

Volume 70, Quarter 4, 2020

# Abraham, Father of Faith

Thanksgiving and Christmas

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# THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ October 4, 2020

Abraham—Father of Faith

## The Call of Abram

Get Up and Go!

### Scripture Reading:

#### Genesis 12

If you were to name a few of the well-known characters in the Bible, it is likely Abraham will be listed among them.

**Abraham (Abram) is often referred to as the “father of faith.”**

His name appears for the first time at the end of Genesis, Chapter 11, though he was then called Abram. (If you are wondering, the Lord does not change Abram’s name to Abraham until Genesis chapter 17). He and his father’s house were traveling to the land of Canaan. Before they arrived, his dad died at age 205 in the land of Haran.

Haran might have seemed like an easy place to settle down with the rest of his family, but God appeared to Abram and gave him a promise. He said, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee.

**And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great.”**

God continued speaking and promised He would bless those who blessed Abram and curse those who cursed Abram.

God told Abram to get up. Have you ever ventured into the unknown? Maybe you have gone to a new school or have had to move to a new place. It might be scary or lonely without friends or connections in the new community. Abram knew what that felt like.

So, Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him. Leaving his home at age 75, he took his wife, Sarai, and Lot, his brother’s son with him. They took all their possessions and servants and followed God’s instructions. Abram left in faith, believing what the Lord promised him was better than what he was leaving in Haran. He believed the reward of the promise to be greater than what he would sacrifice. He trusted the Lord to provide for his needs, even the basics of food and water in an unknown land. Notice, in the beginning, God did not even tell Abram which land He promised. Abram had to trust that God would supply anything he lacked and make up for anything he left behind.

**In Canaan, the Lord appeared to Abram again. Because the Lord visited him, Abram built an altar to the Lord in that place.**

Famine came upon the land where Abram was living, so he decided to sojourn in Egypt. (To sojourn means to turn aside from the road, or to be a guest. Abram was not planning on staying there.) His wife Sarai was a beautiful woman. Before entering Egypt, Abram asked Sarai to conceal that she was his wife. He was afraid the Egyptians would want Sarai and kill him. Abram was right—once Pharaoh saw Sarai, he took her into his house.

Pharaoh gave Abram sheep, oxen, donkeys, servants, and camels as a gift. Still, both Abram and Sarai continued to conceal the truth, so the Lord sent a plague on Pharaoh’s house. Pharaoh called Abram and asked him, “What did you do to me? Why didn’t you tell me Sarai was your wife?” He let Sarai return to Abram and sent them away. ■

### Lesson Discussion

#### Memory Verse

**And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing.**

Genesis 12:2

#### Key Thought

Following God without knowing where he was going, Abram left us an ideal example of faith and obvious trust in the Lord.

- What did God promise Abram?
- After arriving in Canaan, there was a famine. How do you think this affected Abram’s faith in God’s promise to him?
- Did Abram act in faith when he asked Sarai to lie?
- If we mess up and fail to trust God, will He give us another chance?

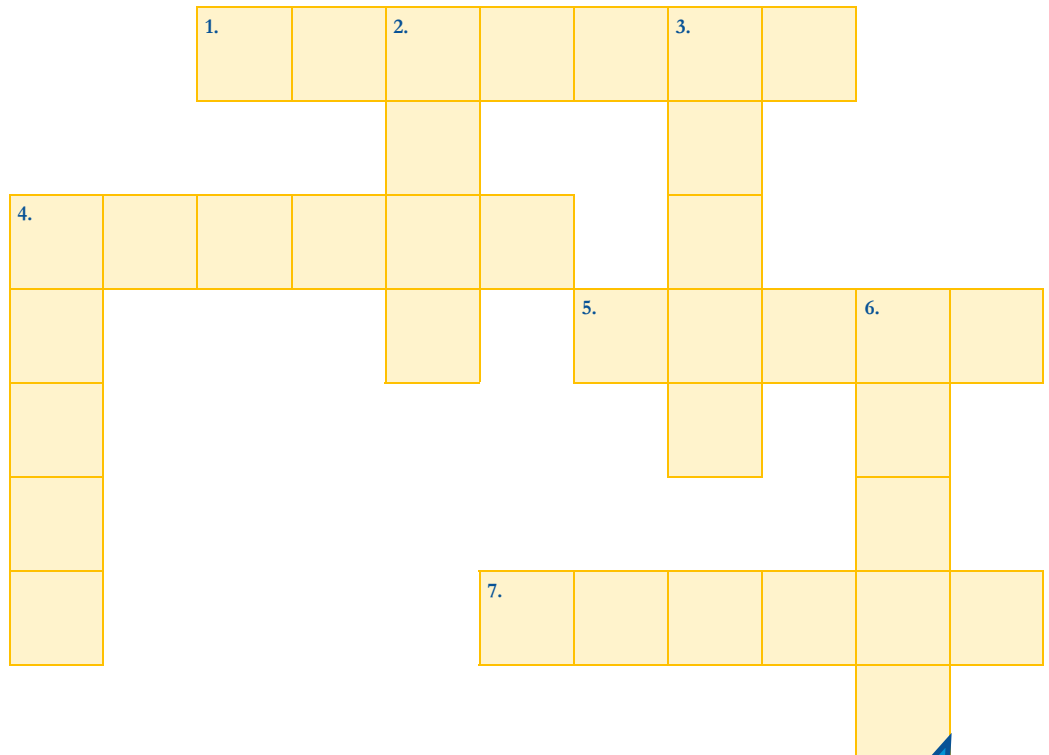
## Clues About Abraham!

### Across

1. God made a \_\_\_\_ to Abram.
4. Abram is often called the \_\_\_\_ of faith.
5. Abram's father died in this land.
7. God promised Abram this land.

### Down

2. To follow God's directions means to \_\_\_\_.
3. Abram's wife.
4. Abram had this because he believed in God's promise.
6. The main character of today's story.



**Abram, Canaan, Faith, Father, Haran, Obey, Promise, Sarai**

**WORD BANK**

## Get Up!

Faith can be a hard concept to grasp. At times, it can be difficult to put into words. Let us learn faith by acting it out. Who would like to volunteer?

**Directions:** Blindfold the volunteer and ensure they have no sight on which to rely. Give simple instructions to walk around the room without running into anything. Finally, place a chair in the middle of the room. Using commands, lead them to it and ask them to sit down. They may not use their hands or feet to feel, simply trust the voice of the one speaking.

Faith is not blind. God does not intend for us to go through life blindfolded without direction. We have the voice of the Lord to follow and trust. His word leads and guides us. Often, we learn by trusting in the small things, before moving on and trusting in bigger things. Spending time reading God's word and praying are some of the best ways we can learn His voice. When we know His voice and hear it, our faith increases!



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Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 1. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.

Abraham—Father of Faith

## Abraham and Lot Separate

Let's Not Fight



### Scripture Reading: Genesis 13

Abraham was not only rich, he was very rich with much cattle, silver, and gold. Abraham's nephew, Lot, also had flocks, herds and tents. The land was

so crowded it could not support both families.

Trouble soon arose, as Abraham's herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen began to strive (*fight*) with each other.

Once-peaceful days turned tumultuous as tempers and jealousies of the two crowded families flared. (*Have you ever noticed being in a crowded car with a sibling or a family member for hours at a time has the potential to lead to conflict?*)

**Having no desire for a family rift, Abraham urged Lot, "Let's not fight. We are brothers."**

"The whole land is before us. It is time to separate." Abraham generously offered, "If you take the land to the right, I will take the land to the left. If you want the land on the left, I will go to the right."

Abraham had just provided the perfect prescription on how to resolve conflict.

### Lesson Discussion

#### Memory Verse

And Abram said unto Lot,  
Let there be no strife, I  
pray thee, between me  
and thee, and between my  
herdmen and thy  
herdmen; for we be  
brethren. Genesis 13:8

#### Key Thought

Selfishness gives you less  
than you think it  
will. Unselfishness gives you  
more than you think it will.

- What problem did Abraham face?
- Name the three ways Abraham left us an example on how to resolve conflict.
- Is it always easy to follow Abraham's example? Why or why not? Who can help us be better than we really are?
- Describe Lot's selfishness and Abraham's unselfishness.

### 1. Do not assign blame.

Abraham did **not** say, "It wasn't my fault there was fighting," but he simply said, "Let's not fight." Although it is easy to blame the other person in a conflict (*because we usually think we are right*), it is better to not play the blame game.

### 2. Recognize we are all brothers and sisters and value those relationships

(*whether we are related or not*)—Abraham said, "We are brethren." Value the relationship of the person with whom you are tempted to strive. Do you remember the lawyer who asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" The answer to that question was *everybody*.

### 3. Separating oneself from conflict is often a wise course of action.

Abraham realized his family and Lot's family and possessions occupied too crowded of a space, so he urged separation. It is sometimes smart to simply (*without attitude*) remove yourself from a volatile situation so that you can pray and bring your emotions under control.

Rather than take the best land for himself, which he could have done, Abraham unselfishly let Lot choose first. When Lot saw the plain of Jordan was fertile and well-watered, he chose that land. He took the best for himself. It was a dangerous move, however. The wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were just beyond the good land that Lot chose. It was not long before Lot had pitched his tent toward those cities, a move that would eventually have terrible consequences.

The good news is that the relationship of Abraham and Lot was not ruined because Abraham was unselfish and didn't create a big fight.

In the meantime, Abraham turned back toward the "*leftover land*." However, God had been watching this whole scene and had not forgotten His promise to Abraham.

God comforted and encouraged Abraham: "Lift up your eyes! Look north, south, east, and west. Get up! Walk through the whole land. Every piece of ground your shoes touch, I will give it to you forever. Furthermore, your children will number more than the dust of the earth."

