progression of events

1 Birth of Esau and Jacob

2 Esau is a hunter, Jacob the indoor type

3 Esau returns home hungry

4 Esau sells his birthright

CTU

5 Isaac tells Esau to hunt and bring him meat

6 Rebekah plans to trick Isaac

7 Jacob agrees

CTU

8 Jacob goes to his father

9 Isaac blesses Jacob

CTS

Climax

Esau comes to Isaac and realizes he has been tricked

Conclusion

Esau plans to kill Jacob

Jacob leaves home

CTS, CTU

This could be acted out by two older children.

Lesson

“There was a special sports day for the children up at the place where Dad works,” said Phil.

“Was it good?” asked Tony.

“Brilliant! I won the race for the under twelves. I got this trophy. Isn’t it wonderful?”

“It is indeed! Well done, Phil,” congratulated Tony. “But wait a minute ... didn’t you have your twelfth birthday last month?”

“Yes, of course. But nobody up there knows my age. See, I won the race, got the trophy and nobody caught on that I am over twelve.”

“I don’t think it is so smart,” said Tony. “You cheated.”

“What does it matter, I got away with it.”

CT

Is it okay to cheat, provided you don’t get caught? Why is it wrong?

Allow children to give their views. Establish that cheating displeases God (Psalm 5:6) and that someone else is wronged when we cheat. Someone else should have had Phil’s trophy.

Today we meet a man who was a cheat. He was the son of Isaac and Rebekah.

Scene 1

Optional background: Outdoor scene. Place Isaac and Rebekah (P-31) and tent (P-14).

Last week we learned how it came about that they married. They probably looked forward to the day when they could tell their children of how God worked it all out. But the years went by and Isaac and Rebekah had no children. The Bible says Isaac prayed that Rebekah would have a baby. Did God listen to his prayer? Yes, God heard and answered his prayer in a special way. He gave them twin boys!

Place baby boys (P-32).

The twins were called Esau and Jacob. They were born after Isaac and Rebekah had been married twenty years. Isaac and Rebekah must have been very happy to have these two baby boys. Grandfather Abraham was happy too.

Place Abraham (P-24).

He was sure that Isaac and Rebekah would have at least one son. Do you know why?

If you have older children help them think this through rather than telling.

Yes, God had promised Abraham that his children and children’s children would become a great nation.

Remove all figures.

Allow children to briefly review events from the previous story.

The name Jacob literally means “supplanter” and carries with it the idea of overthrowing another by

Flashcard 4-1

tripping up through force or treachery. It describes one who by deceptive means takes the place of another - an apt description of Jacob’s early life!



Scene 2

Optional background: Outdoor scene with tent (P-14) or tent background. Place Esau (P-34) and Jacob (P-33).

Although Jacob and Esau were twins they didn't look alike. Esau, the twin born first, had red hair and a very hairy skin, but Jacob didn't have that. Jacob had a soft smooth skin. They were very different in the things they liked doing as well. Esau enjoyed the outdoors. He was a strong man who spent lots of time in the woods and fields with his bow and arrows. He liked to hunt animals and brought them home for the family to eat. Jacob was different. He did not enjoy hunting. He was a quiet man who stayed around the tents. His mother taught him to cook and he spent lots of time with Rebekah. Besides that he liked to think, to figure things out. Jacob was clever. The Bible says he was Rebekah's favourite and Esau was Isaac's favourite. Having favourites like that can cause a lot of trouble.

One day Esau was doing the thing he liked most, hunting. He may not have been able to shoot anything that day, for he came home very tired and discouraged. And, he was hungry! What was that he smelled? Oh! Jacob was cooking. That was what smelled so good.

Remove all figures.

Scene 3

Optional background: Outdoor scene with tent (P-14) or tent background. Place Jacob and Esau (P-35).

"Jacob, give me some of that stew you are cooking. I am almost dying of hunger," Esau said.

Jacob had been doing some thinking. He saw that Esau was determined to have some of that stew. Well, he was determined too.

"I'll give you some, if you'll sell me your birthright," he bargained.

What is a "birthright"? This was something very special which usually belonged to the older son. When the father died the son with the birthright became head of the family and received twice as much of the father's possessions as the other sons. Also, the one with the birthright was especially blessed by God. Esau was the older of the twins so he had the birthright. But even before the twins were born God had told Rebekah, "The younger will be greater than the older." God had planned it that Jacob would have the birthright. But Jacob was not willing to let God work that out. He would try to trick Esau into selling it to him. That is why he said, "I'll give you some stew, if you sell me your birthright."

Esau didn't care much about the birthright, or being head of the family God had promised to bless.

"I told you I'm starving, Jacob," he said. "What good will the birthright ever do to me? Of course you may have it."



You may want to have two children role-play this scene between Jacob and Esau. Print the words from the passage on cards for them to read. You might have preschoolers pretend to be hungry and smell the stew cooking.

Flashcard 4-2



By Israeli law, the birthright secured for the firstborn son a double portion of his father's assets, a special blessing from the father and the privilege of family leadership.

CTU

Read, or have an older child read, the verse from your Bible.



Flashcard 4-3

To help younger children understand blindness you might blindfold a child and ask him to name a colour you hold in front of him. Preschoolers could shut their eyes tightly or hold their hands over their eyes.

Edersheim estimates Jacob and Esau were around 77 years old at the time and Isaac about 137. (*Old Testament Bible History*, William B Eerdmans Publishing Co, Grand Rapids, 1975.)

“Promise me,” Jacob said. “Give me a solemn promise.”

