Use Week of:

God Tested Abraham

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 22:1-19
MAIN POINT: Abraham trusted God.
UNIT KEY PASSAGE: Romans 4:3
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.

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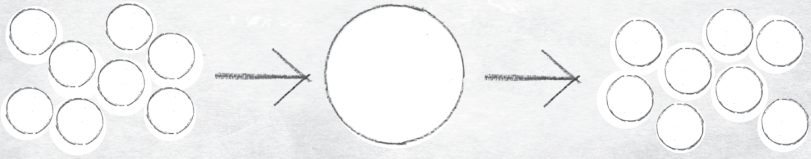

Leader BIBLE STUDY

When Abraham was well over 100 years old, he received another message from God. It was a test, actually. God instructed Abraham to take his son Isaac, the son of promise, and sacrifice him on a mountain God would tell him about. Abraham had waited so many years for this child!

But Abraham obeyed. He got up early the next day and left for his trip. Not waiting around to see if God would change His mind, he saddled the donkey, took the wood, two servants, and his son, and left on the journey as God commanded.

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As Isaac walked with his father, he noticed something was missing. They had the wood and the fire, but "Where is the lamb?" Isaac asked. Abraham answered that God Himself would provide. And God did indeed.

By this point, Abraham had supreme faith that God was able to do anything. Hebrews 11:17-19 gives us a peek inside Abraham's mind: "He considered God to be able even to raise someone from the dead."

God provided a ram for the burnt offering in place of Isaac, who was spared. After what we might imagine was quite a worship service, Abraham and Isaac returned home.

In the New Testament, God brings through John the Baptist the final answer to Isaac's inquiry, "Where is the lamb?" "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). God provided a ram for Abraham, but for all of humanity He has provided His Son, Jesus Christ, the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

MINISTRY GRID
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God Tested Abraham

Genesis 22:1-19

God had promised Abraham and Sarah that they would have more descendants than anybody could count—as many as the stars in the sky! But they didn't have any children! Abraham and Sarah were very old when God gave them a son. They named him Isaac. All of the people on earth would be blessed because of Abraham and Sarah's family. So their son Isaac was very, very special.

Later God tested Abraham to show that God was really more important to Abraham than anything or anyone else. God told Abraham to do something that sounded strange. **God told Abraham to take Isaac to a special mountain and offer him to God.**

Long ago, in Bible times, people gave offerings to God to show they loved Him, to thank Him for something, or to say to God "I'm sorry; please forgive me." These offerings were called sacrifices. When the offering was an animal, the animal was killed when it was sacrificed. People offered God the best animal from their flocks. This time, though, God didn't ask for an animal. He told Abraham to give Isaac as a sacrifice.

Abraham loved Isaac very much. **God had promised that Isaac would have a family.** How could that happen if Abraham gave Isaac as a sacrifice?

Abraham believed that God would make things turn out right. He **did not know how God would do it, but Abraham believed God would keep His promise about Isaac. So Abraham obeyed.**

Early in the morning, **Abraham, Isaac, and two helpers took a donkey and the supplies they needed.** They walked

for three days until **they came to the place God had told Abraham about. Then Abraham and Isaac went by themselves up the mountain.**

"Where is the lamb to sacrifice to God?" asked Isaac. Abraham said, "God will give us a lamb to sacrifice." Abraham built the altar and got ready to offer Isaac to God.

A voice called to them from heaven and said, "Abraham, I see that you were willing to do what I said. You do not have to offer your son Isaac." **Abraham looked up and saw a fine sheep caught in the bushes.** God had sent a lamb to sacrifice instead of Isaac. **God, Abraham, and Isaac could see that Abraham loved God most of all.**

God said to Abraham, "You will have as many descendants as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. All the world will be blessed."

Christ Connection: Abraham trusted God. He was willing to give up his son Isaac when God asked him to. Isaac didn't have to die because God provided a ram instead. God was willing to give up His Son, Jesus, to save the world from sin. We don't have to die for our sin because Jesus died instead.



