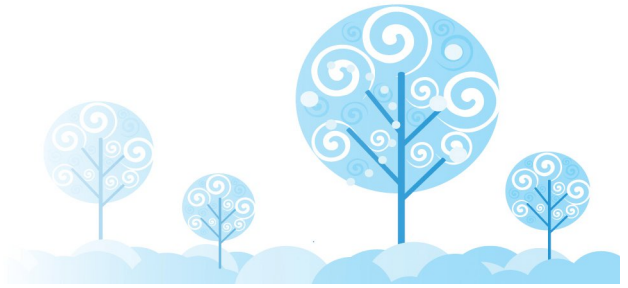


LESSON 8

ABRAHAM'S SONS



OBJECTIVES

1. To understand that all things are possible with our God.
2. To believe we are children of promise like Isaac.
3. To trust in God's promise of salvation through His church.

MEMORY VERSE

"Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments."

(Deuteronomy 7:9)

PRAYER

1. Thank God for guiding and protecting us this week so we can come to Him in Spirit and in truth.
2. Praise God for giving us the promise of salvation through water baptism.
3. Ask God for grace and strength to complete our journey of faith and receive His promise at His Second Coming.



Overview

1. The birth of Ishmael

- a. Sarai gives her servant Hagar to Abram
- b. Hagar runs away from Sarai
- c. Hagar encounters the Angel of the Lord
- d. The birth of Ishmael

2. God's covenant of circumcision with Abram

- a. A new name for Abram
- b. The covenant of circumcision
- c. A new name for Sarai
- d. The promise of Isaac's birth

3. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

Jesus is the one true God. He will fulfill His promise of salvation at His Second Coming. Water baptism is a sign of our spiritual circumcision.

4. Life Application

We should trust in God and His promises of salvation and that all things are possible.

5. Activity: What's in a Name?



Background Knowledge for Teachers

Circumcision is a surgical operation which removes the foreskin (prepuce), a skin covering on the head of a male's penis. Today, most male babies born in the western world undergo this simple operation a few days after birth to promote better hygiene. In biblical times, both the Western Semites and the Hebrews practiced circumcision. However, beginning with Abraham, circumcision became a religious rite which served as a covenant between God and the Jewish people (Gen 17:9-14). This practice later became a source of racial and cultural pride. Hebrews differentiated themselves from other groups by labeling Philistines, and later, Greeks, as "uncircumcised" (Judg 14:3; 15:18; 1 Sam 14:6; 17:26; 2 Sam 1:20; 1 Chr 10:4; Acts 15:1; Gal 5:1-12).

Genesis 17 records the origin and purpose of circumcision as a sign of the covenant between God and His chosen people. Although it cut away a part of the male body, the true meaning and effect of circumcision was not merely limited to the physical. Displeased with the Israelites' rebellion, God called for a circumcision of the heart. He commanded the people to cut away their evil and selfish deeds (Deut 30:6; Jer 4:4; 9:25-26).

In Acts 15:1-29, the council of Jerusalem clarified the issue of circumcision to early Christian believers. Given that many early Christians were originally Jews, Jewish converts thought that Gentile believers also had to be circumcised and observe the laws of Moses as was traditional Jewish practice. After an extensive discussion and with the revelation of the Lord's will, the apostles concluded that they should abolish the practice of circumcision and the observance of Mosaic laws (Phil 3:3; Col 2:11; Rom 2:28-29; Gal 5:6; 6:15).



Reaching Out to Your Students

Your students may not fully understand that God is faithful and wants to be a true, trustworthy friend, father, and benefactor to Christians. They may sometimes view Him as a dictator, writing Him off as a far-off being that does not really understand them or care about them, and only serves to give them rules and punishments. As a result, some children might learn to obey God out of genuine fear and not out of a trust that God wants what is best for them. Students may find it challenging to view God's commandments as a manifestation of His love for us, and His desire for us to receive salvation.

