

Three Visitors

Genesis 18

VISUAL AIDS

Lush green river valleys have always attracted people. Farmers are excited by their bounty; painters are inspired by their beauty. Alas! There are no pictures of that area, which the Bible claims was like the “Garden of God.” What Abraham saw that day, can never be seen again. One day later, it was destroyed and that whole area vanished forever. It became a sterile wasteland of smoking sulphur, salt and sand. Today it is still a wasteland. Show your class photographs of the area around the Dead Sea. Contrast those pictures with ones showing lush, green river valleys.

MEMORY WORK

1. “Nothing is impossible with God.” (Luke 1:37)
2. “Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Genesis 18:25)

CRAFT

In this lesson we have angelic beings appearing in the form of human beings. Perhaps the small humans in your class would like to masquerade as angels! Masks are always fun to make. I have no idea how an angel’s face looks, since I have never seen one, so your imagination is as free as mine in this area. Paper plates (sprinkled with sparkles) or foil pie plates would make an easy base for the mask.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who were the three visitors? How did Abraham treat them? What did he do for them?

2. Why had these three visitors from heaven come to earth? What was their mission?
3. The LORD said, "Sarah will have a son." How did ninety-year-old Sarah respond to this promise?
4. Did Sarah finally have faith in the Word of God?
5. Why were the angels going to Sodom?
6. Abraham began pleading with God to spare Sodom. Why was Abraham so concerned about that wicked city?
7. The LORD promised not to destroy the city of Sodom, if He found how many righteous people in it?

PRAYER

LORD, we thank You that nothing, not even the sin of unbelief, could stop Your great plan of salvation! LORD, we believe Your Word. Please help us when we lack faith. LORD, thank You for preserving the righteous and destroying the wicked. LORD, we thank You that Your mercy and justice fill the earth. We rejoice in You, the Righteous Judge of all the earth.

PSALMS TO SING

113A . . . and 1AB; 7A (3–5); 7B; 9AB; 36B; 37E; 50A; 71C; 94AB; 96B (4, 6); 98AB.

FIELD TRIP

Have a picnic under the shade of some trees. Pack a lunch of freshly baked bread, slices of veal or beef, cheese curds and milk drinks. Recall the meal that Abraham served his heavenly visitors . . . and keep an eye open for angels!

(This student lesson starts on page 235.)

A Day of Destruction, A Day of Salvation

Genesis 19

VISUAL AIDS

You may not wish to show the children the pictures of present-day Sodomites, as they display themselves and their sin in their “Gay Pride Parades.” (However, such photographs are available.) There are also pictures of destroyed cities from World War II, such as Hiroshima. Although there were survivors from these disasters, the children will get a sense of the awful and total destruction that can befall a city. Also of interest for this lesson, would be some of the excellent photographs of the Dead Sea area in modern Israel—the wasteland, which testifies to the catastrophe which God brought upon the cities of that plain, although once it was like the “Garden of the LORD.”

MEMORY WORK

1. “The LORD knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgement . . .” (II Peter 2:9)
2. “Hallelujah! Salvation and power and glory belong to our God, for true and just are His judgements.” (Revelation 19:1, 2)

CRAFT

The children could make a picture called *destruction*: First paint bright flames of fire. When the paint is dry, add charcoal swirls of black smoke. Then put streaks of glue over the whole picture, shaking salt onto it before the glue dries. To this chaos of raging flames and billowing smoke and swirling salt, you might want to add the horror of grey faces or words from newspaper clippings—ripped and burned around the edges, as if these are scraps of debris from that day of destruction.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How many righteous people did the two angels find in Sodom?
2. How did Lot try to protect the two strangers in Sodom?
3. How did these strangers, who were angels, protect Lot?
4. What happened to Lot's wife? Why?
5. What did God do to Sodom, Gomorrah, and the whole plain?
6. Why were these people without excuse?
7. Sodom and Gomorrah are a warning for the whole world! What is God's warning to everyone?
8. What is the great and dreadful Day of the LORD? When is it? How can we escape it?
9. What happened to Lot? How did he end his days on this earth?

PRAYER

We give thanks to You, O God, that Your judgements are true and just. We rejoice, that salvation and glory and power belong to our God. LORD, thank You for rescuing the godly from trials, for saving Your people from sin and death. We praise You, LORD, for Your mercy to us. God, grant to us Your help and strength to be a holy people, living before You—a God who is Holy, Holy, Holy. Our God, we know You are a consuming fire; grant us the proper fear and love before You. We pray for these children, that they might have faith, that they might never turn back in unbelief—and thus, by God's grace, that they might be spared and saved from that great and dreadful Day of the LORD.

