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# Isaac and Rebekah

## Key Themes

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- God's plans are perfect.
- God is faithful to His promises.

## Key Passage

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- Genesis 24

## Objectives

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Students will:

- Recognize God's perfect plan in the events leading to the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah.
- Recite what is meant by God is sovereign.



## Lesson Overview



### Come On In

page 5

Students will shape play dough into camels and water jugs.

Make sure you keep the play dough. This activity will be used in future lessons.



### Studying God's Word

page 5

When Abraham sent his servant to obtain a wife for Isaac, God demonstrated His control, even in humanly difficult situations. God kept His promise, providing Rebekah for Isaac according to His perfect plan.



### Activity 1: Trip Map

page 7

Students will follow a list of directions for marking the map to help them explore the places referenced in the lesson text.



### Activity 1: Memory Verse Cards

page 10

Students will find candy with verse cards in an unlikely-looking bag and then practice saying the new memory verse.

# Lesson Preparation

## WHAT YOU WILL DO

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED



### COME ON IN

- Secure or make enough play dough for each student to have a ball of dough. If you choose to make the dough you can find a recipe on the page *Make Play Dough* on the Resource DVD-ROM.

- A ball of play dough for each student



### STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the *Prepare to Share* section.
- Go *Before the Throne*.
- Print the *Lesson Board Word* outline from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- Student *Take Home Sheets*
- Lesson Board Work* outline
- Map of Mesopotamia and Canaan from your Bible or Bible Atlas



### TRIP MAP

- Print one *Trip Map* activity sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Trip Map* activity sheet for each student



### MEMORY VERSE CARDS

- Print the *Memory Verse* cards, preferably on cardstock, from the Resource DVD-ROM. Cut out one verse card per student.
- Crumple and mark up a paper bag to look dirty on the outside.
- Place candy pieces and verse cards into the bag.

- Wrapped candy and verse cards in a crumpled, dirty-looking paper bag



## Memory Verse

**Genesis 50:19–20** Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.”

► **Pace your lesson!** You can use the provided clocks to indicate the time each section should be completed to keep the lesson on schedule. While teaching, you can compare your anticipated times with the actual time and shorten or drop sections as necessary.





# Prepare to Share

## SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Read Genesis 24, asking God to give you understanding and joy in His Word.

With a solemn oath, a quest to a distant land, an unexpected stranger, and the search for a bride, Genesis 24 is the remarkable account of God's sovereign provision of a wife for Isaac. Through Isaac and Rebekah, God would keep His promises to Abraham—to increase his descendants to as many as the sand and the stars, to give them a rich inheritance in the land of Canaan, taking possession of the cities of their enemies, and to bless all nations on earth (Genesis 12:2–3, 22:16–18).

It is significant to mention two events that are described in Genesis 22, two chapters before the account of this lesson. The first event is God's dramatic test of Abraham's faith. Abraham demonstrated trust in the sovereignty of God (Hebrews 11:17) by not withholding his son, the son of promise—Isaac. God then reiterated his promise of blessing all nations through Abraham's descendant. The second event, although a seemingly obscure fact, is the birth of Abraham's grand-niece, Rebekah (Genesis 22:20–23). God was setting the stage for the fulfillment of His promises.

*Abraham*—By the opening of Genesis chapter 24, Abraham's beloved wife Sarah had died (Genesis 23). Abraham was experiencing the blessings of wealth promised by God (Genesis 12:2). However, though God had promised that he would have descendants as numerous as the stars (Genesis 15:5), as of yet, Isaac (his son) had given him no grandchildren. In chapter 24, Abraham called his oldest servant to return to his homeland, Nahor, and bring back a wife for Isaac. It is interesting that Abraham did not go himself, nor did he allow Isaac to leave Canaan. Isaac's future was to be in Canaan and nowhere else, for God had promised this land to Abraham's descendants (Genesis 12:1–9, 13:14–18, 15:1–21).

*The servant*—The servant proved obedient and loyal in every way, faithfully yielding to his master and the son. He modeled a walk of faith by praying for specific guidance while actively preparing, traveling, testing, and waiting for God's answer (Genesis 24:12–13). And when he received God's remarkable answer, the servant responded with worship and eagerness to return the bride adorned to his master's son (Genesis 24:52–54).

