

LESSON 12

ISAAC AND REBEKAH

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Marriage in Biblical Times

Arranged marriages were common during biblical times. Normally, young people did not decide who they would marry. It was marriage first and then love afterwards. Although there was a great deal more “will” than “romance,” it tended to produce a stable pattern of marriages.

Marriages were arranged, if possible, with members of one’s own kin. As seen in this story, Abraham sent a servant to find a bride for Isaac from his own people, and Jacob was sent to the same place to find a wife. Marriages sometimes took place outside the clan, but this usually happened for political reasons. It was never approved, however, because people from other clans worshiped different deities and this affected the whole religious life of the people.

The Importance of a Good Wife

Abraham had a problem: in order to perpetuate the hope of God’s promises to him and his seed, he needed a wife for his son Isaac. So he called his trusted servant (probably, but not certainly, Eliezer, Gen 15:2), and sent him on an important journey. Abraham knew how important it was that his son have a good wife, a righteous wife, one of God’s choosing, and one who was herself devoted to the same things as Abraham and Isaac.

Abraham had such an impact on his household and all who came under his influence. Abraham’s servant had felt the power of his master’s faith. His life had been so influenced by that faith that it had become his faith as well. So Abraham was happy to send this servant on such an errand. Notice his prayer: “Show kindness to my master Abraham.” He did not request success to gratify himself, or to improve his standing in his master’s eyes. Instead, his desire was solely that the work might be done to his master’s satisfaction.

God Answers the Prayer and Rebekah Responds

The servant’s prayer had been answered. God had led him to Rebekah, who showed hospitality to him by inviting giving water to him and his camels. Rebekah was known for her great faith in the unseen God, the one who called her to make a difficult decision and undertake a long and arduous journey. When she knew what God wanted of her, she did not rest even one day; she was intensely and single-mindedly eager: “I will go!” she said. And she went!

BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 24

BIBLE TRUTHS

1. God helps those who rely on Him.
2. God hears us when we pray and ask for guidance.
3. God wants us to marry in the Lord.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To rely on God in all things.
2. To pray to God for all things.

MEMORY VERSE

“Let your requests be made known to God.”

(Philippians 4:6b)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Lord, we thank You for guiding us and protecting us through this last week. We know that You care for all of our needs, and that we can always turn to You if we need help. Please help us understand that You love us and will always be there for us. Hallelujah! Amen.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

Your students probably do not have to deal with life-changing decisions right now; however, it is crucial at this time to build up reliance upon God. It is often difficult for children (and adults) to remember to ask for the guidance of the Lord. This may seem like an abstract concept to these children: How do we rely on God, who we can't see? How do we ask for God's guidance? How do we know if God says "Yes" or "No"? You may want to discuss these questions with the students to see their level of understanding.

There are no cut-and-dried answers to the previous questions; our job is to help the students understand the concept of reliance in practical terms. What are things they

find difficult to do? What are some problems they face in their daily lives? It could be fighting with siblings, not obeying parents or teachers, problems with schoolwork, etc. You can assure them that God has the power to conquer all of their problems, if they rely on Him. Reliance can come in the form of prayer, remembering the words of God, or the firm understanding that Jesus loves them and cares for them. You and your students can come up with what it means to rely on God in practical terms.

Through daily experiences of God and caring support, their reliance on God will strengthen and grow throughout the years, and this will be invaluable when days of more serious decision-making arrive.

VOCABULARY

idols: fake gods, usually in the form of an image

well: a deep hole dug in the ground that holds water

trough: a rectangular-shaped container that holds water for animals to drink

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about Abraham and his son Isaac. One day, when Isaac was still a young boy, God asked Abraham to do something. Can anybody tell me what that was? (Sacrifice Isaac.) Right before Abraham was about to kill Isaac, what happened? (An angel called from heaven to stop him.) What did Abraham end up sacrificing? (A ram that was provided in the bushes.) Because of Abraham's obedience, the Lord blessed him. Abraham's children would be as many as the stars of the sky and as the sand of the seashore, and they would live in the land of Canaan.

