



Explore the Bible.®

DEAF PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

Genesis

Afshin Ziafat, General Editor

LIFE BY DESIGN

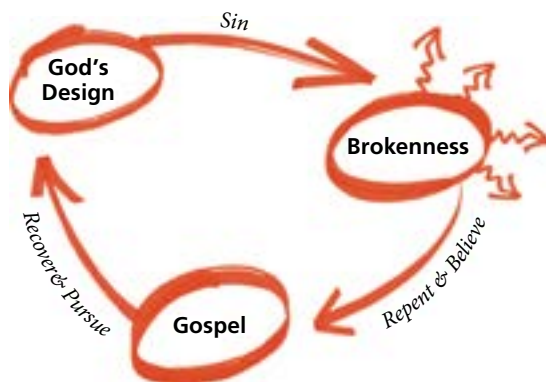
We live in a broken world. This brokenness is seen in suffering, violence, poverty, pain, and death around us. Brokenness leads us to search for a way to make **LIFE work.**

The Bible tells us that God originally planned a world that worked perfectly—where everything and everyone fit together in harmony. God made each of us with a purpose—to worship Him and walk with Him. (See Genesis 1:31 and Psalm 19:1.)

Life doesn't work when we ignore God and His original design for our lives. We selfishly insist on doing things our own way. The Bible calls this sin. Sin leads to a place of brokenness. The consequence of our sin is separation from God—in this life and for all of eternity. (See Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23.)

At this point we need a remedy—some good news. Because of His love, God did not leave us in our brokenness. Jesus, God in human flesh, came to us and lived perfectly according to God's Design. Jesus came to rescue us—to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. He took our sin and shame to the cross, paying the penalty of our sin by His death. Jesus was then raised from the dead—to provide the only way for us to be rescued and restored to a relationship with God. (See John 3:16; Colossians 2:14; and 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.)

We don't have the power to escape this brokenness on our own. We need to be rescued. We must ask God to forgive us—turning from sin to trust in Jesus. This is what it means to repent and believe. Believing, we receive new life through Jesus. God turns our lives in a new direction. (See Mark 1:15; Ephesians 2:8-9; and Romans 10:9.)



When God restores our relationship to Him, we begin to discover meaning and purpose in a broken world. Now we can pursue God's Design in all areas of our lives. God's Spirit empowers us to recover His Design and assures us of His presence in this life and for all of eternity. (See Philippians 2:13 and Ephesians 2:10.)

Now that you have heard this Good News, God wants you to respond to Him. You can talk to Him using words like these: My life is broken—I recognize it's because of my sin. I believe Christ came to live, die, and was raised from the dead—to rescue me from my sin. Forgive me. I turn from my selfish ways and put my trust in You. I know that Jesus is Lord of all, and I will follow Him.

Excerpted from *Life on Mission: A Simple Way to Share the Gospel*.

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»» GENERAL EDITOR



Genesis clearly portrays for us the God of judgment and grace. Though we deserve eternal punishment and separation from God because of our sins, He makes a way through faith to be reunited to Him. Just as Abraham believed

and was credited with righteousness, today we can be part of the redeemed people of God through faith in Jesus! My prayer is that through studying Genesis, we too may be moved to put our faith in the God who is always faithful to His promises!

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»» MEET THE WRITER



Yvonne Otwell became involved in ministry with Deaf people in 1962 after she and her husband, Donald, were married. Through the loving encouragement of Deaf members of West End Baptist Church, Atlanta, Georgia, they began learning sign language. They came to know and

love the people who desired to reach out to others as they served Christ. Yvonne and Don moved to Kansas City, Missouri, in 1965 to continue Don's education. While there, they sensed God's call to missions. In 1970, they were appointed by the Home Mission Board (now the North American Mission Board) as missionaries among the Deaf people in Florida. They are retired, but they continue to serve with Deaf people in Florida. Yvonne is an interpreter, teacher, and has recently begun to write.

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BIBLE READING PLAN

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ACCEPTING CHRIST

Donald Sharpe



I was born with cerebral palsy, and I was deaf. I was premature and weighed only two pounds. The doctors told my mother not to buy baby clothes or buy a crib because I was not going to live. God gave me a miracle.

When I was four years old, my mother heard me laughing and looked in the bedroom.

I was walking. I went to a school for children with cerebral palsy in Gulfport, but later I went to the Mississippi School for the Deaf. I only went home for holidays.

When I was ten years old, my brother, Terry, taught me about Jesus Christ. He wanted me to know about Jesus. I went with him to church. My brother would explain everything in the Bible and talk about a **relationship** with Jesus Christ. One day I could feel my heart begin to open, and I asked Jesus to come into my heart and live with me. I knew I was saved. I could see the face of Jesus at the front door smiling and then disappearing.

After I was saved, I saw my life beginning to change. I began to grow and learn more about being a Christian. I started to have problems with a nerve in my back. I had surgery but had to stay in the hospital for one month and missed one year of school. My health began to improve, and I was strong again. I knew Jesus was with me always.

I went back to school in Jackson until I was twenty years old. Then I went to the Special Technical Facility in Talladega, Alabama, where I learned printing skills and later had a clerk job at a hospital. I taught many sign language classes in Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

I have had many surgeries in my life. Many times I faced serious health problems. I know Jesus was with me always. In my heart I can feel Jesus warning me about not going the wrong way. Prayer and reading the Bible has helped me. With Jesus' help, I now volunteer at my church and send beautiful cards to my brothers and sisters in Christ.

Maybe you have health problems, too. Maybe you learned about Jesus when you were young but did not ask Him to come and live in your life. Now is a good time to ask Jesus to come into your heart and live with you. It is not hard. All you need to do is:

Confess your sins. (Romans 3:23)

Believe that Jesus died for you. (Romans 10:9-10)

Ask Jesus to come into your heart. (Romans 3:20)

Now you can praise God for your new life and share your experience with other people.

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS

»» Genesis is the first book of the Old Testament.

It begins with the truth that God is. That means God has no beginning and no end. Our faith **relationship** with God begins to grow when we accept this one truth.

»» Who wrote the Book of Genesis?

God is the author of the whole Bible. He breathed His Holy Spirit into special chosen people so they could write His words. God chose Moses as the special person to write the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. From written and spoken resources, God's Holy Spirit guided Moses to collect and keep His Word and His work.

»» When was the Book of Genesis written?

The gathering and recording of the message of Genesis dates from about 1450 B.C. to 1410 B.C.

»» Why was the Book of Genesis written?

God wanted His people to know and to understand who He is and how we relate to Him in faith. The Book of Genesis tells the story of how God **created** the world and people and God's relationship with man before and after sin entered the world.

The Book of Genesis makes it clear that God created from nothing everything that is. His final **creation** was a man and a woman. God made them in His likeness. God gave them the **responsibility** to rule over God's creation. God told them to have children so future **generations** could experience a relationship that would remind them of God's love.

God completed all of creation in six days. On the seventh day, God rested.

In chapters 3–25, we learn how God's people rebelled and disobeyed God. The relationship between God and man was broken because God cannot accept **disobedience**. God warned about the terrible **separation**, and it happened. But God loved this man and this woman. He could not leave them in their sin. He had a plan that would draw all people to Him.

»» Who received the Book of Genesis?

God's chosen people, the Israelites, received His Word through His promise to Abraham. It became part of the Torah, the Jewish Written Law.

»» An outline of the Book of Genesis may help you understand the order of events reported by Moses.

Genesis 1:1–2:25

The creation of the world and of man and woman.

Genesis 3

Sin came into the world, and God promised **redemption**.

Genesis 4

Family life, cities, and nations developed.

Genesis 5:1–7:24

Judgment came, but God saved Noah's family.

Genesis 8–11

A second chance was given, and nations began again.

Genesis 12–25

God called Abraham and began the Hebrew nation.



Session 1

GOD CREATES

GENESIS 1:1-5,26-31; 2:1-3

God **created** everything from nothing.

FIRST THOUGHTS

Genesis 1-2 tells about **Creation**. God spoke with purpose and power and everything came from nothing.

God created man and woman in His **image and likeness**. We can know God and believe in Him. God is the only foundation for true life. God worked at Creation for six days, and on the seventh day He rested. He blessed that day of rest, and He gave it to people. Man and woman were His very good creation. He gave them all the rest of creation for their good.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Read the Introduction at the front of this quarterly so you can have a good background for this study of Genesis 1–25.

The story of God’s creation in Genesis provides the foundation for all we believe about Him. When He started, there was nothing. God spoke and the universe was made. He spoke and created light. He created the waters and the earth. God gathered the waters and the earth into their places. He put lights into the sky for day and night. He created plants that had seeds. God created the fish, birds, and all the animals.

Then God said, “Let Us make human beings in Our image and likeness.” God used the terms *Us* and *Our* to show Himself in three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. We call this the **Trinity**.

If God did not create people in His image, we would have no connection to God as Father, no salvation through God the Son (Jesus), and we would not have God the Holy Spirit within us as Christians.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

(GENESIS 1:1-5,26-31; 2:1-3)

1. God Created Everything from Nothing (Genesis 1:1-2)

VERSES 1-2.

¹*In the beginning, God created the sky and earth.* ²*The earth was empty and had no form. Darkness covered the ocean, and God’s Spirit was moving over the water.”*

God has no beginning or end. God has always existed, He exists today, and He will exist forever. God moved in great power to create the earth and sky from nothing.

God **created** order out of confusion. He created light out of darkness. He created life where there was no life.

BIBLE SKILL: *God Is the Creator*

Sometimes, we think we have all the power to do anything we want to do. But we cannot create something from nothing! That is what God did.

Read these verses. What did God create?

Genesis 1:1

Psalms 8:3

Job 33:4

2 Corinthians 5:17

Psalms 51:10

God created everything out of nothing. As Creator, God has all power to rule over all of His creation.

What did God create first? _____ **and**
_____ **(Genesis 1:1).**

What covered the ocean? _____ **(Genesis 1:2).**

2. God Created by His Word (Genesis 1:3-5)

VERSES 3-4.

³Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good, so He divided the light from the darkness.

God spoke and light appeared. The **Creation** happened in perfect order and purpose. After God created the sky and the earth, He saw that it was empty and without form. Darkness filled up the earth and sky. God wanted light. He spoke, and light began.

Our minds cannot completely understand the power of God’s spoken word. Many times in our thoughts about God, we forget how powerful His words are.

VERSE 5.

⁵God named the light day and the darkness night. Evening passed and morning came. This was the first day.

We often overlook another characteristic of God. Because He is the creator, He has the right to give names to His creation.

Giving a name to something or someone is a powerful **responsibility** because it shows **ownership**.

When a married Deaf couple is expecting a child, they often spend hours talking about the sign name for their baby. They have the power and the **privilege** to choose the name for their child. Couples want a strong name that describes the person they would like their child to become. They may think of family or friends or a famous person with a name they would like for their child to have.

God gave names to the light and to the dark (Genesis 1:5).

Light was named _____ and dark was named _____.

3. God Created in His Image (Genesis 1:26-31)

VERSES 26-30.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our **image and likeness**. And let them rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the tame animals, over all the earth, and over all the small crawling animals on the earth." ²⁷ So God **created** human beings in His image. In the image of God He **created** them. He **created** them male and female. ²⁸ God blessed them and said, "Have many children and grow in number. Fill the earth and be its master. Rule over the fish in the sea and over the birds in the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth." ²⁹ God said, "Look, I have given you all the plants that have grain for seeds and all the trees whose fruits have seeds in them. They will be food for you. ³⁰ I have given all the green plants as food for every wild animal, every bird of the air, and every small crawling animal."

God gave people the **responsibility** to have children and to take care of the earth that He made. This first man and woman were able to know God and fellowship with Him. They also had the ability to make choices.

God gives people His knowledge and His strength to obey Him and depend upon Him. He wants us to ask Him for wisdom to know what is right and good. God wants to give us what we need.

God used the words *Us* and *Our* to identify Himself in **creation**. This shows the truth that God is the Father, God is the Son (Jesus), and God is the Holy Spirit. We may not completely understand the truth that God showed Himself in this special way, but we do know that our God did all that is necessary for us to enjoy fellowship with Him.

What can you do to show you believe that all people are made in God's image and should be respected?

KEY DOCTRINE: *The Trinity*

The Bible does not use the word *trinity*, but the concept of the trinity is found all through the Bible to show God at work as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Study these verses to help you understand this concept. Write a few words to help you remember what each verse teaches you.

Romans 8:9-11

Matthew 28:19

2 Corinthians 13:14

1 Peter 1:1-3

Galatians 4:4-6

VERSE 31.

³¹ *God looked at everything He had made, and it was very good. Evening passed, and morning came. This was the sixth day.*

God made the world, and He knew it was good.

God used the words *us* and *our* to identify Himself as God the _____, God the _____, and God the _____.

4. God Created for His Glory (Genesis 2:1-3)

VERSES 1-3.

¹So the sky, the earth, and all that filled them were finished. ²By the seventh day God finished the work He had been doing, so He rested from all His work. ³God blessed the seventh day and made it a holy day, because on that day He rested from all the work He had done in creating the world.

God rested because He finished His **creation**. He wanted His creation to follow His example. He did not need a time of rest, but He knew His creation did! Our bodies, our emotions, and our minds all need time to remember God.

Rest helps us clear our hearts and minds of worry and anxiety and remember that God loves us. Rest helps us enjoy time with our family and friends. This day of rest helps us trust God to heal our brokenness and renew our relationships. Thinking about the Word of God brings rest as we ask Him to take control. God knows our need for rest.

How do you celebrate the day of rest? Name three things you do to take time to rest.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

(Think about the questions on the next page before you look at the hints listed below.)

1. (Moses, led by God's Holy Spirit. See the Introduction to this quarterly.)
2. (Nothing.)
3. (No, God rested to give us an example to follow because our bodies need rest.)

IN MY CONTEXT

1. Who wrote the Book of Genesis?

2. When God created the world, what did he start with?

3. Why did God rest after six days of creation? Was He tired?

Find these verses to learn more about God's creative power. Write a few words to remember what each verse teaches.

John 1:1-5 _____

Psalm 8:3-9 _____

Psalm 33:6-9 _____

Exodus 23:12 _____

Deuteronomy 5:12-15 _____

List ways your Deaf Bible class can show that you take care of God's creation in the place where you live. What can your class do together?

MEMORY VERSE

In the beginning God created the sky and the earth. —Genesis 1:1



Session 2

MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

GENESIS 2:4-9,15-18

God has a special plan for every person.

FIRST THOUGHTS

God **created** people and gave them important work to do. The work would be a pleasure for man. God told the man and woman to obey Him, and they would enjoy life with Him and have fellowship with Him. But if they disobeyed God, the opposite would happen. All **creation** would suffer because **disobedience** would lead to death.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

As God the Holy Spirit **inspired** men to write His Word, He often led them to repeat and add information on an event or teaching. You can see this form of writing throughout the Old and New Testaments. Genesis, chapter 1, gives a summary of creation. Chapter 2 gives more information about the work of God in creation. Moses, the man God inspired to record His work of creation, used this repetition to show the creation of man was very important.

The Bible explains that man was created from the dust of the earth. Man and animals were created differently. God breathed life into man. The Bible does not say this about any of the creatures.

God also inspired Moses to describe the place God created for man. The description of the garden of Eden tells of God's plans and purpose for His creation. The Bible gives a description of where God planted Eden, but no one has ever found the exact location.

Read Genesis 2:10-14. Use a map of the Old Testament, and see if you can find some of these rivers.

EXPLORE THE TEXT (GENESIS 2:4-9,15-18)

1. God Created Man (Genesis 2:4-7)

VERSES 4-7.

⁴*This is the story of the creation of the sky and the earth. When the Lord God first made the earth and the sky,* ⁵*There were still no plants on the earth. Nothing was growing in the fields because the Lord God had not yet made it rain on the land. And there was no person to care for the ground,* ⁶*But a mist would rise up from the earth and water all the ground.* ⁷*Then the Lord God took dust from the ground and formed*

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a man from it. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nose and the man became a living person.

These verses summarize some of what we studied in chapter 1 and then introduce the **creation** of man on the sixth day.

BIBLE SKILL: *The Six Days of Creation*

Study Genesis 1–2 and write down what God did each day.

Day 1 – Genesis 1:3-5

Day 2 – Genesis 1:6-8

Day 3 – Genesis 1:9-13

Day 4 – Genesis 1:14-19

Day 5 – Genesis 1:20-23

Day 6 – Genesis 1:24-31; 2:7-25

Day 7 – Genesis 2:2-3

On day six of creation week, God made man from the dust of the earth. In an effort to understand how Moses explained the creation of man, scientists have studied the makeup of human beings. An interesting fact has been found. The dirt or dust of the earth contains some of the same elements as the physical body of a human being. But God's creation did not stop at a simple body. He breathed into man the breath of life. Man was and is different from every other creation. God's breath caused man to have an **eternal** spirit.

Man is a spiritual being. From the beginning, God wanted His people to enjoy fellowship with Him. God's **relationship** to man and man's relationship to God brought life as God meant it to be.

All men and women need to know God. Men and women do not always know how to satisfy that need. That breath of God from the heart of God was breathed into men and women so they would want a relationship with God and with each other.

What did God use to make man? The _____ of the _____ (Genesis 2:7).

2. A Place to Call Home (Genesis 2:8-9)

VERSES 8-9.

⁸Then the Lord God planted a garden in the east, in a place called Eden, and put the man He had formed into it. ⁹The Lord God caused every beautiful tree and every tree that was good for food to grow out of the ground. In the middle of the garden, God put the tree that gives life and also the tree that gives the knowledge of good and evil.

God gave Adam a place to live. God put him in the garden of Eden. From the beginning, God wanted the best for His creation. He gave them a home. He gave them work to do. He gave them beauty and peace. He gave them freedom. He gave them fellowship with Himself. God planned for people to be innocent and protected.

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In our world today, our homes are not always free from confusion. They are not always complete as the first man and woman's home was. In the New Testament, God the Son, Jesus, tells of a place that He is preparing for us, called heaven. We sometimes call that place home. In that home, life will be complete and free from **interruption** or danger. God wants us to taste home on earth as we learn more about Jesus.