*Rebekah*—Through the providence of God, Rebekah was gracious and eager to submit to His plans for her life in fulfilling His eternal purposes.

*Isaac*—Just as Isaac once trusted his father's will even though it meant stretching out on an altar for sacrifice, he now trusted his father to secure a bride for him.

The history of Isaac and Rebekah is a small reflection of the Creator God's great story of redemption. From before the time sin first entered the world, God has had a plan to call out a people for Himself. He has poured out the awful penalty of sin upon His holy Son and then raised Him up. He sent His Spirit into the world to prepare a bride for His Son, the church. Those who have abandoned all, putting their trust in God, share fully in the inheritance promised through the Son (Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 19:29, 25:34; Ephesians 1:3–12; Colossians 1:22; Revelation 19:7).

## APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

It was important to Abraham that Isaac's wife be a relative from his homeland, Haran (Genesis 24:4). The history and descendants of Isaac's grandfather, Terah, are given in Genesis 11:27–32, allowing us to confidently determine the relationship between Isaac and Rebekah. Terah was the father of three sons: Abraham, Nahor, and Haran. Of Terah's three sons, Abraham moved to Canaan, Nahor remained in northwest Mesopotamia, and Haran died in Ur (Genesis 11:28).

Abraham's brother, Nahor, became the father of eight sons. One of those sons, Bethuel, became the father of Rebekah (Genesis 22:21–23). Thus, God records for us that Rebekah and Isaac were first cousins once removed.

In considering marital unions in the Old Testament between family members like that of Rebekah and Isaac, keep in mind what Genesis 5:4 teaches. Adam and Eve had sons and daughters. This was the way the world was populated at the beginning and repopulated after the Flood. The law against close relatives marrying didn't come until the time of Moses (Leviticus 18–20). Before then there were few genetic defects (mutations) that today make it inadvisable for close relatives to marry. God's Word has the answers—we need to begin with His truth.

Often people are quick to discount the Old Testament as untrue, unrelated, or unreliable. However, God has provided this information—all of it—so we can see that it is precisely recorded and intended to weave a tapestry of redemption from beginning to end.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

God often reveals things in the world today that confirm His history. This account we are studying is a good example.

Because of what we know today of the city of Ur, we can understand Abraham's reluctance for his son to return to Mesopotamia. And we can see why God had to call Abraham away from that city. Archaeological discoveries in this area reveal that it was once a religious center devoted to the worship of the moon god, Sin. There are rather horrifying accounts of royal burial pits which include not only a royal personage but numerous servants and musicians who evidently committed cheerful mass suicide. It becomes clear that God intended Abraham, the one through whom He planned to bless all the families of the earth, to journey to a new location—one which, by the way, was in a far more strategic spot for disseminating this global blessing.

The fact that the ancient city of Haran still exists today is further confirmation of the Bible's his-

tory. The Bible tells us that this is where Abraham's father, Terah, took Abraham, Sarah, and Lot (Genesis 11:31). In this same area, Turkish villages still bear the name of Abraham's grandfather and great-grandfather, Nahor and Serug (Genesis 11:22). God's Word is true and provides us with answers to questions we may encounter from skeptical friends.



### BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear God, Creator of heaven and earth, I come before you as simply a servant rejoicing in the privilege of ministering to your children. In trust, I leave my worries at your feet and ask you to call the students of my class to follow you with their whole lives. I rejoice in the privilege of serving your Son, and I ask you to speak through your Word to call this generation to follow you wholeheartedly and with joyful abandon.



## COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will shape play dough into camels and water jugs.

Make sure you keep the play dough. This activity will be used in future lessons.



## REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme posters from previous weeks, quickly review the lessons with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Children learn by repetition. These posters will reference the lesson title with an illustration to review the key elements of the lesson.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you review the Lesson Theme posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds, and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



# Studying God's Word

## READ THE WORD

Find Genesis 24 in your Bibles. Before I begin reading, let me set the stage here. Abraham was very old and his son Isaac was not married yet. Abraham was getting ready to send his servant 500 miles away—back to Haran, Abraham's homeland—to look for a wife for Isaac. Abraham wanted Isaac's wife to be a relative from his homeland.

