



UNIT 3 | SESSION 3

GOD PROVIDED ISAAC

GENESIS 21-22

KEY PASSAGE:

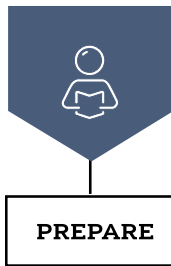
Psalm 135:5-6

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. Nothing is outside of God's good plan.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Abraham showed his love for God by being willing to sacrifice his son Isaac. God provided a ram instead. This is how God showed His love for us: He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross so that we could have eternal life through Him.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

It's been said that when a word or phrase is repeated in the Bible, we ought to pay close attention. In Genesis 22, Abraham repeated one phrase three times: "Here I am."

Abraham first used "Here I am" on his journey when God called his name. Abraham's eager response to God shows that he was ready and expectant to hear from God.

Abraham then used this phrase in response to his son, Isaac. On the journey to the place of sacrifice, Isaac called out to his father and Abraham responded, "Here I am." Even though Abraham was surely wrestling with what God had commanded him to do, he was eager to hear from his son and help him understand what God was doing.

Third, Abraham responded to the angel of the Lord: "Here I am." The angel called Abraham's name twice as he was about to sacrifice his son in obedience to God. Even in a tense and emotional moment, Abraham was sensitive to the Lord and eager to hear from him.

Abraham's use of this phrase clearly shows his open-handed readiness to serve. Abraham responded to the Lord, to his son, and to the angel from his humble heart and willing spirit. Instead of shutting down and stopping his ears to God because of the incredibly

challenging task God had put before him, Abraham remained steadfast in His openness to the Lord.

God desires that we always be ready for however He may intend to use us for His glory and our good. It may be as we drive along in the car, as we hurry through a long list of tasks at work, or in the stillness of a quiet moment with the Lord early in the morning. It also may come in the intensity of grieving the loss of a loved one, navigating conflict in the body of Christ, or as we gather with others to worship. Whenever we sense the leading of the Spirit of God, may we take a posture similar to Abraham, always willingly to say, "Here I am."

TERMS TO KNOW

Sacrifice: What the worshiper brings to God to express love, thanksgiving, or the need for forgiveness. Jesus' death provided the sacrifice to remove sin. Christians are instructed to sacrifice, or give up their own desires, to follow Jesus.

WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “ Think about a time someone provided something that you needed. Who provided? Was it something you could have provided for yourself? Why or why not? ”

2 SESSION STARTER

OPTION 1: PUT TO THE TEST

Choose a volunteer to roll a dice. If the number rolled is even, test kids' physical abilities. If the number is odd, test their knowledge. Use the suggested questions or devise your own.

Physical Tests:

- Who can jump the farthest?
- How long can you do a wall sit?
- How many jumping jacks can you do in one minute?

Knowledge Tests:

- How many countries can you name?
- What is $5,238 + 8,704$? (13,942)
- How many presidents of the United States can you name?

After each round, choose another kid to roll the dice.

SAY “ People can be tested in many ways. These activities tested your knowledge and your physical ability. How do you think a person's faith could be tested? ”

OPTION 2: DO YOU LOVE ME?



Instruct kids to stand in a circle. Choose one kid to turn to his neighbor and say, “Honey, if you love me, will you please smile?” The other player should respond, “Honey, I love you, but I just can't smile,” all while keeping a straight face.

Then that player will turn to the next player and repeat: “Honey, if you love me, will you please smile?” The next player should respond, “Honey, I love you, but I just can't smile.”

Continue around the circle. If a player smiles during his turn, he is out. Repeat until everyone has a turn.

SAY “ How do you know if someone loves you? How do you know if someone respects you? In today's Bible story, we will see how Abraham demonstrated his love and respect for God, and how God—in a greater way—showed His love for us. ”

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome! It's so good to see you. If you brought your Bible, hold it up. [Provide Bibles for kids who need one.] Can anyone tell me what the Bible is about? [Allow kids to respond.] The Bible is God's Word. It tells us the wonderful story of God's plan to rescue sinners.

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. Today's story comes from the Book of Genesis. Does anyone remember what the word genesis means? ('beginning') ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ If left on our own, humans would ruin everything. It's good news that God is in control. Throughout the Bible, we see how He works out His plan through people. Remember our big picture question as we hear more about today's story: **Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. Nothing is outside of God's good plan.** ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 21–22. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “God Provided Isaac.” Use the bolded text to retell or review the story.

GOD PROVIDED ISAAC

“**God kept His promise to give Abraham a son.** Abraham and his wife Sarah were very old when their son Isaac was born. **One day, God tested Abraham.** He wanted to make sure that Abraham loved God most of all.

