



Abraham and Sarah Doubt God

Genesis 16:1–6; 17:15–21; 18:1–15



LESSON GOAL

Students will learn that nothing can stop God's plans.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Explain why Abraham and Sarah did not believe God's promise.
- Recount how Abraham showed that he did not believe God's promise.
- Tell how God still kept His promise.

KEY VERSE

"I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her" (Genesis 17:16).

APPLICATION

- Trust God's promises even if they seem impossible.
- Be patient for God to fulfill His promises.

NEXT WEEK

God Judges Sodom and Gomorrah
Read Genesis 18:16–19:29.

Symbol Key



Craft



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Activity



Q & A



Work Sheet



2 Grade Level

Teacher Planning Sheet

PREPARE

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Application

As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to

- _____
- _____
- _____

Three ways students need to apply this passage are

- _____
- _____
- _____

Materials Needed

POINT

Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.

- _____
- _____

PROCLAIM

Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.

Presentation Ideas

- _____
- _____

Praise/Music Ideas

- _____
- _____
- _____

PRACTICE

Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.

- _____
- _____

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

This week’s lesson focuses on God’s promise to Abram. Biblical promises include elements of a covenantal relationship. This relationship involves blessings to the beneficiary (in this case, Abram). God made promises that related to the future. If God made a promise, then it would occur. The important thing to remember about biblical promises is that they are binding on the part of the one who makes them.

Abram knew the promises of God but had not seen them fulfilled. He questioned God, wondering how God was going to accomplish them when the only heir in Abram’s household was Eliezer, one of his servants. God showed Abram the extent of His promise of a great nation by comparing the number of stars with Abram’s future descendants through an heir. This heir would be born to Abram and Sarai. “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness” (Rom. 4:3). After further assurances by God of the land he was to possess, Abram asked for confirmation of that pledge.

God revealed the sequence of events that would occur before Abram obtained that possession. He also revealed the magnitude of it. He then initiated a contract procedure, peculiar to us but familiar to Abram. When making a covenant, two parties would walk through the pieces of animals that had been cut in two. When nightfall arrived, God alone passed through the animal parts, unilaterally establishing His covenant with Abram.

Later, Abram succumbed to Sarai’s scheme of producing an heir through her maidservant, Hagar. Sarai’s scheme partially backfired when her maidservant became pregnant and then treated her with contempt. Forced to leave because of Sarai’s harsh treatment, Hagar was told to return and submit to Sarai by “the Angel of the Lord,” who promised Hagar a great nation through the son she had conceived.

When Abraham was 99—13 years after the birth of Ishmael by Hagar—the Lord appeared to Abram. He affirmed His covenant with him and his heir through Sarai. He called for a symbol of that covenant through circumcision of all the males of Abram’s household and of future generations. God then changed his name from Abram, meaning “exalted father,” to Abraham, “father of a great multitude.” He also changed Sarai’s name, “my princess,” to Sarah, “a princess.” Falling down and laughing, Abraham could scarcely believe the thought of having a son through Sarah at their ages. Assuring them that it would happen within one year, God named their future son Isaac, meaning “laughter.” Taking seriously the Lord’s command, Abraham proceeded to carry out the circumcision of his son Ishmael and all the males of his household, all in one day. The Lord again appeared to Abraham shortly thereafter, along with two angels in the form of men, saying again that within one year he would indeed have a son by Sarah. When Sarah laughed to herself at the thought, she was asked, “Is anything

Additional Reference Materials

*Keil and Delitzch
Commentary on the Old
Testament* by C.F. Keil
and F. Delitzch

*The MacArthur Study
Bible* by John MacArthur.

*Paradise to Prison:
Studies in Genesis* by
John J. Davis.

too hard for the Lord?"

Remember that Abraham and Sarah did not believe that God would provide an heir for them. They thought Abraham should have a baby another way. But they were wrong to do that. Abraham should have trusted in God's promise, but he doubted what God had said.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth" (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

Why did God tell Abram to leave the city of Ur?

The people of Ur worshiped false gods called idols. God did not want Abram to be like those people. God wanted him to leave and go to another place.

What did God call that place where Abram was to go?

God called it "the land which I will show you" (Gen. 12:1). This was going to be a special land for Abram and his family. God was going to give this land to Abraham's descendants.

Do you think Abram was going to live forever?

No, he would not live forever. God knew that, and so did Abram.