So Abraham removed his tent and lived in Hebron, the city where hundreds of years later King David was anointed; there, Abraham built an altar to the Lord. ■



## The Selfish Cloud

Once upon a time, there lived a cloud. Her home was over a beautiful, lush, green country. One day, she saw another, much bigger cloud and felt very envious. Because she wanted to be just as big as her neighbor cloud, she decided she would never rain again so that she could grow bigger and fatter.

Indeed, the cloud grew bigger, but the land beneath her began to dry up and turn brown. The rivers dried up, and then the animals and people left in search of water. Finally, the whole country became a desert. The cloud really did not care much that the land beneath her was thirsting for water, but she also did not

realize that by being over a desert, there was no place for her to obtain water to keep growing. Slowly, the cloud began to lose size, and there was nothing she could do to stop it.

In time, the cloud realized her foolish mistake. She realized her greed and selfishness was the cause of her vanishing size. Just before she completely evaporated to nothing, a gentle breeze began to blow. The cloud was so small and weighed so little that the wind took her to a faraway beautiful country. Once again, the cloud recovered to her original size.

Having learned her lesson, the cloud remained small and modest, but she became so generous when raining that her new country became even greener.

Adapted from: <https://freestoriesforkids.com/children/stories-and-tales/greedy-cloud>



Fill in the blanks, then share your answers with other students!

### The Benefits of Rain

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### The Benefits of Unselfishness

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

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Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 2. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.

# THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ October 18, 2020



Genesis 13 tells how Lot chose the best land for himself—the land closest to Sodom and Gomorrah. As time moved on, Lot moved inside the city walls of Sodom. The kingdoms surrounding the area were at war, and soon the king of Sodom and the king of **Gomorrah (1)** went out to fight in the valley of Siddim with all the other kings. This valley was full of slime pits! When they realized they were losing the battle, the kings and men of Sodom and Gomorrah ran away from the other kings—some of them fell into these slime pits. The rest escaped to the mountain. The surrounding kings plundered all the possessions in Sodom and stole away those who lived there, including Lot and his family.

One man escaped and told Abram what happened.

## Lesson Discussion

### Memory Verse

That I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich.  
Genesis 15:23

### Key Thought

Abram could have rightfully owned all the possessions and people in the city of Sodom, but he refused. He was not looking to increase his own goods or possessions at the expense of others.

- Have you ever gone out of your way to help someone who has wronged you?

- a. How did it make you feel?

- b. Did it take courage?

- c. What was the end result?

- How do you think Abram felt rescuing Lot?

- How do you think Lot felt when Abram rescued him?

- When Abram's riches increased, he gave a tithe (or an offering) to the Lord. What do you have to

give the Lord today?

**Abram armed his trained servants and his family members to follow after the kings and to save Lot.**

He had 318 men.

*Would you be willing to risk your life and to stand up and fight strong kings to save someone who had purposefully taken the best for himself?* Instead of remembering Lot's behavior, Abram showed great **forgiveness (3)** and courage by fighting to set Lot free, repaying Lot's evil with good.

Abram pursued these kings north to their cities. He successfully retrieved Lot and his household as well as all the people and possessions of the city of Sodom.

A priest and man of God living in Jerusalem met Abram on his journey and blessed him. Abram gave this **priest (2)** ten percent of everything he had gained. In doing this, he acknowledged and paid tribute to God.

Next, the king of Sodom came to Abram. The king asked if Abram were to keep all the possessions, if he could keep all the people. Abram answered, "I have lifted up my head unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth."

**Abram refused to take a thread or even a shoe latchet (buckle).**

He did not want the king to later claim he had made Abram rich.

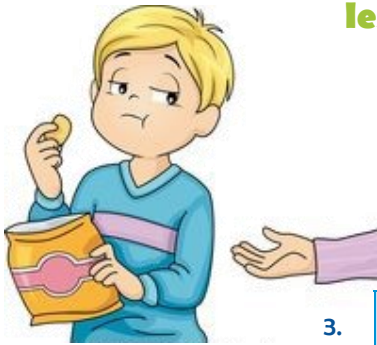
Look how Abram acknowledged it was not in his own strength he conquered these kings, but it was God who gave him the victory. According to the rules of war, if you conquer someone, it is within your rights to keep everything and everyone, but Abram refused. What a perfect example of one who is not selfish! We are not a reflection of God if we are constantly on the lookout for what we can take from others—even if they offer it!

**Abram was not concerned with possessions or goods.**

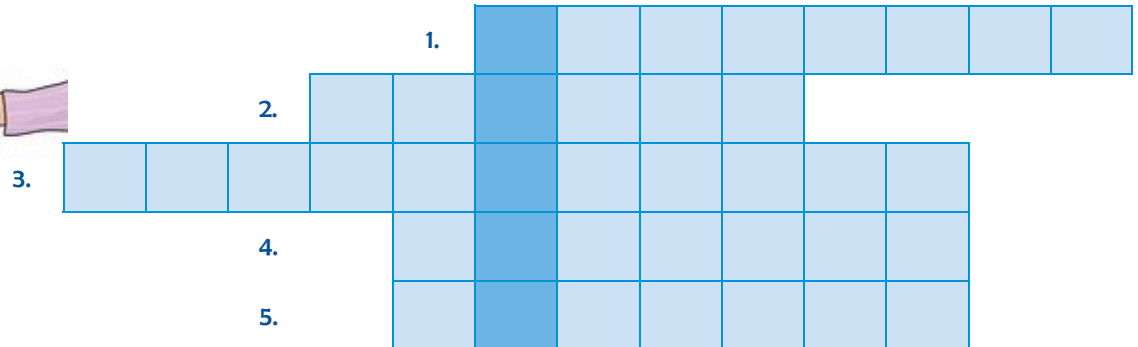
He rescued Lot and this alone made him content.

Abram showed he was not **selfish (4)** and did not care about riches, but there was one thing he did care about. After retrieving Lot, Abram talked to the Lord and reminded God he was still without a child. Remember the promise God had given Abram? God gently told Abram to look up at the stars and asked Abram to count them. (Can you count the stars in the sky?) God promised Abram's family would be numbered as the stars in the sky. Abram believed God would fulfill this **promise (5)**. ■

Abram taught us an important lesson today. It isn't pleasing to God to be selfish! Fill in the puzzle below using the words that are in bold with a number beside them in your **lesson text (1)**. The puzzle will complete the question:



Are you a...?



## Don't Be a Taker!

Form two teams and two lines of chairs facing each other. Choose one player on each team to be the starting player, sitting them at the end of each row. Hand the starting players a delicious and yummy treat. Upon "GO!" the starting players will pass the treat down the row until the last person is holding it. This person jumps up, everyone moves down a seat, and the ending player moves to the starting player's seat. Moving fast, repeat the process until everyone is in his/her own seat. Once the first player is sitting in his/her original seat, they eat the treat quickly. Whichever team eats their treat first wins! Several rounds can be played, allowing everyone to get a treat.

Let's talk about this! You all had to work as a team to win, yet only one person gained the reward. How did that make you feel? Were you a little jealous as they ate the yummy treat and you didn't? (It's human nature if the answer is yes.) But, we shouldn't act on our human nature. God wants us to put our brother above ourselves. Sometimes, we might have to work hard for our brother to profit, like Abram did for Lot, but this pleases God. He does not want us to always be on the lookout to take things for ourselves.



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Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 3. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.



# THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ October 25, 2020

Abraham—Father of Faith



Scripture Reading: Genesis 16: 17:1—8

Sarah was 75 years old and becoming impatient.

Ten years prior, God had promised her husband, Abraham, a son. How Sarah longed for the day she would bear a child, but time seemed to be running out. Year after year passed, and, still, she remained childless.

Sarah had an idea. She would give her Egyptian maid, Hagar, to also be Abraham's wife. At her age, it seemed the only logical way to have the child for whom she so longed. *(Even though it was not in God's plan, this was not an uncommon practice back in those days.)*

The problem was this: God had already PROMISED Abraham a son by Sarah.

Sarah's foolish plan backfired quickly. As soon as Hagar became Abraham's secondary wife and conceived a child, she began to treat Sarah scornfully. No doubt, Hagar now felt somewhat superior to Sarah, so she treated her in that manner.

*(Figuring out the answers to our own problems without God's help rarely ends well!)*

## Lesson Discussion

- How old was Sarah, and why was she impatient?

### Memory Verse

And she [Hagar] called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me. Genesis 16:13

### Key Thought

We are not without faults—that means we have them! Yet, Jesus—the ONE who lives and sees us—still loves us, talks to us, and has mercy on us.

- Describe Sarah's plan. Did it work? What happened?

- Describe the "humanity—faults" of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar.

- Who found Hagar after she ran away, and what did He say to her?

- In what ways do you "run away" from your trouble? Are you glad God sees what you do?

Full of frustration and hurt, Sarah unjustly lashed out at Abraham. "It is your fault Hagar is treating me this way!" She rashly cried to him, "The Lord judge who is right—you or me!" *(How soon she seemed to forget it had been her idea in the first place!)*

Abraham had mistakenly agreed to Sarah's plan, but willing to restore peace, said, "Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee." In other words—you do what you feel like you have to do.

Sarah took out her unhappiness on her Egyptian maid and "dealt hardly with her," most likely beating her or giving her more hard work than she could handle.

**So, Hagar ran away.**

*(Have you ever felt like running away from your problems?)*

As Hagar wandered in the wilderness, she came to a fountain of water.

**There, the angel of the LORD, Jesus Himself, found her. Isn't it good to be found?**

He asked Hagar, "Where did you come from, and where are you going?"

Although He knew the answers to these questions, He wanted to give Hagar the chance to spill all the heartache of her heart. She answered, "I am fleeing from the face of my mistress, Sarah."

The angel of the LORD told Hagar,

**"Go back home to your mistress, and do what she tells you to do."**

He continued, "I will give you many children which cannot be numbered. You will have a son and call his name Ishmael because the LORD has heard your affliction.

