

THE
GOSPEL
PROJECT™
FOR KIDS



FALL 2012 KIDS WORSHIP GUIDE

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LifeWay | Kids

THE GOSPEL PROJECT FOR KIDS™

The Gospel Project for Kids: Kids Worship Guide
A guide for teaching Bible truths to Older and Younger Kids

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Unit 1: IN THE BEGINNING

Big Picture Questions

Session 1: Who created everything? God created the world and people to bring Him glory.

Session 2: What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law and separates people from God.

Session 3: Why does sin separate people from God? God is holy and separate from sin.

Session 4: What happens when people choose to sin? Sin separates people from God and each other, but God's plan is to heal relationships.

Session 5: Who is in control? God is all-powerful, sovereign, and good.

Check out helpful articles on pages 190 and 192.

Unit 1: IN THE BEGINNING

Unit Description: God's story begins with the creation of all things. God did not have to create but chose to. Even more incredible, He made people for the purpose of glorifying Him. Man was created different from all other forms of life on the earth and as such was created in the image of God. God intends for people to be in fellowship with Him; however, people are affected by sin and need redemption.

Unit Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

Session 1: God Created the World and People
Genesis 1–2

Session 2: Sin Entered the World
Genesis 3–4

Session 3: Noah and the Ark
Genesis 6:5–9:17

Session 4: The Tower of Babel
Genesis 11:1–9

Session 5: Job
Job 1–42

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

All of creation began with a word. God said it, and it happened. This method of creation is referred to as *ex nihilo* or “from nothing.” God the Father wasn’t the only One involved in creation, though. Check out Colossians 1:16-17 and John 1:1-3. Jesus was not only present at creation, He was involved. Jesus was God’s agent of creation. All things were created by Him and through Him.

The Bible also tells us that all things were created for Jesus. Have you ever wondered why butterflies exist or why the setting sun fills the sky with such vivid colors? For Jesus!

God’s creation was perfect, totally unaffected by sin. His plan was to fill the earth with all the things He saw were good: large sea-creatures, winged birds, crawling animals, livestock, and wildlife.

God’s ultimate act of creation was creating people. God created people different from everything else He created. Not only do people have a special purpose—to glorify God (Isaiah 43:7)—but we were also made to know and love God. God blessed Adam and Eve and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply.

Creation is the beginning of God’s gospel story, the story that reveals how a great God redeemed a fallen people by sending His Son, Jesus, to be the perfect sacrifice. Every story in the Bible is a snapshot of a bigger story, a story that begins at creation.

Pray for the boys and girls you teach as you prepare to share the gospel story with them. Help kids understand that they were created for a special purpose and that God desires for them to know and love Him. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak through you as you share with kids the story of God’s plan to send Jesus to earth to offer salvation to sinners. This story changes everything.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: God Created the World and People

Bible Passage: Genesis 1–2

Big Picture Question: Who created everything? God created the world and people to bring Him glory.

Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

Kids Worship

Countdown

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

Timeline map (1 minute)

Big picture question (1 minute)

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Review (4 minutes)

Key passage (6 minutes)

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

Group game (10 minutes)

Missions (6 minutes)

Announcements (2 minutes)

Prayer (1 minute)

Additional idea

The BIBLE STORY

God Created the World and People

Genesis 1–2

In the very beginning nothing existed except for God. God spoke and created the heavens and the earth. When He first created the earth it had no shape and total darkness covered the earth. The Spirit of God was present, hovering over the waters. God said, “Let there be light!” and light was created. God separated the light from the dark. The light was called *day*, and the darkness was called *night*. God saw the light and knew that it was good. This all happened on the first day of creation.

God began to separate the waters that were on the surface of the earth from the waters that were above the earth. God created a great expanse between the water on the earth and the water above the earth. He called the expanse *sky*. This all happened on the second day of creation.

Then God created dry land on the earth. The waters were gathered together into one place and the dry land appeared. The dry land was called *earth*, and the waters were called *seas*. God then commanded the earth to grow plants and trees. The plants and trees grew, and God knew that this was good. This all happened on the third day of creation.

Next God placed lights in the sky. God created the sun to shine during the day and the moon and stars to shine at night. God gave us lights to provide light on the earth, to separate day from night, and to help us track time in days and years. This all happened on the fourth day of creation.

God created all living things that are in the water and all birds that fly. God told them to multiply and fill the seas and the earth. God saw that it was good. This all happened on the fifth day of creation.

Finally God created animals to cover the earth. The animals multiplied until they covered the whole earth. God looked down at His creation and knew that it was good.

God then created people. God created people differently from everything else He created; God created people in His very own image. God took dust from the ground and made a man. God took His very own breath and breathed into the man, and the man became alive. God then took a rib from the man and created a woman to be the man’s helper and spouse. God

named them Adam and Eve. God asked the man and woman to care for the garden in which He had placed them and to take care of the earth. God told the man and woman to eat from any tree that He had created. He said that the trees were food for all the wildlife and animals as well as the people He had created. God's one warning was about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. From this tree God warned the man and woman not to eat or they would die. This all happened on the sixth day of creation.

On the seventh day of creation, God rested from all of His work. He had done everything He planned to do and it was very good.

Christ Connection: Colossians 1:15-22 reveals that Christ is ruler over all of God's creation. All of creation was created through Him, by Him, and for Him. Everything was created to give glory to Christ, but people would choose not to give Him glory. The rest of the Bible reveals how Jesus would restore the relationship between God and man.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: God Created the World and People

Bible Passage: Genesis 1–2

Big Picture Question: Who created everything? God created the world and people to bring Him glory.

Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

• room decorations

Tip: Don't get overwhelmed by trying to use all of the theme decorating ideas. Pick one or two that work for your room and budget.

Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas: You may choose to create a stage that resembles the passenger waiting area of an airport, the runway, or the inside of a plane. Here are some ideas from which you can pick to create your decor.

Create a landing strip across the stage using long sheets of paper lined with Christmas lights or rope lights. You can create multiple strips that intersect each other as space allows. Stack some boxes and suitcases labeled for a particular destination as if they are to be loaded into a plane.

Set up the kids' seats to resemble passenger rows on a large airplane. Tape seat numbers to the chairs (example: 2A, 2B, 2C). Set up a bench or row of chairs to represent a passenger waiting area in one area of the room. Place suitcases around the chairs and room. Create a schedule board by dividing a piece of poster board into three columns. List locations in the first column, times in the second column, and write phrases such as *on time*, *arriving*, *delayed*, or *canceled*, in the third column. You may choose to make more than one poster and display them side by side or around the room.

Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video playing as your kids arrive, set it to end as worship time begins.

- name tag, clipboard, and radio headset for the leader

Character insight: This character is searching for his purpose. He is good-hearted and endearing, but makes many mistakes. As the unit progresses he will continue to seek his part of God's story as he tries a variety of jobs at Big Picture Airlines.

Tip: Don't forget to use inflection and add life to your character. Have some fun with the role, especially at the beginning of each session.

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

[Large group leader enters wearing a dress shirt, dress pants, and name tag. Look at the kids and around the room while checking off items on your clipboard. You may wear a radio headset around your neck. Turn to see the kids.]

Leader • Oh, good. All the passengers are here. According to my list we are ready to go; we are ready for our flight to begin. I would like to welcome you to Big Picture Airlines, where way up high you can see the big picture. We ask that all of our passengers take a seat and fasten their seat belts. Please make sure all of your belongings are safely put away under your seat in preparation for our takeoff. My name is _____, and I will be assisting your flight engineer in the cockpit today.

Since we've just met, how about I tell you a little about myself? We can get to know each other before our flight takes off. I'm so confused because I can't figure out what God's plan is for my life. I think I am supposed to work here at Big Picture Airlines, but I don't know which job. So I have been trying all the jobs to help me figure out God's plan for my life. First I was in charge of all the bags that are supposed to be loaded onto the plane. That was fun, but the boss said I can't do that job again because I kinda, sorta, maybe put about 10 or 12 bags on the wrong plane, and they went to New York instead of Los Angeles. So last week I was the gate attendant. That person's job is to help everyone board the plane. I did a really good job until Thursday, when I got mixed up and directed all the passengers for Chicago onto a plane going

to Milwaukee.

So this week the boss said I should try assisting the flight engineer. The flight engineer is in charge of the preflight checklist; monitoring the flight to make sure we follow the flight plan; and watching our fuel, speed, and altitude to make sure we have a safe flight. They look at all the little pieces to make sure you have a safe flight and can look out your windows to see the big picture of God's creation. Oh, that is the part of flying that I love the most. Down on earth you can only see where you are up close, but on our flight you can see the big picture of where you are.

You know, that reminds me of the Bible. The Bible is full of stories about all kinds of different people. To really understand each story we have to remember the big picture of God's story. Each part of the Bible reveals something about God's plan to send Jesus. Because Jesus died on the cross for our sins, we are a part of the big picture of God's story. Let's look on our timeline map and see where our flight will take us today.

Guide kids to look at the timeline map.

Timeline map (1 minute)

Leader • Can anyone find our airport on the map? There it is. Since this is the first Bible story picture, this must be where we are going today. Every week we are going to hear more about God's story, and all the pictures on our map are a part of God's story. All together they form a big picture of God's plan for us to see; the big picture is God's plan to send Jesus to save us from our sin. At the bottom of our map, we can see all the stories that we will talk about and the order in which they happened. It says here on our timeline that our first story is "God

• timeline map
Tip: Point to the different sections of the timeline map as you talk about each one.

Created the World and People.” But before we can start our journey today, I have some important information that will help you on our flight.

Big picture question (1 minute)

Leader • Every week we will be searching for an answer to a big picture question. Our big picture question will help us understand more about God’s story. Does anyone know what our big picture question is for this week? Some of you may think you know the answer, so I need you to promise not to tell anyone. I want everyone to be able to discover the answer on their own. Listen during the Bible story to see if you hear the answer to the big picture question. Today’s big picture question is *Who created everything?*

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 1. Invite kids to follow along in their Bibles. Tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or show “God Created the World and People” video.

Leader • God created Adam and Eve to know Him and love Him. God also wants us to know and love Him. That is how we are a part of God’s story. Up here, flying through the sky, we can look out and see the big picture. We can see how amazing God’s creation is. As we continue to learn more about God’s story, we will see that the Bible shows us God’s plan to send Jesus to rescue us from our sin.

Did you hear the answer to the big picture question during the Bible story? What was the question? Now if you know the answer, when I count to three, I want you to shout it out. Ready, one, two, three.

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- “God Created the World and People” video (optional)
- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- Bible story picture slide or poster (enhanced CD)

Option: Kids can whisper the answer or use a funny voice instead of shouting.

Allow boys and girls to shout out the answer.

Leader • Yes. The answer to our question is ***God created the world and people to bring Him glory.*** I am going to ask our big picture question later, and I want to hear the whole answer. So let's read it together.

Read the answer two or three times to help kids begin to remember it.

Leader • We bring God glory when we praise and honor Him. What are some ways we can bring glory to God? Allow a couple of kids and leaders to share their thoughts.

Review (4 minutes)

Ask the following questions about today's Bible story.

1. How many days did it take to create the earth and everything in it? (*six days, Genesis 1:31–2:1*)
2. In whose image was man created? (*the image of God, Genesis 1:27*)
3. What job did God give Adam to do? (*take care of the garden, Genesis 2:15*)
4. What one warning did God give to Adam? (*not to eat fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Genesis 2:17*)
5. What did God do on the seventh day of creation? (*rested, Genesis 2:2*)
6. ***Who created everything? God created the world and people to bring Him glory.***
7. Who is ruler over all creation? (*Christ is ruler over all of God's creation, Colossians 1:15-22*)

Key passage (6 minutes)

Leader • Did you know that God created people different from everything else He created? God created Adam and breathed life into Adam. The Bible tells us that God

- "In His Own Image"
- key passage slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- Bibles, 1 per kid

created man in God’s image. I need all my passengers to turn in their flight plans to—oh, wait. Have I told you yet about the flight plan? That is one of my favorite parts of assisting the flight engineer. Every plane has a flight plan that tells where the plane is going, the path that it needs to take, and the plan for what to do if we have to land at a different airport or fly a different way to our destination. The flight plan is our map during the flight. Many times life is a lot like flying, up and down, sometimes smooth and sometimes turbulent, and I need the flight plan to remind me that God sent Jesus to rescue me from sin. The Bible is the flight plan. So I need everyone to open their Bible to Genesis 1:27.

Lead boys and girls to read the key passage. Explain that they will have five weeks to memorize these special words from God. Sing “In His Own Image.”

Leader • Being made in the image of God means we were created to know and love God. Remember our big picture question *Who created everything? God created the world and people to bring Him glory.* Being created in God’s image means we were created to bring Him glory by praising and honoring Him.

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

Invite five kids to join you at the front of the room.

Leader • I am going to give each of you a bag of supplies. When I say “start,” you are to open your bag and create a plant with the supplies inside.

Hand out the bags and give the start command. Kids will open the bags to find they are empty. Encourage them to create. Act like there is no problem. After a minute acknowledge that something is missing, and allow the volunteers to sit down.

- 5 lunch or gift bags taped closed
- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)

Leader • God made us in His image, and we have the ability to be creative. But we have to start with or use something to create. God created the heavens and the earth from nothing. The Bible says God said, “Let there be light,” and light was created. He did not have to start with anything to create. That is how powerful God is. Tell me again, *Who created everything?*

Allow kids to answer *God created the world and people to bring Him glory.*

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

Leader • Let’s stand and glorify God for all that He has created and for creating us to be a part of His story. The first song we are going to sing is our unit theme song.

Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- “You Are God Alone” (unit theme song)
- “Indescribable”
- “Who He Says I Am”
- “How Great Thou Art”
- “God of Wonders”

Group game (10 minutes)

The amazing suitcase race

Create two teams of two or three kids each. Give each team a suitcase and explain that the goal for each team is to unpack its suitcase and put the items from its suitcase in the order that each was created. Encourage the crowd to cheer for the team without revealing the answers.

Leader • Great job, everyone. Let’s review their work. I am going to say the day, and I want everyone to shout out

- “You Are God Alone” and other songs of your choice

Tip: Select the number of songs to sing based on the amount of time you have. You may pick from the songs provided or add songs from your own song library.

- 2 suitcases
- Each suitcase needs to have items representing the days of creation.
- Example ideas:
Day 1: flashlight;
Day 2: piece of light blue fabric or paper;

Day 3: pack of seeds or small stem of flowers;
Day 4: sheet of sun, moon, or stars stickers;
Day 5: small bag of fish crackers;
Day 6: stuffed animal such as a dog, lion, or elephant, and a baby doll

something that was created on that day.

Allow the teams to correct any mistakes they made as you review all six days of creation. Review the big picture question and answer. *Who created everything? God created the world and people to bring Him glory.*

Missions (6 minutes)

Leader • God wants us to share His story about Jesus with others. Listen to this story about some missionaries who are sharing the truth about Jesus with people in another country.

Share the following mission story, “Stars in the Sky,” about two missionaries who traveled to Zambia.

Leader • Can you see the stars at night where you live? If you live in a big city with lots of smog and lights on the street, maybe you don’t see them much. But if you go camping in the country or have a picnic in a park and stay late, you probably lie on your back and look up at the sky. The stars are so pretty and remind us just how big God’s creation is.

Psalm 19:1 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims the work of His hands.” Missionaries Daniel and Sky Scott (Yep. Her name is Sky and she loves proclaiming the work of God’s hands!) went to a remote part of Zambia where the stars were gorgeous. The stars took their breath away. Their Zambian friends thought it strange. They seemed to ask: “The stars? You’re amazed at the stars?” Daniel and Sky saw beauty and thought about the glory of God, but the Zambians just saw a night sky.

Do you think about God when you see everything that He has created? Praise God for making the world beautiful, and ask God to help the Mbunda people of

Zambia “see” Him in creation.

Leader • It would be amazing to fly to Zambia and see the stars at night, but we don’t have time to travel there today. But when we are at our homes tonight, we can look at the stars and praise God for creating them just like Daniel and Sky Scott praised God for the stars. The Scotts have a special job as missionaries to tell the people in Zambia about Jesus. This week let’s remember to pray for the Scotts.

Announcements (2 minutes)

Leader • I need all passengers to find their seats and secure their seat belts for our landing. I want to thank you for flying on Big Picture Airlines. Before we land, I have a few announcements.

Make any announcements from your children’s ministry.

Leader • Well, it has been a great flight today. I love how seeing the big picture reminds me that God does have a plan for me. One part of His plan was to send Jesus to rescue me from my sin. Hopefully I will figure out soon what job I am supposed to have here at Big Picture Airlines. Before you get ready to exit the plane, let’s remember what we learned today. Tell me again, *Who created everything?*

Allow kids to answer *God created the world and people to bring Him glory.*

If time allows, interact with the kids by asking for individual kids to share the big picture question and answer. You may also “quiz” some of your fellow Big Picture Airline employees (adult helpers).

Prayer (1 minute)

Leader • God’s story begins with creation and continues today. Everyone is unique, and God made us to know Him and love Him. *Who created everything? God created the world and people to bring Him glory.*

Next week we will continue to learn about how we can bring God glory as we study more of God’s story. After I close in prayer, watch for the signal for you to exit the plane. I hope you will come travel with us again next week.

Close in prayer.

