

YOUTH EDUCATIONAL ADVENTURES

Hand Picked

YE3F · Student Workbook

Juniors · Year 2: Creation

Christian Educational Ministries — a faithful digital edition of the printed program

A Go-Between

MEMORY VERSE

"There is only one God. And there is only one go-between for God and human beings. He is the man Christ Jesus. He gave himself to pay for the sins of everyone." - I Timothy 2:5-6 (NIrV)

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 14:17-24

Matthew 28:18-20

John 1:1-18

Romans 8:26-27

Romans 8:32-34

1 Timothy 2:5-6

Hebrews 7

James 5:13-16

WORDS TO KNOW

BAILIFF - a sheriff's deputy who keeps order in a courtroom

DEFENDANT - the person accused of a crime

INTERCESSION- prayer on behalf of another

PRESIDING - having control or authority over

THE LESSON

The courtroom was silent as the jury was being seated. The defendant sat at the table with his lawyer who would defend him. Then the bailiff stood and said, "All rise for the honorable Judge Smith presiding." Everyone was there as the judge entered the courtroom. The defendant was being accused of a crime. And the defense lawyer was the go-between. The jury would decide if the defendant was guilty or innocent. If the jury finds the defendant guilty, the judge will give out the punishment. If he is not guilty, the judge will let the defendant go free. These are all necessary to have a fair trial.

In Bible times a priest or a judge acted as a go-between for the people and their God. When a crime or sin was committed, that person would bring an offering to the priest. The priest would

then take the offering into the Tabernacle or Temple and offer it to God. He would pray for the person and ask for God's forgiveness. God was the judge and jury. He always gives us a fair trial.

One day Abram was returning from battle. His nephew, Lot, had been captured and everything he had was stolen. Abram heard about it. He went to rescue Lot. Abram not only saved Lot, but he also took back everything that was stolen.

As Abram returned from battle, "the king of Sodom came out to meet him, and Melchizedek, the king of Salem (Jerusalem), who was a priest of the God of Highest Heaven, brought him bread and wine. Then Melchizedek blessed Abram with this blessing:

"The blessing of the supreme God, Creator of heaven and earth, be upon you. Abram: and blessed be God, who has delivered your enemies over to you" (Genesis 14:17b-20a TLB).

Melchizedek's name means "King of Righteousness" and "King of Peace." There is something else that is very interesting about Melchizedek. Hebrews 7:3 tells us that he didn't have a father or mother. It also says that he had no "beginning of days or end of life." This was way back before anyone had even thought of cloning. So we know that all human beings had to have a father and mother. We also know that there is a time when life begins, and when life ends. Melchizedek had no father or mother, and he had no beginning of days or end of life. How could this be? Do you know of anyone else who has no father or mother? God is the only one. Then maybe we should ask, who is Melchizedek?

In one of our YEA lessons we learned that God had a Son whose name was Jesus. He was born as a baby and His mother, Mary, put Him in a manger. Since Jesus was the Son of God, He was like God. He had God's power. He was Eternal. "Before ANYTHING ELSE existed, there was Christ, with God. He has always been alive and is himself God. He created everything there is - nothing exists that he didn't make" (John 1:1-3 TLB).

Did you notice that this Scripture says that Jesus has always been alive - that He actually created the world. But we never see the name Jesus in the Old Testament. Why? Was His name Melchizedek in the Old Testament until He was born as a baby and given the name "Jesus"?

The One who became Jesus had a very important job to do in the Old Testament. Not only did He create the world, He was also a priest of the Most High God. He was the go-between for the people and their God. Abram recognized Him as God in the flesh! He gave Melchizedek a tenth part of everything he owned. This was an act of worship! When we pay our tithe and give an offering to God, we are worshiping Him.

Jesus Christ is our go-between with our God and Heavenly Father (I Timothy 2:5). He acts as our defender when we sin. He goes before God and pleads our case. He makes intercession for us. His Holy Spirit prays for us when we can't find the right words to say.

Isn't it wonderful to know that you are not alone? Jesus Christ is your defender. His Holy Spirit speaks for you when you don't even know how to pray. Jesus will bring you comfort and will strengthen you when you face your enemies. He is there when you face tough decisions. Christ will encourage you when there is sickness in your family. If you are truly sorry when you do something you shouldn't, Jesus will be your defender.

Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything he had when he realized who he was. He praised and worshiped God. Doesn't Jesus Christ deserves our worship? Shouldn't we be willing to give our tithe and offerings and our praise to Him?

God Hand-Picked Melchizedek to represent Him here on earth. Melchizedek spoke to Abram and blessed him. Jesus Christ was Hand-Picked by God to bless you. He came and gave His life for your sins. He is your go-between with the Father. But, you have also been Hand-Picked to be one of His children. If you are His child, you can pray to God for others. You can talk to your friends about what Jesus has done for them. You can live the right kind of life so that others will know that you are God's child.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,
I'm thankful that you Hand-Picked Abram to receive your promised blessing. Thank you for hand picking Melchizedek to be your High Priest. But, most of all, thank you for sending Jesus as my go-between. Help me be a go-between as I pray for and talk to my friends about you.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Hebrews 7:1-3

Monday - John 1:11-14

Tuesday - Romans 8:26-27

Wednesday - Romans 8:32-34

Thursday - Hebrews 7:22-25

Friday - Matthew 28:18-20

Saturday - James 5:13-16

ACTIVITY

Unscramble the letters to find some things that Melchizedek did to represent God, what Jesus did, and what you can do.

Melchizedek

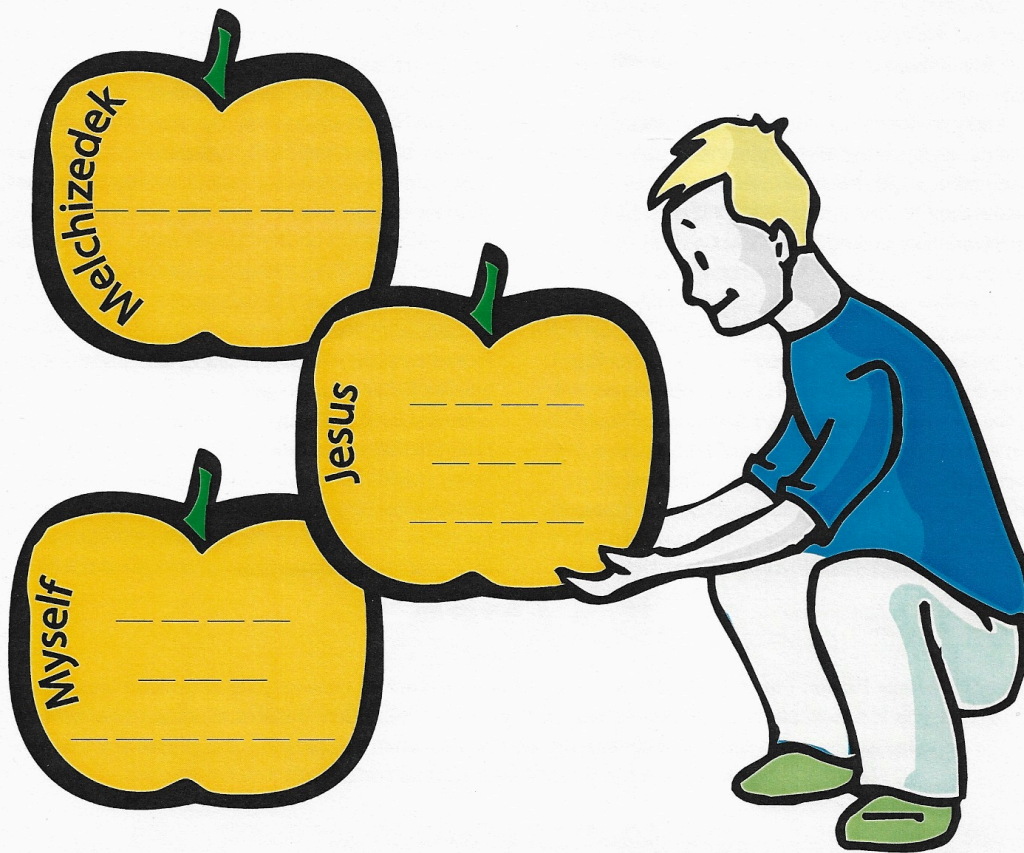
Jesus

Myself

ESLEBDS

IDDE ORF NISS

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SHORTE



Trust Me!

