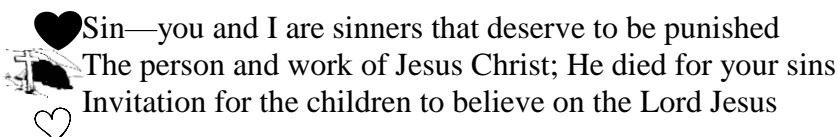


Lesson Four

The Blessings of Ishmael and Isaac

Scriptures to Study: Genesis 17:18:16; 21:1-7; Hebrews 11:8-11; Romans 4

Lesson Aim for the Unsaved: That they would hear and respond to the Gospel in saving faith. This time the Gospel truths are not explained in detail in the lesson itself. The facts of sin, the death and resurrection, and the need to believe are mentioned in the invitation at the end of the lesson. You may need to expand the explanations in the invitation or give more thorough teaching on these truths earlier in your class period if you have children in your class that are not familiar with them. The following symbols do appear in the invitation to remind you of the truths you should explain.



Lesson Aim for the Saved Children: That they will take to heart their need to keep growing in their faith in God. To emphasize this truth, a *main truth statement* has been included in the text for you to repeat, explain, and show how the child can put it into practice in his life. This statement is “**God wants your faith to keep growing.**” By repeating this statement whenever it is appropriate, you will help the children relate what they are hearing in the lesson to their personal lives.

Special Note: There is also a point where Believer’s baptism is discussed and related to circumcision, the Old Testament sign of the covenant. It is important for believing children to understand this step of obedience. But you will have to decide whether or not this is the appropriate place or group to discuss it with. You may have to adapt what is written to fit your particular group, situation, or church’s position on this issue. It may be good to at least mention it since it so easily relates to what is taught in the lesson, but you may need to have a separate discussion or lesson to explain it in more detail to those who are interested.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 11:6

Review Game Questions:

1. What does the name for God, “El Shaddai,” mean? (*The powerful one standing on the mountain*)
2. What does the name “Jehovah” mean? (*The self-existent or ever-living one*)
3. What name did “El Roi” mean? (*The God who sees*)
4. Why did God change Abram’s name to Abraham? (*Because he was going to be the “father of many nations,” not just “exalted father”, which was the meaning of Abram*)
5. Why was circumcision important to Abram and his household? (*It was the outward sign of an inner faith that God commanded. If they did not believe and be circumcised, they were to be cast out*)
6. What is the outward sign of the inner faith of Believers today? (*Baptism*)
7. What promise did God make about Ishmael to show Abraham He did hear his prayer to bless Ishmael? (*He would give him 12 princes and make him a great nation*)
8. What happened in today’s lesson to show that Ishmael was a Believer and follower of the true God? (*He was circumcised, which was the outer sign of an inner faith*)
9. What did Abraham and Sarah do when they first heard Sarah was going to have a baby boy? (*Laughed*)
10. Who can say today’s verse from memory? (*Hebrews 11:6*)
11. What are three ways we can keep growing in our faith? (*Read the Bible and learn about God and*

His promises; pray for faith; obey God)

12. How can you become a son or daughter of God's new covenant that offers forgiveness of sin? (*By admitting your sin; believing Jesus died for your sin; and by asking Him to forgive you and save you*)

The Blessings of Ishmael and Isaac—Lesson Four

Introduction: People know me by different names (David, Dave, Dad, etc.). God has different names as well—each telling us something about what He's like and our relationship with Him.

Scene 1: El Shaddai Appears to Abram (Genesis 17:1-16)

- A. El Shaddai reaffirms His covenant with Abram
- B. God changes Abram's name to Abraham
- ➡ C. God gave circumcision as the sign of His covenant
- D. God changed Sarai's name to Sarah

Scene 2: Abraham Questions God (Genesis 17:17-22)

- A. Abraham doubts Sarah will have a son
- B. Abraham pleads for God to bless Ishmael
- C. God promises to bless Ishmael (12 princes)
- D. God promises to bless Isaac (covenant promises)

Scene 3: Abraham Circumcises All Males in His Household (Gen. 17:23-27)

- A. Abraham circumcises Ishmael as a son of the covenant (Believer)
- B. Abraham and all males of his household are circumcised

Scene 4: Abraham Welcomes Three Heavenly Visitors (Genesis 18:1-9)

- A. Abraham runs to welcome three approaching visitors
- B. Abraham has Sarah prepare them a meal
- C. The visitors announce Sarah will have a son

Scene 5: Sarah Laughs at the News that She Will Be a Mother (Genesis 18:10-16)

- A. Sarah hears what they say and laughs
- B. They ask why Sarah laughed, but Sarah denies it
- ➡ C. Both Abraham and Sarah believe what God told them

Scene 6: Sarah Gives Birth to Isaac (Genesis 21:1-7)

- A. Sarah conceived a child
- B. Sarah gave birth to the child at the time God said

Climax: Sarah gave birth to a healthy baby boy, just as God said!