PSALMS TO SING

11; 97C; 140B . . . and 1AB; 2; 9A; 18BH; 21B; 28AB; 37ABEF; 50A; 68A (1, 2); 69D; 73C; 83B; 94AB; 98AB; 104E.

FIELD TRIP

I suppose you could attend a “Gay Pride Parade”—but I wouldn't view such a detestable display of sin, much less expose children to it. Instead, perhaps there is a place of destruction near you, such as a bombed-out block or a burned-out house. Perhaps there is a place where nothing grows, a waste area. There are pockets of destruction all over the earth. Perhaps you can find one, even a little one, to be the sober reminder of what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah.

(This student lesson starts on page 242.)

The Serpent Strikes, But Fails

Genesis 20 & 21:1–7, 22–34

AUDIO AIDS

For this lesson you will need to collect some laughter. You can make a recording of all the different kinds you find—giggles and chortles and guffaws. Perhaps you can include the laughter of your class on the recording, both the individuals and the group. Let the children listen to the laughter and remind them that when Isaac was born, Sarah said: “God has brought me Laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.”

MEMORY WORK

“Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy . . . The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.” (Psalm 126:2, 3)

CRAFT

Make a collage. Have the children collect pictures of laughing, smiling faces and happy, joyful words.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did Abraham move? Where did Abraham move?
2. Why did Abraham say that Sarah was his sister?
3. What promise of God did Satan attack?
4. For awhile it seemed that the child God promised to Abraham and Sarah could not be born. Why?
5. Who was Abimelech? Was he a good king? Did he fear God?
6. How did God speak to Abimelech? What did God say? Did the king listen?

7. There were several things that happened to give this story a happy ending. What were they? What was the happiest event?
8. Did God keep His promise to Abraham and Sarah?
9. Can we also trust God, to keep His promises to us?

PRAYER

LORD, we rejoice that Your Word prevails, against the schemes of demons and the sins of men. We rejoice, that all the promises of God are fulfilled in Jesus Christ our Lord. Please help us to always fear God, rather than men. Deliver us from the Evil One. Be with us, O God, as we take our stand, by faith, against all the schemes of the devil.

PSALMS TO SING

126AB . . . and 66C (1, 3,5); 67AB; 100ABC; 104E; 106A; 113A; 138AB; 145A.

FIELD TRIP

Go on a little expedition and look for laughter. Hint: Where you find the blessing of children, there you will find the blessing of laughter.

(This student lesson starts on page 253.)

The Lord Gives and the Lord Takes Away

Genesis 21:1–21

VISUAL AIDS

Pictures of parties, especially birthday parties, would be useful for this lesson.

MEMORY WORK

“The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”
(Job 1:21) NAS

CRAFT

Help celebrate someone's birthday, especially a younger child's birthday. Perhaps your class could make birthday cards and/or birthday hats. Plan a simple party for some little person. Don't forget to sing and shout: “Happy Birthday!”

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Isaac was not born in the ordinary way. How was he born?
2. What did Ishmael do to his little brother, Isaac?
3. Why was Abraham greatly distressed?
4. How did God settle the matter? What did God say to do?
5. Why were Hagar and Ishmael crying in the desert? Who heard them? How did God help them?
6. Were the prophecies about Ishmael fulfilled? Did he become a “wild” man? Did he become a nation of people? Who were they?

PRAYER

LORD, it comforts us to know that You hear and see everything. Deliver us from our enemies, from those who hate us and mock us, from those who ridicule us

and persecute us. Help us, God, to be a people marked by kindness and gentleness towards one another.

PSALMS TO SING

71A . . . 34D; 70C; 107A; 123; 131; 145C.

FIELD TRIP

Attend a small child's birthday party to bring him/her gifts, laughter, good wishes, smiling faces and congratulations!

(This student lesson starts on page 257.)

The Lord Will Provide

Genesis 22

VISUAL AIDS

Genesis 22:17 is the first time God promises Abraham “descendants as numerous . . . as the sand on the seashore.” Bring a jar of sand and try to count the individual grains of sand. Imagine how many grains of sand are on a seashore! Maps and photos showing the mountains of Moriah would also be useful for this lesson.