MEMORY VERSE

"Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will live in the land and enjoy its food." - Psalm 37:3 (NIrV)

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 15

Genesis 16

Psalm 4:3-5

Psalm 25:1-6

Psalm 37:3

Psalm 37:3-7,22-29

Psalm 143:8-10

Proverbs 3:5-6

Hebrews 6:18

WORDS TO KNOW

DESCENDANTS - offsprings; a person's children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, etc.

INHERIT - to receive money or property as an heir

OATH - a promise to God

PROGRESSED - moved ahead or forward

THE LESSON

Roger's parents were going out for dinner to celebrate their anniversary. They decided that eleven-year-old Roger and his thirteen-year-old sister were old enough to stay home alone. Mother left a list of emergency numbers, and the number where they could be reached. Dad had left strict instructions as to what Roger and Becky could and couldn't do while their parents were gone. Dad told them that he was placing them on their honor to obey him. Both Roger and Becky said, "You can trust us, Dad!"

Mom told the kids there was frozen pizza and homemade cookies for them to eat, but she asked them to clean up the kitchen when they were finished. Becky put the pizza in the oven. While they waited for it to cook, the kids began flipping through TV channels looking for something to watch. Roger wanted to watch the animal channel - Becky wanted to watch a beauty pageant.

When they couldn't agree on a program they went searching again. They turned to a movie channel and saw something that caught both their attention. It had a car chase and gun battle, but there was a love story woven into it.

Whoops, they almost forgot the pizza! When Becky opened the oven she saw that she had almost burned their dinner. It was also a little smokey in the kitchen. Roger and Becky grabbed paper plates, pizza, chips and cookies and hurried to the den, dropping chips and cookie crumbs on the way.

As the movie progressed, both Roger and Becky realized that this was not the kind of movie they should be watching. There was far too much violence and bloodshed. And, there was quite a lot of bad language and sexual scenes. But, the kids were hooked - they wanted to see how it ended.

Mom and Dad came home just about the time the movie was over. Mom checked the kitchen to see what was burning. Dad followed the trail of chips and crumbs to the den. There was a look of disappointment on his face when he saw what the kids were watching. "I thought you said that we could trust you," said Mom. "But, it seems that you ignored everything we asked you to do. You have shown us that you cannot be trusted!"

A person who can be trusted is someone who is reliable - you can count on him. He is responsible - he will do what is right. He is honest - doing exactly what he says he will do. Can you think of someone who fits that description?

Abraham was called a "friend of God." God told Abraham to leave his home town and his family. He promised to lead Abraham to a land that he would inherit. Now, Abraham had never seen this land, yet he was willing to go out into the unknown. Why? Because Abraham trusted God.

Abraham and his wife, Sarah, were getting very old, well passed the age of having babies. Yet another part of God's promise was that Abraham would have many descendants. One time God told Abraham that there would be more than the grains of sand on the shore. Another time He had Abraham look up in the sky. "Count the stars, if you can. . . . That is how many children you will have" (Genesis 15:5 NIV). How could this be possible? Could Abraham trust God to keep His promise?

The name "Abraham" means the father of many. Can you imagine how he must have felt when people asked him, "How many children do you have, Abraham?" None, zero, zip, nada! So, one day Sarah decided they should help God out. She told Abraham to take her maid as a wife. Sarah hoped the maid would give Abraham a son. Since Sarah was his wife, she could raise this boy as Abraham's heir. But that was not what God had in mind. And, because Abraham and Sarah took matters in their own hands, there was big trouble! Sarah became jealous.

Let's think back now - can God be trusted? Does He do what He says He will do? Yes! The Bible says, "God also bound himself with an oath, so that those he promised to help would be perfectly

sure and never need to wonder whether he might change his plans. He has given us both his promise and his oath, two things we can completely count on, for it is impossible for God to tell a lie" (Hebrews 6:18 TLB).

God doesn't need our help to accomplish His goals. After all, He created us and everything around us. And since He created Abraham and Sarah, He was well able to give them a son, even though they were getting old. All God needed was for Abraham and Sarah to obey Him and be patient!

We need to remember that God can be trusted. When He doesn't seem to be answering our prayers, it may just not be the right timing. God said in Isaiah 55:8, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways ..." He knows what is best for us. What He wants from us is obedience and trust!

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are a Father who can be trusted. You always keep your promises. You know what is best for me and have given your Word as a guide for my life. Help me to obey your commands and to wait patiently for your answers to my prayers.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Psalm 37:3-5

Monday - Proverbs 3:5-6

Tuesday - Psalm 37:26-29

Wednesday - Psalm 4:3-5

Thursday - Psalm 25: 1-6

Friday- Psalm 143:8-10

Saturday - Genesis 15:5-6

ACTIVITY

Your memory verse says, "Trust in the Lord. . ." On the lines below, make a list of things that you can trust the Lord to do for you. Also, make a list of other people whom you can trust.

TRUST THE LORD

[illegible]

TRUST OTHERS

[illegible]

Don't Look Back!

MEMORY VERSE

"A man who still won't obey after being warned many times will suddenly be destroyed. Nothing can save him." - Proverbs 29:1 (NirV)

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 18:23-19:26

Proverbs 14:11-12

Proverbs 29:1

Matthew 16:24-26

Luke 9:57-62

Romans 12:1-2

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

James 1:13-15

1 John 2:15-17

WORDS TO KNOW

ABUSE- to use wrongly, mistreat

BILLOWING - a large swelling mass

HERDSMEN - men who take care of cattle or sheep

RIGHTEOUS - acting in a right manner, morally right

THE LESSON

Linda heard the fire engine's siren. A few minutes later she heard an ambulance. She ran outside to see what was going on. She was met by smoke billowing from her neighbor's house. Flames were already coming through the roof. The garage was also on fire. People were gathered around watching as the firemen worked with hoses and axes. Everyone who lived in the house had escaped safely.

Suppose that when the family first smelled the smoke, they said they didn't want to leave their house. Maybe the dad was watching football and didn't want to leave the TV. Or, what if the kids had said they liked their toys too much to leave? Or, what if Mom said, "This is my house and I will not leave." They would have been lost in the flames.

It is foolish to think that things are more important than your life. When you have been warned of danger and shown the way of salvation, it is foolish not to heed the warning. In today's lesson we will see someone who was just that foolish.

God had blessed Abraham, Lot and their families in many ways. Their herds of sheep and cattle began to multiply. Soon there were so many animals that there was not enough pasture land for them. Their herdsmen began fighting. So, Abraham told Lot to take his family and herds and choose where he would like to live. Lot chose the well-watered green pasture land around the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Now, the people who lived in these two cities were very wicked. Their sins were so bad that God heard from heaven. God hates sin in all of its forms. He sent messengers to Abraham saying that He would destroy the cities.

Abraham didn't want harm to come to his nephew, Lot. So Abraham begged God to save the cities. God finally agreed. He said if ten righteous people could be found in Sodom and Gomorrah, He would not destroy them. But when God's messengers went to warn Lot, they found the men of the cities were even worse than they thought. There were not even ten righteous people in Sodom.