Write one thing you remember about your home when you were a child. It may be a good thing or it may be something you did not like.

3. God Gave a Warning (Genesis 2:15-17)

VERSES 15-16.

¹⁵ The Lord God put the man in the Garden of Eden to care for it and work it. ¹⁶ The Lord God commanded him, "You may eat of the fruit of any tree in the garden."

God placed the first man, Adam, in the middle of the garden of Eden. God said that Adam must care for the garden and work in it. We often think that the garden of Eden was a place where no work was required. But that thinking is wrong. This verse helps us understand. Adam was responsible to care for and work in the garden of Eden. It was a beautiful place, but it needed careful attention.

VERSE 17.

¹⁷ "But you must not eat the fruit from the tree which gives the knowledge of good and evil. If you ever eat fruit from that tree, you will die!"

God also gave a warning. He gave man the ability to make choices. God commanded Adam not to eat from one tree in the

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garden. That was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If Adam disobeyed, what would happen? There would be death. Adam had the freedom to enjoy all of the trees and plants of the garden except this one tree.

Some people ask why God placed that tree in the garden and then said Adam and Eve would be punished if they ate from it. God wanted them to obey and trust Him for everything. God knows what is best for us, but God also gives us the ability to choose. God wanted His **creation** to choose Him and His plan for a rich and full life.

What two things did God instruct Adam to do in the garden?

To _____ for the garden and to _____ in the garden (Genesis 2:15).

4. God Created Woman (Genesis 2:18)

VERSE 18.

¹⁸ *Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is right for him."*

God knows what is best. Adam was alone in the garden. He worked and cared for it. He named the animals and birds and all the living things. But he was not complete. God saw and answered Adam's need for a **companion**. God gave Adam a helper that would make both of them complete. God **created** Eve.

God caused Adam to sleep. He removed a rib from Adam's side and made a woman and brought her to Adam. Adam identified Eve as a part of himself. Her bones came from his bones. Her body came from his body. They were of the same creation. God planned for one man and one woman to become one physically and spiritually in the intimate and **exclusive relationship** of marriage.

The Hebrew words for man, Ish, and for woman, Isha, paint the picture of oneness that God planned for His creation. Today,

marriage is attacked from all sides. People make jokes about marriage. Divorce and living together without marriage is so common, we hardly notice it. God's plan in creating man and woman to complete each other has been changed and criticized.

KEY DOCTRINE: *God's Plan for Marriage.*

Marriage came into being in creation. One of the characteristics of God's image in man and woman was that their relationship with each other would be intimate and exclusive. This is still God's plan. God's first plan and purpose for marriage was "one man for one woman for life."

Find these verses and learn more about God's creative plan for man and woman. Write a few words to help you remember what each verse teaches you.

Genesis 2:19-25

John 14:1-4

Matthew 19:4-5

Ephesians 5:28-33

Find this New Testament passage that includes an Old Testament quotation: In Mark 10:1-12, Jesus quoted Genesis 1:27 and 2:24. What words did Jesus add that are not in Genesis 2:24?

How does God describe marriage in Genesis 1:27 and 2:24?

IN MY CONTEXT

God is the source of life for all people. We can trust God to provide for all our needs. God expects people to trust and obey Him. People must recognize how God gave Adam a **companion**. That shows God's plan for marriage between a man and a woman.

What was Adam's responsibility in the garden of Eden?

What was the name of the tree that Adam was NOT to eat from? The Tree of the _____ of _____ and _____ (Genesis 2:17).

Has God changed His plan for the relationship between a man and a woman? YES NO

Why did God create people?

(God's purpose for people is to have a right relationship with Him.)

How is man different from the animals God created?

(Man has an eternal spirit and can have fellowship with God.)

To think about: God told Adam and Eve they must not eat from the one tree. How does this warning show His love? Compare this to a parent telling a child not to do something because it is dangerous.

MEMORY VERSE

Then the Lord God took dust from the ground and formed a man from it. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nose, and the man became a living person. —Genesis 2:7



Session 3

MAN FALLS INTO SIN

GENESIS 3:1-7,14-19

God judges sinful behavior.

FIRST THOUGHTS

Satan used the beauty of one of God's creatures to tempt Adam and Eve with a lie. Satan continues to lie to people today. Like God's first man and woman, we can fall into the trap of wanting to take control of our lives. We often listen to the lies of Satan instead of the truth of God. We want to experience something or have something that is against God's plan, but **disobedience** always brings **consequences**.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Satan came into the **innocence** of the garden of Eden. Adam and Eve enjoyed the protection and **provision** of God. They enjoyed His fellowship. They experienced God's presence without limits. But Satan used a beautiful creature to tempt Adam and Eve with his lies.

Satan did not tell the whole truth when he spoke to Eve. Eve agreed with Satan, but then she completed God's command with the truth. They could eat the fruit from every tree except one. If they ate from this one tree, they would die.

Satan questioned God's honesty and character. How did Satan succeed in his purpose to **deceive** Adam and Eve? They saw the beauty of the fruit. They imagined the taste of the fruit. They thought of the knowledge that eating the fruit might bring. First, Eve took the fruit and ate. Then, she gave the fruit to her husband. Without asking any questions, Adam took the fruit and ate it.

Then they knew more than they knew before. They knew the result of disobedience. They understood their situation immediately. They were naked. They knew shame. They experienced fear. The temptation of Satan did not cause this terrible knowledge. Adam and Eve disobeyed God when they decided to eat the forbidden fruit.

EXPLORE THE TEXT (GENESIS 3:1-7,14-19)

1. Satan, the Liar (Genesis 3:1-5)

VERSES 1-5.

¹Now the snake was the most clever of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day the snake said to the woman, "Did God really say that you must not eat fruit from any tree in the garden?" ²The

woman answered the snake, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden.”³ “But God told us, ‘You cannot eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden. You must not even touch it, or you will die.’”⁴ But the snake said to the woman, “You will not die.”⁵ “God knows that if you eat the fruit from that tree, you will learn about good and evil and you will be like God!”

Satan used the beauty of the serpent to get Eve’s attention. He spoke through the serpent and Eve listened. Then Satan used Adam and Eve’s freedom to choose to tempt them. They heard Satan say they could know what God knows. Satan touched the **pride** in the hearts of Adam and Eve and made them doubt what God said.

Satan has not changed the way he attacks people. He tempts us with beauty and possibilities that feed our pride. He uses delicious looking things to set before us. Satan never shows us the result of our **rebellion** and **disobedience**. Satan does not show us the loss of self-respect.

KEY DOCTRINE: *Satan*

Study these verses to learn more about Satan, the devil. Make a note about what each verse teaches you.

John 8:44

John 14:30-31

Hebrews 2:14-15

Job 1:6-12

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

Does Satan tempt you and try to pull you away from fellowship with God? YES NO

How? _____

2. Sin Leads to Shame (Genesis 3:6-7)

VERSES 6-7.

⁶*The woman saw that the tree was beautiful, that its fruit was good to eat, and that it would make her wise. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She also gave some of the fruit to her husband, and he ate it.* ⁷*Then, it was as if their eyes were opened. They realized they were naked, so they sewed fig leaves together and made something to cover themselves.*

Adam and Eve took the fruit and ate it. Satan tempted Adam and Eve. They saw the beauty and the possibilities of wisdom and knowledge. But afterward they surely said, “If only we had answered Satan’s **endurance** with truth and faith in God!” They would have had a different experience. When they ate of the fruit of that tree, **innocence** became rebellion. Sin came into God’s **creation**.

All of us have done things that cause us to feel **ashamed**. Sometimes we listen to our pride and say or do things that are against God’s good plan and purpose. But He still loves us and wants us to learn from these experiences. He does not want us to continue to experience shame.

Think of something you have done that caused you to become ashamed. How did you handle the feeling of shame?

3. The Results of Sin (Genesis 3:14-19)

VERSE 14.

¹⁴ *The Lord God said to the snake, "Because you did this, a curse will be put on you. You will be cursed as no other animal, tame or wild, will ever be. You will crawl on your stomach, and you will eat dust all the days of your life."*

God listened to the excuses from Adam and Eve. They blamed Satan. They blamed each other. Finally they blamed God for their **disobedience**. The blame game did not change the **consequences** that God had warned them about from the beginning.

BIBLE SKILL: *Excuses*

Study these verses to learn more about what the Bible says about excuses. Write a few words to help you remember what each verse teaches you.

Acts 24:24-25

Exodus 4:1-14

Jeremiah 1:4-10

Judges 6:12-17

Luke 9:59-62

Luke 14:18-24

Romans 1:18-23

Romans 2:1-9

VERSE 15.

¹⁵ *God said to the snake, “I will make you and the woman enemies to each other. Your descendants and her descendants will be enemies. One of her descendants will crush your head, and you will bite His heel.”*

God pronounced **judgment** on the serpent. This creature would always be hated and feared. The message of Satan that came out of the mouth of the serpent would cause death and destruction.

God’s plan would not be stopped. Read the last sentence in verse 15. His plan and purpose for man and woman became fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus crushed Satan. Jesus experienced the bite of death, but Jesus offered freedom from the power of death in His resurrection from the dead.

VERSES 16-19.

¹⁶ *Then God said to the woman, “I will cause you to have much trouble when you are pregnant, and when you give birth to children, you will have great pain. You will greatly desire your husband, but he will rule over you.”* ¹⁷ *Then God said to the man, “You listened to what your wife said and you ate fruit from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat. So I will put a curse on the ground, and you will have to work very hard for your food. In pain you will eat its food all the days of your life.”* ¹⁸ *“The ground will produce thorns and weeds for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.”* ¹⁹ *“You will sweat and work hard for your food. Later you will return to the ground, because you were taken from it. You are dust, and when you die, you will return to the dust.”*

Judgment not only fell on Adam and Eve, but on all **creation**. Pain and suffering would come to both man and woman. Providing food and shelter would be painful and difficult because the ground would be filled with weeds and thorns. The length of time people would live would be limited. Physical death would be a part of man’s experience.

God forced Adam and Eve to leave the garden (Genesis 3:23-24). They knew the difference between good and evil. If they ate from the tree of life that God had placed in the garden of

Eden, they would not physically live forever. This was harsh punishment, but God’s love for **humanity** caused Him to force them out of the garden.

BIBLE SEARCH: *Overcoming temptation*

Study these verses to learn more about overcoming temptation from Satan:

Matthew 4:1-11: Temptation is not sin. Sin comes when we choose to do what we are tempted to do. Jesus was tempted, but He did not sin (Hebrews 4:15). He chose to obey His Father and use the truth of God’s Word to say no to the temptation.

1 Corinthians 10:13: “The only temptation that has come to you is that which everyone has. But you can trust God, who will not permit you to be tempted more than you can stand. But when you are tempted, he will also give you a way to escape so that you will be able to stand it.”

Discuss with your class: How do you resist temptation?

What can you learn about facing temptation from these verses?

IN MY CONTEXT

Rebelling against God's **authority** and His Word leads to destruction. Every person follows in the footsteps of Adam and Eve. Every person sins. Sin always leads to **judgment**. God holds us responsible for actions or words. This is a fearful thing.

It is true that we are born with the sin nature and that we easily **disobey** God, but it is also true that He has made a way for us to be restored to life through Jesus. God did not leave His **creation** without hope.

Do you think people today feel ashamed of things they do? YES NO

How did the serpent get Eve's attention? How does Satan deceive and cause people to doubt God in today's world?

How do people try to hide their sins?

Examine a temptation you are facing. How can you express trust in God to resist that temptation?

Compare Genesis 39:7-12 and Matthew 4:1-11. How were the temptations similar and different?

MEMORY VERSE

After God forced the man out of the garden, He placed angels and a sword of fire that flashed around in every direction on its eastern border. This kept people from getting to the tree of life. —Genesis 3:24



Session 4

GOD SAVES

GENESIS 6:11-18; 7:11-14

God saved Noah and his family.

FIRST THOUGHTS

We do not deserve salvation, but **grace** provides what we cannot earn and do not deserve. We deserve **judgment** because we sin, but mercy withholds judgment. Being true to His character, God judges sin but extends grace and mercy. The character of God never changes.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

The war between good and evil that began with the **disobedience** of Adam and Eve continued. Chapter 4 tells the story of Cain and Abel. Chapter 5 gives a list of Adam's descendants up to Noah. Genesis 6:1-10 describes how sin continued to grow.

Men and women married and children were born. Even though many joined themselves to unbelievers, God continued to see them as individuals. Moses, the writer of Genesis, under God's inspiration, named **generations** of men and even listed their ages. Through this, God showed the connection of people to people and people to Himself. This list of generations did not include every person born. The list includes only the generations that led to Jesus.

Men and women often chose to sink deeper and deeper into evil living. But God's desire to fellowship with His **creation** never changed. Wickedness filled the earth (Genesis 6:5-6), but the patience and mercy of God would not give up on man.

During those evil days, a few men still trusted God and walked with Him. Enoch, the son of Jared, was so faithful that he was taken by God without passing through death.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

(GENESIS 6:11-18; 7:11-14)

1. God Saw the Wickedness of the People (Genesis 6:11-13)

VERSE 11.

¹¹ *People on earth did what God said was evil, and violence was everywhere.*

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Sin always strains relationships and separates people from each other. People become selfish. Sin destroys what is good. Sin causes people to ignore God's influence. As a result of the growing sin of **humanity, creation** faced God's certain **judgment**.

VERSE 12.

¹² *When God saw that everyone on the earth did only evil.*

God's heart broke as He saw men and women choosing evil and violence instead of goodness and peace.

VERSE 13.

¹³ *He said to Noah, "Because people have made the earth full of violence, I will destroy all of them from the earth."*

But there was hope in Noah because he lived right before the Lord. He and his family still had fellowship with God and obeyed His instructions.

The Bible tells us that God knows what is best for each man and woman (Psalm 139:1-6). That "best" requires obedience and faithfulness to the Creator. By living in this way, humanity will not face the **penalties** for **disobedience**.

God judged sin in Noah's time and continues to do so in our time. But with His judgment, He always provides mercy and **grace**.

Discuss with your Deaf Bible class: Do you think verse 11 is a picture of the world today?

BIBLE SKILL: *Noah, an Example of Faith*

Noah obeyed God, and God was faithful to keep His promise of protection. He and his family escaped the judgment of God because Noah was faithful.

Read these verses. How was Noah an example?

2 Peter 2:5

1 Peter 3:18-20

Hebrews 11:17

2. God Made a Promise to Noah (Genesis 6:14-18)

VERSES 14-16.

¹⁴*Build a boat of cypress wood for yourself. Make rooms in it and cover it inside and outside with tar.* ¹⁵*This is how big I want you to build the boat: four hundred fifty feet long, seventy-five feet wide, and forty-five feet high.* ¹⁶*Make an opening around the top of the boat that is eighteen inches high from the edge of the roof down. Put a door in the side of the boat. Make an upper, middle, and lower deck in it.*

God gave clear instructions to Noah about how to build the boat that would save him and his family. The people watched Noah build the ark and wondered if he was crazy. Noah chose to believe and obey God rather than follow the path of the world around him. His choice proclaimed that God's judgment would come.

VERSES 17-18.

¹⁷*I will bring a flood of water on the earth to destroy all living things that live under the sky, including everything that has the breath of life. Everything on the earth will die.* ¹⁸*But I will make an agreement with you—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives will all go into the boat.*

Compare the world today with that of Noah's time. God continues to call on faithful men and women to live obedient lives. He calls on His **creation** to proclaim His mercy and love. Through God's Word, He warns mankind of **judgment**.

Jesus fulfilled every detail that God required for salvation through His death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. Noah faced the choice to obey. Every person faces this same choice—to obey or to **disobey**.

How do God's detailed instructions about the construction of the ark show His concern for Noah and his family?

Name two things have people said to you about God's judgment on sin and disobedience?

1 _____

2 _____

3. Noah Obeyed God (Genesis 7:11-14)

VERSE 11.

¹¹When Noah was six hundred years old, the flood started. On the seventeenth day of the second month of that year the underground springs split open, and the clouds in the sky poured out rain.

Noah faithfully lived for God through many, many years. He was an old man when the flood began. God gave a specific date for this terrible judgment to begin. It may be that in recording such detail concerning the date that God wanted future **generations** to understand the possibilities for everyone to carry out His plan. God wants us to be faithful. He will bless our obedience. God judged all the earth, but Noah and his family were saved because of God's **grace** and mercy.

VERSE 12.

¹² *The rain fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights.*

Rain came for the first time. Water came from under the earth. Water was everywhere. The peoples of the earth had not experienced such happenings, but they understood God's judgment that day. They also understood and saw for themselves that God does love, and He does show grace and mercy.

VERSES 13-14.

¹³ *On that same day Noah and his wife, his sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their wives went into the boat.* ¹⁴ *They had every kind of wild and tame animal, every kind of animal that crawls on the earth, and every kind of bird.*

Noah and his family obeyed God and moved into the ark to live with animals, with every kind of creature that crawled and with every kind of bird.

Not only did God save Noah from the destruction of the earth, but He saved Noah's wife and his sons and their wives. God **created** the family in the beginning. Even in judgment, God did not destroy His plan for the family.

KEY DOCTRINE: *God's Judgment*

Find these verses and learn about God's judgment on sin. Make notes to help you remember what the verses teach you.

John 3:16-21

Romans 6:23

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The **grace** that Noah found in the eyes of God is available to all. God still uses the family structure that He **created** to proclaim His grace. The death of disobedient men and women in Noah's day reminds us that God's plan will be fulfilled and that **judgment** is sure!

Noah and his family also cry out that God is good. He created people for fellowship with Him. His mercy and grace is available to all people. But people must repent and obey.

Fellowship with God comes through Jesus' death on the cross. Jesus Christ accepted the judgment for our sin on the cross.

Noah accepted a truly big project. What does that tell you about his faith in God?

Have you experienced the grace of God that Noah had? YES NO

If not, talk with your Deaf Bible teacher today.

IN MY CONTEXT

Unconfessed and unforgiven sin leads to greater wickedness. The Bible tells us that disobeying God leads to destruction. But God rescues those who are faithful to Him.