Dismiss

Additional idea

- paper
- markers, crayons, or pencils
- tape

Option: Use the additional idea if you have extra time or as a substitute for the group game or group demonstration. The additional idea typically will require some assistance from other leaders.

Ready, set, draw

Assign each kid in the room a number between one and six. Then tell them to find the others in the room who have a matching number. All the “ones” form a group; all the “twos” form a group; and so forth. Each group then draws something created on the day of the number it was given. Drawings can be displayed in your classroom or hallway as a reminder of God’s creativity during creation.

Leader • We can be thankful for everything God created. God created a variety of animals and plants, and it all works together. What is our big picture question and answer? *Who created everything? God created the world and people to bring Him glory.*

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

Adam and Eve enjoyed all that was good in the garden of Eden. The Lord gave them only one restriction: “You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” and the punishment was severe: “You will certainly die” (Genesis 2:17).

Before the fall, Adam and Eve enjoyed a loving two-way relationship with God. It was a true paradise. God filled the garden with good gifts, so that they might enjoy the good and give thanks to God; this glorifies God. All of that changed when they gave in to the serpent’s temptation. Eve believed the lie that leads many of us to sin: Maybe God is holding out on me.

Adam and Eve desired something more: the wisdom the fruit offered. But when their eyes were opened, they were aware of their nakedness and felt ashamed. Surely the Lord’s heart broke at their act of disobedience and rebellion. Their sin left them cast out of the garden. Though they did not die right away, they would die and their lives and their children’s lives would be forever affected by their choice.

Adam and Eve’s sons, Cain and Abel, were no exception to the effects of sin. Cain and Abel were born into sin. Their story brings to light the deep effects of uncontrolled sin. Cain murdered his brother. God’s creation was never meant to be this way.

Sin is a big problem that needs a big solution. The primary purpose of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection was to deal with sin. Matthew 1:21 says, “You are to name Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.” As the kids you teach become increasingly aware of the bad news, that we are all sinners from birth, rejoice with them over the good news: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Timothy 1:15).

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: Sin Entered the World

Bible Passage: Genesis 3–4

Big Picture Question: What is sin? Sin is breaking God’s law and separates people from God.

Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

Kids Worship

Countdown

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

Big picture question (1 minute)

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Timeline map (1 minute)

The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me (5 minutes)

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

Review (4 minutes)

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

Key passage (4 minutes)

Group game (8 minutes)

Missions (5 minutes)

Announcements (2 minutes)

Prayer (1 minute)

Additional idea

The BIBLE STORY

Sin Entered the World

Genesis 3–4

When God gave Adam the garden to live in, God gave him one command. He told Adam that he could eat from any tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If Adam did eat from it, he would die. God gave Adam and Eve a garden full of food they could eat, and only one rule to follow, only one tree they could not eat from.

The serpent was the most cunning of all the animals. He approached Eve and asked if God had really said that they could not eat from any tree in the garden. Eve told him they could eat from all the trees except the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden. They could not eat from or touch that tree or they would die. Eve added to God's command by saying that they also could not touch the fruit. The serpent told Eve they would not die, and God knew when they ate the fruit, they would be like God and know good and evil.

Eve looked at the fruit and decided it was good to look at and to gain wisdom like God. She ate the fruit and gave some to Adam, who also ate.

As soon as they ate the fruit, their eyes were opened and they knew they were naked. They made clothes by sewing fig leaves together.

At evening Adam and Eve heard God walking in the garden, so they hid. God called out, asking where they were. Adam replied, "I heard You in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid."

God asked Adam, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

Adam immediately blamed Eve and said, "She gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Eve blamed the serpent and said, "He deceived me, and I ate." God punished the serpent by making him crawl on his belly. Adam and Eve also had consequences for their disobedience. Eve would have more pain when she had children. Adam would have to work the ground for food, and it would be hard work.

God was merciful and made clothes for Adam and Eve from animal skins before He sent them out of the garden. God sent Adam and Eve away so

they would not eat from the tree of life and live forever as sinners.

Adam and Eve's sin changed everything. It blocked their relationship with God. It affected their relationship with each other. It brought chaos to the world. But even if all these things changed, God stayed the same. He promised to make everything right again.

After Adam and Eve left the garden of Eden, they had a son named Cain and another son named Abel. Both Cain and Abel were sinners because of Adam and Eve's sin. Abel became a shepherd, and Cain worked the ground by growing plants and crops.

One day Cain gave God an offering of some of the produce he grew. Abel gave God some of the firstborn of his flock. God accepted Abel's offering, but He did not accept Cain's offering.

Cain became furious. God asked Cain why he was furious. God told Cain if he would do what was right, his offering would be accepted. Then God warned Cain that sin was crouching at the door desiring to rule him if he did not do what was right.

Cain invited Abel to go out to the field. While they were in the field, Cain killed his brother. God asked Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" Cain told God that he did not know and it was not his job to keep up with Abel. God revealed to Cain that He knew what had happened to Abel.

Because God is holy, God had to punish Cain for his sin. Cain would no longer be able to work the ground and help things grow. He would have to wander the earth instead of being with his family. He could no longer live in God's presence. Even though God punished Cain, God was merciful and provided Cain with protection from being killed by others. Later Adam and Eve had other children including a son they named Seth.

Christ Connection: Adam and Eve failed to give God glory when they introduced sin into the world, but God didn't leave them without hope. God sent His Son Jesus to live as Adam didn't—perfectly sinless. Jesus was God in the form of a man sent to rescue people from sin.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: Sin Entered the World

Bible Passage: Genesis 3–4

Big Picture Question: What is sin? Sin is breaking God’s law and separates people from God.

Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

• countdown video

Countdown

Show the countdown video playing as your kids arrive, set it to end as worship time begins.

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

[Large group leader enters wearing overalls, coveralls, or an old shirt with dirt smudges. You may carry a tool chest.]

Leader • Hello, passengers, and welcome back to Big Picture Airlines, where way up high you can see the big picture! Last week we had a wonderful adventure flying over creation. We saw the big picture of God’s creation. Are you all ready for today’s flight? Where do you think we are flying today? What do you think we will see?

Oops. I just remembered a tiny, little detail about today’s flight. Well, see, umm, we have a little problem with your flight. Do you all remember the cool jobs I have tried here at Big Picture Airlines? I really loved last’s week’s job helping the flight engineer. So there I was, sitting in the cockpit, reading all the instruments and the flight plan, and before I knew it, my stomach was whirling and whirling round and round and round and round and round. I guess reading all those instruments

Character insight:
Start off upbeat, but transition to a sheepishly sad then a slightly defensive attitude when you have to admit you broke the one rule the mechanic gave you.

makes me a little airsick. So this week the boss said my feet are staying on the ground.

I have been working with the airplane mechanic, Jim. Whatever Jim says, I jump right up to do it. Except for today. You see today we had a little problem. We were looking at your plane, and Jim told me not to push this little button. But when Jim wasn't looking, I just couldn't resist. It was just one little button. I mean what could it possible hurt to push that one little button? I could push all the other buttons, so why not this button? How can I learn to be a real airplane mechanic if I don't push all the buttons in the plane to make sure they work? Right? Isn't that my job? I mean it was just one little button. It couldn't be that important. So I gave in to the temptation. I pushed the one little, itty bitty, oh-so-tiny button that Jim warned me not to push.

And that is when the problem happened. See apparently that button is really, really important for the plane, and if it breaks, you can't fly the plane. So when I pushed the button, I pushed it just a little too hard and broke it. It was stuck. Now we can't turn off the button. And until Jim can fix the button, the plane can't fly anywhere!

Big picture question (1 minute)

Leader • Oh! What am I going to do? I messed up again.

I guess I won't get to be an airplane mechanic now.

I'm never going to figure out God's plan for me at Big Picture Airlines. Hey! What's that on the screen? Is it an announcement about your flight? Oh. It's the big picture question. The question is *What is sin?* Do you all know the answer? I know, let's listen to today's Bible story to find the answer.

Tip: If you are not using a projection screen system, write the big picture question on a large piece of paper and post it in a noticeable place in your room.

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- “Sin Entered the World” video (optional)
- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- Bible story picture slide or poster (enhanced CD)

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 3. Choose to tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or show the Bible story video “Sin Entered the World.”

Leader • Our question was *What is sin?* Did you all find the answer in the Bible story? *Sin is breaking God’s law and separates people from God.* Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve made the wrong choice. They chose to believe Satan and break the one rule God gave them to obey. God still loved Adam and Eve, but He could not let them live in the garden anymore. Their sin had now separated them from God.

God had a plan for salvation before Adam and Eve ever sinned. We can see a glimpse of that plan in Genesis 3:15. God promised in Genesis 3:15 that a male descendant of Eve would one day defeat Satan. A *descendant* is a child born into a specific family in a first generation or later generations. One day a descendant of Eve would completely defeat Satan. This descendant would come through the family of Adam and Eve’s son, Seth. Many, many, many years after Adam and Eve sinned, God sent His only Son, Jesus, to earth through the descendants of Seth.

So when I think about what Adam and Eve did, that means when I pushed the one button Jim told me not to touch, I sinned, too. I broke a rule that someone gave me to follow instead of obeying it. I read in the Bible about how we all sin and need to be forgiven. We all need God’s plan for salvation. God’s plan was to send Jesus to pay the price for our sin, so we could be forgiven of our sins. When Jesus rescues us from our sin, we can know and love God.

- timeline map

Timeline map (1 minute)

Leader •When Adam and Eve sinned, it really changed everything. Do you all remember what we talked about last week? Let's look at our timeline map. Here is where we started last week. Wow! Everything was perfect. The world was perfect, and Adam and Eve were perfect. And this week we learned how sin entered the world. Everything is different in our world because of sin. Once sin entered the world, we needed a Savior to rescue us from our sins. I am glad that God knew we would need a Savior, and His plan was to send Jesus. Do you all know how to become a Christian, so that you can know and love God?

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (5 minutes)

Use your Bible and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Encourage kids to ask their parents or other adults any questions they have about becoming a Christian.

- funnel
- 16 or 20 oz. clear plastic bottle with lid
- food color (optional)
- 7 oz. of water
- 7 oz. of vegetable oil
- paper towels for minor spills
- Tip: If you have a large group, you may wish to use a larger soda bottle and increase the amount of water and vegetable oil.

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

Select three or four boys and girls to help you with the group demonstration. Allow each one to complete one of the steps listed below.

1. Pour 7 ounces of water into the clear plastic bottle using a funnel.
2. Add food color to the water and mix together (optional).
3. Use a funnel to pour 7 ounces of oil into the plastic bottle.
4. Close the lid to the bottle.
5. Shake the bottle as hard as you can.
6. Watch the oil and water separate.

Leader • Do you all remember our big picture question? *What is sin? Sin is breaking God’s law and separates people from God.* Even though we tried to shake the water and oil and make them go together, they can’t. Sin separates us from God just like the water and the oil are separated. The good news is that God sent Jesus to earth to die on the cross for our sin. Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life so He could pay the price for our sin.

Review (4 minutes)

Ask the following questions about today’s Bible story.

1. What did the serpent tell Eve would happen if she ate the fruit? (*Her eyes would be opened and she would be like God; he told her she would not die; Genesis 3:4-5*)
2. How did God punish Adam, Eve, and the serpent? (*God sent Adam and Eve from the garden; God created hard labor for man to grow crops and woman to have pain in childbirth; God cursed the serpent and made him crawl on his belly; Genesis 3:14,16,17,23*)
3. What jobs did Cain and Abel do? (*Cain worked the ground and Abel was a shepherd of flocks, Genesis 4:2*)
4. What was Cain’s response when his offering was not accepted? (*He was furious and looked despondent, Genesis 4:5*)
5. ***What is sin? Sin is breaking God’s law and separates people from God.***
6. Who did God send to rescue people from sin? (*God sent His Son Jesus to live as Adam didn’t— perfectly sinless. Jesus was God in the form of a man sent to rescue people from sin.*)

- “You Are God Alone” and other songs of your choice

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

Leader • Let’s stand and praise God for creating the world and people.

Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- “You Are God Alone” (unit theme song)
- “Indescribable”
- “Who He Says I Am”
- “How Great Thou Art”
- “God of Wonders”

Key passage (4 minutes)

- key passage poster or slide (enhanced CD)
- “In His Own Image”

Leader • Does anyone remember what the flight plan is?

Last week we looked at a special verse in the flight plan.

Has anyone memorized our key passage verse? Would you like to share with the group what our key passage is?

Select one or two volunteers to share the key passage with the group. If you do not have any volunteers, encourage the group to practice saying or reading the verse two times each day to help them memorize the verse. Lead the kids to read the verse at least once.

Leader • Stand with me to sing our song that reminds us how special we were created.

Sing “In His Own Image.”

- 3–5 suitcases of various sizes per team
- Print the following verses on index cards and hide them in the pockets of the suitcases:
Genesis 1:1;
Romans 3:23;
John 3:16; 1 Peter 3:18;
Romans 10:9–10, 13.
Print one set per team.
- Stack each team’s set of suitcases in a pile.

Group game (8 minutes)

The amazing suitcase race

Gather several suitcases of various sizes. Explain to the boys and girls that their goal is to search through all the pockets of each suitcase to find the five Scripture cards that help explain how to become a Christian.

After all the teams have found the cards, review what each Scripture says about becoming a Christian.

Leader • *What is sin? Sin is breaking God’s law and separates people from God.* God sent Jesus to rescue us from our sin.

Missions (5 minutes)

Leader • Great job, teams. I have a special in-flight video about a boy not much older than you who obeyed God and went on a trip to tell people how to become a Christian. His journey started by boarding a plane and flying to another country.

Show “Extreme Living.” “Extreme Living” details the life of missionaries serving in the Amazon jungle.

Leader • You are never too young to be able to share with someone else about Jesus and how He came to earth to save us. You may share about Jesus with your family, your friends, people in our town, or people in another country.

Announcements (2 minutes)

Leader • The captain has turned on our fasten seat belt sign, so I need all passengers to find their seats. I want to thank you for trying to fly on Big Picture Airlines. Before we leave, I have a few announcements.

Make any announcements from your children’s ministry.

Leader • Well even though I made a big mistake, and you all couldn’t fly anywhere today, we still had a great time. Adam, Eve, and Cain taught us a lot about the consequences of sin. *What is sin? Sin is breaking God’s law and separates people from God.*

I am sure glad God had a plan for salvation, and I know He has a plan for my life. I can’t wait to see what job at Big Picture Airlines I get to try next week.

• “Extreme Living”
video

Prayer (1 minute)

Leader • When you exit the airport and travel home today, you can ask your parents or family any questions you have about becoming a Christian. You can also ask any of the other adults here at the airport. They will be glad to answer any questions you have. After I close in prayer, watch for the signal for you to exit the airport. I hope you will come travel with us again next week.

Close in prayer.

Dismiss

Additional idea

- painters tape
- Place several taped lines on the floor or stage.

Toe the line

Instruct each group of four or five kids to stand on one of the lines in single file. The goal of the game is for the last kid in the group to move to the front of the line. They have only one rule: No one's feet can leave the taped line.

Leader • Was it hard to follow the one rule? *What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law and separates people from God.* We do not have to remain separated from God because of our sin. Remember if you have questions about becoming a Christian, you can ask a leader or your parents.

Insights for Worship Leaders

Sharing how to become a Christian in a large group environment can be challenging. Here are some tips to guide you as you present the gospel to kids.

- Focus on the gospel. Don't stress about reading every Scripture and every statement given in the guide. Focus on helping kids see their need for a Savior and how Jesus defeated sin.
- Allow kids an opportunity to respond without pressure from adults or peers. Try to have counselors available to meet one-on-one with kids. Make sure kids know who they can talk to and when they can talk.
- Be as concrete as possible. Avoid abstract or highly symbolic phrases like "inviting Jesus into your heart" or "the blood of Jesus covers you." Abstract phrases often lead to distraction and confusion among concrete thinkers.
- Limit conversation about baptism. Clarify the distinction between baptism and salvation.
- Keep perspective. Your role is to present the gospel as clearly as possible, but it's the Holy Spirit's role to convict. Don't put unnecessary pressure on yourself.
- Pray. Pray. Pray. Spend time in prayer as you prepare for the large group session. Pray during the large group time. Pray throughout the week for the kids who heard the gospel presentation.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

God is serious about sin. Because God is holy, He cannot be around sin. He hates sin, and He will not leave sin unpunished. As the earth grew more populated, Scripture describes a deplorable situation: “Man’s wickedness was widespread on the earth and ... every scheme his mind thought of was nothing but evil all the time” (Genesis 6:5).

God planned to punish the sinful people by starting over. He planned to send a flood to wipe out everything on the earth. God is just, and He is also loving. God chose to save one man: Noah. Even though sin was rampant, God recognized Noah as a righteous individual. One of the most ringing endorsements of Noah is “Noah walked with God.”

God chose Noah to build an ark to save Noah, his immediate family, and male and female pairs of animals. Imagine the taunting that Noah and his family may have received. Noah remained faithful and stayed true to the task God had given him. When the ark was complete, God poured out His wrath on humanity by sending the flood. Because God is holy and cannot allow sin, He must punish sin. He did so dramatically in this story.

After saving them, God issued a covenant to Noah, his family, and all inhabitants of the earth for all time. God gave the sign of a rainbow to ratify His covenant. When people see the rainbow, it reminds them of the covenant God made with Noah and everyone after him.