Lot invited the messengers to stay at his house. He prepared a feast for the messengers and treated them kindly. But the men of Sodom had other plans. They surrounded Lot's house and demanded that he send the messengers out. They wanted to abuse and mistreat them. It got so bad that God made the wicked men go blind. But they still kept trying to find the door.

The messengers told Lot to gather his family, his daughters and sons-in-law and leave Sodom. The Lord would send fire and rocks from heaven to destroy the city. But, Lot's sons-in-law didn't listen. They didn't want to leave all their possessions.

The next morning God's messengers told Lot to leave in a hurry. But he and his family looked around at all their things. Were they really going to lose it all? They had forgotten how wicked the men of Sodom were. So, the messengers took Lot by the hands. They pulled Lot, his wife and two daughters out of the city. They told them to run for the hills to escape the fire. They told them not to look back at Sodom.

While Lot and his family were escaping they smelled the smoke. They heard the cries of the people of Sodom as the fire and rocks fell on them. They knew Sodom was facing God's judgment. But instead of obeying God, Lot's wife turned around and looked back. God's Judgment fell on her - she was turned into a pillar of salt!

Jesus used the example of a farmer plowing a field to teach why it is not good to look back. As long as the farmer looks ahead, he knows where he is going. If he keeps his eye on a goal, he can see how to plow a straight row. His field will be ready for planting. But if he takes his eye off the

goal and looks back, his rows will be crooked. He will lose his direction. His field will not be productive. He is not fit for service in God's Kingdom (Luke 9:62).

Lot's wife lost her life because she refused to obey God. She took her eyes off of God's way of doing things. She rejected His plan to save her. She was not fit for service in the Kingdom of God.

Sodom had looked good when Lot first saw it. It was a prosperous city. The pastures were well-watered. But, think of the loss. Lot lost his wife and his daughters lost the men they were promised to marry. They lost all their possessions as well.

God wants us to obey His laws and to try our best to do what is right. Jesus died for our sins and made a way for our salvation. The Bible warns us of the consequences of ignoring God's way. The choice is up to you. Will you obey God and accept that salvation, or will you refuse and reject it?

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for providing a way for Lot and his family to escape the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. You have also provided away to save us from the penalty for my sins. Help me, Lord, to understand and accept what Jesus did for me. May I choose to live in a way that pleases you.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Matthew 16:24-26

Monday - Romans 12:1-2

Tuesday - 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

Wednesday - James 1:13-15

Thursday - 1 John 2:15-17

Friday - Proverbs 14:11-12

Saturday - Luke 9:62

ACTIVITY

Use the key below to fill in the blanks.
Answer the question on the lines at the bottom.

A	B	C	D	E	F	H	I	K	L
									
M	O	R	S	T	U	W	Y		
									

Son of Promise

MEMORY VERSE

"He was absolutely sure that God had the power to do what he had promised." - Romans 4:21 (NIRV)

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 18:1-15

Genesis 21:1-8

Romans 4:16-22

Romans 4:21

2 Timothy 1:12

Hebrews 6:13-15

Hebrews 11:11-12

2 Peter 3:8-9

WORDS TO KNOW

ABSOLUTELY - positive, no doubt

FULFILL - to carry out, to bring to pass

INHERITANCE - to receive property or money at the death of someone else

THE LESSON

There is a saying that states, "A promise is only as good as the one making the promise." For example, if your friend promised to give you a check for \$1,000,000, that promise would probably be no good. Why? Because your friend's bank account surely doesn't contain that much money! You cannot promise to give something you don't have. But, if your friend promised to let you ride his new scooter, you could probably believe him. That promise would be in his power to keep.

God has made many promises in the Bible to many people. He promised Noah that He would never again destroy the world with a flood. He promised to lead Abram to a new land. He promised that Abraham would become the father of many nations. And He promised to bless Abraham and Sarah with a son of their own. Were these good promises? Was it within God's power to keep these promises? "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14). Your

memory verse says that Abraham "was absolutely sure that God had the power to do what he had promised" (Romans 4:21 NIrV).

When God's messengers first told Abraham that Sarah would have a son, Sarah laughed. She just couldn't believe such a thing could happen to a woman so old. But, Abraham trusted God's promise. After all, hadn't God promised to lead Abraham to a new land? He kept that promise. God showed Abraham the new land. He promised to give Abraham all the land that he could see. Since God created this earth, it was His to give. So, Abraham knew he could trust God to keep the promise about giving a son to him and Sarah.

But, Abraham and Sarah had waited a long time for God's promise to be fulfilled. As a matter of fact, Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born. Sarah was ninety years old. Since Sarah laughed when she first heard God's promise, they named their son Isaac, which means laughter.

Isaac brought much happiness to the home of Abraham and Sarah. And when he reached a certain age, Abraham gave a great feast in Isaac's honor. But Sarah saw Ishmael, her maid's son, making fun of Isaac. This made Sarah so mad that she told Abraham to send the boy and his mother away out of her sight. She didn't want Isaac to have to share any of his inheritance with Ishmael. Abraham was sad to send his son, Ishmael away, but God promised to make a great nation from him, too.

We know that God had the power to keep His promises to Abraham. The nation of Israel is descended from Isaac. It is through this nation that God sent His Son, Jesus, to live on this earth. God also kept His promise to bless Ishmael. The Arab nations are all descended from Ishmael.

Our Heavenly Father has made promises to you, too. He promised to forgive your sins if you admit to Him that we have sinned. He promised to give His Holy Spirit to guide us and teach us. He promised to give a place in His Kingdom to those who believe in Him and keep His commands. He promised to one day return to take us to our new home.

How do we know that God will keep His promises to us? First, we can look back and see that God kept His promises to those before us. Next, we know that God doesn't play favorites. He doesn't love one group of people more than another. He will keep His promises to you, too (Acts 13:32-33). Finally, Titus 1:2 tells us, "Before time began, God promised to give that life (eternal life). And he does not lie" (NIrV Kids Bible).

The same God who created the earth and sky is the God who made these promises. The book of Psalms tells us, "Great is our Lord. His power is mighty. There is no limit to his understanding" (Psalm 147:5 NIrV Kids Bible). He knows what we need and has the power to give us what He

says. He wants us to believe Him, to trust Him, and to obey Him. You, too, can be like Abraham and be "absolutely sure that God (has) the power to do what he (has) promised."

STUDENT PRAYER

Great and Mighty God,

There is nothing too hard for you to do. Help me trust you to keep your promises to me, just like you did to Abraham. I want to be able to say with Abraham, "I am absolutely sure you have the power!"

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Hebrews 11:11-12

Monday - Genesis 18:6-8

Tuesday - Romans 4:16-18

Wednesday - Romans 4:20-22

Thursday - 2 Timothy 1:12

Friday - 2 Peter 3:8-9

Saturday - Hebrews 6:13-15

ACTIVITY

Look up the following verses and complete the statements by drawing a line from column to column. (The quotations are from the NIV.)

Hebrews 10:23 "For He	what He promised us –	in keeping His promises."
Romans 4:21 "God had power	who through faith and patience	The promise is for you & your children."
Acts 2:38-39 "And you will receive	is not slow	known all these great promises."
2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord	to do what	is faithful."
1 John 2:25 "And this is	the gift of the Holy Spirit.	inherit what has been promised."
2 Peter 3:13 "In keeping with His promise	who promised	fulfill them."
Galatians 3:14 "So that	the promise	and heirs according to promise."
Hebrews 6:12 "Imitate those	then you are Abraham's seed	comes by faith."
Romans 4:16 Therefore	by faith we might receive	a new heaven and a new earth."
Galatians 3:29 "If you belong to Christ	we are looking forward to	He had promised."
1 Chronicles 17:19b "You have	abolish them, but to	over God's house."
Psalms 33:4 "For the Word of the Lord	is faithful as a Son	eternal life."
Hebrews 3: 6 "But Christ	done this great thing and made	faithful in all He does."
Matthew 5:17b "I have not come to	is right & true. He is	the promise of the Spirit."