Now let's read Genesis 24:5–7. Listen very carefully so you will be prepared to answer the questions.

Genesis 24:5–7

## EXAMINE THE WORD

Let's stop here for a few moments and ask some questions about what we just read.

### Observe the Text

*Refer to the Bible Study poster to remind your students how to dig deeper into God's Word by asking the right questions.*

Abraham was from Haran and the surrounding area including the city of Nahor. This is where Abraham's servant was headed. *Show them this area on a map from your Bible or Bible atlas.*

- ? **What was the servant worried about?** *If the children can't answer read verse 5 again. The woman may not be willing to follow him back to Canaan.*



- ? What did he ask Abraham about his son, Isaac? *Should he take Isaac with him on the journey?*
- ? Look at verse 6. What did Abraham tell his servant about his son? *Do not take my son back there.*

OK. Verse 7 tells us that Abraham had lots of experience with God and he trusted God. *Re-read verse 7 to the class.*

He confidently told his servant, "You shall take a wife for my son from there." He trusted God.

### Discover the Truth

Now tell me in your own words what Abraham was asking his servant to do. *He wanted his servant to return to his country or homeland and bring back a bride from Abraham's relatives to marry Isaac.*

Abraham believed and trusted in God. When we think about verse 7 we see that Abraham knew God, knew what God had done, and knew God's Word. *Write on the board, "Knew God," "Knew God's Works," and "Knew God's Word."*

Abraham's trust in God is like a baby that learns to know his parents. He knew God. *Point to "Knew God" on the board.*

As the baby grows, he sees his parents work and do lots of different things for him and others. The baby sees how strong they are. Abraham did the same. He knew God's works. *Point to "Knew God's Works" on the board.*

The baby begins to realize that his parents will do what they say they will. Abraham believed God would do the same. He knew God's Words and believed Him. *Point to "Knew God's Words" on the board.*

Just like that baby learns to trust his parents, Abraham realized he could trust God.

- ? Why do you think Abraham was so sure his servant would find a wife for Isaac? I'll give you a hint. We just answered it. Who can tell me? What did we just write on the board? *He knew and believed God, His works, and His Word. On the board, draw a line beneath "Knew God's Word." Below the line write "= Trust."*

Yes! Because Abraham knew these things, he knew he could trust God.

One more thing. Abraham understood that God is sovereign. Let's read together this attribute of God. *Point to sovereign on the Attributes of God poster. Read together from the poster: God is sovereign—in complete control of everything; God does all that He pleases.*

- ? What is God in control of? *Everything!*



► Print the Lesson Board Work outline from the Resource DVD-ROM for easier planning.

## SOVEREIGN

*(Refer to Attributes poster)*



# A Long, Special Trip

## MATERIALS

- Trip Map activity sheet for each student
- Crayons

## INSTRUCTIONS

*Students follow directions to help them explore on the map places referenced in the lesson.*

These sheets will help us to see where Abraham went and where he came from. Remember, Abraham sent his servant 500 miles away to look for a wife for Isaac. The servant went all the way back to Haran—Abraham’s homeland. He went with camels and gifts for the bride’s family.

Color the tent in the land of Canaan because Abraham and Isaac lived there in tents.

Color the ten camels that were traveling with the servant from the land of Canaan to the town of Nahor.

Color the jug of water at Nahor and remember Rebekah who watered all the servant’s camels.

## CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Unfortunately, we sometimes slip into thinking that the history of the people in the Bible isn’t real because it was so long ago. However, these people lived as surely as you do and their cities were just as real as your city is today.