God is the great deviser of rescue plans. Just as God chose to save Noah, He had an even greater plan: to save all people from the punishment for sin by sending His Son, Jesus. Instead of killing many and saving one man, God would sacrifice one man and save many. Pray that the kids you teach would hear the gospel this week and trust in Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: Noah and the Ark

Bible Passage: Genesis 6:5–9:17

Big Picture Question: Why does sin separate people from God? God is holy and separate from sin.

Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

Kids Worship

Countdown

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

Timeline map (1 minute)

Big picture question (1 minute)

Tell the Bible story (11 minutes)

Review (4 minutes)

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

Sing and offering (3-12 minutes)

Key passage (5 minutes)

Group game (10 minutes)

Missions (5 minutes)

Announcements (1 minute)

Prayer (2 minutes)

Additional idea

The BIBLE STORY

Noah and the Ark

Genesis 6:5–9:17

One day God looked at all the people on earth and saw they were choosing to sin. It was so bad that God was sad that He made people. God wanted people to have a relationship with Him, but the people did not want to know and obey God. Noah was different than all of those people because he was a righteous man. Noah was a descendant of Seth, Adam and Eve's son, and Noah followed God.

Because the world was so sinful, God had to punish the people for their sin. Sin separates people from God because God is holy. To save Noah from this punishment, God instructed him to build an ark of gopher wood. The ark was to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. It would have rooms on the inside. God told Noah how to build the roof, where to put the door, and all the other details he needed to build the ark.

God shared with Noah that He would punish sin by sending a flood, and only Noah and his family would live. God established a special covenant with Noah; He would save Noah and his family. God also gave Noah instructions to bring animals into the ark. For most of the animals Noah brought one male and one female into the ark. Some animals God called *clean* and Noah brought seven males and seven females of the clean animals on board. Clean animals were animals that people were allowed to offer as a sacrifice to God, and after the flood they were allowed to eat the meat of a clean animal. God instructed Noah to put every kind of food that Noah's family and the animals would eat on the ark, too. Noah obeyed everything God instructed him to do.

Next God told Noah to load all the animals, food, and his family onto the ark because God was going to send rain. It would rain 40 days and 40 nights. This rain would cause a flood that would wipe out everything on earth.

After Noah, his family, and the animals entered the ark, God shut them inside. Noah's family was protected as the waters rose and covered the entire earth. The high mountains were completely covered by the water. Everything on dry land died. Only Noah and those in the ark lived. For 150

days the water completely covered the earth.

But God remembered Noah and his family, so He sent a wind and the water began to go away. After another 150 days on the ark, the tops of the mountains were visible. The ark rested on the mountains of Ararat. After 40 days Noah opened the ark's window and sent out a raven. The raven flew back and forth until the waters dried up. So Noah sent out a dove, but the dove could not find a place to rest, so she returned to the ark. After seven more days, Noah sent the dove out again, but this time she returned with an olive leaf. Noah knew that the water had gone down from the lower areas of land. After another week Noah sent the dove out, and this time she did not return. Noah opened the ark and saw that the ground was drying.

When the ground was dry, God told Noah to bring everyone and every animal out of the ark. Noah built an altar and gave an offering to the Lord. God was pleased with Noah's offering and promised Noah that He would never completely flood the earth again. God told Noah and his family to spread out over the earth and fill it with people. God gave Noah a special sign of the covenant He made with him. God placed a rainbow in the sky, so every time Noah and his family saw the rainbow it was a reminder that God remembered the covenant He made. The covenant was an everlasting covenant that God would always keep.

Christ Connection: The story of the flood shows us how serious God is about sin. He will not leave sin unpunished. But the story of Noah also shows us how loving God is. He provided a rescue plan for one righteous man—Noah. And the rescue was extended to Noah's family. This story points ahead to a greater rescue! Jesus, the only perfectly righteous person, came to take the punishment for sin. We trust His act of obedience and are saved from the punishment our sin deserves.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: Noah and the Ark

Bible Passage: Genesis 6:5–9:17

Big Picture Question: Why does sin separate people from God? God is holy and separate from sin.

Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video playing as your kids arrive, set it to end as worship time begins.

• microphone
or walkie-talkie for
leader

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

[Leader wears solid dark dress pants or skirt and a white dress shirt. You may choose to create a name tag. Begin the flight announcement introduction by speaking into a microphone or walkie-talkie. Once you recognize the passengers, you can put away the microphone.]

Leader • Welcome to Big Picture Airlines, where way up high you can see the big picture. We are glad to have you aboard flight 65917! My name is _____, and I will be serving as your flight attendant on our journey to ... Wait a minute! I know you all. Oh, I am so excited you are here. This is my very first flight as a flight attendant for real people. I feel so much better that all my passengers are familiar faces. How have you been this week?

So let me tell you about my week. First, as you all probably guessed, after last week's little mistake with the airplane button, the boss decided I should pursue a job

other than becoming a mechanic at Big Picture Airlines. Jim said he was glad for all the help I gave him, but he and the boss think God has something different planned for my life. So now you are asking how can I be a flight attendant since I became sick as the flight engineer? Well, the boss found this incredible medicine for me to take that keeps my tummy from going round and round and round and round while on the airplane. Isn't that the best? I can fly again!

And you all are my very first people passengers! Yesterday, I was so excited about my first day as a flight attendant that I accidentally got on the wrong plane. It was a cargo plane, not a passenger plane. After we took off, I got ready to bring the snacks to everyone and realized that I was on a plane filled with animals, not people. That's when I met Noah, the guy who takes care of the animals. Noah said that his job was to make sure all the animals got on the plane and that they had food to eat during the flight. He said since I was on the plane that I could help feed the animals, too. It was a lot of fun seeing the turtles, puppies, monkeys, parrots, and all the other animals.

Anyway that was yesterday, and today I am on the right plane, a plane with people passengers. And these people passengers are all friends. Whew! Noah and all his animals reminded me of another guy named Noah who had a job taking care of animals. This Noah's story is in the Bible, and he is on our timeline map.

• timeline map

Timeline map (1 minute)

Leader • He is right here after Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel, so Noah lived after they did. We started learning about God's story with creation. His story continued with Adam

and Eve. Then came Cain, Abel, and Seth. Now Noah is next in the big picture of God’s story.

Big picture question (1 minute)

Leader • Does anyone remember the big picture question from last week? *What is sin?* The answer was *Sin is breaking God’s law, and it separates people from God.* But why does sin separate people from God? Hey! That should be our big picture question for today, *Why does sin separate people from God?* Let’s listen to our Bible story to find the answer.

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- “Noah and the Ark” video (optional)
- Bible story picture slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)

Tell the Bible story (11 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 6:5–9:17. Choose to tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or show the “Noah and the Ark” video.

Leader • The Bible shows us God’s plan to send Jesus. I guess we can learn a lot from Noah. The Bible says that Noah was righteous and blameless, which means that Noah was doing right and walked with God. Noah wasn’t perfect like Jesus, but God was gracious to save Noah and his family. After the flood God made a covenant with Noah to never completely flood the earth again. A *covenant* is a promise between two people or between a person and God. God will always keep His covenants.

God rescued Noah and his family from the flood. God also rescued us when He sent Jesus to pay the price for our sin by dying on the cross.

Did you listen closely during the Bible story to find the answer to our question? Our big picture question was *Why does sin separate people from God?* I am going to count to three, and I want everyone to shout out what you think the answer is. Ready? One, two, three. Great job! I

Option: You may choose to review how to become a Christian using the guide provided.

Tip: Anytime you share how to become a Christian in a large group environment, try to have counselors available to meet one-on-one with kids. Make sure kids know who they can talk to and when they can talk.

think I heard someone say it. The answer is ***God is holy and separate from sin.*** Because God is righteous and perfect, He cannot sin. He cannot be around sin. That is why sin separates us from God. Let's read the big picture question and the answer together. ***Why does sin separate people from God? God is holy and separate from sin.***

We can be forgiven of our sins and no longer be separated from God. God sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins, so we could know and love God. Any time you have questions about becoming a Christian, you can ask any of the adults in our airport, your parents, or another Christian adult you know. We would love to answer any questions you have.

Review (4 minutes)

Allow kids who want to answer a review question to “pop up” from their seats when you ask the question. Try to call on one of the first kids to “pop up” for the answer. Ask the other employees of Big Picture Airlines (adult leaders) to help you spot which kids are first.

1. How many days and nights did it rain? (*40 days and 40 nights, Genesis 7:12*)
2. Noah was what type of man? (*righteous and blameless, Genesis 6:9*)
3. What did Noah build? (*an ark, Genesis 6:14*)
4. What did Noah put on the ark? (*his family, animals, and food; Genesis 6:18-21*)
5. What was the sign God gave Noah to remind him of the covenant God made? (*a rainbow, Genesis 9:12-17*)
6. ***Why does sin separate people from God? God is holy and separate from sin.***

-
7. Who is the only perfectly righteous person? (*Jesus, the only perfectly righteous person, came to take the punishment for sin. We trust His act of obedience and are saved from the punishment our sin deserves.*)

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

Leader • Let's pretend we are in the ark and it is raining outside. Can you all hear the rain? Me neither, but I have an idea. We can make rain right here. I need everyone to practice with me these steps.

1. Hands down on lap
2. Rub your palms together
3. Snap your fingers
4. Clap hands together
5. Slap your lap
6. Stomp your feet
7. Reverse the steps to stop the rain storm

Leader • Can you imagine being Noah and hearing it rain for 40 days and 40 nights? God saved Noah and his family from the flood and promised to never again completely flood the earth. *Why does sin separate people from God? God is holy and separate from sin.*

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

Leader • God is holy and is worthy of our honor and praise. Stand and worship Him for giving Jesus to rescue us from sin. Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Select three or four songs to sing during this time of worship.

Song suggestions:

- “You Are God Alone” (unit theme song)

• “You Are God Alone”
and other songs of
your choice

- “Indescribable”
- “Who He Says I Am”
- “How Great Thou Art”
- “God of Wonders”

Key passage (5 minutes)

- “In His Own Image”
- key passage poster or slide (enhanced CD)

Leader • Has everyone been practicing our key passage from the flight plan? Would someone like to volunteer to quote our key passage from memory?

Allow one or two volunteers to share the key passage. Lead everyone to read the verse together. Sing “In His Own Image.”

Leader • Good work. This passage tells us God made us in His own image. God created you in His image to know and love Him, to please Him and bring Him glory.

Group game (10 minutes)

- Provide a stack of 5 bars of soap; 20 socks; 50 pieces of individually wrapped candy; 100 cotton balls.
- list of items to pack, see sample list below: 2 bars of soap; 8 socks; 14 pieces of individually wrapped candy; 40 cotton balls
- suitcase, 1 per team
- Scatter and intermingle the supplies together so that kids must sort them. Provide more items than kids actually need.

The amazing suitcase race

Invite eight kids to form two teams of four. Teams will take turns crossing the stage or room to retrieve the items needed to pack in their suitcases for their trip on the ark. They may pick up no more than five items each time. If a team ends up with too many of one item, it must return the extra items to the stack before it can win. The first team to correctly pack its suitcase wins. Involve all the kids by asking each section of the audience to cheer for a team.

Leader • You had to pack two bars of soap for your trip. What did Noah have to pack two of? (*each kind of unclean animal*)

You had fourteen pieces of candy on your list. Noah had fourteen what? (*fourteen of each of the clean animals*)

What else was on your list? Eight socks. Why eight? (*Noah and his family were the eight people on the ark.*)

Tip: Use items that are easy for you to gather together.

And the last item on your list was forty cotton balls. What does the number forty mean in Noah's story? (*It rained 40 days and 40 nights.*)

Congratulate the kids and ask them to return to their seats.

Missions (5 minutes)

Leader • Noah spent many months on the ark with all the animals. In our game we reviewed that for 40 days and 40 nights it rained without stopping. I have a story for you about a program that uses 40 days and 40 nights to help missionaries learn some very important skills.

Read the story, "40 days/40 nights," to the boys and girls.

Leader • Missionaries in Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa go to a very special program when they move from the United States to Africa. It's called "40 Days and 40 Nights." For forty days they learn how to ride African public buses and bargain in the market. The U.S. has a price tag on everything, and that's what you pay. In Africa the price tag may say one dollar, but if you bargain, you might get it for sixty or seventy cents. The missionaries also show the love of Jesus by working with African pastors, telling Bible stories to children, and helping beggars.

The 40/40 missionaries and their children will go and live in a Zambian home. They will eat African food, work with the Zambians, sleep in the hut, and go to church with them. Some of the families are nervous about staying with people they don't really know, but they are excited to give it a try. Pray that the children of missionaries will have fun learning about their new culture. Pray for the adults to be very patient with their children and with each other. Pray for the Zambian families. They are sharing their love and time and homes with the missionaries. Pray they will

all be blessed with new friendships that will last their whole lives.

Leader • God chose Noah to be a part of His plan. God has also chosen these missionaries that are in Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa to be a part of His plan. God even has a plan for us in the big picture of His story. We should share with others God's plan to send Jesus to pay the price for our sin.

Announcements (1 minute)

Leader • I need all passengers to find their seats. Before we leave I have a few announcements.
Make any announcements from your children's ministry.

Prayer (2 minutes)

Leader • Oh, I see the captain has turned on the fasten seat belt sign, so I need all passengers to remain seated and fasten your seat belts as we prepare for our landing. I have enjoyed flying with you on Big Picture Airlines. Do you remember what we learned on today's flight? *Why does sin separate people from God? God is holy and separate from sin.* God saved Noah and his family, and He has provided for us to be saved, too, when we become a Christian. Before we land, we will pray.

Pray, thanking God for His gift of salvation.

Leader • I hope you enjoyed your flight today and will fly with us again. Please remain in your seats until the pilot gives you the signal that you may depart from our plane. Thanks again for flying Big Picture Airlines.

Dismiss

- rainbow colors of paint: blue, green, purple, red, orange, and yellow, or any bright colors you choose
- cotton swabs or paint brushes
- paint trays, plastic plates, or bowls with rainbow paint colors, 1 set per group
- poster board, 1 per group

Additional idea

Rainbow paintings

Form several groups. Instruct kids to work together making dots and dashes (pointillist style) of paint to create a large rainbow.

Say • *Why does sin separate people from God? God is holy and separate from sin.*

- Every time we see a rainbow in the sky, it is our reminder that God made a covenant with Noah that He will always keep.
- God always keeps His covenants and promises. We can celebrate that He kept His promise to send Jesus to rescue us from our sin.

When dry, hang the rainbow art where kids (and adults) can see it as a reminder of God's covenant.

Insights for Worship Leaders

The story of Noah highlights the extreme level of sin in the world after the fall. We also must face the consequences of sin. One of the consequences of sin is that we do not how to know and love God. You may choose to present how to become a Christian during your Kids Worship time today. Or use this guide any time kids ask questions about how to know and love God.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

Following the flood, God wanted to have a fresh start. God commanded Noah in Genesis 9:1 to “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.”

This command echoes the one given to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28. God intended the paradise of the garden to spread into the whole world, but sinful people had other desires. God always blesses in order to be a blessing to others.

Genesis 10 accounts for the nations that spread out in the land after the flood (Genesis 10:32). As the people moved east, they found a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. This story continues the cycle of disobedience to God and a choice to sin that will be a constant reminder of our need for a Savior. In Genesis 11:2, Scripture indicates that instead of filling the earth as commanded, these people chose to settle. A single language enabled them to devise a plan to build a large tower into the heavens.

Read Genesis 11:4. The people’s motive was clear: “Let us make a name for ourselves.” God had commanded them to fill the earth, but the people didn’t want to be scattered. They didn’t believe God would give them what was good if they obeyed. They sought to obtain for themselves what they thought was good.

Babel, better known by the name *Babylon*, means “gate of the gods.” The people, trying to build a monument tall enough to reach into heaven, the dwelling place of God, succeeded only in separating themselves from God and from each other.

This week you have the opportunity to tell the kids you teach about God’s better plan: His plan not for people to reach up to Him, but His plan to reach down to people by sending His Son, Jesus, to live the perfect life we couldn’t live and die the death we don’t want to die. That is the gospel. Pray that the kids you teach would have open hearts to receive it.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: The Tower of Babel

Bible Passage: Genesis 11:1-9

Big Picture Question: What happens when people choose to sin? Sin separates people from God and each other, but God’s plan is to heal relationships.

Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

Kids Worship

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The BIBLE STORY

The Tower of Babel

Genesis 11:1-9

Do you remember what God told Noah's family to do after the flood? Did God say to settle down and build a great city? No. God said to move out to different places and have many children.

But what do you think the people did? They moved to a valley that looked good to them. They said to one another, "We are great. We do not want to be scattered over the earth. Let's build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the sky. It will show how great we are."

The people were not doing what God had told them to do after the flood. They wanted to be as important as God. They were saying "Look how great we are" instead of "Look how great God is." They wanted glory for themselves instead of God. But God is greater than anyone.

Do you think the people could build a tower with its top in the sky? Do you think that even people who live today can use big machines to build a tower that tall? The tallest buildings in the world are very tall, but God can look down at them!