Ishmael would be a wild man, fierce, untamed, and live free in the desert. *(Did you know the Arabs are Ishmael's descendants and are still living in our world today?)*

Hagar was convinced that God Himself had appeared to her in her sorrow and wilderness-wandering. *(Jesus still loved her EVEN though she was not completely faultless toward Sarah!)*

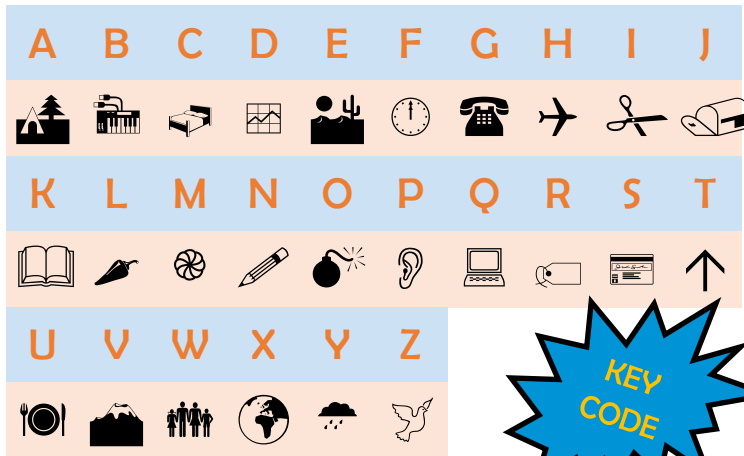
Hagar called the name of the well "Beer-lahai-roi," which means,

**"The well of Him that lives and sees me."**

After returning back home, Hagar gave birth to a son whom she named Ishmael, according to the angel of the LORD's word.

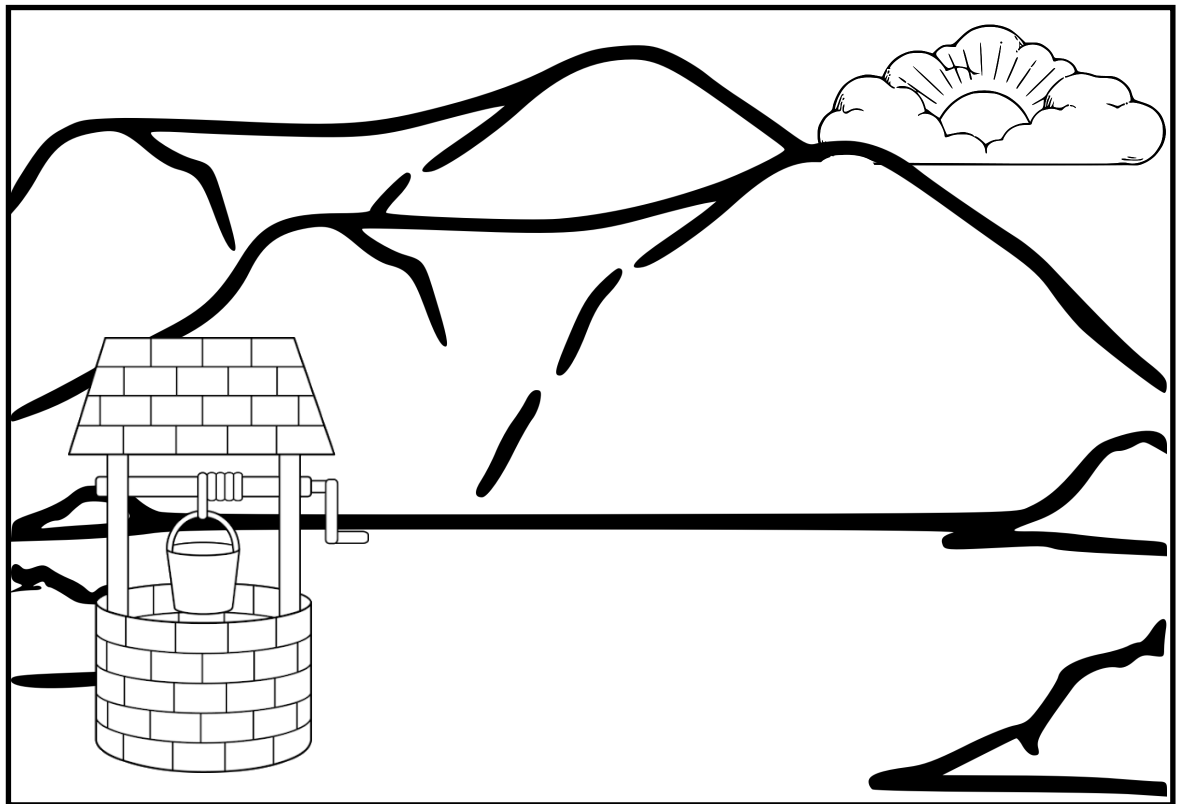
Thirteen years passed, and Abraham was now 99 years old. Abraham thought, "Surely Ishmael is the son God promised me." But once again, God appeared to Abraham and said, "Sarah thy wife will have a son: and you will call his name Isaac." ■





Use the key code to solve the puzzle. Where does the answer to the puzzle come from?

Draw Hagar at the well and label the well with the name she gave it.



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Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 4. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.

# THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ November 1, 2020

Abraham—Father of Faith

## Abraham Intercedes for Sodom

Is Anything Too Hard For God?

### Scripture Reading: Genesis 18

In the heat of the day, Abraham was sitting in the door of his tent. When he saw three strangers, he ran, bowed before them, and invited them into his tent. Abraham offered them water to drink and to wash their feet. He asked them to sit under the shade of a tree while he ran to prepare a meal for them. “Sarah! Hurry and bake ash cakes to serve to our visitors!” he said, coming into the tent. (*You can still make these today!*) Abraham went and found a young and tender calf. When he butchered and prepared it and Sarah finished the cakes, he served these along with milk and butter to his visitors.

What a beautiful picture of hospitality! Abraham’s example can challenge us. *Do we run to prepare the best of what we have to serve our visitors?* In Hebrews, we read, “be not forgetful to entertain strangers (or show hospitality), for thereby some have entertained angels unaware.” Did Abraham have angels in his tent?

One of them asked, “Where is Sarah, your wife?” Abraham responded knowing Sarah was in the tent.

### Lesson Discussion

- What did Abraham and Sarah show the strangers who came to their tent?

#### Memory Verse

Is anything too hard for the Lord? Genesis 18:14

#### Key Thought

Abraham drew near to the Lord with faith and courage to pray for the souls around him. The Lord listened and was willing to have mercy. Never give up praying for people in your life!

- God reinforced His promise to give Abraham a son. How did He do that?
- Abraham prayed earnestly for something. What was he asking God to do?
- Does God listen to our prayers? Is He moved by them? Does He change His course of action because of our

The man said, “In a year when I return, Sarah will have a son.” Sarah was listening from inside the tent. When she heard this, she laughed to herself because her body was too old to have children. **The Lord** asked Abraham, (*notice now, the Bible says it was the Lord*), “Why did Sarah laugh?”

### “Is anything too hard for the Lord?”

Sarah was afraid and denied laughing.

The men rose and looked toward Sodom. It was then that the Lord revealed to Abraham that He intended to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah for their sins were great.

The Bible tells us,

### Abraham drew near to the Lord.

Abraham asked, “If you find fifty righteous men in the city, will you spare it from destruction for those fifty men?” The Lord agreed—if he found fifty men, He would spare the whole place for their sakes.

Abraham started thinking, “Well, if there are five less than I said, will you destroy it for lack of five?” God answered, “If they are forty-five, I will not destroy it.”

Abraham continued, “What if they are forty?” He said, “I will not destroy it for forty’s sake.”

Abraham pleaded and said, “Don’t let the Lord be angry, but what if they are thirty?” Again, the Lord answered, “If there are thirty, I will not destroy them.”

See how patient God is? Abraham continued to beg for the lives of those in Sodom and Gomorrah, and God responded with mercy. God attentively listened to Abraham’s earnest desire and compassion for his neighbors’ wellbeing.

Abraham questioned about twenty—the Lord would not destroy it for twenty.

Finally, Abraham asked, “If there are only ten?” And the Lord answered, “I will not destroy it for ten’s sake.” After this, the Lord went on His way, and Abraham returned to his tent.

Abraham interceded faithfully for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. He knew the Lord had to destroy wickedness but asked for mercy because of the righteous.

### The Lord listened!

Abraham pleaded with the Lord, and the Lord agreed. This gives us great hope to plead and pray for our family and friends who are not living for the Lord. Our faithful prayers can accomplish a lot! ■

## Can You Name...

Five more stories in the Bible where God does the impossible?!

1. _____	2. _____	3. _____	4. _____	5. _____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

## Is Anything Too Hard For God?

This object lesson may take 30-40 minutes to complete.

To perform this, you will need:

- A peeled hard-boiled egg
  - A dry bottle/jar with an opening slightly smaller than the diameter of the egg
  - Boiling water (an electric tea kettle may be easiest)

Let's try to fit the boiled egg in the jar! Can anyone do it without damaging the egg? It's too big! But things are not always as impossible as they seem. Let me show you how to make the egg fit into the jar.

Pour a few inches of boiling water in the bottom of the jar and place the egg in the opening of the jar.

*Continue on with the lesson. It may take a few minutes for the egg to drop into the bottle, so use this as part of the object lesson.*

Has anything in your life ever seemed impossible? At some point in our life, we will find ourselves in a hard situation. It is then we look to God in prayer, with faith, to do the impossible! We cannot ever pray or talk to the Lord too much. Abraham asked the Lord for mercy multiple times and continued asking in faith. The angel in the story asked, "Is anything too hard for God?" Like the egg and the bottle, we may not always see immediate results, but God is always working on behalf of His children.