Often people believe only part of the Bible. It is sometimes difficult to understand that a loving God could bring judgment on His **creation**. Yet, what the Bible tells of Noah's life proves that God cannot accept sin and **disobedience**. God could not overlook the deep evil and violence that filled the earth. God cannot overlook the sin that covers our city, our state, our nation, and the world today.

Do you think God's heart is broken because of the evil and violence in our world today?

What can your Deaf Bible study class do to overcome evil with good?

What can you do to spread God's peace?

Noah's experience in building the ark, waiting for the rains, and living aboard the ark was a test of faith. What tests your faith today?

What helps you to continue to be faithful even when it seems crazy to do so?

MEMORY VERSE

This is the family history of Noah. Noah was a good man, the most innocent man of his time, and he walked with God. —Genesis 6:9



Session 5

A NEW START

GENESIS 8:15–9:1,11-16

God offers a second chance when people repent and obey Him.

FIRST THOUGHTS

God offered **grace** to Noah and the new world by His promise of a new start. This new start depended on a **covenant relationship**. God always promises His grace and mercy when He warns of **judgment**. He made a promise and prepared a way for people to return to Him. A fresh start is always available when people obey God.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Noah and his family spent more than a year in the ark. The rains from above and the waters from underground stopped. The flood waters began to go down. God gave clear instructions about the ark and His plan to save Noah and his family. In the same way, the Bible also tells the details of what happened after the flood.

On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ark touched land on one of the mountains of Ararat, an area that is today part of Turkey. The waters continued to go down until on the first day of the tenth month. Noah could clearly see the tops of mountains. Forty days later, Noah opened the window of the ark and sent out a raven that did not come back. Later, Noah sent a dove out three different times. The first time, the dove came back to the ark because there was no place to land. The second time, the dove came back with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. Noah knew then that the earth was dry. The third time, the dove did not return.

God told Noah to free the birds, the animals, and every creeping thing by families so that they could return to their natural living places and reproduce. Noah and his family left the ark. The ark was empty!

EXPLORE THE TEXT (GENESIS 8:15–9:1,11-16)

1. A New Start (Genesis 8:15-19)

VERSES 15-19.

¹⁵ Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶ “You and your wife, your sons, and their wives should go out of the boat. ¹⁷ “Bring every animal out of the boat with you—the birds, animals, and everything that crawls on the earth. Let them have many young ones so that they might grow in number.”

¹⁸ So Noah went out with his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives.

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¹⁹ *Every animal, everything that crawls on the earth and every bird went out of the boat by families.*

God often gives people a second chance. The story of Noah and his family emphasizes this. Sin filled the earth, but God spread His covering of **grace** and mercy on the earth. God gave a second chance to His **creation**.

When Noah and his family came out of the ark, God gave them food and shelter and the ability to grow crops and use animals for food.

What did God say all the creatures should do after leaving the ark?

Let them have _____ .

Think of a time in your life when you made a fresh start. How did that new beginning give you hope and commitment to do better?

2. A New Altar (Genesis 8:20)

VERSE 20.

²⁰ *Then Noah built an altar to the Lord. He took some of all the clean birds and animals, and he burned them on the altar as offerings to God.*

Noah built an altar and worshiped God with burnt offerings. This is the first reference in the Bible to building an altar. The story of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:3-4) tells of their sacrifices but does not say they built an altar. Noah thanked God that his family was saved through the flood. They were alive and well. So Noah built an altar to the Lord and sacrificed some of the birds and animals that were saved in the ark as sacrifices to God. Noah obeyed God by worshiping Him with a blood offering as was required from the time of Abel and Cain, the sons of Adam and Eve.

What was the first thing Noah and his family did after they left the ark?

They built an _____ so they could _____ God.

Why is it important that parents serve as the primary faith trainers of their children?

How do you lead your family to worship and serve God?

3. A New Promise (Genesis 8:21–9:1,11-16)

VERSES 21-22.

²¹ *The Lord was pleased with the sacrifices of Noah and said to Himself, “I will never again curse the ground because of human beings. Their thoughts are evil even when they are young, but I will never again destroy every living thing on the earth as I did this time.*

²² *“As long as the earth continues, planting and harvest, cold and hot, summer and winter, day and night will not stop.”*

These verses from the Bible are clear. God was pleased with the actions of Noah and His family after the flood. They worshiped God and gave thanks for being saved. God promised them the earth, people, animals, birds, and creeping things would never be destroyed by a flood again.

BIBLE SKILL: God's Promises

Find these verses in your Bible and learn more about God's promises. Write a few words after each one to help you remember the promise.

Lamentations 3:22-26

Jeremiah 29:10-14

Matthew 6:25-34

VERSES 9:1,11-16.

¹ Then God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Have many children; grow in number and fill the earth. ¹¹ "I will make this agreement with you: I will never again destroy all living things by a flood. A flood will never again destroy the earth." ¹² And God said, "This is the sign of the agreement between me and you and every living creature that is with you. ¹³ "I am putting my rainbow in the clouds as the sign of the agreement between me and the earth. ¹⁴ "When I bring clouds over the earth and a rainbow appears in them, ¹⁵ "I will remember my agreement between me and you and every living thing. Floods will never again destroy all life on the earth. ¹⁶ "When the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and I will remember the agreement that continues forever between me and every living thing on the earth."

God made a promise to Noah and his family and to all people. God would never again destroy the whole earth with a flood. He showed His promise with a rainbow in the sky. Rainbows are reminders that He will keep His promise.

BIBLE SKILL: *The Bow (and Arrow) and the Rainbow*

God often included visible signs to help His people remember His covenants.

The bow (with its arrows) is a symbol of warfare and destruction.

After the flood, however, God put down His bow and turned it into a symbol and promise of peace. God designated the rainbow as the sign of His covenant with Noah. God placed His rainbow in the clouds as a visible reminder that He would never again destroy all flesh with a flood.

Read these other verses that are about a rainbow:

Ezekiel 1:28

Revelation 4:3

Revelation 10:1

The words *never again* are repeated three times (Genesis 9:11,15) for emphasis. God did not say He would never again judge people for their sins. God said He would never again use a universal flood as a form of **judgment**. Noah and his family stopped to thank God for His promises and for saving them from the destruction of the flood.

In God's plan for people, Jesus, God's Son, gave up His life as a sacrifice offering for our sin. In the resurrection of Jesus after His death on the cross, we are offered the promise that we can claim His mercy and **grace** for our sin.

Faith in what God has done gives us true life. Notice the words true life. This promise is not just for physical life, but for true life in fellowship with God. From the beginning, God wanted everyone to have this true life of fellowship with Him.

During a summer camp for Deaf children and adults, the sky seemed to open and water came down like a waterfall. All the children and adults ran for shelter from the lightning, thunder, and rain.

They watched as the afternoon rains fell. They were anxious to get back outside to play. The rain fell for only a short time, but there was lots of water left. When the rains stopped the children saw a beautiful rainbow in the sky. They asked questions about the colors and the shape of the rainbow. They also asked questions about why there was a rainbow in the sky. This was an opening for the teachers to share about Noah and how God showed **grace** and mercy to him and his family. Also this was a perfect time for sharing that God's grace, His love, and His mercy was not just for Noah, but for each one of them.

Even though the children are grown and many have families, they still remember the rainbow and God's mercy and grace that is for them as it was for Noah and his family.

What do you think about when you see a rainbow in the sky?

List ways God showed His kindness to you recently.

IN MY CONTEXT

Let Noah's life remind you to trust God. God always reminds us that His promises do not fail. When He warns of **judgment**, He promises mercy and grace. He gives an opportunity to repent and return to Him.

Noah's first act after leaving the ark was to worship God. Have you been encouraged to make a fresh start as a result of worshipping God? YES NO

Do you sometimes feel it is hard for you to trust God and to wait on Him to guide you?

What can you do differently the next time you need to trust Him?

Think about this: Examine your life to determine areas where you have become careless in your spiritual walk. What steps do you need to take to make a fresh start in those areas?

Discuss with your Deaf Bible class how you can help each other use the worship service and Bible study to serve God better.

MEMORY VERSE

When the rainbow appears, I will see it and I will remember the agreement that continues forever between me and every living thing on the earth. —Genesis 9:16



Session 6

SCATTERED!

GENESIS 11:1-9

God punishes people when they **rebel** against Him.

FIRST THOUGHTS

People often forget that God is God and we are His **creation**. None of us can improve on the plans and purposes of God, no matter how smart or strong we think we are or how great is our imagination.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Genesis 10–11 gives a listing of the families of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. God commanded Noah and his sons to have children. They obeyed and the families of the earth multiplied greatly.

The story of the sin nature of people continues into chapter 11. Adam and Eve and their children, the generation of Noah, and the descendants of the sons of Noah all disobeyed and rebelled against God.

The people went to an area called the Valley of Shinar. They named their city Babel. This was in the land where Nimrod was the powerful leader. Later, it was called Babylon. Today it is the land where Iraq and other Middle Eastern nations are located. Nimrod was a descendent of Noah. God told everyone to move out to all the parts of the earth, but this group chose to stay in this place.

These chapters also explain how the people began to imagine how things would be if they could be in charge of their lives. They met together and planned something that seemed good to them. They planned to make bricks and build a city with a tall tower. Making bricks and using tar would be faster than gathering stones and using mortar. So the project began.

God knew of their plans and came down to see what the people were doing. Their plans did not fit into God's plan. The people were not building something for God but for themselves. They thought about how good it would be for them to stay together in this city and not be scattered over the earth.

Their one language made it possible for the people to live together in unity. God changed that. Now, the people could not understand each other. The Lord used this confusion to scatter them over the earth.

Babel was the name of the place where the people planned to build their city and tower. The word *babble* is still used today to describe confusion and misunderstanding.

EXPLORE THE TEXT (GENESIS 11:1-9)

1. United by a Sinful Purpose (Genesis 11:1-4)

VERSES 1-2.

¹*At this time the whole world spoke the same words. ²As people moved from the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there.*

Look at how many times the words *we* and *us* are used in these verses. These words do not refer to God but to the people. As you study this lesson, think of how they were proud of who they were and what they could do. The people rebelled against God, but He continued to bless them. He gave them land on which to live. They became skilled builders and built cities and lived together. They communicated with each other easily and experienced unity because they had one language.

VERSES 3-4.

³*They said to each other, “Let’s make bricks and bake them to make them hard.” So they used bricks instead of stones, and tar instead of mortar. ⁴Then they said to each other, “Let’s build a city and a tower for ourselves, whose top will reach high into the sky. We will become famous. Then we will not be scattered over all the earth.”*

Life was good for the people. But soon they began to imagine how they could make life better. The desire to follow their own way was powerful. They searched for a way to become famous. Deciding to build a city and a tower did not seem like a bad idea. But the reason for building was not for God’s glory. It was because of their **pride**.

BIBLE SKILL: *Pride*

Find these verses and learn more about pride and how God deals with it.

Proverbs 13:10 – Pride leads to arguments.

Proverbs 16:18 – Pride leads to destruction.

1 John 2:15-17 – Pride is one of the devil's tools.

Psalm 19:13-14 – Let this verse be our prayer and path to avoid confusion.

**How many languages did the people use? _____
(Genesis 4:1)**

**What reason did the people have for building a city and a tower?
They would become _____ and not be _____**

What are some of the large buildings in cities today that impress people?

Use the Internet to find out where the tallest building in the world is located. Share this information with your Deaf Bible study class.

What is the largest or tallest building you have ever seen?

2. Reviewed by God (Genesis 11:5)

VERSE 5.

⁵*The Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the people had built.*

God knows everything and is everywhere. He knew the work of the people. He knew their hearts and their plans. He would not let them continue in their pride. God came down to see the building of the city and the tower. Even though they were doing a good job and the city and tower would be monuments to their skills and creative abilities, God interrupted them. He wanted them to know that they were responsible for the decisions and plans they made. He wanted them to talk with Him about their needs and their wants. God reminded them that He still watched over them and guided them. God wanted them to know that their imaginations were God-given and should still be under His control.

KEY DOCTRINE: *God's Plan Is Best*

We must remember that God's plans and His purposes will happen no matter what we think or do. He may interrupt our plans so we can follow His plans. Read these verses to see God's plan for:

The tithe - Malachi 3:8-10.

Suffering - 1 Peter 3:15-18.

Salvation - Romans 10:9-13.

Marriage - 1 Kings 11:1-4.

Has God ever stopped you from doing something that was not His plan? YES NO

How did you feel about that interruption?

3. Scattered by Confusion (Genesis 11:6-9)

VERSES 6-8.

⁶The Lord said, “Now, these people are united, all speaking the same language. This is only the beginning of what they will do. They will be able to do anything they want.” ⁷“Come let us go down and confuse their language so they will not be able to understand each other.”

⁸So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city.

Deaf people know what it is like to not understand the people we work with! It is not impossible, but very difficult. Interpreters and new technology make it better for many Deaf workers. God confused the languages to make the work difficult. God was not against their building cities. He did not like their reason for building the city and tower. He knew they would not stop at the desire for fame and **pride** in their skills. They were tempted to **rebel** and **disobey** God more.

The lesson for us to learn is that God willingly allows the unpopular and often painful things to come into our lives in order to guide us into His very good plan and purpose. We are responsible to trust Him.

VERSE 9.

⁹The place is called Babel since that is where the Lord confused the language of the whole world. So the Lord caused them to spread out from there over the whole world.

Do you remember the New Testament record of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost? (Read Acts 2.) One of

the greatest things that happened on that day was that all the people understood what the disciples said. They spoke different languages but they understood everything.

Confusion was not the plan for Pentecost and it was not the plan for the children of God in the early **generations**.

Creation was done in an orderly manner. The beginning of families was done in an orderly manner. The building and filling of the ark was done in an orderly manner. These events were God's plan.

The reasons for building the city and tower of Babel were not in God's plan. God caused the people to speak different languages and used that to scatter the people. The confusion reminded them that He had plans and a purpose for men and women. Building of a city and tower to bring fame to them was not what God wanted.

Did God need to come down to the earth to know what these people were doing? YES NO

Why do you think He came down?

IN MY CONTEXT

Do you think if the people in our lesson today remembered their responsibility to God they may have acted differently? YES NO

When you are more aware of your responsibility to God, do you think and act differently? YES NO

God can bring good things out of difficult situations. How have you seen God use the gospel to change someone?

Who influences you most in your life?

Does that person's influence help you to obey Christ? YES NO

Discuss with your Deaf Bible study class how the class can have a stronger Christian influence on each other and on other Deaf people in your community.

Find the location of the ancient city of Babel, or Babylon, on a Bible map or Internet search. Then use a Bible dictionary to learn more about the early history of Babylon. Find the same area on a map of the modern world. With your class, discuss how events in this area today show the continuation of the rebellion against God described in Genesis 11.

MEMORY VERSE

So the Lord caused them to spread out from there over the whole earth.

—Genesis 11:9



Session 7

WHEN GOD CALLS

GENESIS 12:1-9

Faith leads to obedience and righteousness.

FIRST THOUGHTS

God called Abram to obey Him in faith. The Bible tells us that a **relationship** with God comes through faith in Him. Faith demands action if it is true faith. God called Abram to go to a place he did not know. Abram believed God and acted on the call he received. He believed God had a plan and purpose for his life. He did not know everything about the plan. He did not know where God would lead. But, he trusted God and obeyed. That is faith!

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

The verses in this lesson contain the listing of the **generations** of Noah's son, Shem. Genesis 11:10-26 introduces us to the beginning of the nation of Israel.

God called Abram, the son of Terah, to move out of his homeland and go to a place that God would show him. Abram was called out of a pagan nation to become the father of the Hebrew people (the Jews). He did not know where God wanted him to go. He did not know how the one true God would use him and his family. He only knew that God called, and he must obey.

God made promises to Abram that would be fulfilled through him and his family. This family would grow to become a great nation. The number of people would be like the "sands of the sea." Abram and his family would be protected. God would bless every person that blessed Abram and his family. God said He would curse anyone that wanted to hurt Abram and his family.

Like Abram, we do not always know everything God wants us to do. Like Abram, we do not know where God will lead. But, like Abram, our right response to His call must be to obey.

EXPLORE THE TEXT (GENESIS 12:1-9)

1. God Called Abram (Genesis 12:1-3)

VERSE 1.

¹ *The Lord said to Abram, "Leave your country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land I will show you."*

God called a man named Abram and his family to leave his home and relatives and travel to a new place. Abram's faith and obedience to God's call brought many blessings to him and his family.

Abram's life teaches us that God always blesses people when they have faith in Him. God's call to Abram had no details about

where he should go. God would show Abram where to go and be with him all the way.

Abram was the son of Terah from the family of Shem. They lived in a place called Ur. Abram had two brothers. One of his brothers, Haran, died while the family was still in Ur. Terah and Abram took care of Haran's son, Lot. The wives and children of Abram, Lot, and Terah joined their husbands and fathers in the journey of faith and obedience.

VERSES 2-3.

²“I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you. I will make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others.” ³“I will bless those who bless you, and I will place a curse on those who harm you. And all the people on earth will be blessed through you.”

God promised to show Abram the way. He also promised to multiply the descendants of Abram. His family would grow in purpose and in number. God wanted to show His desire for all people to know Him personally and enjoy fellowship with Him.

BIBLE SKILL: *Abram (Abraham)*

Abram (later changed to Abraham) was not perfect, but he was justified (made right with God) through his faith (Hebrews 11:8-13). How did Abraham show his faith?

Genesis 12:4

Genesis 13:9

Genesis 14:20

Genesis 18:23-33

James 2:14-24

Romans 4:1-24

Galatians 3:6-14

Today's families experience problems just as Abram's family did. God **established** the body of Christ, the church, to stand with families and individuals to help, to heal, and to strengthen broken hearts and lives.

Have you and your family moved to an unfamiliar place? YES NO

What problems did you face?

What are some of the difficult things God may call us to do today?

2. Abram Obeyed God (Genesis 12:4-9)

VERSES 4-5.