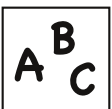
Making the leap of faith and trusting in God's promise of salvation can be best reached by making small jumps or hops in our daily spiritual walk. Encourage students to discover how faithful God can be in the day-to-day. If they spend time to read God's word, they will receive the promise of God's grace, joy, peace, encouragement, and wisdom. If students take the time to talk to God about their lives in prayer, not only by giving their requests, but by also sharing their hopes and fears, they will personally experience that God is nearby to guide, strengthen, and protect them. By taking these small steps to trust God to be a priority, a close friend, and a key player in their daily lives, students will gain a better grasp of God's faithfulness in bringing about the long-term promise of salvation.



Opener

5 Minutes

Boys and girls, let's take turns listing out a few offers or promises that someone made to you or you made to another person, but which were not kept. It might be something big like being offered to go to summer vacation at Disneyland but ending up stuck at home, or something smaller like trying not to say curse words but hearing them come out when you're in a bad mood. How did you feel when that person or you did not follow through with your promise? (Bad, guilty, sad, upset, angry, hurt, etc.) Why do you think people break promises? (Busy, changed their minds, not enough money, not enough ability, lying, don't care, etc.) Now let's think about some promises that people have kept. Some examples might be Dad or Mom actually attending one of your important school shows or activities, or finally getting that pet you had been hoping for all year. Doesn't it feel wonderful to know that you can trust someone to keep their word? The more people do what they promised, the more we trust them, and the more we want to be around them, isn't that so? We know that humans are limited, and often it is difficult to fulfill a promise even if we really want to. God is different. He is a true God, which means He cannot and would not want to go against something He has promised us. In today's lesson, we will learn about God's promise of salvation to the Israelites through circumcision. We are very blessed because we can count on this same promise of salvation today when we receive water baptism.



Vocabulary

circumcision: cutting off a part of the skin on a boy's private parts as a sign of the covenant between God and His chosen people

covenant: a promise

foreskin: the front part of the skin on a boy's private part, cut off as part of circumcision

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. So that Hagar would bear a child for Sarai and Abram
2. Because Hagar looked down on her mistress once she became pregnant with Abram's child
3. Because Sarai mistreated Hagar
4. The Angel of the Lord
5. To go back to her mistress Sarai and submit to her
6. Ishmael
7. 99
8. circumcision
9. Abraham, father of many
10. Sarah, Isaac



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #1 and tell the students that we will be filling it out as we go through this lesson.

Sarai gives her servant Hagar to Abram

Abram had been living in the land of Canaan for ten years. During this long period of time, Abram and Sarai could not have any children of their own. Sarai had an Egyptian servant called Hagar. Sarai said to Abram, "I can't have children. Take my servant Hagar and maybe we can have children through her." Abram obeyed Sarai and took Hagar as his second wife. Hagar became pregnant with Abram's child. Once Hagar was pregnant, she started to look down on her mistress Sarai, who could not bear children.

Hagar runs away from Sarai

Sarai was very upset at this difficult situation. Sarai told Abram she was unhappy because Hagar was not being respectful now that she was pregnant. Abram told Sarai she could do anything she wanted to her servant Hagar. Students, what do you think Sarai did next? Sarai started treating Hagar badly. It must have been very sad for Hagar, because she was pregnant, her mistress did not like her, and her baby's father did not protect her. Hagar could not take Sarai's mistreatment and ran away into the desert.

Hagar encounters the Angel of the Lord

Hagar ran to a spring of water in the desert, close to the road that led to a place called Shur, between Kadesh and Bered. Here, the Angel of the Lord appeared to her. He asked her, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She replied, "I am running away from my mistress Sarai." The Angel of the Lord said to her, "Go back to your mistress, and submit to her." Then the Angel of the Lord comforted her by making a promise and giving a prophesy to Hagar saying, "I will multiply your descendants, and they will be too many to count. You will have a son. You will call him Ishmael, because the Lord heard of your pain. He will be a wild man, he will be against others and others will be against him. He will live among his brothers." After the Angel of the Lord spoke, Hagar called him and that place Beer Lahai Roi, which means "You Are the God Who Sees." God had seen her difficulties, and encouraged her with His blessing and promise. Students, we see that even when Hagar was alone and helpless, God remembered her and took care of her. God is a loving father to those in need.