Conclusion: Abraham named his son Isaac, as God had said (meaning "laughter"). This was a son born of faith since it had been humanly impossible.



Invitation: Acts 10:43

➡ **Challenge:** Hebrews 11:6

The Blessings of Ishmael and Isaac Genesis 17:16; 21:1-7

Introduction: [Adapt to your “names” and relationships.] I noticed when I came in today that several of you called me “Mr. Martin.” Why did you call me that? That’s my name, isn’t it? Some of you called me “Teacher” because that’s what I do. But when I go home, there are some people there who call me “Dad.” When I talk to my friends, they call me “David.” If I sign my name on a check or some other important paper, I write “Arleigh.” If you come with me to Kansas City, you might hear someone call me “General” because that was the nickname my friends in college used for me.

I have many different names that people know me by, but I’m still the same person. The name I use with someone just tells you something about our relationship. It tells something about me.

Our God has many different names too. Each one tells us something very special about Him. It’s wonderful to learn His names because then we can know more about what He’s like. Abram too had begun to learn more about God through the names God had been revealing to him.

Scene 1: El Shaddai Appears to Abram (Genesis 17:1-16)

A. El Shaddai reaffirms His covenant with Abram

Abram had been living in the land of Canaan for nearly twenty-five years. One day Jehovah, the God Abram had been following all of those years, again appeared and spoke to Abram. He gave Abram another one of His wonderful names. Each name Abram knew for God told him something special about God.

*The first name mentioned in God’s call to Abram was the **God of Glory** (Acts 7:2). The glory of God is the beauty or splendor of God that is made up of all His attributes (characteristics).¹ The love of God, the truth of God, the power of God, and the wisdom of God are all part of what makes Him wonderful, awesome, and magnificent. At times, this glory is visible in the Bible as either a bright light, a fire, or a thick heavy cloud.²

*The name God used most with Abram had been **Jehovah** [*have children repeat*]. This name has the idea of being the **self-existent one**.³ This name reveals that God had no beginning. He has always been living. No one created Him. He is the ever-living One.

*Hagar was used to give us another name for God. She called Him **The God Who Sees** (Genesis 16:13). In the language of Abram it was **El Roi** [*have children repeat*]. This name is a combination of two words. “El” is a very common name for God and has the idea of being **strong** and **powerful**.⁴

Now God revealed Himself as **Almighty God** (Genesis 17:1). The words in Abram’s language were **El Shaddai** [*have children repeat*]. This name pictures God as the powerful one standing on a big strong mountain.⁵ In other words, He is the God who can do whatever He wants. Nothing is impossible for Him, and no one can stop Him from carrying out His plans.

After giving Abram this new and mighty name for Himself, he again assured Abram that He would do all that He had promised.

B. God changes Abram's name to Abraham

Next, God gave Abram a new name that had a special meaning. He said, “No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be ***Abraham*** (17:5). Abram meant “exalted father.”⁶ This new name meant “the father of nations.” This meant many nations would come from Abraham’s children and grandchildren. In fact, **El Shaddai** promised that many kings would come from his descendants (17:6). He also said that the promises He had given Abraham would be true for his descendants forever! He said He would still be their God too.

C. God gives circumcision as the sign of His covenant

God also gave Abraham a special sign of this covenant that all the men in his household (as well as all his descendants) were to have. God called it circumcision. Circumcision is when some extra skin that a man has is cut off. Then, all through his life this man would see the scar and remember the faith and commitment he had made to keep the covenant and follow God. This sign would last all his life and was to be done on the eighth day after the baby was born.⁷ For the baby, circumcision was a reminder to his parents that they were going to bring up this child to believe in, worship, and obey the God of Abraham. This was one way they were to show their faith and keep their responsibility of obedience to the covenant that God had made with Abraham.