Future Foretold, Part One

Use this activity as a review, if you did not use it last week. It must be used with "Future Foretold, Part Two" (in the Practice section). Cut three slips of paper. On the first slip of paper write, "God will make me very fruitful." On the second slip of paper write, "God will make many nations come from me." On the third slip of paper write, "God will make kings come from me."

As students enter the classroom, give the slips to three different students. Tell them not to read their slips until instructed. Have the three students stand in front of the class when all of the rest are seated. Tell them that the "futures" foretold on their slips of paper will come true within the hour. Have them read their slips out loud. Have students listen to the Bible lesson to hear how Abram's future held the same promises. How would those promises be fulfilled? How will the future promises to the three students be fulfilled?



The Waiting Game

Have the students stand in a circle an arm's length apart from one another. Tell them that you will be playing some music. When the music starts playing, they should start dancing. When the music stops, they must freeze and wait until the music starts again before they dance. Explain to them that in today's lesson, they will learn the importance of being patient.



Promises, Promises

Use the “Promises, Promises” work sheet to take an inventory of all God’s promises to Abram. Label each promise by circling the letter for one of three categories: L—Land, D—Descendants, O—Other. You may wish to do this as a group activity. Then put a check mark by the promises that could not be fulfilled unless Abram had a son.

How Old?

Survey parents as they drop off their children for class. Have them tell you how old they were when the student was born. (Older students can give this information themselves. Help them subtract their present age from the age of each of their parents. Students may not know their parents’ exact ages, but have them guess as closely as possible.) Graph the results of this survey on the board. Make two number lines from 0 to 100 (number by tens), one for mothers and one for fathers. Put a large dot above the age of each parent in each survey. Discuss your results. What was the average age of mothers and fathers when these children were born? How old were the youngest parents? How old were the oldest parents? Do students know any adults who had children when they were older than this? Did you know that the very oldest mother in recent history (according to the Guinness Book of World Records) was 63 years old when her baby was born? She had her baby in California in 1996. When is a person too old to have children? In today’s lesson we will learn that Abraham and Sarah thought they were too old to have a baby.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included to use during worship time. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Reading of the Text

Read Genesis 16:1–6 and 17:15–21.

Introduction

It was important for Abraham to know that he would have an heir. What is an heir? An heir is a person who receives what you own after you die. That person becomes the full owner of what was yours. The son of the family usually became the heir. Today we will see that God was going to give Abraham an heir. Abraham’s heir would be his son. Some people might have thought that when Abraham died, so would God’s promise. But this was not true. God always makes a way for His plans to be accomplished.



Leadoff Questions (LOQs)

LOQ: What does the Bible say Sarah did to solve the problem of having no children?

Answer: Sarah told Abraham to have a child with her servant Hagar. It was wrong for her to do this.

LOQ: What should Sarah have done to solve the problem of having no children?

Answer: God had promised Abraham that he would have children and that his children would come from Sarah, not from someone else. Sarah should have trusted this promise.

LOQ: How did Abraham respond to Sarah?

Answer: Abraham listened to his wife, Sarah. The Bible says that Sarah's servant Hagar had a baby for Abraham (Gen. 16:3–4). But guess what happened to Sarah? Sarah got jealous when she knew that Hagar was going to have a baby. She then blamed Abraham for having the baby. She was angry with both Abraham and Hagar. Abraham told Sarah that she could do whatever she wanted with Hagar. The Bible says that Sarah "dealt harshly with her." Sarah was not nice to Hagar because she hated her. As a result, Hagar fled from Sarah (Gen. 16:6).

LOQ: Why were Sarah and Abraham wrong to have Hagar have the baby?

Answer: God had promised Abraham and Sarah that they would have a child. They should have believed that God would give them a child. But Sarah began to stop trusting God, and Abraham did as well. When Sarah told Abraham that maybe Hagar could have the baby, she was showing that she did not trust what God had said. Abraham should not have listened to Sarah, but he did listen to her. When God says that He will do something, we should trust Him that He will do it. Abraham and Sarah did not believe.

LOQ: How did Abraham feel about God's promise of a son?

Answer: God promised Sarah that she would have a son (Gen. 17:16). God told Abraham that He would bless her and give her a son. God even said that Sarah would be "a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her" (Gen. 17:16). But Abraham still did not believe that God would do this. He said to God in Genesis 17:17, "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" (Gen. 17:17).