The birth of Ishmael

Hagar returned home and gave birth to Abram's son. They named him Ishmael. Abram was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born.

A new name for Abram

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am the Almighty God; walk before Me and be righteous. I will make a covenant (promise) between Me and you. I will multiply your descendants." Abram must have been so amazed that God not only appeared to him, but that the Lord also spoke to him. Imagine if that happened to you, how surprised and joyful would you be? Abram was so touched by God's wonderful promise, he fell on his face. This was a way for Abram to show honor and respect to God for His powerful and generous blessings.

God continued speaking, "My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many. You will no longer be called Abram, but your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many. I will make you very fruitful. I will make nations and kings come from you. I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants for many generations. This will be an everlasting covenant, I will be God to you and your descendants after you. I will also give to you and your descendants all the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession and I will be their God." Students, do you know why God changed Abram's name? Abram means "father" and Abraham means "father of many." Abraham's new name had to do with God's wonderful promise. Can we list out what God promised to Abraham so far?

1. Abraham will become the father of many and have many descendants.
2. God will give Abraham and his descendants the land of Canaan.
3. God will be the God of Abraham and his descendants.

For an old man like Abraham, it must have seemed nearly impossible that he would have that many descendants or that he could ever possess the land where he was a stranger for so many years. It was God's generosity and power that would allow these powerful promises to come true for Abraham and his descendants. For these blessings to be fulfilled, Abraham had to have faith in God's promises and obey God's commandments.

The covenant of circumcision

God instructed Abraham to keep His covenant and receive all these wonderful blessings by having the mark of circumcision. God gave Abraham a command, "Every male

child among you will be circumcised on their foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. Every male child who is eight days old will be circumcised, even if they are the children of relatives, or servants, or foreigners. Through circumcision, My covenant will be in your flesh and will be an everlasting covenant. Without circumcision, a male child cannot be part of My covenant."

Boys and girls, circumcision is when the front of the skin on a boy's private part is cut off. Although it may sound painful, God was very wise about teaching Abraham to do it when a boy is eight days old. On the eighth day, there is less bleeding and the wound can heal faster. Also, because the baby is so young, he will not remember the quick pain, and can still enjoy the benefits of having a mark of God's covenant. Abraham had to have faith that by obeying God through circumcision, God would also fulfill His promised blessings to him and his descendants.

Today, after Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross, we are God's children by circumcision through water baptism. Water baptism is a mark of God's covenant with us. Water baptism sets us aside as God's chosen people and allows us to receive God's promised blessings.

A new name for Sarai

Then God said to Abraham, "Sarai your wife will also have a new name. You will not call her name Sarai, but Sarah."

The promise of Isaac's birth

God promised Abraham, "I will bless Sarah and also give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she will be a mother of many nations and kings." This must have been shocking news to Abraham. When he heard it, he fell on his face and laughed. In his heart Abraham thought, "I am already a hundred years old, how can I have a child? Sarah is already ninety years old, how will she bear a child?" Abraham thought about his son Ishmael and thought to ask God to bless Hagar's son instead, saying "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"

Even though it might have seemed impossible, God had His own plan, and replied, "No, Sarah your wife will bear you a son. You shall call him Isaac. I will establish My everlasting covenant with him and with his descendants. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you and will bless Ishmael. I will make him fruitful, multiply his descendants, give him twelve princes among his descendants, and make him a great nation. But, I will establish My covenant with Isaac, the son Sarah will bear to you by this time next year." Once God finished talking to Abraham, He left.

Because Abraham was a righteous, faithful, and obedient man, he obeyed God's commandment of circumcision as a sign of their covenant. On that same day, Abraham took Ishmael and every male in the household and circumcised them. Abraham was ninety-nine years old and Ishmael was thirteen when they received circumcision. Every single male in Abraham's household became part of

God's covenant through circumcision.