“Abraham,” God said.

“Here I am,” Abraham answered.

“**Take your son Isaac to the mountain and give him to Me as a sacrifice,**” God said. **Abraham obeyed God.** He got up early the next day and left with Isaac, two servants, and a donkey carrying supplies. They walked for three days before they got to the mountain where God wanted Abraham to make the sacrifice. **Abraham** asked his servants to stay with the donkey. “We’ll be back,” he said. Then he **and Isaac went up the mountain with the supplies for the sacrifice.**

Isaac saw something was missing. “My father,” he said, “where is the lamb for the offering?” Abraham answered, “God Himself will provide the lamb.” When they got to the place God had directed them, **Abraham built an altar** and placed the wood on top. Then he put Isaac on top of the wood. **Just as Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, the angel of the LORD called out,** “Abraham, Abraham!”

Abraham stopped. “Here I am,” he said.

The angel of the LORD said, “**Do not lay a hand on the boy or do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your only son from Me.**” **Abraham looked up and saw a ram trapped by its horns in the bushes. He offered the ram to God instead of Isaac.** Abraham named the place The LORD Will Provide.

The angel of the LORD reminded Abraham that God would keep the covenant He made with Abraham. God again promised to bless Abraham, to make his family as numerous as all the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashores. God promised victory over Abraham’s enemies and blessing to all the earth through Abraham’s family.

Christ Connection: Abraham showed his love for God by being willing to sacrifice his son Isaac. God provided a ram instead. This is how God showed His love for us: He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross so that we could have eternal life through Him. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use silence for effect: Build suspense by pausing at various times as you tell the story. For example, pause after Isaac questions Abraham about the sacrifice and again after Abraham puts Isaac on the altar.

Convey emotions: Let your face reflect some of the emotions Abraham may have felt—confusion, fear, grief, relief, gratitude, and so forth.

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ In the Bible, a sacrifice was something a worshiper brought to God to express obedience, love, thanksgiving, or the need for forgiveness. Usually sacrifices involved killing an animal. In this story God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son. That was not a normal request God made. In fact, it is the only time in the Bible God ever asked anyone to sacrifice someone else.

What did Abraham do? Look at Genesis 22:3. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Gen. 22:3.] Abraham didn't delay. He didn't make excuses or hesitate, hoping God would change His mind. He didn't try to figure out a way to get around God's command.

Abraham was willing to be faithful to God's command even though he probably didn't understand why God would ask him to do this. The Bible tells us in Hebrews 11:19 that Abraham believed that if Isaac died, God had the power to raise Isaac from the dead. He showed that he believed God's plan even when he didn't understand God's plan.

Remember that Abraham was a real person who lived long ago. He felt emotions. The Bible says he loved his son. He had waited so long for a child. How do you think Abraham felt when God asked him to give up Isaac? How do you think he felt when God provided a ram instead?

God later provided His one and only Son. We deserve to die for our sin, but God provided Jesus as the substitute. What does that tell you about how God feels about us? ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Abraham showed his love for God by being willing to sacrifice his son Isaac. God provided a ram instead. God provided the sacrifice for Abraham, but for all of humanity He has provided the true Lamb: His Son, Jesus Christ—the ultimate sacrifice for sin. This is how God showed His love for us. Jesus came to die on the cross so that we could have eternal life through Him. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

2 GROUP DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** “ How do we know Abraham had faith? Does your faith change how you live? ”

Lead kids to recognize that Abraham acted out of his faith. He was willing to obey God because he trusted God. He believed God could raise Isaac from the dead. Our faith should influence our decisions and how we live. Faith in Jesus changes our lives. We don't just say we trust in Jesus; we live it out through faithful obedience.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 2:13.)

| **SAY** “ Do you think you could obey God if He asked you to do something you didn't understand? Why or why not? ”

Guide kids to share their thoughts. Remind kids that it can be hard to obey God when we don't understand His plan. Abraham believed that God would keep His covenant to make Abraham the father of many nations. We don't see the big picture like God does, so we have to trust Him. The Bible shows us that God has been faithful to keep His promises over and over. He is trustworthy and in control.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Prov. 3:5.)

| **SAY** “ What plans do you have for your own life? Would you be willing to give them up if God asked you to? ”

Invite kids to share honestly. Encourage them that they can trust God completely. We may make plans about where we will live in the future, what job we might have, or what our family might look like; but God is in control. His plans are good, and anything He asks us to give in this world is worth it because He is worth so much more.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Prov. 19:21.)