⁴So Abram left Haran as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. At this time Abram was seventy-five years old. ⁵He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and everything they owned, as well as all the servants they had gotten in Haran. They set out from Haran, planning to go to the land of Canaan, and in time they arrived there.

Abram obeyed God's call. God led him to the land of Canaan. As Abram traveled, he built altars for worshiping God.

Abram's life gives a picture of God's care and His plan for a man and his family. God wanted to bless His **creation** through Abram. God wanted to keep His promises.

Abram traveled from Ur to Haran and lived there until his father, Terah, died. He was happy in Haran as a place of waiting for God's voice to move him. At the right time, he gathered his family and everyone and everything that was precious to him. He placed his loved ones and his possessions in God's hands. He continued his journey of faith.

Abram did not just hear from God and say that he had faith in God. Abram acted on his faith. Abram's faith would not have been real if he had not obeyed God. Faith requires action. Abram's life is an example of real faith.

Abram had a real faith and fellowship with God. We can have that faith and fellowship, too. We can also worship and give thanks and praise God for His blessings.

VERSES 6-9.

⁶Abram traveled through the land as far as the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. The Canaanites were living in the land at that time; ⁷The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants." So Abram built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him. ⁸Then he traveled from Shechem to the mountain east of Bethel and set up his tent there. Bethel was to the west, and

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He went to the east. There Abram built another altar to the Lord and worshiped Him.⁹ After this, he traveled on toward southern Canaan.

Wherever Abram traveled, he built altars for worship. Abram lived his faith.

When we pray for our children, we need to remember to ask God to help them obey Him. Obedience is the door to blessings. Blessings come from faith and obedience.

God leads us at times to do or to say things that are not easy to do or say. Abram was called to do a big work. We may think that we are not called to do a big work like Abram, but it is important work anytime God calls us to do or say what He wants. He wants us to be faithful in that work. We may face danger. We may become unpopular with our friends and family. We may face changes in the place we live or the job we do. We may not be comfortable in the place where God leads us.

One thing we can know is that all of us are called by God to be faithful in the place God has put us. All of us are called to obey Him and live by faith just as Abram did. Learning and living out the lessons of Abram's life of faith is not easy, but it is blessed by God.

KEY DOCTRINE: *Abraham in God's Plan for the Salvation.*

Find these verses and learn more about how Abram was part of God's plan for salvation for all nations.

Hebrews 11:8-10: This is a list of people of faith who served God in the Old Testament.

Matthew 1, Luke 2: These two chapters list the generations that finally result in the coming of the Savior, Jesus Christ. We often skip over the genealogies listed, but they are valuable. They give evidence of the faithfulness of God in the lives of individuals. He promised a Savior in the beginning and His promise did not fail.

Have you ever tried to travel to a place for the first time without a map? YES NO

Did you need to ask for help? YES NO

Who showed Abram the way to go?

When you worship, what do you thank God for?

Do you thank God for a purpose in life?

Do you ask God to help you obey Him?

What is one way you obey God?

What is keeping you from taking steps of obedience?

IN MY CONTEXT

What is the one command given in the passage for our lesson?

How can your obedient faith be a blessing to others?

How might it be easier to follow the Lord as you get older? How might it be more difficult?

What is God asking you to do that will stretch your faith in Him?

Discuss with your Deaf Bible class: How has your class been blessed by God recently?

How can your class use these blessings to help others?

Decide on one blessing and plan ways to share the blessing with others. _____

To think about: Evaluate your current worship experience and how you are involved in it. What can you do to become more involved in worship?

MEMORY VERSE

I will bless those who bless you, and I will place a curse on those who harm you. And all the people on earth will be blessed through you.

—Genesis 12:3

The top of the page features a green background on the left and a grayscale image of an hourglass on the right. The hourglass is positioned vertically, with sand visible inside. It is flanked by two black vertical lines with circular nodes. The word "Session" is written in a white serif font, followed by a large white number "8".

Session 8

WAITING FOR THE PROMISE

GENESIS 15:1-7,13-16

God always keeps His promises.

FIRST THOUGHTS

God first **established** a covenant **relationship** with Adam. That means God promised Adam something if Adam was faithful. That **covenant** (agreement) was made again with Noah. Now God made the same covenant with Abram and the children that would come from him in future **generations**. God made a promise to Abram. He fulfilled that promise even though His time and plan were sometimes difficult for Abram and others to understand.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Between Genesis 12:9 and Genesis 15:1, the Bible records more about Abram's faith. He left his home and followed the Lord to a land he had never seen. He traveled all the way to Egypt where God protected him and his wife. His nephew, Lot, separated from him but God continued to bless Abram with many things. And through all of this, Abram continued a pattern of worship according to God's instructions. Abram made animal sacrifices to the Lord God. God accepted his sacrifice and his worship.

Abram and his family suffered hunger, and God supplied their needs. He had disagreements in his family, but God gave wisdom to solve the problems. He rescued his nephew, Lot, from some evil kings. God sent a priest to bless Abram. Abram worshiped God and gave the priest a tenth of everything he had taken from the battles he fought. Abram was faithful to God.

EXPLORE THE TEXT (GENESIS 15:1-7,13-16)

1. Abram's Frustration (Genesis 15:1-3)

VERSE 1.

¹*After these things happened, the Lord spoke to Abram in a vision: "Abram, don't be afraid. I will defend you, and I will give you a great reward."*

God spoke with Abram in a vision. Even though God protected him and gave him all he needed and more, Abram questioned God's plan. God reminded Abram that He would keep His promises. In his weakness and questioning, Abram continued to believe and obey. God honored Abram's faith.

It is hard to keep living out our faith when we can't see how God can do what He says He will do. Like Abram we must

be faithful. Even when we fail and **disobey**, God wants His children to come to Him just as Abram did.

VERSES 2-3.

²But Abram said, “Lord God, what can you give me? I have no son, so my slave Eliezer from Damascus will get everything I own after I die.”

³Abram said, “Look you have given me no son, so a slave born in my house will inherit everything I have.”

Abram was frustrated because he did not have a son. He told God that there could be no reward for him because he did not have a son. Instead, the slave in his home, Eliezer of Damascus, was the next in line to be his heir. Abram was sad and filled with doubt. But God did not forget Abram or turn back from His promise.

How did God help Abram when he doubted and felt upset?

Do you ever feel upset because of what is happening around you?

YES NO

2. God's Promise (Genesis 15:4-5)

VERSE 4.

⁴Then the Lord spoke His word to Abram: “He (the slave) will not be the one to inherit what you have. You will have a son of your own who will inherit what you have.”

God was and is in control of everything. His promises are sure.

God's promise in Genesis 12, is repeated in chapter 15. God would give a son to Abram to inherit all that he had.

VERSE 5.

⁵*Then God led Abram outside and said, “Look at the sky. There are so many stars you cannot count them. Your descendants also will be too many to count.”*

This son and his descendants would be so many that they could not be counted.

Did God keep His promise to Abram? YES NO

What challenges to our faith come because of God’s timing?

What are some reasons God might delay answering a prayer?

3. Abram’s Faith (Genesis 15:6)

VERSE 6.

⁶*Abram believed the Lord. And the Lord accepted Abram’s faith, and that faith made him right with God.*

Abram doubted, but he still believed! Because Abram believed God, God declared Abram to be righteous. Abram’s faith may have been weak, but he still believed. God said that Abram’s faith, even weak faith, made Abram right with Him.

We can learn a very important lesson from this verse. Abram’s righteousness came from God, not from Abram. Abram did not work for this righteousness. He did not earn it. God’s righteousness was given to Abram because of Abram’s faith in God.

Abram’s faith caused him to walk with God and believe God. Abram struggled with what he could not see, but he walked by faith in God’s promises. In 2 Chronicles 20:7, Abram is called God’s friend. This friendship came from faith. God is always our friend. We become His friend as we believe in Him.

How would you compare what Abram did to what a person does when accepting Christ?

Can you do anything to become right with God?

BIBLE SKILL: *Justification by Faith*

Justification is one of the words we use when we talk about salvation. It is God's gracious and full forgiveness because of His righteousness. It is the idea of being accepted as right when we are not right.

Genesis 15:6 is quoted three times in the New Testament to show the depth of this biblical truth. Read Romans 4:1-3, Galatians 3:6-9, and James 2:20-25.

What does the quotation in Romans and Galatians say about salvation?

What does the quotation in James say about genuine faith?

How does this apply to our lives today?

4. God's Plan (Genesis 15:7,13-16)

VERSE 7.

⁷God said to Abram, "I am the Lord who led you out of Ur of Babylonia so that I could give you this land to own."

Remember that God not only **created** with purpose, but He saved His children with a purpose in mind. The purpose was given to Abram in detail.

God reminded Abram of His name. The name Yahweh is a Hebrew word. Most Bibles translate this word in English as the Lord. This was a reminder that Abram heard the great and only God who made heaven and earth. The Lord spoke to him.

KEY DOCTRINE: *God's Names*

The Bible uses many names for God. Each one helps us understand more about who He is. The word *lord* was a common word showing respect for a father, a king, or an important person. When it is used for God, it shows His power:

Exodus 34:23-24

Joshua 3:13

Psalms 89:8

Deuteronomy 10:17

God also reminded Abram of God's call to follow Him from Ur of the Chaldeans (Babylonians) to a new land promised for him. This reminded Abram that he had followed God by faith to this point and that God was calling for continued faith in the future.

Our past obedience and faithfulness can lead us to future obedience and faithfulness. As we trust God now, we can build greater faith to trust God in the future. Abram had trusted God with his past, and now God called Abram to trust Him with his future.

God often asks us to trust Him with the future without giving us all the information we want about that future.

VERSES 13-14.

¹³ *Then the Lord said to Abram, “You can be sure that your descendants will be strangers and travel in a land they don’t own. The people there will make them slaves and be cruel to them for four hundred years.*

¹⁴ *“But I will punish the nation where they are slaves. Then your descendants will leave that land, taking great wealth with them.”*

God told Abram that his family would become slaves and suffer in a foreign land. He promised that they would return to this promised land when it was God’s time. They would bring much wealth from this land where they suffered as slaves. These words were fulfilled in the life of Jacob and his sons, the grandson and great grandsons of Abram. They lived in Egypt for four hundred years and became slaves in that land. God kept His promise to punish those who were cruel to His nation and to return His people to their promised land (Exodus 12:35-36).

VERSES 15-16.

¹⁵ *“And you, Abram, will die in peace and will be buried at an old age.”*

¹⁶ *After your great-great grandchildren are born, your people will come to this land again. It will take that long, because I am not yet going to punish the Amorites for their evil behavior.*

God promised Abram a long life. This promise was truly fulfilled because Abram lived to be 175 years old (Genesis 25:7). His life was very long and eventful, and God fulfilled all the promises made to him.

Write something that has happened in your life that was hard to accept, but later you understood that God was with you.

IN MY CONTEXT

Abram's life was not easy. Sometimes his faith was weak, but he gave us an example to follow. He listened to God. He understood what God told him to do. He obeyed God.

Abraham believed that God controlled the past, the present, and the future. He believed that God was in control of all that had happened to him and all that would happen to him.

Read Exodus 12:1-34 to learn how Genesis 15:14 came true. God made the promise to Abram but it did not come true until three **generations** later, in the time after Abram's grandson, Jacob, had died.

Find these verses and learn about God's faithfulness. Write a few words to help you remember what the verses teach you.

Matthew 17:20

Romans 4:1-6

Luke 1:35-38

Romans 8:28

Jeremiah 29:10-14

Have you been waiting on some answer from God? YES NO

Has this lesson helped you understand about God's timing? YES NO

What are some ways your Deaf Bible class can encourage each other to develop deeper faith?

MEMORY VERSE

Abram believed the Lord. And the Lord accepted Abram's faith, and that faith made him right with God. —Genesis 15:6



Session 9

A NEW NAME

GENESIS 17:1-8,15-22

God gives true life.

FIRST THOUGHTS

God is able to fulfill His **covenant** promises. Again and again, Moses recorded the covenant promises of God and God's faithfulness to keep His promises. Earlier lessons emphasized the desire of God to fellowship with His very good **creation**. God promised to keep the agreement that Abram's family would be as "the stars in the sky." God promised that this chosen family would bless all the nations of the earth.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

God promised Abram that his descendants would be “as many as the stars in the sky” (Genesis 15:5). But Abram had no children. He questioned God about this promise. Abram wondered if his wealth and family would be passed on to his slave because he had no children.

In chapter 16, we learn that Sarah was not willing to wait on God’s promise. She took control and offered her servant, Hagar, to Abram. Abram accepted the offer and Hagar had Abram’s son, Ishmael.

So Abram and Sarah solved the problem their way but not God’s way.

EXPLORE THE TEXT (GENESIS 17:1-8,15-22)

1. God Gave His Promise Again (Genesis 17:1-8)

VERSES 1-2.

¹*When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty. Obey me and do what is right.”* ²*“I will make an agreement between us, and I will make you the ancestor of many people.”*

God knows everything. He is all powerful. He is everywhere. He has control of everything. God keeps His promises. He does not fail!

God repeated His covenant promise to Abram. God wanted to show His love and care for all nations through Abram. God would be faithful to keep His promises to Abram and his descendants. He wanted Abram and the coming **generations** to be faithful to their part of the agreement.

VERSE 3.

³*Then Abram bowed face down on the ground. God said to him.*

Abram often bowed face down when God spoke to him. He did this again in verse 17. He recognized the greatness of God and bowed before Him as a sign of respect and **humility**. Believers must always be humble and reverent toward the Lord. This happened twenty-four years after God called Abram to leave his home. God promised a land and offspring, just as He did the first time.

VERSES 4-6.

⁴*"I am making my agreement with you: I will make you the father of many nations. ⁵"I am changing your name from Abram to Abraham because I am making you a father of many nations. ⁶"I will give you many descendants. New nations will be born from you, and kings will come from you."*

God also chose this moment to change Abram's name. *Abram* means "the father is exalted." God changed his name to *Abraham* which means "father of a multitude." God changed Abram's name to show what He would do. God promised Abraham he would be the father of many nations. All believers in Christ are heirs of Abraham. He is our father by faith (Galatians 3:7,29).

VERSES 7-8

⁷*"And I will make an agreement between me and you and all your descendants from now on: I will be your God and the God of all your descendants. ⁸"You live in the land of Canaan now as a stranger, but I will give you and your descendants all this land forever. And I will be the God of your descendants."*

God's **covenant** was **eternal** and included the offspring of future **generations**. God reminded this special man and his family again and again that He would always be their God. This covenant also included the land that was promised to Abraham's offspring.

God's promises make a difference in our lives. But our obedience to God also makes a difference in the lives of our family.

KEY DOCTRINE: *God's Patience*

God is patient. God can wait as long as He wants to wait. When His plan includes waiting, we become impatient like Abraham did. What do these verses tell you about God's patience?

Numbers 14:18

Nehemiah 9:29-31

1 Peter 3:19-20

Do you sometimes need to be reminded of God's promises and His patience? YES NO

**Do these verses help you to understand God's patience better?
YES NO**

The Bible gives many promises from God. Write one promise from God that means much to you.

2. Abraham Offered God a Different Plan (Genesis 17:15-18)

VERSES 15-16.

¹⁵ *God said to Abraham, "I will change the name of Sarai, your wife, to Sarah. ¹⁶"I will bless her and give her a son, and you will be the father.*

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She will be the mother of many nations. Kings of nations will come from her.

God also changed Sarai's name to *Sarah*. God promised that Sarah was to be blessed by bearing a son to Abraham. This was a reminder of the promised blessing God made to Abraham many years before. The promise was not just for Abraham. Sarah would have a son in her old age. Truly, Sarah looked forward to a child from the time she married Abraham. Now God promised that her hope would become reality.

VERSES 17-18.

¹⁷ Abraham bowed face down on the ground and laughed. He said to himself, "Can a man have child when he is a hundred years old? Can Sarah give birth to a child when she is ninety?" ¹⁸ Then Abraham said to God, "Please, let Ishmael be the son you promised."

Could God keep His promise of a son to Abraham and Sarah? Jesus said, "With God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:18). Abraham had some doubts when God reminded him of the promised son. Abraham suggested that the son of Hagar, Ishmael, be the promised son. Ishmael was the result of Sarah not believing God could or would do what He promised. Sarah took control of the problem, and this caused even more problems.

BIBLE SKILL: *Ishmael*

Ishmael was the first son of Abraham. His mother was the servant, Hagar (Genesis 16:1-15). He was not part of God's plan, but he was the result of Abraham and Sarah trying to help God do His work. God did not forsake Ishmael completely (Genesis 21:8-20). Ishmael married an Egyptian woman and had twelve sons (Genesis 25:12-16). Esau married a daughter of Ishmael (Genesis 28:9; 36:1-9). The descendants of Ishmael were called the Ishmaelites. They lived in the area of northern Arabia (Genesis 25:18).

Abraham believed God when he left his home in Ur to go to a place he did not know. He believed and followed God's leading to a promised land set aside for him and his descendants. He believed God when he was caught in a lie and deceit. He believed God gave him wisdom and strength to be the leader of his family. But with that belief Abraham also doubted that God could give him this promised son.

We pray and talk to God about our needs or problems. We believe He listens and answers our prayers. But at times doubt and unbelief sneak into our hearts and minds. God reminded Abraham again and again that God always keeps His promises. God reminds us, too. We must believe and trust Him!

Have you doubted God's promises like Abraham did? YES NO

Have you tried to take control from God like Sarah did? YES NO

How do our choices make a difference in the lives of our children and their children?

Do you pray for your children and grandchildren? YES NO

Pray for them to be obedient to God's plan. His blessings come to those that obey Him and follow His plans and purposes! God eagerly waits for that obedience so He can bless.

List some things you ask God when you pray for your children.

3. God Announced His Power (Genesis 17:19-22)

VERSES 19-22.

¹⁹ *God said, "No, Sarah your wife will have a son, and you will name him Isaac. I will make my agreement with him to be an agreement that continues forever with all his descendants."* ²⁰ *"As for Ishmael, I have*

heard you. I will bless him and give him many descendants. And I will cause their numbers to grow greatly. He will be the father of twelve great leaders, and I will make him into a great nation.²¹ “But I will make my agreement with Isaac, the son whom Sarah will have at this time next year.”²² After God finished talking with Abraham, God rose and left him.