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #2. The answers have been underlined below.

Abraham had two sons by two different women. Each of these women and their sons represent two different covenants. Let's read Galatians 4:21-31 and find what makes these two different. [Answers are listed below.]

- Freewoman
- Born according to the Spirit
- Heavenly Jerusalem
- Freedom
- Heirs
- Child of promise: Isaac

1. How do we become a part of the covenant God made with Abraham and Isaac?
(We enter the covenant by water baptism, which is a mark of our spiritual circumcision.)
2. What will be the end for those who are not children of the promise?
(They will be in bondage and cast out.)
3. Aside from receiving water baptism, what might be some ways that we can set ourselves apart as children of the promise?

We do not behave (rude, mean, disobedient, disrespectful) or speak (cursing, lying) in a way that would sadden God.

If we have made a mistake or sinned, instead of ignoring it or making excuses, we ask God to help us to correct it so we can grow spiritually.

We show God's love to others by being kind and supportive. We take what we learn in RE class, family service, or our own Bible reading and try to share encouraging verses and testimonies with those in need.

We look for ways to serve fellow brothers and sisters, even if nobody notices or tells us to do it in the first place.

We remember to give prayers of thanksgiving whenever we enjoy something good and ask God for guidance and strength in our times of difficulty.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

One True God

Jesus is the one true God. He is a God who is faithful and worthy of our trust. He made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants. This covenant applies to us today because we are Abraham's spiritual descendants. Jesus will fulfill His promises of blessing and salvation at His Second Coming. We believe that we will receive these promises because once we have undergone water baptism, we bear the sign of our spiritual circumcision and are part of God's covenant.

Water Baptism

After Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross, we have become God's children by circumcision through water baptism. Water baptism is a mark of God's covenant with us. Water baptism sets us aside as God's chosen people and allows us to receive God's promised blessings.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **What were the names of the two women with whom Abraham had children?** Sarah and Hagar.
2. **How old was Abraham when each of his sons were born?** He was 86 when Ishmael was born and 100 when Isaac was born.
3. **Why did Hagar run away to the desert?** Her mistress Sarai treated her badly after she had become pregnant, because she looked down upon Sarai.
4. **What did the Angel of the Lord tell Hagar to do?** He told Hagar to return home and submit to her mistress.
5. **What was the meaning of Abram's new name?** Abraham meant "father of many," referring to the covenant God had made with him and his descendants.
6. **What did God promise Abraham?** God promised him many descendants, the land of Canaan, being his God, and having a son called Isaac through his wife Sarah.
7. **What were God's instructions about circumcision?**
Every male child who was eight days old and belonged to Abraham's household had to receive circumcision as a sign of the covenant they had with God.
8. **When God promised Isaac's birth, how did Abraham react and what was God's reply?**
Abraham laughed because he and his wife were too old to have children, and asked that Ishmael be blessed instead. God said the covenant would be through Sarah and Abraham's son Isaac, but that He would also bless Ishmael.



Life Application

10 Minutes

All Things Are Possible with God

There are many examples in the Bible and real life that show us how God can transform situations that are out of our control. Match the descriptions of the impossible events below with the name of the correct Bible character.

Answers: 1. Jonah; 2. Daniel; 3. David; 4. Elijah; 5. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; 6. Lazarus; 7. Dorcas; 8. Jesus

God's Promises to Me

1. Mark 11: 24, Pray in faith and will receive it from God.
2. 1 John 2:25, Eternal life.
3. Luke 11:13, Holy Spirit!
4. 1 John 1:9, He will forgive us (but we should be careful not to deliberately sin against God and ask God to forgive us).
5. John 14:27, God promises us His peace dwelling in us.
6. 1 John 5:4-5, God promises that we will overcome our world—the evil.
7. John 14:2-3, Jesus' second coming.