Passed the Test!

MEMORY VERSE

"Abraham had faith. So he offered Isaac as a sacrifice . . . Abraham believed that God could raise the dead " - Hebrews 11:17, 19 (NIrV)

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 22:1-19

Psalms 27:13-14

Isaiah 53:3-7

Galatians 3:6-9

Hebrews 7:25-27

Hebrews 11:17,19

Hebrews 11:17-19

James 2:17-22

1 Peter 1:6-8

WORDS TO KNOW

CONVERSATION- talking with another person or other people

DIRECT COMMAND - told to do something in exact words

THE LESSON

Mr. Collins came into the room with a stack of test papers. "Oh no," thought Jeremy, "I forgot today was test day." Mr. Collins passed out the papers. He told the students they had twenty minutes to complete the test. It would cover the material in chapter five of their textbook. The first question showed Jeremy that he should have studied! What a terrible feeling - to be faced with a test for which you are not prepared.

When Abraham was one hundred years old, God finally gave a son to him and Sarah. Isaac was the joy of their life. He brought laughter to their home. He fulfilled God's promise. He was the hope of their future. Abraham and Sarah were very thankful for this special gift.

But now Abraham was facing the hardest test of his life. One day God spoke to Abraham. Now, Abraham was usually excited to hear from God. After all, God had made him some great promises in their conversations. But what God had to say today really troubled Abraham. God told him to take Isaac, the son that he loved so much, and offer him as a sacrifice.

Why would God ask Abraham to do such a thing? Wasn't Isaac the fulfillment of God's promise? Had Abraham done something wrong? Had he misunderstood God's command? It is hard to imagine what Abraham was thinking. What should he do?

But, God was not punishing Abraham. Abraham had heard God correctly. This was a test. Would Abraham trust God? Would he obey, even if it would hurt? Would Abraham be willing to give his son, Isaac, to God? How Abraham handled this test would prove how much he loved God. It would count for all eternity.

Sadly, the next morning, Abraham saddled his donkey. Isaac must have wondered why Abraham looked so sad. Offering time was usually a time of thanksgiving. But, he went quietly with his father to Mt. Moriah. When they arrived, Abraham told his two young servants to wait with the donkey. He said he and Isaac were going to worship and would come back again.

Abraham knew God told him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. Yes, he would obey God. But, Abraham was not afraid. He was not worried. Why? Don't you imagine that Abraham had been talking to God on the trip to Mt. Moriah? He may have asked God why he had to do this. He may have asked God to provide another sacrifice - we don't know. But what we do know is that when they arrived, Abraham decided to trust God. He would obey. He believed that God was even able to bring Isaac back to life again!

Up the mountain went Abraham and Isaac. They built an altar out of stones. They laid wood on the altar. Then Isaac spoke up, "The fire and wood are here... but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" (Genesis 22:7 NIV). Abraham told Isaac that God would provide one.

Abraham laid his son on the altar and raised a knife to kill his son. "At that moment the Angel of God shouted to him from heaven, 'Abraham! Abraham!'" "Yes, Lord!" he answered. "Lay down the knife; don't hurt the lad in any way," the angel said, "for I know that God is first in your life - you have not withheld even your beloved son from me." God Himself provided the ram that was in the bushes for the burnt offering. God told Abraham that he had Passed the Test! Abraham proved that he loved God more than anything else.

You will probably never have to face a test like Abraham's. But, every day you face smaller tests that will prove how much you love God. Are you willing to obey God when He gives you a direct command? When He says you should honor your father and mother, do you obey? When he says not to misuse the name of the Lord, do you ignore Him? When He tells you to honor the Lord on the Sabbath, do you attend Sabbath services? What about stealing and lying - will you Pass the Test?

There will come a time when you will have to stand up for what you believe. How will you react when someone makes fun of you for not keeping Christmas or Halloween? When you are asked

why you worship on the Sabbath, what will you say? If you are dared to do something you know you shouldn't, how will you respond? Will you stand up for God ? Will you Pass the Test?

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Lord, My Teacher,

When I am faced with tests, help me be like Abraham. He had faith and obeyed your command - even when it meant he might lose his son. Teach me to trust you to do only those things that are for my own good.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - James 2:17-22

Monday- I Peter 1:6-8

Tuesday- Psalm 27:13-14

Wednesday - Galatians 3:6-9

Thursday - Isaiah 53:4-5

Friday - Hebrews 7:25-27

Saturday- Hebrews 11:17-19

ACTIVITY

Read the following tests. Think about how you would respond.
In the box rank how you would grade your response using the letters below.

- A** - I could pass with flying colors.
B - I think I could pass.
C - I'd need help and practice to pass.
D - It would be really hard for me to pass.
F - I would fail.

Test of Your Faith

Telling the Truth - Tim picked a fight with his younger sister. As Jenny started crying Mom came into the room. Tim knew he was wrong. What would *you* do?

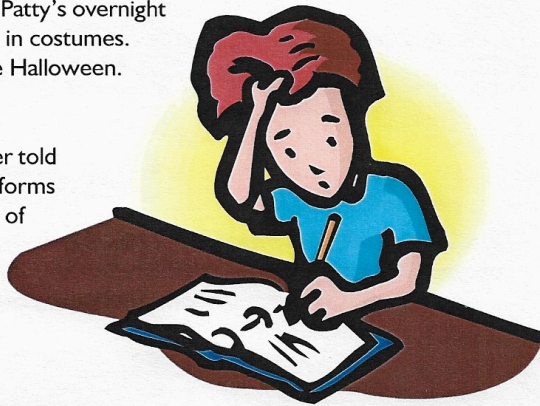
Being Honest - Heather couldn't believe her eyes. There on the floor of the grocery store was a wallet – with money in it! She looked around but didn't see anyone close by. What would *you* do?

Being Obedient - Trevor's dad was going out of town for a few days. He told Trevor to be sure to feed and walk the dog every morning. But, Trevor hated getting up early. What would *you* do?

Helping Others - Karen fell off her bike and broke her arm. It was in a cast and it was hard for her to carry her books to school. John saw her struggling with her books. But, he had his own books to carry. What would *you* do?

Obedying God - You are invited to Patty's overnight Halloween party. Everyone will be in costumes. The party is on Friday night before Halloween. What should *you* do?

Believe God - Your science teacher told you that man evolved from lower forms of animals. There is even a picture of primitive man in your science book. But, the Bible says that God created man in His own image. What should *you* believe?



Will You Pass The Test?

Chosen Bride

MEMORY VERSE

"But God chose you to be his people. You are royal priests. You are a holy nation. You are a people who belong to God." - 1 Peter 2:9a (NIRV)

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 24

Proverbs 18:22

Proverbs 31:10-12

John 15:15-16

Romans 12:10-13

1 Corinthians 1:24-31

Ephesians 1:3-4

Philippians 4:6-7

1 Peter 2:4—10

1 Peter 2:9

WORDS TO KNOW

DELIGHT- great pleasure

RESPONSIBILITY- something for which you must give an account

SUITABLE - appropriate, suits a given purpose

THE LESSON

Pat looked forward to gym class - he loved to play baseball. But, he was always nervous when it came time to choose teams. Pat was afraid he wouldn't be chosen until last. It was embarrassing being the last one chosen. Today would be different; it was his turn to be captain and choose the team.

As Pat looked around at his classmates, he chose Johnny first. Johnny was a great hitter and Pat wanted him on his team. His next choice was Susan, she was a fast runner. Ronnie could throw the ball a long way, Tony was a good outfielder and Kelly was a good pitcher. Finally Pat had his team. Everyone had been chosen because of something they could do well.

But, there was one boy left who was not chosen for either team. He was new in school. Pat had never seen him play baseball; he didn't know what he could do. The gym teacher placed the new

boy on Pat's team.