WANT TO DISCOVER GOD'S WORD? GET *MORE!*

Invite preschoolers to check out this week's devotionals to discover that just as God provided a ram as a substitute for Isaac, He provided His Son, Jesus, to be the perfect sacrifice for sin. (1 John 2:12) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out *www.lifeway.com/devotionals.*

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: God Tested Abraham
BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 22:1-19
MAIN POINT: Abraham trusted God.
KEY PASSAGE: Romans 4:3
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.

Welcome time

- "My God Is Real" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert printable
- favorite toys

Play the unit theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- "Find the Sheep" activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or markers

Guide preschoolers to find the sheep in the picture. Point them to the legend so they may easily identify the sheep.

SAY • Long ago, in Bible times, people gave offerings to God to show they loved Him, to thank Him for something, or to say to God "I'm sorry; please forgive me." These offerings were called *sacrifices*. In our Bible story, Abraham and his son Isaac offered a sheep as a very special sacrifice to God. Let's find out what made this sacrifice so special.



Tip: An adult leader may be the guide for younger preschoolers.

Take a journey

Invite children on a pretend journey. Form a single-file line. The first child in line is the guide. When you call out an obstacle, the guide pretends to navigate the obstacle. All the children behind must follow his action. When you say

"new guide," the child in front moves to the back of the line and the child in front is the new guide. Suggested obstacles include mud, strong wind, snow, rain, a tunnel, a river, a stream, a field of tall grass, and a tall mountain.

SAY • In today's Bible story, Abraham and his son Isaac took a three day journey to a special mountain. God asked Abraham to do something very hard on that mountain. We will hear what God asked Abraham to do in today's Bible story.

Old man masks

- paper plates
- scissors
- cotton balls
- craft sticks
- glue
- tape

Before the session, gather a paper plate for each child and cut the center out of each. Distribute the paper plate rings to preschoolers. Guide preschoolers to glue cotton balls onto one side of the paper plate. Make a handle for the mask by attaching a craft stick to the back of the ring. Demonstrate how to hold the craft stick so the paper plate circles the preschooler's face creating a "mask."

SAY • God promised Abraham he would have many descendants, but he did not have any children. Abraham was an old man and his wife was an old woman. How could they have a baby? God kept His promise and gave them a son in their old age, but then God asked Abraham to do something with his son that sounded strange.

Transition to Bible study

- countdown video (optional)

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Invite preschoolers to move to Bible study by walking like old men and women.

Large Group LEADER

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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.

Introduce the Bible story

- baby doll

Hold a baby doll. Ask preschoolers if any of them have a real baby in their house. Allow them to talk about babies.

SAY • Last time we learned that God promised to give Abraham and Sarah a baby, and He did! In today's story, God tells Abraham to do something very strange with his son Isaac, when he got older.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Bible
- "God Tested Abraham" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Open your Bible to Genesis 22.

SAY • Is there any book more important than the Bible? No, the Bible is most important because it has God's words in it. The stories in the Bible really happened. Today's Bible story comes from Genesis, the first book in the Bible.

Show the Bible story video "God Tested Abraham" or tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided. Use the bolded version for younger preschoolers.

Talk about the Bible story

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

SAY • Abraham must have been sad when God asked him to give his son as an offering, but **Abraham trusted God.** Abraham knew God would keep the covenant

He made with him. Abraham obeyed God.

Point to the giant timeline or big story circle as you ask the following review questions:

1. Who was Abraham's very special son? (*Isaac*)
2. Did Abraham know why God wanted him to offer Isaac? (*no*)
3. Did Abraham believe God would keep His promise about Isaac no matter what? (*yes*)
4. What did God provide as a sacrifice? (*a sheep*)

Learn the big picture question

- Big Picture Question Poster

SAY • Our big picture question is, ***What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.*** God's promise to bless Abraham was also a promise to bless all God's people. Abraham was willing to give up his son because he believed God's promise. God gave up His Son, Jesus, to save the world from sin. We don't have to die for our sin because Jesus died instead. What a blessing!