Trusting God's Promise of Salvation through His church

Subject	Apostolic Church	Other Churches
Holy Spirit	<i>Speak in tongues is the evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit</i>	<i>Receive it when you believe</i>
Sabbath	<i>Friday sundown to Saturday sundown</i>	<i>Sunday or no specific day</i>
Water Baptism	<i>In living water, by the name of Jesus Christ, with the presence of the Holy Spirit, facing down</i>	<i>In a pool or tank, by the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, facing backwards</i>
Holy Communion	Unleavened bread and grape juice	<i>Use unleavened bread, biscuits, cookies. and grape wine or soda</i>
Foot-washing	Wash each other's feet to have a part in Jesus	May not practice nor believe that the teaching of foot-washing is to have a part with Jesus



Activity

What's in a Name?

10-15 Minutes

Objective: To understand the importance of a name.

Materials

- Baby name books (includes the meanings of common English names), one per group
- 3" x 5" index cards
- Clock or stopwatch

Instructions

1. Divide the class into small groups of three or four.
2. Distribute the baby name books, index cards, and pencils to each group. (Distribute Bibles as needed.)
3. Each student in the group takes turns looking up the meaning of his or her name in the baby name book. They write down the meaning of their name on their index card. Within their group, students can share any special reasons or stories about why their parents decided to give them that particular name.
4. Set the clock or stopwatch for five to ten minutes.
5. During the allotted time, each group tries to find as many Bible characters as possible. They write down the names and corresponding meanings on the index cards. (To avoid duplication in Bible character names, the teacher can assign a range of Bible books to each group. For example: Group 1 can use names from Genesis to Psalms, and so on)
6. Once the time is up, each group presents their list of Bible character names and meanings. The group with the longest list of names with meanings wins. (Names without meanings will not be counted.)
7. Discuss the importance of Biblical names and how each name described the person or determined that person's life. Link the activity back to the lesson (the change of Abram's name to Abraham).

Abraham's Sons

Having Children

_____ said to _____, "I can't have children. Take my servant _____ and maybe we can have children through her." (Gen 16:2)

Hagar in the Desert

_____ said to her, "Go back to your mistress, and _____ to her." (Gen 16:9)

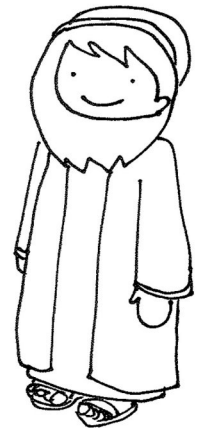
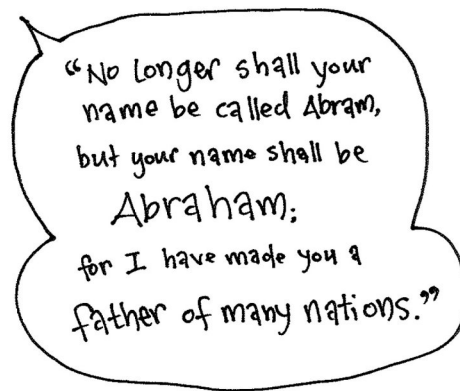
After he spoke, Hagar called him and that place Beer Lahai Roi, which means "You Are the _____ Who _____." (Gen 16:13-14)

The birth of Abram and Hagar's son

Hagar returned home and gave birth to Abram's son. They named him _____. Abram was _____ years old when his first son was born. (Gen 16:15-16)

A new name for Abram

"You will no longer be called Abram, but your name will be _____, for I have made you a father of _____. I will make you very _____. I will make nations and kings come from you. I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants for many generations. This will be an everlasting covenant, I will be God to you and your descendants after you. I will also give to you and your descendants all the land of _____ as an everlasting possession and I will be their _____." (Gen 17:5-8)



The covenant of circumcision

"Every _____ child who is _____ days old will be _____. My covenant will be in your flesh and will be an everlasting covenant." (Gen 17:12-13)

The promise of a new birth

"_____ your wife will bear you a son. You shall call him _____. I will establish My everlasting _____ with him and with his descendants." (Gen 17:19)

Children of Promise

Abraham had two sons by two different women. Each of these women and their sons represent two different covenants. Let's read **Galatians 4:21-31** and find what makes these two different. Hagar's column has already been filled in as an example.