God said that any man or boy from Abraham’s household or descendants that did not get circumcised would be cut off. That means he would be cast out of this nation for breaking God’s covenant (Genesis 17:14). Why did God take this so seriously?

*First, it was a matter of obedience to the covenant. God commanded it. To disobey was a serious sin.

*Secondly, circumcision was an outward picture of what was to have happened on the inside. The cutting away of extra skin was a picture of the cutting away of sinful thoughts and actions that now had no place in the life of a believer in the true God. In other words, this circumcision of the skin was to picture what God calls a “circumcision of the heart” (Deuteronomy 10:16). It was a lasting reminder to get rid of any sin. Circumcision could never take away sin, but it was to be a step of obedience to Abraham and those in his family from then on who had put their faith in God. This step of obedience was

one way they could grow in their faith towards God. **If you are a Believer today, God wants you to keep growing in your faith too**, as Abraham and his household were.

Today, although circumcision is still practiced in many parts of the world, it is no longer the outward sign that God demands for those who have placed their faith in Him and His one way of salvation. Many years after Abraham, during the days that the New Testament was being written, God gave a new sign. This sign, or outward showing of an inner faith, is baptism. Every person who accepts the salvation from sin offered through the Lord Jesus is to be baptized.⁸

Baptism, just like circumcision, does not, in any way, bring salvation. It too is a step of obedience for those who have believed and have been saved. It too is an outward picture of what has happened inside the heart of one who has believed. Going down into the water is a picture of your faith that Jesus died and was buried for **your** sins. Coming back up out of the water is a picture of your belief that Jesus was raised from the dead to a new kind of life. It pictures that your sins have been washed away and you too have been given a new kind of life, an eternal life that gives you a new power to live a clean life. This baptism is a public testimony to God and others watching that you are committing yourself to live for the God who saved you. You should never forget this event and what you are saying by it to God and to

others. God established this outward sign of an inward faith later in the New Testament, but in the Old Testament the sign was circumcision.

D. God changes Sarai's name to Sarah

The next thing that God told Abraham was a complete shock. He changed Sarai's name to Sarah,⁹ which means "princess." She was going to have a son and be "a mother of nations" (17:16).

Scene 2: Abraham Questions God (17:17-22)

A. Abraham doubts that Sarah will have a son

When Abraham heard God say Sarah was going to have a son, he fell down to the ground laughing. This couldn't be true, he thought in his heart, because he was 99 years old and Sarah was now 89 years old. The body of an 89-year-old woman does not have what it needs inside for a baby to grow. That's why most women stop having babies by the time they are half as old as Sarah. Abraham knew this had never happened before. It was impossible. No doctor and no medicine could cause Sarah to have a baby at this age.

B. Abraham pleads for Ishmael to be blessed

So Abraham said, "O that Ishmael might live before you" (17:18). This plea from Abraham shows us how much Abraham loved Ishmael and how he expected Ishmael to be his heir. It meant that he was praying for Ishmael to always live under His covenant blessings.

God knew Abraham's doubts and questions about Sarah, even though he didn't say them out loud. God said, "No . . . Sarah your wife will have a son and you are to name him Isaac" (17:19), which means "laughter".¹⁰ He went on to say that Isaac would be the son that would inherit all of the promises of the covenant that He had made with Abraham.

C. God promises to bless Ishmael

Does that mean God loved Isaac more than Ishmael? Or, that He hated Ishmael and was either going to curse Ishmael or give him nothing? That is certainly not what the Bible says. God said,

And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: behold I will bless him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of 12 princes, and I will make him a great nation (17:20).

Does that sound like a curse against Ishmael? No! God loved Ishmael even more than Abraham did. He had very special blessings for him too. Just like the Angel of the Lord had told Hagar earlier, God would multiply Ishmael's descendants so much that they would be "too many to count" (16:10). God even told Abraham that Ishmael would have twelve sons, who would be princes. Ishmael too would be the father of a great nation. These were wonderful promises for Abraham and Ishmael from El Shaddai.

D. God promises to bless Isaac

At the same time, God was making Isaac the main heir of His covenant with Abraham. Why? Not because one was better than the other, but because God is *sovereign*. No one can tell God what to do. He knows all and makes His own wise choices. He chose to bless both, but He decided that some blessings

were especially for Isaac and others were especially for Ishmael. God would make both a great nation. He would give both more descendants than could be counted, and He would bless them in many other ways.

