The Jesus Family Tree

ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN SG

LESSON 1

ABRAHAM

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Keeps His Promises
SCRIPTURE: Genesis 15; 17
GOD'S BIG STORY: God chooses to begin a special family through Abraham and his wife, Sarah, and promises to bless the whole world through their descendants. They're too old to have children, and the promise feels impossible. But God is faithful and keeps His promises in His time!
WORD OF WONDER: The Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin is going to have a baby. She will give birth to a son. And he will be called Immanuel. —Isaiah 7:14



- Welcome Question: If you could wish for one thing and know it would come true, what would you wish for?
- Curiosity Questions
- Word of Wonder Activity
- God's Big Story
- Discussion Questions for Elementary Kids and Preteens
- Small Group Prayer Time
- LARGE GROUP
- Elementary Responding in Worship: God's Promises
- Preteen Responding in Worship: YES and AMEN!

SCAN FOR THIS WEEK'S VIDEO!

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Keeps His Promises
SCRIPTURE: Genesis 15; 17
WORD OF WONDER: Isaiah 7:14

Do you ever feel like your desires are too small for God? Like your prayers should be "God, save the nations!" or "God, heal the world!"? Do you feel like your requests reveal to God that you're too bogged down in the little things of life?

I'm curious whether that's how Abram and Sarai felt when asking God for a child. Maybe they felt that they should have been asking for God to move in grander and greater ways in the world instead of "just" blessing their individual family.

But God has never been a God of scarcity. Read Genesis 17:1–8. Not only does God reaffirm His promise to give Abram a child, but He shows that the reach of this promise extends far beyond "just" one man and his wife. From this promise—this child—the entire world will be blessed! God promised to give Abram as many descendants as there are stars in the sky. And from those descendants would come the One who would forever save the world: Jesus Christ.

No plea is too small for God. Give your requests to Him and trust that He will work to bring about His will. After all, He is the God who keeps His promises!

—Callie Bogle
Children's Ministry Associate
Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?
The book of Genesis gets its title from the Greek word for *beginning*. Genesis tells the beginning of God's big story. While its author is anonymous, Genesis and the four subsequent books (Exodus through Deuteronomy) are together, often called the Law of Moses.

WHAT?
Genesis 15 and 17 record two stories about God's promise to Abraham that He would give him descendants. God guarantees His promise in these passages by making binding, relational promises called covenants, in which God takes an oath to do what He said.

WHERE?
Both of these stories are set near the oaks of Mamre, which was an ancient holy site near Hebron (20 miles south of Jerusalem). While Abraham and his family lived there, Abraham built an altar and encountered God in that place multiple times.

WHEN?
Abraham settled with his family for a time by the oaks of Mamre (Genesis 13:18), while his nephew Lot lived near Sodom. Abraham had to rescue Lot when Sodom was attacked by five kings. The covenants of Genesis 15 and 17 followed this rescue.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:
God chose Abraham and eventually blessed the whole world through him. The rest of the Old Testament follows this family as they often fail in their blessing mission—until we get to Jesus. He's the descendant of Abraham that God's people had been waiting for—God kept His promise!

Small Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Keeps His Promises
SCRIPTURE: Genesis 15; 17
WORD OF WONDER: Isaiah 7:14

Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: paper, coloring utensils, whiteboard (optional), dry-erase marker (optional)

Games & Activities Guide

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have activities ready to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them! Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

As kids arrive ...

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Use the Welcome Question and the following "I'm Curious" questions to engage kids. Say **"I'm curious.."** before each question and give kids an chance to think before answering each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

Consider having a whiteboard or poster for kids to write or draw answers to any of the questions:

- **Would you rather have lots of different things happen to you each day or have life stay pretty much the same from day to day? Why?**
- **Jesus often asked people He met to change what they were doing. Who's someone—besides Jesus—who has asked you to do something differently?**

Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity or game, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

Word of Wonder Activity

WORD OF WONDER

The Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin is going to have a baby. She will give birth to a son. And he will be called Immanuel.

— Isaiah 7:14 (NIrV)

SUPPLIES: Bible, paper clips (1 per small group), timers (1 per small group)
Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Jumbled Verse Sheets NIrV (1/SG)

Leader Tip: Kids may ask about the meaning of *virgin*. Keep your answer simple by explaining that a *virgin* is an unmarried woman. Some translations (like NIV) use the word *conceive*, which you can explain as "she will have a baby." With these kinds of questions, it's often best to defer to families: "That's a great question. We can't get into it right now, but you can talk more about it with your parents or adult family members."