Sarah	Hagar
	<i>Bondwoman</i>
	<i>Born according to the flesh</i>
	<i>Mount Sinai, earthly Jerusalem</i>
	<i>Bondage</i>
	<i>Cast out</i>
	<i>Child of promise: Ishmael</i>

Even though Abraham had two sons, God's covenant was with Isaac (Gen 17:19). Today, we are blessed because we are also heirs of God's covenant and promises along with Isaac. We are circumcised by water baptism and led by the Holy Spirit to obey God's commandments. We have been freed from sin and are now able to live for Christ.

1. How do we become a part of the covenant God made with Abraham and Isaac?
2. What will be the end for those who are not children of the promise?
3. Aside from receiving water baptism, what might be some ways that we can set ourselves apart as children of the promise?

I am blessed because I am also the heir of God's covenant and promises along with Isaac.

All Things Are Possible with God

There are many examples in the Bible and real life that show us how God can transform situations that are out of our control. Match the descriptions of the impossible events below with the name of the correct Bible character.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego
Jesus
David

Dorcas
Elijah
Lazarus

Jonah
Daniel

1. _____ Swallowed by a large fish and survived inside it for three days
2. _____ Thrown into a den of hungry lions for a night and came out unharmed
3. _____ Knocked a giant warrior dead with a stone
4. _____ Fed by ravens next to a brook
5. _____ Cast into a burning furnace and came out without any burns
6. _____ Walked out of his tomb when Jesus called him, even after being dead for 3 days
7. _____ Known for her good and charitable deeds, she was resurrected by Peter
8. _____ Helped the blind see, the lame walk, cleansed lepers, and resurrected the dead

Examples of miracles and God's work are not only found in the Bible, but also in our everyday lives. Write a summary of a testimony where God made something possible in your family. No grace from God is unimportant even if it may seem small. You can share stories of healing, deliverance from danger, receiving the Holy Spirit, or experiencing peace and joy during a prayer.

My Testimony

All things are possible with God.



God's Promises to Me

Objective: To learn to trust and accept God's promises.

Here is a list of only seven of the many promises that God has given us. Find out what each of the promises says, and write down what the promises are.

Verse	Scripture	Promise
Mark 11:24	"Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them."	
1 John 2:25	"And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life."	
Luke 11:13	"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"	
1 John 1:9	"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."	
John 14:27	"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."	
1 John 5:4-5	"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"	
John 14:2-3	"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."	

Trusting God's Promise of Salvation through His Church

Abraham trusted God to fulfill His covenant. He believed in God's promise and showed it by going through circumcision. Today, God has promised salvation to those He has chosen out of the world. We believe in His word which is recorded in the Bible and we put these into practice as a church. There are several characteristics that describe the church God has set aside for salvation. List out **one difference** between the church that follows the Bible, and the practices of other churches you may have seen or heard about. If needed, you can team up with another classmate to work on this list.

Subject	Apostolic Church	Other Churches
Holy Spirit		
Sabbath		
Water Baptism		
Holy Communion		
Foot-washing		



E2 Year 1 Book 2 Lesson 8—Abraham's Sons

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

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
Read							
Pray							

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. **(Deuteronomy 7:9)**

Short Answer

1. Why did Sarai give her maidservant Hagar to Abram as a second wife?
2. Why did Sarai complain to Abram about Hagar?
3. Why did Hagar run away to the desert?
4. Who appeared to comfort Hagar when she ran away?
5. What did the Angel tell Hagar to do?

Fill In the Blank

6. The angel told Hagar that she would have a son and he would be named _____.
7. Abram was _____ years old when the Lord appeared to him and spoke of His covenant.
8. The everlasting covenant between God and Abraham meant that every male in his household and his descendants had to receive _____.
9. God gave Abram a new name, _____, which means "_____."
10. God gave Sarai a new name, _____. The son born to her would be named _____.