However, He would give them different lands to live on, and he would use the descendants of Isaac to give spiritual light and truth to the rest of the world (Isaiah 49:6). Most of the prophets and kings who wrote the Old Testament, as well as most of the New Testament would come from Isaac's line.¹¹ Even the Savior of the World, Jesus Christ, would be a descendant of Isaac. So we can see that God had special plans for both Isaac and Ishmael. After telling Abraham these things, God went back to heaven.

Scene 3: Abraham Circumcises all Males in his Household (17:23-27)

A. Abraham circumcises Ishmael as a son under God's covenant

Abraham chose to believe and accept everything God had said. He showed his faith by circumcising Ishmael, who was now a teenager. Ishmael was 13-years-old and could have refused this. But the fact that his name was mentioned first shows that he was probably the first to accept circumcision as an outward sign of his inner faith in God and the truth He reveals. He probably had been an Old Testament saint or believer for some years, but now he took on the outward sign of it, which God required. This act of circumcision indicates that we will probably see Ishmael in heaven.

B. Abraham and all other men in his household are circumcised

In fact, Abraham circumcised all the men in his house, including the servants. The fact that all males were circumcised shows the religious impact Abraham had on his own family and any others who stayed with him. They had all become believers and so now gladly identified themselves as believers by being circumcised. Even Abraham was circumcised, and he was 99 years old. He had already been declared righteous (right with God) about twenty-five years earlier (15:6). So we know that circumcision did not save anyone. It was just a sign of inner faith (Romans 4:9-12—as baptism today is an outward sign of inner faith. It too does not save anyone today.)

Scene 4: Abraham Welcomes Visitors (Genesis 18:1-9)

A. Abraham welcomes three approaching visitors

One hot day, as Abraham was sitting by the door of his tent, he looked up and saw three strangers coming. He immediately ran out to greet them in a very respectful way. He bowed to them and asked if they would rest there for a while. He offered to bring water to wash the dust off their feet. He offered bread and pointed them to some shade under nearby trees where they could take some rest from the heat. They accepted his offer.

B. Abraham has Sarah prepare a meal for them

Abraham hurried inside and asked Sarah to quickly make some cakes for them to eat together. He also selected a choice calf to be cooked for a big meal. Some labaneh (yogurt) and milk were also added to the menu. Abraham then took all the food and put it in front of the guests. He continued standing by them to make sure they were well taken care of.

The men did not give their names. But when you listen to their conversation, you soon find out who they were. It was the Lord who had come from heaven in the form of a man, with two angels (also in the form of men).

C. The visitors announce that Sarah will have a son

Suddenly they asked where Sarah, his wife, was. How did they know her? Then one said he would come visit them next year about this time and Sarah would have a baby boy. Wow!

Scene 5: Sarah Laughs at the News She Hears (Genesis 18:10-16)

A. Sarah laughs at what she hears them say about her

Sarah was standing out of sight near the door of the tent, listening to what these three strangers were saying to her husband. She heard them say that she was going to have a baby son next year. This sounded strange because she knew that she was too old to have children. So Sarah did exactly what Abraham did when he heard this news earlier. She laughed to herself.

B. The men ask why Sarah laughed, but she denies it

One of the men asked, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘shall I indeed bear a child when I am so old.’ Is anything too difficult for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son” (18:13-14). Wow! This *man* had read Sarah’s very thoughts. He knew exactly what she had been thinking. Only God can read the thoughts of men, and the Bible does say that it was Jehovah who was there talking to them.

But Sarah tried to deny that she had laughed. She said she didn’t laugh. She was afraid when she saw how this person knew what she had been thinking. But Jehovah knew the truth. He reminded her that she did laugh. Soon after that the men left.

C. Both Abraham and Sarah choose to believe what God told them

The New Testament tells us that Abraham chose to believe these words from God. Even though he knew it was humanly impossible for Sarah to have a child, He believed that His El Shaddai would somehow make it happen.¹² The New Testament also tells us that Sarah chose to put her faith in these words from Jehovah God.

By faith even Sarah herself received the ability to conceive (a child), even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised (Hebrews 11:11).