Esau promised. Jacob received the birthright, Esau got his food. Clever Jacob knew this was the beginning of something special for him. But he was unfair in the way he tricked Esau into selling it for some stew. He cheated. Perhaps you are thinking, “What a mean thing to do!” But the Bible tells us that, although we may not cheat as Jacob did, each one of us has a deceitful heart. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

That means that the real you is not honest, true and open. The real you is bad, wrong and false. In God’s sight you are “desperately wicked”. That means you are very bad. You may not seem like that on the outside. Perhaps your Mum and Dad and teacher think you are a good, well-behaved boy or girl. But God knows the real you. He knows your angry thoughts. He knows that you love yourself more than anyone else. He knows about the times you lie and cheat. He knows you are not as good as you pretend to be. What the Bible says about being deceitful and bad is as true of you as it was of Jacob. You cannot make the real you into a person who pleases God. But God can change you and make you a different person. If you have never trusted Him, that is what you need more than anything else. If you want to belong to God and to have your life changed, but you are not sure how this can happen, stay and talk with me when the others leave. Just come and sit at the front (*or designate another suitable place*) and I will know that you want to talk about how your life can be changed.

Jacob too, needed God to change him. But he was not thinking about God. If he had just asked God to look after him, God would have made sure he got the birthright. Jacob was foolish to try to work things out for himself.

Remove all figures.

Scene 4

Optional background: Outdoor scene with tent (P-14) or tent background. Place Isaac (P-36) and Esau (P-34).

It was sometime later that Isaac called Esau. “I’m hungry for some good meat. Go out with your bow and arrows, shoot an animal and prepare me some good meat.” Isaac was an old man and he was blind. “I may die before long,” he said, “and I have a blessing, just for you. Bring the meat and I will bless you.”

Although Isaac knew God had said that the older would serve the younger, he was going to give Esau the blessing which went with the birthright. He probably knew too that Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob.

Remove all figures.

Scene 5

Optional background: Outdoor scene with tent (P-14) or tent background. Place Rebekah (P-37) and Jacob (P-33).

Rebekah heard Isaac talking to his favourite son. As soon as Esau went out with his bow and arrows, Rebekah called Jacob, her favourite son.

“I heard your father tell Esau to bring him some meat to eat, and he would give him a blessing from the Lord. Now listen and do what I tell you. Go out to the flock and bring me two goats. I will get the meat ready for your father, just the way he likes it. You will take it to him. He will think you are Esau and give you the blessing.”

Rebekah knew that her favourite son already had the birthright and she was determined he would have the blessing that went with it. But she was being very deceitful.

At first Jacob did not agree to do what his mother told him. “My father will know I am not Esau,” he said. “Esau is a hairy man and my skin is smooth. Father will feel me and I’ll bring a curse on myself.”

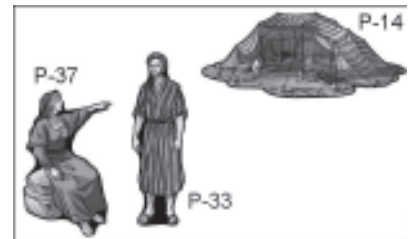
“You listen to me, Jacob,” Rebekah said. “I’ll take your curse upon myself. Go ahead and get the goats.”

So Jacob agreed to do as she told him. Of course it was very wrong. Both mother and son were being very deceitful. Because we have cheating, deceitful hearts, it shows in the things we do.

Perhaps you were in trouble, because you were later than you should have been. You explained, “Old Mrs Jones stopped to talk to me, that’s why I’m late.” It was a lie. You had in fact gone to the park with your friends. Or, one day you deliberately hit your brother with a cricket bat. But you explained to your mother, “I didn’t mean to, the bat slipped.” Another lie. You do those things because the real you is deceitful and desperately wicked. Only God can change you. He can make you a different person, not just on the outside; He can change the real you. God can make you a person who is not deceitful and cheating. He can make you a person who wants to obey God. If you really want to be different, then come to Jesus Christ and ask Him to forgive you for all the wrong you have done. He can forgive you, for He died for your sin. When you come and trust Jesus Christ to forgive you, then you are changed. The Bible says, “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Don’t you want to be a different person, rather than being a cheat and deceiver like Jacob? If Jacob had trusted God, God would have worked it out that he got the blessing. There was no need to try to trick his father.

Rebekah too, should have known better. What do you think Rebekah could have done, when she knew Isaac was planning to give the blessing to Esau?

Flashcard 4-4



It's possible that Rebekah had wanted to keep Isaac from going against God's revealed plan to bless the younger son, but her deceptive methods showed a lack of trust in God's sovereign control.

CTU

Adapt with appropriate examples for the children you teach. Preschoolers can understand deceit through an example on their level, such as marking on the wall at home then lying about it.

Read, or have an older child read, the verse from your Bible.

Try to get some of the thoughts of your pupils here. You can build on them to come up with something like the following.

First she could have prayed that God would show her what to say to Isaac and that he would pay attention to what she said. She could have told Isaac that she heard he was planning to give the blessing to Esau, and reminded him of what God said before the twins were born. She could have told him that the birthright now belonged to Jacob, and that could not be changed. Then she could have asked if he would give the blessing to Jacob. It is never right to cheat. God is always displeased when we deceive and trick other people.

Remove all figures.

But Rebekah did things her own way, not God's way. She cooked the meat and prepared it just as Isaac liked it. Then she brought some of Esau's clothes and had Jacob wear them. She took the hairy skins of the young goats and put the skin on his hands and around his neck. Jacob took the food and brought it to Isaac.

Flashcard 4-5



Children could role-play this scene, using a man's shirt and piece of craft "fur" for props. The children could pantomime as you tell the story or read a dialogue from prepared cards.

Preschoolers will remember this event better if they are each served a small piece of lunch meat.

Scene 6

Optional background: Outdoor scene with tent (P-14) or tent background. Place Isaac (P-36) and Jacob (P-38).

"My father," he said. "Here I am," Isaac answered. "Who are you, my son?"

Remember, Isaac was blind.

"I am Esau, your firstborn son," Jacob answered. "I have done as you asked. Please sit up and eat this meat and bless me."

"How did you find it so quickly?" Isaac asked.

Jacob thought quickly. "Because the Lord your God brought it to me," he lied.

"Come close, and let me feel you," Isaac said, "that I may know if you really are Esau or not."

How do you think Jacob felt by this time? Rebekah must have been standing near, listening. How do you think she felt? They must have been fearful that their scheme might not work.

