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Old Testament

Promises God Made to Abraham



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- God fulfills each one of His promises.
- Faith and Obedience are important for God's Promises to come true in our lives.



SCRIPTURE PORTION

Genesis 12:1-7; Genesis 15; Genesis 17:1-8; 15-19; Genesis 22:1-19



RECAP

- What did we learn last week?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week.



MEMORY VERSE

2 Corinthians 1:20: "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. And so through Him the 'Amen' is spoken by us to the glory of God."

Materials Needed:

- Red and blue pens / or crayons / or color pencils
- Cloth to blind fold

Note to the Facilitator:

The second half of the story about Abraham sacrificing his son Isaac was already done in Lesson 7, Doctrine of God. Focus more on the learning than the story.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Old Testament is a collection of thirty-nine books about the history and religion of the people of Israel. Testament means ‘Covenant.’ ‘Covenant’ means “an agreement.” God makes an agreement with a specific group of people the Israelites—to love and care for them. Through these covenants, God attempts to relate to the rest of humankind.

In the next few weeks, we are going to very briefly look at a few specific stories in the first four books of the Old Testament. Through these stories, we will see how God fulfills the covenant He makes with His chosen people.

**ATTENTION GETTER**

Have all the children form a big circle for this variation of Blind Man’s Bluff. In the center, have one child blindfolded and one who isn’t. The child who isn’t blindfolded is the ‘Voice of the Lord.’ Have the ‘Voice of the Lord’ say, “I keep my promises.” The blindfolded child must move toward that voice and try to tag the person. Once a student tags the Voice of the Lord, he or she becomes the Voice. Another child is blindfolded, and the former one joins the circle. The children forming the circle should prevent either party from moving out of it.

After playing the game, bring everyone back to their seats.

Ask:

(Let the children respond to the following questions).

Like we played in this game, do we have to run behind God for Him to fulfill His promises for us?

No! We don't have to run behind God for He is always faithful in keeping His promises.

Let's say that you prayed for something and you still did not receive it. Does that mean God didn't hear you? Does that mean He doesn't love you?

No!

Sometimes we ask God for something and we don't get it right away. We have to wait. Can you think of a time when you prayed really hard for something and then had to wait to get it?

Does God promise to always give us what we want?

No!

Why not?

He promises to give us what is best for us.



TEACHING CONTENT

Today, we will look at the Covenant—promises God made—with Abram (means exalted father). Later, God changed his name to Abraham (Father of many nations). We'll also see why God gave only Abraham all the promises, and how long Abraham had to wait to see one of the promises come true. **Abraham was not able to see the completion of most of the promises in his lifetime. Yet, Abraham knew that God is faithful and will keep His promises.** In the next seven weeks, we will see how God fulfilled His Covenant—promise to Abraham.

When Abram was 75 years, God spoke to Abram and asked him to leave his country, people, father's household and go to the land that God would show him.

God promised to bless Abram. Let us turn in our Bibles to Genesis, and read chapter 12:2-3 which records the promise God made to Abraham.

(Let the children respond to the following questions:)

What are the blessings God promised Abram?

- He will make him a great nation.
- He will bless him and make his name great.
- He will bless those who will bless him and whoever curses Abram God will curse him.
- All people on earth will be blessed through Abram.

Did Abram know which land he had to go to?

No!

Did Abram ask God which land?

No!

Abram left Haran along with his wife Sarai and his nephew, Lot. Abram didn't need to know where God was leading him; he trusted God and obeyed Him without asking any questions. Abram chose to obey God.

When Abram arrived in Canaan, the Lord appeared to him and gave him another promise.

What promise did God give Abram? To find the answer, read Genesis 12:7
(Let the children read the verse and answer).

He promised to give Abram's offspring, *(explain offspring—Abram's children, grandchildren and great, great grandchildren)* the land of Canaan.

Abram (75 years) and Sarai did not have any children (they were past the age of having children). God promised to give the land of Canaan to Abram's offspring.

About 10 years later, God again appeared to Abram in a vision. Abram and Sarai were still childless. God promised that they would have a son. To confirm His

promise, God took Abram outside his tent and asked him to look up at the heavens and count the stars. God told Abram that his descendants will be as numerous and countless as the stars in the sky.

How did Abram respond? The Bible says Abram believed God and He credited it to him as righteousness. Can you believe it! Abram was an old man—85 years and his wife was 75 years and yet he chose to believe God’s promise that he would have a son.

Abram had full confidence in God that He would keep His word. He also knew that the promises God made for the future would come true. This is one of the reasons why God chose to make promises to Abram because He knew Abram faithfully believed and trusted in God always.

Later that day, God made a covenant with Abram. In the covenant, God promised him much more land than the land God originally promised of the land of Canaan (Genesis 12:6-7).

Again God appeared to Abram when he was 99 years old, and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before Me and be blameless. I will confirm My covenant between Me and you and will greatly increase your numbers” (Genesis 17:1, 2).

God made a covenant with Abraham. God promised:

- To make him the father of nations. In the first promise God made with Abraham, He said He will make him into a great nation. In this covenant, God promised to make him the father of nations. Hence, God changed his name from Abram to Abraham (Abraham means father of nations). Likewise he changed Sarai’s name to Sarah because she will be the mother of many nations.
- To make him very fruitful.
- To give the whole land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession to Abraham and his descendants. (Everlasting means forever).
- To be their God.
- Abraham and Sarah will have a son in a year’s time. God told them to name their son Isaac.

Just as God had promised Abraham, Sarah gave birth to a son and they called him Isaac. Abraham was 100 years and Sarah 90 years when Isaac was born. When Isaac was a young boy, God tested Abraham to see if Abraham loved God more than his son.

Children, do you remember what test God gave Abraham? *(Let the children respond).*

God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. Did Abraham obey God? *(Let the children respond).*

Yes! He immediately obeyed God. The Bible tells us that Abraham woke up the next morning and took his only son to sacrifice him on the mountain that God would show him. When Abraham reached the mountain, God told him to sacrifice his son. He built an altar and laid his only son on it. When he was about to slay his son, God stopped him. He spoke to Abraham from heaven and said, "I swear by myself ... that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me" (Genesis 22:16-18).

God did not want the sacrifice of Abraham's son. He wanted to know if Abraham trusted Him enough to make the hardest choice God could put before him. Abraham passed the test. When God saw that Abraham loved, trusted and obeyed Him to the extent that he was willing to sacrifice his only son, He told Abraham that the promises He had made to Abraham would now fully depend on God Himself. He completely committed Himself to fulfilling the promises He had made to Abraham because of his faith and obedience.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

Were all the promises God gave Abraham easy for him to believe?

No!

Do you think Abraham understood why God was asking him to leave his country and sacrifice his son?

No!

Why did Abraham obey God?

He had faith in God. He trusted God and believed that God had a good reason to ask him to do what He wanted him to do.

Did Abraham question God before obeying Him?

No!

Why did Abraham receive the promises from God?

He believed and put his faith and trust in God even when he could not understand. He obeyed God even when it was difficult and things seemed impossible and hopeless in His life.

He had great confidence that God would fulfill His promises.

Why did God choose to carry out His plan through Abraham and not through anyone else? To find the answer, read Genesis 26:4-5

During Abraham's time, people did not know much about the true and living God. They did not have a personal relationship with God nor did they know His name. In this context when God spoke to Abraham, He believed and obeyed God even though he had not seen God or known about Him.

God chose Abraham because he had faith—a faith that was seen in his obedient actions. He fully trusted in God; he did all that God had commanded him.

God viewed Abraham's faith as righteousness. In other words, even though Abraham was not perfect, God regarded him as a righteous man because he deeply believed and obeyed God.

God says in Genesis 26:4-5 "... all nations on earth will be blessed, because Abraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commandments, my decrees, and my laws."

Can we enjoy the blessings of Abraham today even though we are not Abraham's offspring (Israelites or Jews)? How? To find the answer, read Galatians 3:26-29.

Galatians 3:26-29: "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Yes! The answer is found in the first promise God made to Abraham. God told Abraham that through him all the people of the earth will be blessed. In the covenant God made with Abraham, God told Abraham that through his offspring all the nations of the earth would be blessed. So we too will be blessed. As Galatians 3:26-29 says we will be blessed only when we believe by faith that Jesus is God and that He died for our sins. Also, we must ask Him to forgive us our sins and accept Him into our lives. When we do this, we belong to Christ and become children of Abraham and heirs of the promise God gave Abraham and all the promises in His Word.

Before most of God's promises mentioned in the Bible, there is a command. We need to obey for the promise to come true. Below are a few examples. Underline in red what God wants us to do and underline the promise in blue.

1. **Matthew 11:28-30:** Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Answer: Red – Come to Me; Blue – I will give you rest.

2. **Proverbs 3:5-6:** Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him; He will make your paths straight.

Answer: Red – Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him; Blue – Make your paths straight.

3. **Luke 11:9:** Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

Answer: Red – Ask, seek, knock; Blue – it will be given to you, you will find, door will be opened.

4. **John 15:7:** If you remain in Me and My Words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

Answer: Red – If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask; Blue – it will be given you.

5. **Psalm 55:22:** Cast your cares on the Lord, and He will sustain you ...

Answer: Red – Cast your burden on the Lord; Blue – He will sustain you.

6. **1 Peter 5:7:** Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

Answer: Red – Cast all your anxiety on Him; Blue – He cares for you.



APPLICATION

Listed above are just a few promises God has given us. The Bible has more than 3000 promises. Compared to a few promises that God made Abraham, He has made more than 3000 promises for each one of us. Just as God was faithful in fulfilling the promises He made to Abraham, similarly, God is faithful in fulfilling the promises given in His Word.

What do we need to do for God's promises to come true in our lives?

Firstly, we need to read God's Word to know the promises He has made for us. Every day, when you read the Bible, underline the promises.

Secondly, we need to obey God.

In these promises we just read, what are the commands we need to obey for the promise to come true in our lives?

We need to go to God, trust, ask, seek, knock, remain in Him, and follow or obey His Words, casting, giving or handing over our problems and difficulties to God.