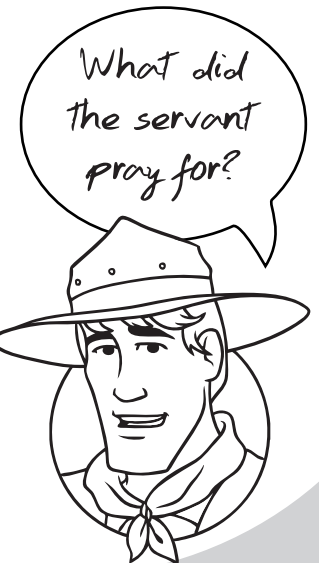
The same God who completed His plans through Abraham, his servant, Isaac, and Rebekah will complete His plan in your life. You can trust God just as surely as Abraham trusted Him because you know God, you know about His works and His words in your own life and in the Bible. *Refer to the board work.*



## READ THE WORD

Now back to Abraham and his servant. Abraham’s servant had been given a big assignment. He was to make a long trip, about 500 miles. He was to go to a family that didn’t know him and bring back a wife to a groom she had never seen! One of the first things he did when he arrived was to pray. I’m going to read one verse. Listen carefully and tell me what he prayed for. *Read Genesis 24:12–14*

Genesis 24:13–14



## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

- ? **Where did this take place?** *A well outside the city. Read verse 13 again and help the children come up with the answer.*

The well was outside the city. The people from the city came to water their animals. They usually filled jugs of water and even carried them back to the city.

? **What did he pray? It is in Genesis 24:14. Can anyone tell me?** *If the children can't get it, read verse 14 to them again. He prayed that the girl who offered water to him and his 10 camels would be the wife for Isaac.*

This is a pretty specific prayer, isn't it? And it shows us that the servant really trusted that God was in charge of everything. He believed that God knew who would be at the well on this day, at this time, what she would say, and what she would do.

### Discover the Truth

This servant really believed that God is sovereign over everything in history. In fact these words stand out to me in his prayer. He said, "Let her be the one You have *appointed* for Your servant Isaac."

The sovereign God had a plan and a particular wife *appointed* for Isaac. The servant didn't know who the right girl was for Isaac, but he trusted that God knew, so he asked God to clearly direct him. And God did just that. *Refer to the Attributes of God poster.*

## SOVEREIGN

*(Refer to Attributes poster)*

### READ THE WORD

The Bible is so exciting! The servant was at Haran, outside the city at the well praying to God that just the right woman would come and offer to give his camels a drink! This is how the servant would know this was to be Isaac's wife. And that is exactly what happened next. The beautiful Rebekah arrived at the well before the servant was even finished with his prayer. She offered the servant a drink and even offered to water all ten of his camels.

When the camels had finished drinking their water, the servant asked the woman whose daughter she was. And guess what? She was Abraham's great-niece. Abraham had prayed that Isaac's wife would be a relative—someone in his family. And this girl at the well at this particular time and watering the servant's camels for him was Abraham's relative. *To make this connection clear to the children write this little family tree on the board: "Terah (three sons), Abraham (Terah's son), Haran (Terah's son), Nahor (Terah's son), Isaac (Abraham's son), Bethuel (Nahor's son), Rebekah (Bethuel's daughter)."*

Genesis 24:50–51

Now we are going to find out how Rebekah's family reacted to this man from a faraway country who wanted to take their daughter away to be married! Listen as I read. *Read Genesis 24:50–51.*



## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

- ? Who is speaking in this verse? Can you see it in your own Bible? It is in verse 50. *Laban and Bethuel.*

Those are hard names to say. Laban was Rebekah's brother and Bethuel was Rebekah's father. *If you put the family tree on the board, refer to that.*

- ? The servant was eager to hear if Rebekah's family would let her marry Isaac. What did they tell him? *Read verses 50–51 again so the children can answer. This is of the Lord. Rebekah can be Isaac's wife. You can take her.*

### Discover the Truth

When God plans something, nothing can stop it. And His plans are perfect. God directed the servant, Abraham, Rebekah, Rebekah's father, and her brother in such a way that His plan would be fulfilled. God always does what He chooses to do and our *yes* or *no* will not stop any of His plans. God is sovereign. *Point to the Attributes of God poster. Encourage students to repeat the definition.*

- ? What is the best way to act when God shows you His plan? *Agree with it like Rebekah and her family did. Thank God for it like the servant did.*



## READ THE WORD

Well, now we get to the happy ending! The servant gave precious gifts to Rebekah and her family and by the next morning Rebekah was saying goodbye to her family and leaving for a whole new life.