Slowly Jacob moved close to his father. Isaac reached out his hands and moved them over the hairy goat skin covering Jacob's hands and neck.

"The voice is Jacob's voice," he said, "but the hands are the hands of Esau. Are you really my son Esau?" Isaac begged for the truth.

Again Jacob lied. "I am," he said.

"Then bring me the food and I will eat it," Jacob told him.

Afterwards, Isaac again asked Jacob to come near to him. Jacob kissed his father, and as he did Isaac smelled Esau's clothes which Jacob

wore. They smelled like the outdoors, where Esau spent most of his time. This made Isaac even more sure that he was really talking with Esau. So he gave Jacob the blessing.

“May God give you many riches. You will be lord over your brother. Those who bless you will be blessed” (from Genesis 27:27-29). These were some of the things Isaac said to Jacob.

Jacob hurried away from his father. Their trick had worked! But even when you are not caught, it is always wrong to lie, to cheat and trick others.

When Christian boys and girls do these mean things, it really brings disgrace to the Lord Jesus. If you love the Lord Jesus, remember you are a changed person. God the Holy Spirit lives in you to help you to be honest, and to do right. Depend on His help, when you feel like breaking the rules in order to win a game. When you know you could get better marks in school exams if you copied, ask God to help you to do what is right and not copy. God will always help you. He will help you to be honest and pay the bus fare, even when your friends don't pay and never get caught. These are ways in which you can show that you are a Christian, and that God has changed you. A Christian boy or girl should not cheat the way Jacob did.

Remove Jacob (P-38). Place Esau (P-39).

Jacob had scarcely left Isaac before Esau arrived.

“Get up, father,” Esau said. “Here is your meat. Eat and bless me.”

Isaac could not believe his ears!

“Who are **you**?” he asked.

“Why, I am your firstborn son, Esau.”

Esau must have wondered what had happened to his father. Why didn't Isaac know who he was? Then Esau noticed his father was trembling, shaking all over, as if something dreadful had happened.

“Who?” Isaac exclaimed. “Where is he who brought me meat? I ate it before you came and I have blessed him. Yes, he shall be blessed.”

Both father and son knew Isaac had been deceived. Though Esau had bargained to sell his birthright, now he was not only disappointed, he was angry.

“My brother has tricked me twice,” he said. “First he robbed me of my birthright. Now, he has stolen my blessing.” Esau begged Isaac for a blessing, but Isaac could not give him the important blessing he had given to Jacob.

Remove all figures.

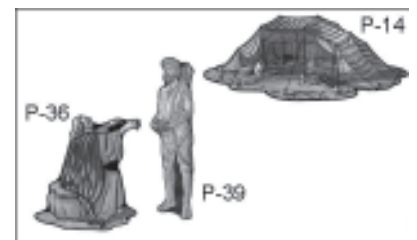
The Bible says, “Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him” (Genesis 27:41).

You may want to have the children smell garden gloves or some other outdoor item.

CTS

Show “sovereign God” symbol footprint for preschoolers. Use examples such as trusting God's care when a parent leaves them at daycare or knowing that God is in control at night when it's dark.

No flashcard



Read, or have an older child read, the verse from your Bible.

Flashcard 4-4



Although Rebekah thought their separation would be brief, she died before Jacob returned. Both she and Jacob suffered the consequences of their deception.

CTS

Esau had already married two Canaanite girls, which brought much grief to Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 26:34-35). Thinking to please his father by marrying a descendant of Abraham, Esau would later marry a daughter of Ishmael

CTU

(Genesis 28:6-9), showing his continued disregard for God's covenant.

Review game**Stumble**

Place Gospel symbol footprints from lesson 2 in a shoe box, sack or envelope.

Divide the class into teams. Ask review questions, alternating between the teams.

When a child answers a question correctly he may draw a footprint. If it has

“My father will soon be dead,” Esau said to himself. “Then I’ll kill Jacob.”

Scene 7

Optional background: Outdoor scene with tent (P-14) or tent background. Place Rebekah (P-37) and Jacob (P-33).

Rebekah knew what Esau was planning. She called Jacob. “Esau is planning to kill you,” she said. “You must leave home for a while. Go to my brother in Haran. Stay there until your brother gets over his anger. Then I will send for you to come home.”

Rebekah did not tell her husband her real reason for sending Jacob away. “I don’t want him to marry one of these girls around here,” she said. Esau had already done that and his parents were sorry. So Isaac agreed to send Jacob to Haran. After Jacob left Rebekah never saw her favourite son again.

Remove all figures.

What problems their cheating brought! Deceiving always displeases God and also brings sadness or hurt to other people. Perhaps you are a Christian and the Lord Jesus is your Saviour; but there are still times when you feel like telling a lie or cheating. This is because, although God has made you a new person, the old sinful you is still there. The bad “old you” wants you to cheat, lie and deceive. The “new you” wants to do what is right. Remember, God the Holy Spirit lives in you. You do not have to obey the “old you.” Depend on the Holy Spirit to help you to be honest and truthful, the way He wants you to be.

But some of you have never been changed by God. Perhaps you know that the real you is bad and displeases God. Ask God to change you today. Perhaps you say, “But you don’t know how bad I have been.” God knows, and He still wants you to come to Jesus Christ to be forgiven. Then you will be a new person and God will help you not to be deceitful and do the mean things. He will help you to live for Him.

Review questions

- 1 What did Isaac and Rebekah call their twin boys? (Esau and Jacob.)
- 2 In what ways were Esau and Jacob different? (Esau had a very hairy skin, Jacob had a soft smooth skin; Esau enjoyed the outdoors spending time with his bow and arrows, Jacob loved indoors spending time on cooking; Esau acted without thinking, Jacob was a thinker spending time on planning things.)
- 3 What is a birthright? (It is something very special - when the father died the son with the birthright became head of the family and received twice as much of the father’s possessions as the other sons. He was also especially blessed of God.)