This reminds us of the kind of response God wants from His children today. If you have become His child through faith in Jesus, then **God wants your faith to keep growing**. The longer you have been His child, the more you should be able to believe and trust Him to keep all His promises to you. Remember our memory verse? Can we say it together? [*Repeat Hebrews 11:6 together*]. It’s impossible to please God without faith because:

*It takes faith to become part of His family (John 1:12)

*It takes faith to be a good testimony (example) to others (Hebrews 11:2)

*It takes faith to win against all the temptation we have in this world (1 John 5:4)

*It takes faith to resist the attacks of Satan (Ephesians 6:16)

*It takes faith to see God answer our prayers (Matthew 21:22)

That is why our faith needs to keep growing as a Believer. The Bible tells you how your faith can grow:

1. Through reading and obeying God's Word (Romans 10:17)

The more you read the Bible, the more you will know about God's wisdom and power. The more you see that, the more you can trust Him to help you and fulfill His promises to you.

2. Through praying for God to increase your faith (Luke 17:5)

Every day you can ask God to make your faith in Him stronger. He wants your faith to be strong so you can please Him.

3. Through obedience. As you obey, you prove you are believing what God says. James says a faith without obedience (works) is a dead and useless faith (James 2:17-20). As you obey God, He will reward you and this will encourage you to believe even more.

God wants your faith to keep growing, just as Abraham's and Sarah's faith kept growing.

Scene 6: Sarah Gives Birth to Isaac (Genesis 21:1-7)

A. Sarah conceives a child

The Lord did for Sarah just as He had promised. Sarah conceived a child for Abraham, even though she was too old to have children. Her faith in God caused a miracle to happen. God had done what was impossible for any man to do. The baby began growing inside Sarah's womb.

B. Sarah delivers a child at the time God said

At just the right time, Sarah had the baby. Do you think it was a boy or a girl? What had the Lord said it would be?

Climax: Sarah gave birth to . . . a healthy baby boy, just as God had said! This baby was truly the son of faith in the power of God to do the impossible.

Conclusion: Abraham named that baby Isaac, as God had told him earlier. Isaac means "he laughs." This was a fitting name since both Abraham and Sarah laughed when they first heard the news that Sarah was to have a son. Also, they knew now that others would be happy and laugh with them at this news. This baby was born of faith because it was humanly impossible for Sarah to have any children at her age (90).

Abraham circumcised Isaac when he was eight days old, just as God had instructed. He was committing himself to raising Isaac to believe in and obey God (Genesis 18:19). He would be a son of the covenant.