Ahead of time, print one set of the Jumbled Verse Sheets NIrV for each small group. Scramble each set so the pages are out of order and attach them together using a paper clip.



Our Word of Wonder for The Jesus Family Tree series is from the book of Isaiah. Isaiah was a prophet, or messenger, from God who wrote about God's promise to send a special baby who would be *Immanuel*, which means God with us. That baby is Jesus! Let's say the verse together now. Open your Bible to Isaiah 7:14. Read Isaiah 7:14 several times together.

Let's practice our Word of Wonder by putting the jumbled verse into order! Hand out the Jumbled Verse Sheets NIrV to each kid. If your group is small, give two consecutive sheets to each kid. If your group is large, give each sheet to a pair of kids. Kids can stand and hold their verse sheet(s) in front of them for everyone to see. Set the timer for 30 seconds and explain that they'll have 30 seconds to put themselves into verse order. When the timer goes off, they'll freeze and read their sheets in whatever order they're standing—even if that means reading a jumbled version of the verse! If kids successfully put the verse in order, challenge them to trade their sheets with someone else and try it again with less time on the timer. If they weren't successful, that's OK! Invite them to try again with more time on the timer.

Leader Tip: If your group includes mostly younger kids, write numbers on the sheets to make ordering them easier. Also consider setting the timer for longer than 30 seconds.

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Invite kids to open their Bibles to Genesis 15. Explain that today's story comes from Genesis, the very first book in the Bible. Genesis teaches us about how everything began, how things went wrong, and how God started to make things right.

Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we'll experience more of the story!

Invite kids to follow along as you read aloud Genesis 15:3–6. Next, invite them to count on their fingers the number of times God says, "I will" as you read Genesis 17:1–5, 15–21.

Leader Tip: The suggested read-aloud verses and Experience It! Script mention Ishmael, the son Abram had with Sarai's servant, Hagar. If you have any concerns about the maturity of the content, be sure to read the passage and script ahead of time.

Elementary Questions

- **Have you ever had to wait a long time for something? How did that feel?**
- **Abraham and Sarah were already very old when God fi st spoke to Abraham. What's something they didn't think they would ever have?** *(children)*
- **What did God promise Abraham?** *(to give him a new homeland and many children; to bless the world through his family)*
- **Did God give Abraham what He promised right away?** *(no)*
- **Do you think it was hard for Abraham and Sarah to trust God? Why or why not?**
- **How did God keep His promise to Abraham?** *(Sarah had a baby named Isaac, who had his own children and grandchildren, and eventually Jesus was born in his family line.)*
- **God keeps His promises! What is one promise from God that you want to remember?** *(A few promises from God found in Scripture: to always be with us, to forgive us, to give us peace, to give us wisdom)*

Make It Inclusive: Open-ended questions can be difficult for some kids to answer. Consider modifying the questions into yes/no format or offering two answer choices for each.

God promised to give Abraham and Sarah many children, and God kept that promise in His way and His time! Eventually, God's Son, Jesus, was born from Abraham's family. God surely did bless the whole world through Jesus! Let's talk with God in prayer and ask Him to help us trust Him.

Preteen Questions

- **Have you ever had to wait a long time for something? How did that feel?**
- **What did God promise Abram?** *(to give him a new homeland and many children; to bless the world through his family)*
- **The Bible says that "Abram's faith made him right with the Lord"** (Genesis 15:6)**. Why was Abram (later renamed Abraham) described this way? What did he do?** *(Reread Genesis 15:6 together. Abram believed the Lord.)*
- **Many years passed after God's promise, and Abraham and Sarah still had no children. How do you think they felt during that time?**
- **How did God keep His promise to Abraham? How does His promise relate to us?** *(Sarah had a baby named Isaac, who had his own children and grandchildren, and eventually Jesus was born in his family line. Through Jesus, we can join the family and become children of God!)*
- **God keeps His promises! What has God promised us?** *(A few promises from God found in Scripture: to always be with us, to forgive us, to give us peace, to give us wisdom)*

God keeps His promises, and we can trust Him even when we don't know how He will do what He said He will do! Let's talk with God in prayer and ask Him for the faith to believe in His promises and trust in Him!

Small Group Prayer Time

Start your prayer time by thanking God for loving us and for always keeping His promises! Then invite kids to take turns praying the following words and filling in the blank with something God has promised us: "God, thank You for _____. I trust You to keep Your promises!" For example, they might pray, "God, thank You for always being with me. I trust You to keep Your promises!" Assure kids it's OK if they'd rather pray silently, and it's also OK if there's some silence during this time.