God came down to look at the tower. God said, "If they are doing this, they will keep thinking up more bad things to do. We need to stop them. Here is what we will do. We will mix up their words." When people tried to make plans, they could not understand what other people were saying. If one workman said, "Hand me another brick," nobody else knew what he wanted. They had to stop building the city.

Isn't God smarter than people? He had such a great idea to stop the people from building that tower! Who else could have created many different languages? Families had to move away from each other to live with people they could understand. God made it so the people did just what He had told them to do after the flood. They were scattered all over the world. The city with the unfinished tower was called Babel (BAY buhl), or Babylon. It means "confused," because the people were confused when they tried to talk to one another. Because the people chose to disobey God, their sin separated them from one another.

God's plan to be with His people is much better than the plan of those who built the tower. They were trying to reach up to God and make a great name for themselves. But God's plan was to reach down to us and make a great name for Himself. The good news is that Jesus brings us to God and makes us friends again.

Christ Connection: Instead of glorifying God, people chose to ignore God's plan and glorify themselves. This didn't stop God's plan to scatter the people and to form nations. Eventually one of these nations would become God's chosen people. Through the nation of Israel, Christ would come to save the world.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: The Tower of Babel

Bible Passage: Genesis 11:1-9

Big Picture Question: What happens when people choose to sin? Sin separates people from God and each other, but God's plan is to heal relationships.

Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

• countdown video

Countdown

Show the countdown video playing as your kids arrive, set it to end as worship time begins.

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

[Leader enters wearing dress pants, dress shirt, and a headset.]

Leader • Oh, hi! Welcome back to Big Picture Airlines, where way up high you can see the big picture. Are you all back to take another flight? You surely do travel a lot. And you always travel in this big group. Anyway how are you all?

Today I am super, super excited because I am on my way to my next job. Working as a flight attendant was so much fun until yesterday. So yesterday there was this little, itty, bitty, not really a big deal accident. I was carrying a tray full of icy cold soda, and I tripped. Yeah, I fell. But that wasn't really the problem. When I tripped I was standing in first class, and all the drinks on the tray landed all over the people sitting there. They weren't exactly happy about being cold, wet, and sticky after the

Tip: Remember to change the tone of your voice to reflect what the character is saying. Be sheepish, be indignant, be excited, be curious, be whatever the line calls for to help the kids connect to the character.

soda spilled on them. And do you think anyone asked if I was okay? Nooo. And *I* was the one who fell on the floor of the airplane! Now the boss says it is time to try a new job. I just know there is a perfect job for me here at Big Picture Airlines. I have to be patient and keep praying that God will help me figure it all out.

Oh, yeah. I have to tell you about my new job. This week I get to help the air traffic controller in the air traffic control tower. I am so excited! It is a super serious job and a very important job to help every plane fly safely. I can't wait to get up in the tower and see everything that happens.

So where are you all going this week? You don't know? Have you looked at the map? Come on. I will help you read the timeline map and discover where you will travel to next.

• timeline map

Timeline map (1 minute)

Leader • So last week you went where? Noah's ark is right. So here is Noah and the ark on your timeline, and right next to that it says: "The Tower of Babel." Hey! What a coincidence! We are both going to a tower today. Have you all ever visited the Tower of Babel before? That's not the one that is leaning to the side is it? No? Oh. The leaning tower is called the "Leaning Tower of Pisa." Wow! You all are so smart. So the Tower of Babel sounds like a cool place to visit.

• "You Are God Alone"
and other songs of
your choice

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

Leader • Hey, before we travel to our towers, we should sing. God is so great. Last week we learned how He saved Noah and his family from the flood. God also sent Jesus to save us from our sins. Our song reminds us that

God is the only true God and His name and His praise will last forever. Sing with me to praise God for being so wonderful.

Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- “You Are God Alone” (unit theme song)
- “Indescribable”
- “Who He Says I Am”
- “How Great Thou Art”
- “God of Wonders”

Group demonstration (6 minutes)

- 16 oz. drinking cups, 8
- table tennis balls, 10 or more

Leader • Wow! What a great group of singers you all are.

That was some amazing worship of our God. You know you all are such a great group to travel with, do you mind if I go with you to visit the Tower of Babel? I have about an hour before I have to be in the air traffic control tower. Oh, thank you. I just love reading the Bible and discovering the big picture of God’s story. Before we read our Bible story, I have a challenge for some of you.

Select five kids to participate in the demonstration.

Challenge the five boys and girls to complete the following activity by working together. Explain that this is not a race but a team challenge.

Give two players four cups stacked together. The other three players will bounce a table tennis ball for the first player to catch in her cup. Once a ball is caught in a cup, the player must remove one cup from the bottom of her team’s stack, place it on top of the cup with the table tennis ball in it, and catch another table tennis ball in the new cup. Continue play until all four cups have a table tennis ball.

Leader • By working together you were able to complete the challenge. Working together is very important, but sometimes we don't always choose to work together to accomplish the right things. Have you ever seen a friend help another friend do something wrong like cheat on a test, lie to her parents, or disobey her parents? Or maybe you've been a friend who helped someone do something wrong. That is similar to what happened at the Tower of Babel.

Big picture question (1 minute)

Leader • Before we can visit the Tower of Babel, we need to find our big picture question. There it is on our flight screen. Our big picture question is *What happens when people choose to sin?* That is a pretty big question. Are you all ready to fly to Babel now? On the timeline map it says that Bible story about the Tower of Babel is in Genesis 11.

Tip: If you don't have a projection screen, write the question on a large piece of paper and post it in a very visible place on stage.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 11. Choose to tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or show the Bible story video "The Tower of Babel."

- Bibles
- "The Tower of Babel" video (optional)
- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- Bible story picture side or poster (enhanced CD)

Leader • That was a sad story. Once again people chose to disobey God, and they chose to work together to disobey God. They didn't do what God told them, and they didn't help each other obey God's commands. Our big picture question was *What happens when people choose to sin? Sin separates people from God and each other, but God's plan is to heal relationships.*

Sin always has consequences even though we do not always see the consequences immediately. The people of Babel rejected God's plan to follow their own plan. The

result of their sin was that it separated them from God and one another.

God's plan to heal relationships was to send Jesus through the nation of Israel to die for our sins. Colossians 1:20-22 reveals that Jesus has reconciled us to God or healed our relationship with God by dying for our sins. When we become a Christian our relationship with God is healed because Jesus paid the price for our sin so we could be forgiven. God's plan did not include people building a tower to reach heaven. God's plan was to reach down to people by sending Jesus to earth to reconcile us to God.

Jesus also heals our relationship with others. One day there will be no more sin to separate people from God and each other. All Christians of every language and nation will worship Jesus, the King of the Nations, together in heaven.

Option: You may choose to share how to become a Christian using the guide provided.

Tip: Anytime you share how to become a Christian in a large group environment, try to have counselors available to meet one-on-one with kids. Make sure kids know who they can talk to and when they can talk.

Review (5 minutes)

1. Where were the people traveling from? (*the east, Genesis 11:2*)
2. What did the people use to build the tower? (*bricks for stone and asphalt for mortar, Genesis 11:3*)
3. What did God confuse or change to stop the people from continuing to sin? (*the language of the people, Genesis 11:7*)
4. ***What happens when people choose to sin? Sin separates people from God and each other, but God's plan is to heal relationships.***
5. Jesus was born into what nation? (*Through the nation of Israel, Christ would come to save the world.*)

- suitcase, 1 per team
 - 1 set of building items
- Items can be anything you have that will fit inside the suitcase. They do not have to be traditional building materials. Here are some suggestions: wooden craft sticks, graham crackers, sugar cubes, spaghetti noodles, old newspapers, tape, building blocks, cotton swabs, index cards, deck of cards.

- key passage poster or slide (enhanced CD)
- “In His Own Image”

Group game (10 minutes)

The amazing suitcase race

Invite ten or twelve kids to participate in today’s game.

Form two or three teams.

Leader • Since we have been talking about towers today, your challenge is to open your suitcase and build a tower with the items inside. The best tower will be the winner. Each player may only make one move or addition to the tower at a time. All the players on the team must equally participate in building the tower.

After a minute of play, inform the players that they may no longer talk to each other. They cannot gesture with their hands or use any other form of communication to talk with their team. Congratulate all the participants when they finish their towers.

Leader • Was it harder to build your tower when you could not communicate? We built a tower for fun, but the Tower of Babel was not built for fun. It was built in disobedience to God’s command. God confused the languages of the people so the people had to stop disobeying Him. The people should have followed God’s instructions to scatter and fill the earth. We should obey God’s commands.

Key passage (4 minutes)

Leader • That reminds me about the flight plan. Does anyone remember our key passage from the flight plan? We were created in God’s image to bring Him glory. When we disobey His commands like the people did at Babel, we do not bring glory to God. We can bring glory to God by obeying His commands.

Invite one or two volunteers to quote the verse from memory. Sing “In His Own Image.”

Missions (7 minutes)

Leader • Because of the disobedience of the people at the Tower of Babel, people speak very different languages. This is sometimes a challenge for missionaries when they want to go to another country and tell people about Jesus. Many missionaries will go to language school to help them learn the language of the country they will or do live in. Some missionaries also help translate the Bible into the language of the people they live among because the people do not have a Bible in their own language that they can read and understand. Missionaries also learn languages by talking to the people in the area in which they live. Maggie McIntire is a missionary kid in Senegal. Watch and listen to discover how many languages Maggie can speak.

Show “Go West.” The video “Go West” details the life of the McIntire family serving in Senegal.

Leader • Maggie and her family aren’t allowing all the different languages to keep them from telling others about Jesus. We shouldn’t allow anything to keep us from sharing about Jesus with our friends and family.

Announcements (2 minutes)

Leader • I need all passengers to find their seats. I want to thank you for flying on Big Picture Airlines. Before we leave I have a few announcements.

Make any announcements from your children’s ministry.

Prayer (2 minutes)

Leader • Oh, look at the time. I need to report to the air traffic control tower to learn how to do my new job. I am so excited to see if God’s plan is for me to become an air traffic controller, helping keep all the planes and

passengers safe.

What a great flight we had today! The people at the Tower of Babel learned a very important lesson about obeying God. *What happens when people choose to sin? Sin separates people from God and each other, but God's plan is to heal relationships.* God always wants us to choose to obey Him because we were created to bring glory to God. Obeying God is one of the ways we can bring glory to God.

Close in prayer. Pray that boys and girls will remember to obey God and help their friends choose to obey God, too. Thank God for sending Jesus to heal our relationship with God.

Dismiss

Additional idea

Language confusion game

- Language Confusion Game Suggestions
- index cards
- marker
- Use the list provided to select words or phrases to write on index cards.

Distribute index cards to boys and girls. Explain that half of the cards have an English word/phrase on them. The other half of the cards have the same words but in a different language. Boys and girls need to find the word or phrase that matches their card. When they think they have the right match, they should form a single line facing the teacher and hold up their cards.

After a few minutes of play, the teacher will announce how many matches are correct but will not reveal which matches are correct. Boys and girls may rearrange to find a new match. Repeat until all the words have been matched correctly.

Leader • Speaking a different language than someone else can be a challenge. When God confused the languages of the people, they could no longer work together to disobey

Him. ***What happens when people choose to sin? Sin separates people from God and each other, but God's plan is to heal relationships.*** God sent Jesus to rescue us and reconcile or heal our relationship with God and each other.

Language Confusion Game Suggestions

- *Salam!* : Hello! (Turkem and Azeri languages)
- *Khosh amadin!* : Welcome! (Farsi language)
- *Aebakhshid!* : Excuse me! (Farsi)
- *Yakshimusuz!* : How are you? Are you doing well? (Uyghur)
- *Çok memnun oldum!* : Nice to meet you! (Turkish)
- *Jook an jal:* Thank you (Sereer)
- *Ee nee sogoma:* Good morning (Bambara)
- *I ni su:* Good evening (Bambara)
- *I tow goh bay di?* : What is your name? (Jula)
- *An be koh fe:* I'll see you later (Jula)
- *Somogodo?* : How are your people? (Jula)
- *Mate fu?* : How's your family/house? (Zerma)
- *Ay ga Irikoy Sabu:* I thank God (Zerma)
- *Kal nda ton ton:* Good bye (Zerma)
- *Asalaamalekum:* Peace be unto you (Arabic/Wolof)
- *A la tantu:* Praise God (Susu)
- *Tana mu na na?* : Everything okay? (Susu)
- *Ameena:* Amen (Maninka)
- *Que Dieu vous benisse:* God bless you (French)
- *Je m'appelle ...* : My name is ... (French)

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

What? Job? Why now? Most biblical authorities believe, based on subject matter and language, that Job was a contemporary to the patriarchs. Job fits chronologically into this period of history.

The story of Job helps Christians see God alone is all-powerful, sovereign, and good. Job's story is one all people can relate to, as everyone will suffer in his or her lifetime. God's dialogue with Job reveals His characteristics clearly.

Have you ever in your life commanded the morning or assigned the dawn its place? (Job 38:12) God is all-powerful! Does the eagle soar at your command and make its nest on high? (Job 39:27) God is sovereign. Who provides the raven's food when its young cry out to God and wander about for lack of food? (Job 38:41) God is good.

Throughout all of Job's suffering, Job never stopped trusting God. Listen to Job's response to God's questions: "I am so insignificant. How can I answer You?" (Job 40:4) Job didn't understand his suffering, but he understood who God is. While the Book of Job speaks volumes to the problem of human suffering, it is also an important picture of how a suffering person should relate to God. Though Job sometimes doubted God, he never turned away. Job's suffering actually brought him closer to God.

Pray that you will help the kids you teach understand the story of Job and its implications. Point them to the true suffering servant, Jesus, who was truly innocent yet suffered greatly so that we could be brought closer to God in both our suffering and in our joy. Job reminds us that following Jesus will be worth it. God is good, present, and in control. We can trust Him when we don't understand the pain we have to endure. At the cross God used the ultimate pain to bring about the ultimate good, our future and final salvation from sin.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: Job

Bible Passage: Job 1–42

Big Picture Question: Who is in control? God is all-powerful, sovereign, and good.

Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

Kids Worship

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The BIBLE STORY

Job

Job 1–42

Job was a wealthy man known as the greatest man in the area where he lived. Job was also known as a man of perfect integrity who tried to resist sin. He had a relationship with God and was committed to following God's plan.

One day Satan came before God. God asked Satan if he had noticed Job, a man who followed God. God said that no one on earth was like Job. Satan claimed that Job only followed God because God had protected and blessed Job. He said that if God took away all Job owned, then Job would not follow God anymore. So God gave Satan permission to take away all Job owned, but he was not allowed to hurt Job. Satan sent men to steal Job's oxen, donkeys, and camels, and he sent lightning to kill Job's sheep. He also caused Job's children to die. In one day Job lost all of his wealth and his children, but Job continued to follow God.

Again Satan came before God. God again asked him if he had noticed Job. God told him that even after all Satan had done, Job still followed God and kept his integrity. Satan said that if Job became sick, he would not praise God anymore. So God gave Satan permission to make Job sick, but God would not let Satan kill Job. Job became ill with boils all over his skin. His wife thought he should blame God. But Job told her that God was always in control whether Job experienced good times or bad times.

Three of Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, came to visit him so they could comfort him. Job shared with his friends how confused and grieved he was over all he had experienced. Instead of comforting Job, his friends told him that Job must have sinned to cause these bad things to happen to him. His friends believed that suffering only came to people who sin. They believed that Job was being punished for a sin he had committed and that Job should repent so God could restore his good fortune.

Job was very upset that his friends had not comforted him and that they did not believe he was innocent. Job responded that he knew he had not sinned. Job wished he had a mediator to represent him before God. Because Job could not explain why he was suffering, he wanted some

answers from God. Job wanted God to come tell his friends that he was innocent and to answer Job's questions about why he was suffering. As Job's friends insisted he must have sinned, Job became depressed and questioned whether God was just and why God was silent and would not answer his questions.

Finally Elihu, another friend of Job's, explained that God was not silent. Elihu accused Job of insisting on his own righteousness to the point that he implied God was unjust. Elihu argued that God was righteous, merciful, and just. He reminded Job that God was all-powerful and sovereign over all.

After Elihu spoke to Job, God spoke to Job through a whirlwind. God asked Job if he was there when God made the earth. Was Job the one who told the sea where it should stop? Did Job decide when the sun would rise or when it would snow? Did Job put the stars in the sky? God asked if Job knew when all the animals had their babies or if he was able to tell the eagles when to fly in the sky. God used all of these questions to help Job understand that God was sovereign and all-powerful. Job was a human who was not capable of fully understanding God's plans. He should have known to trust that God had control over everything and that God could use even the bad things that happened to Job for good.

God gave Job the opportunity he wanted earlier, to speak directly to God about his suffering. Job realized that he had spoken about things he did not understand, and he repented of his earlier words and attitude.

God restored all of Job's wealth and doubled the amount of possessions he had before he lost them all. All of his relatives and former friends came to a special dinner at Job's house to comfort Job. Job had 10 more children and lived 140 years after his suffering. He saw his grandchildren and great-grandchildren be born and grow up before he died.

Christ Connection: Job's suffering and his request for a mediator gives us a glimpse of our Savior, Jesus. Neither Job nor Jesus experienced suffering because they had sinned. Unlike Job, Jesus never questioned why He had to suffer. Jesus understood that we needed Him to pay the price for our sin and be our mediator before God.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: Job

Bible Passage: Job 1–42

Big Picture Question: Who is in control? God is all-powerful, sovereign, and good.