Choosing the right person for a team or a job can sometimes be difficult - especially when you don't know the person. Today's lesson is about a man who asked for special help in making the right choice. He was Abraham's best servant. And, he had an important job to do.

Abraham's son, Isaac, was a grown man. Abraham knew it was time for him to get married and start a family of his own. But, Abraham didn't want Isaac to marry any of the women who lived nearby. Those women didn't worship the true and living God. They worshiped idols. So, Abraham called his very best servant and told him he had a job for him.

Abraham knew that his relatives who lived back in his homeland worshiped God. He knew he could find a good wife for Isaac there. But Abraham was getting too old to make such a long trip. So he decided to send his servant, Eliezer.

Abraham told Eliezer exactly what kind of wife to choose for Isaac. He made Eliezer promise to do exactly what Abraham wanted. Abraham gave Eliezer ten camels loaded with all kinds of good things and sent him on his way.

This was an awesome responsibility. Can you imagine how Eliezer must have felt? He didn't know anyone in Abraham's homeland. How would he ever meet a suitable woman for Isaac? And if he met one, how would he know she was the right one? What if she refused to travel back to marry Isaac? Eliezer knew he couldn't do this job alone.

The trip had been long. Eliezer was hot and thirsty when he came to a well of water. It was the time of day when the women came to get water. Now was his chance! But, first Eliezer asked for help - he prayed to God. "Give me success today. Be kind to my master." He asked God to let one of the women offer to give a drink to him and to his camels. "That's how I will know you have been kind to my master" (Genesis 24:12, 14 NIV.)

Have you ever seen a camel drink water? They can drink as much as 21 gallons of water in ten minutes! So giving water to ten camels was no easy job. Was Eliezer asking the impossible?

Rebekah came to the well that day. She was a beautiful young woman. And, as she and Eliezer talked, he discovered that she was related to Abraham. Eliezer decided to ask her for a drink. And to his surprise and delight she offered water to him and to his camels. His prayer had been answered - she was the one!

God chose Rebekah to be a bride for Isaac. It was God who led Eliezer to the well at just the right time of day. Rebekah was friendly and caring. She offered to help the thirsty traveler. She was not lazy and was willing to work and serve Eliezer. But most importantly, Rebekah had been taught to love and serve God.

Your memory verse states, "But God chose you to be his people. You are royal priests. You are a holy nation. You are a people who belong to God" (1 Peter 2:9a NIV). Why are you a special person? If you believe and trust in God, you belong to Him. He has made you holy.

God wants you to be like Rebekah - friendly and caring to others. When there is a new person in your school, be friendly. Help him find his classes. Invite him to eat lunch with you.

God also wants you to be willing to work and serve Him. Doing kind things for others is serving God. Inviting friends to attend Sabbath School with you is working for God. These are some ways you can show your love to God.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for choosing me to belong to your family. Help me to act like one of your children by being caring and friendly to others. And help me to show that I love you by serving you.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Proverbs 31:10-12

Monday - 1 Corinthians 1:26-27

Tuesday - John 15:15-16

Wednesday- Ephesians 1:3-4

Thursday - Proverbs 18:22

Friday - Romans 12:10-13

Saturday- Philippians 4:6-7

ACTIVITY

On the lines below, make a list of the things you would have been looking for had Abraham sent you to look for a wife for Isaac. Hint: There are some things in your lesson that you may want to include.

Now look in the newspaper and read some want ads in the classified section. Then write your own want ad advertising for a bride for Isaac. You may want to mention the requirements on your list above in your ad.



Playing Favorites

MEMORY VERSE

"Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism." -
Colossians 3:25

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 25:20-34

Genesis 27

John 3:16

Acts 10:34-35

Romans 2:11-13

Galatians 6:7-8

Colossians 3:25

WORDS TO KNOW

DESCENDANTS - children and grandchildren, offspring born to a family

GAME - wild animals or birds

THE LESSON

Isaac and Rebekah loved each other very much. But, there was something missing! They had been praying that God would give them a child. God always does much more than we expect. He blessed them with twin boys. These twins were not alike at all. Esau, the oldest, was a hairy man. His skin was ruddy, or red. He loved to be outside roaming the hills hunting for wild animals. Jacob was fair skinned and smooth. He liked to stay close to home and keep the flocks of sheep and goats.

Isaac and Rebekah taught both boys about God and His promises. They taught them that their grandfather Abraham obeyed God and because of this, he and his descendants would receive special blessings. Usually this special blessing was passed on to the oldest son before the father died. It was called the birthright.

Part of this blessing was that the Savior of the world would be Abraham's descendant. If you knew that God's Son would be born in your family, how would you live your life? Jacob believed God and His promises. But, Esau cared little about God or His promises. He even married a

woman who didn't love God. Even so, Isaac loved Esau the best. He loved the delicious meat Esau brought home from his hunting trips. Rebekah loved Jacob even more than Esau.

One day Jacob made a big pot of stew. As he was stirring it, the smell drifted through the air. Esau had been away from home on a hunting trip. He hadn't had anything to eat for quite a while. The smell of the delicious stew made his stomach growl. He came up to Jacob and said, "Quick! Let me have some of that red stew! I'm very hungry!" (Genesis 25:30 NIV).

Esau and Jacob were brothers. Would you give your brother something to eat if he were starving? Jacob saw this as his chance to get Esau's birthright. He told Esau that he would give him something to eat if he would sell him his birthright. Well, Esau thought, "What's a birthright worth if you're going to die of hunger anyway?" So he traded all of the rights of being the oldest son to his younger brother. He ate the stew with peas and bread and went about his business unconcerned that he had thrown away his birthright.

Isaac was getting old and was almost blind. He knew that he would soon die. He wanted to pass on a special blessing to Esau before he died. He told Esau to go hunt for some wild game. Then he was to cook the meat the way Isaac liked it and bring it to him.

But, Rebekah heard what Isaac told Esau. She wanted Jacob to receive the blessing. So she told Jacob to bring her two of his goats. She cooked them just the way Isaac liked best. Jacob knew that he wasn't hairy like Esau. He was afraid Isaac would know the difference even though he couldn't see very well. So, Rebekah put skin from the goat on Jacob's arms and neck. She told him to wear some of Esau's clothes. Now Jacob was ready to go in to his father.

Isaac asked who was there. Jacob said that he was Esau. Isaac said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob." But, when he touched Jacob, he felt the goat's hair. Since Jacob felt and smelled like Esau, Isaac ate the meat that Jacob brought. Then he blessed him: "May God always give you plenty of rain for your crops, and good harvest of grain, and new wine. May many nations be your slaves. Be the master of your brothers. May all your relatives bow low before you. Cursed are all who curse you, and blessed are all who bless you" (Genesis 27: 28-29 TLB). He asked God to give his son good crops. He said that other nations would serve him- even his own brothers! He would have all the rights of the oldest son.

Jacob had just been blessed by his father and Esau came in the room with his father's favorite dish. When Isaac realized that he had been tricked, he began to tremble. Esau cried with bitterness and asked for his father to bless him. But the blessing had already been given and Isaac couldn't take it back.

The blessing that was left for Esau didn't compare with what Jacob received. He wouldn't have a life of easy or luxury. For a time he would serve his brother, but would finally be free from him. Esau became so angry that he threatened to kill his own brother.

The sad part of this story is that it didn't have to happen. Isaac and Rebekah had their favorite sons. They were willing to do anything to make sure their favorite got the most.

Just because Jacob lied and got the better blessing, doesn't mean that it was right for him to do it? Why was there no need for Jacob to lie and trick his father? God said in the beginning that the older would serve the younger. It was in God's plan for Jacob to get the greater blessing. Don't you think God could work this out without Jacob lying? What Jacob did was wrong. He received the blessing, but he should have waited for God to work this out in His time and His way. Then there would be no bad consequences like Esau wanting to kill him. "Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism" (Colossians 3:25).