Are some of these commands easy to follow? (Let the children respond).

Yes they are easy.

Do we obey them? (Let the children respond).

Most often we don't.

Why? (Let the children respond).

It is a lot easier to go to our parents and friends and ask them for help. We don't go to God because firstly we can't see Him, and then we are not sure if He will answer. If we are sure God answers, we don't know how and when He's going to answer. If God answers, we are wondering if it's God's voice we are hearing or we are unsure if it's God speaking to us. Often God is quietly working out things on our behalf. Sometimes because we are unable to see it, we then wonder if God is doing anything. Oh! We have so many DOUBTS.

Compared to us, Abraham did not know God's name, he knew very little about the nature and characteristics of God. He did not even have the Bible to know about God. Yet, when God spoke to Him, he obeyed God.

It was easy for Abraham to obey because he had the faith.

He had faith that it was God who spoke to him.

He had the faith that God will show him the land where he needs to stay.

He had the faith that God will take care of him and his people.

He had the faith that God will protect them.

He had the faith that even though his wife and he were old, they would have a son.

Thirdly, we need to have faith. It is faith that will lead us to obey God.

Abraham's faith led him to obey God. Romans 4 tells us that Abraham was not saved because he obeyed God; rather, his obedience to God was a result of his faith. The Bible tells us that without faith it is impossible to please God. That is why God was pleased with Abraham's faith and made all those wonderful promises to him.

Similarly, it will be easy for us to obey God when we have faith that:

God hears us.

God has promised to answer us, He will.

God has promised to help us, He will.

God has promised to care for us, He will.

God has promised to guide us, He will.

Let us not doubt but always have faith to obey Him and see His promise come true in our lives.

Lastly, we need to speak the promise in faith over our lives. Or if our family or friends are in need, we must speak the promises in God’s Word over their lives.

You can say, Lord Jesus I thank you for this promise in your Word. I speak this in faith over _____ (mention the person’s name) / my life. I believe it is done.

The 3000 promises in the Bible are for every area of our lives:

- Our studies
- Health
- Safety
- Protection
- Healing
- To overcome fear
- To be the best in what we do
- For strength, etc.



FOLLOW UP

Given below are a few promises from the Bible. Tick at least three promises that you can claim over your lives in prayer, or over the lives of your family members or friends. Read the promise, obey the command and in faith claim the promise. Next week, share with your class how in faith you obeyed God’s command and how God fulfilled those promises.

A few promises you can claim over your life and over the life of your family and friends:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| We have been promised eternal life | 1 John 2:25 |
| God has promised forgiveness for all our sins | 1 John 1:9 |
| We are promised the Holy Spirit | Luke 11:13 |
| God can do impossible things in our lives | Luke 18:27 |
| He has promised deliverance from fear | Psalms 34:4 |

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| All of our needs will be supplied | Philippians 4:19 |
| God will not withhold any good thing from us | Psalms 84:11 |
| God has promised wisdom | James 1:5 |
| God has promised peace | Isaiah 26:3 |
| God has promised escape from temptation | 1 Corinthians 10:13 |
| God has promised us health and healing | Jeremiah 30:17 |
| God has promised protection from harm and danger | Psalms 91:10 |
| God promises to answer our prayers | Matthew 21:22 |
| God promises to do mighty things through our faith | Matthew 17:20 |
| God promises to teach and guide us | Psalms 32:8 |
| God promises to give us what we ask for | John 14:13 |
| God promises to always be with us | Matthew 28:20 |
| God promises to give us strength | Philippians 4:13 |



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



Old Testament

Promises God Made to Jacob



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Even though we sin, God is faithful in keeping His promises.
- God wants us to respect and treat as holy ... His spiritual blessings and promises.
- Children will learn to choose, respect and treat as holy ... their spiritual birthright—God’s promises and blessings.



SCRIPTURE PORTION

Genesis 27, Genesis 28:10-22; Genesis 32:22-32



RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week.



MEMORY VERSE

Ephesians 1:3 (CEV): “Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for the spiritual blessings that Christ has brought us from heaven!”

Materials Needed:

On two strips of chart paper, write in block letters the words 'Temporary' and 'Eternal.'

**ATTENTION GETTER****Activity:**

Discuss the meaning of temporary and eternal.

Preparation:

On two strips of chart paper, write in block letters the words 'Temporary' and 'Eternal.'

Presentation:

Display the word strips you have prepared—'Temporary' and 'Eternal.' Discuss as a class what each word means. (Temporary: lasting only a short while, not permanent. Eternal: something that will last forever). Ask the children to look at the objects given in their student workbook and identify which pictures represent things of temporary and eternal value.

Chocolate

Bible—Word of God

Earth

Heaven

TV

Reading the Word of God

Gossiping about someone

Sharing the gospel with someone

Explain:

Very briefly discuss each picture and why it gives temporary pleasure or has lasting value.



INTRODUCTION

Last week, we looked at the wonderful promises God made to Abraham. Although Abraham did not see the fulfillment of most of the promises during his lifetime, God was faithful in keeping and fulfilling His promises. After the death of Abraham, God confirmed His promise to Abraham's son Isaac. In our lesson today, we'll see how Jacob stole his brother Esau's birthright. Even though Jacob sinned against God, God was faithful in fulfilling the promise He made to Abraham and blessed Jacob.



TEACHING CONTENT

Jacob Takes Esau's Birthright

Isaac and Rebekah were married for 20 years but they did not have children. God was faithful in fulfilling His promise to Abraham. He blessed Isaac and Rebekah with twins—Esau and Jacob. God revealed to Rebekah that one of her two sons would be stronger than the other; and the older would be a servant of the younger!

The meaning of this will become clearer to you as we go on with the story.

One day, when Esau came home from hunting, he was very hungry; so he asked Jacob for some of the tasty stew-soup he was cooking. Jacob said he would give him the stew if Esau sold his birthright at that moment. As Esau was very hungry, he said that a birthright was of no use if he died of hunger. So Jacob made Esau swear to sell his birthright in exchange for some bread and stew. Esau sold his birthright to Jacob.

Was Esau's choice temporary or eternal? (*Let the children respond*).

To satisfy a temporary hunger, Esau gave up his eternal spiritual blessing.

A birthright was a special honor given to the firstborn son. The firstborn son would get a double portion of the inheritance money after his father died. He would also have the honor of serving as the family leader and carrying the family name and title. This was also a spiritual position God used to lead the family through the father.

In addition to all of these privileges, Esau had an extra privilege. Because of his birthright, the covenant promise made to his grandfather Abraham, would be passed on to him. Esau was the firstborn and this birthright was his. But like many, he failed to appreciate its value and sacredness.

There is a lesson here for us: if you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, God has given you a birthright. You now are a child of God and when you die, you will live forever and ever in Heaven with Him. Don't treat your birthright lightly! As you go through life, the things of the world will look very good (*name a few sins*), but don't sell yourself to those things! Don't trade your birthright for something as worthless as Esau did.

Jacob Cheats Esau and his Father

Jacob not only took Esau's birthright but also cheated him and took Esau's blessings from his father Isaac.

Isaac knew that he would die soon; so he wanted to give Esau, his firstborn son, the birthright blessing. When Rebekah heard this, she remembered what God had told her—that Jacob would rule over Esau. But Rebekah failed to trust God. To make sure that Jacob got his father's blessings, she cooked a meal and asked Jacob to take it to his father, and get the blessing.

Jacob did just as his mother said. Isaac could not see because he was very old, so Jacob went in place of Esau and got the blessings from his father. Just as Jacob left, Esau came in with the meat he cooked for his father. Isaac and Esau realised that Jacob had tricked and cheated them. Esau was very upset and angry; he decided to kill Jacob after his father died. When Rebekah heard of Esau's plans, she told Jacob to run away and live with her brother Laban in Haran.

By cheating Esau and Isaac, Rachel and Jacob were able to get away with what they wanted; but their sin brought them much suffering. Rebekah had to send away the son she loved the most; she never got to see her beloved son Jacob ever again.

God's Promise to Jacob

Jacob travelled towards Haran. When the sun set, he put a stone under his head and laid down to sleep. He had a beautiful dream in which he saw a ladder from

earth reaching to heaven; angels were walking up and down the ladder. God stood above the ladder and said: "... I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and the east, to the north and to the south. All the people on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you" (Genesis 28:13).

Wow! God spoke to Jacob in his dream and gave him the same blessing he had given his grandfather, Abraham, and his father, Isaac. God was faithful in keeping his promise to Abraham by confirming his blessing to his descendant Jacob in spite of him cheating his brother and father.

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it ..." He took the stone which he placed under his head, set it up as a pillar and poured oil on it, calling the place Bethel. He made a promise, "If God will be with me, and will watch over me on this journey I am taking, and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my father's house, then the LORD will be my God" (Genesis 28:20-21).

Jacob chose to let his dream be a permanent moment of joy by commemorating the event and making a promise to God.

Jacob continued his journey to a new unknown place called Haran. He felt like a different person inside ... because God had told him he was not alone anymore.

Jacob Wrestles with Man and God

After living for 20 long years in Haran, God told Jacob to go back home and God promised to be with him. Jacob took his flocks, herds, wives and children and left Haran. Jacob knew he would have to face his brother Esau whom he cheated of his most precious possession—his Blessing and Birthright. Jacob was afraid and anxious.

That night before he was going to meet his brother, Jacob found himself wrestling with a man all night till daybreak. However, this wasn't like the wrestling match

we have in sporting events. Jacob was so troubled that he wanted an answer; he wanted relief for the problem he was facing. That's why he was not willing to let go of the man till he blessed him. The man asked Jacob to let go of him. But Jacob said he would let go only if the man would bless him.

Jacob held onto the man because he wanted a blessing that was eternal.

Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome." Then Jacob realised he had struggled with God the entire night. God changed his name from Jacob, which means "deceitful" to Israel which means "one who struggles with God and overcomes." God changed his name because an inner spiritual change had taken place in Jacob's heart. His character had changed. Jacob had an encounter with God and he was forever changed from the inside out.