- 4 How does God describe the real you, your heart? (“Deceitful above all things and desperately wicked” - Jeremiah 17:9.)
- 5 How did Jacob get the birthright? (He tricked Esau, by buying it from him for some stew when Esau was very hungry.)
- 6 Why would Jacob have got it anyway, without cheating? (Because God had promised this even before Jacob was born.)
- 7 How did Rebekah and Jacob make Isaac believe that he was giving the blessing to Esau? (By putting goat-skin around Jacob’s hands and neck; by putting on clothes from Esau; by saying he was Esau.)
- 8 How can Christians live honestly and not cheat? (Because they are new persons, God the Holy Spirit lives in them and helps them to be honest and truthful.)
- 9 What did Esau plan to do when he realized he had been tricked? (He planned to kill Jacob after his father’s death.)
- 10 What Bible verse tells us that our hearts are deceitful? (Jeremiah 17:9.)

Preschool review questions

- 1 How many children did Isaac and Rebekah have? (Two.)
- 2 Name the twin boys. (Jacob and Esau.)
- 3 Which twin liked to be outdoors and to hunt animals for the family to eat? (Esau.)
- 4 What did Jacob wear to pretend he was Esau? (Goat’s skin to cover his hands and neck; Esau’s clothes.)

points on it he may stop and keep those points for his team or continue drawing to get more points. If he draws a dark heart he “stumbles” and loses all points for that round.

The team earning the most points wins.

Preschool review game

Footprint concentration

(See lesson 2 - page 24.)

Use preschool questions from lessons 1-4.

Lesson 5

Jacob away from home

Scripture for teachers

Genesis 28:10 - 29:30

Genesis 31:2-7,11,13-18

Genesis 32:6-31

Genesis 33:1-4

Genesis 35:1-15,27

This lesson covers a vast portion of Scripture. Do not attempt to include all details. The lesson text covers the main incidents. The births of the sons have been omitted, because the following volume which centres on the life of Joseph, will include this.

Central truth

God changes the lives of those who are His

Application

Unsaved: Receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour, then you will begin to experience God changing your life

Saved: Gladly accept the changes God is making in your life

Memory verse

“... He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ”
Philippians 1:6b

Visual aids

- ♦ Flashcards: 4-6, 5-1, 5-2, 5-3, 5-4, 5-5 and 5-6

Or

- ♦ Figures: P-5, P-6, P-7, P-26, P-33, P-40, P-41, P-42, P-43, P-44, P-45, P-46, P-47, P-48 and P-49

- ♦ Backgrounds (optional): Outdoor scene, night scene, indoor scene and plain background

Carry-over activity

- ♦ Photocopy the puzzle on page 62. Give each child a copy. They could work on it after the lesson when you have the opportunity to discuss the answers, or they work on it at home. The puzzle includes a list of the words to find. However, depending on the age of the children, you may want to omit this list.

Lesson outline

Introduction

Jacob says goodbye

Progression of events

- 1 Jacob sleeps with a stone as pillow
- 2 He has a dream
- 3 God speaks to him **CTU**
- 4 Jacob erects pillar
- 5 Jacob says, “The Lord shall be my God” **CTU**
- 6 Jacob meets Rachel at well
- 7 Jacob works seven years for Rachel
- 8 Laban cheats Jacob and gives Leah **CTS**
- 9 Jacob marries Rachel
- 10 Jacob continues to work for Laban
- 11 Jacob decides to leave **CTS**
- 12 Jacob leaves
- 13 Jacob hears that Esau is coming
- 14 Jacob prays **CTS**
- 15 Jacob sends his family over the river

Climax

Jacob wrestles with God **CTS**

Conclusion

Jacob meets Esau and they weep together
CTU, CTS

Gospel activity

No more darkness

Cup hands together as if holding something.

There's something in my hands God wants you to think about.

Ask a couple of children to look inside, one at a time.

What's in my hands? (Nothing.) Nothing? But it's there now.

Open hands.

Now it's not there.

Repeat several times, allowing children to continue guessing.

It's darkness. When I open my hands the darkness is gone because the light has entered. There can't be darkness and light at the same time.

Darkness reminds me of sin. Sin is disobeying God by doing, saying, or thinking wrong things. The Bible says every person in the world has sinned. What are some ways boys and girls your age sin?

Let children share.

The Bible says, "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Because you've sinned, you deserve to be separated from God forever.

God isn't like you and me. The Bible says, "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). God is holy; He never sins. But God loves you. In fact, He's the One Who created you and knows everything about you. He knew you needed Someone to take away your darkness of sin. That's why God sent Jesus, God the Son, to take your punishment for sin by dying on the cross. When you believe Jesus died on the cross to pay for your sin and you receive Him as Saviour, God forgives you. He takes away the darkness of your sin so that someday you can live with Him in Heaven.

Lesson

Scene 1

Optional background: Plain board. Place Jacob (P-33).

Jacob said goodbye and left home. It was a sad day. He had cheated his old, blind father. He had made his twin brother furious enough to want to kill him. Perhaps he was thinking, “Will I ever see my mother and father again?” He had a long journey ahead of him; it was about 720 km (450 miles) to his uncle’s place. He either walked or rode a camel, so the journey would take a long time. Up until this time Jacob seems to have thought little about God. There is nothing in the Bible that tells us that he had trusted or obeyed God. Indeed the things he did showed that he did not love God.

Remove Jacob (P-33).

Scene 2

Optional background: Night scene or plain board with dark cover. Place Jacob (P-40).

One night, soon after he left home, Jacob had no place to sleep but in the open field. He took a stone for a pillow. What a hard pillow that would have been! But Jacob was very tired and soon fell asleep. While he slept, he dreamed.

Place angel stairway (P-41).

It was a beautiful dream. A ladder, like a stairway reached from earth to Heaven. Angels were coming down the stairway from Heaven to earth, and going up into Heaven again.

Most wonderful of all, the Lord stood at the top of the stairway and spoke to Jacob.

“I am the Lord God of Abraham and the God of Isaac.”

And now ... God was speaking to him ... Jacob! He listened carefully.

“The land on which you are lying, I will give to you and your family, your children and grandchildren, and great grandchildren, all your descendants. Your family will be as the dust of the earth.”