The color of your skin doesn't matter to God. Neither does it matter whether you are rich or poor. He wants all of us to obey Him and receive His blessings. God sent His Son, Jesus, to die for the sins of everyone. He doesn't play favorites!

Jesus wants to be a part of your life, to live in you. He wants to bless you too. Will that make a difference in how you act, in what you do?

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

I thank you that you do not play favorites with your children. You love all of us. Teach me to treat others the same way - no Playing Favorites.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Genesis 25:24-26

Monday - Genesis 25:27-28

Tuesday - Genesis 27:35-36

Wednesday - Galatians 6:7-8

Thursday - Acts 10:34-35

Friday - John 3:16

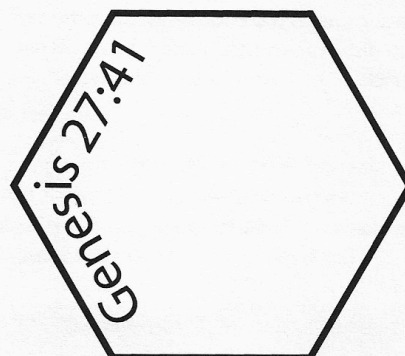
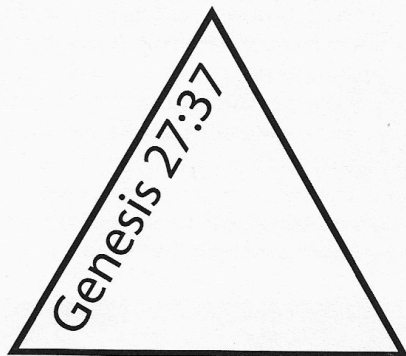
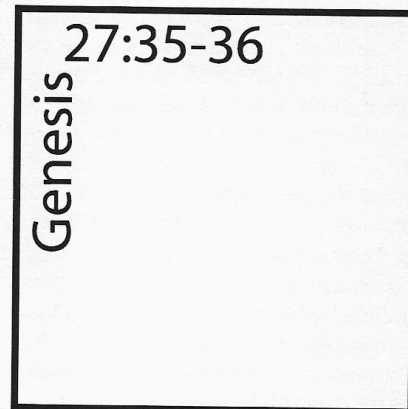
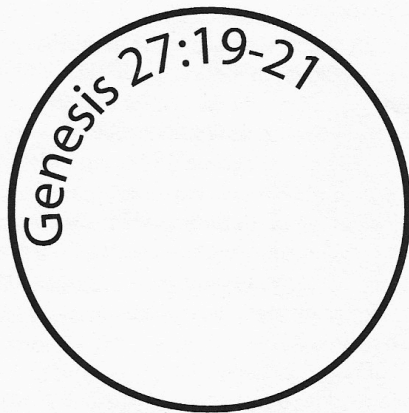
Saturday - Romans 2:11-13

ACTIVITY

Read the scriptures listed below. Choose from the response list what happened when Isaac and Rebekah played favorites with their sons. Write the response in the corresponding shape (There may be more than one right answer).

Responses

Angry	Giggled	Mixed Up	Scared
Beat	Hated	Noticed	Trusted
Cheated	Ignored	Obeded	Unfair
Defended	Jealous	Peace	Violent
Envied	Killed	Questioned	Wept
Fought	Lied	Repented	Yelled



What a Dream!

MEMORY VERSE

"I am with you. I will watch over you everywhere you go. . . I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." - Genesis 28:15 (NIrV)

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 28:15

Genesis 28:10-22

Genesis 32:24-30

Genesis 49

Psalm 105:6-11

1 Corinthians 2:9-10

Philippians 1:6

Hebrews 13:5-6

WORDS TO KNOW

DESCENDANTS - offsprings; a person's children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, etc.

AGES - length of life or existence of time

IMPACT - influence or effect

THE LESSON

Ryan's dad hinted that something good was going to happen on Ryan's birthday. Ryan could hardly wait!! Finally, his birthday came. After eating breakfast with his family, Ryan's dad told them all to come outside. There, in the front yard, was a brand new bicycle and helmet. It was even Ryan's favorite color: green. Suddenly, Ryan turned to his dad and asked, "Does this mean I get to run errands for you on my bike?"

"Absolutely!" his dad said, "As long as you have your homework finished and you follow directions carefully, you can help." Then he added, "I will really appreciate you helping me. And when I don't have any jobs for you, you can ride with your friends."

Ryan was delighted. It was a dream come true.

Jacob was one of Abraham's grandsons. God was so pleased with Abraham's obedience that He promised to bless him, his children, his grandchildren and his great grandchildren down through the ages. This blessing should have gone to Esau. But Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of soup. Then Jacob tricked him out of his blessing. Esau didn't realize how important his birthright was. He may not have really believed how good God can be to us when we obey Him.

Jacob left Beersheba and stopped to camp one night in a town named Haran. He didn't take along a soft pillow to rest his head. But he found a rock to use as a headrest. While he was sleeping, he had an awesome dream. In his dream he saw a staircase that reached from earth to heaven with angels going up and down on it. That must have been spectacular!

"At the top of stairs stood the Lord. 'I am Jehovah,' he said, 'the God of Abraham, and of your father Isaac. The ground you are lying on is yours! I will give it to you and to your descendants. For you will have descendants as many as dust!' " Now that's a lot of children and grandchildren! Have you ever picked up a handful of dirt and tried to count the grains? But God didn't limit the number of descendants to the number of grains in a handful of dirt. God promised to bless Jacob with so many children, grandchildren and great grandchildren that he couldn't even count them.

"They will cover the land from east to west and from north to south; and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants." God said that Jacob's descendants would spread out in every direction around the world. But there was even more. He said that "all nations of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants." That means that Jacob's descendants would make the world better for everyone. How was this to happen and has it happened?

Well, this wasn't the only time that God appeared to Jacob. Jacob arrived at Bethel and God appeared to him once again and blessed him. "You shall no longer be called Jacob ('Grabber'), but Israel ('One who prevails with God'). 'I am God Almighty,' the Lord said to him, 'and I will cause you to be fertile and to multiply and to become a great nation, yes, many nations; many kings shall be among your descendants' " (Genesis 35:10-11). Because Abraham and Jacob obeyed God, God would bless them with so many descendants that they would become many nations. There would even be many kings as their descendants.

Jacob had twelve sons. One of his sons was named Judah. Jesus was one of Judah's descendants. Everyone knows that many of Judah's descendants live in the nation of Israel today. We call them Jews. Down through the years everyone has known who Judah is. But Israel is only one nation today and God said there would be many. There have to be other nations in the world that are Jacob's descendants as well that are also a part of the House of Israel. Jacob had twelve sons, not just one. So where are they today?

In Genesis 49:1, Jacob gathered his sons around him and told them what would happen to each one of them “in the last days.” Jacob knew that his sons would be great nations. Many years after this, the nation of Israel was divided into two kingdoms. Descendants of ten of his sons made up the northern tribes, and there were two in the southern tribes. The ten northern tribes are called “the lost ten tribes.” People may not know who they are, but we know that there have to be other great nations somewhere that are Israelites. God said so! But why did God plan it this way. What was His purpose? And how can we find them? One way to know where they are would be to ask the question, where are those nations that do so much good helping other people? Remember, God said, “All nations of the world will be blessed through you.”

Have you ever noticed that it is the Americans and British who always go help other nations when they are in trouble? If a nation doesn't have food to eat, the Americans send them food. If another nation needs help in protecting itself from its enemies, America and Britain go help them fight. Could America and Britain be Jacob's descendants? Could the kings and queens of England be some of the many kings God promised to be Jacob's descendants?

