

GOD PROVIDES A WIFE FOR ISAAC

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: GENESIS 24:1-67



GRADESCHOOL

God's plan and our prayer work together.

The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

Abraham knew God would provide a wife for his son – There was no doubt in Abraham's mind that God would help his servant find a wife for his son.

Abraham's servant prayed in faith to God to provide a wife for Isaac – The servant is shown as a man of prayer and faith. He obviously believes God is able to hear and answer prayer. His prayer is not simply a general call for help, but instead it is a very specific detailed request. We know that this servant is Abraham's most trusted servant and the oldest. Perhaps this servant had been present years earlier when Abraham went to Mount Moriah to sacrifice his son. In any case, the servant would have been aware of Sarah's age and her miraculous conception in old age. These events and watching Abraham worship the Lord influenced the servant to pray that God would bless his efforts and show him Isaac's wife.

God provides a wife in perfect answer to the servant's prayer – In a wonderful demonstration of answered prayer, God orchestrates the circumstances and Rebekah follows the exact description the servant prayed to God.

WHERE IS JESUS?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

In Ephesians 1:11-12 Paul tells us that as Christians we are chosen according to His plan. Similarly God chose Rebekah for Isaac. Rebekah would be another godly wife in the lineage of Jesus. God works out His sovereign choice according to the plan of Christ, who works out everything in conformity to the purpose of His will. Abraham's servant prayed that the Lord would direct the choice of a wife for Isaac and He did just that!

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:11-12)

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ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

Bible Passage: Numbers 24:17

Connecting the passage to Christ:

Balaam claims to hear the words of God and the knowledge of the Most High. He then gives a prophecy of a king who will come from Israel. A special reference is made to a star that will rise. David is the king that conquers the enemies of God. The picture of a conquering king foreshadows (or reminds us of) Jesus who will put all His enemies under his feet until His final triumph over death itself (see 1 Corinthians 22-26).

Questions for reflection:

- Who is the king Balaam's prophecy speaks of? (Jesus.)
- Read Revelation 22:16. How is this passage connected to the prophecy? (Jesus is referred to as the bright Morning Star which is a fulfillment of the prediction that a star would come out of Jacob. Jesus was also first recognized by a star marking His birth.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.



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ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?

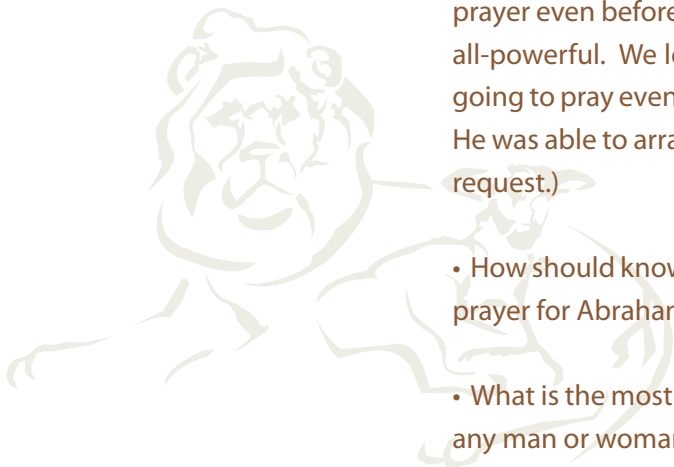
FINISH THE QUESTION

Even before Abraham's servant finished his prayer, God was answering it, see Genesis 24:15. In order to emphasize God's amazing ability to know our prayers even before we ask (Psalm 139:4) ask the children to give you the second half of the questions below. Share the bold and ask them to guess the second half of the question, and then answer the question.

1. What president can be found on the quarter? (Washington)
2. Who was crucified next to Jesus? (Two thieves)
3. What treasure is said to be at the end of a rainbow? (A pot of gold)
4. What are the names of the two professional football teams in the state of Pennsylvania? (Steelers and Eagles)
5. What did Benjamin Franklin discover with a key and kite? (Electricity)
6. How many pennies make one dollar? (100)
7. Who was the first man on the moon? (Neil Armstrong)
8. What happened when Moses put his staff on the ground? (It turned into a snake)
9. How many ears of corn are there in one dozen? (12)
10. Who bombed Pearl Harbor? (The Japanese)

Then ask the class the following questions:

- What do we learn about God when we realize He was able to answer the servant's prayer even before he was finished praying? (We learn that God is all-knowing and all-powerful. We learn God is all-knowing because He knew what the servant was going to pray even before he finished. And we learn that He is all-powerful because He was able to arrange for the circumstances to happen just the same as the prayer request.)
- How should knowing this story encourage our faith in Jesus? (If God could answer prayer for Abraham's servant, He can answer our prayers too.)
- What is the most important thing we can ask God for? (The most important thing any man or woman can ask for is that God change their heart and save them.)



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WHY NOT A CANAANITE WIFE?

Abraham did not want to have his son take a wife from among the idol worshipping Canaanite tribes. See if the children can guess why.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Why was Abraham so insistent that his servant not get a wife for his son among the Canaanites? (Abraham was not interested in his son marrying someone who worshipped the Canaanite idols when God had promised to give their land to Abraham.)
- What did Abraham do to ensure his servant would follow his wishes in choosing a wife for his son? (He made his servant swear, that is give his word in an oath.)
- Why did Abraham have such confidence that his servant would be successful? (Abraham believed God would send an angel to guide his servant to success, see Genesis 24:7)

TELLING THE STORY WITH PROPS

Supplies

- clay water jar
- gold ring
- two gold bracelets
- straw

Tell the story and pass around the objects from the story when you get to them. The objects should bring interest to the story as you read it.

PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.

IN CLASS PROJECT

Supplies

- paper
- colored pencils

The first and second grade children can use the preschool coloring sheet and questions. Have the older children draw a picture of Abraham's servant at the well with ten camels loaded down with costly gifts, gold, silver, and jewelry with Rebekah watering the camels.

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FOR OLDER GRADES

Use the following activity for practical application and discovery of this lesson:

Compare Abraham's desire for his son not to take a wife from among the Canaanites with God's direction for believers not to be unequally yoked. Although this passage from the New Testament is unrelated to the Old Testament passage of this study, it demonstrates the same principles that Abraham used in wanting to get a wife for his son from among his own kinsmen.

Read 1 Corinthians 6:14-18 and then ask the class the following questions:

- Did Abraham follow Paul's counsel in sending his servant for a wife for his son? Why do you think so? (Elicit that Abraham knew that the best wife for Isaac would be a woman who encouraged him in his faith walk with the Lord.)
- Why do you think God does not want us to marry unbelievers? (Elicit that marriage to an unbeliever creates multiple difficulties and distractions from worshipping the Lord.)

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Prayer – Prayer is simply talking to God. In this story, prayer takes the form of Abraham's servant requesting God to bless his search for a wife for Isaac; later, the servant's prayer is one of thanksgiving (verse 26).

Prayer is to be offered in humility with the understanding that God is superior over us. Prayer is to be offered in faith that God can do what you are asking. Psalm 139:4 tells us that the Lord knows our prayers even before we finish, and that is exactly what happened in our story. Even before the servant finished praying, Rebekah approached the well.