God has all power, and His promises will come true. God had great patience with Abraham and Sarah. He kept assuring them that He had the power to do what He said He would do.

Ishmael, the son of Hagar and Abraham, was not to be the son of God’s promise. Abraham loved his son, Ishmael. God loved Ishmael, too. Ishmael was proof of Abraham and Sarah’s plan. Ishmael was not part of God’s plan. But God heard Abraham’s prayer and blessed Ishmael. He would be the father a great nation and of many descendants. Great leaders would come from his family. Read Genesis 25:12-18 to see how God fulfilled His promise to Abraham about Ishmael.

God’s plan involved a son from Abraham and Sarah. He would be the promised son. God’s plan was bigger than His promise to Abraham. God’s plan involved Jesus, Abraham’s descendant through Isaac, to bless all people. No matter how impossible it seemed to Abraham and Sarah, God would keep His promise to them in His way and His time.

We have God’s Word to help us trust Him today. Do you use your Bible to keep your faith strong? YES NO

IN MY CONTEXT

Our impatience causes problems. Instead of waiting on God's guidance, we often try to solve problems or make things happen ourselves. Sarah followed her plan without thinking about the results. When we follow our own plans, we suffer the loss of God's blessings. God's promised blessings come to us when we obey Him and Him alone.

What are some of the dangers that come with following our own plans instead of following the Lord's?

Why is it in our best interest that God sometimes says no to our plans?

Think about a time you substituted your plans for God's plans. Ask God to reveal ways you are substituting your plans for His. Then confess your impatience and tell God you want to follow His plans for your life.

How can your Deaf Bible class help each other follow God's plans?

MEMORY VERSE

I am God almighty. Obey Me and do what is right. —Genesis 17:1



Session 10

WHERE WICKEDNESS RULES

GENESIS 18:20-25; 19:12-16

God is merciful, but He is also just.

FIRST THOUGHTS

God's justice means He does not allow **disobedience** and **rebellion** to continue. But even when people **disobey**, God continues to offer a way back to Him. He has **grace** and mercy for all people.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

The servants of Lot (Abraham's nephew) had a disagreement with Abraham's servants. The disagreement became very serious. Abraham suggested that Lot choose an area to live in, and then he would take what was left of the land.

Lot chose a beautiful valley. Sodom and Gomorrah were two of the five cities in that valley. For **generations**, these cities practiced idol worship. The two cities were famous for their wickedness. They practiced sexual sins of all kinds. They were filled with **pride** and dishonesty. Evil controlled the cities.

Three visitors came to talk with Abraham. Two of these men were angels. Bible teachers believe the third one was the Lord. The visitors recalled the promise given to Abraham and his descendants. They told Abraham that God's promise would be fulfilled in him.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

(GENESIS 18:20-25; 19:12-16)

1. Man's Sin (Genesis 18:20-21)

VERSES 20-21.

²⁰ Then the Lord said, "I have heard many complaints against the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. They are very evil. ²¹ "I will go down and see if they are as bad as I have heard. If not, I will know."

Sodom and Gomorrah's disobedience required God's **judgment**. This is the second time God said, "I will go down." He knew everything and did not need to go down and see anything for Himself. But He needed to go down and confront the evil with His presence.

God is disappointed and sad when His people sin because of the harm evil brings to His **creation**. God's plans and purposes

focus on life and fellowship and wholeness. **Rebellion** and evil living cause **separation** and death. **Judgment** was God's last choice.

What two things do you see in today's world that do not show obedience to God and His Word?

1. _____
2. _____

2. Abraham's Intercession (Genesis 18:22-25)

VERSES 22-23.

²² So the men turned and went toward Sodom, but Abraham stood there before the Lord. ²³ Then Abraham approached Him and asked, "Do you plan to destroy the good people along with the evil ones?"

Abraham knew of the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah. He also knew his nephew, Lot, and his family lived there. Abraham showed great love, **humility**, and courage as he bargained with the Lord. Abraham prayed for these wicked cities and the people that would be destroyed. He begged for God's mercy on them.

Abraham's visitors turned toward Sodom to see the cities for themselves. As they went out toward the cities, Abraham stood before the Lord to plead for the people of the cities. Abraham stood boldly before God and asked if the Lord would destroy the good people with the evil people. He did not think it was right for some righteous people to suffer because of the sin of the wicked people.

VERSES 24-25.

²⁴ "What if there are fifty good people in that city? Will you still destroy it? Surely you will save the city for the fifty good people living there. ²⁵ "Surely you will not destroy the good people along with the evil ones; then they would be treated the same. You are the judge of all the earth. Won't you do what is right?"

Abraham bargained with the Lord for the lives of Lot and his family and also for all the people of the cities. With each “if,” God replied with a promise to save the people. If just ten good people could be found, the Lord would hold back His judgment (verse 32).

BIBLE SKILL: *Abraham’s Plea to the Lord*

Abraham’s first request showed some faith in the people in those cities. As he thought more about it, his faith began to shrink.

Abraham asked God to save Sodom and Gomorrah . . .

if fifty righteous people were found (verses 25-26).

if forty-five righteous were found (verses 27-28).

if forty good people were found (verse 29).

if thirty righteous were found (verse 30).

if twenty good people were found (verse 31).

if ten righteous people were found (verse 32).

There was too much sin and too much rejection of God’s plan. The Lord was willing to forgive and save the cities, but He could not wait any longer for their repentance. Judgment and destruction came down!

Today the names, Sodom and Gomorrah, have become a clear and strong description of evil and sin.

How is God’s view of sin different from the world’s view of sin today?

How can a nation ignore sin to the point that sin becomes the normal way of life?

List areas where our nation has drifted from God’s plan.

3. God's Grace (Genesis 19:12-16)

VERSES 12-13.

¹²*The two men said to Lot, "Do you have any other relatives in this city? Do you have any sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or any other relatives? If you do, tell them to leave now, ¹³"Because we are about to destroy this city. The Lord has heard of all the evil that is here, so He has sent us to destroy it."*

These verses do not need much explanation. God's Word is clear. God patiently sought to find fifty, then forty, and on to ten. But not even ten righteous people were in the city so God had to send **judgment** on them.

VERSES 14-16.

¹⁴*So Lot went out and said to his future sons-in-law who were pledged to marry his daughters, "Hurry and leave this city! The Lord is about to destroy it!" But they thought Lot was joking. ¹⁵At dawn the next morning, the angels begged Lot to hurry. They said, "Go! Take your wife and your two daughters with you so you will not be destroyed when the city is punished." ¹⁶But Lot delayed. So the two men took the hands of Lot, his wife, and his two daughters and led them safely out of the city. So the Lord was merciful to Lot and his family."*

In the face of judgment, God offered **grace** and mercy to Lot and his family. God's patience in the face of terrible sin and **rebellion** is sometimes difficult for us to understand. We benefit from His patience just as Lot and his family did. God's mercy means we deserve judgment but we do not get it. God's grace means we receive what we do not deserve. The two angels asked Lot about his relatives in the city. Lot went out to his future sons-in-law to beg them to leave the city with him and his daughters. They thought Lot was joking and refused to come with him.

KEY DOCTRINE: *God's Mercy*

Along with judgment and punishment, God always provides a way for His people to receive His forgiveness. Write a few words to remind you what each verse teaches you about God's mercy.

Exodus 33:19

2 Kings 13:22-23

Nehemiah 9:18-21

Isaiah 63:7

Jeremiah 3:11-13

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Ephesians 2:4-7

The angels explained that the cities would be destroyed. Lot, his wife, and his daughters needed to leave. But they were slow to obey. Then the angels took them by the hand and led them out of the city of Sodom. They were saved from the destruction.

Again the patience that God showed to Abraham and Lot and his family amazes anyone that reads this story. But God's

patience with us is just as amazing. Be thankful for His patience as He offers mercy and **grace** again and again.

The character of our God is clear in the story of **judgment** on Sodom and Gomorrah. The men of those cities took life that was **created** in the image of God and turned it into evil living. The **relationship** in marriage between one man and one woman was lost in unclean and sinful acts. The people were involved only in satisfying self. Their lifestyle did not honor God.

The citizens of these cities had a choice. They could repent and turn back to the God of **creation**. They could call out for God's grace and mercy on them. But they did not. God could not and would not fail to judge the choices of these people. The lifestyle of the people of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah required judgment. God brought judgment. Burning sulfur (called fire and brimstone in some Bible translations) fell and the cities were destroyed (Genesis 19:23-29).

God saved Lot and his family. They moved to the mountains for safety. Lot experienced the influence of a man of faith, Abraham, but he chose to follow the influence of men and women practicing terrible sins.

In today's world, many hearing and Deaf people choose to live self-centered lives physically and spiritually. Disrespect, lust, greed, **pride**, and self-satisfaction rule the lives of many. Will God judge this sin? Yes! Unless men and women decide to repent and surrender to God's plan, His judgment will come.

Do you think people today really believe this story of Sodom and Gomorrah is true? YES NO

**Do you think people today believe God really punishes sin?
YES NO**

IN MY CONTEXT

Sin brings judgment upon those who continue to **rebel** against God. God listens to the prayers of His people and lets them ask about His plans. God always offers grace even in a time of judgment.

Did Abraham balance humility and boldness in his approach to God?
YES NO

Do you feel you can stand before God like Abraham did? YES NO

What can you and your Bible study class do because of what you have learned from this lesson?

Here are some suggestions:

1. Lead your Bible study class to pray that America will return to righteousness as a nation.
2. Pray for a revival among believers in your city and church.
3. Ask the Lord to show you any area of sinful actions or attitudes in your personal life.
4. Commit to full obedience to His best for your life and future.
5. Think about ways to show grace to others without giving up your beliefs or God's standards.
6. Identify at least one person in your life to whom you need to show grace. Think about how you can do this.

MEMORY VERSE

You are the judge of all the earth. Won't you do what is right?

—Genesis 18:25



Session 11

GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES

GENESIS 21:1-8

God is always faithful and always keeps His promises.

FIRST THOUGHTS

Many times in this study we have learned how God keeps His promises. Even when men and women fail, God does not fail! His good purposes and plans succeed. The amazing thought is that God uses men and women to be part of His purposes and plans. Abraham's life proves this.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Just as his **ancestors** surrendered to temptation, Abraham felt he had to defend himself with a lie or half-truth. In the beginning of his journey with God, Abraham lied to the pharaoh of Egypt. Sarah was a beautiful woman. Abraham said she was his sister and not his wife (Genesis 12:10-20). Sarah was Abraham's half-sister, but she was also his wife.

Abraham traveled to southern Canaan and then on to Gerar (Genesis 2:1-17). He told Abimelech, the king of Gerar, the same lie he told the pharaoh. Abraham thought that kings would want to take Sarah as a wife. Perhaps a king or leader would kill him in order to take Sarah. Abimelech did take Sarah as his wife. He believed the lie that she was Abraham's sister.

Abimelech's wives and servant girls could not become pregnant because he took Sarah for his wife. In a dream, God showed Abimelech the truth about Sarah. God protected Sarah by causing Abimelech not to touch her. Abimelech was upset about the lie because he feared God's power. He returned Sarah to Abraham. Both men exchanged gifts to prove a good **relationship** between them. After Sarah was returned to Abraham, God made it possible for Abimelech's wives and servants to have children again.

EXPLORE THE TEXT (GENESIS 21:1-8)

1. God's Promise Came True (Genesis 21:1-2)

VERSES 1-2.

¹The Lord cared for Sarah as He had said and did for her what He had promised. ²Sarah became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. Everything happened at the time God had said it would.

God promised a son for Abraham and Sarah. He kept His promise, and they became parents of a son. Having children was very important to Sarah and Abraham. In their culture, having a child was proof of God's blessing. Also, a son would carry the family name and history with him into the future. That was very important to Sarah and Abraham.

Sarah's doubt and anger did not stop God from keeping His promise. Abraham's doubt and lying did not stop God from keeping His promise. Abraham and Sarah sinned and failed to believe God, but God was faithful even when they were not.

Sarah gave birth to Isaac. Isaac was the son of God's promise. Sarah's servants laughed at the thought that she and Abraham could have a child in their old age. God kept His promise and Isaac was born.

Sarah and Abraham had doubted God's ability to keep His promise. They both were beyond child-bearing age. Laughter from their servants brought anger and resentment into Sarah's life. She sought to take control and help God keep His promise. A son was born to Abraham and Hagar, Sarah's servant girl. Trouble was the result of that plan.

Hagar, the servant of Sarah, had a son, Ishmael. Ishmael laughed at Isaac. Sarah was angry and requested that Hagar and Ishmael be sent out away from their camp.

Hagar and Ishmael wandered in the desert and were near death. An angel of the Lord heard the cries of Ishmael and came to him with the promise that he would become a great nation. Hagar and Ishmael were led to water and were saved from sure death. God had promised Hagar that a great nation would come from her son. The angel reminded her of that promise.

A Deaf couple wanted a child very much. They had been married for more than seven years, and the doctors told them they would never have children. They cried and prayed together and felt God wanted them to have a child. No child came, so they decided to adopt a child. After waiting for many months, they adopted a little boy who was Deaf. He was a gift from God

to them. God kept His promise in His time. A few months later, they learned that they were expecting a daughter. God blessed them with two children. God kept His promise to them. God does not fail to keep His promises.

Have you ever doubted God's promises? YES NO

What happened?

What are some excuses people use to explain why they cannot serve the Lord right now?

2. Abraham Remembered God's Promise (Genesis 21:3-7)

VERSE 3.

³And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac.

Isaac's name means he laughs. He came into the world in God's timing. He was the proof of God's promise to Abraham that he would become the father of multitudes.

VERSE 4.

⁴Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him.

Abraham remembered God's instructions about circumcision. He and all the members of his family and his men servants were circumcised at God's command. Circumcision was the physical sign of God's people that would come from Abraham and the **generations** to follow. When Isaac was born, Abraham followed God's plan exactly. Isaac's circumcision and name would be a constant reminder of God's **covenant** and faithfulness in Isaac's birth.

VERSES 5-7.

⁵Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶And Sarah said, “God has made me laugh, so that all who hear will laugh with me.” ⁷She also said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have borne him a son in his old age.”

Sarah laughed with joyful wonder. The promise was fulfilled. To add to the wonder, Sarah, even in her old age, was able to nurse her son. This, too, was evidence of God’s miraculous work. From her experience, Sarah knew God keeps His promises.

Earlier, Sarah had laughed at the idea of having a child at her advanced age (Genesis 18:10-15). Now, she laughed for a different reason. This was no longer the laughter of doubt. This was laughter from a heart overjoyed at the birth of her son. The fulfillment of God’s promise brought a new level of trust and joy in the Lord for Sarah. She found a joy she had not known prior to the birth of Isaac.

God works through people of all ages and situations. We are never too young to serve the Lord, and we are never too old to serve Him. He wants us to serve Him as single or married, with children or without, in every part of our lives. He wants every believer, in all situations, to live by faith and obey Him.

All of us have times when we doubt God’s promises. All of us become impatient. Waiting on God is not easy, but God always keeps His promises. We can always trust Him.

God keeps His promises. What are some things you can do when you know God has kept a promise to you? _____

What are some spiritual milestones in your life?

How can you celebrate these special moments?

3. Abraham and Sarah Rejoiced (Genesis 21:8)

VERSE 8.

⁸*So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.*

At the right time, Abraham celebrated the birth of Isaac.

Isaac grew and at the proper time he was weaned from his mother. He was about two or three years old, or maybe a little older. The time came for Abraham to give a great feast to **celebrate** this occasion. They rejoiced because God's promises were fulfilled in them. They had no doubt about God's power to keep His promises.

The memory of the doubt and lying and anger did not stop the celebration of Isaac's life. Abraham and Sarah enjoyed God's blessing. They understood that God is in control, and His plan and purpose will be fulfilled in His time.

KEY DOCTRINE: *Thankfulness*

Read these verses to find things you should be thankful for, or ways to help you show thanksgiving to God. Write a note to help you remember what the verses teach you.

Psalm 9:1-2

Psalm 30:1-12

Psalm 65:1-4

Psalm 100:1-5

Psalm 116:1

Psalm 118:1-4

Psalm 138:1-8

When the early Pilgrims came to America, they suffered many hardships. They were in a new place. They did not know what would happen in the future. We **celebrate** Thanksgiving Day to remember that God was not only faithful to Abraham but also to the early settlers of our country. God kept His promises to Abraham and Sarah, and He continues to keep His promises to us today.

Write about one time when you celebrated God’s blessing in your life.

IN MY CONTEXT

God can be trusted to fulfill His promises, but in His time. We must find ways to remember God's faithfulness to us. God's gifts to us should be celebrated as an act of worship and thanksgiving.

Discuss with your Deaf Bible class how God has been faithful in your lives. Discuss how these experiences can be used to encourage each other.

Take time to pray with your family and thank God for what He has given to you and them.

What is one thing you do on Thanksgiving Day to celebrate how God always keeps His promises?

MEMORY VERSE

And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken. —Genesis 21:1



Session 12

THE FAITH TEST

GENESIS 22:1-14

God provided a sacrifice for Abraham. He also sent His Son, Jesus, to be a sacrifice for our sin.

FIRST THOUGHTS

Abraham was not perfect, but his faith in God's power was strong. Abraham obeyed God when God asked him to do something that did not make sense. Abraham disobeyed at times, but he knew God wanted the best for him and his family. Abraham lived a life of faith.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

We do not know how Abraham recognized God's voice when God spoke to him. But he listened to Him, and he obeyed God's instructions.

Chapter 22 begins with the words, "After these things." What things? Last week the lesson ended at Genesis 21:8. Later in that chapter we learn that after Isaac was born, Hagar and Ishmael were forced to leave. Then Abraham made an agreement with Abimelech, king of the Philistines, so he could travel in peace.

EXPLORE THE TEXT (GENESIS 22:1-14)

1. God Tested Abraham's Faith (Genesis 22:1-2)

VERSES 1-2.