BIBLE STORY

A Promise to Find a Wife

God blessed Abraham in every way. Abraham lived in the land of Canaan and God blessed him with lots of sheep, camels, donkeys, and cattle. His tents were filled with silver and gold, and he had servants to look after everything. Abraham knew that everything he had was from God. Abraham must have woken up every morning remembering that God was with him and loved him.

But Abraham was getting older and Isaac had already grown into a young man and was ready to get married. Abraham saw that it was time to find a wife for Isaac, so he sent for his chief servant. This servant was loyal and was in charge of everything that Abraham had. What things do you think the servant was in charge of? Has someone ever trusted you to take care of something? [Allow students to share.]

Abraham spoke to his servant, "I want you to make me a promise. Promise me that you will go and find a wife for my son Isaac, but not from among the people who live

around here. Instead, go back to my own country and find a wife for him among my relatives." Why do you think Abraham did not want Isaac to marry someone from the land of Canaan, where they lived? [Allow students to answer.]

Abraham did not want to find a wife from the people who were living around there because those people did not believe in the one true God. Instead, they worshiped false gods and idols. Abraham wanted to find his son a wife who also believed in and worshiped the one true God. Abraham knew that this was what God wanted. What do you think might have happened to Isaac if he had found a wife from the people of Canaan instead? Maybe he would not have been able to worship God every day. Or maybe his wife would have been mad that Isaac didn't worship her idols, and both of them would be unhappy. Abraham knew that it would make God very sad if Isaac and his wife could not worship God together like Abraham and Sarah did.

So Abraham's servant said, "What if she won't come with me? Shall I take Isaac back to live with her there?"

"No," Abraham said, "God has given me this land. God will send His angel to help you find a wife for Isaac from among our people, but you must not take my son Isaac back there." Abraham believed that God would provide for Isaac.

Off to the House of Abraham's Relatives

So Abraham's servant promised Abraham that he would find a wife for Isaac from his own relatives. The servant took ten camels and packed all kinds of presents like gold, silver, and clothing. Why did the servant bring so many presents? If the servant found a wife for Isaac, he would give her and her family all of these presents.

Abraham's servant got everything ready and set out for the land where Abraham's relatives lived. He had to travel for many days to get there. One evening, he arrived at a town called Nahor. There was a well just outside of the town, so the servant had the camels kneel down near the well to rest and get a drink. In the evening, the women from town would come out to draw water from the well. At that time, it was the women's job to get water since there was no running water. In order to have any water in the house, women would go to the big well just outside the city. They would take large jars and fill them with water from the well, then carry the water home.

While the servant was resting at the well, he was probably wondering how he would find a wife for Isaac. What do you do when you don't know how to do something? Sometimes we ask our parents or a grown-up for help. But when no one really knows the answer, we know we can pray to God, and that is exactly what the servant did.

The Servant Prays for God's Help

The servant prayed, "O Lord, please help me today and show kindness to my master Abraham. I am standing beside this well and the women of the town are coming out to draw water. May it be that when I ask one of them for a drink and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink'—let her be the one You have chosen for your servant Isaac. If this happens, I will know that she is the one who will be the wife for Isaac." The servant was asking God to help him know who the right girl would be.

Before he had finished praying, a girl named Rebekah came out with a jar on her shoulder. Rebekah was very beautiful and she had never been married before.

Rebekah went down to the well and filled her jar with water. Abraham's servant hurried to meet her. He asked, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar."

"Drink, my lord," said Rebekah. She quickly lowered the jar to her hands and gave him a drink.

After she had given him a drink, she said, "I'll get water for your camels, too, until they have finished drinking." The servant didn't even have to ask Rebekah to

get water for his camels. Rebekah did it all on her own. Have you ever done something nice to someone even when they didn't ask you? [Allow students to share.]

Rebekah quickly emptied her jar into the trough where the camels drank from and ran back to the well to get more water until there was enough for all his camels. Now this was not an easy thing to do. Rebekah only had one jar, and the servant had ten camels. She had to go back many times to the well before the camels had enough to drink. What does this show about Rebekah? This shows us that she was a very hard working girl who also had a lot of love.

The Servant's Prayer Is Answered

The servant watched her closely as she got the water to see if she was the one who would be Isaac's wife. Was she the one God had chosen? What do you think? How can we tell if she was the one God had chosen? [Allow students to share.] Rebekah worked quickly, running back to the well to get more water. When all the camels had finished drinking, the servant asked Rebekah, "Whose daughter are you? Please tell me, is there any room in your father's house for us to spend the night?"

