

Isaac Gets a Bride

(Genesis 24)

Introduction

Did you know that God is with you every minute of every day? He never leaves you. He is always leading you and guiding you through your day, even when you don't realize it. Nothing happens by accident. Every person you meet during the day and every thing that happens to you is part of His great plan for your life.

Can you think of an example in your life how God has led you to do something or meet someone and something special happened that you knew only God could have arranged? (We went out to dinner recently and got to the restaurant at the same time as some good friends that we hadn't seen in a long time. So we ended up having dinner together!)

Our lesson this morning is about God's supernatural guidance.

Opening Prayer

Father, it is exciting to think that You are always with us and that nothing that happens to us during our day is an accident. We are here this morning in Sunday school, because this is part of Your wonderful plan for our lives. You want us to be here today to learn this wonderful lesson from the book of Genesis about Abraham and Isaac. Give us spiritual ears this morning to hear Your voice. Make us good students of Your word today. You are worthy to be trusted! In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Lesson

Last week we learned about how Abraham had faith to obey God even when it was difficult.

To review let me ask you some questions:

1. How was Abraham's faith tested? (God asked Abraham to kill his only son.)
2. What was God trying to prove? (He just wanted Abraham to be willing to give up even his only son, just as God, the Father, gave His only Son.)
3. Did Abraham kill his son? (No! God provided a ram.)
4. What is this story a wonderful picture of? (How God provided a substitute for us. Because of our sins, we deserve to die; but God, the Father, gave His only son, Jesus, to die in our place. And, now we get everlasting life in Heaven.)

Isaac was a special child because his parents were almost 100 years old when he was born.

When Isaac grew to be a man, Abraham decided it was time to find his son a wife. Now, he didn't want Isaac to marry a woman from the new land they had moved to, he wanted Isaac to marry a woman from way back home.

Genesis 24:1-4

Abraham was now a very old man, and the LORD had blessed him in every way. One day Abraham said to his oldest servant, the man in charge of his household, "Take an oath by putting your hand under my thigh. Swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not allow my son to marry one of these local Canaanite women. Go instead to my homeland, to my relatives, and find a wife there for my son Isaac."

Abraham didn't want Isaac to marry a woman of another faith. He knew that if Isaac married one of the local Canaanite girls who worshiped idols, Isaac might be led away from the only true God.

When you grow up, your parents will not want you to marry someone who is not a Christian. The Bible says we should not do that. It's for our own happiness.

But the servant was worried about going to a faraway country and finding just the right woman for Isaac and then being able to convince her to come away with him.

Genesis 24:5-7

The servant asked, "But what if I can't find a young woman who is willing to travel so far from home? Should I then take Isaac there to live among your relatives in the land you came from?" "No!" Abraham responded. "Be careful never to take my son there. For the LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and my native land, solemnly promised to give this land to my descendants. He will send his angel ahead of you, and he will see to it that you find a wife there for my son.

Abraham wasn't worried. He trusted God. He knew God would work out the details. He remembered how God had provided the ram. Even when we can't see how things will work out, God can! And, we can trust Him. (Teacher, review the memory verse.)

So the servant took off with ten camels loaded with the best of everything Abraham owned so he could impress the bride-to-be.

Genesis 24:10

Then he loaded ten of Abraham's camels with all kinds of expensive gifts from his master, and he traveled to distant Aram-naharaim. There he went to the town where Abraham's brother Nahor had settled.[Haran]

Now, I want you to see how God leads and guides us in everything we do. Watch what happens when the servant arrives...

Genesis 24:11-14

He made the camels kneel beside a well just outside the town. It was evening, and the women were coming out to draw water. "O LORD, God of my master, Abraham," he prayed. "Please give me success today, and

show unfailing love to my master, Abraham. See, I am standing here beside this spring, and the young women of the town are coming out to draw water. This is my request. I will ask one of them, 'Please give me a drink from your jug.' If she says, 'Yes, have a drink, and I will water your camels, too!'—let her be the one you have selected as Isaac's wife. This is how I will know that you have shown unfailing love to my master."

After traveling for a long time, the servant came into just the right village. The first thing he did was to go to a well to get water for he and his camels. He knew that the young women from the village came there to get water. He was wondering how he would know which one to approach. So, he prayed and asked God to point out the right girl in this most unusual way: He said, "When I ask a girl for a drink and she says, 'Yes, certainly, and I will water your camels, too,' let her be the one who will become Isaac's wife."

Have you ever asked God for something specific like that? I have! I've said, "Lord, when I get to the busy mall, will you provide a parking place right by the door for me?" And, as I drive up, there's a car pulling out of the perfect parking place. God loves to answer our prayers!

So, what do you think happened?