This was the same promise as God had given Abraham. God had another promise for Jacob.

“I am with you and will keep you wherever you go. I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done that.”

What a wonderful promise! Did Jacob deserve that God should do all this for him? No! Why did God make these promises? Because He loved Jacob although he did not deserve God’s love at all.

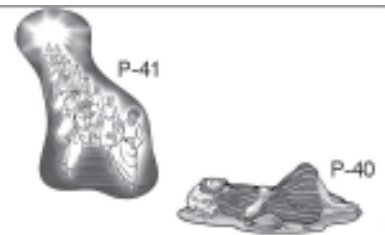
Not one of us deserves to be loved by God! All of us have disobeyed Him. All of us want to go our own way instead of His. Yet God loves sinners like you and me. He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. Jesus Christ lived a perfect life that pleased His Father.



Children will enjoy tracking on a map Jacob’s journey from Beersheba to Bethel, where this next event takes place.

Some commentators suggest that the angel activity on this stairway represented their ministry of taking the believer’s prayers to God and returning with His answers. Both Calvin and Luther understood the “ladder” to be a picture of

Flashcard 4-6

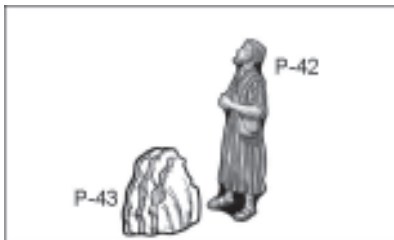


Christ, referring to His statement in John 1:51. The angels were visible evidence of God’s promise to be with Jacob at all times. (*Old Testament Bible History*, William B Eerdmans Publishing Co, Grand Rapids, 1975.)

God’s Word to Abraham and Isaac was that their family would be as the stars of the sky (Genesis 15:5 and Genesis 26:4). Both “dust” and “stars” mean “millions”.

CTU

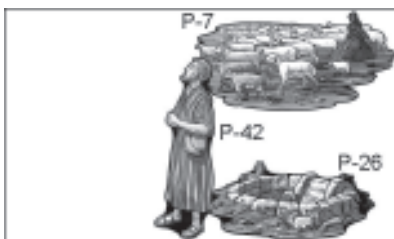
For preschoolers introduce "change" symbol footprint as you speak of God's changing us to be like Him.



No flashcard

You may want to bring a large rock to class and have a child set it on end to help your students understand this part of the story. Jacob's memorial stone was the first of many significant memorials in Scripture. Unlike altars built for sacrifices, memorials marked special places where God met with man. Others could learn about God when they asked, "What do these stones mean?" (*The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament*, Victor Books, Wheaton, 1985.)

CTU



Children will enjoy locating Haran on a map. Let them also find Beersheba (where Jacob's trip began) and Bethel.

But He was nailed to a cross and died as if He were a sinner. God punished His own dear Son for our sin and in that way made it possible for sinners to be forgiven and belong to Him. If you trust Jesus Christ as the One who died for your sin, then you will belong to God. God will begin to make you the kind of person He wants you to be. It is wonderful that God loves people who do not deserve His love at all, people like you and me and Jacob.

Remove all figures.

When Jacob awoke, he was amazed by his dream. He was afraid. To feel that he had been so close to the Lord God filled him with fear. He knew what kind of person he was, and now he realized that God knew all about him. That must have made him afraid.

"Surely the Lord is in this place, and I didn't know it!" he exclaimed. "This is the house of God, this is the gate of Heaven."

Scene 3

Optional background: Outdoor scene. Place Jacob (P-42) and pillar of stone (P-43).

Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had used for a pillow, set it up as a pillar and poured oil on it. This would mark the place where something very special had happened to him.

"This place shall be called Bethel," he said. Bethel means "house of God". This was the place where Jacob had met God. And there he made a promise, "If God will be with me and will give me food and clothes and bring me back to my home again, then the Lord shall be my God" (from Genesis 28:20-21).

Before this Jacob had not lived for God at all. But now he said, "The Lord shall be my God." This was the beginning of Jacob's life with God. Do you not want to belong to God, to be His? Today you too can say and really mean it, "The Lord shall be my God." You must ask the Lord Jesus to forgive you for being bad. You must believe that He was punished for your sin. Then you will belong to God. The Bible says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12). After you have received Christ, God will begin to change you. It will not happen all at once. Slowly but surely you will begin to think as God wants you to and you will begin to do what He wants. We are going to see how God changed Jacob. After God spoke to him at Bethel, Jacob would never be the same again.

Remove all figures.

Scene 4

Place Jacob (P-42), well (P-26) and sheep (P-7).

Perhaps about two weeks later Jacob arrived in the area of Haran. He saw a well in a field and some shepherds close by. He went near and spoke to them.

“Where do you come from?”

“From Haran,” came the answer.

“Do you know Laban?” Jacob wanted to know. Laban was his uncle, his mother’s brother.

“We know him.”

“Is he well?” Jacob asked.

“He is well. Look, here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep.”

Place Rachel (P-44).

When Rachel came to the well Jacob introduced himself.

“I am Rebekah’s son,” he said.

Rachel was excited and ran home to tell her father.

Remove Rachel (P-44).

When Laban heard of it, he hurried to the field to meet Jacob.

Place Laban (P-45).

He brought Jacob to his home.

Remove all figures.

Many questions were asked and answered that night. Jacob felt at home with Laban’s family. He had some sons (Genesis 31:1) and two daughters, Leah and Rachel. The Bible says Rachel was beautiful. And Jacob loved her! He knew he wanted to marry her, but probably thought he should not speak about it until later.

Scene 5

Optional background: Outdoor or indoor scene. Place Jacob (P-42), Laban (P-45), Leah (P-46) and Rachel (P-44).

After Jacob had been with his uncle a month, Laban said, “Just because you are my relative is no reason you should work for me for nothing. What wages would you like to have?”

Jacob didn’t even have to think about his answer to that. “I’ll work for you for seven years for Rachel,” he answered quickly.

