

Lesson 016

Isaac, The son of Promise

Genesis 17→18:1-16

MEMORY VERSE

GENESIS 17:9 And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant"

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- As many small prizes (pencils, stickers, erasers, etc.) as the number of children in your class, and a nicely wrapped box with something worthless inside it, like a rock. Have the box prepared before class.
- Masking tape and a balloon.
- Construction paper, markers or crayons, and scissors.

ATTENTION GRABBER! Let's Make a Deal

Pass out small prizes (pencils, stickers, erasers, etc.) to each student. After everyone has been given a prize, tell them that you want to make a trade. Bring out a nicely wrapped box with something worthless inside it, like a rock, and see if anyone will trade their small prize for the gift.

If a student does trade, have them open it to discover the "dud" prize. Explain to the class that God gives us good gifts; He gives us good promises. We need to trust Him for our needs and not take matters into our own hands. When a good thing (like a prize) is traded for a bad thing (a wrapped rock), we are sad and dissatisfied. God wants us to be satisfied with what He has given us. You may return the original prize to the child who received the rock. God wants us to trust Him!

LESSON TIME!

God always keeps His promises! God wants us to trust Him.

Lesson Goal:

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! [Romans 11:33]

GENESIS 17: 1- 3a

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. 2 And I will make My covenant between Me and you and will multiply you exceedingly." 3 Then Abram fell on his face

Thirteen years passed and Abram was ninety-nine years old. God came to him again and declared Himself to be the Almighty God. Sometimes God has to remind us of His nature. He was declaring Himself to be "El Shaddai." This name of God declares not so much the might of God, but rather His resources, "God, All-Sufficient." He told Abram to walk before Him and to be perfect (or upright and sincere).

God was about to act in grace, for Abram had come to the end himself. It has been said that "God's opportunity does not come until man comes to the end of himself." God always has a reason for His delays. It is in the strength of the resources of God that man is able to walk. God wants us to trust Him.

God then made a covenant with Abram, promising to multiply his descendants. In this chapter, God confirms His covenant with Abram only through His Word. Abram's acceptance is indicated by the fact that he bows in humility and reverence before God. He worships the Lord.

GENESIS 17: 3- 8

3 Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: 4 "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. 7 And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. 8 Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

Here we see Abram's name changed from Abram, "exalted father," to Abraham, "father of a multitude." He was promised that the fruit of the covenant should be the making of a great nation and the coming of kings. It also would be a continuous covenant as God would establish it between Himself and the seed of Abraham throughout their generations on the condition of their faithfulness. God wants us to trust Him.

GENESIS 17: 9- 14

9 And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. 10 This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; 11 and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. 12 He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. 13 He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

[From Fr. Tadros Malaty] Circumcision has been of great importance, as it was the distinction between the descendants of Abraham, those with the covenant, and the Gentiles. Its importance is proclaimed in God's words concerning the uncircumcised: "that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant"

The importance of circumcision in the Old Testament is demonstrated, that every time the people proclaim repentance, they return to God through three things: circumcision of every uncircumcised male, reading the law, and keeping the Sabbath.

Meditations for servants: In the New Testament: The people of God [Christians] get the sign of circumcision in their inner heart, as the heavenly sword cuts the (foreskin) of the mind, namely, that defilement of sin. (St. Cyril, the Great)

The symbolic rite of circumcision sealed the covenant. It was the outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible relationship. It represented the true dedication of the heart to God. In obedience with God's command, Abraham circumcises all the male members of his household, including Ishmael, who, we are told, was 13 years old.

GENESIS 17:15-19

15 Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her."

17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" 18 And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"

19 Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.

Now we see Sarai's name being changed from Sarai (the meaning is uncertain) to Sarah, which means "princess." The promise is that she would become the mother of nations. Abraham falls on his face and laughs in his heart at the wonder of the promise made. He pleaded with God that Ishmael might live in His sight and enjoy divine protection so that he might be the one through whom the promises made to Abraham would be fulfilled. God's will was firm. Sarah would bear a son whose name would be Isaac. It is interesting that Isaac's name means laughter, reminding us of Abraham's laughter when he first heard the news. God can do the impossible! God wants us to trust Him.

GENESIS 18:1-8

Then the Lord appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. 2 So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, 3 and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. 4 Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. 5 And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said."

6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make cakes." 7 And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave it to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it. 8 So he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate.

Here we see Abraham sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. He greets three men who appear before him, bowing himself to them and offering them his generous hospitality. We will see that one of them is the Lord. It is a beautiful picture of Abraham providing lovingly and gladly of his best for them. We also see the beauty of the grace of God. God was willing to be the guest of those who would receive Him.

GENESIS 18:9-16

9 Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" So, he said, "Here, in the tent."

10 And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.) 11 Now Abraham and

Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. 12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"

13 And the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?' 14 Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

15 But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!" 16 Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way.

After his great generosity, Abraham was receiving instead of giving. God was repeating his gracious promises to him with more detail. Sarah did not appear to the male visitors; but she was close by, listening. Then, they brought the startling news to Abraham that Sarah, his wife, who was advanced in years, was going to have a son by the next year.

When Sarah who was listening in at the tent door heard this, she laughed and said, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" In response to her laughter, the Lord tenderly rebuked her. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" He who created the heavens and the earth and all their host is able to do all things. Those who truly have faith are not taken by surprise by what God does.

Abraham was a mighty man of faith. He was the friend of God. He had tremendous faith; and along with that faith, he had tremendous testing. At times, he failed, but we must always remember that though we may be faithless and fail, God is always faithful and accomplishes His plan through us by his wonderful grace. Abraham shows us that [God wants us to trust Him](#).

Promised Surprise

Enclose cardboard shaped stars in as many envelopes as the number of children in your class. Explain that there is something special in each envelope. Hand out crayons to your class and have them gently rub the crayon over the hidden shape in the envelope.

The shape should appear where the crayon is rubbed. Show your class how to shake the envelope and move the stars around, allowing for additional star shapes to be drawn with different colors.

Ask your class if they could see what was in the envelope before coloring over it. They could not, but because you told them they believed you. Explain that God makes promises, too. We cannot always see them, but we can trust Him to be true. God wants us to trust Him.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to trust the Lord in all things--first to believe in Him for salvation and then to trust Him to show us how to live our lives for Him.



**Abraham and the Three
Visitors**

Genesis 18