

October 27, 2019

Morning Overview

Lesson: *Patriarchs: God Tests Abraham*

Lesson Objective:

This week's lesson is a very hard lesson because of the nature of the content. *When reading the story to younger ages, please see the teacher's note in the "Story" section on Page 3 of this curriculum.* And yet this is a very important lesson as we see Abraham demonstrate true faith in God. Abraham's obedience to God's commands, Isaac meekly marching along, and the ram caught in the bushes points us back to Jesus and the Cross. Trust in God's promises, even to the point of unimaginable suffering or the denial of something, is what Abraham shows us in this story, and it is ultimately what Jesus not only shows us but gives us through His death and resurrection.

Teaching Points:

- God is faithful. God always keeps His promises.
- God speaks with Abraham.
- God chose Abraham – we do not know why – to make a promise (covenant) with and God had a special purpose for him.
- God's promise of a son to Abraham finally arrives and his name is Isaac.
- Abraham demonstrates true faith in God; we see this faith in his action; we call faith in action obedience.
- God gives commands to His people.
- God provides what his people need to obey those commands.

Scripture: Genesis 21:1-7; Genesis 22:1-18

Story: *Vos Child's Story Bible*, Pages 21-23; *Jesus Story Book Bible*, Pages 60-69;
Gospel Story Book Bible, Pages 28-29.

Scripture Memory for October: Genesis 15:1 (ESV)

Fear not Abram (*wag index finger signaling "no"*)

I am (*point upwards*)

Your shield (*hold forearm out like it has a shield on it*)

Your reward (*rub index and middle finger with thumb indicating money*)

Shall be very great (*stretch arms out to your side*)

Craft: God Provides a Ram

Supplies: Cardstock scene of ram and bush, straw, glue, crayons/markers

Instructions:

1. Color ram and bush.
2. Glue straw around horn so ram looks stuck.

If child has already done craft first hour, have them work on a coloring sheet



Story

Teacher's Note

Gauge your classroom to determine the extent of detail you go into with the kids. For younger children, you may want to refer to the sacrifice as "God told Abraham to give Isaac to Him." For the older children, you may choose to be more specific. This story leaves out the "He bound his son Isaac...then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son." If you do choose this aspect, please be sure to highlight, many times, that God meant this as a "test" (Genesis 22:1). He never intended for Abraham to kill his son and He has never required any human sacrifice.

Transition

Remembering the end of last week's story, what did God promise that Abraham would have? A family, right? And how many people would be in that family? Lots and lots. In fact, God told Abraham that he would have more family members than there is sand on the ground or stars in the sky. That's a lot of family members! This week we see the arrival of God's promise to Abraham and Sarah: A baby boy and his name is Isaac. But God has a test for Abraham, a very hard test. We will find out in our story whether Abraham believes God will keep His promises. And not only that - will Abraham obey God. Remember when we trust in God's promises, we call that faith. And Abraham shows us in this story what it looks like to have faith and what it means to obey God.

God Gives Isaac

"He is here! He is here!" Abraham and Sarah were so delighted at the arrival of their son. The baby boy God had promised them so many years ago and so many times over had finally arrived. Abraham held the baby in his arms and named him "Isaac" as the Lord commanded. Abraham and Sarah loved Isaac very much. Isaac was promised long ago – twenty-five year ago. And at the age of one hundred, Abraham finally held in his arms God's promise to him. Sarah thought back to the day she heard the promise from God about Isaac. She remembered what she did and how she laughed when the Lord promised her a son. She thought the Bible tells us, "God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears about this will laugh over me." She could not believe that she was able to give Abraham a son at her age, she was close to 100 years old. Sarah did just as the Lord promised. Now she knew that nothing was too hard for God.

God Speaks to Abraham

Isaac grew up. He went from being a little baby boy to a strong, young man. Abraham loved Isaac very much.

Then one day God called Abraham. Abraham knew God's voice. He had heard Him before, "Abraham." "Here I am," he said. "You must take your only son Isaac, whom you love so much, go to the land of Moriah and there on the mountain I want you to give Isaac back to Me as an offering."

The Bible does not tell us what Abraham said after he heard God's command. But God was calling Abraham to give Isaac back to Him. Abraham and Sarah had waited for a very long time to have Isaac. God had given Isaac to them. God had also promised that Isaac would begin a big family (with as many people as the stars, remember?). And that family would be a blessing to the whole world. But now, God was asking Abraham to do something that was very, very hard.