Key Passage: Genesis 1:27

Unit Christ Connection: God knew we would sin, and Jesus, our Creator, came to redeem us and protect us from the wrath of God by suffering for us.

Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video playing as your kids arrive, set it to end as worship time begins.

- passport holder, box of facial tissues, suitcase for the leader

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

[Leader enters wearing ordinary clothing, passport holder, box of facial tissues, and suitcase.]

Character insight: Enter with a mood of dejection and depression. You also are sick with a cold, so sniff, cough, and pretend to sneeze on occasion.

Leader • Hello. Welcome to Big Picture Airlines, where way up high you can see the big picture. How are you all? I am not good. I have just had the worst week. First, the boss said I couldn't work in the air traffic control tower anymore. The air traffic controller asked me to bring her some coffee since she had to work so late. I poured the coffee. I even added the right amount of cream and sugar, but then I spilled it all over the floor. Then, the boss slipped in the coffee and fell. He wasn't hurt, but he was covered in hot coffee. He wasn't exactly mad, but he said that the air traffic control tower was super important and we couldn't risk the air traffic controller falling and getting hurt. If the air traffic controller was hurt, then no one could tell the planes when to take off and land. That would be too dangerous.

I think the boss felt bad about it all when I started to cry. So he said I could go on vacation to anywhere Big Picture Airlines flew. I rushed home and packed my bags to go to the beach. I was so excited to go someplace new and exciting. I was thrilled to just be a passenger. But that didn't work out too well either.

I missed my connecting flight and had to spend all night sitting in the airport while waiting for the next plane. On my new plane I sat next to this really nice girl who had a cold. So for eight hours she coughed. She sneezed. And she sniffed all the way to our destination. By the time we got off the plane I had a cold, too. We went down to baggage claim to find our luggage, and my luggage wasn't there. My luggage was in Topeka, Kansas, not the beach. There isn't even a beach in Topeka, Kansas. So I spent my whole vacation sick and without my luggage. And on top of that it rained the whole time. The lifeguard said we couldn't get in the ocean because the rainstorm made the waves and the current too strong. It was a really, really, really, really bad trip. I am so glad to be back home.

Have you all ever had a really bad week like that? Well I hope your trip today is better than my trip was. Where are you all going today? What! You don't know yet? We should look at the map and find out.

• timeline map

Timeline map (1 minute)

Leader •OK, remind me again. Where did you go last week? The tower of Pisa? Oh the Tower of Babel. That's right, and we learned that sin separated people from God and each other, but God's plan is to heal relationships. I am so glad our relationship with God can be healed because of Jesus. Your map says you are going to job

next. What did you say? That's not job, it's Job. It's spelled like job, but his name is pronounced "JOHB." OK, I got it. Let's review the big picture question for everywhere you have traveled.

Big picture question (3 minutes)

Review each of the big picture questions from the unit.

Week one: *Who created everything? God created the world and people to bring Him glory.*

Week two: *What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law, and it separates people from God.*

Week three: *Why does sin separate people from God? God is holy and separate from sin.*

Week four: *What happens when people choose to sin? Sin separates people from God and each other, but God's plan is to heal relationships.*

Leader • On my vacation all this bad stuff was happening to me, and I wasn't sure why. It felt like everything was out of control. I wonder if today's big picture question and Bible story about Job will help me understand? Do you all see our big picture question anyway? Is it on the Big Picture Airlines announcement screen? There it is. Read it with me. *Who is in control?* Let's open our Bibles to the Book of Job and find the answer to our question.

Tell the Bible story (9 minutes)

Open your Bible and tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or show the Bible story video "Job."

Leader • The bad things that Job experienced is called *suffering*. Bad things don't only happen to bad people. Because of sin in the world, bad things can happen to all people. Sometimes bad things do happen to us as a

- large poster board with this week's big picture question printed on it (not the answer)
- tape
- Attach the poster board to a prominent spot on your set.

Option: If you are using a projection screen, you may wish to project the big picture questions.

- Bibles
- "Job" video (optional)
- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- Bible story picture slide or poster (enhanced CD)

Tip: Tell the Bible story with your Bible open to the Scripture passage you are teaching.

consequence of our choice to sin. But Job shows us that sometimes bad things happen because once Adam and Eve sinned, our world was no longer perfect. Job teaches us that when bad things happen, God is still in control. He can bring something good out of the bad.

As you continue to travel through the big picture of God's story, you will hear more stories about how God used some bad events to make some very good things happen. In the Bible story, we saw that Job was reminded of the answer to our big picture question. Our question was ***Who is in control?*** The answer is that ***God is all-powerful, sovereign, and good.*** Say the question and answer with me. ***Who is in control? God is all-powerful, sovereign, and good.*** We can always trust God to take care of us. *All-powerful* means that God owns all power and He can do anything He wants. *Sovereign* means that God is in control of all things and accomplishes whatever He pleases. *Good* means worthy of approval. God is good and everything He does is good.

We can also learn from Job's friends about how to help our friends when they are going through a bad or sad time. Job needed to hear the truth about God from his friends. We can encourage our friends that God loves and cares for them. God loved people so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior and Lord.

Review (4 minutes)

Spend a few minutes reviewing the Bible story with the kids.

1. God told Satan that Job was a man of perfect _____ . (*integrity, Job 1:8; 2:3*)

-
2. Name one of the bad things that happened to Job.
(He lost his possessions, his children died, he became sick with boils; Job 1:14-19; 2:7)
 3. Name one of Job's three friends. *(Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar; Job 2:11)*
 4. What did Job's friends say was the reason that people suffer? *(People suffer because they have sinned, Job 4:8)*
 5. What happened at the end of the story of Job? *(God restored his property, doubled his possessions, and gave Job 10 children; Job 42:10,13)*
 6. ***Who is in control? God is all-powerful, sovereign, and good.***
 7. Name a way we can respond when bad things happen.
 8. Job wished he had a mediator before God. Who is our mediator, representing us before God? *(Jesus understood that we needed Him to pay the price for our sin and be our mediator before God.)*

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

• “You Are God Alone”
and other songs of
your choice

Leader • We should praise God for being all-powerful, sovereign, and good. He is always in control.

Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Select three or four songs to sing during this time of worship.

Song suggestions:

- “You Are God Alone” (unit theme song)
- “Indescribable”
- “Who He Says I Am”
- “How Great Thou Art”
- “God of Wonders”

- sugar
- milk
- water
- chocolate syrup
- flour
- measuring cups
- bowls
- 3 small packages of instant chocolate pudding mix, remove the box and any instructions
- Save 1 set of instructions to give to Group 3.
- 3 whisks
- plenty of adult supervision

Tip: Be aware of any allergies kids may have. Post an allergy alert sign for parents to see as they drop off their kids. Choose kids who do not have any food allergies to participate in the demonstration.

Group demonstration (10 minutes)

Select nine kids to form three teams of three. Each team needs a table of ingredients and supplies and an adult leader to help and supervise. The goal is to make chocolate pudding using the ingredients on the table. Each team will also be given some advice to help it decide how to make its dessert. Teams may choose to follow the advice or make their own decisions. Ask each adult leader to assist the group with the following advice but to refrain from helping too much.

- **Group 1:** You are making chocolate pudding. You may use any of the ingredients on the table in any amount. Start with the pudding mix.
- **Group 2:** You are making chocolate pudding. Chocolate pudding needs this pack of chocolate pudding mix and some milk. You may choose to also use any other ingredients on the table that you think are needed to make the pudding correctly.
- **Group 3:** You are making chocolate pudding. Chocolate pudding needs this pack of pudding mix and milk. Follow this set of instructions from the pudding box to make the perfect pudding.

Give each group a chance to share with the audience what it chose to put in the pudding and what advice it was given.

Leader • The advice each group was given influenced the choices each group made. What if I told one of the groups to add salt to the pudding? Would that have made a difference? The pudding would have tasted awful. We have to be wise in how we choose to help our friends. We should always help our friends understand the truth about God, Jesus, and the Bible. God is holy and He cannot lie. His Word is always true and Jesus will help us understand what choices to make.

- Several suitcases of different sizes and shapes. You may choose to label them with destinations to help everyone identify each one.
- piece of paper the size of an airplane boarding pass
- prizes of your choice, optional

Option: Assign each small group a specific suitcase to point to. Make sure one group will point to the correct suitcase.

- key passage poster or slide (enhanced CD)
- "In His Own Image"

Group game (5 minutes)

The amazing suitcase race

Leader •The object of today's game is to choose the suitcase that has a plane ticket inside.

Participant must exit the room or stand where he cannot see the suitcases or hear you give instructions. The leader must place the ticket inside one suitcase. Inform the remaining boys and girls that they may choose to advise the player which suitcase is the right suitcase or they may point to the wrong suitcase. Bring the participant back and allow him to continue choosing a suitcase until he selects the right one.

Leader •How hard was it to decide which suitcase to pick? Did everyone give you the right advice? People do not always tell us the right choice to make. When we give someone advice or when we receive advice from someone, we should always check to see if it agrees with the Bible. Any advice that does not agree with the Bible is bad advice.

Key passage (3 minutes)

Leader •Our world today can tell us many things that may not be in agreement with the Bible. Some people in our world do not believe that God created people. But we learned at the beginning of our unit that God made the world and He made people. He made people to bring Him glory. The Bible even tells us how special God made people. Does anyone remember our key passage and what it tells us about how God made people?

Guide boys and girls to read the key passage, then guide them to say the passage from memory without seeing the poster or slide. Sing "In His Own Image."

-
- “The Least of These” mission video

Missions (7 minutes)

Leader • When Job was suffering his three friends came to help him. They thought they knew what to say and do, but they didn’t help Job. They did not help Job find hope and focus on God’s sovereignty. As Christians we often have the opportunity to help people who are suffering. Watch this video to discover how missionaries in Zimbabwe are helping people who are suffering find hope and learn to know and love God.

Show “The Least of These.”

“The Least of These” video details how missionaries are helping AIDS patients medically and spiritually at the Sanyati Hospital in Zimbabwe.

Leader • You can also look for ways to help people who are suffering. You can pray for your friends and family when they are having a bad day. You can tell others about Jesus and how to become a Christian. All of these are good ways to help people who are suffering.

Announcements (1 minute)

Leader • I need all passengers to find their seats. I want to thank you for flying on Big Picture Airlines. Before we leave I have a few announcements.

Make any announcements from your children’s ministry.

Prayer (2 minutes)

Leader • Wow! What an adventure we have had today. Oh, thank you. It’s a note from Big Picture Airlines.

Dear _____, Because of your hard work at our airline and your willingness to try many jobs to find the one that God has planned for you, we are happy to invite you to attend our special pilot school starting tomorrow. At pilot school you will learn everything

- piece of paper in an envelope
- Enlist a helper to deliver the envelope after the announcements.

you need to know to be a pilot for Big Picture Airlines. Congratulations. Signed, Boss.

Did you all hear that? I am going to be a pilot! I'm gonna be a pilot, I'm gonna be a pilot, I'm gonna be a pilot! Oh, sorry. I forgot you all were there for a moment. Can you believe this? I finally know what God's plan is for me here at Big Picture Airlines. I will be able to fly people like you all over the world and help them learn about the big picture of God's story. I have to go pack for pilot school. I am glad I got to meet you all and travel with you. You are a great group. Before I go let me pray for you all. I hope you have many more great adventures as you continue to follow your map and discover more of God's story, His plan to send Jesus.

Close in prayer.

Dismiss

Additional idea

I got your back balloon race

Guide kids to form pairs. At your signal each pair will hold a balloon between their backs and race from one point to another. Allow two or more pairs to race each another.

Leader • Job's friends did not "have Job's back." When he needed their encouragement and support the most, they did not give it. They thought they were helpful, but they weren't because they did not tell Job the whole truth about God. Because of Job's integrity and prayer for his friends, God forgave Job's friends. Because of Jesus' perfect integrity and His death on the cross for our sins, God forgives us when we ask Him to.

• balloons, inflated

Tip: Beware of any allergies to latex. You may need to substitute a playground ball for the balloon.

Option: Use the additional idea if you have extra time or as a substitute for the group game or group demonstration. The additional idea typically will require some assistance from other leaders.

Tip: When kids ask questions about how to know and love God, you can use this guide to explain how to become a Christian.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Unit 2: GOD'S COVENANT WITH PEOPLE

Big Picture Questions

Session 1: Why did God choose Abraham? God chose Abraham to be part of His covenant plan to send Jesus to earth to bring us salvation.

Session 2: Who always keeps His covenant? God is always faithful to keep His covenant; people should always trust God.

Session 3: How can we show we believe God's plan? We obey God even when He asks us to do things we don't understand.

Unit 2: GOD'S COVENANT WITH PEOPLE

Unit Description: After sin entered the world, God's plan to redeem His people began through the person of Abraham. God gave Abraham specific promises related to his offspring. God revealed His plan for redemption through Jesus Christ, a descendant of Abraham. God's promises to Abraham are still being fulfilled today.

Unit Key Passage: Genesis 17:7

Unit Christ Connection: Jesus is the true Son of promise whom God provided as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

Session 1: God's Covenant with Abraham

Genesis 12:2-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9

Session 2: The Sons of Abraham

Genesis 16:1-16; 17:15-22; 21:1-7

Session 3: God Tested Abraham

Genesis 22:1-19

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

To understand today's story, it is important to know that Abram, a descendant of Noah's son Shem (Gen. 11:10-26), came from a family who were pagans. Unlike Noah, they worshiped other gods. (See Josh. 24:2.) God communicated with Abram, who became the next person to take a very prominent role in God's plan of human redemption.

In Genesis 12, God spoke to Abram, calling him to leave behind his family and his lands to go to a place God would show him. God promised to make Abram into a great nation and to make his name great. By faith, Abram obeyed.

Genesis 15 starts with God's promising a great reward to Abram. Notice Abram's response: "What can You give me, since I am childless?" That's when God made a great promise to Abram: Your offspring will be as numerous as the stars.

God also promised to give Abram land, and God gave specific instructions to Abram for confirming the covenant. In Abram's time, when a covenant was made between two people, the animals would be split and both parties would walk through them as to say, "If I do not hold up my end of the covenant, may I be like these dead animals." What is different about this covenant? Only the smoking fire pot and flaming torch passed through, symbolizing that God alone would be responsible for upholding the covenant.

Years passed and Abram still had no children. God was serious about the covenant. In fact, He changed Abram's name, which means "The Father Is Exalted," to Abraham, which means "Father of a Multitude."

Show kids how Jesus fulfilled God's promise to Abraham. Jesus would bless all people by causing them to turn away from their sins. (See Acts 3:25-26.)

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: God’s Covenant with Abraham

Bible Passage: Genesis 12:2-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9

Big Picture Question: Why did God choose Abraham? God chose Abraham to be part of His covenant plan to send Jesus to earth to bring us salvation.

Key Passage: Genesis 17:7

Unit Christ Connection: Jesus is the true Son of promise whom God provided as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

Kids Worship

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The BIBLE STORY

God's Covenant with Abraham

Genesis 12:2-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9

There was a man named Abram who lived with his wife, Sarai. Abraham was a descendant of Noah, and he and his family had spread out in the earth. God chose Abram and promised Abram three things: that he would make his name great, that he would have a big family, and that he would be blessed. God visited Abram in a vision and said, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield; your reward will be very great."

This was a good promise, but Abram was sad. He didn't have any children to inherit his blessing. "One of my slaves will be my heir," Abram said. But God had a better plan. He took Abram outside. "Look at the sky and count the stars, if you can," God said. Abram couldn't count the stars. There were too many! "Your offspring will be that numerous," God promised. Abram believed God, and God was pleased.

God also promised that Abram's family would keep the land they were living in. Abram asked, "How can I be sure?" So God confirmed His covenant with Abram. He gave Abram very special instructions to bring a cow, a goat, a ram, a turtledove, and a pigeon. Abram did as God asked, and a deep sleep came over him. While Abram was sleeping, God told him what would happen in the future. He said that Abram's family would be slaves in another country for 400 years before God would judge the nation and bless Abram's family. Despite this, Abram would live a long, peaceful life.

When it got dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch, representing God, passed between the animals. This showed that God would be responsible for keeping His promise.

Many years passed and Abram still didn't have the promised son. God hadn't forgotten, though. He appeared to Abram again and reminded him, "I am God Almighty. Live in My presence and be blameless. I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you greatly."

God was so serious about His promise that He changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means, "Father of a Great Multitude." God told Abraham

that he would be the father of nations, and even kings! “I will keep My covenant between Me and you, and your future offspring throughout their generations, as an everlasting covenant to be your God and the God of your offspring after you,” God said.

And God promised to give Abraham and his offspring all of the land of Canaan where they were residing. “I will be their God,” He said.

Christ Connection: God chose Abraham to be the father of the nation in which Jesus would be born. In this way, Abraham would bless all nations, as God had promised. God also saw Abraham’s faith in God’s promises and counted it as righteousness. It is our faith in Jesus’ perfect righteousness that brings salvation to God’s people.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: God’s Covenant with Abraham

Bible Passage: Genesis 12:2-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9

Big Picture Question: Why did God choose Abraham? God chose Abraham to be part of His covenant plan to send Jesus to earth to bring us salvation.