When Esau met Jacob he was very happy to see him. They lived in peace the rest of their lives.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

To fulfill God's promise to Rebekah, was it necessary for Jacob to cheat his brother and father? Why?

No! God doesn't want us to use dishonest or wrong ways to help Him fulfill His promise in our lives.

What was the result of Jacob's sin?

He was separated from his family.

His father was upset with him.

His brother wanted to kill him.

He had to run away and live in a new, unknown land.

He was sad and lonely.

Why did God bless Jacob even though he sinned?

God remembered the promise He made to Abraham and Rachel.

Why does God bless you even though you sin *(name a few sins that they do)*?

God is a promise-keeping God and He can never ever go back on His nature and promises.

Since, God always keeps his promises, does it mean we can continue to sin?

No!

Why did Esau give away his birthright?

He thought that his hunger was more important than his spiritual birthright and blessing. He lived more for his pleasures, and did not respect or treat as holy, his spiritual birthright. His spiritual birthright and blessing did not mean anything to him. He chose what was temporary over that which was eternal.

What is the birthright we receive when we accept Jesus into our lives?

We become sons and daughters of the living God and the devil has no authority over our lives.

We become part of the blessings God gave Abraham.

We receive every spiritual and physical blessing *(list out a few spiritual and physical blessings)*.

The Holy Spirit lives in us and we receive the gifts and fruits of the Spirit in our lives.

We are free from the power of death.

We receive eternal life—which means we will go to heaven when we die and live with Him eternally.

Why do we and other people like Esau, not value or treat as holy our spiritual birthright—the blessings and promises?

We are more concerned about enjoying our lives with the pleasures of sin in the present. We think that death and the life to come are way out in the future. We think that once we accept Jesus into our lives, all the blessings and promises are ours and we can live however we want.

Read the following list. Circle 'thumbs up' for choices that represent eternal values and 'down' for choices that are not:

- Saying a prayer—thanking God before you eat your meals. 
- Copying in a test or exam. 
- Reading the Bible every day. 
- Joining a few friends and making fun of other children in your class. 
- Making friends with someone who is lonely in your class. 
- Grumbling and complaining when your parents ask you to help them. 
- Doing your chores (cleaning your room, studying etc.) cheerfully. 
- You don't attend church because on Sunday morning you like to watch TV or prefer not to wake up early. 
- You spend all your time on Saturday playing and watching TV, and not devote even 10 minutes to learning your Memory Verse. 
- Instead of putting your offering in church, you use it to buy something to eat at the canteen in school on Monday. 
- Using bad language/words is very common and cool in school; so you use them too because you think they're cool. 
- To avoid getting punished you choose to lie to your parents and teachers. 
- Listen attentively to your teacher and not play or talk in class. 



APPLICATION

What's the worst sin that you've ever committed? Did you know that there is no sin too big or too awful for God to forgive? God's love and mercy are greater than any sin. In spite of our sin, God is faithful in keeping and fulfilling His promises.

What a loving and merciful God we have! He chooses to bless us in spite of us not obeying Him and loving Him the way we should. How are you treating His blessings—salvation, eternal life, forgiveness, His love, His promises, healing, the power to overcome the devil, etc.? How are you valuing these blessings? Esau didn't appreciate the blessings he had. He was too quick to trade his eternal blessing for a temporary bowl of stew (soup) to satisfy his hunger.

Jacob on the other hand did not let go of God till he received his eternal blessings. That brought about an inner spiritual change which changed not only his name but also his character. He was forever changed inside out.

The same will take place in our lives when we let go of our temporary pleasures and choose to receive eternal blessings.

Are you trading your eternal blessings for the temporary satisfaction of watching TV, copying to get a little more marks, lying to save yourself from punishment, using bad words or acting in ways that would please your friends and the world?

When we choose things that yield eternal blessings, it does not mean that life will be boring or that we'll not have fun or be cool. But it will cause others to also choose to value and desire blessings that are eternal. This will also lead them to know the giver of our eternal blessing—Jesus.

Ask God to help you choose things that will yield eternal blessings.

Write down 5 temporary pleasures you will give up for eternal blessings.

E.g.:

| TEMPORARY PLEASURES | ETERNAL BLESSINGS |
|---|---|
| Speaking lies | Jesus said those who are pure in heart will see God. |
| Copying in the test | Jesus said those who are pure in heart will see God. |
| Hate my brother, sister or anyone who makes fun of me or are rude to me. | Those who love their enemies will be the sons/daughters of their heavenly Father. |
| I'll give up watching TV for 15 minutes in the evening to read my Bible and pray. | When we seek God first, He will give us everything we need. |
| I fought with my friend and I'm not speaking to her. | Those who are peacemakers will be called sons of God. |



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



Old Testament

LESSON 3

Promises God Made to Joseph



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- God never leaves nor forgets about us.
- God's presence is always with us.
- Even though others may try to harm us, God will fulfill His plan and promises.



SCRIPTURE PORTION

Genesis Chapter 37, 39-45



RECAP

- What did we learn last week?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week



MEMORY VERSE

Deuteronomy 31:6: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you."

Note to the Facilitator:

The story of Joseph is written in a very concise manner to save time.

Materials Needed:

- Glass
- Water
- Food Color or any tang orange flavour



ATTENTION GETTER

Activity: God will never forget us.

Presentation:

Take a glass filled with water and add a little tang with orange flavour or food color to it.

Say:

Our lives are plain and tasteless like this water (*show the glass tumbler containing water*). When we invite Jesus into our life (*add some tang with orange flavour or food color*), He brings joy, meaning and purpose into our lives. We will never be alone again. He will always be with us. Just as we can't separate the water and the color, we too will not be separated from the love of God. God will never leave us or forsake us.

How many of you have become so interested in watching the television that you forgot to breathe? Maybe it happened when you were watching a cricket game; you were so excited to see who would win that you forgot to breathe! What about when you are sleeping? Do you forget to breathe then? (*Allow responses*). Of course not! No one forgets to breathe. Breathing is so important and necessary to life that no one forgets to do it. What about eating? Have any of you ever gone a day when you simply forgot to eat? (*Allow responses*). Or you were having such a good day that you simply never thought about food? Of course not! We need to eat to live and so no one forgets about food. It is important.

Explain:

Do you know there is someone that God never forgets about? He never forgets about YOU! Just as we cannot forget breathing and eating, God cannot forget us. We are so important to Him that He cannot forget about us. In fact, all day long He thinks about us. Just as we breathe all day long, we can know that God is thinking about us all day long. Even though many months and years may have passed, God will never ever forget the promises He has made to us.

**INTRODUCTION**

In our story today, we'll see the beginning of the fulfillment of the covenant (promise) God made to Abraham. God told Abraham that for four hundred years his descendants would be strangers in a country that was not their own and they would be enslaved and mistreated. But, He would punish the nation where they served as slaves; and afterwards they would come out with great possessions (Genesis 15:13). We'll see how God rescued a young boy and used him to begin the fulfillment of this promise.

Activity:**Quiz**

(Let the children answer the following questions:)

In which country did God say Abraham's descendants would live as strangers and be enslaved and mistreated?

Egypt

In which land did Abraham, his son Isaac and grandchildren, Jacob and Esau and their children live?

Canaan

If Abraham's descendants lived in Canaan, how did they get to Egypt?

(If they are able to answer the question above by mentioning Joseph and the famine, then don't ask them the questions given in the next page).

Say:

I'll help you find the answer.

After Jacob returned from Haran where did he live with his family?

In Canaan

How many sons did Jacob have?

12

Who was Jacob's 11th and favorite son?

Joseph

If Joseph was living with his father in Canaan, how did he land in Egypt?

Let's see how...

Note to the facilitator:

Most children are familiar with the story of Joseph. This lesson does not mention the details of the life of Joseph. To save time and to keep the attention of the children, you could do a quiz.



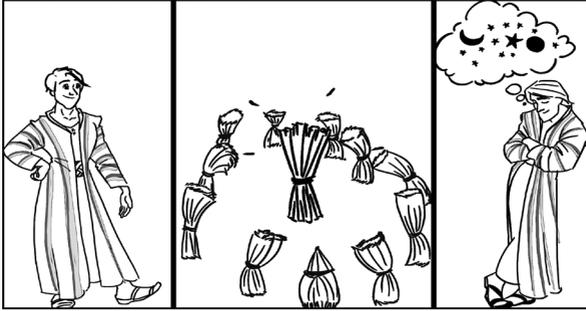
TEACHING CONTENT

Bible Story: Joseph

God Delivers Joseph from the Wicked Plans of his Brothers

Joseph was Jacob's favorite son because he was firstborn of his beloved wife, Rachel. Joseph's ten older brothers were jealous of him and hated him. Why did Joseph's brothers hate him and why were they jealous of him? *(Let the children respond).*

You can find the answers in the pictures given in our workbook. Let's look at them. *(Let the children look at the pictures and let them write the answer given in the space below the picture).*



Richly Ornamented Robe which his father gave him

Dream: His brother's sheaves were bowing down to Joseph's sheaves

Dream: The sun, moon and 11 stars were bowing down to Joseph

First Picture: Richly ornamented robe that his father gave him. His brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more than any of them; so they hated him and would not speak a kind word to him.

Second and Third Picture: Joseph had two dreams and when he told them to his brothers they hated him all the more.

In his first dream, he and his brothers were in the fields putting together sheaves of grain. Suddenly the sheaf that Joseph was binding stood upright, and the sheaves that his brothers were binding gathered around Joseph's sheaf and bowed down to it. His brothers said, "Do you think you will actually rule over us?"

In the second dream, the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down to him. Hearing this, his brothers hated him all the more. Their hate turned to thoughts of murdering Joseph.

One day, Joseph went looking for his brothers who were looking after the sheep very far away from home. Seeing him coming at a distance, his brothers planned to kill him. One of the brothers, Reuben, tried to save Joseph by asking his brothers not to kill him but to throw him into a dry well where he could be left to die. Reuben's plan was to come and rescue him later.

When Joseph met his brothers, they took off his robe and threw him into an empty well. They saw merchants passing that way. They sold Joseph to the merchants. Joseph cried and pleaded with his brothers but they did not change their mind. The merchants then took Joseph to Egypt and sold him as a slave to Potiphar.