But Abraham knew that God loved him. Abraham knew that God loved Isaac and Abraham knew that God only wanted the very best for them both. And so, Abraham decided that he would obey God even though he didn't understand why God was asking him to do such a hard thing as giving his only son, Isaac, back to Him.

The Journey

The Bible says Abraham didn't wait very long, but he got up early the next morning and put a saddle on his donkey. He took two young servant men with him and Isaac, his son. Abraham also cut enough wood to make an altar for the offering he would give to the Lord. For three days Abraham, Isaac, and the two men traveled. They had to go a long

distance. God had told them where to go and it was pretty far away. Abraham kept moving towards the mountain the Lord would show all the while knowing that what God was asking of him was very hard. Abraham had heard God's voice and he would obey.

The Offering

Finally, on the third day Abraham looked up and saw the mountain way in the distance. He said to his two servants, "Stay here with the donkey while Isaac and I go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you." Abraham took the wood for the offering and placed it on Isaac's shoulders. Isaac carried the heavy wood like this (show how Isaac would have carried it – bulky and placing it on one's shoulder).

Now Isaac knew how to build the altar. He had probably watched his father Abraham give offerings to the Lord before. He knew how to make a fire, but Isaac didn't know where the animal was that they would use as an offering. As the two of them walked on together, Isaac asked Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "Where is the lamb for the offering?" Isaac asked. Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the offering, my son." And the two of them went on together toward the mountain.

All the time Abraham must have wondered why God would ask for Isaac back. Abraham did not know what would happen. Abraham would need to trust that God loved him and Isaac. Abraham would have to trust that God would only do what is right. God promised Abraham that he would have a son, and God's promise came true. God promised that through Isaac Abraham would have a very large family. Abraham would have to trust that God would keep His promise right then and there.

Finally, they got to the place where God had told Abraham to go. Abraham built an altar there. First, he arranged the wood he had cut and Isaac had carried. Then Abraham placed Isaac on the altar to give him back to God. Isaac would be the offering. Abraham would do just what God had said. He would give his son Isaac, whom he loved so much, back to God just as God had asked.

God Speaks Again

But God was looking down at Abraham and Isaac. He saw that Abraham would obey. God saw that Abraham loved Him even more than his only son, Isaac. God was pleased! "Abraham! Abraham!" It was God's voice again! Abraham stopped. He listened to God's voice, "Don't do anything to Isaac! Now I know that you love Me more than anything else. For you would have even given me your only son."

God Provides the Sacrifice

Then Abraham looked up and there in some thick bushes was a ram. A ram is a boy sheep that has long horns that are curved. The ram's horns were caught in the bushes and he was stuck. Abraham knew that the ram had been placed there by the Lord. Abraham would offer that ram to God instead of his son Isaac. God had provided the ram for the offering.

The Bible says Abraham gave that place on the mountain a special name. It was the place where he had built an altar to give Isaac back to God, but instead God had provided a ram. God had provided the only sacrifice that was needed. Abraham called it, "the Lord will provide."

Then Abraham heard God's words again. "Because you have done this and were willing to give me even your son who you love so much, I will surely bless you, Abraham. I will make your children and their children as many as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. All nations on the whole earth will be blessed because you have obeyed me." Then the Bible says Abraham returned to his servants, and with Isaac they all went home.

Once again, Abraham had trusted and obeyed God.

Questions for Review with Younger Children

Have the kids answer “Yes” if it is true, or “no” with the correct answer if it is false.

1. Abraham had 3 sons: Danny, Bobby, and George. (No! He had only one son, Isaac).
2. Abraham and Sarah waited twenty-five years for Isaac. (Yes)
3. God spoke to Abraham. (Yes)
4. God told Abraham to take Isaac and offer him back to God. (Yes)
5. Abraham did not believe God and did not obey Him. (No! Abraham obeyed God.)
6. Abraham took Isaac and two servants with him. (Yes)
7. Abraham almost offered Isaac back to God, but God told him to stop. (Yes)
8. God provided another offering for Abraham. (Yes)
9. The offering was a ram stuck in mud. (No! It was a ram caught in some bushes.)
10. Isaac stayed on the mountain and never left. (No! He went back home with Abraham.)