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Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 1. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.

# THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ November 8, 2020



## Abraham—Father of Faith Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed God's Love & Mercy God's Judgement

Scripture Reading: Genesis 19

**"Remember Lot's wife."**

(Luke 17:32). What did Jesus mean? Let's find out!

When Lot separated from Abraham, he set his tent up so that it simply *faced* the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Later, we find Lot actually living *IN* the very unsafe city of Sodom. Why was it unsafe?

God was so displeased with the sinful behavior of the inhabitants of the city, He planned to destroy it.

**IMPORTANT FACT:** God is love. Love defines God's character. His love is a warm blanket that wraps us up in comfort and security.

**But, there are TWO equally important parts to God's character.**

God is also judgement. Because God is pure and holy, He is unable to close His eyes, turn His head, and act like sin does not exist. The judgement side of His character requires Him to punish wrong.

God was about ready to pour his judgement out on the

very wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

One evening as Lot sat at the gate of the city, two angels approached him. Lot stood up and bowed himself with his face toward the ground. He may not have realized they were angels, but he knew they were not like the wicked men of Sodom.

The angels refused Lot's earnest pleas for them to stay at his house, but at his insistence, they finally agreed. Lot washed their feet and made them good food to eat.

Word quickly spread through the city of Lot's visitors. Evil men who intended the angels harm rushed to Lot's house. Lot refused to let them see his visitors, but went outside to try and calm them down. Becoming angry, however, the men beat the door, trying to break it down.

Amid the noise and confusion, Lot found himself pulled back inside the house by the angels. When the door was firmly shut, the angels proved they were MORE than mere men. Smiting the men outside with blindness, the now-blind men wore themselves out trying to find the door.

God's love and mercy had run out; He now held judgement in His hand. *(Thank God Abraham had prayed for the salvation of Lot and His family, and God had listened!)*

The angels urged Lot, "Go get your family and leave the city! God has sent us here to destroy it." Sadly, Lot's sons-in-law made fun of his words of warning—they did not believe Lot and refused to leave.

The angels' urgent pleas for Lot to leave increased as the morning sun rose. "DO NOT LOOK BACK," they said! "Leave now, lest you be destroyed with the city."

Lot lingered, hesitating. Perhaps he thought of all he would leave behind. Finally, in mercy, the angels grabbed the hands of Lot, his wife, and his two daughters and pulled them out of the city.

"Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven" (Genesis 19:24).

Disobediently, Lot's wife disregarded the very specific instructions of the angel and looked back at the burning, smoking city and "became a pillar of salt."

**GOOD NEWS:** Jesus, in His GREAT LOVE, died on the cross so we could **ESCAPE** the judgement sin brings. Run out of the City of Destruction toward heaven. Remember Lot's wife. **NOTHING** in the world, no matter how good it looks, is worth looking back. ■

### Lesson Discussion

- Name the two equally important parts of God's character.

#### Memory Verse

Remember Lot's wife.

Luke 17:32

#### Key Thought

God is Love.  
God is Judgement.

- What did Lot's sons-in-law do when Lot warned them to leave the city? Do people still make fun of God's warnings?
- What should we remember when we think of Lot's wife?
- WHO made a way for us to escape sin and the destruction it will bring? Can you be "good enough" to be saved or do you have to ask for Jesus' blood to cover your sins?



## Pilgrim's Progress Allegory

An allegory is a story that can be interpreted to show a hidden meaning. While in prison for preaching about God, John Bunyan wrote a book named *Pilgrim's Progress*.

The opening scene of *Pilgrim's Progress* shows us a man who lived in the City of Destruction. He held a book in his hand and carried a great burden on his back. As he read the book, he wept and trembled. Unable to contain his emotion, he broke out with a mournful cry and said, "What shall I do?"

In the midst of his dilemma, he returned home. Finally becoming aware of his great distress, his wife asked, "What is the matter?" He could no longer stay silent and told her what he had learned from the book. He said, "You see, I have learned that our city will be burned with fire from heaven. I am afraid we are all doomed...even you, my sweet children, unless I can find some way of escape, but I haven't found any way."

Not believing his words, they hoped a good night's sleep would settle his frenzied thoughts, but he tossed and turned with tears and sighs until the sky brightened with the dawn. At first, his family tried to console him, but as he went on, their faces hardened with anger. They answered him gruffly with harsh words. Sometimes they ridiculed him, and other times they scolded him. Finally, they just ignored him.

One day, while walking in the field, he burst out crying, "What shall I do to be saved." As he stood, a man named Evangelist walked up to him and asked, "Why are you crying?"

He said, Sir, I've read in this book I'm holding that I am condemned to die, and after that comes judgement."

Evangelist handed the man a parchment roll, and on it were the words, "Flee from the wrath to come." He pointed out the shining lights in the distance and told the man to flee directly toward it. He said, "When you see the gate, knock and you will be told what you should do."

The man had not run far from his own door when his wife and children noticed what he was doing and cried out to him. "Come back! Come back home!" But, the man put his fingers in his ears and ran on. "Life! Life! Eternal life!" He did not turn to look at his home or family behind him, but fled toward the middle of the plain and toward the shining light.

—Adapted from *Pilgrim's Progress*.

*(This was only the beginning of this man's journey toward heaven. If you are interested in learning more about what happened to him, ask your parents for a copy of *Pilgrim's Progress*!)*



Name five things that will bring God's Judgement (example: stealing):

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Name five things that make you think of God's Love (example: morning sunshine:)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

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Contributors: Sister Julie Elwell and Sister Nicole Gellenbeck.

Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 6. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.



Junior Sunday School ■ November 15, 2020

Abraham—Father of Faith

## The Promised Isaac

God's Promises

### Scripture Reading: Genesis 15 & 21

God had appeared to Abraham not only once, but many times, and Abraham patiently waited for the fulfillment of God's promise.

Months and years passed, and still, there was no child.

Perhaps Abraham began to doubt. Again, God came to Abraham in a vision and said, "Do not fear. I will be your shield and your reward." Abraham reminded God again, "Lord, I have no child. I only have a steward." The word of the Lord came to Abraham again saying, "Your steward will not be your heir. It will be your own child.

**Look up at the heavens and see the stars. Are you able to number them? That's how big your family will be."**

In the Old Testament, God talked to people, gave them visions or dreams (like with Abraham), and sometimes spoke with an audible voice. They did not have the Bible to read. Today we are privileged to read the words God has spoken. It is in reading the Bible or through the godly people around us that God can confirm His will for us.

### Lesson Discussion

#### Memory Verse

For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. Genesis 21:2

#### Key Thought

No matter the circumstances, God always keeps His promises!

- What did Abraham do with his sacrifice to God?
- Did Abraham believe that God would fulfill His promise?
- How long did Abraham have to wait for his son to be born?
- Do people always keep their promises? Does God?

Abraham believed the Lord, and the Lord counted it as righteousness.

Abraham asked, "How will I know I'll have a child?" So, God made a promise with Abraham and told him to sacrifice a three-year-old calf, a three-year-old goat, a turtle dove, and a young pigeon. Did Abraham sacrifice these to the Lord and go his own way, do his own thing, and forget about it? No! He carefully watched over his sacrifice. When the birds came to eat it, he drove them away. Abraham then fell into a deep sleep, and God revealed to him what was going to happen to his family, the children of Israel, and how they would become slaves in the land of Egypt.

**Even though Abraham believed the Lord, that belief was tested.**

Even more days, months, and years passed--twenty-five years!

At the prompting of his wife, Abraham, agreed to have a child with Sarah's servant, Hagar. He had a son named Ishmael. This was not the Lord's plan. Do you remember? When the angels visited Abraham under the tree, the promised son was to come of Sarah.

The Lord visited Sarah and did what He said he was going to do. Sarah gave birth to a son named Isaac—which means laughter. Abraham circumcised him on day eight and kept his part of the covenant with God. Abraham was one hundred years old when Isaac was born.

Abraham believed God's promise, and it was tested with the passage of time—but

**God kept His promise.**

Humans might make promises they cannot keep, but God will always keep His promises. The Bible contains over 3,000 promises!

Do you have a favorite promise from God? Ask your parents or grandparents about their favorite promises. Many times, the promise may seem impossible, but over and over, they are proved true. We can stand on the promises of God! ■

Title:

## Sing a Song!

Fill in the title and missing words in the song to the left. Use the word bank and if you get stuck, look at #512 in the Evening Light Songbook!

Word bank:

- Promises
- Highest
- Eternal

Circle the following promises that *are* eternal:



Standing on the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ my king,

Through \_\_\_\_\_ ages let His pra - ises ring;

Glo - ry in the \_\_\_\_\_ I will shout and sing,

\_\_\_\_\_

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Contributors: Sister Julie Elwell and Sister Nicole Gellenbeck.

Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 7. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.

# THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ November 22, 2020



*A Day of Thanksgiving*

## Jesus Gives Thanks

Jesus had a thankful heart. He got tired, was sometimes hungry, and suffered much, but we *never read about Him complaining. Not one time.*

### Thanksgiving for Our Food:

**Jesus gave thanks for the food.** After three days of healing the sick and preaching to the multitudes who followed Him, the people were hungry. Instead of sending them home (like the disciples wanted to do), Jesus took a few little fish and seven loaves of bread, then prayed to God, giving thanks for the simple meal. Incredibly, the food fed 4,000 men plus women and children! God performed a miracle. Be careful to bow your heads and give God thanks before we eating breakfast, lunch, and dinner! Your stomach would growl with hunger, if not for God's provision of food!

### God Always Hears:

On another occasion, Jesus' good friend, Lazarus died. Lazarus' sisters were very sorrowful. Even Jesus wept. Jesus knew God wanted to show the people His

power and His glory, so before Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead and called for him to come out of the grave, He prayed this prayer: "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I know that you always hear me." God always hears your prayer, too! As He sits on His throne in heaven, he waits to hear your voice. God may not answer your prayer exactly like you want Him to, but He always answers them the right way.