LOQ: What did Abraham say to God?

Answer: Abraham told God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!" (Gen. 17:18). Abraham did not believe that he and Sarah could have children. He did not believe that God could keep His promise because he thought it was physically impossible to have children.

LOQ: How did God respond?

Answer: God responded to Abraham by saying, "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac" (Gen. 17:19). God told Abraham that He would make the same promise to Isaac that He had made with Abraham. God even told him when Sarah would give birth; it would be one year from then (Gen. 17:21). Abraham should have told God that he believed Him. Abraham should not have questioned what God told him. To question God was sinful. Abraham knew better than to question God, but he did it anyway.

Summary

God will not allow anything to change or stop what He has planned to do. Abraham and Sarah did not believe that God would give them an heir. But they were wrong not to trust God. God accomplishes everything that He says He will do. And in the next couple of weeks, we are going to see that more and more.

Application

God gives us promises in the Bible. We need to believe and trust that He will fulfill these promises. But it is important to remember that these promises are for believers only. If you are not a believer, you cannot claim any of the promises in the Bible. It is important to be saved so that you have a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



Learning to Wait

Set a kitchen timer or an alarm clock for two minutes. Tell the students they are to sit in their seats and wait quietly and patiently while you prepare for the lesson. After the timer or alarm goes off ask the students what it was like to wait. Did they feel impatient? Explain that in today's lesson they will learn how hard it was for Abraham and Sarah to wait for a baby, and how they made mistakes when they became impatient.



Trusting

Set an empty chair before the students. Ask the students whether they believe that the chair will hold them if they sit in it. (The expected answer is yes.) Ask for a volunteer to come sit in the chair. While the student is sitting, talk about how we can know God and believe in Him, but we must act on that belief by putting our trust and faith in Him. Remind them that in the story they just heard, God had promised Abraham and Sarah a son. They should have trusted God to provide them with a child. Their action should have been to remain dedicated to each other in their marriage and wait for God to produce the child. (Reminder: Sometimes waiting is the action we are to do.)

Praise and Worship

Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down

*Father Abraham**

In His Time

Mighty Is Our God

My Faith Has Found a Resting Place

O Worship the King

Seek Ye First

Standing on the Promises

The B-I-B-L-E

Trust and Obey

**Replace "so let's just praise the Lord" with "if Jesus is our Lord."*

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

"That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments" (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



Future Foretold, Part Two

Have three baskets filled for the completion of "Future Foretold, Part One" (in the Point section).

Fruitful: Fill with enough grapes or fruit slices for each student.

Nations: Fill with assorted flags from the nation of Israel.

Kings: Fill with an assortment of objects signifying kings.

Call the three students whose futures were "foretold" up to the front of the classroom. Have them read their slips of paper again. Give these students their "fulfilled promises" by giving them the correct baskets and instructing them to distribute the baskets' contents to the class. In future lessons we will see how these promises to Abram do get fulfilled even if our promises did not turn out exactly as we thought.



1
2

Abraham and Sarah Puppets

Tell the students that they will be making two puppets, one of Sarah and one of Abraham. Give each student two brown paper lunch bags and four wiggly eyes. Have the students glue two wiggly eyes to each lunch bag and then color in a nose, mouth, and clothes. (The mouth should be on the overlap of the bag.) Next, have the students glue clumps of black yarn, about three to four inches long, on the Sarah puppet. This will be her hair. For Abraham, have them glue clumps of brown yarn, about two inches long, around the mouth. This will be his beard. Glue more brown hair on the top and sides of the upper part of the bag. This will be Abraham's hair. Finally, glue a strip of ribbon across each puppet's "hair" to serve as a headband.



2
3

The Waiting Path

Tape a wrapped piece of sugar-free gum to the back of "The Waiting Path" work sheet located at the back of this lesson. The students may chew the gum only with their parents' permission and if they have said their memory verse. They have to wait for the gum like Abraham had to wait for God's promise to come true.



"Abraham and Sarah"

Give each child a copy of the "Abraham and Sarah" work sheet at the back of this lesson. They can fill out the work sheet in class or take it home to finish.



2
3

Journal Page: "Waiting on God's Time"

Give each student a copy of the journal page at the back of this lesson. They can fill out the page individually, in small groups, or at home.