Key Passage: Genesis 17:7

Unit Christ Connection: Jesus is the true Son of promise whom God provided as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

• room decorations

Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas: Set up a tent on one side of your stage or classroom. If space is tight in your teaching area, consider using a child-size tent. On the other side of the stage, place a picnic table or a regular table covered in a checked tablecloth to resemble a picnic table. Place camping lanterns around the stage. If they are the oil type, please remove all the oil before placing them in a children’s environment. Roll out some sleeping bags at the front of the tent. Build a campfire by stacking wood logs in a circle. Place a log bench or camping chair by the campfire where “Ole Faithful” can sit to tell his/her stories.

• countdown video

Countdown

Show the countdown video playing as your kids arrive, set it to end as worship time begins.

• lantern, walking stick, or old tool box for leader (optional)

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

[Ole Faithful wears camping or hiking attire. Enter carrying a lantern and a walking stick or old tool box.]

Leader • Welcome to Covenant Campground. My name is _____, but around here they just call me “Ole Faithful,” ‘cause no matter what, I’ll be around to help

Character insight: "Ole Faithful" has been the caretaker of Covenant Campground for years. He/she is a wise, salt-of-the-earth type character who loves to sit around and talk to campers. He/she especially loves telling campers Bible stories around the campfire each night.

you out. I try to be faithful in everything I say and do because my God is faithful to me every day. I'm the caretaker here at Covenant. I oversee all our buildings and the land. If someone needs help with something, they usually just call Ole Faithful. If something breaks, I'll be the one to fix it. I've been here nigh-on 40 years. I'm guessing you guys are new when it comes to camping. I've seen a lot of campers come and go during my years. Camping is a lot of fun, but it's also a lot of work.

You all aren't those campers who like to bring their e-lectronics with them, are you? The other day one camper was unpacking and she had a TV, a little box that she said played music called an "i-something," a computer, a hair dryer, and a toaster. I don't know where she thought she would use that stuff. We don't have electricity or the Internet. All that stuff and no way to use it!

Let me ask, you all do know how to pack your food up tight so the bears don't get into it, right? I don't like having hungry campers who lost all their food to the bears. You all look a little nervous about being all the way out here in the woods with the bears and coyotes. You sure you're in the right place? I just mentioned bears and half of your leaders started looking a little pale and nervous. OK, let's make sure you all are in the right place. Do you have a map of where you are going?

• timeline map

Timeline map (3 minutes)

Leader • Oh, here. I see your map. And here is Covenant Campground on your map. Well it looks like you all are in the right place. And it says here on the map that you campers came to Covenant Campground to learn about a fella named Abram.

Well before you go to set up your tents, pull up a seat around the campfire, and I'll tell you the story of Abram. I love to tell stories around the campfire each night. It's a Covenant Campground tradition to gather around the campfire every night and tell about a part of God's story from His Word, the Bible. It's not quite nighttime but I'll go ahead and tell you tonight's story about Abram.

Now Abram's daddy was named Terah, and Terah's great-great-great-well a lot of greats-granddad was Noah. You campers have heard of Noah, right? Good. Well Abram had a long family tree, but it stopped with Abram. See Ole Abram didn't have any kids, but God had a big plan for Abram. God told Abram to leave his home and go to a land God would show him. And what do you know? Ole Abram packed up his family and moved. I think they understood a lot about camping before they finally arrived in Canaan, the land God showed Abram. One day God came to Abram and gave him a special promise, a covenant. That's why we call this campground Covenant Campground, 'cause the covenant God made with Ole Abram is important to all of us today.

Do you all know what a covenant is? A *covenant* is a promise between two people or between a person and God. One person promises to bless or serve another person in a specific way. Sometimes keeping the promise depends on one person's meeting conditions set by the other person. The covenant God gave Abram didn't require Abram to meet special conditions. The covenant God made with Abram would be fulfilled by God not Abram.

Big picture question (1 minute)

Leader • God chose Abraham to receive this special

covenant promise. Do you all know why? That is a good big picture question for our campfire. **Why did God choose Abraham?** Now don't go gettin' all excited like you know the answer. Calm down. We have to hear the Bible story to find the answer to our big picture question. Get comfy and I'll tell you all about Abram and the covenant.

- Bibles
- "God's Covenant with Abraham" video (optional)
- Bible story picture slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)

Tip: Always tell the Bible story with your Bible open.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 12. Tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or you may choose to show the Bible story video "God's Covenant with Abraham."

Leader • That was a mighty big covenant that God made with Abram. God even changed Abram's name to Abraham to demonstrate that Abraham was going to be the father of many nations of people. How do you think Abraham felt when God told him he would receive a big reward and have a lot of descendants? Can you imagine sitting there looking at all those stars and hearing that your offspring would be as numerous as those stars? *Offspring* is a word for descendants, family, or children. In this Bible story the word *offspring* describes Abraham's kids, his grandkids, his great-grandkids, and so forth.

The Bible says that Abraham chose to believe God. When God made the covenant with Abraham, God was choosing Abraham. Our big picture question asks **Why did God choose Abraham?** Why do you all think God chose Abraham?

Allow a couple of kids to share their ideas.

Leader • Read the big picture question and answer with me. **Why did God choose Abraham? God chose**

Abraham to be part of His covenant plan to send Jesus to earth to bring us salvation. Jesus was one of the many stars that God told Abraham would be like the number of his offspring. Jesus is a member of Abraham's family.

That's right. See, when Adam and Eve sinned, they created a big problem for everyone. The Bible tells us in Romans 3:23 that everyone sins. Sin separates us from God. We need God's plan of redemption. To *redeem* someone is to pay a price to get someone back. Jesus redeemed us when He died on the cross for our sins. He paid the price for our sin, so now we can be forgiven of our sins and follow Jesus as our Savior and Lord. I have a camp game that will help us understand this.

- lock and key that fit each other
- multiple keys that do not fit the lock
- Dump the keys out of a bucket onto the picnic table so kids can see how many keys they have to sort through.

Tip: Check with your local hardware store about keys that were cut incorrectly and see if you can buy a small batch of these throw away keys, or ask church members to donate one key that no longer opens anything they own. If you have more than 30 keys, you may want to pick more than five kids to play.

Group game (8 minutes)

Select five kids to play today's game. Explain the following rules to the boys and girls. The goal is to find the key that opens the lock. Only one key opens the lock. Each student may test only one key on her turn. Ask kids to return to their seats after they correctly locate the key.

Leader • God had only one plan to redeem us. The only way we can be forgiven by God and spend eternity with Him is to accept God's gift of salvation. Just like there was only one key in this stack that fit the lock, there is only one way to be saved. God's plan has always been to send Jesus to redeem us. Jesus was God's one and only plan for redemption.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (5 minutes)

Leader • Abraham was chosen to be a part of God's plan to send Jesus to redeem us. The Bible says that when we choose to trust Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we become part of Abraham's covenant (Galatians 3:9,14). We are

considered spiritual descendants or children of Abraham. Explain how to become a Christian using the guide provided.

- 2 books of same size and cover thickness
Note: The books must be the same size and cover thickness or the demonstration will not work properly.

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

Open the books and place one back cover on top of the other. Flip the pages of the books to intertwine the pages.

Ask two kids to assist you.

Leader • These books show us how a covenant is supposed to work. When two people make a covenant, it is the responsibility of both people to keep their promise. When that happens the covenant is strong and not broken. People don't always keep their covenant, but God always keeps His covenants. When God made His covenant with Abraham, nothing could keep God from keeping the covenant.

Allow the volunteers to each grasp the spine of a book and try to separate the two books by pulling.

Leader • God's covenant with Abraham could not be broken, just like they couldn't pull the books apart. God would fulfill His covenant to Abraham and give him many offspring, but Abraham would have to wait a while for that to come true. We'll talk more about that at another campfire.

- "Promises" and other songs of your choice

Tip: Select the number of songs to sing based on the amount of time you have. You may pick from the songs provided, a previous unit's songs or add songs from your own song library.

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

Leader • Every good campfire circle has a time for singing and praising the Lord. I think it's time we stood up and streeeeeetched and worshiped God for always keeping His covenant promises.

Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- “Promises” (unit theme song)
- “God’s Plan”
- “By Faith”
- “Have Faith in God”
- “Because of Who You Are”

- key passage poster or slide (enhanced CD)
- “I Will Keep My Covenant”

Key passage (4 minutes)

Leader • We have one more song to sing, and it is about your key passage. The key passage comes right from our story today and is part of the covenant promise God made to Abraham. Read the promise with me.

Guide kids to read the key passage together. Lead kids to sing “I Will Keep My Covenant.”

Leader • Abraham’s covenant would not just stop with him but would continue with his offspring for all generations. That means the promise is for his kids, his grandkids, his great-grandkids, and on and on forever.

Review (4 minutes)

Leader • You campers are some great singers, but let’s see how well you listened to Ole Faithful tell the Bible story. Invite kids to answer each question.

1. Who would be blessed because of Abraham? (*all the peoples on earth, Genesis 12:3*)
2. How many children did Abraham have? (*none, Genesis 15:2*)
3. What does the word *offspring* mean? (*children, grandchildren, and so forth; Abraham’s future family*)
4. What did God tell Abraham to count and why? (*the stars, and Abraham’s offspring would be as numerous as the stars; Genesis 15:5*)

-
5. God made a _____ with Abraham.
(*covenant, Genesis 17:2*)
 6. God told Abraham he would become the father of many _____. (*nations, Genesis 17:4*)
 7. **Why did God choose Abraham? God chose Abraham to be part of His covenant plan to send Jesus to earth to bring us salvation.**
 8. Whose perfect righteousness brought salvation to God's people? (*It is our faith in Jesus' perfect righteousness that brings salvation to God's people.*)

• "XTreme Missions:
Brad Lartigue"
missions video

Missions (5 minutes)

Leader • What a great covenant God made with Abraham.

God chose Abraham to be a part of His covenant plan of redemption through Jesus. God's plan of redemption is so amazing that we should tell everyone all about it. Let me tell you campers about one of my favorite places to camp and how a missionary there is working to tell people about God's covenant plan or redemption.

Show "XTreme Missions: Brad Lartigue" missions video.

Leader • Brad and his team have a big job trying to tell over 4,000 people about Jesus. We also have a big job of trying to tell our family, friends, neighbors, and other people we meet about Jesus here where we live.

Announcements (2 minutes)

Leader • Before I send you campers out to set up your tents for the night, let's go over our campground announcements.

Make any announcements from your children's ministry.

Prayer (2 minutes)

Leader • Well look at the time. I gotta get back to work.

The lakeside cabin has a leaky faucet that needs to be fixed. So I'm gonna mosey on up that way. It sure was nice to meet you, campers. I hope you have a good time here at Covenant Campground. *Why did God choose Abraham? God chose Abraham to be part of His covenant plan to send Jesus to earth to bring us salvation.* Join me in closing our campfire circle by praying.

Close in prayer.

Dismiss

Additional idea

Edible Torch

Assist boys and girls in making fiery edible torches by scooping sherbet into each cone. As they eat their snack, review the Bible story.

Leader • As a part of the covenant ceremony, God caused a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch to appear. These two things symbolized God and His commitment to the covenant. Our edible torch is our reminder that God will always keep His covenant.

God chose Abraham to be a part of His covenant plan to bring us salvation. We can be forgiven of our sins by God because Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

- mini ice cream cones
- orange or orange/red/yellow swirled sherbet
- paper towels
- ice cream scoops

Option: pre-made orange sherbet pop-up treats

Tip: Post an allergy alert.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

Abraham and Sarai had been living in Canaan for 10 years. Even though God had promised them more descendants than they could count, they still didn't have a child! So Sarai devised a plan to help God out. She gave her slave, Hagar, to her husband as a second wife (concubine).

The taking of a concubine by the husband of a barren woman was not unheard of in that day. It was a way to carry on the family name. Since Hagar was a slave in the household, Hagar's child would be Abraham's heir.

When Hagar became pregnant and began to disrespect Sarai, Sarai mistreated her until Hagar ran away. Hagar was probably returning to Egypt when an angel of the LORD found her in the wilderness. He asked her what she was doing and instructed her to return to Abraham and Sarai. The angel also gave Hagar a promise: she would have a son named Ishmael, because the Lord heard her cry of affliction.

Thirteen years after Ishmael was born, God changed Sarai's name to Sarah to reaffirm his promise of a son for Sarah. Sarah became pregnant and gave birth to Isaac, just as God had said.

Abraham and Sarah had waited 25 years for the son of promise. Even though Sarah tried to "help" God's plan, God was faithful to His promise. God can always be trusted.

Help the kids you teach understand that God fulfilled His promise to Abraham by giving him a son. Isaac was the hope of Abraham and Sarah for a future and a legacy. God also promised to send the Savior, Jesus Christ, through Abraham's family. Jesus ultimately fulfilled God's promise to Abraham, and He is the hope of the world for salvation and redemption.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: The Sons of Abraham

Bible Passage: Genesis 16:1-16; 17:15-22; 21:1-7

Big Picture Question: Who always keeps His covenant? God is always faithful to keep His covenant; people should always trust God.

Key Passage: Genesis 17:7

Unit Christ Connection: Jesus is the true Son of promise whom God provided as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

Kids Worship

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The BIBLE STORY

The Sons of Abraham

Genesis 16:1-16; 17:15-22; 21:1-7

God promised Abraham in His special covenant that he would have a child, but Abraham and Sarai still had no children. So Sarai decided she would try to solve the problem on her own. She told Abraham, “Since the Lord has prevented me from bearing children, go to my slave; perhaps through her I can build a family.”

Abraham agreed to marry Hagar. When Hagar became pregnant, she began to treat Sarai with disrespect. Sarai was upset, and she complained to Abraham. Abraham said, “Do whatever you want with her.” Sarai began to mistreat Hagar until Hagar ran away.

Hagar was in the wilderness when an Angel of the LORD found her near a spring of water. “Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?” the angel asked.

“I am running away from my mistress Sarai,” Hagar replied.

The Angel of the LORD told Hagar that she needed to return to Abraham and Sarai and do whatever Sarai said. Then the angel gave Hagar a promise: “I will greatly multiply your offspring. You have conceived and will have a son.” The Angel of the LORD told Hagar to name her son Ishmael because the Lord had heard her cry of affliction. He also told her that Ishmael would always be hostile and fight with other people, including his own family.

Hagar returned home and gave birth to her son. Abraham was 86 years old when Ishmael was born. Abraham now had a son! Had Sarai’s plan really worked? But Ishmael was not the son God would choose to be part of His special covenant with Abraham.

Abraham and Sarai continued to wait for 14 more years for God to give them their promised son. One day God appeared to Abraham and told him that he was changing Sarai’s name to Sarah, which means “princess.” God said, “I will bless her; indeed, I will give you a son by her. She will be remembered because her descendants will include entire nations and kings.”

Abraham laughed because he was a hundred years old, and Sarah was

ninety years old. How could Abraham and Sarah be parents when they were so old? Abraham wanted God to bless his son Ishmael instead, but God told Abraham that this was not His plan.

“In one year, Sarah will have a son,” God said. “I want you to name him Isaac. I will confirm My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his future offspring.” As for Ishmael, God said He would bless him too, but the covenant would only be for Isaac and his offspring.

A year later God kept His covenant with Abraham when Sarah gave birth to a son. Abraham named his son Isaac, just as God had instructed him. Abraham learned that God is always faithful to keep His covenant; everyone should always trust God.

Christ Connection: God fulfilled His promise to Abraham by giving him a son. Isaac was the hope of Abraham and Sarah for a future and a legacy. God fulfilled His promise to the world by giving us His Son. Jesus ultimately fulfilled God’s promise to Abraham, and He is the hope of the world for salvation and redemption.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: The Sons of Abraham

Bible Passage: Genesis 16:1-16; 17:15-22; 21:1-7

Big Picture Question: Who always keeps His covenant? God is always faithful to keep His covenant; people should always trust God.

Key Passage: Genesis 17:7

Unit Christ Connection: Jesus is the true Son of promise whom God provided as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

• countdown video

Countdown

Show the countdown video playing as your kids arrive, set it to end as worship time begins.

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

[Enter whistling or humming a tune, carrying some firewood for the campfire. Add the firewood to the campfire before noticing the kids.]

Leader • Well, hello there. It looks like you survived your first camping experience and you have returned to Covenant Campground. I bet you came back to see Ole Faithful so you can hear more of Ole Abraham's story. Well, camping can teach you some of the lessons that Ole Abraham had to learn. You know, starting this campfire reminds me of an important lesson from Abraham. See, at Covenant Campground we don't start a campfire with matches. No, no. We start the campfire the old way, with a rock and a piece of flint. To start a campfire you have to be patient. It takes practice to learn how to start a campfire. Some campers get impatient and they make mistakes by using the wrong stuff to light the campfire. Then they get hurt or someone else gets hurt. People can

Note: The story of Abraham's name change occurred in last week's lesson. To avoid confusion he is referred to as Abraham throughout this lesson.

create a lot of trouble when they decide to create their own way instead of listening to the instructions they are given.

That reminds me of our story about Abraham. Remember God had promised Ole Abraham that his offspring would be as numerous as the stars in the sky. After a few years Abraham and Sarai still didn't have any kids, so they decided they would help God's plan come true. But I think they forgot a couple of things, like being patient and trusting God to keep His covenant.