### Thanksgiving Even In Sadness:

The good news of salvation that Jesus brought was rejected by many who thought they were smart and wise. No doubt Jesus was sad and disappointed. However, in Matthew 11:25, **Jesus answered the sadness in His heart with a prayer of thanksgiving;** He thanked God there were still people who did accept the message of salvation and were sorry for their sins. Things will happen to make us sad, disappoint us, or don't go our way. We should answer those hard times with thanksgiving to God for the GOOD things we still see in our lives. If we open our eyes and look around, we can always find something to still thank God for.

### Thanksgiving in Suffering:

Perhaps the greatest prayers of thanksgiving Jesus offered were during the last supper He shared with His disciples before being crucified. Jesus broke bread and served it to His disciples. He also handed them a cup from which to drink. Most Importantly, He prayed a prayer of thanksgiving to God before serving them. Why was this so great? The bread symbolized Jesus' broken and suffering body on the cross. The cup represented the blood He would spill for our salvation. **Jesus gave thanks for His own suffering!** You, too, will experience hard things, but give thanks anyway! God uses your "hard things" to make you a stronger and better Christian!

The Psalmist David was another example of someone with a thankful heart. He was not a perfect man, but he always gave God thanks! No wonder it was said that David was a man after God's own heart!

God does not want us to be ungrateful, complaining children. Make it a habit to always give THANKS. Truly God is great and very good to us. He deserves thanksgiving every day of the year. ■

### Memory Verse

In everything give thanks:  
for this is the will of God in  
Christ Jesus concerning you.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

### Key Thought

Thank and praise God for  
everything in your life.

### Lesson Discussion

- Discuss the four times Jesus give thanks in our lesson.
- Is it always easy to give thanks? Why or why not?
- How do you feel when you complain?
- Discuss what you have to be thankful for.



## Did You Know?

We celebrate Thanksgiving on the third Thursday every November in America

today. Thanksgiving was a holiday started in 1621 by the pilgrims after a successful harvest and after struggling to survive in a new land. In the third year after arriving from England, the spring and summer were very hot, leaving their crops dying in the fields. William Bradford, the governor of the colony ordered a day of fasting and prayer. Soon thereafter rain came! God heard and answered their prayers. Truly, the colonists were thankful!



## The Legend of 5 Kernels of Corn

*(A legend is a story that is popularly regarded as historical but cannot be proven true.)*

**Needed:** 5 kernels of corn on a plate while the teacher reads the legend and explains the activity. The verses of Psalms 136.

**Legend:** The first winter the Pilgrims spent in their new home was very cold and bitter. Food was in short supply. Some days they only had enough food for each person to have five kernels of corn for the day. When spring came, they planted food and it grew. The harvest was good the following year and they celebrated Thanksgiving with their Indian friends. From then on, when they celebrated Thanksgiving, the Pilgrims laid out five kernels of corn on each plate to remind themselves of their blessings.

**Truth:** While we may not be able to prove the truth of that story, there ARE Biblical scriptures we know for sure to be factual. Find a Bible and read Psalms 136. Write beside each kernel of (popped) corn something about God or something He did for which to be thankful--or think of your own Thanksgiving. The first three verses below will help you get started.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is **good**: for his **mercy** endureth forever.

O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth forever.

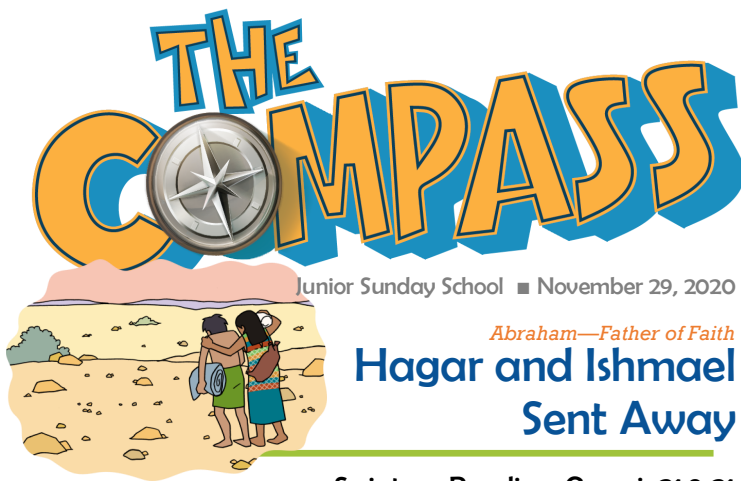
O give thanks unto the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth forever. —Psalms 136:1-3



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Contributors: Sister Julie Elwell and Sister Nicole Gellenbeck.

Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 8. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.



## Hagar and Ishmael Sent Away

**Scripture Reading: Genesis 21:8-21**

It was a day of celebration! A great feast was made by Abraham for his small son, Isaac. The day did not end joyfully, however.

Ishmael, son of Hagar, was now about 15 or 16 years old. Perhaps he was jealous of the feast given for his brother, but, for whatever reason, he mocked and ridiculed young Isaac.

When Sarah saw Ishmael mocking her son, it roused her anger. She said to Abraham, “Cast out (*divorce*) this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son.” She wanted Hagar and Ishmael gone!

Abraham was grieved because he loved Ishmael. God, seeing Abraham’s sorrow, said, “Don’t let this thing be grievous to you. Do everything Sarah has asked of you. Isaac will inherit your family name, but I will also make a great nation of Ishmael.”

### Memory Verse

And the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Genesis 21:17

### Key Thought

Our hard situations are not too hard for God to solve. He always has a plan and hears us “where we are.”

### Lesson Discussion

- How old was Ishmael in our story today, and what did he do that upset Sarah? What did she demand?
- What was Abraham’s reaction to Sarah’s request? What did God say to him?
- The angel of God called to Hagar and gave her words of hope. What were they? Where was Ishmael?
- When we face hard situations that cause us sadness or pain, we should pray that God will

\_\_\_\_\_ our eyes to see a well of water.

- How old did Ishmael live to be, and how many sons did he have?

Early the next morning, Abraham awoke. Taking bread and a bottle of water, he gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder. He then sent her and Ishmael away. (*Notice! Abraham no doubt had a heavy heart, but because he trusted God’s words, he lost no time in obeying God’s instructions.*)

Hagar and Ishmael left. It was not a good moment for them. Wandering in the wilderness, their water was soon gone. Ishmael was weak from dehydration and lack of food, so Hagar laid him under a desert shrub. In desperation, she withdrew the distance of a bowshot to weep out her sorrow. She cried, “Let me not see the death of the child.”

But wait! The angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven saying, “What is wrong, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is.”

**God was watching the whole situation. He cared enough to speak to Hagar FROM Heaven, calling her by name. He knows your name, too!**

“Arise,” God said! “Lift up your son, for I will make him a great nation.” God not only gave this promise to Abraham, He also gave it to Hagar.

God then opened Hagar’s eyes—it was like she blinked a few times—and she saw a well of water she had not seen before. With renewed hope, she filled her empty bottle with water and gave it to her thirsty son.

**God not only provided water to survive, but He offered words of hope!**

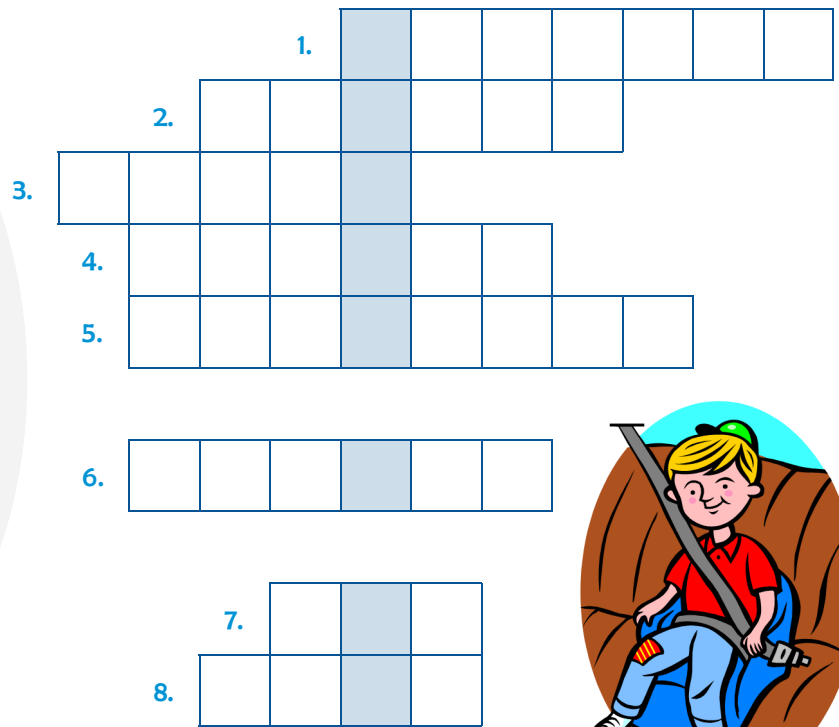
God was with Ishmael. He grew up living in the desert and became an archer. His mother found him a wife from the land of Egypt, and Ishmael had 12 sons (*the same as Isaac*). Their names were Nebajoth, Kedar, Adbeel, Misbsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah—these were also the names of their towns and castles. (*Yes! That is what the Bible says. Can you pronounce their names?*) The Arab people are descendants of these men. Ishmael lived to be 137 years old!

Although we don’t know what the relationship between Ishmael and Isaac was after this Bible account, it is encouraging to find that when Abraham died at 175 years old—about 70 years later—BOTH brothers buried their father.

**“And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah” (Genesis 25:9). ■**

Where does God see you? Complete the sentences below and fill the missing word into the puzzle to find out!