Genesis 24:15-17

Before he had finished praying, he saw a young woman named Rebekah coming out with her water jug on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Abraham's brother Nahor and his wife, Milcah. Rebekah was very beautiful and old enough to be married, but she was still a virgin. She went down to the spring, filled her jug, and came up again. Running over to her, the servant said, "Please give me a little drink of water from your jug."

Genesis 24:18-19

"Yes, my lord," she answered, "have a drink." And she quickly lowered her jug from her shoulder and gave him a drink. When she had given him a drink, she said, "I'll draw water for your camels, too, until they have had enough to drink."

So, it happened just as the servant asked of God! After the camels had all they could drink, the servant asked the girl if her family could put him up for the night. So, she invited him home. And, as it turns out, she was from Abraham's relatives. The Lord had led the servant right to the house of Abraham's brothers!

God leads and guides each of us day by day! Nothing happens to us by mistake. Every person you meet during each and every day is part of God's wonderful plan for your life.

So, when the servant got to Rebekah's home, he told her family what had happened.

Genesis 24:37-40

And my master made me take an oath. He said, 'Do not allow my son to marry one of these local Canaanite women. Go instead to my father's house, to my relatives, and find a wife there for my son.' 'But I said to my master, 'What if I can't find a young woman who is willing to go back with me?' He responded, 'The LORD, in whose presence I have lived, will send his angel with you and will make your mission successful. Yes, you must find a wife for my son from among my relatives, from my father's family.

Rebekah's family saw the hand of the Lord in the way things turned out.

Genesis 24:51

Here is Rebekah; take her and go. Yes, let her be the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has directed."

Genesis 24:57-58

"Well," they said, "we'll call Rebekah and ask her what she thinks." So they called Rebekah. "Are you willing to go with this man?" they asked her. And she replied, "Yes, I will go."

God wants to give us good things but He wants us to ask for them and trust Him to give us what we need. We should pray that His will be done in our lives.

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank You that You never leave us alone. We find such comfort in knowing that You are always with us leading us and guiding us through every day. We pray that we will see Your hand in each and everything that happens to us and every person we meet along the way each day. We don't want to miss any special plan you have for us. Help us to keep our spiritual eyes and ears open to the things of You, God. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

CRAFT CORNER

GAME CENTER

Pictionary

Write the names of people, objects, songs, and places from the story on 3x5 cards. For example: camel, pitcher, bracelet, well, wedding, water, daughter, Isaac, servant, Canaan, The servant meeting Rebekah.

Have one student at a time pick a card. The student will try and draw the word on the board, while other students guess what it is. You can divide the class into teams if you'd like, or simply award tokens to the first student to guess. Or do the drawing yourself and have the students guess.

Or, use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

Review Questions:

1. Who sent the servant? (Abraham)
2. Who was the servant looking for? (A wife for Isaac)
3. What animals did the servant lead? (Camels)
4. Why didn't Abraham want Isaac to marry a woman from the new land of Canaan? (He didn't want Isaac to marry a woman of another faith. He knew that if Isaac married one of the local Canaanite girls who worshiped idols, Isaac might be led away from the only true God.)
5. How did the servant know which girl was the one for Isaac? (He prayed to God, "When I ask a girl for a drink and she says, 'Yes, certainly, and I will also water your camels,' let her be the one who will become Isaac's wife." And, then, Rebekah came out with her pitcher on her shoulder... so it happened just as the servant asked of God!)
6. What gifts did the servant give Rebekah? (A gold nose ring and bracelet.)
7. Why did the servant choose the sign of drawing water for camels? (Only a kind, humble, polite and generous person would freely offer to draw water for ten camels as well as for their owner. The servant chose a behavior that reflected good qualities in a person. He wanted a kind, humble, polite and generous wife for Isaac. Jesus said you can tell a good tree by its fruit - and you can tell a good person by their behavior. How good is our fruit today? Would the servant have picked you?)
8. What are some examples in Abraham's life of how God leads and guides each of us day by day? (God led his servant to the right village, the right well and the right girl.)
9. What sign did the servant ask for? (that the girl would offer him and his camels water.)

10. What did the servant give Rebekah? (Bracelets and a ring)
11. Why did Abraham send the servant so far away? (He wanted Isaac's wife to worship God, like his family there did.)
12. Why did the servant ask God for a sign? (To be sure the girl was God's choice.)
13. What was Rebekah's brother's name? (Laban)

True/False

1. Abraham went to find a wife for his son. (F-he sent his servant)
2. It wasn't important who Isaac's wife worshipped. (F-she needed to worship God)
3. The servant prayed for a confirming sign from God. (T)
4. Drawing water for and inviting strangers home was a sign of hospitality. (T-in fact, it was extremely rude not to)
5. Rebekah took a long time to decide whether or not to go. (F)

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