Coloring Sheet

Give each child a copy of the coloring sheet at the back of this lesson. Have them color the picture in class or take it home to color.

Abraham and Sarah
Doubt God



MEMORY VERSE

“Now the LORD had said to Abram...‘I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed’” (Genesis 12:1–3).

PROMISES, PROMISES

Take an inventory of all God's promises to Abraham. Label them by circling the letter for one of three categories: L—Land; D—Descendants; O—Other. Put a check mark by the promises that could not be fulfilled unless Abraham had a son.

Do you remember these promises?

- L D O ____ "I will make you a great nation" (Gen. 12:2).
- L D O ____ "I will bless you" (Gen. 12:2).
- L D O ____ "[I will] make your name great" (Gen. 12:2).
- L D O ____ "You shall be a blessing" (Gen. 12:2).
- L D O ____ "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you" (Gen. 12:3).
- L D O ____ "In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:3).
- L D O ____ "To your descendants I will give this land" (Gen. 12:7).
- L D O ____ "All the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever" (Gen. 13:15).
- L D O ____ "I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth" (Gen. 13:16).

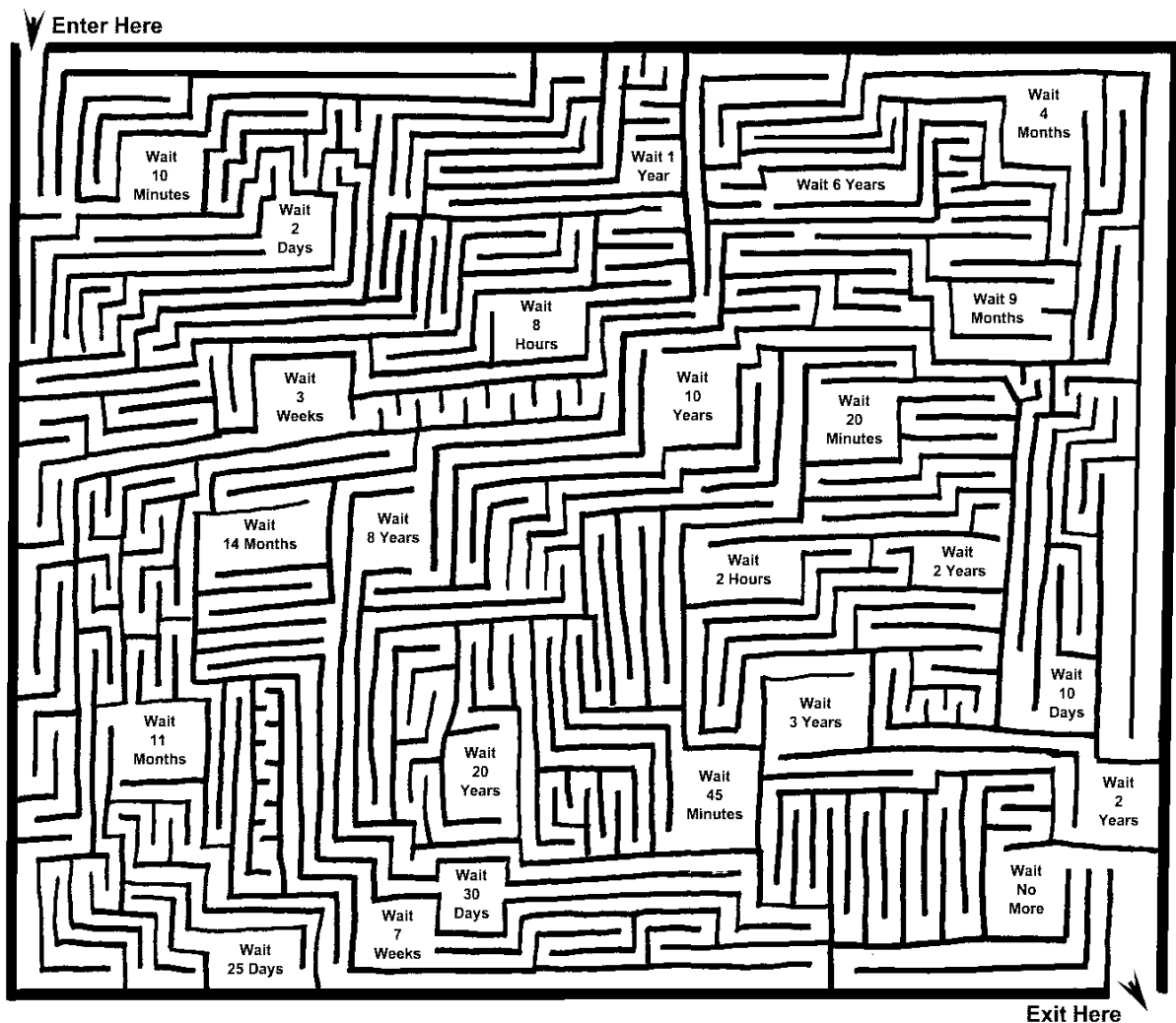
God made more promises in these Scripture passages.