1. God sees me when I am \_\_\_\_\_ the dog.
2. I get up and go to \_\_\_\_\_ every weekday.
3. My mom buys groceries from the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. On Sundays, my family goes to \_\_\_\_\_.
5. I dream when I am \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Jonah was \_\_\_\_\_ from God when a fish swallowed him.
7. My Dad drives the \_\_\_\_\_ to work in the morning.
8. I have to do chores when I'm at \_\_\_\_\_.



## Empty Bottles of Water

**Needed:** A small water bottle or cup of water for each student. A larger pitcher of water with the following words written on paper and taped to the pitcher, "Pure Water out of Jesus' Well."

Pass the water bottles out at the beginning of class and have the students sip/drink from them throughout the reading of the lesson.

After reading the lesson, point out that with each step Hagar and Ishmael took into the desert and as hour after hour passed, their water was soon gone. In the same way, there are times we find ourselves walking in a desert place. What does that mean?

Imagine this scenario: You wake up in the morning. It is hard to open your eyes because you are so tired. You have a slightly stuffy nose, but you are not sick enough to stay home from school. You go into the kitchen and pour your favorite cereal into a bowl. Just as you begin to pour the milk, the dog jumps on you, causing you to jerk, hit the bowl, and spill it all over the table and floor. You finally get to school—two minutes late and are marked tardy. A math test from the day before is passed out and your grade was bad. When it came time for recess, the school bully decided to pick on you—making fun of the stain on your shirt (from the cereal and milk that you hadn't even realized was there). Several other kids were standing around and heard the mocking words. You finally got home from school and realized you accidentally left homework that was due the next day at school....

Well, you get the idea. It was just a bad day from beginning to end. Thankfully, not all days are like that! But sometimes, we do have hard days. With every hard thing that happens, it is like another drink from our water bottle is taken until, finally, we find the water is all gone. We are heart-thirsty, tired, and depleted.

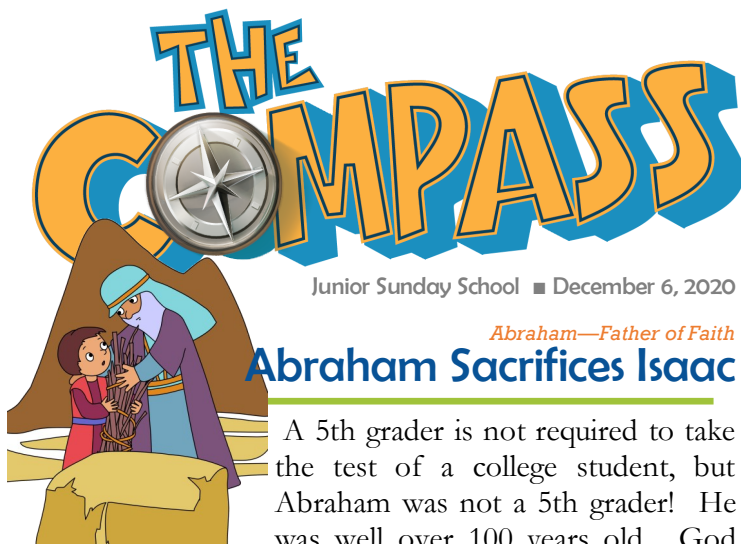
**Teacher:** Now, refill the student's bottles from the pitcher of "Pure Water out of Jesus' Well." Talk about how we need water refills periodically! We get those through prayer—talking to Jesus--and through reading a verse and then sitting quietly and just thinking about it. Talk about how God, just like with Hagar, always has a ready supply of water—sometimes our eyes just have to be opened to see it!

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Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 9. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.

Answers: 1. Walking 2. School 3. Store 4. Church 5. Sleeping 6. Hiding 7. Car 8. Home



Junior Sunday School ■ December 6, 2020

Abraham—Father of Faith

## Abraham Sacrifices Isaac

A 5th grader is not required to take the test of a college student, but Abraham was not a 5th grader! He was well over 100 years old. God

had handed him many “tests” throughout his lifetime, but one day God put a test on Abraham’s desk that would prove to be the hardest of all.

“Abraham,” called God! Rather than ignoring God or acting like he didn’t hear Him, Abraham immediately responded, “*Here am I.*” God said, “Take your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. Offer him for a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” (*Do you notice how quickly Abraham responded?*)

The next morning, Abraham didn’t mess around in camp working on unfinished tasks. He rose up early and saddled his donkey. Taking two young servants, Isaac, and some wood for the burnt offering, he started on the 45-mile journey to Moriah.

### Lesson Discussion

- God tempted Abraham. What is

#### Memory Verse

And it came to pass after these things, that God did not tempt [test] Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: he said, Behold, here I am. Genesis 22:1

#### Key Thought

When God speaks to us, He wants our immediate response without asking a lot of questions and is pleased with an active obedience.

another word for “tempt,” and what did God ask him to do?

- List some of the ACTIVE ways in which Abraham immediately obeyed God.
- Count how many times Abraham said, “Here I am” in the story. What does that tell us about Abraham’s listening skills and his willingness to respond? What does it tell us about how we should listen and respond to requests from authority figures in our lives?

- What did God provide for Abraham to sacrifice instead of Isaac? Who did that sacrifice represent?

On the third day, Abraham saw the mountain in the distance of which God had spoken. He told the young men, “Stay here with the donkey. Isaac and I will go up on the mountain to worship and will come again to you.”

**Abraham did not want the two servants to distract him from obeying a very hard command, so he left them behind.**

Abraham said he was going to *worship* God! Even before Abraham knew how this would end, his faith in God was so strong that he did not stagger (*meaning, he did not doubt or move unsteadily*) under this most difficult of tests.

As father and son walked up the steep mountain, Isaac, who was no longer just a young child, had a question. “My father,” he said. Abraham said, “*Here am I, my son.*” Isaac asked, “We have the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” With all the love in his heart, Abraham responded, “My son, God will provide himself a lamb for the offering.”

**Do you ever have questions? Notice how well Isaac submitted to his father in this story.**

It was finally time. Abraham set the wood in order, bound his son, and laid him on the altar. Stretching out his arm to slay his son, perhaps with tears streaming down his face, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven saying, “Abraham, Abraham!”

**God is always RIGHT on time—He is never too late!**

For the third time, Abraham said, “*Here am I.*” (*Abraham had proven himself to be a good listener and always responded—but can you imagine how HAPPY He was to stop what he was doing and respond to God yet again?*)

The angel of the Lord said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad. Now I know that you fear God because you have not kept your son—your only son—from me.” (*Are we willing to give God what we love the very most and believe He will accept our sacrifice?*)

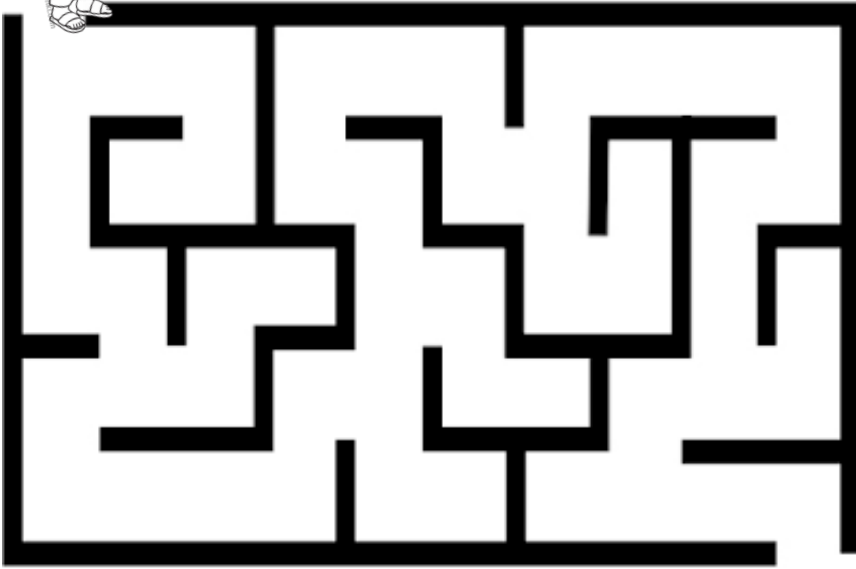
When Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, he saw a ram was caught by his horns in the nearby bushes. So, Abraham took the ram and offered it to God instead of his son, Isaac. Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh, which means, “God will provide.”

■





Help Abraham get to the ram in  
the thicket!



## Verse Race!

Get your Bibles and race  
against your classmates to find  
this verse and copy it into the  
space provided.

Psalm 119:60

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## A Substitute Sacrifice

Needed: Packets of real cane sugar and packets of substitute sugar (*Splenda/ Stevia/Sweet 'N Low*). Pass out the packets of sugar substitute and have the students write "Isaac & the Ram" on them. Then pass out packets of real cane sugar and have the students write "Me & Jesus" on them.

What is the difference between REAL sugar and SUBSTITUTE sugar? Real sugar is made from a sugarcane plant. Substitute sugars are chemically altered to taste sweet, but they are not the "real" thing. Sugar substitutes take the place of real sugar. Similarly, if your school teacher is sick, a substitute teacher may come in for the day. A substitute takes the place of the person that should be there.

In the same way that the ram caught in the thicket was a **substitute sacrifice** for Isaac, Jesus is a **substitute sacrifice** for you and me.

We have all sinned and deserve to die. But because God loves us so much and does not want us to die, He provided Jesus—a substitute offering—for our sin. When we are willing to put ourselves on Jesus' altar, we might think something bad will happen. Will Jesus ask me to do something I don't want to do? Will He ask me to live in a way I don't *want* to live? He might—that is what laying down on the altar actually means. But the GOOD NEWS is that rather than dying, we gain eternal life. Jesus already died on the cross for us! He was our substitute offering!