Even though Joseph's brothers planned to kill him, we see how God protected Joseph. The brothers dipped Joseph's coat in goat blood and went home to show their father. They told their father that an animal devoured Joseph. Jacob was so sad and mourned for many days.

God Was With Joseph

Though Joseph was in a new land with no family and friends, the Bible says there was someone with him. Do you know who that was? The answer is in Genesis 39:2 (*Let the children read the first line only*). The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered. Potiphar saw that God was with Joseph and gave him success in everything he did. Potiphar approved of Joseph and put him in charge of his household and everything he owned. So from a slave, God raised him to the position of a manager.

Potiphar's wife lied to her husband about Joseph and he was put in jail. Joseph had done nothing wrong but he was separated from his family and was now in prison. Though his family was not with him, was Joseph alone? No! Who was with Joseph? The answer is in Genesis 39:20, 21 (*Let the children read the first line only*) - The Lord was with him in prison. God showed him kindness and granted him favor with the prison warden, and Joseph was made in-charge of all the prisoners. God gave him success in whatever he did.

While in prison, God gave Joseph the meaning of the dreams that the king's cupbearer and baker had. It happened just like God told Joseph. The cupbearer got his job back and the baker was hanged.

Joseph requested the cupbearer to speak to Pharaoh on his behalf and remove him from prison. Sadly, the cupbearer forgot about him, but there was someone who did not forget about Joseph. God never forgot about Joseph. Even in a terrible place like the prison, God never left Joseph or forgot about him.

After two years, Pharaoh had two bad dreams. Pharaoh told his dreams to his advisors but no one knew what they meant.

It was then that the cupbearer remembered Joseph. The cupbearer told Pharaoh and he had Joseph removed from prison. When Pharaoh told his dreams to Joseph, God gave Joseph the meaning of the dreams. Joseph not only gave Pharaoh the meaning of the dream but also went on to give him some good advice.

Pharaoh saw that Joseph was very wise and that God was with him. So he made Joseph the second highest in the country and put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

Wow! In one day, Joseph went from being a prisoner to the second-in-command in Egypt.

God Brings Jacob and His Family to Live in Egypt

Everything in Egypt happened just as God had told Joseph. When the 7 years of famine began, it was so severe that people came from all countries to buy grain from Joseph. The whole world was in need of food. Some of those people were Joseph's brothers. When his brothers came, they all bowed to him because he was an important person. Just as he dreamed they would, at the beginning. Joseph recognised his brothers, but they did not know who he was. (It had been over 10 years since they had seen him).

Joseph accused his brothers of being spies and put all of them in jail. On the third day, Joseph told them they could all go home with their grain except for Simeon. If they wanted Simeon to be released, they would have to bring Benjamin with them the next time.

The brothers had to follow Joseph's instructions. When they reached Canaan they told their father, Jacob, everything that had happened to them. Jacob was very upset. He did not want to send Benjamin with them. He was scared that he would lose Benjamin just like he lost Joseph and Simeon.

After some time, the grain they had brought from Egypt got over. When they had no food left to eat, Jacob agreed to send Benjamin.

When the brothers, along with Benjamin, reached Egypt they went to Joseph. Joseph was so happy to see his own brother Benjamin. After having lunch with his brothers, Joseph instructed his servants to fill the brothers' bags with grain. Now he was going to test his brothers to see if they loved each other. Joseph told his servant to put his personal silver cup in Benjamin's bag. The brothers left for Canaan, but when they had been gone only a short while, Joseph sent his servants after them.

The servants told them that whoever had stolen Joseph's cup would remain back as a prisoner in Egypt. When the servants searched the bags, the brothers were horrified to find the cup in Benjamin's bag. Instead of leaving Benjamin, they returned with him to Egypt. Joseph said, "You are all free to go, except Benjamin. He must become my slave." Do you think the brothers (so they could save their very own lives) were willing to let go of Benjamin as they had done to Joseph?

Judah was willing to stay as a slave in Egypt in place of Joseph. The brothers promised their father they would bring Benjamin safely back home. They knew if anything happened to Benjamin, their father would surely die.

Joseph realised his brothers' hearts were changed and they were now better men. He finally revealed to his brothers who he was. He asked them not to be angry with each other for selling him. Joseph did not take revenge, but was able to see the greater purpose of God in his life. Hence, he was able to overcome his hurt and forgive his brothers for the evil they had done to him.

Pharaoh asked Joseph's brothers to go back to Canaan and get their wives, children and father and bring them to Egypt. He promised to give them the best land in Egypt where they could live. In this way, Joseph was able to meet his father and, live with him and his brothers in Egypt.

In today's lesson, we saw that though Joseph's brothers intended to harm and get rid of Joseph. God used this to begin the fulfillment of the promise He made to Abraham. God was very faithful to Joseph and never forgot about him. God was very aware of what was happening to him, and He was very pleased by Joseph's obedience. Even though many people treated Joseph badly and unfairly, he chose to obey God and His commands.

As a result of Joseph's obedience, honesty and desire to honor God in everything he did, his two sons received the birthright blessing. Although Ruben was the oldest, the birthright blessings went to Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. The families of each of the 11 brothers formed one tribe each. But Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, went on to become two tribes. So Joseph received a double portion of the blessing. Ephraim was given the right to take on his grandfather's name—the name of Israel.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

How did Joseph become a manager in Potiphar's house and in-charge of other prisoners while in prison?

God was with Joseph; so he did well when he lived in Potiphar's house. When Potiphar saw that God was with him and that God gave him success

in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes. Potiphar put him in charge of his house and the other slaves.

When Joseph was in prison, God was with him and showed him kindness. He granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden; so the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners. God gave Joseph success in whatever he did.

Have you ever felt forgotten by your family or friends?

Yes/ No

When have you felt forgotten by them?

E.g., When they forgot your birthday. Or when you asked your dad and mum to buy you a book or something you had take to school and they forgot. Maybe they had to pick you up from somewhere and they forgot.

Do you feel at times that God does not love you and has forgotten you?

Yes/No

When do you feel that God has forgotten you and does not love you?

E.g., When:

Your prayers are not answered.

You are sick.

You studied well for your test and you did not get good marks.

You took part in a competition and you did not get a prize.

People blame you for something that you did not do.

Friends make fun of how you look.

Got punished for something you did not do.

Does God ever leave us or forget us? How do we know?

No! Our friends and family may leave us and forget about us but God never does. We can know this for sure because He promised in His Word that He will never leave us or forget us.

Isaiah 49:15 says a woman may forget her child and have no compassion on her son, but God says I will not forget you.

In Hebrews 13:5-6 God says, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' So we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?'"

Why did Joseph have to suffer even when he did not do anything wrong?

Joseph suffered because of his own brother's hatred and jealousy towards him. Also because Potiphar's wife's evil desires were not fulfilled, she falsely blamed him for something he did not do.

Is it true that bad things happen only to wicked people and that only they suffer?

No! We see that though Joseph was good and did what was right, he still went through suffering. All people suffer.

Is it true that God will remove all troubles from the lives of those who love and obey him?

No! Though God loved Joseph, he still faced all a lot of troubles. Joseph lived in a strange land as a slave and prisoner for 13 years. During these years he was separated from his father, mother and his brothers. But God granted Joseph favor and blessed him in the midst of his problems and troubles. He was made a manager in Potiphar's house, was in charge of all the prisoners, and became the Prime Minister of Egypt.

We will go through problems and difficulties but God will help us and give us the strength to overcome our problems.

What did Joseph do when he went through problems and troubles even though it was not his fault?

He knew God was with him.

He was patient.

He obeyed God and did not sin against him.

He did not complain or grumble.

He did not take revenge and forgave those who hurt him.



APPLICATION

God loves each one of you very much. However, the Bible doesn't say that those who love Jesus and obey Him will never have problems and troubles in life. When you face problems and troubles, don't be discouraged, and don't wonder if God is with you or if He loves you. Remember, He loves you and He is always with you. Even if your friends and family leave you, God will never leave you or forsake you. God will bless you even when you are going through the problem.

Satan will tempt you to think that God does not love you or care for you, that He will not bless you or help you. The Bible calls satan a liar and the father of all lies. So all that satan speaks are lies; we shouldn't believe him. At these times, read the promises in God's Word, believe them and ask God to bless you and give you favor. When you do this, you will be surprised to see what God can do.

What are some of the thoughts / problems that are troubling you?

Do you think:

- No one loves you.
- You are not smart or good looking.
- You are not talented.
- Not good in studies.

Do you face problems like:

- You are not doing well in studies.
- Friends in school make fun of you.
- Because you don't use bad words, copy during a test, or lie, your friends are no longer with you.
- Maybe you're constantly sick or having some weakness or deformity.
- During your test you don't remember what you learned.

Write down five problems you are going through, and against each problem write down what God promises in His Word to help you. Pray and trust God to help you and fulfill His promise for you.

| PROBLEMS | PROMISE |
|----------|---------|
| | |
| | |
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CLOSE WITH PRAYER



Old Testament



Moses and the Burning Bush



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- God has a special plan and purpose for our lives.
- God will fulfill His plan and purpose for our lives if we are willing and allow Him to.
- God will give us His wisdom and strength and guide us in fulfilling His plan for our lives.



SCRIPTURE PORTION

Exodus chapter 1 to chapter 4:20



RECAP

- Recite last week's Memory Verse.



MEMORY VERSE

Jeremiah 29:11: "I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Materials Needed:

Blueprint of a building



ATTENTION GETTER

Object Lesson: A Blueprint

Materials: Blueprint or diagram of a building.

Preparation: Get a design or a blueprint of a building.

Presentation: When someone decides to build a house or building, what does he do first? Does he simply buy some cement, mud and bricks and start building? No! First he makes a plan. This plan is called a blueprint and it looks like this (*hold a blueprint*). The blueprint shows the measurement for each room, where each board should go, and how the rooms fit together. If the builder follows the blueprint, then the house will be beautiful and very nicely made.