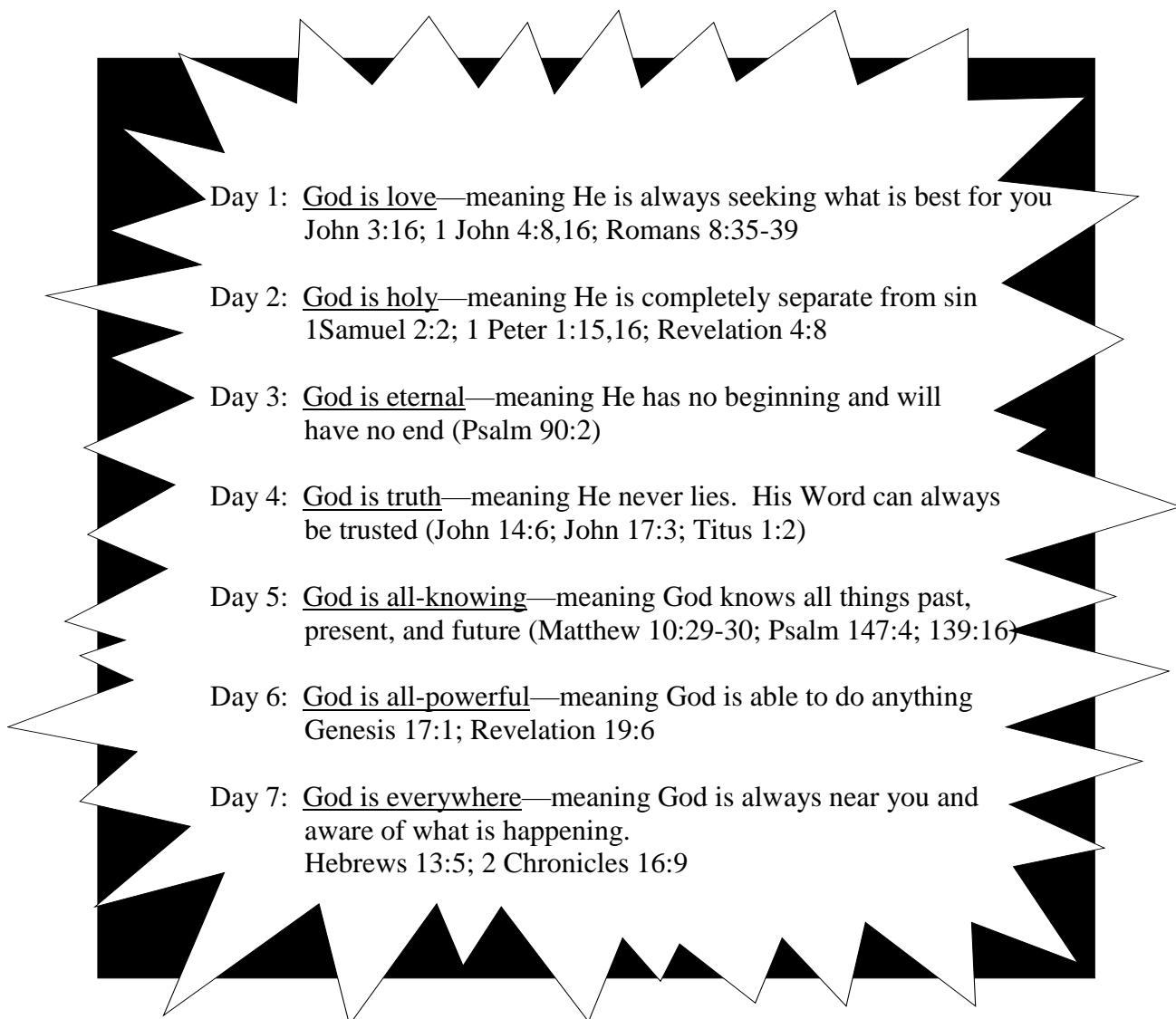
Invitation: What about you? Are you a son or daughter of the New Covenant that God made, based on the death of Jesus Christ? This new covenant is His promise to forgive your sins when you put your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior. The Bible says (read Acts 10:43)

 God's prophets predicted that He would send a Messiah or "chosen one" to be a Savior for all the people in the world. Jesus is the One they were all talking about. God's promise to you today is that He will cleanse and forgive all of your sins if you will believe in Jesus and accept His death on the cross as the

payment for the sins you have done. First, you need to recognize that you have sinned and that you deserve to be punished by God for your sin. This punishment is death; being away from God forever in a place of punishment. Secondly, you must believe that Jesus died for you, that He rose again, and He's alive today. He wants to forgive you, but you must believe in Him—that He died for you and can forgive you. Do you have this kind of faith in Jesus? If so, you can be forgiven today!

 Let's all bow our heads and close our eyes. If you have that kind of faith in Jesus, then you can now pray in your heart and tell Him what you believe. Tell Him you admit that you are a sinner. Tell Him you believe that when He died on the cross, He died for your sin. Ask Him to forgive you and take away your sin, then say "amen" to finish your prayer. I'll wait a moment so some of you can say this prayer [pause]. I hope that those of you who prayed that prayer will stay a few minutes after class to talk with me so that I can pray with you too and encourage you to start growing in your faith as Abraham did.

→ **Challenge:** For all of you who have believed, **God wants you to keep growing.** Remember our verse? Who can say it from memory? [*Call on one who volunteered or have all repeat it.*] It pleases God when you trust and believe in Him and His promises. As I said earlier, one of the things that helps strengthen your faith is to read the Bible and learn more about how great and awesome our God is. I have a list of verses that I want to give you to read each day of this coming week. Each day will focus on a different attribute of God, and give you verses to look up about it. Underline each verse that you read and bring this list back next week to show me and explain what you learned about God. **God wants your faith to keep growing.** Will you promise to do that this week?



¹ This truth is best seen in God's response to the prayer of Moses in Exodus 33:18, where He pleads for God to "Show me Your glory." God answered this prayer by saying that He would show Moses His *goodness . . . grace . . . and compassion* (33:19). God then adds even more when he actually passes several of His attributes before Moses in an effort to give Moses a glimpse of His glory. The name *Jehovah* was proclaimed (which signifies *self-existence* and *eternity*) . . . *Jehovah Elohim* (*eternally strong one*) . . . *merciful . . . gracious . . . longsuffering . . . abounding in goodness and truth . . . forgiveness and justice* (see Exodus 34:6-7).