Laban seemed pleased. “It is better that I should give her to you for a wife, than to someone else,” he said. “Stay and work for me.”

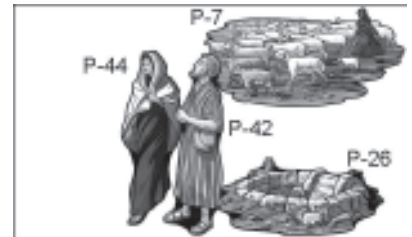
Remove Leah (P-46) and Laban (P-45).

Jacob thought about Rachel all the time. It didn’t seem that seven years was too long to work for her. He loved her so much! When the time was up Jacob spoke to Laban.

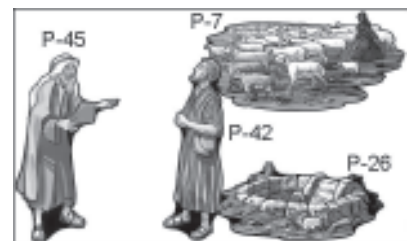
“Give Rachel to me now,” he said. “My seven years are finished.”

So Laban planned a feast and invited his friends. In the evening he brought his daughter to Jacob. She wore a veil or head covering as the brides of that country did, and she became Jacob’s wife. Jacob

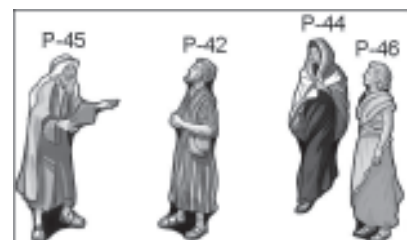
Flashcard 5-1



Flashcard 5-2

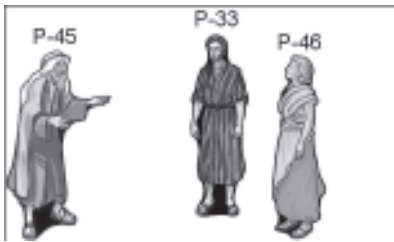


Flashcard 5-3



Count to seven with preschoolers.

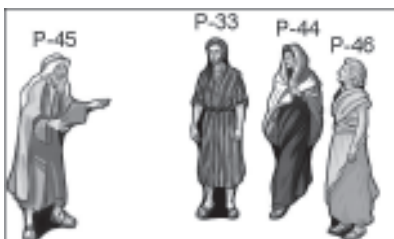
It is unclear why Jacob didn't realise sooner that he had been deceived. Commentators speculate that it may have been a combination of the darkness and the heavy veil Leah wore.



CTS

Children would enjoy role-playing the conversation between Jacob and Laban. Print the words of the passage on cards for them to read.

Flashcard 5-4



was shocked when he discovered that his new bride was not the beautiful Rachel, but her older sister Leah!

Remove Rachel (P-44). Place Laban (P-45) and Leah (P-46). Replace Jacob (P-42) with figure P-33.

Laban had cheated Jacob. What a mean trick! Why did God allow this to happen to Jacob?

Allow children to respond.

Surely it was to help Jacob to learn how mean and hurtful cheating is. No-one was more of a cheat than Jacob, and God wanted to teach him this lesson so that he would turn from cheating. Sometimes God allows His children to suffer in this way, because He wants them to learn how wrong a particular sin is.

A Christian girl, Jenny, was a very good singer. She boasted a lot about her singing and the competitions she had won. She forgot that it was God who had given her a good voice; she should have been thanking Him for it, rather than boasting about it. Jenny was entering a festival competition.

"I know I'll come first," she boasted confidently to her friends.

On the evening of the contest she walked onto the platform and something happened which had never happened before to Jenny - she forgot some of the words. Of course she didn't win. When she got home she sobbed in disappointment.

Quietly her mother said, "Jenny, maybe God allowed this to happen to you to show you that you should not boast about your singing." Jenny remembered that. Very wisely she asked God to help her learn this lesson, and to stop boasting.

If you love the Lord Jesus, it is very important that you too should learn the lessons God is teaching you. Do not fight against Him, but allow Him to change you. Will Jacob change from being a cheat?

He was angry. "What have you done to me?" Jacob asked Laban. "I worked seven years for Rachel. Why did you trick me?"

"In our country we never marry the younger before the older," Laban answered. "You may marry Rachel too, if you work for seven more years for me."

Jacob agreed to work seven more years.

Remove Laban (P-45). Place Rachel (P-44).

After a short time Jacob married Rachel and continued to work for Laban. You may be thinking, "Two wives? Was that right?" No, God never intended a man to have two wives, and having two wives brought problems into Jacob's home.

Place Laban (P-45).

One day, years later, Jacob said to Laban, "I would like to go back home. Give me my wives and children. You know how long and how well I have worked for you."

Laban begged him to stay. "I'll give you whatever wages you wish," he said.

Again Jacob said what he wanted. This time it was agreed that Jacob would get some of Laban's flocks. Over the years Jacob became a rich man with many sheep, goats, donkeys and camels.

Jacob was with Laban for about twenty years. During that time Laban cheated him several times. Slowly but surely God was teaching Jacob a lesson about being a schemer. If you are a true Christian God will teach you lessons too. He will change you. As the weeks and months pass, He helps you understand Him and obey Him more. He wants you to gladly accept what He teaches you, so you do become more like the Lord Jesus. God was willing to spend years changing Jacob and it is the same with you. He is very, very patient with His children. When you fail Him, He does not say, "I'm finished with you." Over the twenty years He was very patient with Jacob too.

Remove Laban (P-45).

He spoke to Jacob again, "Go back to your country and I will be with you."

Jacob then talked to Rachel and Leah. "Your father does not feel kindly towards me anymore," he said. "But God has been with me." He explained that God had told him to leave and to take all his possessions with him. Rachel and Leah immediately agreed to go with him. Jacob was still far from what God wanted him to be, but we can see that there were changes in his life. He was listening to God, obeying God and telling others how God had been with him.