¹Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ²And He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

What a request! Abraham knew the voice of God. He had heard it many times. Abraham and Sarah experienced the long wait for a son. Surely he wondered why God would ask him to offer this beloved son on the altar. Human sacrifice was practiced in Old Testament times, but people that followed God did not do this. God is the God of life, not death.

God did not change His character in speaking to Abraham. The request for Isaac to be offered as a sacrifice was a test of Abraham's faith. Would Abraham trust God for the life of this son of promise and obey God?

How would you answer the request God gave Abraham?

Notice in the verses that Sarah was not aware of God's request. How do you think she would answer God?

Discuss with your class some ways in which the members of your Deaf Bible study have had their faith tested. What events or periods in your life have most tested your faith?

2. Abraham Prepared for the Test (Genesis 22:3-8)

VERSES 3-6.

³ So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴ Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. ⁵ And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." ⁶ So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.

Abraham took Isaac and the items needed to offer his son as a sacrifice to God. Abraham showed that he trusted God completely. He believed God would provide.

Abraham heard God's request and obeyed immediately. He did not wait to begin to prepare for the journey. He saddled the donkey in the early morning and then called Isaac and the young men to get ready for the trip. This must have been hard for Abraham. He gathered the wood he needed and left the camp.

Moriah was a series of mountains about fifty miles from the camp where Abraham was staying. The journey took three days. Abraham and Isaac traveled the last few miles without their servants. Abraham promised the servants that they (both father and son) would return to them. He spoke in faith. Abraham believed that even if he offered his son's life to God, God would raise Isaac from the dead. Abraham's faith did not weaken (Hebrews 11:17-19).

VERSES 7-8.

⁷But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" ⁸And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." And the two of them went together.

Isaac also showed great faith in his father. The things needed for worship and sacrifice were there, but there was no lamb. Isaac accepted the words of his father, "God will provide the lamb for the burnt offering." With that promise, the two moved to the place of worship.

What four things did Abraham do to prepare for the trip to Moriah?

BIBLE SKILL: *Abraham Obeyed God*

Read Genesis 12-21. In these chapters, look for the times God spoke to Abraham. You will find words like "God said" and "Abraham did what God wanted him to do."

You will also see some verses that tell about times Abraham did not obey God. How can the Bible call Abraham the example for our faith when he did not always obey God? It is because he always came back to God and continued faithful.

3. Abraham Passed the Test (Genesis 22:9-12)

VERSES 9-10.

⁹ Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. ¹⁰ And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

Imagine the grief that Abraham experienced in the moments of binding Isaac and placing him on the altar of sacrifice. The steps in sacrificial worship were familiar. But this time was not the same as before.

Imagine the questions in Isaac's mind and heart. The Bible does not show one word of protest from Isaac's lips. Without struggle or protest, Isaac allowed his father to place him on the altar of worship. Then God stopped Abraham's arm from bringing the knife down.

VERSES 11-12.

¹¹ But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." ¹² And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

God stopped Abraham from completing the sacrifice of Isaac. God approved of Abraham's act of faithful obedience!

Now imagine the joy when the Angel of the Lord called out to stop the sacrifice. Some Bible teachers believe that Angel of the Lord means Jesus Himself. Abraham met Jesus face-to-face as he faithfully obeyed.

┌
We are always reminded of this story when we sign Abraham. We show God's hand stopping the arm of Abraham. (It was really God's words, not His hand, that stopped Abraham.)

KEY DOCTRINE: *Angel of the Lord*

Bible teachers believe that the words, *Angel of the Lord*, refer to God. Read these verses to see how the Angel of the Lord spoke to men:

Genesis 16:7-9, to Hagar, Sarah's servant.

Exodus 3:1-3, to Moses from a burning bush.

Numbers 22:21-36, to the prophet Balaam.

Judges 2:1-3, to the people of Israel.

2 Samuel 24:16-18, to King David.

Zechariah 3:1-10, to the high priest.

Matthew 2:20-21, to Joseph.

Luke 2:8-12, to the shepherds.

Acts 5:18-21, to Peter and John in jail.

Are you now facing a test to your faith in your home, church, or work? YES NO

Did this lesson help you understand that testing better? YES NO

4. God Gave Abraham a Sheep to Sacrifice (Genesis 22:13-14)

VERSES 13-14.

¹³ Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ Then Abraham called the name of the place, The Lord Will Provide; as it is said to this day, “In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”

Abraham passed the test in God’s timing! At just the right time, the Angel of the Lord stopped the sacrifice of Isaac. At just the right time, the sacrificial animal, a male sheep, was caught in the bushes. At just the right time, God provided all that was needed for worship.

God allows testing in our lives to strengthen our faith. That faith brings God’s peace. God also gives assurance that He provides the victory He has promised.

This story reminds us clearly what Christ did for us on the cross. Why is it important for believers to understand how Jesus took our place on the cross?

IN MY CONTEXT

The test that Abraham faced causes many questions to come to our minds. Think about these questions. There are no easy answers.

Why would God allow this kind of test to come into Abraham and Sarah's life? How could Abraham be so calm and show so much faith in this situation? How could Isaac trust his father so completely? Does it seem to you like God's command for Abraham to offer Isaac as a burnt offering is not like the way you see God?

***Faith* and *works* are important words in the Book of James. Discuss with your class the importance of doing works because of our faith, but having faith for salvation.**

We must always interpret difficult Bible passages in the light of the whole Bible. If we try to understand Genesis 22 without the rest of the Bible, we can easily have a wrong picture of God. Read these verses to understand this better:

Psalm 40:4-10

Psalm 51:16-17

Hebrews 10:1-14

MEMORY VERSE

Abraham answered, "God will give us the lamb for the sacrifice, my son." —Genesis 22:8



Session 13

GOD GIVES WHAT WE NEED

GENESIS 24:1-17

God always gives us what we need.

FIRST THOUGHTS

God provides for the needs of His people in ways that agree with His **eternal** purpose and plan. Think of the garden of Eden, Noah's ark, the calling of Abraham, the saving of Isaac, and the **provision** of the Lamb. All of these prove God's love and care. This **provision** may be rejected, but it cannot be denied. God is our provider!

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Chapters 22 and 23 tell of Abraham's faith in God through times of testing and loss. Genesis 23 records the death of Sarah, Abraham's wife. Abraham still thought of himself as a stranger in the land where God had called him. He purchased the cave of Machpelah as a burial place for his wife. This would also become the burial site for Abraham, Isaac and his wife, Rebekah, and Jacob and his wife, Leah.

EXPLORE THE TEXT (GENESIS 24:1-17)

1. The Servant's Assignment (Genesis 24:1-9)

VERSES 1-9.

¹Abraham was now very old, and the Lord had blessed him in every way. ²Abraham said to his oldest servant, who was in charge of everything he owned, "Put your hand under my leg. ³"Make a promise to me before the Lord, the God of heaven and earth. Don't get a wife for my son from the Canaanite girls who live around here. ⁴"Instead, go back to my country, to the land of my relatives, and get a wife for my son Isaac." ⁵The servant said to him, "What if this woman does not want to return with me to this land? Then, should I take your son with me back to your homeland?" ⁶Abraham said to him, "No! Don't take my son back there. ⁷"The Lord, the God of heaven, brought me from the home of my father and the land of my relatives. And he promised me, 'I will give this land to your descendants.' The Lord will send His angel before you to help you get a wife for my son there. ⁸"If the girl won't come back with you, you will be free from this promise. But you must not take my son back there." ⁹So the servant put his hand under his master's leg and made a promise to Abraham about this.

The custom of that time required the father to select a wife for his son, but this was not something Abraham could do. He was

too old to travel. As a loving father, Abraham wanted to see his son married and to see children born to him. But he did not want his son to marry a Canaanite girl. He wanted Isaac to marry a girl from his own godly family.

Abraham had a trusted servant, Eliezer, who was also the oldest of his servants. Abraham asked this servant to show that he accepted this **responsibility** by placing his hand under his master's thigh. The symbol may have been to remember that the **generations** to come would keep the **covenant** made between God and Abraham. Or possibly this was a symbol of circumcision that also pictured the covenant between God and Abraham. Either explanation presents a strong reminder that the agreement was serious. The details of the lives of the men and women and their families are recorded in the Bible to help us to see the faithfulness of God. In spite of man's failures and **disobedience**, God's promises and His **provision** do not fail. He chose to work through past generations to build His kingdom. God does not give up on His people—not in the past, not in the present, and not in the future. His promises and His provision are sure.

What was the name of Abraham's servant?

What was the sign of the agreement between Abraham and his servant?

2. The Servant's Prayer (Genesis 24:10-14)

VERSE 10.

¹⁰ *The servant took ten of Abraham's camels and left, carrying with him many different kinds of beautiful gifts. He went to Northwest Mesopotamia to Nahor's city.*

Abraham's servant's mission was very important. He had to choose a wife for his master's son. This would be the family that would continue the generations of his beloved master. The mission required prayer. This servant needed clear guidance. He trusted the God of his master to lead him to the right wife for Isaac.

Nahor's city was Haran. There were two men named Nahor. One was Abraham's grandfather. This one is Abraham's older brother.

VERSES 11-14.

¹¹*In the evening, when the women come out to get water, he made the camels kneel down at the well outside the city.* ¹²*The servant said, "Lord, God of my master Abraham, allow me to find a wife for his son today. Please show this kindness to my master Abraham."* ¹³*"Here I am, standing by the spring, and the girls from the city are coming out to get water."* ¹⁴*"I will say to one of them, 'Please put your jar down so I can drink.' Then let her say, 'Drink, and I will also give water to your camels.' If that happens, I will know she is the right one for your servant Isaac and that you have shown kindness to my master."*

The servant prayed for a sign so he would know the girl God planned for Isaac to marry. He would request water for himself. He would not ask for water for the camels. If he spoke to the right girl, she would give him water and volunteer to draw water for the camels. Perhaps the kindness shown to both servant and animals would be the exact information needed to make the right choice for Isaac and his master.

What signs did the servant ask for to guide him to the right girl for Isaac?

Why do you think the servant would want the girl to be kind?

Write about one time that you needed help in making a decision.

3. God's Answer (Genesis 24:15-17)

VERSES 15-17.

¹⁵ Before the servant had finished praying, Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, came out of the city. (Bethuel was the son of Milcah and Nahor, Abraham's brother.) Rebekah was carrying her water jar on her shoulder. ¹⁶ She was very pretty, a virgin; she had never had sexual relations with a man. She went down to the spring and filled her jar, then came back up. ¹⁷ The servant ran to her and said, "Please give me a little water from your jar."

God answered the servant's prayer before the prayer was finished. Rebekah, a beautiful young girl, arrived at the well. Abraham's servant must have been surprised and excited to see this beautiful young girl come to the well. He had not finished praying for guidance. He noticed right away that she fit the image he and Abraham had for a wife for Isaac. She even carried a water jar on her shoulder.

In verses 18-67, we learn how Rebecca gave water to the servant and then offered to bring water from the spring to give to his camels. The servant immediately bowed to thank God for His guidance. Rebekah agreed to become Isaac's wife. The servant's prayers were answered.

When we pray to God and ask Him to meet our needs we show our faith in His **provision**. God uses prayer to work out His plan and purpose in the world. At times the answer to prayer comes quickly. Other times the answer comes later. At times our requests do not fit His plan and purpose. The answer may be "No!" Even then, the key to prayer is to trust in God's desire for the best for His people and His plan!

Through prayer, we can seek and find God's direction and understand His purposes. God answers honest and sincere prayer in ways that agree with His plan and purpose.

God gave men and women, boys and girls, the gift of prayer. We pray as we focus on Him and communicate our deepest needs and our greatest joys. Just as He shares with us through His Word, through the Holy Spirit, and through circumstances and people, we share our heart with Him. Paul said to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

KEY DOCTRINE: *Prayers from God's People*

The power of prayer is in the One (God) who hears the prayer. The power is not in the one (person) who says the prayer. The servant had faith in God that He would answer.

Luke 11:1-13 and Matthew 6:1-15: The disciples of Jesus asked Him to teach them how to pray. Jesus gave them, and us, a model prayer. We sometimes call it the Lord's Prayer. Jesus told them and us to keep praying, asking, seeking, and knocking. He reminded them of how much the Father in heaven loves them and wants to provide for them.

Write about a time when God answered your prayer request.

Write down the prayer requests from your Deaf Bible class and remember to pray for them this week.

IN MY CONTEXT

Think about these questions first, then look at the suggestion below the question.

1. To whom do you pray?

We pray to God, our Father, through Jesus our Savior.

2. How do you pray?

We pray in humility, honestly seeking to pray as God wants us to pray. We do not need to worry about words or signs. God sees and knows our heart. The Holy Spirit interprets our words to the Father.

3. When do you pray?

We can pray anytime or all the time!

4. What do we pray for?

We can pray for God to meet our needs. We can pray for others. We can confess our disobedience and failures. We can pray about everything, always giving thanks and praise.

5. Where do you pray?

We can pray anywhere or anyplace. We also can pray in a special place where our conversation with God is private.

6. Why do you pray?

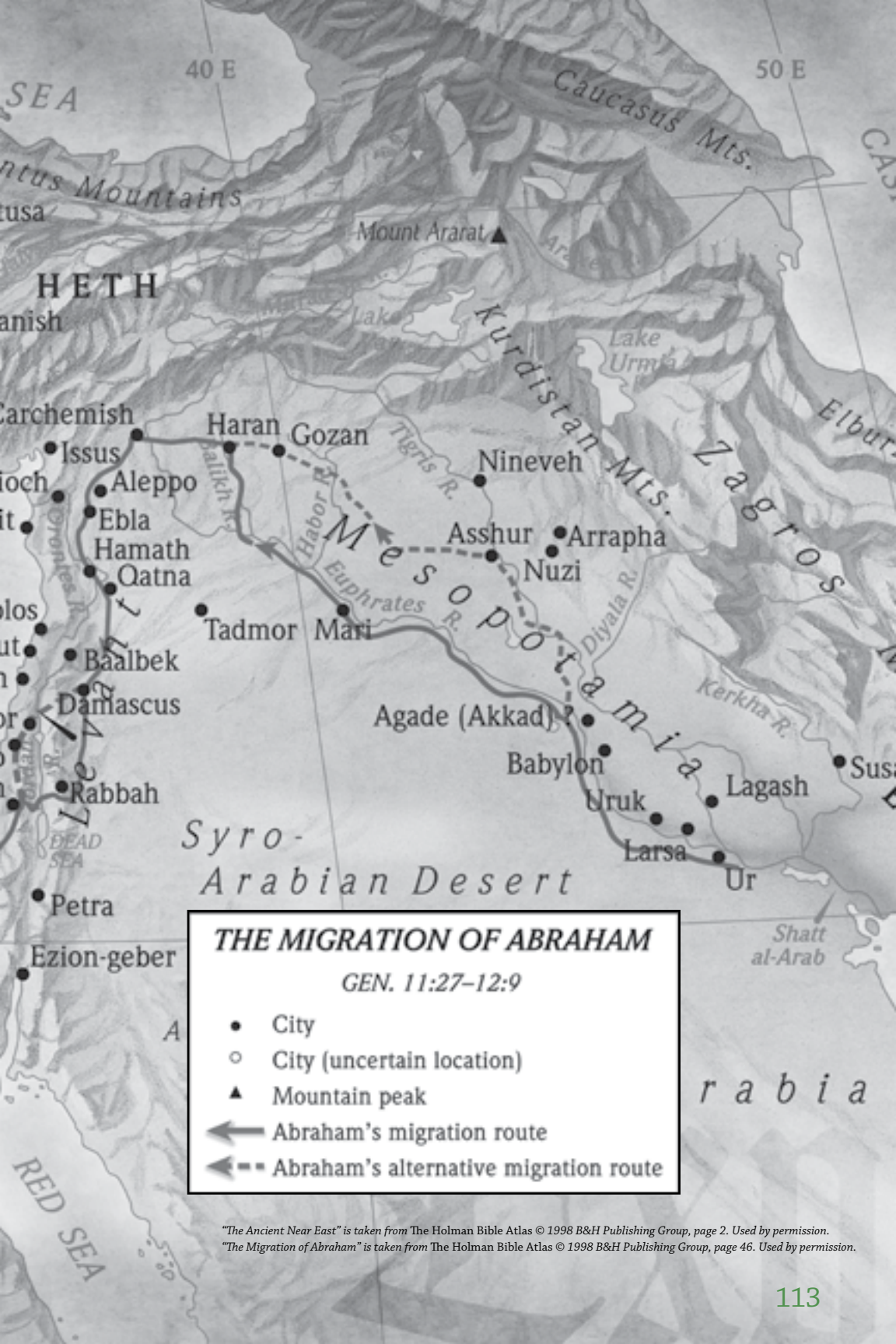
We pray because God asks us to pray. Jesus taught His disciples to pray. Jesus, Himself, prayed. We pray because we fully depend on God.

MEMORY VERSE

Blessed is the Lord, the God of my master, Abraham. —Genesis 24:27

THE LANDS OF GENESIS





THE MIGRATION OF ABRAHAM

GEN. 11:27-12:9

• City

○ City (uncertain location)

▲ Mountain peak

← Abraham's migration route

←-- Abraham's alternative migration route

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"The Migration of Abraham" is taken from The Holman Bible Atlas © 1998 B&H Publishing Group, page 46. Used by permission.