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Contributors: Sister Julie Elwell and Sister Nicole Gellenbeck.

Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 10. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.

# THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ December 13, 2020

Christmas Stories

## Zacharias and Elisabeth

### Scripture Reading: Luke 1

In the days of Herod, the king...

Herod was the first non-Jewish man to take the throne, which was through the Roman government. Fun fact of the Bible: Jacob prophesied this would happen way back in Genesis! Imagine the fear and sadness of the Jews during this time. This is the setting in which Jesus was born.

In the days of Herod, the king, there was a priest named Zacharias. He was married to a woman named Elisabeth. They were both righteous and kept God's commandments, but they were also old and without children. They had just traveled to the temple for Zacharias to serve his one-week term as a priest. The priests burned incense in the holy place while everyone else stood outside praying.

It was while he was burning incense that Zacharias saw an angel. He was scared! The angel said to him, "Fear not, Zacharias: for your prayer is heard and your wife Elisabeth will have a son, and you will call him John. He will be great in the sight of the Lord." Zacharias

asked the angel, "how shall I know this? I am an old man and my wife is old too."

Does that sound familiar? Abraham asked a similar question when an angel told him about having Isaac in his old age.

### How awesome for Zacharias to have his prayers confirmed!

It is likely he had been praying for a son. And maybe, he had been praying for the promised Messiah to help deliver them from the Roman government.

Answering Zacharias, the angel said, "I am Gabriel, and I stand in the presence of God. He sent me to bring you this glad news. But because you did not believe my words, you will not be able to speak until your wife gives birth to your son."

The people waiting outside the temple began to wonder what was taking Zacharias so long! When he came out, he could not speak to them. They correctly guessed he had seen a vision. As soon as Zacharias was done working in the temple, he returned to his own house. Elisabeth was soon pregnant—as the angel had promised.

A few months later, an angel also appeared to Mary, the mother of Jesus. (We will learn about this in our next lesson). When Mary learned that Elisabeth was pregnant, she hurried to see her.

### As soon as Elisabeth heard Mary's voice, the baby inside her leaped and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.

She told Mary, "Blessed are you among women! Why is the mother of my Lord visiting me? As soon as I heard your voice, my child leaped for joy."

Mary stayed with Elisabeth for three months before returning home.

Elisabeth soon gave birth to her son. Her neighbors and friends rejoiced with her! On the eighth day, when the child was circumcised and named, her friends wanted to name the baby Zacharias. In those days, it was quite common for the first boy to be named after his father.

They asked Zacharias what the child's name would be. He asked for a writing table and confirmed the name the angel had spoken to him: John. They could not understand—no one in the family was named John!

### As the angel promised, he was able to speak again! He praised God and went on to prophesy. ■

### Memory Verse

But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

Luke 1:13

### Key Thought

Zacharias did not believe the angel and could not speak for nine months! When God's word is confirmed to us, let's have faith to believe it!

### Lesson Discussion

- In what book of the Bible did Jacob prophesy that a non-Jewish man would sit on the throne?
- Who appeared to Zacharias in the temple?
- God promised a son to Zacharias and Elisabeth, but Zacharias didn't believe. What was his punishment?
- What happened to Elisabeth's baby when he heard Mary's voice?

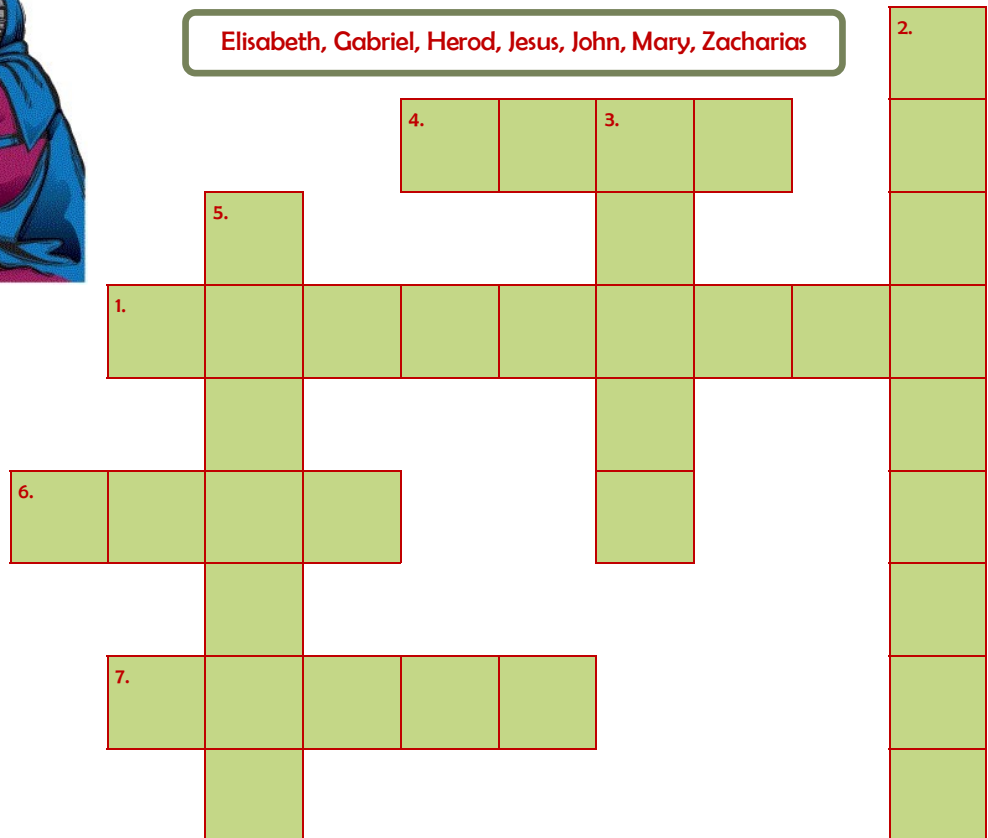
## Christmas in the Bible

Use the clues and the word bank to complete the crossword puzzle.



Elisabeth, Gabriel, Herod, Jesus, John, Mary, Zacharias

1. The priest and father of John the Baptist.
2. Mary's aunt.
3. The non-Jewish king who sat on the throne.
4. Son of Elisabeth and Zacharias, forerunner of Jesus.
5. The Angel who announced John's birth.
6. Mother of Jesus.
7. The Promised Messiah and Savior of the world.



## Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley, 1739

Upon his conversion, Charles Wesley immediately began writing hymns, each one packed with doctrine, all of them exhibiting strength and sensitivity, both beauty and theological brawn. He wrote constantly, and even on horseback his mind was flooded with new songs. He often stopped in at houses along the road and ran in asking for "pen and ink."

He wrote more than six thousand hymns in his life, and he didn't like people tinkering with the words. In one of his hymnals, he wrote, "...I must beg of [those who reprint my hymns] these two favors: either let them stand just as they are, to take things for better or worse, or add the true reading in the margin, or at the bottom of the page, that we may no longer be accountable either for the nonsense or for the doggerel of other men."

But one man did the church a great favor by polishing up one of Charles's best-loved hymns. When Charles was thirty two, he wrote a Christmas hymn that began:

*Hark, how all the welkin rings,  
"Glory to the King of kings;"*

The word *welkin* was an old English term for "the vault of heaven." It was Charles's friend, evangelist, George Whitefield, who, when he published this carol in his collection of hymns in 1753, changed the word to the now beloved "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing."

**Doggerel:** verse or words that are badly written or expressed.



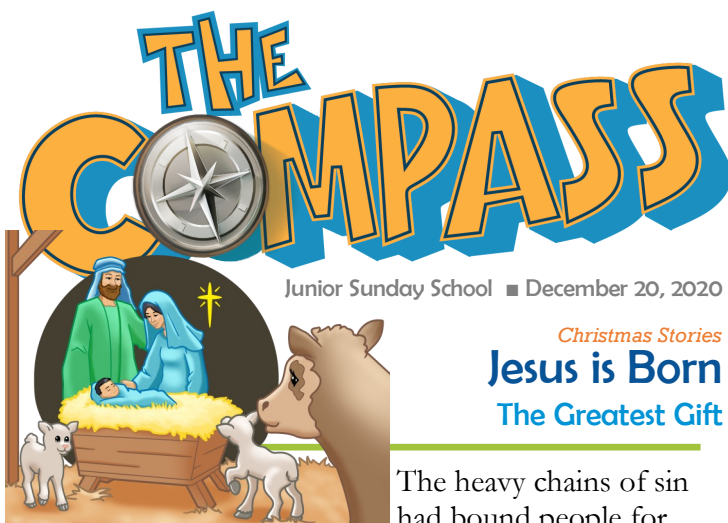
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Christ, by highest Heav'n  
adored;  
Christ the everlasting Lord;  
Late in time, behold Him come,  
Offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
Hail th'incarnate Deity,  
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus our Emmanuel.

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Contributors: Sister Julie Elwell and Sister Nicole Gellenbeck.

Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 11. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.



proclamation and announcement the angels came to bring these humble shepherds was **GREATER still!**

*Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.*

Suddenly, as though heaven could not contain the JOY of the message it brought to earth, the night sky above the shepherds exploded with the praise of a multitude of the heavenly host.

### GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN.

The angels then went back into heaven. It was quiet and still once again. Maybe the wind was blowing softly over the hills and the moon was shining. But a brand new ENERGY had been given to these humble shepherds! As their fast-beating hearts finally slowed to a normal beat, they talked in wonder and excitement. They said, “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord has made known unto us.”

Not a minute was wasted. With **HASTE** (*in a hurry*) they found Mary and Joseph and baby Jesus. *Where did they find them? In an expensive hotel? No! The very God of heaven came in the humblest of ways—that way EVERYONE would not feel like Jesus was “too good” for them. They found Jesus wrapped tightly in swaddling clothes—exactly like the angel had told them!*

The shepherds did not keep their good news a secret! They told everyone they met about the angels’ message and about the birth of Jesus. Everyone that heard the shepherd’s story marveled. But Mary listened to all that was done and said and thought about them in her heart.