Practice the key passage

- Key Passage Poster
- "Abraham" song

Open your Bible to Romans 4:3. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing the key passage song together.

SAY • When God made His covenant with Abraham, God showed that keeping the covenant was His job, not Abraham's job. God always keeps His promises. **Abraham trusted God.** Abraham believed God even when he didn't understand what God was doing.

Transition to small groups

Small Group ACTIVITIES

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BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 22:1-19
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KEY PASSAGE: Romans 4:3
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.

Play with sand

- plastic tub
- plastic tablecloth
- sand
- sand toys

Place a plastic tub on a table covered with a plastic tablecloth. Fill the tub with a couple inches of play sand. Provide sand toys such as plastic rakes, shovels, and sifters. Consider hiding items in the sand for preschoolers to uncover.

SAY • How many grains of sand do you think are in this tub? We could never count each grain of sand. God told Abraham he would have as many descendants as sand on the seashore! That is a lot! **Abraham trusted God** to keep His promise.

Play "Where is the lamb?"



- toy sheep
- "Sheep" printable (optional)

Play this version of "hot and cold." Select one child to be *It*. She should close her eyes while you hide a toy sheep somewhere in the room, while the rest of the group watches. She opens her eyes, and you ask, "Where is the lamb?" She searches for the toy sheep while the rest of the group gives verbal clues. If she is not at all close to the sheep, the group shouts out, "Cold!" As she gets closer to the sheep, the group says, "Getting warmer!" When she is very close to the sheep, the group says "Hot!" Once she finds the sheep, play again with another child as *It*. If a toy

sheep is not available, use the "Sheep" printable.

SAY • Isaac asked his father, "Where is the lamb to sacrifice to God?" Abraham told him that God would give them the lamb to sacrifice, and God did. **Abraham trusted God**, and God provided a sheep to offer instead of Isaac. Later on, God would provide another sacrifice—His Son, Jesus. We don't have to die for our sin because Jesus died instead.

Craft star scenes

- dark colored construction paper
- star stickers
- white crayon

Provide a sheet of dark colored construction paper and star stickers for each preschooler. Encourage preschoolers to place the star stickers on their paper. Write *Abraham trusted God* or the key passage on each child's paper with a white crayon.

SAY • God promised Abraham would have as many descendants as there are stars in the sky. When God asked Abraham to offer Isaac, **Abraham trusted God.** Isaac didn't have to die after all, and God provided a sheep instead. God was willing to give up His Son, Jesus, to save the world from sin. We don't have to die for our sin because Jesus died instead.

Play "this instead of that"



- assortment of items
- large basket

Gather an assortment of items in a large basket. Form a circle. Place one item from the basket in the center of the circle. Invite preschoolers one at a time to take the item from the middle, place it in the basket, and replace it in the middle with another item in the basket. When a preschooler places her item in the middle, guide her to say "[*item's name*] instead."

SAY • God provided a sheep for Abraham to offer to God

instead of Isaac. **Abraham trusted God.** He was willing to give up his son Isaac when God asked him to. Isaac didn't have to die because God provided a sheep instead. God was willing to give up His Son, Jesus, to save the world from sin. We don't have to die for our sin because Jesus died instead

Walk through an obstacle course



• blindfolds

Set up a simple and safe obstacle course using items available in the room. Group preschoolers in pairs. Blindfold one preschooler and encourage her partner to walk her through the obstacle course. Preschoolers who do not wish to be blindfolded may close their eyes. Repeat until each child has walked through the obstacle couse blindfolded.

SAY • You could not see where you were going, so you had to trust your friend to lead you through the obstacle course. Abraham did not understand why God would ask him to offer Isaac, but **Abraham trusted God.** He did what God said to do, and God provided a sheep to offer instead of Isaac. Later, God gave His Son, Jesus, to save the world from sin.