God thinks and plans big and long! His plan is awesome! God told Jacob, “I am with you, and will protect you wherever you go, and will bring you back safely to this land: I will be with you constantly until I have finished giving you all I am promising” (Genesis 28:15 TLB). God made this promise to Jacob, and down through the ages He has kept it. Because Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob obeyed Him He kept His promise and blessed a lot of people. Think how far reaching God's promises will be to you if you will obey Him. Don't miss out like Esau did, because didn't realize how great his blessing could be. Be a part of the dream!

STUDENT PRAYER

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
You are Awesome! Thank you for thinking and planning big and long. Thank you for the great nation that I live in, and the blessings I receive because Abraham, Isaac and Jacob obeyed you. Help me never to forget how great your blessings can be if I will always obey you.
It's in Jesus' name I pray.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - 1 Corinthians 2:9-10

Monday - Hebrews 13:5-6

Tuesday - Genesis 28:15-16

Wednesday - Philippians 1:6

Thursday - Genesis 28:10-14

Friday - Psalm 105:6-11

Saturday - Genesis 32:24-30

ACTIVITY

Add or subtract the number of letters written under each line.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Jacob went on a
 L-2 M+2 V-1 S-1 L+2 D+1 Z-1
 to visit relatives. He was so
 Q+3 J-1 S-1 C+2 F-2
 he lay down on the ground. He used a

 for a pillow.
 T-1 W-3 L+3 Q-3 B+3

That night Jacob had a beautiful

 . He saw a stairway leading
 F-2 P+2 A+4 C-2 L+1
 to heaven with on it.

 was at the top and spoke to Jacob. God
 D-3 L+2 H-1 G-2 K+1 R+1
 F+1 R-3 E-1

 him and promised
 A+1 M-1 G-2 U-2 V-3 B+3 F-2
 to be with Jacob.

PRAYER

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, You are Awesome! Thank you for thinking and planning big and long. Thank you for the great nation that I live in, and the blessings I receive because Abraham, Isaac and Jacob obeyed you. Help me never to forget how great your blessings can be if I will always obey you. It's in Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Sons by the Dozen!

MEMORY VERSE

"Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from Him" - Psalm 127:3 (NIV)

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 29

Genesis 30:1-25

Genesis 35:23-26

Psalm 78:1-7

Psalm 127:3-5

Psalm 127:3

Proverbs 10:1

Proverbs 13:1

Proverbs 17:25

Galatians 4:4-7

Ephesians 1:3-5

WORDS TO KNOW

DECEIVED- lied to, misled

DESCENDANTS - children, grandchildren, offspring born to the family

HERITAGE- property or other valuables passed down to members of a family

PRESERVE - to protect from harm and prepare for future use

THE LESSON

Do you remember how Jacob and his mother tricked and lied to Isaac so that Jacob would receive the blessing? Well, it's payback time! Read on and you will find out how Jacob got paid back for his trickery.

After Jacob had the dream and saw the staircase going all the way from heaven to earth, Jacob made a promise to God. He said, "If God will help and protect me on this journey and give me food and clothes, and will bring me back safely to my father, then I will choose Jehovah as my God!" He also promised to give God back a tenth of everything He gave him. Then he set up the stone he used for a pillow when he had the dream. It was to become a place of worship.

Then he continued his travels and came to a well where there were some shepherds with their sheep to be watered. While he talked with these men, he learned that his uncle Laban lived there. But what made it even better, his uncle had two daughters. While they were talking, they looked up and saw Rachel coming to water her sheep. She was a shepherdess and Laban's younger daughter.

Jacob couldn't help but notice how beautiful she was. He fell in love with her at first sight. Rachel ran to tell her father that Jacob was at the well. Laban rushed out to meet him. Jacob wanted Rachel to be his wife. He told Laban that he would work for him for seven years if Laban would let him marry her. That sounded like a good deal to Laban and he agreed to it.

Now this is where the story gets even more interesting. There was a custom in the land - the oldest daughter must marry first. So Laban tricked Jacob. He switched the girls on the night of the wedding. Jacob awakened the next morning to the awful surprise that he had married the wrong girl. Laban did the same thing to him that Jacob had done to his own father. Jacob had been tricked! He was like a farmer who planted seeds. When he went out to gather in his crop, he harvested exactly what he planted (Galatians 6:7). Jacob had deceived his own father in order to receive Esau's blessing, now he was being deceived! It was payback time.

One of the most important things in the life of an Israeli woman was that she have children - especially sons! It had been foretold that the Messiah, the Savior of the world would be born to one of Abraham's descendants. Every Jewish woman hoped that she would be the mother. How do you think Rachel felt when her sister, Leah, was the first to give Jacob a son? She became jealous. Rachel hadn't been able to have any children. So she gave Jacob one of her handmaids to be his wife. Now the race was on to see who would have the most children.

Rachel prayed and asked God to give her a son. Finally God blessed her with a son she named Joseph. Since Rachel was Jacob's favorite wife, how do you think Jacob felt toward Joseph? How would that make the rest of the boys feel? Before long, there was trouble in Jacob's house.

Can you imagine what it would be like to grow up in a family of twelve boys? Your house would be very crowded! There are some advantages and some disadvantages to having that many children. One advantage would be that you would always have someone to play with. A disadvantage was that the boys didn't get along with each other.

Jacob loved all of his boys dearly. Your memory verse states that, "Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from Him." But, today some people think of children as just a bother. They may even kill a tiny baby before it is born because they don't want to take care of it. Not only are they guilty of murder, they are saying to God, "I don't want your reward!"

What was the promise that God gave to Abraham? He promised that Abraham's descendants would number more than the sands on the seashore. He would have more descendants than

there were stars in the sky. That was part of Abraham's blessing from God. That blessing was passed down from Abraham to Isaac and now to Jacob. God was fulfilling His promise. These twelve sons would participate in that blessing - they were from God!

When the time was right, Jesus Christ was born to Mary who was one of Jacob's descendants from the tribe of Judah. "But his own people did not accept him. Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God" (John 1:11-12 NIrV). And when you accept Jesus as your Savior, you will be a son or daughter in God's family. Members of God's family will also participate in God's very special blessings!

God wanted Jacob's heritage preserved and passed it on to future generations. He "gave laws to the people of Jacob. He gave Israel their law. He commanded our people who lived before us to teach his laws to their children . . . Then they would put their trust in God. They would not forget what he had done" (Psalm 78:5, 7 NIrV). God wants you to remember and keep His laws. He wants you to remember what He did for Jacob, and what He has done for you!

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for making me one of your children. Teach me to act like a child of yours by loving you and obeying you. And help me to pass that heritage on to others.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Galatians 4:4-7