MEMORY WORK

1. “God Himself will provide the lamb . . .” (Genesis 22:8)
2. “Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29)

CRAFT

Your class can make Bible bookmarks from pretty flowered paper glued on cardboard and cut in the shape of a cross. On the cross beam add their verse of memory work: *God himself will provide the lamb.*

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did God test Abraham? Why did God test Abraham?
2. Abraham was going to sacrifice his son, as God commanded, but he said to his servants, “We will come back to you.” What did Abraham believe God was going to do?
3. What did Abraham carry up the mountain? What did Isaac carry?
4. What did Isaac ask on the way? What was Abraham’s answer?
5. How did God rescue Isaac?
6. Tell two ways that God provided a lamb as a substitute?

7. Two thousand years later, what was built on Mount Moriah?
8. Who was the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world?
9. God swore an oath to Abraham. Why? By whom did He swear?
10. What did God promise? Had He made this promise before that day? When?
11. What were the results of Abraham's obedience?
12. How was Abraham a prophet? How did he "speak" about Jesus?

PRAYER

LORD, thank You for providing all our needs, especially our greatest need—the Lamb for the sacrifice! Heavenly Father, thank You for loving us and for sending Your Son as a substitute, to die on the cross to pay for our sins.

PSALMS TO SING

118C . . . and 22C; 34DE; 40E; 61; 66B; 106A; 111A; 150A.

FIELD TRIP

Visit a farm (or zoo) that has rams, with long curly horns—the kind of horns that could get caught in a bush.

(This student lesson starts on page 262.)

A Loved One Lost, A Loved One Gained

Genesis 23 & 24

VISUAL AIDS

Photographs of camel caravans and veiled women, would be useful for this lesson. Look in National Geographic and books about the Middle East.

MEMORY WORK

“Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.” (Proverbs 31:30) NAS

CRAFT

Have your class make a camel caravan. If each child makes one camel, you will have a caravan to display on your classroom wall. (Make sure all the heads are facing the same direction.) Camels can be drawn on white paper, painted, and then cut. They could also be made from brown construction paper. The children can load the camels by pasting onto them whatever cargo they choose—little boxes wrapped in gold or silver paper, little cloth bags filled with stuffing, bales of fabric tied with string, etc. Don't forget to have each child draw a self-portrait, to ride on top of his/her camel!

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How old was Sarah when she died? How long did Isaac have his mother?
2. What was the first piece of property that Abraham owned in the promised land?
3. Abraham wanted a godly wife for his son. How could he find one? What was his plan? Who would help him?
4. Did God lead Abraham's servant? Where did God lead him?

5. How did Isaac and Rebekah meet each other? Did Isaac like the woman God chose for him? What does the Bible say?
6. The LORD had a very great plan and purpose for Rebekah's life. What was it?
7. How is this lesson a double love story?

PRAYER

LORD, we thank You for the stories of our lives. We thank You for surely leading us and loving us. Heavenly Father, we pray for these children, that at the right time You will provide the right person to be their marriage partners.

PSALMS TO SING

45C . . . and 13; 32D (5); 52A (7, 8); 57B (5, 9,10); 106A; 108A; 117A.

FIELD TRIP

Most of us can not go to a place to see a camel caravan walking along the desert sands. However, maybe there is a zoo, where at least you can view a live specimen and perhaps even ride on one!

(This student lesson starts on page 270.)

God Blesses Isaac

Genesis 25:1–26 & 26

VISUAL AIDS

Do you have ultrasound pictures of any of your children before they were born? Do you have a friend with twins, who has their ultrasound photo before they were born? Such pictures would be an excellent visual aid for this lesson.

MEMORY WORK

1. “Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and obey it.” (Luke 11:28)
2. “The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn His face toward you and give you peace.” (Numbers 6:24–26)
3. “The LORD remembers us and will bless us . . . He will bless those who fear the LORD.” (Psalm 115:12, 13)

CRAFT

You have probably seen those old-fashioned, cross-stitch samplers that say: God Bless This House. The children could make such a sampler, making bright X's with yarn or pen on cardboard.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Abraham remarried. What was his new wife's name? How many more sons did Abraham have? Who was the son of promise, through whom his children were counted?
2. How was Abraham's faith tested? How was Isaac's faith tested?
3. How many years passed before Rebekah became pregnant?
4. At first Rebekah was delighted; then she became alarmed. Why?

5. Whom did Rebekah ask what was happening? What did God say?
6. What were the names of the twins? Why?
7. How long did Abraham live in the Promised Land?
8. What trouble did Isaac face in Canaan? How did God help him?
9. Where did God speak to Isaac? What did He say?