LARGE GROUP

refer to large group leader guide

Elementary Responding in Worship: God's Promises

SUPPLIES: pipe cleaners or wax sticks (about 6–8 per kid)

Today we learned in God's big story that God promised to give Abraham a huge family with lots of children and grandchildren and to bless the whole world through this family. Even though Abraham and Sarah were very old, and even though they waited a very long time, God kept His promise!

God's promise to Abraham included us, too, because one day, Jesus would be born from Abraham's family and make the way for us to have a personal relationship with God. God gives us many other promises in the Bible too. Let's explore some of them now!

Give each kid about 6–8 pipe cleaners or wax sticks. **I'll read some of God's promises from the Bible. As I do, I invite you to shape your pipe cleaners (or wax sticks) into something that reminds you of that promise.**

God promises to always be with us. Jesus told His disciples, "You can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end" (Matthew 28:20b)**.** Give kids time to shape their pipe cleaners or wax sticks into something that reminds them that God is always with them. For example, they might make two stick figures to represent themselves and God or make a symbol like a heart or a cross.

God promises to give us peace. *Peace* is a deep feeling that everything will be OK, and the peace of Jesus never ends! A Jesus-follower named Paul wrote these words in the Bible: "Don't worry about anything. No matter what happens, tell God about everything. Ask and pray, and give thanks to him. Then God's peace will watch over your hearts and your minds. He will do this because you belong to Christ Jesus. God's peace can never be completely understood" (Philippians 4:6–7)**.** Give kids time to shape their pipe cleaners or wax sticks into something that reminds them of God's peace. They might create a peace sign.

God promises to give us wisdom. *Wisdom* is knowledge and understanding that comes only from God. It allows us to make good decisions and act in the right way. The Bible says in the book of James, "If any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone and doesn't find fault" (1:5)**.** Give kids time to shape their pipe cleaners or wax sticks into something that reminds them of wisdom. They might make a stick figure to represent an adult in their life who has wisdom.

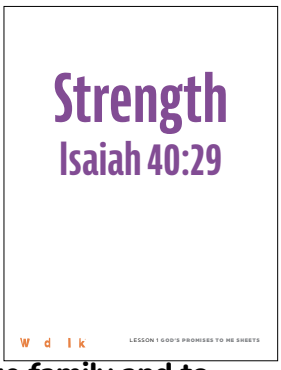
Jesus is how God kept His promises! God promises to always be with us, and Jesus is called Immanuel, which means "God with us." Jesus also gives us peace and wisdom. Jesus said, "I have come to fulfill what is written" (Matthew 5:17)**. On Christmas, we celebrate that Jesus *is* God's promise come true!** Give kids time to shape their pipe cleaners or wax sticks into a reminder of Jesus, who loves them and fulfills God's promises! They might make a baby in a manger or a symbol like a cross.

Let's say today's Wonder Truth together one more time. Say the Wonder Truth with the kids: GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES! Give kids the option to shape their pipe cleaners or wax sticks into something that reminds them that God keeps His promises. They might choose to keep their previous reminder of Jesus intact or create a new shape.

Invite kids to take their creations home as a reminder that God keeps His promises.

Preteen Responding in Worship: YES and AMEN!

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid plus 7), whiteboard, dry-erase marker, paper (1 sheet per kid), coloring utensils, writing utensils, masking or painter's tape (optional), highlighter (optional)
Wonder Ink RESOURCES: God's Promises to Me Sheets, music from The Jesus Family Tree Elementary Spotify playlist



Ahead of time, print the God's Promises to Me Sheets. Place the seven sheets throughout the room to mark each prayer station. You can place them on separate tables, tape them to the walls, or simply spread them out on the floor. Set a Bible at each station and open it to the verse referenced on the sheet. Consider highlighting the verse referenced to make it easier for kids to find and read it. Additionally, write these two questions on a whiteboard: "What word stands out to you most in this promise verse? What does this promise show you about what God is like?"

Today we learned in God's big story that God promised to give Abraham a huge family and to bless the whole world through them. Even though Abraham and Sarah were very old, and even though they waited a very long time, God kept His promise!

God's promise to Abraham included us, too, because one day, Jesus would be born from Abraham's family and make the way for us to have a personal relationship with God. God gives us many other promises in the Bible too. Let's explore some of them now!

Give each kid a blank sheet of paper and set out writing and coloring utensils. **You'll find a few examples of these promises spread throughout the room, along with Scripture references to help you find them in the Bible. There's also an open Bible at each station that shows the verse listed on the sheet.** Point to one or two of the prayer stations and read the signs at them. **For the next few**