Monday - Proverbs 10:1

Tuesday - Proverbs 13:1

Wednesday - Proverbs 17:25

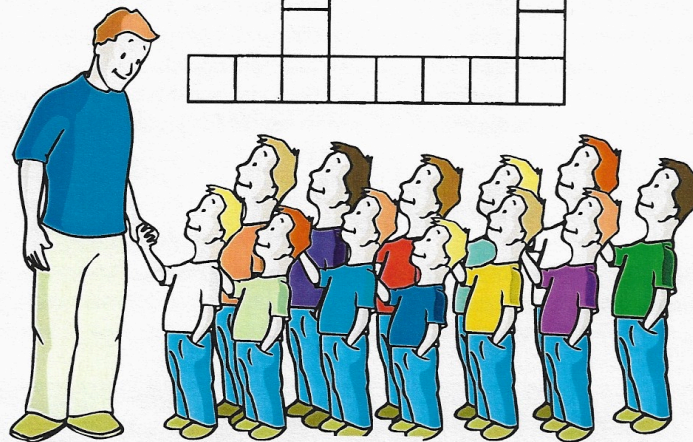
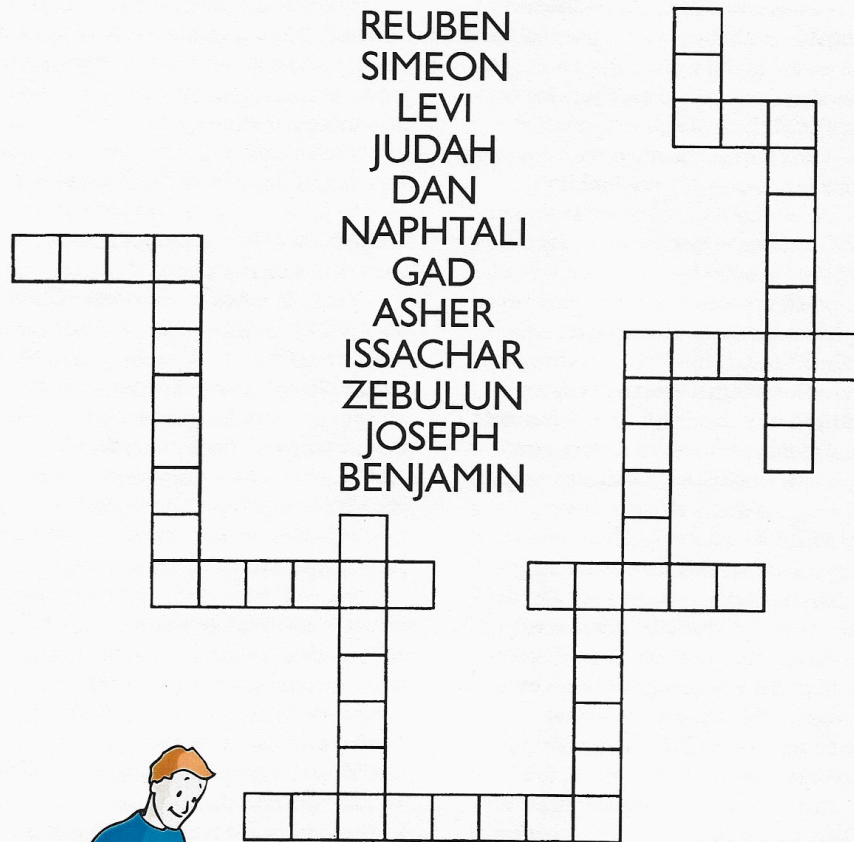
Thursday - Psalm 78:5-7

Friday - Psalm 127:3-5

Saturday - Ephesians 1:3-5

ACTIVITY

Jacob had twelve sons.
Fill their names into the word puzzle below.



Change of Heart

MEMORY VERSE

"Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord never counts against him. He doesn't want to cheat anyone." - Psalm 32:2 (NirV)

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 32:22-31

Genesis 35:9-10

2 Chronicles 7:14

Psalm 32:2

Proverbs 1:22-23

Ezekiel 18:30-32

Hosea 12:2-6

Romans 12:1-2

2 Corinthians 7:9-10

Ephesians 1:6-7

Colossians 1:12-14

WORDS TO KNOW

HUMBLY - not full of pride, being aware of one's shortcomings

RIVER JABBOK - a river that empties into the Jordan River, about 20 miles north of the Dead Sea

SCHEMER - one who has a secret plan for getting what he wants

SUPERNATURAL - not of human origin, of God

THE LESSON

When your mom and dad named you, they probably liked the sound of the name. Sometimes names are passed down from father to son. Some girls are named after movie stars or someone famous. But, in Bible times names had a special meaning. The name might describe how a person looked. Or, it might describe what the parent hoped the child would one day become.

Jacob's name means that he took something by force or trickery. Do you remember how he bargained with his brother to sell him his birthright? He wouldn't give him a bowl of stew until Esau agreed. Jacob also tricked his father into giving the special blessing to him instead of Esau.

But, now he had to see his brother Esau, whose blessing he had received. Jacob was about to meet with Esau face to face.

The last time Jacob saw his brother, Esau was very mad at him. Esau even threatened to kill Jacob for what he had done. So, Jacob was sent away. Now it was time for Jacob to go home. He was nearing his homeland. Jacob received a message that Esau and four hundred men were coming to meet him. Do you think this was the end for Jacob?

No, Jacob prayed, "O God of Abraham my grandfather, and of my father Isaac - O Jehovah who told me to return to the land of my relatives, and said that you would do me good. I am not worthy of the least of all your loving kindnesses shown me again and again just as you promised me. For when I left home I owned nothing except a walking stick! And now I am two armies! O Lord, please deliver me from destruction at the hand of my brother Esau, for I am frightened - terribly afraid that he is coming to kill me and these mothers and my children. But you promised to do me good, and to multiply my descendants until they become as the sands along the shores- too many to count" (Genesis 32:11-12 TLB).

Jacob, the schemer, now began to think of ways to make peace with Esau. He divided his flocks, herds, and his families into groups. Then he sent gifts ahead to Esau. He sent 220 goats, 220 sheep, 30 camels and their babies, 50 head of cattle, and 30 donkeys! Why do you think Jacob sent all these animals? Could it be he thought the gifts would buy Esau's forgiveness?

During the night Jacob got up and wakened his wives and children and took them across the Jordan River at the Jabbok ford. He returned to the camp as was alone - or so he thought! During the night God came to Jacob in the form of a man. He wrestled with Jacob all night long. Since God was in human form, He was not using His supernatural power. Jacob seemed to be winning. Then all at once the Man touched Jacob's hip and the bone went out of place. Jacob knew then that he had been wrestling with God, and not just a man. Jacob held on for dear life. The Man told Jacob to let Him go. But Jacob said he wouldn't let Him go until He blessed him. Hadn't God already promised to bless Jacob?

Before morning, God renewed His promise to Jacob. He let Jacob know that he had power with God because he didn't give up. God also changed Jacob's name. He was no longer one who tricks or schemes. He became Israel, prince of God. Jacob knew now that God would truly keep His promise.

The next morning Jacob crossed the river. He saw Esau coming toward him with his 400 men. How do you think Jacob's prayer and meeting with God the night before affected how he felt? Jacob reminded himself of God's promise. He bowed himself humbly before Esau. And, instead of coming to kill Jacob, Esau ran to meet him. He hugged Jacob around the neck and cried. Do you think there was a change in Esau's heart as well as Jacob's?

What do you think Jacob did as soon as he settled in the land of his father? What is the first thing you should do when God blesses you? Jacob did what his father and grandfather did after receiving the promise of God; he built an altar. There he thanked God and proclaimed that the True God was the God of Israel.

What do you think changed Jacob from being a schemer and cheater? And, why do you think God changed his name from Jacob to Israel? Don't you think it was because Jacob had a change of heart? When your heart changes, then your actions change also.

The Apostle Paul says, "God has shown you his mercy. So I am asking you to offer up your bodies to him while you are still alive. Your bodies are a holy sacrifice that is pleasing to God. When you offer your bodies to God, you are worshiping him. Don't live any longer the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed" (Romans 12:1-2 NIV). How has your heart changed? Can God see it? Can your friends and family see it?

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,
Thank you for changing Jacob's heart from being a cheater and a schemer to a prince of God.
Take my life and use me to be an example to others. Let others see by my actions that my life and heart have been changed.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Genesis 35:9-10

Monday - Proverbs 1:22-23

Tuesday - 2 Chronicles 7:14

Wednesday - Ephesians 1:6-7

Thursday - 2 Corinthians 7:9-10

Friday - Colossians 1:12-14

Saturday - Ezekiel 18:30-31

ACTIVITY

Your memory verse states that a man is blessed if his sins are forgiven.
The Lord will not count them against him anymore, and his heart will be changed.
On the lines below, write at least five things that you will not want to do if
your heart has been changed.

My sins

||||| |||

Psalm 32:2

FORGIVEN