The world did not yet realize *who Jesus was or why He came to earth. What they did understand was that something extraordinarily incredible and special had just happened!*

**God’s Son had just been born on earth. The heavy weights of sin that kept people in a prison cell of sin, chained in darkness, would finally be broken!**

Glory to God in the Highest! ■

Junior Sunday School ■ December 20, 2020

### Christmas Stories Jesus is Born The Greatest Gift

The heavy chains of sin had bound people for

four thousand years. People who *wanted to do right found themselves under the bondage of a power stronger than they were—the power of Satan. Even on bright, sunshiny days, people could not escape the sickness that ate away at the hope in their hearts.*

But God had a plan—a plan to *break the power of those heavy chains that bound His creation! No man or woman was found who was a worthy or pure enough sacrifice for sin except one—God’s only son, Jesus.*

**It was time—time to send Jesus from heaven to earth as a Redeemer and Saviour!**

Heaven held its breath. Earth was quiet and still under its great burden. In the country hills close to Bethlehem, shepherds kept watch over their flocks by night.

Breaking the stillness of night, an angel of the Lord appeared in the night sky and the glory of the Lord shone all around. The shepherds were very afraid. Although their fear was great, the heavenly

### Lesson Discussion

- What did people bend under the weight of? Do you remember a sin you have committed that felt like a huge weight?

### Memory Verse

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Matthew 1:21

### Key Thought

God saw the heavy chains of sin people carried, so He sent Jesus to earth to break the chains of sin and bring peace and joy!

- How do you think the shepherds felt when the angels appeared to them

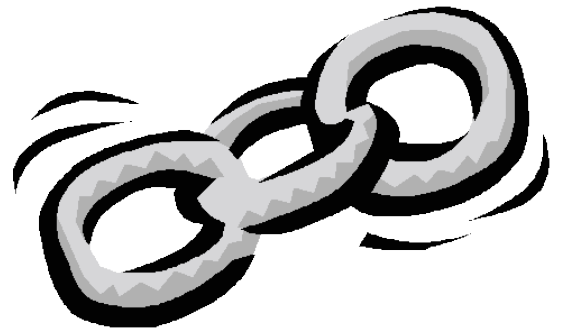
- Recite the JOYOUS message of the angels.

- Where was Jesus born? Are you glad He was born in a humble way? Why?



## Chain Breaker!

Needed: Heavy chains (*tire chains would work!*) or a big, bulky, heavy object. A beautifully-wrapped box inside of which are pieces of paper with these words (one word per paper): Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, and The Prince of Peace.



Before reading the lesson, give each student a set of heavy chains to hold or a big, bulky, heavy object. Explain the chains represent the condemnation sin brings. (*They can't just set the heavy chains or item on their lap! They have to hold them up while the lesson is being read!*) After the lesson is over, have the students talk about if they were tired of holding the "heaviness" of their object. Have them imagine what it would be like to carry chains around everywhere they went!

Emphasize the beauty of Jesus' mission to earth: To BREAK the chains of sin and then take the weight away. Next, show them the beautifully wrapped box. Open it and read each of the characteristics of Jesus mentioned in the verse of Isaiah 9:6, discussing each one.

Christmas gifts are fun to receive, but no present given us can ever compare with the *GIFT of Jesus brought to earth—to you and me!*

## For Unto Me...

Copy this verse with your own handwriting onto the lines below, substituting the word "me" for "us":

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6



Yes! Jesus is YOUR gift! He wants to rule your life. He wants to be wonderful to YOU. He wants to be the one to give you help and advice. He wants to be the STRONG God to whom you turn. He wants to bring PEACE to your heart. He wants to be YOUR God forever and ever!

**JESUS, THE GREATEST GIFT!**

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Contributors: Sister Julie Elwell and Sister Nicole Gellenbeck.

Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 12. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.

# THE COMPASS

Junior Sunday School ■ December 27, 2020

Christmas Stories

## Simeon and Anna



Simeon lived in Jerusalem and spent much time in the temple worshipping God. He was a distinguished scholar and knew the Holy Scriptures, from Genesis to Malachi, very well. For years he had been looking for the Messiah, "the consolation of Israel." He had studied all the prophecies about the Messiah and was sure in his heart that the time had come for Him to appear.

**What's more, it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that he would not die until he had seen the Christ.**

One day, the Holy Spirit led Simeon to go to the temple. As he entered, he noticed Joseph and Mary who had come to the temple to present Jesus to the Lord. They also brought a sacrifice that was required according to the Law of Moses.

By their clothes, Simeon could see that Joseph and Mary were Galileans. It was evident that they were not wealthy. They were carrying two birds in a cage as their offering. A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons was the gift offered by those who could not afford to bring a lamb.

### Memory Verse

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Matthew 5:8

### Key Thought

God will reveal Himself and His Son to those who faithfully serve and wait on

### Lesson Discussion

- Who had Simeon been looking for?
- How was it revealed that he would not die until he had seen Christ?

- Why had Joseph and Mary come to the temple?
- Who was Anna and how did she serve God?
- To whom did she give thanks?

Simeon felt drawn to Joseph and Mary. Then, when he looked down at their Child, his heart was deeply stirred. It was as though the voice of God spoke to him saying,

**"This is the Messiah! This is the One for whom you have been looking so long!"**

Tears of happiness must have rolled down Simeon's cheeks. He took the precious Baby in his arms. Holding Him close, he said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

Joseph and Mary watched all this in amazement. Simeon turned to Joseph and Mary and blessed them. Looking at Mary, he spoke directly to her, saying, "Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

Mary wondered what Simeon meant. What strange destiny was ahead for her precious little Jesus? How would He cause people to fall and rise again? And what was this about a sword piercing her own soul? Was not her Child to become King of Israel? How then could there be any suffering? Some day she would understand, but not then.

Almost immediately after Simeon spoke these strange words, Anna, a prophetess, came in. Anna spent her time continually in the temple serving God with prayer and fasting, night and day.

**The Holy Spirit revealed to her that this was the promised Child. She began to thank God aloud that He had sent the Messiah at last!**

People around heard her and came to see.

Eagerly, Anna told them about the promised Messiah and "spoke of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Some believed her; others doubted, but most just went on their way without giving the matter another thought.

But, Mary kept the words of these two righteous people in her heart. The Holy Spirit had inspired their words. She was more sure than ever that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the Child of promise and prophecy. ■

# What Can God Do For You?

Use the key code to solve the puzzle and find out!

2	10	26		15	25	13	13		3	7	5	7	16	13	
4	25	18	12	7	13	14		24	10		24	4	10	12	7
	15	4	10		14	16	25	24	4	14	9	13	13	8	
12	7	3	5	7		16	20	26		15	16	25	24		
				10	20		4	25	18						

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
16	1	21	26	7	14	2
H	I	J	K	L	M	N
4	25	22	6	13	18	20
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
10	19	17	3	12	24	9
V	W	X	Y	Z		
5	15	23	8	11		



## Tires, Tires, Tires

While we were living in La Mision, Baja, California, the Richard Watkins family (Shirley Doolittle's parents) came to visit us. They took our oldest son, Bob, home with them' and he worked that summer in Salem, Oregon. He earned enough money to buy new school clothes. The following summer, the other children wanted to do the same, so our entire family went to Oregon. We hoped to earn money.

The only available job was picking strawberries. We crawled around on our knees picking strawberries for about a week, but earned only a few dollars. Since God wasn't blessing our efforts, we began thinking, maybe God had something else in mind for us.

Then, a phone call came from the church in San Diego asking James to come and conduct a funeral. While he was away, I felt God was saying, "I want you to go to Monark Springs camp meeting." When James returned, I said nothing to him about my impressions.

The night after he returned, we were discussing our questions about God's will for the summer, and he said, "I believe we should take the children to Monark; however our tires will never make the trip."

"Maybe we could earn money and buy tires," one of the children suggested.

"Let's ask God to send money for new tires," another said. "We really want to go."

"Well, let's pray about it," James answered. "We haven't much time before the meeting will be over."

We started on trips without enough gas, how about going on faith? I thought.

We felt assured that God wanted us at Monark, because God had told both James and me while we were 1,000 miles apart.

"We have enough money for gasoline," James said again. "Let's load up tonight and leave early in the morning. God can make the tires last."

I don't remember how far we went before the first

tire blow-out. It was somewhere in Idaho. There we were beside the road. The children jumped out to freedom and started running down the moderately sloped embankment. In a few minutes, one of them called, "Come look. Here is a tire." James raced down the hill. Holding Leah's hand, I followed slowly. Needless to say, the tire was the right size. God would not have sent one that didn't fit.

We went on a few hundred miles and another blow-out. This time, a man in a pick-up stopped to help us. Guess what he had in his pick-up bed? Lots of tires! He worked for a tire shop and had come out to change a tire on a tractor in a field. Among the tires on the truck, he found one that fit our need. He gave it to us and helped James put it on.

On we went. I can't remember how God supplied the next two tires. What I remember is we drove onto the Monark camp ground with four different tires than when we started in Oregon.

The saints were singing. It sounded like heaven to us weary travelers. Before the service had ended, I got up in the pulpit and testified how God brought us there. Maybe some of you "old timers" can remember my testimony.

During that meeting, God told us to not return to our home in Mexico. He impressed us to keep our children, ages 6 through 16, near the saints for a few years. We did, and they all found wonderful spouses.

As I reflect on the past, I wonder what great differences would be in our family today had we not followed God's directions and started out that day from Oregon without decent tires on our car!

—Charlotte Huskey

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Volume 70, Quarter 4, Week 13. Editor: Lindsey Gellenbeck. 2020.