Did you know that before you were born, God made a blueprint for your life? He has a plan for each one of your lives. He has works that He wants you to do and He has people that He wants you to touch. He created each of you for a very special purpose. The blueprints for each one of your lives are different, but each is very special, and only you can fulfill the plan that God has for your life.

Just as the builder follows the blueprint to make a good building, we should ask God to show us the blueprint for our lives, so we can fulfill the purpose that He has for us.



INTRODUCTION

Joseph and his brothers comfortably settled in Egypt and were growing in number. Was this the land God promised Abraham He would give His people? (*Let the children respond*).

No!

Which was the land God told Abraham He'd give his descendants? (*Let the children respond*).

Canaan.

Remember last week when we learned that God used Joseph to begin the fulfillment of the promise he had made to Abraham. What was the promise? (*Let the children respond*).

God told Abraham that for four hundred years his descendants would be strangers in a country not their own, and that they would be enslaved and mistreated there. But He would punish the nation where they served as slaves and afterwards they would come out with great possessions (Genesis 15:13).

In our story today, we will see why the Israelites, Joseph's brothers and their families, were treated as slaves. We'll also see that God chose a leader to lead His people out of Egypt and back to the land He promised Abraham. We'll learn today about the man God chose and how He led him.



TEACHING CONTENT

Bible Story: Birth and Call of Moses

Birth of Moses

A new Pharaoh (*explain Pharaoh is an Egyptian term for King*) who didn't know Joseph ruled Egypt. He was afraid of the Israelites because they were growing more in number than the Egyptians. He thought if enemies came and fought against the Egyptians, the Israelites would join the enemies and overthrow the Egyptians.

So Pharaoh came up with three plans to reduce the number of Israelites, but all his plans failed. Do you know why? Because of the promise God made to Abraham. What was the promise? It was: "I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore."

What were the three plans Pharaoh made?

Plan One: Pharaoh and the Egyptians treated the Israelites as slaves (*explain who a slave is*). They were forced to work long hours in the mud pits to make bricks and in the field. They were also made to build big cities. But they couldn't keep the Israelites from increasing in numbers.

Thus we see the fulfillment of what God told Abraham—that his descendants would be strangers in a country not their own, and that they would be enslaved and mistreated for four hundred years.

Plan Two: Pharaoh ordered the midwives to kill all the boy babies born to the Israelites (*A midwife is a nurse who helps women during childbirth*). The midwives feared God and chose to obey God rather than Pharaoh. They did not kill the newborn babies and the Israelites multiplied and grew very mighty.

Plan Three: Pharaoh came up with a third, very cruel plan. He commanded his people to throw every boy baby that was born to the Israelites in the river Nile.

It was during this time that a baby boy was born to Jochebed and Amram. Jochebed did not want her son to be thrown in the river Nile; so she hid him for three months at home from the Egyptians. When it was impossible to hide him any longer at home, she put him in a basket and placed him among the reeds (thick, long grass) along the river Nile.

The next morning, the Princess (Daughter of Pharaoh) came to swim in the river. She found the baby in the basket and wanted to keep him. Miriam, who was watching her brother in the basket, offered Moses' mother as a nursemaid to look after the baby. The princess agreed and so Jochebed got to raise her own son.

The Princess named him Moses because she had taken him out of the water. When Moses grew older, Moses was brought up in the palace as an Egyptian prince. Moses grew up knowing he was not an Egyptian but a Hebrew. He thought he could use his power and strength to help deliver his own people.

One day when Moses was about 40 years old, he saw an Egyptian beating an Israelite. When no one was looking, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

The next day, Moses saw two Hebrew men fighting with each other. Moses intervened to sort out the matter. One of the men said to Moses, "Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?" Moses was sure no one was watching when he killed the Egyptian; but now he realised that someone did see.

When Pharaoh heard of the murder, he wanted to kill Moses. Moses ran away to the land of Midian and lived there for 40 years as a shepherd with Jethro's family. Thus we see that his confidence in his own efforts, to win freedom for his people, failed miserably and even delayed the process.

Call of Moses

After forty years, the Pharaoh died. The new Pharaoh made life even harder for the Hebrew people. The Hebrew people cried out to God and He heard their cry.

One day when Moses was 80 years old, he was tending the flock of Jethro near Horeb, the mountain of God. Moses saw a burning bush that had caught fire; but the amazing thing was that the bush was not getting burnt out. When Moses went closer to see the bush, God called out to Moses, revealing Himself as the God of his forefathers—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God told him that He had heard the cry of His people and would take them out of Egypt to a good and large land, a land flowing with milk and honey. God asked Moses to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let His people go out of Egypt.

Moses told God that he was not the one who should go to Pharaoh to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt. However God assured him that He would be with him.

Moses asked God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and tell them, the God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me, what is His name, then what shall I tell them?” God told Moses to reply that I AM WHO I AM had sent him. God also asked Moses to tell the Israelites that the LORD, the God of his forefathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—had sent him.

This was the first time God was revealing Himself to the nation as a whole.

Why did God reveal His name as ‘I AM WHO I AM?’ God expresses Himself as a personal God who is behind everything in history. He is an unchanging, eternal being who is self-existent. This means God is not dependent on anyone or anything for His existence and life. He is eternal—meaning without beginning or end. There was never a time when He never was and there will never be a time when He will cease to exist. He is unchangeable—always the same, yesterday, today and forever.

God also introduces Himself as the LORD, the God of your fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob.

God told Moses when he gets to Egypt to take along with him the Israelite elders and request Pharaoh to let the Israelites go so that they could go to the desert for three days and worship their God. God told Moses that Pharaoh would not listen until he and the Egyptians saw all the wonders that He would do among them.

Moses was scared and very hesitant to go to Egypt. God graciously responded by giving Moses several signs that would prove Moses was speaking with God's authority and power.

The signs were: First, God asked Moses to throw his rod on the ground. When he did this, it became a snake. God asked him to pick up the snake and it turned back into a rod.

Second, God told Moses to put his hand inside his robe. When he did so, his hand became leprous like snow. Leprosy was one of the most feared diseases in Moses' time. It was a very painful sickness for which there was no cure and in those days this sickness always ended in death.

God asked him to put his hand again into his robe, and his hand became the same as before.

God told Moses that if they didn't believe these two signs, he could then take some water from the river Nile and pour it on the ground. The water would then turn into blood.

Even after all this, Moses was still not ready to go. He told God that he was no good at speaking in front of people. God was angry with Moses and chose Aaron, Moses' brother, to go with him as a spokesman. God told Moses that He would teach both of them what to do and what to speak. Finally, Moses decided to go.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

When all the Israelite babies were killed, why was baby Moses saved? To find the answer read Hebrews 11:23.

In faith, Moses parents hid him because they had the trust and faith that God would protect their son. Hebrews 11:23 says, "By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict."

Did God have a plan for Moses? What was God's plan for him?

Yes! God chose him as a leader to deliver His people from slavery in Egypt.

Was Moses hesitant to go to Egypt because he had to do everything by himself?

No! God told him what to do and what to say to the Israelites and the Pharaoh. He said He would perform many wonders after which the Egyptians would let them go. He also told them that He would teach both Moses and Aaron what to do and what to say.

If God leads you to do something, He will always enable you to accomplish it.

After God answered all of Moses' questions, performed miracles and assured him of help, Moses was still not ready to go. Do you think God made a mistake in choosing him?

No! Moses felt he wouldn't be able to deliver the Israelites. So he made a lot of excuses; but God didn't accept any of them. Now Moses was ready from God's perspective, because now Moses knew he was inadequate in his own strength. Moses finally understood that he could not carry out God's purpose on his own. That is exactly where God wanted him—dependent on Him alone.

God can never make a mistake. God knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows exactly who to choose to carry out His plans. He also knows how He wants to use us for His glory.

What did God say His name was and what does it mean?

'I AM'—It means God always was and He always will be. He had no beginning and He will have no end. He just is! God wanted Moses and the people to know that He is the all-powerful God who would be with them, to give them the power to follow Him. He wanted them to trust God to give them the power they would need, to do what He asked.

**APPLICATION**

Just as God had a plan for Moses' life, God has a plan for each of your lives. Maybe you think you are not special or important. That is not true. You are very special and God has a wonderful plan for your life.

Just as Moses was scared, people are often scared that God's plan for them may not be good. They worry that they may not like God's plan for their lives. Children,

I want you to know that you can trust God’s plan and can be confident that God’s plan is the best plan for your life. Today’s memory verse will help you remember that God’s plans are always good. God does not want to bring you harm; He wants what is best for your life.

God does give us a choice, just like He did with Moses. We can choose to accept God’s plan or reject it. We have to decide whether we want to choose God’s plan or our own plan. Children, God’s plan is always the best and it will bring much happiness to your life.

When you choose to accept God’s plan, God will step by step reveal His plans for your life. One way God reveals His plans is when you spend time every day reading your Bible and praying.

If you like to commit to spending time with God everyday, write down the time you would commit to do this. When you are praying say, "God please reveal your plan for my life."

Another way of knowing God’s plan for your life is by knowing the talents He has blessed you with. List the talents God has blessed you with. Beside each, write down if you are using the talent. If yes, how are you using it? If no, how would you like to start using it?

| TALENTS | AM I USING MY TALENTS | HOW AM I USING MY TALENTS | HOW WILL I START USING MY TALENTS |
|---------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | |
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CLOSE WITH PRAYER



Old Testament



The Ten Plagues



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Our God is the only true and living God.
- Our God is mighty and powerful.
- God wants everyone to worship and obey Him.



SCRIPTURE PORTION

Exodus 4:29 to 12:36



RECAP

- What did you learn last week?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week.



MEMORY VERSE

Proverbs 28:14: "Blessed is the man who always fears the Lord, but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble."

Materials Needed:

- Hand puppets of the ten plagues attached with this lesson.
- Wooden Stick with a little red food color stuck at the end of the stick.

- Transparent glass filled with water.
- 1 hard-boiled egg – write 'A' on the egg with a marker.
- 1 uncooked egg – write 'B' on the egg with a marker.
- Table or hard flat surface.