PRAYER

LORD, we thank You for all Your blessings to us!

PSALMS TO SING

67AB; 134AB . . . and 1AB; 3 (5); 5AB (1, 5); 21AC; 33B (6); 34AC; 40ABE; 41BC; 65A; 72D; 84AB; 89I; 106AG; 112AB; 115D; 116A; 119A; 128AB; 146AB.

FIELD TRIP

You can take the children to watch a well being dug. It is a lot of work, even with machines. Remind them of what happened to Isaac. Time after time his servants would dig a well—and the Philistines would steal it from him!

(This student lesson starts on page 280.)

God Chooses Jacob; Jacob Chooses God

Genesis 25:19–34

VISUAL AIDS

For this lesson pictures of identical twins (and triplets, quadruplets, quintuplets, etc.) would be interesting for the children to see and to contrast with the twins, Jacob and Esau, who were not identical. You could also bring some red lentils for your children to see.

MEMORY WORK

1. “Let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.” (Hebrews 4:14)
2. “Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful.” (Hebrews 10:23)

CRAFT

Your children could make a lentil mosaic. You will need cardboard, glue, and different kinds of many-coloured lentils. If you have access to a kitchen, you could also supervise a cooking project. Each child could make a small loaf of bread and all together the class could make a big lentil stew. (Put tomato sauce in it to give it a bright red colour, and lots of vegetables and spices for taste.)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Were Jacob and Esau identical twins? How were they different?
2. What was the most significant difference between these twins?
3. When did God choose Jacob?
4. Did God choose Jacob because he was good or because he had faith? Is anyone saved because of their own righteousness? How then are people saved?
5. Did Esau live by faith? Did Esau hope in God's promises?

6. How did Jacob show that he believed the Word of God?
7. What did Esau do that showed he was a godless man?

PRAYER

LORD, we thank You for Your grace to us and choice of us and love for us. We humbly ask for Your help that we might always cling fast to Your precious promises. Help us to seek first Your kingdom and Your righteousness. May we never be foolish and godless like Esau, trading heavenly treasures for earthly pleasures. O LORD, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil this day . . . and all the days of our lives.

PSALMS TO SING

135AB (1); 65A (2) . . . and 4AB; 14C; 33B (6); 47A; 53; 95B (5, 6); 105A; 119WX; 146AB.

FIELD TRIP

Do you know some identical twins? I know some elderly ladies, (over ninety years old) who still look exactly alike and who still enjoy confusing people. I know other younger sets of twins too. Invite these people to your class for a visit and ask them to dress in their “twin” clothes—just for fun.

(This student lesson starts on page 286.)

First the Birthright, Then the Blessing

Genesis 26:34–27:40

VISUAL AIDS

Photos of blind people, walking with white canes or guide dogs, would be useful to stimulate discussion for this class. Does your church have a braille Bible? Bring it (or some other samples of braille writing) for your children to examine. Borrow a blind person's watch to show your students.

MEMORY WORK

"The word of the LORD stands forever." (I Peter 1:25)

CRAFT

Your children can make pictures for a blind person by gluing bits of yarn and scraps of cloth onto cardboard. Since this is a picture to feel rather than to see, the children will have to think about making their artwork interesting by using different textures, instead of different colours.

GAME

Blindfold your children and have them identify different things by using:

1. just their ears (e.g., the sound of a zipper or car keys)
2. just their nose (e.g., the smell of crayons or spices)
3. just their tongue (e.g., the taste of fruit or cheese)
4. just their hands (e.g., the feel of a clothespin or pinecone)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What did Esau do with his birthright?
2. What else did Esau do that troubled and angered his parents?

3. What did Isaac decide to do before he died? Why? Was he right or wrong in what he planned to do?
4. What did Rebekah decide to do? Why? Was she right or wrong in what she planned to do?
5. What were four things that Jacob did to deceive his father?
6. What blessings did Isaac give to Jacob?
7. When Esau knelt before his father weeping and pleading, why did Isaac not change his mind and give him the blessing?
8. What “blessing” was given to Esau by his father?
9. How was the blessing to Jacob finally and eternally fulfilled? What Son of Jacob rules this very day, as the King of kings and LORD of lords?

PRAYER

LORD, we are thankful that it is not our plans, but Your great plan, that prevails. We praise You, O God, that Your Word stands firm. We rejoice that Your blessings to us, in Jesus Christ, are forever sure.

PSALMS TO SING

115D . . . and 67AB; 119F; 119I (1); 134AB.