Listen as I read Genesis 24:63–67.

Genesis 24:63–67

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

- ? Who is mentioned now? *Isaac.*  
That's right. Isaac, Abraham's son.
- ? Where was Isaac just as Rebekah was coming? *Look in Genesis 24:63. He was walking in the field.*
- ? How did Isaac feel about Rebekah? That answer is in verse 67. Let me read it to you again. *He loved her and made her his wife.*

### Discover the Truth

This is a true, happened-in-real-history love story. The same God who provided a specially chosen bride for Isaac sees you, too. He is powerful



and can be trusted to work all things together for good for those who belong to Him.

God still seeks and calls people to follow Him. Rebekah was invited to leave her old life behind and belong to someone grand. Jesus calls to us as well. And He has far more blessings to offer than Isaac could ever offer Rebekah. I hope that one day you will hear His loving call and you, too, will follow and obey Him wherever He leads—just like Rebekah did in this wonderful account of God finding Isaac the perfect wife.

Jesus offers us a new life as well if we trust Him as our Lord and Savior, if we believe His Word and obey it. His death on the Cross assures eternal life for everyone who truly believes in Him.



## Memory Verse Cards

### MATERIALS

- A piece of wrapped candy for each student
- A memory verse card for each student
- A crumpled, dirty-looking paper bag

### INSTRUCTIONS

*Print and cut out one Genesis 50:19–20 card from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.*

*Place the candy pieces with the verse cards into the crumpled bag before class.*

*Students will read aloud the verse several times before enjoying the candy.*

God always directs events to accomplish just what He had in mind to do all along. God wants us to know that He is in control.

Things often look a lot like this crumpled paper bag—a big ugly mess; but we need to remember that things aren't always as they seem.

- ? Who is willing to reach into this awful, beat up bag to find out what is inside?

*Choose someone to reach in and pick something out.*

Aha! It is a treat! And your memory verse.

*Have each child draw one treat and one Memory Verse card from the bag. Have the children read the verse several times together before eating the candy.*

Now you can eat your candy. And I want to give you a tip that will help you practice your memory verse every day until you learn it very well. When you get home, tape these cards to the bathroom mirror. Then, every day while you brush your teeth, practice the verse in your head three times. Before long, you will know it by heart!

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

When we memorize Bible verses we are learning God's Word. In these verses we are reminded that nothing is out of God's control. Even situations that seem bad will be used for God's good purpose. Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, and the servant were able to confidently follow God because they trusted Him and knew that He was able to accomplish all that He promised.





# Applying God's Word

## WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

God had promised Abraham that He would make a great nation from the descendants of Isaac. Although it seemed like a very difficult task for Abraham's servant to travel 500 miles, find just the right girl from people he had never met, and expect her to leave her family to marry a stranger from another land—it was not too difficult for our God, who is sovereign. He is in complete control of everything and does all that He pleases. His plan for Isaac and Rebekah was perfect and His plans for us are perfect, too. Abraham and his servant trusted that God would provide and provide perfectly. They trusted Him because they knew Him, they knew what He had done, and they knew His Word.

We know from this account that God is in control. He is sovereign over every detail—even when it comes to picking a wife for someone 500 miles away. He is in control of everything and we can trust Him and all that He does. His plans are always perfect—because He is perfect.

## GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

The next time you are worried and upset about things in your family or about getting along with others, stop to think like Abraham.

He remembered who God is—that God is sovereign, the Lord of heaven and earth. He remembered what God had already done for him. God had kept His promises. He remembered what God said. *Point to the words "Knew God," "Knew God's Works," and "Knew God's Word" on the board.*

One thing God has promised to all those who belong to Him and love Him is to work all things together for good. That doesn't mean we get everything we selfishly want, but that God's purposes for us will bring Him glory and be good for us, too.



► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



### MEMORY VERSE

**Genesis 50:19–20** Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good in order to bring it about as it is to this day, to save many people alive.



### GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them

- Thank God for His promises and perfect plans to fulfill them.
- Ask God to remind us throughout the week of who He is, what He says, and what He has done.