She said, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor." Nahor was Abraham's brother! She was one of Abraham's own people, just as Abraham had asked his servant to find.

"We have plenty of straw and food for the animals. There is also plenty of room for you to spend the night," she said.

Abraham's servant bowed down to the ground and worshiped the Lord. "Praise be to the Lord, the God of my master Abraham! He has smiled on my servant Abraham this day. He has guided me on my journey and led me to the house of my master's relatives." Why do you think it was important for the servant to praise God here? Do you think it made God happy that the servant did this? [Allow students to share.] How many times has the servant prayed to God so far? He prayed to God at the well, and he prayed to thank God again after he talked to Rebekah. It is important for us to learn to always remember to pray to God, regardless of whether it is a big thing or a small thing in our lives.

The Servant Meets Rebekah's Family

The servant then gave Rebekah heavy gold bracelets for her arms and a gold ring for her nose. Rebekah ran back to her mother's house. When Abraham's servant got there, he immediately told Rebekah's family about why he was there. What things do you think the servant told Rebekah's family? He told them how Abraham sent him to find a wife for Isaac among his relatives and how the Lord guided him there. He told them how he had prayed to the Lord. When he was still praying, Rebekah came to the well, and he knew that she was the one who would be Isaac's wife.

Rebekah's father answered, "This is from the Lord! Here is my daughter; take her with you, and let her become the wife of Isaac."

When Abraham's servant heard this, he bowed down to the ground and worshiped God. How many times has Abraham's servant worshiped God now? (Three times.) What do you think this shows about the servant? He was indeed a faithful servant and knew that God was the one who was guiding him. Then, he brought out more gold and silver jewelry and other costly gifts and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave treasures to her brother and to her mother also.

The next morning, Abraham's servant wanted to go back quickly to Abraham and finish this work. Even though Rebekah's family wanted Rebekah to stay home for a few more days, the servant knew that the work he was doing was very important. So Rebekah's family asked Rebekah, "Will you go with this man?"

"I will go," she said. So they sent Rebekah on her way and they blessed her.

Isaac Meets Rebekah

Around the time that the servant was traveling back home with Rebekah, Isaac was out in the field during the

evening, thinking about things. Have you ever spent time just thinking about things? What things do you think about? [Allow students to share.] As he was thinking, he looked up and saw the servant's camels coming home. At that moment, Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac.

"Who is that man in the field coming to meet us?" Rebekah asked Abraham's servant.

"He is my master," the servant answered. When Rebekah heard this she covered herself with a veil. Why do you think Rebekah covered herself with a veil? This means that she agreed to be his wife and that she did not want him to see her face since they were not married yet.

Isaac ran up to them, and Abraham's servant told Isaac how the Lord had guided him to find Rebekah. Isaac married Rebekah, and he loved her very much. God had brought the two together, and they loved each other very much.

From this story, we can tell how Abraham trusted God to help find a wife for Isaac. God hears our prayers and answers them because He is faithful and He loves us. The servant prayed to God, and He listened to the prayers. He is there to help us in our time of need. We can see how God gives the best to us when we let Him help us.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

- 1. From where did Abraham want his servant to find a wife for Isaac?**
Back in his home country among his relatives.
- 2. Why didn't Abraham want to find a wife for Isaac from the people he was living with?**
Those people didn't worship the Lord.
- 3. When the servant got to Nahor, who did he see coming out to draw water?**
The women of the town; among them was Rebekah.
- 4. How would the chief servant know which one would be Isaac's wife?**
She would be the one who would give him a drink and would get water for all his camels, too.
- 5. What was the first thing the servant did when he found Rebekah?**
He knelt down and praised God for guiding him.
- 6. When Rebekah saw Isaac coming towards her, what did she do?**
She covered herself with her veil and walked over to Isaac.
- 7. What did it mean when Rebekah covered herself with a veil?** She had agreed to become Isaac's wife.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"Let your requests be made known to God." (Philippians 4:6b)

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

Understand that God will help us when we try to do the things He wants us to do.