² You can see evidence of this truth in the following verses: Exodus 3:2-6; 14:19-20,24; 33:9; 40:34-38; 1 Kings 8:10-11.

³ See Charles C. Ryrie, Basic Theology (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), p. 47. This is the most used name for God, occurring some 5,321 times in the Old Testament. On this same page Ryrie also explains how we got the English word "Jehovah" from the Hebrew letters actually given in Old Testament Scripture. The consonant letters of this name are YHWH. Because this name was one God used especially for His chosen people, it became so sacred to the Hebrews that by 500 B.C. they would not pronounce it. Instead they would substitute another name for God, "Adonai." By 500 A.D. the scribes who copied the books of the Bible to be read in the synagogue started writing the vowels of the name "Adonai" between the consonants of YHWH. From this came the word we spell and pronounce as Jehovah in English.

⁴ "El", along with its plural form "Elohim" is used some 2,310 times in the Old Testament for the true and living God. The plural form is one used to show majesty and greatness, and can be giving us an early indication of the Trinity, which is more clearly revealed in the New Testament. See Ryrie, pp. 45-46.

⁵ The most accepted understanding of the root idea of "shaddai" is connected with an Akkadian word that means "mountain." Akkadian was probably the mother tongue of Abram in the land of Ur. This was a name often used by God when He appeared to Abram in order to comfort or to confirm the covenant He made with him. See Ryrie, p. 46.

⁶ See comments on Genesis 11:27 in Charles C. Ryrie, The Ryrie Study Bible NASB (Chicago: Moody Press, 1978), p. 23.

⁷ Please be sensitive about how you explain circumcision. Even young children may ask questions about it, but you do not need to be too detailed or graphic in your explanation. Also note that modern medical research has shown the eighth day to be the ideal time to perform circumcision. According to Dr. S.I. McMillen, the greatest danger from excessive bleeding in an infant occurs between two and seven days in his life. By the eighth day one of the main proteins (prothrombin) that helps clot up and thus stop bleeding is at its highest level (110% of the adult level). Thus, the safest day to circumcise is the eighth day, as God directed. See S.I. McMillen, None of These Diseases (U.K.: Marshall Morgan and Scott, 1984), pp. 92-93.

⁸ The New Testament clearly teaches that all those who believe on the Lord Jesus for their salvation are to be baptized (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:34-39). Although there are churches that do not give children Believer's baptism, the Bible never puts any age limits or pre-conditions except they must be Believers. Believing children should be taught about the meaning of baptism. They should want to obey this command of Christ and take this step. If the child is not permitted to be baptized until a certain age, then he should be encouraged to know that God sees his willingness to obey, and knows that he is obeying the authorities God has placed over him at this time. He should be baptized whenever he can be. Until that time, it seems that God holds the authorities over him responsible for their not allowing him to obey this command (see Hebrews 13:17).

⁹ Ryrie notes that "Sarah's name change was less important than Abraham's. *Sarai* means "my princess and Sarah means princess. Perhaps the significance lay only in marking the occasion." See comments on Genesis 17:15 in the Ryrie Study Bible (NASB), p. 31.

¹⁰ See note on Genesis 17:19 in the Ryrie Study Bible (NASB), p. 32.

¹¹ There is good evidence that the book of Job, who was called "The greatest of all the sons of the east," was from the line of Ishmael (and/or Esau who married a daughter of Ishmael). The term "sons of the east" is never used in the Bible in reference to someone from Isaac's line, giving clear evidence Job was not a Hebrew. Although there are still some uncertainties about the exact location of Job's land of Uz, all possible locations are "in Ishmaelite territory in north Arabia." See the entire discussion on Job in "Ishmael in Biblical History," pp. 119-140. See also Malouf's evidences that Proverbs 30,31 are examples of Ishmaelite wisdom literature, being written by Agur and Lemuel of the "Massa" tribe of Ishmael (pp. 140-155).

¹² This is one of the marks of faith that made him such a model of the kind of faith God wants from all of His children, even today. Read Romans 4:16-21 where it talks about how Abraham's faith in God's ability to give them a child when he knew "his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully

assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform” (Romans 4:19-21). Abraham passed this gigantic test of faith.