Christian boy and girl, do you see changes in your own life? Perhaps you can see for yourself that you do not lose your temper as often as you used to. Or it may be your room used to be a mess, but God is helping you to keep it tidy. Or perhaps you never prayed to God, but now you do. Yes, you see changes that God is making in you.

Remove all figures.

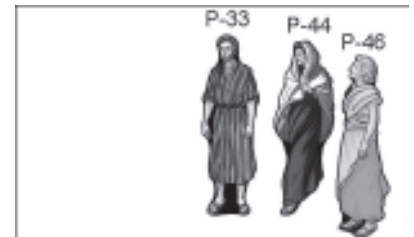
Scene 6

Optional background: Outdoor scene. Place camels (P-6), wagon (P-5) and sheep (P-7).

It was a big, big group that needed to move when Jacob decided to leave his uncle. There were camels carrying Jacob's wives and children, other animals (many hundreds of them), wagon-loads of possessions, and many servants. It was impossible to leave secretly. Jacob chose to go at a time when Laban was away from home.

Can you guess what was in Jacob's mind as he left? Yes, I am sure he was thinking of Esau. Was his brother still angry? What would Esau

CTS

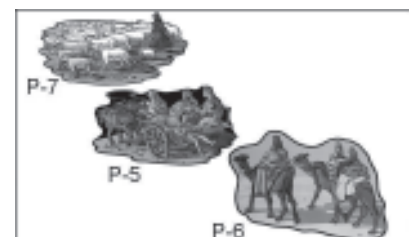


Flashcard 5-6

CTS

Preschoolers will relate to hitting, screaming when they don't get their own way, or refusing to share.

Preschoolers will enjoy lining up and pretending to travel in a caravan.



Some commentators believe Esau's large company of men came from his recent battle and conquest of Mount Seir, where he later settled.

Flashcard 5-5



Show a small jar of sand and ask a child to count the grains.

Children will enjoy locating the Jabbok River on a map. This event took place at the ford of the river, which is one of the main eastern tributaries of the Jordan. Edersheim describes this spot as almost parklike, with lush green trees and shrubs that nearly conceal the brook.



say and do when Jacob returned? Jacob was worried and afraid, so he sent messengers ahead to find out about Esau.

They returned with a frightening report, "Esau is coming with four hundred men!"

Remove all figures.

What could Jacob do? Should he go back to Haran? Should he prepare to fight? Should he try to trick his brother again? God had changed Jacob and at this difficult time he did the wisest thing. He prayed.

Scene 7

Optional background: Outdoor scene. Place Jacob (P-47).

"O God of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac; the Lord who said to me, 'Go back to your country and your family and I will be with you.' I do not deserve your goodness and your faithfulness to me. When I left home I had nothing but my staff [walking stick]. Now we are many people. I pray that you will deliver me from my brother Esau. I am afraid for myself, the mothers and the children." Then Jacob reminded God of the promise He had made, "You promised to make my family as the sand of the sea - too many to count." (From Genesis 32:9-12.)

Jacob knew that if God would allow Esau to destroy him and his family, this promise would not come true. So he depended on God to protect them. Jacob had learned how to pray and to trust God.

CTS

These are lessons which God wants each of His children to learn. When you first trusted Jesus Christ as your Saviour, you may not have known much about praying. But as you learned about God, you started to talk to Him. Through learning what the Bible teaches, and with the help of the Holy Spirit living in you, you understand more of how to pray. Perhaps you have never yet prayed aloud. Next week we are going to have a prayer time when you will have the opportunity to thank God for something He has done for you. Why don't you come prepared to pray out loud and thank God for something He has done for you?

Remind the children again at the end of the meeting to come prepared next week to thank the Lord for something He has done.

It is so good to hear Jacob pray as he did, isn't it?

Remove Jacob (P-47).

Jacob then sent some of his animals to Esau, and a special message, "These are a gift from your servant Jacob."

In the evening Jacob sent his animals, his wives and his children across a nearby river. But he himself stayed behind.

Place Jacob (P-33).

That night a very strange thing happened. A man came and wrestled with Jacob. Indeed the man put Jacob's thigh out of joint, making

him limp. This was not just an ordinary man, it was a heavenly visitor. Jacob was wrestling with God.

Place Jacob and man wrestling (P-48).

God spoke to him, “Your name shall no longer be Jacob [which means ‘schemer’] but Israel [meaning ‘a prince of God’].” (From Genesis 32:28.)

A new name, a new person! Who would have thought that Jacob would ever be anything but a cheat? But God didn’t give up on him. He made Jacob a different and a better person. It took a long time, but God is patient. When you sin, when you fail God, He does not stop His work in you. The Bible says, “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6b). He will make you more like the Lord Jesus, even though it takes a long time to change you, just as it did with Jacob.

Remove Jacob and man wrestling (P-48).

Jacob would never forget that night! The next day he still limped as he went out to meet his brother. He arranged his family in the safest possible way. Then he himself went ahead. Esau approached. What would happen? Would Esau kill his brother? Would Jacob again try to trick Esau? All Jacob did was to bow down. Esau ran to meet him, threw his arms around Jacob’s neck and kissed him. The brothers wept together. God had worked it all out for Jacob!

Place Jacob and Esau (P-49).

Jacob was a far better man than one who had left home twenty years earlier. He had not deserved anything good from God but God loved Jacob, and He changed him in many ways. If you have not trusted in Jesus Christ as your Saviour, then you do not know what it is to have God changing you. But if you trust Him today, asking Jesus Christ to forgive you and be your Saviour, then God will begin to change your life.

If you already are God’s child, thank Him for what He is doing in your life. Gladly learn the lessons God teaches you, and so become more like the Lord Jesus. When God takes you to Heaven you will be perfect. As the Bible says, “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6b). Someday you will be like Jesus. Isn’t that something to look forward to!

Review questions

Complete the sentences.

- 1 As Jacob slept outside under the night sky, he dreamed one night and saw ... (A ladder with angels going up and down.)
- 2 You become God’s child when you ... (Receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour.)