1. God gives us many different blessings. Do we always remember to make God happy too by doing things that He wants us to do? Think about what things God has blessed us or our family with and think about what we have done to make God happy.
2. When our parents, teachers, or friends trust us with an important job, do we do a responsible job, like Abraham's servant did? What jobs have we been given before? What type of preparations did we make for those jobs? Were we responsible? When we are entrusted with important jobs, we need to prepare and be responsible.
3. Whenever we face a big problem and don't know what to do, do we pray to God and ask Him to help us? What kinds of problems have we asked God to help us with? What kinds of problems have we tried solving without God's help? When God helps us, do we remember to give thanks to God? We need to be thankful to God all the time.

ACTIVITIES

1

"Trust God" Water Pitcher

Objective: To trust God in all things.

Materials

- Butcher paper
- Markers
- Scissors
- Glue

Abraham's servant trusted that God would give Isaac a good wife. Instead of picking a girl he thought Isaac would like, Abraham's servant prayed to God and asked Him to show him which girl He would like Isaac to marry. God answered his prayer by having Rebekah come out and give water from her pitcher to him and his camels.

Note: Prepare the water droplet cutouts before class by drawing them, making copies, and then cutting them out.

Instructions

1. Make a "Trust God" water pitcher by drawing a large picture of a water pitcher on butcher paper (to be taped to the wall).
2. Distribute two to three water droplets to each student.
3. Ask your students to think about prayers they have entrusted to God and have them write them inside the water droplets. When they are done, they can glue them inside the picture of the water pitcher.

Over the course of the quarter, they can continue to add to the water pitcher as they think of things they want to pray to God about. Remind them that we should always entrust our problems to God, and that He will answer us according to His will.

2

Arts and Crafts

Objective: To help retell the story in an interactive way.

Idea #1: Camel Sock Puppet

Make a camel puppet out of old socks. Use your imagination and create a camel by stuffing an old sock. You can sew on button eyes and create a hump. Attach four string legs.

Idea #2: Make A Well

Cover a metal can with construction paper and make a well.

Idea #3: Jar Making

Decorate glass jars or empty juice bottles with a variety of colored masking tape pieces. Coat the tape with a layer of clear enamel and let dry. Now you have a pretty jar!

Idea #4: A Sand Camel

Make a camel in the sand. Place sandpaper underneath white paper. The students can use crayons to draw a picture of a camel in the desert. A sand texture will appear on the paper. Make sand dunes and other desert features. Experiment with different grits of sandpaper.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. Because the people in Canaan did not believe in the one true God.
2. Ten camels, along with presents like silver, gold, and clothes.
3. He told them how Abraham sent him to find a wife for Isaac among his relatives and how God had guided him there. He told them how he had prayed to God and how Rebekah had come out and done everything that he had prayed about.
4. The first time was before he met Rebekah. The second was after he met Rebekah at the well. The third was after Rebekah's father agreed to allow Rebekah to marry Isaac.
5. Abraham's servant, camels
6. prayed
7. False; Rebekah had never been married before she met Isaac.
8. True
9. True
10. Answers may vary.

E1 Year 1 Book 1 Lesson 12—Isaac and Rebekah

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truths: 1. God helps those who rely on Him.
 2. God hears us when we pray and ask for guidance.
 3. God wants us to marry in the Lord.

Lesson Objectives: 1. To rely on God in all things.
 2. To pray to God for all things.

Bible Reading: Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a checkmark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Philippians 4:6b)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

Short Answer

1. Why didn't Abraham want Isaac to find a wife in Canaan?

2. What are some of the things the servant brought to prepare for his trip?

3. What did the servant tell Rebekah and her family when he went to her house?

4. When did the servant pray to God and praise Him?

Fill In the Blanks

(prayed Abraham's servant camels)

5. Rebekah gave water to _____ and his _____ to drink.

6. Before the servant began looking for Isaac's wife, he _____ to God.

True or False

7. Rebekah was married to someone already before she met Isaac. _____

8. Isaac was thinking in the field when he saw Rebekah for the first time. _____

9. The chief servant was faithful to Abraham. _____

Life Application

10. Think about some things that God wants you to do. Then, think about how you want to praise God when He helps you do these things. Write down your praises to God below. Be ready to share your answers next week.