- L D O ____ "One who will come from your own body shall be your heir" (Gen. 15:4).
- L D O ____ "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars...So shall your descendants be" (Gen. 15:5).
- L D O ____ "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates" (Gen. 15:18).
- L D O ____ "I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly" (Gen. 17:2).
- L D O ____ "You shall be a father of many nations" (Gen. 17:4).
- L D O ____ "I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you" (Gen. 17:6).
- L D O ____ "I will establish my covenant...to be God to you and your descendants after you" (Gen. 17:7).
- L D O ____ "I give to you and your descendants after you...all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession" (Gen. 17:8).
- L D O ____ "I will bless her and also give you a son by her" (Gen. 17:16).
- L D O ____ "My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you" (Gen. 17:21).

The Waiting Path

Abraham and Sarah waited 25 years before God gave them a son according to His promise. There are many true stories in the Bible of people who had to wait for long periods of time before seeing God's promises become realities. How long would you wait for a promise?

Directions: Using a colored pen, make your way through the maze, and mark your path with a line as you go. You will find that some of these paths run in circles, but there are no deadends. As you travel through the maze, your line will cross through wait spaces that have a certain amount of time noted in them. Every time you pass through a wait space, write that amount of time on a piece of scratch paper. When you finish, add up the years, months, weeks, days, hours, and minutes. Put the total amounts in the blanks in the sentence at the bottom of the page. Then read the sentence and answer the question for yourself.



If you had to wait ____ years, ____ months, ____ weeks, ____ days, ____ hours, ____ minutes before receiving the fulfillment of an important promise from God, how patient would you be?

Abraham *and* Sarah



GENESIS 16:1-6; 17:15-21

Name _____

1. Did Abraham and Sarah believe that God would give them a son? _____
2. True or False: Abraham and Sarah agreed that Abraham should have a child with their servant Hagar. _____
3. When Hagar learned she was pregnant, she _____ Sarah.
celebrated with hated respected
4. What did Hagar do after Sarah treated her badly? _____
5. How old was Abraham when the Lord told him he would have a son with Sarah?
25 60 99
6. God told Abraham to name his son Isaac. What does the name Isaac mean? _____
7. Were Abraham and Sarah able to change God's plan? _____
8. Was it wrong for Abraham and Sarah to doubt what God had promised? _____

Waiting for God's Time

Have you ever been so anxious for something to happen that you did something about it and ended up making the problem bigger? That is just what Abraham and Sarah did. They could not wait for God to fulfill His promise to them. They did not believe God was able to fulfill His promise.

What reasons do you think Abraham and Sarah gave for not believing and waiting on God? _____

How would you answer Abraham and Sarah from God's Word? _____

What happened as a result of Abraham and Sarah disbelief? _____

Is it hard for you to believe that God will keep His promises? _____

Waiting for God's Time

Have you ever been so anxious for something to happen that you did something about it and ended up making the problem bigger? That is just what Abraham and Sarah did. They could not wait for God to fulfill His promise to them. They did not believe God was able to fulfill His promise.

What reasons do you think Abraham and Sarah gave for not believing and waiting on God? _____

How would you answer Abraham and Sarah from God's Word? _____

What happened as a result of Abraham and Sarah disbelief? _____

Is it hard for you to believe that God will keep His promises? _____

Can you think of a time when you were impatient? Write about that time below.

What happened as a result of your impatience?

What should you do when you are having a hard time being patient?

Why should you wait on God?

Can you think of a time when you were impatient? Write about that time below.

What happened as a result of your impatience?

What should you do when you are having a hard time being patient?

Why should you wait on God?



God had not given Sarai and Abram a baby (Gen. 16:1–4).