The man who fought with Jacob was God, probably the Lord Jesus, taking on human form. The fight was real and physical, resulting in an injury that would remain with Jacob the rest of his life. The fight also symbolised Jacob’s striving with God. The name Israel has been variously defined as “prince with God,” “one who fights with God” and “one who sees God.”

CTS

Show name Israel on a wordstrip or chalkboard. Even though Jacob’s name was changed to Israel, the Scripture narrative continues to refer to him as Jacob.

Preschoolers would enjoy bowing seven times.



CTU

CTS

Review game

Right way, wrong way

Prepare 12 footprints with “right ways” (eg tell others about Jesus, share, be kind, pray, obey parents,

go to church, love others, learn Bible verses) and "wrong ways" (eg lie, disobey, cheat, pout) written on them, one per foot.

Spread footprints facedown on a table or fan in your hand.

Divide the class into two teams. Ask questions, alternating between the teams.

When a child answers a question correctly he may draw a footprint and tell whether it is a right way or wrong way to live as a Christian.

The team collecting the most right ways wins.

Preschool review game

Right way, wrong way

Follow instructions above.

Use preschool questions from lessons 1-5.

- 3 When Jacob arrived at a well near Haran he asked some shepherds about Laban and met ... (Rachel.)
- 4 "What wages do you want for working for me?" Laban asked Jacob when he was a month with him. Jacob answered ... (I'll work seven years for Rachel.)
- 5 When the seven years were finished there was a wedding celebration and Laban gave Jacob ... (Leah.)
- 6 God works in His children to make them like ... (The Lord Jesus.)
- 7 God does not give up on His children because He is ... (Patient.)
- 8 When Jacob started to go home with his family and possessions after being away twenty years he was worried about ... (Meeting Esau.)
- 9 When he learned Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men he ... (Prayed.)
- 10 When they saw one another Esau... (Ran to meet him, threw his arms around him and kissed him.)
- 11 Jacob received a new name. God said, "You shall be called ..." (Israel.)
- 12 Christians will be prefect when ... (They go to Heaven.)

Preschool review questions

- 1 Who did Jacob meet at the well? (Rachel.)
- 2 Who did Jacob work for? (Rachel's father, Laban.)
- 3 After Jacob was married and had lots of children what change did God want him to make? (To go back to his own country.)
- 4 How does God want to change you? (To be more like Jesus.)

Gospel globe

(Gospel activity - lesson 1)



Preschool symbols



Lesson 1
"Promise" symbol footprint



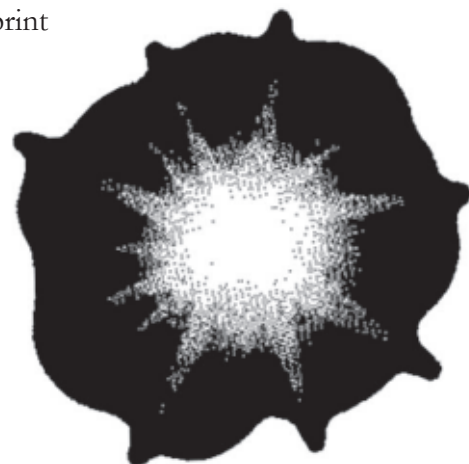
Lesson 2
"Provision" symbol footprint



Lesson 3
"Guidance" symbol footprint



Lesson 4
"Sovereign God" symbol footprint



Lesson 5
"Change" symbol footprint

Ruled star

Carry-over activity - lesson 1



Footprint template

Review game - lesson 1



Footprint concentration

Review game - lesson 2



1000



0



2000



3000



5000



DOUBLE

God changes boys and girls

Carry-over activity - lesson 5

God changes boys and girls

See if you can find five things which God does not want you to be,
and five things which God helps His children to be.

Shade the first group of five with one colour and the second group another colour.

o	z	a	h	r	s	i	l	g	c	t	l	u
b	j	t	p	u	o	u	r	m	r	z	s	s
e	z	w	n	e	f	u	a	w	p	x	e	t
d	q	u	z	k	t	m	u	s	t	f	l	g
i	p	i	n	z	f	p	p	e	s	o	f	r
e	o	a	l	j	o	y	f	u	l	p	i	u
n	h	z	t	h	n	v	e	z	e	q	s	m
t	p	c	e	t	y	o	g	n	z	s	h	b
m	a	x	h	o	n	e	s	t	v	r	s	l
k	p	o	d	e	k	p	o	p	o	y	k	i
l	i	a	e	v	a	j	d	p	l	r	p	n
n	s	n	w	p	j	t	b	c	t	s	o	g
p	a	b	d	h	i	h	f	q	m	e	a	n

Words to find in the puzzle

grumbling
mean
sad
envy
selfish

obedient
joyful
honest
kind
thankful

Copy, cut out and keep in your Bible



Summary of steps for counselling the child who wants to come to Christ

Make sure the child understands about

God

Who is God?
God made us. He speaks to us through the Bible.
God is holy and pure. He loves us.

Sin

What is sin?
Sin is disobeying God's commands. It is against God.
Speak about specific sins.
The child is a sinner by nature and act. (We sin because we are sinners.)
Sin deserves punishment.

The Saviour

Who alone can take away your sin?
God the Son died on the cross for sinners.
The Lord Jesus rose again from the dead.
He is Lord of all.

Explain how to be saved

Explain what the Lord wants us to do, and what He will do.
Use a Bible verse (*John 1:12; 3:16; 6:37; Acts 16:31; Romans 6:23 or 10:13*).
What does the Lord want you to do?
What will the Lord do?
Warn about difficulties.
Ask: "Do you want to trust Christ, or would you rather wait?"
Encourage the child to pray audibly (if ready).

Speak about assurance of salvation

Go back to the Bible verse you used.
Speak about a changed life.
Tell him what the person who is truly trusting in Christ can know.

Give (later) some advice about the Christian life

Read and obey your Bible.
Talk to God, our heavenly Father.
Tell others what the Lord has done for you.
Ask God to forgive you when you sin.
Meet with other Christians.
Remember the Lord promises: "*I will never leave you*" (*Heb 13:5*).