Note to the Facilitator:

- This is a long lesson and can get a bit monotonous; so please use the creative tips given below to keep the attention of the children.
- The sentences that are in bold in the teaching content are very important and have to be told to the children.
- To involve the children during the teaching of the ten plagues the Teacher can do the particular action (as shown in the picture) whenever you say, 'Pharaoh's heart was hardened.'



The children can respond by doing the particular action shown in the picture when they say: 'And he did not let the people go.'

This will enable the children to listen attentively and stay alert by doing the action.



ATTENTION GETTER

Being able to spin an egg that has been hard-boiled will show the kids how a hardened heart makes it difficult to resist the devil.

Materials Needed:

- 1 hard-boiled egg – write A on the egg with a maker.
- 1 uncooked egg – write B on the egg with a marker.
- Table or hard flat surface.

Say:

I have two eggs here. Except for the fact that one is marked "A" and the other one is marked "B," they look the same. However, they are very different. Let me show you. I need one volunteer. *(Give the volunteer the hard-boiled egg)*. What I would

like you to do is spin this egg around like a top. Can you do that? That was easy, was it not? Now I need another volunteer to spin this other egg. *(Give the second volunteer the uncooked egg. Softly caution the child that it's a raw egg and ask them to be gentle so the egg does not break and mess up the place).*

What is wrong, are you having trouble spinning this egg? Some children may catch on early. In any case, let the children experiment with the two eggs for a few seconds before taking them back. Explain that the difference between the two eggs is that one is hard inside, while the other is still liquid. We can spin the egg which is hard inside.

The Bible says, "Blessed is the man who always fears the Lord, but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble" (Proverbs 28:14). This hard-boiled egg is like someone with a hardened heart, who does not fear the Lord. The devil can make this person do things they know are wrong. In a sense, the devil has some control over their life; that is very scary, is it not? Someone who is obedient to the Lord, and does not let his or her heart become hardened, can resist the power of the devil. Like the egg with the soft center that we cannot spin around, a Christian who is obedient to the Word of God and who fears the Lord, cannot be controlled by the devil. We must make sure our hearts do not become hard, like a hard-boiled egg.

Today, we'll learn about a King whose heart was so hard that He was not willing to listen and obey God.



INTRODUCTION

Last week, we looked at how God had begun fulfilling His promise to Abraham, and His plan to raise Moses as a leader who would deliver His people out of Egypt. Today, we'll hear how God delivers His people out of Egypt. This was also the first time that the Hebrew people would hear and see the power and miracles of the God they prayed to. This would also be the first time that the nation of Egypt and surrounding nations would know that the God of the Hebrews (Israelites) is the only true and living God.



TEACHING CONTENT

Bible Story: The Ten Plagues

When Moses and Aaron reached Egypt, they along with a few Israelite elders, went to Pharaoh's palace and said, "... This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness'" (Exodus 5:1). Pharaoh was surprised and replied, "**Who is the Lord, that I should obey Him and let Israel go**" (Exodus 5:2)? Pharaoh asked them to get back to work.

Since Pharaoh was stubborn and refused to listen to God, He sent ten plagues. He wanted to show Pharaoh and the Egyptians that He is God above all gods; He alone is the living, powerful and mighty God. God sent the plagues only on the Egyptians and not on Goshen, where the Israelites lived.

What were the ten Plagues? *(As you talk about each plague you can put the puppets on each finger, or a child's finger as shown in the picture).*



PLAGUE 1: *(Hold up the stick which has some red food color at the end of it. When you narrate the lines below you can put the stick in a glass of water, and it will turn red).*

God asked Aaron to strike the Nile River with his staff. God turned all the water in Egypt to blood. When Pharaoh's magicians were also able to do this, Pharaoh's heart became hard and he would not listen.

PLAGUE 2: God sent frogs and they covered the entire land. The frogs were everywhere, so that people were walking and sleeping on frogs. The magicians could also make frogs appear. Pharaoh was so fed up of the frogs that he asked Moses to pray to God to take all the frogs away. When all the frogs died, Pharaoh's heart was hardened and he refused to send the people.

PLAGUE 3: God asked Aaron to strike the ground with his staff and the dust turned into lice. They were on all the people and animals. When the magicians tried to do it they couldn't. **They told Pharaoh that 'this is the finger of God.'**

Teacher: Pharaoh's heart was hardened *(say with action).*

Children: And he did not let the people go *(say with action).*

PLAGUE 4: God sent flies all over Egypt. Pharaoh promised Moses to let the people go if God would remove the flies. When God removed the flies,

Teacher: Pharaoh's heart was hardened *(say with action).*

Children: and he did not let the people go *(say with action)*.

PLAGUE 5: God sent a terrible disease on all the animals belonging to the Egyptians and all of them died. Not one of the animals belonging to the Israelites died. When Pharaoh heard this:

Teacher: Pharaoh's heart was hardened *(say with action)*.

Children: and he did not let the people go *(say with action)*.

PLAGUE 6: God told Moses and Aaron to take a handful of ash *(explain ash)* from a stove and throw it into the air in front of the Pharaoh. When they did it, there were terrible boils on all the Egyptians.

Teacher: God hardened Pharaoh's heart *(say with action)*.

Children: and he did not let the people go *(say with action)*.

PLAGUE 7: In the seventh plague, God explained to Pharaoh, through Moses, the reason for the plagues:

But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you My power and that My name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

God sent thunder, lightning and very heavy hail that fell upon Egypt, killing people, animals and plants. Pharaoh admitted he had sinned and that he and his people were in the wrong and only God was in the right but still changed his mind again as soon as the storm stopped.

Teacher: Pharaoh's heart was hardened *(say with action)*.

Children: and he did not let the people go *(say with action)*.

PLAGUE 8: Then God told Moses "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his officials so that I may perform these miraculous signs of mine among them that you may tell your children and grandchildren how I dealt harshly with the Egyptians and how I performed my signs among them, and that you may know that I am the LORD" (Exodus 10:1, 2).

Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh that if he will not let the Hebrew people go, God would bring locusts the next day, which would eat up every plant in Egypt. Pharaoh

then agreed. But when he heard all the Israelites would go with their animals, he told Moses to take only the men and to leave the women and children behind.

Then Moses went out and stretched his arms. Locusts (big grasshoppers) covered the entire land. They ate up all the plants and crops in Egypt. Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron and told them "... I've sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. Now forgive my sin once more, and pray to the Lord your God to take this deadly plague away from me" (Exodus 10:16.17). When Moses prayed, God sent a strong wind which carried away all the locusts and dumped them into the Red Sea.

Teacher: Pharaoh's heart was hardened (*say with action*).

Children: and he did not let the people go (*say with action*).

PLAGUE 9: Then God told Moses to stretch his hand towards the sky, and there was thick darkness in Egypt for three days. It was so dark that people were neither able to see each other nor move around anywhere.

Then Pharaoh sent for Moses and asked him to take everyone and go worship the Lord. But he ordered that the animals be left behind. Moses said he would take all the animals since they must offer some of them as sacrifice to God. Again God hardened Pharaoh's heart.

Teacher: Pharaoh's heart was hardened (*say with action*).

Children: and he did not let the people go (*say with action*).

Pharaoh was very angry with Moses and told him to get out of his sight, and that he would never want to see him again.

PLAGUE 10: Finally, God warned of a tenth plague, so devastating that Pharaoh would send the Hebrew people out of Egypt. First, God told the Hebrew people on the 14th day of the month that each family should kill a male sheep or goat that is a year old, at twilight, and put some of its blood on the sides and top of the door frame. Then they had to roast the meat and eat it with bitter herbs and bread without yeast, and not leave their homes till morning. That night the angel of death would pass through Egypt and he would spare those homes whose door posts were marked with blood.

God asked them to celebrate this Passover festival every year. When they celebrated this feast, they were to tell their children and the generations to come how God brought them out of Egypt.

During the night, the angel of death killed the firstborn in every Egyptian house. Even Pharaoh's firstborn son died. Pharaoh commanded Moses to go immediately, taking everything with them.

The Israelites gathered gold and silver from the Egyptians, who willingly gave up their wealth because they were now terrified of the powerful God of the Israelites.

Thus, we see the fulfillment of one of the promises that God made to Abraham—“But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions” (Genesis 15:14).



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

Why did Pharaoh not allow the Israelites to leave Egypt?

He was stubborn and hard-hearted; and God had hardened his heart.

Why was Pharaoh so stubborn?

He thought he was very powerful and great. The Kings (who called themselves Pharaohs) thought they were gods.

Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart?

The Egyptians worshiped false gods/idols. Even most of the Israelites who had heard about the God of their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, had not experienced Him in a personal way. God wanted to prove to both the Egyptians and the Israelites that He is the true and living God who is mighty, powerful and great. They would have no doubt that He is the only true God, creator and ruler of the universe.

How does God show His strength, might and power today?

God is constantly trying to prove His power and strength to us every day.

God gives us the strength and power to excel and do well in sports, studies, playing instruments and other things.

God gives us the strength and power to overcome temptations and live a life that honors and pleases Him.

The Holy Spirit manifests the nine gifts of the Spirit through each one of us. When we pray:

The sick are healed.

People receive solutions for their problems.

They receive the guidance they have been looking for.

They are delivered from temptations or bad habits.

Too often when we are successful at something, we take the credit, don't we? Isn't it easy to think, "Wow, wasn't I good? I am talented and smart! I'm powerful!" The truth is we did not accomplish any of these things in our own strength and power; it's always with God's power and ability alone that we can do all things.

Do you think God was acting cruelly when he destroyed the Egyptians with the 10 plagues?

God is a God of love, compassion and mercy. When people don't yield and continue to be stubborn and hard-hearted, He shows forth His judgment and punishes sin. Pharaoh and his officials were stubborn, not willing to listen or obey God. Over and over, God showed Pharaoh how powerful and strong He was. But Pharaoh and the people refused to humble themselves before God.

Did the Egyptians believe that the God of the Israelites was powerful?

Yes, some did. But some were still stubborn, especially Pharaoh.

What stories did God want Moses to tell his grandchildren?