Snack

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert printable
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Tell preschoolers that you will serve crackers for snack. Just before handing out crackers, give preschoolers cookies instead. Point out that you provided cookies instead of crackers for snack. Remind kids how God provided a sheep for Abraham to offer as a sacrifice instead of Isaac. Most important, God provided His Son, Jesus. We don't have to die for our sin because Jesus died instead.

Transition

- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- books and puzzles
- crayons
- *Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschool*

When a child finishes his snack, guide him to throw away any trash. He may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page and invite preschoolers to draw a picture of a sheep. Remind them that **Abraham trusted God.** He did not understand what God was doing, but he believed God would keep His promise.

SAY • God, help us to love You more than anything and to trust You like Abraham. When we don't, remind us that You still love us and that You sent Jesus to die for our sin instead of us. Thank You for giving us a Savior. Amen.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

Journal Page

God the Covenant-Maker

Key Passage: Romans 4:3

Big Picture Question: What did God promise?
God promised to bless His people.

Session 1: God's Covenant with Abraham
Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9
God promised to bless Abraham..

Session 2: God Tested Abraham
Genesis 22:1-19
Abraham trusted God.

Session 3: The Promise Reaffirmed
Genesis 25:19-26; 26:1-6; 28:10-22
God reminded Abraham's family about His promises.



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"Abraham believed God."

Romans 4:3



Abraham believed God.

Romans 4:3



Abraham believed God.

Romans 4:3



"Abraham believed God."

Romans 4:3



Abraham trusted God.





Find the Sheep



INSTRUCTIONS: Find and circle the sheep in the picture below.



DOWNLOAD THE TGP FAMILY APP

KEY PASSAGE: Romans 4:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

- What did God promise? God promised to bless His people.

BIBLE STORY:
GOD TESTED ABRAHAM

- God gave Abraham a son named Isaac.
- God tested Abraham by telling him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice.
- Abraham trusted God and obeyed Him.
- God provided a sheep to sacrifice instead of Isaac.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- Sometimes it is hard to obey. Tell about a time when obeying was hard for you.
- Abraham showed that he loved God most of all. What are some things you are tempted to love more than God?

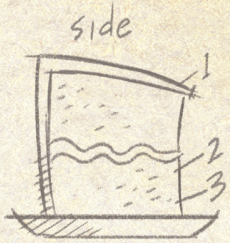
FAMILY ACTIVITY:

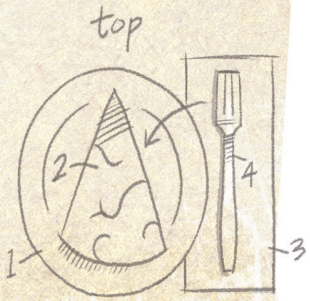
- Lead your child to give away a favorite possession, such as a toy. Then replace the item. Talk about how Abraham was willing to give up Isaac, but God provided a sheep instead.

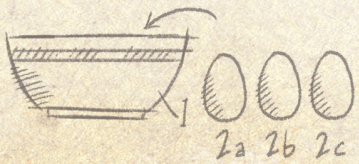


What did God promise?





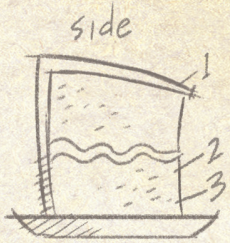


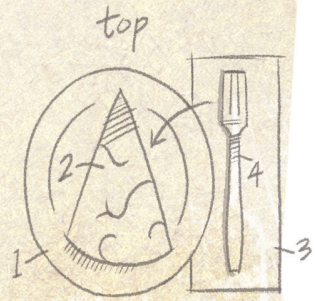


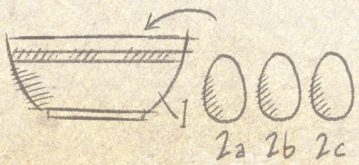
What did God promise?

God promised
to bless
His people.

















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God the Covenant-Maker

Instructions: Print and use as directed in the leader guide.