WORD LIST

- Abundance** – Much more than requested or needed
- Accountable** – Must answer to someone for what is said or done
- Affecting** – Causing a result, influencing
- Ancestors** – Past family members
- Announce or Announcement** – To Inform, message given
- Appetite** – Desire to satisfy physical or emotional needs
- Applies** – Fits, adds to
- Ashamed** – Feel bad (regret) what one says or does
- Assaulted** – Hurt, attacked
- Authority** – Control over someone or something; rule
- Celebrate** – Be joyful
- Companion** – Friend, helper, mate, partner
- Confirm** – Understand, proof, yes, sure
- Consequences** – Results because of an action or word
- Constantly** – Always, never stopping, continue
- Covenant** – An agreement between two or more people; an agreement between God and His children
- Creation, Created** – God made from nothing for purpose
- Deceive, Endurance** – to fool or trick someone to cause harm
- Disobey, Disobedience** – Not doing what God said to do, rebel
- Emphasize** – To set above for clear understanding, point out
- Endurance** – Strength to finish
- Established** – Set up, started
- Eternal** – Forever, always
- Exclusive** – The only way or the only one
- Existence** – To live or to have life
- Expansion** – To add to an idea for understanding, explain more
- Free will** – To be able to make choices
- Generations** – The lifetime of families from parents to children
- Genesis** – Beginning
- God breathed into** – God gave man His image, living, breathing, soul that is able to fellowship with God
- Grace** – God's unlimited and undeserved love and gifts
- Humanity** – All people of all times
- Humility** – True willingness to learn and be under God's control

┌

Identity – Name and character

Image and likeness – Same characteristics, nature

Innocence – Not yet experienced sin, Free of guilt

Inspired – A touch of God to lead or guide in His direction

Instruction – A teaching or direction

Intention – Having a reason or purpose

Intercession – Praying for another person

Intimacy – Private, person, openness

Interruption – Something or someone that stops or comes between a word, an event, or people

Involves – About

Judgment – Deciding, choosing, saying what is right or wrong

Justification – Having a right relationship with God

Meditating – Focusing or thinking on something over and over

Ownership – Having proof of owning

Penalty, Penalties – How a person will be punished for wrong doing

Pride – Thinking highly of self, better than others

Principle – A belief or rule to live by and guide decisions

Privilege – Honor to be or do, allowed to be or do

Provision – Given what is needed and best

Rebel, Rebellion – Not obeying God's Word

Regeneration – To cause to be renewed or to live again, renewal of life

Redemption – Accepting the price Jesus paid so we could know God as He wants us to know Him

Relationship – Connection between people and people with God

Responsibility – Required duty, something a person must do

Sabbath – The seventh day; The day of rest

Separation – To be parted from something or someone, absent

Sham – False, pretend, lie

Shambles – Confusion and destruction

Trinity – God in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit

Unchecked – Not stopped

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE LEADER

- Review this resource page for ideas to make your teaching more effective.
- Review the pupil material for Scripture and lesson format.
- Use the Leader Guide to supplement your teaching. (Note: Questions you may want to ask your class members are in bold type.)
- Use the questions in the pupil material to encourage discussion.

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

- On-Line Commentary:
“<http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/index.htm>”.
- Bible verses in this publication are from the New Century Version (NCV). This translation is available on-line:
“<http://www.biblegateway.com>”.
It is also available as an eBook. You can download it for a fee from this site:
“<http://biblegateway.christianbook.com/the-everyday-bible-ebook/9781418533618/pd/9616EB?p=1172355>”.
- The ASL Bible is produced by Deaf Missions and available at:
“<http://www.deafmissionsstore.com/>”.
- The ASL Bible for mobile devices is available at:
“<http://www.DeafBible.com>” or “<http://www.Bible.is/Deaf>”.
- Let’s Sign Hymnal and the ASL Bible are available at:
“<http://www.Letssignllc.com>”.



Explore the Bible.®

LEADER GUIDE

Genesis

Session 1

GOD CREATES

GENESIS 1:1-5,26-31; 2:1-3

PLAN AHEAD

Write the word BEGINNING on the board.

Ask _____ to summarize the Introduction to the Book of Genesis from the pupil material.

Ask _____ to give a brief background about Labor Day. (See “<http://www.dol.gov/laborday/history.htm>”.)

At the close of the lesson, ask _____ to sign “How Great Thou Art” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #163). Prepare copies of the words, and discuss references to God’s **creation** in the verses. Sign the chorus together.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God Created Everything from Nothing (Genesis 1:1-2)

Have the selected class member sign a summary of the Introduction.

Point to the word BEGINNING on the board. The Hebrew word for beginning is the first word and the title of this book. *Genesis* is the Greek word for “beginning.”

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *Beginning (Genesis 1:1)*

Many Bible books refer to the beginning. Ask several class members to sign one of these verses: Psalm 90:1-2; Psalm 102:25; Proverbs 8:22-29; Ecclesiastes 1:9; Isaiah 41:4; John 1:1-3; Ephesians 3:11.

As creator, God has **authority** over all of His **creation**.

DIG DEEPER: Create (Genesis 1:1)

The Hebrew word for create means “to make something from nothing.” Only God can make something completely new from nothing. The writer used the word create in verses 1, 21, and 27. In verse 1, God created the sky and the earth. Nothing existed but God before He did that. In verse 21, He created the first animals. In verse 27, He created people.

The Holy Spirit of God moved over the water. Some translations have the word *hovered*. Explain this as a helicopter hovering over something on the ground.

2. God Created by His Word (Genesis 1:3-5)

God spoke and light began. God created with a specific order. First, God made light. Later, He made plants. Plants cannot grow if there is no light. Then, He made animals and people. They cannot see if there is no light, and they need plants for food.

3. God Created in His Image (Genesis 1:26-31)

Man’s body is like an animal’s body. But man’s spirit is not equal to God’s Spirit but in the image of God’s Spirit. See the pupil material to encourage discussion of the concept of the Trinity.

What are some ways believers can practice good stewardship of God’s creation?

4. God Created for His Glory (Genesis 2:1-3)

Your class will study this session during Labor Day weekend. Use the presentation about Labor Day here.

Why is it important to have a day of rest? (We become refreshed and reconnect with God when we rest. God declared it holy.)

Why do we worship on Sunday instead of Saturday? (Because Jesus was resurrected on the first day. Some people keep the seventh day as a special day.)

Does it matter whether our special day is the first or the seventh day in our week?

IN YOUR CONTEXT

How can God’s people celebrate the Creator? (By worshiping Him.)

Close the lesson with “How Great Thou Art.”

Session 2

MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

GENESIS 2:4-9,15-18

PLAN AHEAD

Use the questions in the pupil material to encourage discussion.

Ask _____ to sign "This Is My Father's World" (Let's Sign Hymnal #140).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God Created Man (Genesis 2:4-7)

Ask _____ to sign Psalm 103:13-14.

This second telling of the **Creation** story has the emphasis on day six and the creation of people. Ask the class to find Genesis 2:7,19.

What did God do for Adam that He did not do for the other creatures? (Breathed the breath of life in him.)

Ask _____ to sign Psalm 8:3-8 for further emphasis.

How can the story of man's creation encourage us when we feel unimportant or unloved?

2. A Place to Call Home (Genesis 2:8-9)

Everything that God **created** was perfect. Then God prepared a special home for Adam in a beautiful garden.

Why is it important to have a place we call home?

Ask _____ to sign John 14:1-4. (Christ promised His disciples He would prepare a home in heaven for all His followers.)

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *The Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15)*

The Bible says very little more about the garden of Eden after Genesis 4.

The prophets used it as an example of a perfect place.

Ask class members to find one of these verses and tell the class what it says about the garden of Eden.

Isaiah 51:3; Ezekiel 28:11-13; Ezekiel 36:33-35; Joel 2:1-3

3. God Gave a Warning (Genesis 2:15-17)

The garden was a safe and secure home where Adam could enjoy rest and fellowship with God. It was never intended to be a place for idleness. God gave Adam the **responsibility** of taking care of his new home.

God warned Adam not to eat from the special tree. This was a call to obey and trust God to give what Adam needed.

DIG DEEPER: *Death (Genesis 2:17)*

God wanted people to live and to be His friends. They decided to do evil and that caused death for everyone. But Christ brings life to everyone who trusts him (1 Corinthians 15:21). Our spirit immediately becomes alive when we trust Christ. When Christ returns to earth, God will change us (1 Corinthians 15:51). Then all believers will live with God forever.

How is saying “don’t” a demonstration of love? How have you used words like no and don’t to demonstrate your love for your children?

4. God Created Woman (Genesis 2:18)

A helper means a person who will work together with another person. It does not mean a servant or a slave.

What new insights about Creation did you receive from today’s lesson?

IN YOUR CONTEXT

God is the source of life for all people. God can be trusted to give us everything we need. God expects obedience from His **creation** as an act of trust.

How does verse 18 relate to God’s design for marriage between a man and a woman?

Session 3

MAN FALLS INTO SIN

GENESIS 3:1-7,14-19

PLAN AHEAD

Bring the front page from several newspapers.

Ask _____ to sign “Purer in Heart, O God” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #346).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

To introduce the theme of the lesson, distribute newspaper pages. Ask class members to find examples of bad news or the impact of sin on our world.

Ask them to share what they find.

1. Satan, the Liar (Genesis 3:1-5)

An ordinary snake could not do what this snake did. Satan used the snake to speak to Eve.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *The Serpent (Genesis 3:1)*

In verse 1, what words describe the serpent?

(Most clever of all the wild animals).

Encourage discussion of the concept of clever. What ASL sign(s) can be used to express this concept?

Satan led Eve to question what God said. Satan had two lies: 1. They could become a god. 2. They could find happiness without God.

How does Satan deceive and cause people to doubt God today?

The devil wants people to think about the things God says they must not do. And he wants people to forget all the good things God has given them.

2. Sin Leads to Shame (Genesis 3:6-7)

Ask the class to study Genesis 3:6 and locate action words that describe the progression of temptation (saw, took, ate, gave, ate). Instead of seeking God and confessing to Him what they had done, the first couple tried to cover up their sin.

How do people try to hide their sins today?

Ask _____ to sign John 3:19.

“Their eyes opened.” Adam and Eve were not physically blind before. But now they understood with their mind.

3. The Results of Sin (Genesis 3:14-19)

Emphasize verse 15 as prophecy of Christ and His ultimate victory over Satan and sin.

DIG DEEPER: *Consequences of Sin (Genesis 3:14-19)*

Notice the consequences of sin in Genesis 3:14-19:

The serpent’s consequences (verses 14-15)

The woman’s consequences (verse 16)

The man’s consequences (verses 17-19)

How does the promise of verse 15 give hope while facing the consequences of sin?

God said a man will hurt the devil’s head. Hurting the head will cause death. The devil will hurt the man’s foot. Hurting the foot will not cause death. When Jesus died, the devil made Him suffer great injury and pain. (The devil hurt His foot.) But Jesus won the fight against the devil. (Jesus hurt the devil’s head.)

IN YOUR CONTEXT

Rebelling against God’s **authority** and His Word leads to destruction. Every person has followed in the footsteps of Adam and Eve by rebelling against God. Sin always leads to **judgment**, with God holding us **accountable**.

Session 4

GOD SAVES

GENESIS 6:11-18; 7:11-14

PLAN AHEAD

Ask _____ to sign “Jesus Saves” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #453).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God Saw the Wickedness of the People (Genesis 6:11-13)

When God made everything, it was very good (Genesis 1:31). But when Noah lived, everything was evil. This change started when Adam and Eve did not obey God (Genesis 3:17-19). Instead of becoming more like God, as the serpent had promised, people became more ungodly.

Have you seen things go from bad to worse as a result of sin?

Encourage discussion.

DIG DEEPER: *God’s Plans Changed (Genesis 6-7)*

God planned to destroy everything He had made. But He saw Noah was not like other people. Noah “walked with God” (Genesis 6:9, Hebrews 11:7), like Enoch (Genesis 5:24, Hebrews 11:5) and like Adam before he sinned.

So God chose not to destroy the entire world. He always does the right thing (Genesis 18:25). And He will always save the people who trust Him (2 Peter 3:10-13).

What happens when people no longer respect God’s commands?

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *Unprepared for Judgment (Genesis 6)*

This chapter does not tell much about the people before they died in the flood. Second Peter 2:5 shows that Noah warned them. But Jesus said that they were living their usual sinful lives (Matthew 24:36-39).

Jesus said people will continue their evil lives before His return. When Jesus returns, He will be their judge. Jesus' return gives hope to everyone who trusts Him. But it will be terrible for everyone who opposes Him.

2. God Made a Promise to Noah (Genesis 6:14-18)

God gave Noah specific instructions before He brought **judgment** through the flood. The Hebrew word for ark is the same one used for Moses' basket (Exodus 2:1-6). That word does not appear anywhere else in the Bible. The size of the ark is not as important as Noah's obedience and God's **provision**.

Judgment and **grace**: All the earth was flooded as an act of God's judgment. Noah and his family were saved by God's grace.

In Hebrew, the word for agreement, or **covenant**, is like the English word *testament*. This is a legal word used in a will (the paper a person writes to show what is promised to other persons after the writer's death).

3. Noah Obeyed God (Genesis 7:11-14)

God also rescued animals of all types. The flood did not begin until they were all safely in the ark. Clean animals were ones that people ate. There were some animals that people did not eat, called unclean animals. Many years later, God gave Moses a list of clean and unclean animals (Leviticus 11:1-47).

In Hebrew, the description of the rain says *the windows in the sky opened*.

IN YOUR CONTEXT

Unforgiven sin leads to greater wickedness. God rescues people from judgment if they are faithful to Him. **Disobedience** to God leads to destruction.

Session 5

A NEW START

GENESIS 8:15–9:1,11-16

PLAN AHEAD

Bring to class several concordances from the church library or study Bibles. Ask _____ to sign “Amazing Grace” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #21).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. A New Start (Genesis 8:15-19)

This is a story of hope, not defeat. Building and filling the ark were done in an orderly way. Emptying the ark was equally planned. The animals did not rush out and cause others to become injured. They went out carefully to refill the earth.

2. A New Altar (Genesis 8:20)

Noah built an altar and worshiped God with burnt offerings in recognition of God’s deliverance of Noah and his family. The Bible does not tell us if Noah built altars and sacrificed animals before the flood. He probably did, because he built an altar immediately after he came out from the ark. He knew which animals he should sacrifice to please the Lord.

DIG DEEPER: *Noah’s Animal Sacrifices (Genesis 8:20)*

Noah was grateful to God. There were only a few animals in the ark. Where did Noah get the animals to sacrifice? (They were in the ark long enough for the animals and birds to multiply. These are the ones Noah used as sacrifice.)

Noah showed his family the importance of worshiping and praising God.

Have you tried to have a family worship time? Encourage the class to share their struggles as well as successes.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *Pleasing God (Genesis 8:20)*

Noah wanted to please God, like Abel in Genesis 4:4. And God was pleased with Noah. God knew that people were still sinful (Genesis 8:21). God's plan was that Jesus would die in order to forgive their sins. But God made a promise to Noah. God promised to protect the earth. He will make sure that seasons and days continue. And this promise lasts until the end of the world.

Use a Bible concordance to find verses about pleasing God.

Other religions have stories about a flood. Some things in those stories are the same as in Genesis. The important things, however, are only in God's Word: 1. There is one God, who has power over everything. 2. He is good, and He is a fair judge. 3. God loves people. 4. Noah was a good man. He obeyed God.

3. A New Promise (Genesis 8:21–9:1,11-16)

God promised never to destroy the earth with a flood again. He

established a **covenant relationship** with Noah, his descendants, and all of **creation**.

IN YOUR CONTEXT

God offers a fresh start to those who confess their sin, repent, and express faith in Him and His **provision**. We can respond to God's salvation and provision by humbly worshiping Him, offering Him our all. God offers all people a new life through faith in Christ.

Session 6

SCATTERED!

GENESIS 11:1-9

PLAN AHEAD

Find a picture of the tower of Babel.

Secure a map to locate the area of Babel.

Ask _____ to sign “God Is So Good” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #107).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. United by a Sinful Purpose (Genesis 11:1-4)

Review the discussion of these verses in the pupil material.

The story in this lesson happened many years after the flood. People forgot about the **judgment** that destroyed everything. People continued to **disobey** God and follow their own selfish ambitions.

God is omniscient (knows everything), and did not need to come down to see what was happening. God came down to look at the tower and, more importantly, to hold the people **accountable** for engaging in this prideful activity without His approval and without regard for Him.

God holds us responsible for our obedience to Him. How does this truth change your plans for the next week?

What dangers exist when making plans without seeking God’s leadership?

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *Pride (Genesis 11:4)*

The Tower of Babel is the first among many stories in the Bible that illustrate the truth that pride often leads to destruction.

Ask _____ to sign Proverbs 16:18. Ask others to use a concordance to find other verses that teach about pride.

DIG DEEPER: *Languages (Genesis 11:1)*

In verse 1, we read that all people spoke one language. But chapter 10 tells us that the descendants of each of the three sons of Noah spoke their own language (Genesis 10:5,20,31). From the beginning, they all spoke the language used by Noah, so we can understand that the groups in chapter 11 had different languages, but all understood Noah's language so they used that. It is like at Gallaudet University with many Deaf students from all over the world. They each have their national sign language, but at Gallaudet they all use the same language, ASL.

2. Reviewed by God (Genesis 11:5)

God did not need to come down to see what was happening. God came down to hold the people responsible for their act of **pride** without talking with Him.

3. Scattered by Confusion (Genesis 11:6-9)

God confused the rebellious builders by giving them different languages. As a result, they abandoned their project and scattered throughout the earth.

The original meaning of the name *Babel* (or Babylon) meant "the gate to God." The people thought that its top would reach heaven. But after God scattered them, *Babel* meant "confusion."

IN YOUR CONTEXT

People often take what God gives and twist it into some act of **disobedience**. God holds groups and individuals responsible for their actions. God's purposes will always be carried out in spite of what people do.

Session 7

WHEN GOD CALLS

GENESIS 12:1-9

PLAN AHEAD

Bring to class a map showing the route of Abraham's travels.

Bring copies of today's worship service bulletin.

Ask _____ to sign "He Leadeth Me" (Let's Sign Hymnal #141).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God Called Abram (Genesis 12:1-3)

God called Abram to leave the land of his **ancestors** and to move to a new land. Abram's obedience led to many blessings.

Do you remember the first day you went to school? It may have been especially traumatic if you went to a residential school. How did you feel? Encourage discussion.

What does it mean when we talk about "God's call" in church? Does God call every Christian? Is a call to foreign missions more important than a call to be a faithful layman in the local church? (What God calls us to do is not as important as our obedience to that call.)

Is God calling you to move spiritually on His behalf? Do you have the faith to be obedient to that call? (Witnessing, going on a mission trip, setting an example for friends and family.)