To talk about all the miracles, signs and wonders He had done when they were living as slaves in Egypt—how He brought them out of Egypt and out of slavery.

Why did God ask Moses to tell his grandchildren about the miracles he was witnessing?

So they would know that it was God who brought the Israelites out of slavery from Egypt. He brought them out with His mighty hand and power. They would then

realise that their God was the only God—a God who is living and all powerful, a God who keeps the promise He made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Then they would believe in and put their trust in Him and worship Him alone.

Does God want us to also tell others about His miracles and His love? Why?

Yes it's important for us to tell others—our friends in school and in the neighborhood—about the wonderful miraculous deeds God did in the Bible. We can also share with them the miracles God has done in our lives. It encourages others to believe in Him and to trust Him to work in their lives as well.

God wants everyone to know that He is the only true God and Savior, and that there is no other. No one is as mighty and powerful as Him; He is the only one who deserves our worship.



APPLICATION

Over and over again, God showed Pharaoh how powerful and strong He was. But Pharaoh refused to humble himself and obey God.

Often, we too are like Pharaoh and his officials, being stubborn and hard-hearted. The Bible says, "Blessed is the man who always fears the Lord, but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble" (Proverbs 28:14). The devil can easily use a person with a hardened heart to do things that are wrong. A person who is obedient to the Word of God, and who fears the Lord, cannot be controlled by the devil.

There are many areas in our lives where our hearts are hardened. God is giving us an opportunity to change. Let's change and not wait till God has to deal with us in the hard way that He did with Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

All you need to do is accept your sin, submit and surrender those areas to God. Once you do, God promises to remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. The Holy Spirit will cause you to obey Him and walk in His ways. Isn't that wonderful?

List down areas in your life where you are stubborn and hard-hearted.

(Listed below are a few examples. Let the children write down the areas they are stubborn and hard-hearted.)

E.g.:

- Watching TV programs.
- Playing for hours and refusing to do your homework.
- Acting selfish and not wanting to share with your friends, brother or sister.
- Not willing to read the Bible or learn Memory Verse.
- Not willing to eat what your mother prepares.
- Not willing to listen to your parents and teachers when they correct you for doing something wrong.
- Not willing to give up your bad habits.

Do you want to submit these areas to God? If you would like to, let's pray and ask the Lord to help us.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



Old Testament



God's Providence and Protection



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- God provides and cares for us.
- Trust God to provide for our daily needs.
- Complaining is sin.



SCRIPTURE PORTION

Exodus 13:21-31; Chapter 14, 15:22-27 and Chapter 16



RECAP

- What did we learn last week?
- Share how you were able to do the three things God wanted you to do.
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week.



MEMORY VERSE

Philippians 2:14: "Do everything without complaining or arguing."

Materials Needed:

- An inexpensive pair of plastic sunglasses
- A few drops of baby oil or any other oil
- Lemonade without sugar
- A few small plastic glasses to serve the lemonade
- Sugar
- Spoon

**ATTENTION GETTER****Activity**

Bring an inexpensive pair of plastic sunglasses. Share that complaining or grumbling affects our vision. Explain that when we complain, we are thinking only about ourselves and not trusting God. Rub baby oil on the glass lens. Ask the kids to look through the glasses. It is hard to see things correctly. When we complain and grumble, we do not see things correctly. We fail to see that God is good and that He can provide for us. We fail to trust and put our faith in Him.

OR

Make lemonade for the kids without adding sugar and bring it in a bottle. Pour some in a glass and give it to a few to taste. Since the lemonade tastes flat, the children would probably make a face. If you ask if they'd like some more, they'd probably refuse. Share how complaining makes a person very bitter and sour like this lemonade. Now add sugar. Explain that sweetness and kindness helps others and encourages them. Ask the kids how they can be like "sugar."

**INTRODUCTION**

Last week, we heard how the Israelites hurriedly left Egypt for the Promised Land—the land God promised He would take them to.

Today, we'll see how God provided, cared and loved the Israelites. Though the Israelites experienced God's power, providence, love and care, they constantly

grumbled against God. Even though they grumbled against God, He still provided and took care of the thousands of Israelites on their journey to the Promised Land.



TEACHING CONTENT

God went ahead of the Israelites in a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of light during the night:

As the Israelites journeyed through the desert, God went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them during the day. During the night, God went with them in a pillar of fire, to provide light so that the people could travel, cook and eat. Children, don't you think that was so wonderful! God was Himself traveling with His people, guiding them and providing for their needs. Similarly, on our life's journey, God is with us and in us—the Holy Spirit who guides, leads, cares and provides for all our needs.

God asked Moses to camp by the Red Sea and told him "... I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord" (Exodus 14:4).

Israelites' first complaint: We will be killed in the desert! God protects the Israelites from Pharaoh's army:

When Pharaoh was told that the Israelites had fled, he and his officials changed their minds. Pharaoh took 600 of his best chariots and all his officers, to bring the Israelites back to Egypt.

Where are the Israelites now?

As God had told them, the Israelites had camped by the Red Sea. When the Israelites saw the Red Sea in front of them, and the Egyptian army coming closer from behind, they were very afraid and began to grumble. They said to Moses ... *(Ask a child to read aloud Exodus 14:12 and explain in their own words what the people complained about).*

Read Aloud:

Exodus 14:11: "... Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? ... Didn't we say to you in Egypt 'Leave us alone; let us

serve the Egyptians?' It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!"

Can you imagine! The people wanted to go back to Egypt to slavery! That was the place where they had cried out in misery, pain and hopelessness. After God had rescued them from slavery, they wanted to go back to it. They had seen and experienced the power of God when He brought them out of Egypt. They should have known that God had the power to protect them and save them from the Egyptians. What do you think the Israelites should have done? They should have trusted God; instead they were afraid and began to grumble and complain.

Ask the children:

What do you think Moses did? Did he also grumble and complain? (*Ask one child to read aloud Exodus 14:13, 14 and let the children answer in their own words.*)

Read Aloud:

In Exodus 14:13-14, Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."

God told Moses to order the people to move forward. He asked him to raise his staff and stretch out his hand over the sea. When Moses did this, the water split into two! All night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and the water lifted itself and made huge walls of water. All the people walked on dry ground (at the bottom of the sea).

When they were walking on dry ground, the angel of God and the pillar of cloud moved and stood between the Egyptian army and the Israelites. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to one side and light to the other side. When the Pharaoh's army entered the parted sea, God made the wheels of the chariots come off, so that they had difficulty driving. When the Egyptians saw this they said "Let's get away from the Israelites, the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

Meanwhile, the Israelites got safely to the other side. As the sun rose, God told Moses to stretch out his hand over the sea again. When Moses did, the walls of water immediately fell, thundering back into the sea! As the Israelites watched

Pharaoh's army being buried by the Red Sea, they knew their God was very powerful. And they feared God and put their trust in him, and in Moses, the man God had sent to deliver them.

Second complaint: No water! God provided water for the Israelites:

Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water there because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?"

Oh! The people again began to grumble. Moses cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water and the water became sweet.

Third complaint: No Food! God sends bread and meat from heaven.

When the Israelites came to the Desert of Sin, they did not have food to eat. So they again grumbled against Moses and Aaron.

Ask the children:

What do you think they said? (*Ask one child to read aloud Exodus 16:3 and let the children answer in their own words.*)

Read Aloud:

Exodus 16:3: "... If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death."

Ask:

What do you think they should have done instead of grumbling? (*Let the children respond.*)

They should have asked God and trusted, and waited patiently until the food and water came.

God told Moses that He would rain down bread from heaven for them. While Moses and Aaron were announcing this to the Israelites, the Lord personally appeared in a cloud and spoke to Moses:

Read Aloud:

Exodus 16:11,12: "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight (evening) you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.'"

That evening, quail (a kind of bird) came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost appeared on the desert floor. These later melted away when the sun grew hot. When the Israelites first saw it, they did not know what it was. Moses told them that it was the bread God had given them to eat. The people of Israel called the bread 'manna.' It was white, like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey.

God provided the Israelites with this miraculous bread the whole time they lived in the desert.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Note: *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

Why did God lead the Israelites by a pillar of cloud and fire by day and night?

To guide them on their journey and to let the Israelites know that God was with them day and night! The pillar of cloud served as a guide during the day, and the pillar of fire was light for them during the night.

What has God given us to guide us in our life's journey?

The Bible.

After watching God's powerful hand deliver them from Egypt, why were the Israelites afraid when they saw the Egyptians coming behind them?

They did not have the faith and trust that God would protect them from the Egyptians.

What helps us to have confidence in God when we are afraid or when we face a problem?

We must remember God's nature. He is always good, loving, faithful and the promise - keeping God. Know that God never changes and He is in control of our lives. It also helps us to remember His faithfulness in the past.

After the Israelites miraculously crossed the Red Sea, why did the people panic when they had no water to drink and food to eat?

They had no trust and faith in God. They doubted His ability to care for them and meet their needs.

Does God provide everything you want in life?

No! God does not provide us everything we want, but He does provide all that we need. Some things we may want may not be good for us or may not be the right thing for us. *(Give a few examples of wants and needs so children can know the difference).*

Is complaining a sin?

Yes!

Why is complaining a sin?

When you complain, you are saying that God doesn't know how to care for you or meet your needs. It's one way of telling God that what He has given you is not good enough.

Did God hear the Israelites grumbling?

Yes! He told Moses he heard the people grumbling.

When we grumble or complain does God hear us?

Yes! Whenever we complain about something, we are actually grumbling against God.

What should you do if you are ever tempted to complain about things?

Think about all the things God has blessed you with and say a "thank-you" prayer to Him.

When you pray every day ask Him to help you be content.

You may want many things, but wait patiently without grumbling. Trust that God in His perfect time will provide for you.

Check whether you are obeying God and His Word.



APPLICATION

This story is an example for us to trust that God will provide for our every need—to be assured that He loves and cares for us. It's also an example for us not to grumble but wait patiently for God to provide for us.

When others think of you, are they reminded of your complaining, or do they think of you as someone who is content? Being content is a Godly attitude. It's being sure of the fact that God knows your needs and will always be faithful to you.