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

- basket of bean bags or table tennis balls
- bucket, 1 gallon size or larger
- Place the bucket 8–10 feet from the players.
- 2 prizes of your choice (optional)

Option: Allow the players to switch roles and play the game for a second time.

Leader • I need one volunteer. Good. Now here is a little twist. Before I can tell you about the game, you have to pick somebody to play the game for you. You will not play; he will play for you.

After the kid picks someone, explain that the playing partner will have 60 seconds to toss all the bean bags into a bucket. Play the game.

Leader • Who did you pick to play the game for you? Why did you pick that person? Did you trust her? Was it hard to trust your partner? Would you have rather played the game yourself? Is it hard to trust?

Congratulate both kids for playing. You may choose to give each kid a prize.

Leader • Trust can be hard. Our big picture question this week is *Who always keeps His covenant?* Listen to today's Bible story and see if Abraham and Sarai knew and believed the answer to our big picture question.

- Bible
- "The Sons of Abraham" video (optional)
- Bible story picture slide or poster (enhanced CD)

Tell the Bible story (9 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 16. Tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or you may choose to

show the Bible story video “The Sons of Abraham.”

Leader • From the beginning God’s plan was for Abraham and Sarah to be the parents of the son God promised Abraham. God would fulfill His covenant to make Abraham a father when *He* planned, not when *Abraham* planned. God chooses us to be a part of His plan, but He doesn’t need us to find ways to make His plan happen. Ole Abraham and Sarah created quite a mess when they decided they should help God. God’s plan was for Sarah to have the child God promised Abraham, but at the time God chose—not when Abraham and Sarah decided was the right time.

Trusting God is hard sometimes, and people make mistakes by trying to help God out by creating plans of their own. God would keep His covenant with Abraham, but He would keep it according to His plan, not the plan of Sarah and Abraham.

The people of Israel waited a long time to see God fulfill His covenant promise to Abraham that all people would be blessed through Abraham. God blessed people through Abraham when He sent His Son to earth to live, die, and rise from the grave to save us from sin.

The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me (5 minutes)

Leader • The people of Israel waited and hoped for a long time for salvation to come. And when Jesus did come, not everyone chose to believe He was God’s Son, sent to bring salvation and redemption. To become a Christian we have to choose Jesus to be our Lord and Savior. Last week we talked about how to become a Christian. Let’s review.

Use the guide provided to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian.

- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)

- 9 foam or plastic cups with a lid or containers that kids cannot see through
- roll of coins
- wide tape
- permanent marker
- Each container needs to have a strip of tape on it. Write 4 words of the key passage on each strip of tape. Write the Scripture reference on the 9th container.
- Place 1 coin in the 1st container, 2 coins in the 2nd container, and so forth.

Option: At the beginning of the game, cover the words of the key passage with a sticky note or a piece of paper. After a minute, reveal the key passage words and guide players to also use the words to help arrange the containers.

- key passage poster or slide (enhanced CD)
- "I Will Keep My Covenant"

Big picture question (1 minute)

Leader • Abraham and Sarah were reminded of the answer to our big picture question, *Who always keeps His covenant?* Campers, what do you think the answer is? Excellent answer. *God is always faithful to keep His covenant; people should always trust God.* Read the big picture question and answer with me. *Who always keeps His covenant? God is always faithful to keep His covenant; people should always trust God.* Do you all remember when God told Abraham about the covenant? Part of it is in our key passage.

Group game (8 minutes)

Leader • I think it's time we played a good ole campfire game to help us learn this key passage. The goal is to arrange the key passage in order. If you need help, inside the containers are coins. The container that has the first four words of the key passage has one coin inside. The container with the second four words of the key passage has two coins inside, and so forth. By shaking and feeling the weight of each container, it will help you arrange the key passage in order.

Select two volunteers to play the game. If needed, allow the audience to assist the volunteers in arranging any containers that are out of order.

Lead the group to say the key passage together.

Leader • *Who always keeps His covenant? God is always faithful to keep His covenant; people should always trust God.*

Key passage (4 minutes)

Ask if anyone has memorized the verse. Give one or two kids the opportunity to quote the verse. Remind kids they

only have one more week to work on memorizing this key passage.

Leader • It is time for our first campfire song. Stand with me and let's sing about God's covenant to Ole Abraham. Sing "I Will Keep My Covenant."

• "Promises" and other songs of your choice

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

Leader • Stay on your feet. It's time to praise God by singing some more of our campfire songs. Remember God will always keep His covenant promises.

Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- "Promises" (unit theme song)
- "God's Plan"
- "By Faith"
- "Have Faith in God"
- "Because of Who You Are"

Missions (7 minutes)

• "Adam's Trek" missions video

Leader • We know that the Bible tells us that we can trust God. God is always faithful to His covenant. In our world, many people have not heard that they can trust God. Some of these people have never heard of Jesus. Missionaries have a special job to teach people about God and how Jesus lived, died, and rose again to pay the price for their sin.

Show "Adam's Trek" missions video.

Leader • Did you all see the *yrta*? It looked a lot like a big tent to me. Can you imagine living in a big tent like the *yrta* in the winter? Adam and his family are working very hard to teach the people in the Kamchatka

region that they can trust God. Often missionaries need to demonstrate to the people that they can be trusted. When the people see that the missionaries are trustworthy, they are more willing to hear about God. We should remember to pray that the people in the Kamchatka region will learn the truth of our big picture question. ***Who always keeps His covenant? God is always faithful to keep His covenant; people should always trust God.***

Review (4 minutes)

Leader • It's time to see who was listening to Ole Faithful during the Bible story.

1. What was the name of Sarah's slave whom she told Abraham to marry? (*Hagar, Genesis 16:3*)
2. Who found Hagar in the wilderness? (*the Angel of the LORD, Genesis 16:7*)
3. God told Abraham that Sarah would have a son and name him what? (*Isaac, Genesis 17:19*)
4. Which son of Abraham did God promise to confirm His covenant with? (*Isaac, Genesis 17:21*)
5. ***Who always keeps His covenant? God is always faithful to keep His covenant; people should always trust God.***
6. Jesus is the hope of the world for what? (*Jesus ultimately fulfilled God's promise to Abraham, and He is the hope of the world for salvation and redemption.*)

Timeline map (1 minute)

• timeline map

Leader • I wonder what story I am going to tell you next week at the campfire. So far you have heard about "God's Covenant with Abraham" and "The Sons of Abraham." They are both listed here on your timeline map. Your

map says you guys want to hear another story about Ole Abraham at the next campfire. Oh, I know what story I'll tell you. It's a really good Bible story. Well, all the stories in the Bible are good stories. They are all a part of the big picture of God's story. I sure do love telling the stories from the Bible at our campfires.

Announcements (1 minute)

Leader • Before I send you campers out to cook up your dinner and build your campfires, let's go over today's announcements at Covenant Campground.

Make any announcements from your children's ministry.

Prayer (1 minute)

Leader • Looks like our campfire has burned out for now. It's time for me to take my daily walk around the campground and see how everyone's doing and if anyone needs help. Maybe I'll see some other campers, and I can tell them the story of "The Sons of Abraham." I'll see you all at the next campfire for another story about Ole Abraham. Since we end every campfire in prayer, do I have a camper who wants to pray for us?

Select a volunteer to close in prayer.

Dismiss

Additional idea

Father Abraham

Lead boys and girls to sing Father Abraham.

Father Abraham had many sons

Many sons had Father Abraham

I am one of them and so are you

So let's all praise the Lord.

(add actions, optional)

Repeat and either add an action each time or do a new action each time. (Sample actions: right arm swinging up and down, left arm swinging, right foot walking in place, left foot walking.) End motions and song with the instruction to "sit down."

Leader • God's covenant with Abraham can never be broken. Galatians 3:14 says those today who become Christians are considered sons and daughters of Abraham. God is always faithful to His promises.

Insights for Large Group Leaders

Sharing with boys and girls how to become a Christian in a large group environment can be challenging. Here are some tips to guide you as you present the gospel to kids.

- Focus on the gospel. Don't stress about reading every Scripture and every statement given in the guide. Focus on helping kids see their need for a Savior and how Jesus defeated sin.
- Allow kids an opportunity to respond without pressure from adults or peers. Try to have counselors available to meet one-on-one with kids. Make sure kids know who they can talk to and when they can talk.
- Be as concrete as possible. Avoid abstract or highly symbolic phrases like "inviting Jesus into your heart" or "the blood of Jesus covers you." Abstract phrases often lead to distraction and confusion in concrete thinkers.
- Limit conversation about baptism. Briefly clarify the distinction between baptism and salvation as needed.
- Keep the right perspective. Your role is to present the gospel as clearly as possible, but it's the Holy Spirit's role to convict. Don't put unnecessary pressure on yourself.
- Pray. Pray. Pray. Spend time in prayer as you prepare for the large group session. Pray during the large group time. Pray throughout the week for the kids who heard the gospel presentation.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

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

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

Can you image the conversation on that three-day journey? Scripture leads us to believe that they didn't talk about their destination until after the site had been revealed.

Was Isaac excited about going to sacrifice with his father? We soon get a glimpse into Isaac's thoughts when he questioned Abraham about the lamb for the sacrifice. Abraham answered that God Himself would provide. And God did indeed.

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

God provided a ram for the burnt offering, and after what we might imagine was quite a worship service, Abraham and Isaac returned home.

The parallel to Christ in this story is very clear. You can almost see the cross of Christ in the background. God provided a real lamb for Abraham, but for all of humanity He has provided the Lamb: His Son, Jesus Christ—the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: God Tested Abraham

Bible Passage: Genesis 22:1-19

Big Picture Question: How can we show we believe God’s plan? We obey God even when He asks us to do things we don’t understand.

Key Passage: Genesis 17:7

Unit Christ Connection: Jesus is the true Son of promise whom God provided as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

Kids Worship

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The BIBLE STORY

God Tested Abraham

Genesis 22:1-19

God kept His promise to give Abraham a son, but God wanted to make sure He was the most important thing in Abraham's life. So He decided to test Abraham to see if he would remain faithful.

"Abraham," God said. "Here I am," Abraham answered. God instructed Abraham to take Isaac to the mountain and sacrifice him. A *sacrifice* is anything of value brought to God as a way to show obedience, love, thanksgiving, or the need for forgiveness. During Old Testament times, a sacrifice usually involved killing an animal. This time, God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac instead.

Abraham obeyed God. He got up early the next day and left with Isaac, two servants, and a donkey carrying supplies. It took three days before he got to the mountain where God wanted him to make the sacrifice. Abraham asked his servants to stay with the donkey, and he and Isaac headed up the mountain with the supplies for the sacrifice.

Isaac noticed something was missing. "My father," he said, "Where is the lamb for the offering?"

Abraham answered, "God Himself will provide the lamb."

When they got to the place God had directed them, Abraham built an altar and placed the wood on top. He then placed Isaac on top of the wood. Just as Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, the Angel of the LORD called out, "Abraham, Abraham!"

The angel continued, "Do not lay a hand on the boy or do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your only son from Me."

Abraham looked up and saw a ram trapped by its horns in the bushes. He offered the ram instead of Isaac to God. Abraham named the place, "The LORD Will Provide."

The angel spoke to Abraham again, reminding him that God would remain true to the covenant the two shared. God promised to bless Abraham, making his family as numerous as all the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashores. He promised victory over Abraham's enemies and

blessing to all the earth because Abraham had obeyed.

Christ Connection: Abraham showed his faith in God when he was willing to sacrifice Isaac. Isaac also showed he was ready to do what his father said. This is a clear picture of God who was willing to sacrifice His only Son, and of Jesus who was willing to do what was necessary for God's plan of salvation. Isaac's life was spared because God provided a substitute. We need a perfect sacrifice as our substitute for sin. God provided a perfect sacrifice in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: God Tested Abraham

Bible Passage: Genesis 22:1-19

Big Picture Question: How can we show we believe God's plan? We obey God even when He asks us to do things we don't understand.

Key Passage: Genesis 17:7

Unit Christ Connection: Jesus is the true Son of promise whom God provided as the ultimate sacrifice for sin.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video playing as your kids arrive, set it to end as worship time begins.

• kindling

Introduce the session (1 minute)

[Ole Faithful enters carry some kindling to add to the campfire.]

Leader • Hello, Covenant Campground campers! I almost have our campfire ready for today's Bible story. Did you have a good week camping? I have had a busy week making repairs and helping lots of campers. But I told each of those campers about Ole Abraham and Sarah. Campers, are you ready to hear this week's campfire story about Abraham? It is a great story. Before I tell you about Abraham, we should start our campfire with a little music.

• "Promises" and other songs of your choice

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

Leader • God will always keep His covenants and promises because He cannot lie. Like Abraham learned, we have to surrender to follow God's commands and His plan. Any promises God makes, He will fulfill.

Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an

Tip: Select the number of songs to sing based on the amount of time you have. You may pick from the songs provided or add songs from your own song library.

offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- “Promises” (unit theme song)
- “God’s Plan”
- “By Faith”
- “Have Faith in God”
- “Because of Who You Are”

• timeline map

Timeline map (1 minute)

Leader • Last week I told you about how Abraham and Sarah learned to trust God. So far we have learned about the covenant God made with Abraham and the sons of Abraham. Does anyone remember the names of Abraham’s sons? (*Ishmael and Isaac*) Abraham sure learned a powerful lesson about trusting God to keep His covenant. The Bible tells us in several books of both the Old and New Testament that Abraham had faith or believed God. One of those verses is in the Book of James. James also tells us that Abraham was called God’s friend. Today we are going to hear a story that helps us see how much Abraham believed and trusted God.

Big picture question (1 minute)

Leader • Do you campers ever have trouble believing God? We can’t always see all of God’s plan for us. We have to have faith in God and His plan even when we don’t understand what is happening. I have a good question for you all. *How can we show we believe God’s plan?* That is the big picture question for today’s campfire. Pull up a seat around our campfire and listen to the Bible story to find the answer.

- Bibles
- “God Tested Abraham” video (optional)
- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- Bible story picture slide or poster (enhanced CD)

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 22. Tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or you may choose to show the video “God Tested Abraham.”

Leader • Well, Ole Abraham has been in a lot of interesting situations. First God told him to move to a new land and that God will bless all people through him. Then God promised he would be a father even though Abraham was old. God also made a covenant with Abraham and changed his name to Abraham instead of Abram. God changed Sarai’s name to Sarah and promised she would be the mother of Abraham’s promised son.

And in today’s story we saw that Abraham and Sarah finally had the son God promised Abraham. But God wanted Abraham to show that he trusted God. Even though God tested Abraham by asking him to sacrifice or give up his precious son, Abraham obeyed God. In the Bible a *sacrifice* was something a worshiper brought to God to express obedience, love, thanksgiving, or the need for forgiveness. Usually sacrifices involved killing an animal.

The Book of Hebrews tells that Abraham believed God could raise Isaac from the dead. Because of His grace and mercy, God did not require Abraham to actually sacrifice Isaac. Instead God provided a ram to be the sacrifice. The big picture question I asked you before the Bible story was *How can we show we believe God’s plan?* Abraham showed us the answer. *We obey God even when He asks us to do things we don’t understand.* Repeat the question and answer after me. *How can we show we believe God’s plan? We obey God even when He asks us to do things we don’t understand.*

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (5 minutes)

Leader • The story of Abraham and Isaac reminds us of Jesus. God provided Abraham with a substitute sacrifice, the ram. We need a perfect sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sin. God sent Jesus as a substitute for us, and He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin.

Use the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian.

Review (4 minutes)

Invite campers to answer the following review questions.

1. Which son was Abraham to offer to God? (*Isaac, Genesis 22:2*)
2. Who stopped Abraham from sacrificing Isaac? (*the Angel of the LORD, Genesis 22:11-12*)
3. Why did the Angel of the LORD stop Abraham? (*He had shown that he feared God, Genesis 22:12*)
4. What did God provide for Abraham to sacrifice instead of Isaac? (*a ram, Genesis 22:13*)
5. Abraham's offspring would be as numerous as what two things? (*the stars in the sky and sand on the seashore, Genesis 22:17*)
6. ***How can we show we believe God's plan? We obey God even when He asks us to do things we don't understand.***
7. What does this story teach us about Jesus? (*This is a clear picture of God who was willing to sacrifice His only Son, and of Jesus who was willing to do what was necessary for God's plan of salvation. We need a perfect sacrifice as our substitute for sin. God provided a perfect sacrifice in His Son, Jesus Christ.*)

• 1 coin per pair

Option: To help kids understand that everyone, adults and kids, has to sacrifice at times to obey God, you may choose to include adults in this demonstration, too.

Tip: If a kid is double-jointed at the fingertips, he may be able to drop the coin.

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

Ask for several volunteers and form pairs. Distribute one coin to each pair. The first player will lace his fingers together as if praying. While keeping other fingers laced, straighten ring fingers and press together. The second player will place a coin between the first player's pressed together ring fingertips. The challenge is for the first player to release the coin (without moving his other fingers) to give it to the second player. If he follows the instructions correctly, he won't be able to release the coin. Allow the partners to switch roles and try the challenge.