2. Abram Obeyed God (Genesis 12:4-9)

Use a map to show the route from Haran to Shechem, in Canaan, about 400 miles.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *Canaanites (Genesis 12:5)*

The area we know as the promised land was named for Noah's grandson, Canaan (Genesis 10:1-6). The name, *Canaanite*, often included many small tribes and nations in the area. They were greatly influenced by Egypt. Baal was one of the most popular gods in Canaan. God often told the Israelites to stay away from Canaanite worship. Today, this area is in the nations of Lebanon, Syria, Israel, and Jordan.

Ask class members to look at the Sunday bulletin.

What do you find that shows some people spent much time to prepare for this worship service? (Sermon preparation, music rehearsals, prayer, technical setup, ushers, interpreters, child care during the service, etc.)

How do you prepare for this Bible class and the worship service? (Praying for the teacher, pastor, and other leaders, opening your heart to hear the Lord speak to you.)

DIG DEEPER: *Abram as an Example (Genesis 12-13)*

Abram is called a righteous man, but he was not a perfect man. As we study his story, we will find he did not always obey God or trust God completely. Soon after the verses in today's lesson, there was not enough food. Abram did not stay in the place where God had taken him and trust God to take care of him. Instead, he went to Egypt. He had trouble there because he was not completely honest. Sometimes, he preferred to trust his own clever ideas. How can we understand why Abram is an example of faith when he disobeyed God? (Hebrews 11:1-8 shows he was not honored for what he did but for his faith.)

IN YOUR CONTEXT

God seeks people who will faithfully follow Him even if that means leaving the place where we are comfortable.

Session 8

WAITING FOR THE PROMISE

GENESIS 15:1-7,13-16

PLAN AHEAD

Ask _____ to sign “Standing on the Promises” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #388).

What is one important promise you made and kept, other than marriage vows? (To family, church, at work, etc.) Note that home or automobile loans are really promises to pay.

How do you feel when someone breaks a promise to you? Do you think people break their promises more easily today than in past times? (Encourage discussion.)

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. Abram’s Frustration (Genesis 15:1-3)

“After that” in verse 1, means some time later, not immediately.

DIG DEEPER: *A Servant’s Inheritance (Genesis 15:1-3)*

According to the law at that time, a servant could inherit everything if his owner had no children. Usually it was a young servant, and his master adopted him as a son. The Bible does not tell any more about Eliezer, but maybe he was Abram’s chief servant in chapter 24. If so, Eliezer was truly loyal to his master.

Have you ever felt God did not keep His promise to you?
(Encourage discussion.)

Do you become impatient when you need to wait? What situation is the most frustrating to you? (Traffic, the doctor's waiting room, trying to sell your house, waiting to hear about a new job.)

The work God does within us while we wait is just as important as whatever it is we are waiting for. Sometimes the hardest part of following God is waiting on Him to act.

What can we do when we are tempted to doubt God's promises? (Go back to the Bible, and study more about God's promises.)

2. God's Promise (Genesis 15:4-5)

God promised Abram would have his own child, grandchildren, many great-grandchildren, etc. God did not plan for Eliezer to inherit.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *The Covenant with Abram (Genesis 15:4-5)*

Abram's prayer in verses 2-3 was that God's promise would happen. God repeated His promise in verses 4-5. But Abram still had to trust God. Abram was already old. He had no children. God also promised the country called Canaan to Abram's descendants. Abram was already living there. But Abram's descendants would have to wait four hundred years until the time God had chosen. Abram's descendants would become slaves. (Exodus and Joshua record this history.) The inhabitants of Canaan would become very wicked. But God had a plan. And He would do everything that He promised.

3. Abram's Faith (Genesis 15:6)

Because Abram believed God, God declared Abram righteous. Ask _____ to sign Romans 4:1-5 to explain more about Abram's faith.

Ask _____ to sign Romans 4:16-25 to show how Abram continued to have faith.

4. God's Plan (Genesis 15:7,13-16)

God explained His plan for Abram and his descendants.

IN YOUR CONTEXT

We can trust God when we do not understand. Faith in God and His **provision** is the only path to righteousness.

Session 9

A NEW NAME

GENESIS 17:1-8,15-22

PLAN AHEAD

Ask _____ to sign “Only Believe” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #326).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God Gave His Promise Again (Genesis 17:1-8)

God gave new names to Abram (Abraham) and Sarai (Sarah). And He ordered the male members of their family to receive circumcision. That would show they were joined in the **covenant** with God. The meaning of names was important to people at that time. Abraham would really become the father of many people. Encourage discussion of name changes today, such as when a woman marries or when a teen drops a childish nickname.

What is the significance of your sign name? Did you change your sign name after you left school? Why?

DIG DEEPER: *More About the Covenant (Genesis 17:1-8)*

Abraham obeyed God even before God gave Isaac to him. God’s covenant was still there. God’s promises:

1. He would always be Abraham’s God. 2. Abraham would have very many descendants. 3. Abraham’s family would have their own country.

The New Testament teaches more about God’s covenant. Because of Jesus, people who are not Jews can join in with God’s covenant. God promised to bless His people. Christ made God’s blessing complete.

Circumcision was physical evidence that the people obeyed God. But God wanted them to obey in every way. That included what they thought, what they said, and what they did (Romans 2:26-29).

God promised that some descendants of Abraham would be kings. This was the first time God made this special promise.

Can you name two kings who were descendants of Abraham?

(David, Solomon.)

In what ways are future generations blessed by our faith?

(Share an example of several **generations** of one family active in your church.)

2. Abraham Offered God a Different Plan (Genesis 17:15-18)

Abraham suggested Ishmael for his heir. Ishmael was thirteen years old. This is an example of the error of our efforts to shortcut God's plan.

Discuss Abraham's motivations for suggesting another way.

Did he not believe God at all, or was he just trying to help God?

Encourage discussion of times when class members tried to take control away from God.

Do we limit God's ability to use us by our lack of trust?

3. God Announced His Power (Genesis 17:19-22)

Abraham felt God's presence again. God said that within a year, Abraham and Sarah would have a son.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *God's Presence (Genesis 17:19-22)*

Ask pupils to sign these verses about the presence of God: 1 Chronicles 16:34; Isaiah 25:6-8; John 15:5-11.

Ishmael was not in God's plan. But God gave Ishmael a place in His plan. Ishmael's descendants would be a great nation. God had already made this promise to Hagar (Genesis 16:10).

Are you willing to trust God's plan for your life?

IN YOUR CONTEXT

God will keep all His promises. Our impatience can lead us to substitute our imperfect plans for God's perfect plan. We must be careful not to limit what God can do in and through us.

Session 10

WHERE WICKEDNESS RULES

GENESIS 18:20-25; 19:12-16

PLAN AHEAD

Ask _____ to sign “Only Trust Him” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #327).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Background: Ask _____ to review Genesis 18:1-20, to show the context for this lesson and the next one.

1. Man’s Sin (Genesis 18:20-21)

The people in Sodom were very wicked. The Bible does not say who complained to God (verse 20), but God heard their cry.

Jesus used Sodom and Gomorrah as an example of what it will be like when He comes again (Matthew 10:15).

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *Final Judgment (Genesis 18:20)*

In the end, God will destroy the earth by fire (2 Peter 3:10). This has not yet happened because God is kind and patient. First, God will separate good people from evil people (Matthew 13:36-43). We can only become good in God’s eyes because Jesus died for us. And we must trust God and invite Him into our lives. God is patient because He does not want anyone to suffer (2 Peter 3:8-9). But the time that He has chosen will come.

2. Abraham’s Intercession (Genesis 18:22-25)

The men in verse 22 are the three angels that came to see Abraham (Genesis 18:1-5). Two were angels, but one visitor was the Lord. Abraham humbly asked God to save the city if God could find a few good people in it.

Did Abraham's prayer conflict with God's plan for justice? Or was Abraham exhibiting the godly characteristics of mercy and patience as he interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah? Encourage discussion.

3. God's Grace (Genesis 19:12-16)

The men who wanted to marry Lot's daughters refused to leave. Lot's wife looked behind her as she left. Maybe she wanted to stay in Sodom. She died with the people in Sodom (Genesis 19:26).

When Lot was safe in the little town of Zoar (Genesis 19:30-38), God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

What are serious sins in your community? (Refer to recent newspaper and TV stories.)

What are the possible consequences of that sin?

DIG DEEPER: *Destruction Two Times (Genesis 7-9, 18-19)*

Compare the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18-19) with the flood (Genesis 7-9):

In both stories, God saved one family.

Before the flood, God shut the door of the ark. In Sodom, God's angel shut the door of Lot's house.

In the flood, God sent water down from the sky. In Sodom and Gomorrah, God sent fire and sulfur down onto the cities.

During the flood, God remembered Noah and his family. In Sodom and Gomorrah, God remembered Abraham's family.

Afterward, in both stories, the father became drunk and his children sinned against him.

God went down to the earth before the flood. He went down to the tower at Babel. And He went down to Sodom and Gomorrah.

IN YOUR CONTEXT

How can our prayers affect God and maybe change a situation where sin is strong? When we pray for sinners, we reach out to God for them, but we also need to reach out to lost people.

Session 11

GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES

GENESIS 21:1-8

PLAN AHEAD

Ask _____ to sign “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #119).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God’s Promise Came True (Genesis 21:1-2)

Exactly as God had promised, and at the promised time (Genesis 18:14), Sarah and Abraham had a son.

How old were Abraham and Sarah? What is the significance of their ages?

Note in verses 2, 5 and 7 how wonderful this birth was.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *Precious Promises (Genesis 21:1-2)*

God has made some promises we can claim today. Ask class members to sign these verses. Comment on how we can pray with hope or thanksgiving each time we read verses like these: Deuteronomy 31:6; Proverbs 1:33; Isaiah 40:29; Isaiah 41:10; Jeremiah 29:11; Matthew 11:28; John 6:37; Romans 8:28; Romans 10:9; 1 John 1:9; Philippians 4:19; 1 Peter 5:7; James 1:5.

How has God’s timing turned out to be better than your planning? (Perhaps God did not provide the new job you wanted, but another, better position came along.)

How can God’s delay in answering our prayers be a blessing?

2. Abraham Remembered God's Promise (Genesis 21:3-7)

The custom was for the father to name a new baby. *Isaac* means “laughter” (Genesis 17:19). Isaac’s name and circumcision (Genesis 17:12) was a reminder of God’s faithfulness in Isaac’s birth.

Explain the historical and spiritual significance of circumcision from your study of Genesis 17:10-27.

Earlier, Sarah laughed because she did not believe (Genesis 18:12). After Isaac’s birth, Sarah laughed again. But then she laughed because she was very happy.

How would you receive the news that you would become first-time parents if you were far beyond the normal time?

3. Abraham and Sarah Rejoiced (Genesis 21:8)

At the appropriate time, Abraham celebrated the birth of Isaac. Isaac may have been nearly three years old at that time.

In what ways do believers celebrate spiritual milestones in life? What are the benefits of celebrating these special moments?

How can our church celebrate God’s faithfulness?

How can we be reminded that God keeps His promises, especially during difficult times? (Suggest posting a verse in a place where you can see it and meditate on it daily.)

Invite the class to relate recently answered prayers.

DIG DEEPER: *Ishmael (Genesis 21:8-20)*

Abraham’s other son, Ishmael, was not happy. Until Isaac was born, Ishmael was Abraham’s only son. Ishmael had become a young man. And Ishmael thought that, after Abraham’s death, he (Ishmael) would lead Abraham’s family. Now, Ishmael was only the son of a slave. He would never be as important as Isaac. Ishmael was cruel to Isaac, and Abraham had to send him and his mother away. God told Abraham He would make Ishmael successful.

IN YOUR CONTEXT

Answered prayer should be celebrated as an act of worship and thanksgiving.

Session 12

THE FAITH TEST

GENESIS 22:1-14

PLAN AHEAD

Ask _____ to sign “Have Faith in God” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #127).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. God Tested Abraham’s Faith (Genesis 22:1-2)

A test of our faith is for our benefit. We grow from the experience. God will not test us more than we are able to handle (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Does this story teach us that God tempted Abraham to commit murder? No, God does not tempt anyone to sin (James 1:13-14).

In other religions, people sacrificed children to their gods.

Moriah was the mountain where Jerusalem was built (2 Chronicles 3:1).

Abraham’s immediate and obedient response to God’s call: “Here I am.”

DIG DEEPER: *Learning to Trust God (Genesis 22:1)*

Many times during his life, Abraham learned to trust God more. God knew Abraham was ready to trust Him completely. Abraham did not know why God was testing him, but he recognized God’s voice. Today, we must recognize when God leads us to do something (John 10:3-5). God never wants us to do anything that is against His instructions in the Bible. We have church leaders to help us. They are not always right, but we need to listen carefully to their advice.

Do you think this was a fair test of Abraham’s faith?

2. Abraham Prepared for the Test (Genesis 22:3-8)

Emphasize that Abraham had three days to think about God's request as they walked toward the mountains.

Hebrews 11:17-19 suggests that Abraham probably expected God to bring Isaac back to life.

Abraham trusted God, and Isaac trusted Abraham.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *Isaac's Understanding (Genesis 22:7-8)*

Isaac was familiar with animal offerings on an altar. He probably knew stories of how God's people gave animals to God as offerings. Noah did that when the flood was over (Genesis 8:20). Abraham did it often, such as at Mamre (Genesis 13:18). Isaac had seen his father kill a lamb as a gift to God. He naturally expected Abraham to do the same this time.

Abraham said, "God will give us the lamb." Abraham did not know he spoke a prophecy. Many years later God gave the Lord Jesus as an offering for our sin (John 1:29-36).

What does Abraham's immediate action reveal about his faith? How does the speed of obedience reveal a person's level of faith?

3. Abraham Passed the Test (Genesis 22:9-12)

Abraham was willing to obey God. Isaac was willing to obey Abraham.

Has there been a time in your life when you have been asked by God to sacrifice something of value?

4. God Gave Abraham a Sheep to Sacrifice (Genesis 22:13-14)

What are some experiences that can test your faith? (Job offer in distant place, or less money. Decision about buying a home. Problems with adult children.)

What can we do when our faith is tested, especially if we realize that our faith is weak? (Mark 9:14-24).

IN YOUR CONTEXT

True faith always leads to obedient action.

Session 13

GOD GIVES WHAT WE NEED

GENESIS 24:1-17

PLAN AHEAD

Ask _____ to sign “God Will Take Care of You” (Let’s Sign Hymnal #111).

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. The Servant’s Assignment (Genesis 24:1-9)

Abraham sent a trusted servant to his homeland in search of a wife for Isaac.

Later, Esau married a Canaanite woman, and this upset his family greatly (Genesis 26:34-35).

See the pupil material for the discussion of the custom of making the promise.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH: *People and Places (Genesis 24:1-10)*

These verses have several names of people and places.

Verse 2. The servant was probably Eliezer (Genesis 15:2).

Verse 4. *My country* was West Mesopotamia. Abraham had lived there, in the city of Haran (Genesis 11:31), Mesopotamia today is the area of Syria and Iraq.

Verses 5 and 7. This country was Canaan, where Abraham was living.

Verse 10. Nahor’s city. Nahor was probably Abraham’s brother (verse 15). This was probably the town of Haran where Nahor lived. Later we read that Laban lived in Nahor’s city (verse 29), and Genesis 27:43 says Laban lived in Haran.

The journey would not be easy because of the distance and the great number of livestock and material he had to carry with him.

Have you ever been asked to do something that was difficult and maybe expensive? How did you decide to accept the responsibility, or not?

2. The Servant's Prayer (Genesis 24:10-14)

The servant followed Abraham's directions and prayed for God's help.

DIG DEEPER: *Wedding Gifts (Genesis 24:10)*

The servant wanted to show that his master was wealthy. That is why he took ten camels. The valuable gifts were presents for the woman whom the servant chose. Verse 53 identifies these as gold and silver jewelry and clothes. The camels were also presents. The journey was about four-hundred fifty miles and took about a month. Abraham's servant had other men with him for the journey (verse 32).

The servant knew the women usually went to the well in the evening. He was very clever with his test. It would show if the woman was kind to strangers and animals. And it would show if she was willing to work. Camels need a lot of water!

Ask _____ to sign James 1:5-6. Notice the connection between wisdom and faith.

Why do you think the servant called God the God of my master Abraham?

3. God's Answer (Genesis 24:15-17)

God answered the servant's prayer. He was still praying when Rebekah came out. She was a very suitable young woman.

Ask _____ to summarize the rest of the story in verses 18-67.

What do these verses tell us about the truth of the Main Idea in the pupil material? (God always gives us what we need.)

IN YOUR CONTEXT

God answers honest and sincere prayer in ways that are consistent with His plan and purpose.

Encourage class members to prepare for the start of next quarter by reading the first few chapters of the **Gospel of Matthew**.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

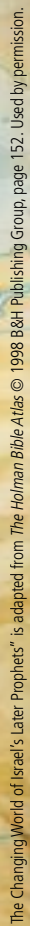
How do you like this new format? We would like to hear from you and your class members. Send an e-mail to Stephanie Johnson or George Joslin to tell us what you think of it. Our e-mail address is ETBDeaf@lifeway.com. For additional teaching helps visit: www.lifeway.com/ETBDeaf.



THE MIGRATION OF ABRAHAM

GEN. 11:27-12:9

- City
- City (uncertain location)
- ▲ Mountain peak
- Abraham's migration route
- Abraham's alternative migration route



Genesis

"Mommy, where do babies come from?" Out of the mouths of infants comes one of the ultimate questions of life. It points to our innate desire to know about our origins. And not just about our family history. We want to know the whole story. We want to know about the first man and woman and how they got here. We want to know how "here" got here—how the earth began, how the sun started shining, where the stars came from. If we understand our beginnings, we can better understand who we are and where we're going.

When Genesis was first written, it provided a God-given corrective to a plethora of fanciful creation myths in the ancient world. Today Genesis remains the trustworthy source for learning who we are, why we're here, and most importantly, who our Creator is.



Let the Word dwell in you.