Write down a list of things that you're grateful to God for:

| Things I Have | Things I Am |
|---------------|-------------|
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Pray each day that God will help you be content and happy with what He has given you.



CLOSE WITH PRAYER



Old Testament



Twelve Men Who Spied Canaan



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand that God's way is the right way and that we should trust Him.
- Realize that since God is with us, we have nothing to fear.
- God is gracious, loving and forgiving; but He punishes sin.
- Listen and take advice from people and friends who trust and have faith in God.



SCRIPTURE PORTION

Numbers 13 and 14



MEMORY VERSE

Proverbs 13:20: "He who walks with the wise grows wise but a companion of fools suffers harm."



RECAP

- What did you learn last week?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week.

- Share any experience this week, when instead of complaining you thanked God.

Materials Required:

- A magnet
- Paper
- Some metal objects that would attract a magnet



ATTENTION GETTER

Object Lesson: Magnetic force

Put some metal objects that will get attracted to a magnet. Ask a child to come forward and give him a magnet. Hold a paper with some metal objects and ask the child to pass the magnet over the objects. The children will see that when the magnet passes over the objects, they will jump up and cling to the magnet. The magnet doesn't have to physically touch the objects. It just has to come close, and all the items in its path are automatically attracted to it.

Learning:

Children, we should always take care to be found with people of honorable character because character is like the metal objects. If we stay around rebellious and bad people, their character will eventually stick to us. Even if we never actually do anything bad ourselves, by hanging around dishonest or evil friends, we draw a bad reputation to ourselves like magnets.



INTRODUCTION

Bible Story: Twelve Men Who Spied the Land of Canaan

The Israelites traveled from Egypt through the Red Sea and into different places in the desert. Now they were standing at the edge Canaan—the Promised Land. After roaming around in the desert for so long they were probably very excited to enter the land that God Himself had promised them.

The entire Israelite community grumbled and rebelled against God, Moses and Aaron. A few people who did not have faith and trust in God were influencing others. Since they failed to trust in God and grumbled against God, God punished them. They had to stay in the desert for forty years before they entered the Promise Land. Let's see why God gave the Israelites such a harsh punishment.



TEACHING CONTENT

God asked Moses to send one man from each tribe of Israel to explore the land of Canaan.

Ask:

How many tribes were in Israel?

There were 12 tribes in Israel. Moses chose one man from each tribe to spy out the land of Canaan. *(Ask the children to read Numbers 13:18-20 and explain what Moses asked the 12 spies to do in Canaan).* He asked them to see if the people who lived in Canaan were weak or strong, few or many, to see if the land was good or bad and if the cities had strong walls around it. He also asked them to bring some fruit from the land.

The 12 spies explored the land and returned after 40 days. They brought with them pomegranates and figs, and a cluster of grapes that was so large it took two spies to carry it on a pole. Let's read Numbers 13:27-28 to see what the spies had to say about the land they explored—Canaan *(Allow the children to read and answer).*

Say:

They said:

- The land truly flows with milk and honey: This means that the land had plenty of water and was very fertile.
- The people living there are powerful: The descendants of Anak the Giant lived there.
- The cities are fortified and very large.

The Israelites knew that the descendants of Anak were giants! They had heard that these people were expert warriors. So all that they saw and heard made them scared and frightened. However, two of the ten spies—Caleb and Joshua—did not believe only what their eyes had seen. They had faith in God and chose to believe that God wouldn't allow anything bad to happen to them. What was Caleb's response? Let's turn to Numbers 13:30 and read what Caleb said. (*Allow the children to read and answer*).

He said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it." Caleb and Joshua knew that with God's help, they could do anything. The other spies did not have faith in God, they were afraid. What was the response of the rest of the ten men? Let's read Numbers 13:31-33 (*Allow the children to read and answer*). The ten men said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are. All the people we saw there are of great size ... We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes ..." The giant-descendants were so big that the ten spies felt like small grasshoppers in their sight.

These ten men spread fear among the Israelites with their negative report. All the people became discouraged and frightened, and began to cry loudly. They complained to Moses and Aaron; let's read Numbers 14:2-4 to see what they complained about (*Allow the children to read and answer*).

Read Aloud:

Numbers 14:2-4

Say:

Can you imagine this! They wanted to trade their freedom for slavery again! Instead of trusting God, they depended on their own wisdom. They forgot the many occasions when God had helped them—how He had freed them from slavery, made a way for them to pass through the Red Sea, given them food in the desert, and protected and guided them. Now all they could think about was their problems, when in fact they should have remembered their blessings.

When Caleb and Joshua heard the people's complaint they fell face down, tore their clothes and encouraged the people. Let's read Numbers 14:8-9 to see how they encouraged the people (*Allow the children to read and answer. Reiterate the answer after the children have done so*).

What a difference in the way the ten men saw God, and the way Caleb and Joshua did. These two trusted the Lord and placed their faith in him. But the people refused to listen to Caleb and Joshua; they were so angry with them that they even tried to kill them.

The Lord said to Moses, "How long will these people refuse to believe in me?" He decided to wipe them all out with a plague (sickness). Do you think Moses would have been happy to hear this? Do you think he looked at this as a good opportunity to finally get rid of the Israelites who had given him such a hard time with their constant grumbling?

If you were Moses what would you have said to God? Let's look at what Moses tells God in Numbers 14:13-19 (*Let each child read one verse aloud and answer the question in their own words*).

Wow! Moses asked God to forgive the sins of the people just as He had done from the time He brought them out of Egypt. God heard Moses and forgave them of their sin of unbelief. But there is punishment for sin.

What was their punishment? Let's look at Numbers 14:28-35. (*Let each child read one verse aloud and answer the question in their own words*).

Their punishment for rebelling and not trusting God was that none of them would enter the Promised Land. God proclaimed that anyone who was 20 years and above would not enter the Promised Land. They'd wander in the hot desert for 40 years until all of them died. Only the families of Joshua, Caleb, and all children below 20 years would enter the Promised Land.

Why did God say that they would live 40 years in the desert? The answer is in Numbers 14:34 (*Let the children read and answer*). The 12 spies took 40 days to spy the land of Canaan; so their punishment was one year for each of the 40 days.

The Lord struck down the ten men with a plague and they died.

The Israelites cried bitterly when they heard of the punishment. The next morning they urged Moses to let them enter the Promise Land immediately. Moses warned them not to, because the Lord was not with them; if they tried on their own, they'd surely be defeated and get killed by the enemy. However the people did not listen to Moses; they attacked the Canaanites and were killed and defeated by them.

What a sad end for the people who disobeyed, grumbled and did not trust God. However what a wonderful assurance for those who trusted and believed God; after 40 years they'd be able to enter the land of promise—Canaan. Thus, God did fulfill the covenant He made to Abraham.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Note: *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

Though God forgave the people, why did he punish them?

They had to suffer the consequences of their sin. When we do wrong, we too will suffer the consequences for the wrong we have done.

Do you think their punishment was very harsh? Why? To find the answer read Numbers 14:11 and 22.

No! The Israelites had grumbled from the very day God began His plan of delivering them from Egypt. Remember how, when Pharaoh refused to provide them straw to make bricks, they blamed Moses and Aaron of bringing death upon them.

God himself was sad that in spite of all the miraculous signs He had performed, and after all that He had done for them, they disobeyed and tested Him 10 times. Imagine! God was patient with them even though they tested Him 10 times. So when they finally refused to change their ways, God punished them by letting them receive all the negative things they had believed they'd receive. They had said that they would all die in the desert and that is exactly what happened to them.

Why did the Israelites listen to the ten men, and not to Joshua, Caleb and Moses?

Maybe because the majority of men—ten of them—were saying that they'd be defeated by the Canaanites. On the other hand, only two men were saying they could win.

How were Joshua and Caleb different from the ten men?

Joshua and Caleb

Never murmured

They didn't wish to return to Egypt

Ten men

Murmured

They wanted to go back to Egypt

Never complained

Put their faith and trust in God

Trusted in God's strength

Complained

Did not have faith and trust in God

Depended on their own strength

What does the Bible say about choosing friends? *(Read the passages below to find the answer.)*

Proverbs 13:20 says, we need to walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.

Proverbs 22:24-25 says, not to make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with a person who gets easily angered or we will learn his ways and get ourselves trapped. We will take up evil people's habits if we join them.

1 Corinthians 15:33 - good person becomes an evil person if he chooses evil friends.

Why is it important for us to choose friends who live right and do the right things?

The verses we just looked at tell us that having good friends can help us make good choices. We learn and follow the good things they say and do.



APPLICATION

Both Joshua and Caleb had the courage to stand up for God, and what they believed was the truth. If the Israelites had listened to Joshua and Caleb, they too would have surely entered the Promise Land along with the two.

Often, like the Israelites, we too listen to our friends and to the world, saying and doing things that we shouldn't. We don't want to stand up for the truth. We are willing to go against God and disobey Him by following the evil ways of the world.

The Bible says in:

Romans 12:9: Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

Psalms 97:10: Let those who love the Lord hate evil.

Proverbs 8:13: "To fear the Lord is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech."

What are some things that you or your friends think are ok for you to do, but God says is not right.

- Ok to copy one little answer in the test.
- Ok to say a lie to save your friend who did something wrong.
- Ok to cheat while playing a game so your team can win.
- OK to use bad words because everyone uses them.
- Not cool to pray before eating my lunch if my friends are watching.
- It's ok to talk bad about your friend or other classmates when they are not around.
- It's ok to laugh and put down others who don't speak good English, or are not good in studies.
- It's ok for you to play with your friends or cousins on Sunday rather than go to church.

What are some of the wrong behaviors / attitudes you have copied from your friends?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Children, there are only a few people who obey God and His Word, and do what is right. On the other hand, there are thousands who do wrong. But just because thousands do a certain wrong thing, it doesn't necessarily make it right. God's Word (Bible) tells us what is right and wrong. When we follow His Word, we will surely enter the Promised Land. What is our promised land? Heaven!



CLOSE WITH PRAYER