FIELD TRIP

Take your class to visit a blind person. Bring the special pictures that the children made. You could also bring other things that a blind person would enjoy: a bouquet of fragrant flowers, a song your class has learned, a tasty treat you have made together. Your blind friend will have many interesting things to show and share with your children also.

(This student lesson starts on page 292.)

Jacob Blessed and Blessed Again!

Genesis 27:41–28:22

VISUAL AIDS

The dust of the earth—it is everywhere! Show your children a shaft of sunlight shining through a window—and how it illuminates the dust of the earth, which is even in the air.

MEMORY WORK

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified . . . for the LORD your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Deuteronomy 31:6)

CRAFT

The children could each draw a picture of Jacob's dream or you could all work together on a classroom display. Make a large, floor-to-ceiling, cardboard ladder on one of the walls. Then have the children draw and colour (from top to bottom on pieces of white art paper) one angel, their own guardian angel. They can also decorate their angels with sparkles and sequins. Cut out the angels (making sure each child's name is somewhere on it) and place this heavenly host all along the ladder. You might want to put a large stone at the bottom of the ladder, where the children can rest their heads, while they look up the ladder.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Did Esau repent of his unbelief? How do we know?
2. What was Rebekah's plan to save Jacob's life?
3. What did Isaac command Jacob to do? How did he bless him?

4. Where did Jacob spend the first night of his journey?
5. What did Jacob dream? What did he see? What did he hear?
6. What did God promise Jacob when He spoke to him in the dream?
7. Why was Jacob afraid when he awoke from his dream?
8. What did Jacob do to remember the spot where God visited him?
9. God made promises to Jacob and Jacob made promises to God. What were they?
10. Why do you think Jacob would return to the promised land?

PRAYER

LORD, we thank You for Your promise that You will never leave us, nor forsake us.

PSALMS TO SING

3; 27C; 55A . . . and 4AB; 7A; 11; 31AE; 46ABC; 52B; 54AB; 56; 57AB; 59AB; 62A; 73C; 86B; 91AB; 118C; 142; 143C; 146.

FIELD TRIP

Take your children to a safe place where they can lie down in the night with a stone for a pillow and the sky for a ceiling, where they can hear the wind moaning in the trees and see shadows moving in the dark. Let each child experience the loneliness and scariness of Jacob's situation. Remind the children that God is with them too.

(This student lesson starts on page 301.)

Deceiver Is Deceived

Genesis 29:1–30

VISUAL AIDS

Show some photographs of refugees to the children. Discuss how these people have had to leave their homes and flee for their lives, bringing little or nothing with them. Jacob was a refugee in a foreign land. All he brought with him was his shepherd's crook. You could also bring a shepherd's crook to show your children Jacob's only possession, his only visible, tangible possession. All he had was a staff in his hand, but in his heart he possessed a great treasure—the promises of God!

MEMORY WORK

“The LORD disciplines those He loves, and He punishes the child in whom He delights.” (Hebrews 12:6)

CRAFT

Jacob had a staff for his journey. When people in Japan hike up Mount Fuji they buy special walking sticks, which are branded with a sign at each level of the journey. These sticks are also adorned with bright ribbons and tinkling bells. Perhaps your children could each make one of these sticks. Visit your local lumber store and pick up some 1x1 sticks of the appropriate length. Each child's name can be burned into the wood. Then the children can decorate their own staffs as they please.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is a fugitive? Was Jacob a fugitive?

2. What did Jacob take with him on his journey? What did he hold in his hand? What did he hold in his heart?
3. Name one river that Jacob had to cross.
4. Whom did Jacob hope to find in this foreign land? How did he find them?
5. With whom did Jacob fall in love?
6. How did Jacob's uncle trick him? Why did Laban do this?
7. Do you think Jacob learned a very important lesson when he was deceived? What do you think he learned about treating people?

PRAYER

LORD, thank You for being with us wherever we go. Thank You for always being fair and just, even when people cheat us and harm us. LORD, we thank You for not giving us what we deserve, for not giving us what we have earned by our sins—which is death and hell. Thank You, LORD, for lovingly and graciously giving us eternal life in Jesus Christ. Help us never to cheat other people, but to always be fair with them. Help us to obey Your Law: “Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you.”

PSALMS TO SING

119P . . . 36A; 37A; 62AB; 101; 119M; 120 (1); 140AB; 141A.

FIELD TRIP

I'm sure the children would like to go for a long hike over rugged terrain, using the walking sticks they made.

(This student lesson starts on page 309.)