Leader • No one was able to give up his coin. You all held on to the coin. Sometimes we try to hold on to things that we like or are important to us even when we know God wants us to give them up. For example, maybe there is a TV show we like to watch, but we know God doesn't like the things they do or talk about on that show. We know God doesn't really want us to watch it, but we aren't willing to give it up or sacrifice it. Just like our campers held on to the coin, we hold on to something that God wants us to give up. Abraham did the opposite. He was willing to give up his son, something far more important than a TV show, to obey God.

*Denotes a name changed for security reasons.

Missions (3 minutes)

Read the missionary story, "Where God Wants us to Live."

Leader • On his way to school one morning, Clint* turned to his parents and said, "I want to live in America." When asked why he wanted to live in America, he said that it was "less noisy and looked nicer." Well, these things are true, but it saddened his parents to hear Clint speak this way. He normally did not complain though this third-world, overpopulated mega-city definitely has a lot of

obvious issues that even a 5-year-old notices. Dad asked him a wise question. “Clint, where does God want us to live?” Clint answered, “South Asia.” He then went on to school and did not bring it up again.

When God calls moms and dads to be missionaries, the children have a chance to serve God in that foreign country, too. Please pray for Clint and missionary kids everywhere that God would help them love the place and people where they live—the place where God has called their whole family to serve.

Following God’s plan is not always easy. We can see that in Abraham’s story and in Clint’s story. But both Abraham and Clint have shown that they believed God’s plan. ***How can we show we believe God’s plan? We obey God even when He asks us to do things we don’t understand.***

- key passage slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- “I Will Keep My Covenant”

Key passage (5 minute)

Leader • Does anyone remember our campfire key passage? It is part of God’s covenant promise to Abraham.

Provide an opportunity for a few kids to quote the key passage. Sing “I Will Keep My Covenant.”

- 3 pool noodles, per team
- 2 chairs
- permanent marker
- Cut the pool noodles in half and write the key passage on the pool noodles.

Group game (10 minutes)

Form two teams. Each team must collect the six pieces of firewood (pool noodles) and carry them to the altar (chair). The goal is to stack the firewood with the key passage phrases in correct order without causing any of the pieces to fall off. Allow teams to be creative in their stacking as long as the key passage is in the correct order.

Leader • Good work, campers. Excellent work stacking your firewood. I may have to get you to help me build the campfire next time. This key passage tells us that

Option: Allow the teams to build a campfire instead of an altar.

Use wrapping paper, paper towel, or mail tubes.

God will always keep His covenant. Even when we don't understand God's plan, we can trust that God knows the big picture. *How can we show we believe God's plan? We obey God even when He asks us to do things we don't understand.*

Announcements (2 minutes)

Leader • Before I send you campers to pack up your tents and camping gear to head home, let's go over the final announcements at Covenant Campground.

Make any announcements from your children's ministry.

Prayer (1 minute)

Leader • Looks like it is time for you all to leave Covenant Campground and Ole Faithful so you can continue to learn about the big picture of God's story. Thanks for visitin' and lettin' me tell you all about Ole Abraham. Let me pray for you as you continue on your journey through God's story to learn all about His plan to send Jesus to bring salvation to people.

Close in prayer.

Dismiss

Additional idea

Here I am game

Leader • Genesis 22:1 reveals that when God called Abraham, Abraham replied by saying "Here I am." After God gave Abraham instructions, Abraham chose to obey God's instructions even though it meant giving up his only son. We are going to play a game to see who is ready and willing to obey just like Abraham.

Instruct kids to line up and turn to face the leader who

is standing across the room. By obeying the leader's instructions, a kid can cross the room to the finish line. The leader will call the name of a boy or girl. The named kid responds by saying: "Here I am." The leader will respond by giving an instruction to obey and the number of steps a kid can take if she obeys the instructions. For example, "Do four jumping jacks and you may take six steps." A list of sample actions is below. The kid can choose whether or not to do the action. If the kid forgets to say: "Here I am," or does not perform the requested action, no steps can be taken. If you have a small playing area, limit the number of steps a kid may take on each turn.

Sample Instructions:

- Sing the "ABC's" and you may take 2 steps.
- Pat your head 10 times and you may take 3 steps.
- Hop on one foot for 20 seconds and you may take 4 steps.
- Smile at 3 friends and you may take 3 steps.
- Laugh for 20 seconds and you may take 2 steps.
- Tell a friend the names of 5 books in the Bible and you may take 3 steps.
- Sing "Happy Birthday" and you may take 6 steps.
- High-five 3 friends and you may take 2 steps.
- Count to 12 backward and you may take 2 steps.
- Smile at an adult leader and you make take 1 step.
- Tell an adult helper "thank you for helping in my class today" and you may take 3 steps.
- Name 2 things you can praise God for and you may take 3 steps.
- Write your name in the air and you may take 2 steps.
- Make a silly face and you may take 1 step.

Leader • Were any of the instructions I gave too hard to do? Could you give up the most important thing in your life, if I had asked you to give it up?

The Bible says that Abraham never questioned why God wanted him to give up his son. Abraham never refused to obey God. In the New Testament Book of Hebrews, the Bible reveals that Abraham believed that God was so great and powerful that even if he had to sacrifice Isaac, God would raise him from the dead (Hebrews 11:19). Abraham had faith in a great God. We share the same faith. We believe that after God sacrificed His only Son, He raised Him from the dead. Like Abraham, we should believe God to the point we are willing to obey even if we don't understand everything.

Abraham did not only answer when God called his name, he took action and obeyed God's instructions. Not only do we need to hear what God says, we need to obey Him. *How can we show we believe God's plan? We obey God even when He asks us to do things we don't understand.*

Insights for Worship Leaders

While Abraham was spared having to sacrifice his son Isaac, the son of the promise, God would not spare Himself. God willingly sacrificed His one and only Son to redeem people from their choice to sin. Help kids to understand the gravity of sin and the price that had to be paid by Jesus Christ in an age-appropriate manner. The guide in the next column can be used to share the gospel with kids.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Unit 3: THE COVENANT RENEWED

Big Picture Questions

Session 1: How did people know God's plan? God communicated His plan to people in different ways.

Session 2: What can stop God's plans? Nothing can stop God's plans because they are always perfect.

Session 3: What new name did God give Jacob? God changed Jacob's name to Israel, which became the name of God's covenant people.

Session 4: Who is always with us? God is always with us, even when things happen we don't understand.

Session 5: Why did God send Joseph to Egypt? God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.

Unit 3: THE COVENANT RENEWED

Unit Description: God's covenant with Abraham to bless all people was renewed with Isaac and again with Jacob. God continually reminds His people of the covenant He made with Abraham. Through the line of the patriarchs, God brought His ultimate plan for salvation.

Unit Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Unit Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

Session 1: The Promise Reaffirmed

Genesis 25:19-26; 26:1-6; 28:10-22

Session 2: The Stolen Blessing

Genesis 25:27-34; 27:1-45

Session 3: Jacob's New Name

Genesis 32-33

Session 4: Joseph Sent to Egypt

Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1-41:57

Session 5: Joseph's Dreams Came True

Genesis 42:1-46:34; 50:15-21

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

The covenant that God issued to Abraham is a significant and important event. Compare Genesis 22:17-18; 26:4; and 28:14. What do you make of the significance that God gave Abraham a covenant, then reaffirmed it with both Abraham's son and grandson?

Abraham likely reminded Isaac about the promise God had made. But just to make sure, God retold the promise to Isaac, too. (See Genesis 26:23-24.)

Isaac was 60 when he fathered the twins, Jacob and Esau. God shared some information with Rebekah about her twins' futures. (See Genesis 25:23.)

Another famine in the land forced Isaac to move. He planned to move to Egypt, but God told him to stay where he was because the land he was on would be the land God would give to his many offspring. (See Genesis 26:4.) God reaffirmed the covenant with Isaac.

Isaac blessed Jacob, and Jacob moved away to the land of his uncle, Laban. While spending the night en route, he dreamed about a ladder or stairway with angels ascending and descending the stairway. God Himself stood by Jacob and reaffirmed the covenant He had made with Abraham and Isaac.

In the morning when he awoke, Jacob took the stone he had slept on and anointed it with oil to use as a stone of remembrance. He renamed the place Bethel (house of God) and made a vow to God—the only patriarch to make a formal vow.

God's plan was clearly communicated to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jacob would become the father of the 12 tribes of Israel, the nation through which God would fulfill His covenant promise by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to be the Savior of the world. From the nation of Israel, Jesus would come to earth to be our Savior.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: The Promise Reaffirmed

Bible Passage: Genesis 25:19-26; 26:1-6; 28:10-22

Big Picture Question: How did people know God’s plan? God communicated His plan to people in different ways.

Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Unit Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

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The BIBLE STORY

The Promise Reaffirmed

Genesis 25:19-26; 26:1-6; 28:10-22

Isaac, Abraham's son, married Rebekah when he was 40 years old. For 20 years Isaac and Rebekah did not have any children, so Isaac prayed to God to ask that Rebekah be able to have a child. God answered Isaac's prayer and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. The two babies fought inside of Rebekah, and she worried about why this was happening. Rebekah asked God about the unusual behavior of the babies. The Lord spoke to Rebekah and told her part of His special plan for the two babies. God told her, "Two people will come from you and be separated." One of the two groups of people would be stronger than the other group. God also told her, "The older will serve the younger." This was not what usually happened in a family, but this was part of God's plan for Abraham's family. When Rebekah had her babies, she had two boys. The first baby boy was red looking and hairy, and they named him Esau. The younger baby was born holding on to his older brother Esau's heel, and they named him Jacob.

Later the land where Isaac and his family lived had a famine. Isaac went to Gerar where Abimelech, king of the Philistines, lived. God appeared to Isaac to give him a special message about His plan for Isaac and his family. God told Isaac, "Do not go down to Egypt. Live in the land that I tell you about; stay in this land as a foreigner, and I will be with you and bless you." God also shared with Isaac the special covenant God had made with Abraham. "I will give all these lands to you and your offspring. I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of the sky. All the nations of the earth will be blessed by your offspring because Abraham listened to My voice and kept My mandate." Isaac obeyed God and stayed in the land of Gerar.

Many years later Isaac and Rebekah's son Jacob sinned and had to leave his family for a while to stay safe. Jacob was the son that God said would be the leader of their family even though he was the youngest son. On his way to his uncle Laban's house, Jacob stopped at night to sleep. Jacob took a stone and used it as a pillow under his head.

While he slept he had a dream, and in his dream he saw a stairway coming down from heaven to the ground. There were angels going up and down the stairs. Then Jacob saw God, who spoke to him, “I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your offspring the land that you are now sleeping on.” The covenant God made with Abraham, God now gave to Abraham’s grandson, Jacob. God told Jacob his family would be like the dust of the earth. They would spread out in all directions, and all the people on earth would be blessed because of his family. God promised Jacob, “I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go. I will bring you back to this land.”

Jacob awoke and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place. What an awesome place this is.” Early the next morning, as a way to remember the place where God had shared His plan with him, Jacob took the stone under his head and poured oil over it. He renamed the place Bethel. Jacob made a vow that because God kept His promise to Jacob, Jacob would follow and honor God.

Christ Connection: God’s wonderful plan to Abraham extended well beyond his lifetime. The plan was shared with Rebekah, Isaac, Jacob, and eventually an entire nation leading to the birth of a baby boy named Jesus. Jesus fulfilled God’s plan to provide salvation and redemption for all of God’s people.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: The Promise Reaffirmed

Bible Passage: Genesis 25:19-26; 26:1-6; 28:10-22

Big Picture Question: How did people know God's plan? God communicated His plan to people in different ways.

Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Unit Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

• room decorations

Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas: Set up a table as a studio desk with two chairs behind it on one side of the room. Add an old video camera and a tripod in front of the desk. A large banner of a city or old televisions could be used as background.

Place another camera on a tripod on the other side of the room. Hang a large green or blue sheet or table cloth, your green screen, on the wall in front of that camera.

For extra effect, add lighting using spotlights or make artificial lights using large food cans attached to PVC pipe or wood.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

• microphone, real or fake
• earphone
• notebook
• pencil

[Enter with a big smile, carrying a microphone and a notebook and pencil. Wear an earphone in one ear. You can hide your lesson plans in your notebook.]

Leader • Hello, everyone, I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless for a male leader*], and this is *Did You See That?* This is a

Tip: The character for this unit is, as the name suggests, clueless. Keep that in mind when playing the part.

show dedicated to you as the eyewitness. Today, you will see a dramatic story unfold. Then, you will be asked to describe exactly what you saw.

Anita Clue is always on top of the latest breaking news story. I've been an investigative reporter for more than two weeks now. I've been across the entire county seeking out the biggest stories everywhere. You may have heard of some of my past stories. They include: "Chewing Gum, Does It Really Stay in Your Stomach Forever?"; and "Pizza Boxes, Why Are Pizzas Round and the Box Square?" I know. Please hold your applause. I have a very special talent.

You can imagine how excited I was when I was told I get to cover a real Bible event. I got so excited, my bubble gum came right out of my mouth! Unlike my previous stories, these are timeless and you get to see them right along with me in your Bible. So, come with me as I investigate today's story. My producer should be sending me some information through my ear piece about our story anytime now. While we wait, let's sharpen your eyewitness skills with a little exercise.

Group demonstration (6 minutes)

- dollar bill
- paper clips, 2

Leader • I need four volunteers. It's important for all eyewitnesses to really be able to see clues, hear tips, and be able to piece the information together so it can be communicated clearly. Let's see if you are up for the challenge. I am giving you a dollar bill and two paper clips. I want you to figure out how to connect the two paper clips using your dollar. You have two minutes. Go! To complete this trick, you fold the dollar into thirds so it looks like a flattened Z. Clip the top layer with the middle layer, placing the clip about an inch from the loose end. Add

the second paper clip by clipping the middle and bottom layer together, placing the paper clip about an inch from the other end. Pull the ends apart quickly. The two clips should come off the bill hooked together. Make sure to practice a few times before worship. Unless the kids have seen it done before, they will fail at the task. If they do succeed, congratulate them for being excellent eyewitnesses. If not, follow the script below.

Leader • Good try! Let me, the expert, of course, show you how to use this piece of paper to combine these paper clips.

[Intentionally fail to complete the demonstration. Then, grab the ear with the earpiece in it and talk into the mic.]

Leader • I'm hearing those voices again. Oh, Earie, is that you? *[Look at the kids.]* It's my producer, Earie. What? Am I showing that trick that I can never get right? Of course not. OK, I am. You will help me again. Thanks.

[Perform the activity correctly as if you are being told the directions through your earpiece. When you are done, hold up the two paper clips joined together.]

Leader • See, I told you I was the expert. OK, so I had a little help. Thanks, Earie! Sometimes we don't understand something unless we've been told. Sometimes we have to be told several times. That's when we know it's true. *[To Earie]* What's that, Earie? You have today's story? A man sees a staircase to heaven with angels going up and down. Wow! That sounds great!

• "Starry Night" and other songs of your choice

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

[Continue talking to Earie through your microphone. Hold the earpiece in your ear with your finger.]

Leader • What's that? Cue the music? I don't have any music. You weren't talking to me. You were talking to the

sound board operator. There's music for today's story. I love music. Can I sing along? Really, they can too? Thanks, Earie. [*Look at kids.*] Let's all take a few minutes and praise God for the true stories we find in His Word. Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- "Starry Night" (unit theme song)
- "Trustin' God"
- "My God Is Real"
- "You're Worthy of My Praise"
- "I Stand in Awe"

• timeline map

Timeline map (1 minute)

Leader • Every week we will see where we are reporting from and get a glimpse into the event we will be reporting. Our timeline map will direct us to where we need to go, so let's take a look. Today we will see "The Promise Reaffirmed." I wonder what promise and who will it be reaffirmed to.

• big picture question
slide or poster
(enhanced CD)

Big Picture Question (3 minutes)

[*Grab ear as if receiving a message from the producer.*]

Leader • Earie says I should ask you kids a question. So, here we go. Can fish get thirsty? [*To Earie*] What, Earie? Not that question? Ask the big picture question. On my cue card on the wall. There's a poster on the wall? [*To kids*] Anyone see a poster? Oh, there it is. [*To Earie*] Earie, these kids are good at this eyewitness thing. Let's all look at the big picture question. ***How did people know God's plan?***

Ask for volunteers to answer the question.

Leader • [To Earie] You want me to give them the answer to the question? [To kids] Here's the answer to my question. Of course fish don't get thirsty! Duh! They are swimming in water. [To Earie] Huh? Oh, give the answer to the big picture question, the answer on the cue card.
How did people know God's plan? God communicated His plan to people in different ways.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per child
- "The Promise Reaffirmed" video (optional)

Leader • God made a huge promise we call a *covenant* to Abraham. But God didn't stop there. He shared His covenant plan over and over again in several different ways. [To Earie] What, Earie? Yes. OK. [To kids] Earie says today's story begins in Genesis 25. Watch and listen closely. Remember, you are the eyewitness.

Open your Bible to Genesis 25. Invite kids to follow along in their Bibles. Choose to tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or show "The Promise Reaffirmed."

Leader • All right, everyone, it's time for a live report on what you saw and heard about today's story. I'm going to ask one of you a question, and you just tell me in your own words what you know. Earie says we are going live in five seconds.

[Give a four, three, two, one with your fingers. Smile and act as if you are suddenly on television. Ask someone to come up with a fake camera or you can just look intently over the heads of the kids. Invite volunteers to come up on stage or up front. Ask the review questions and place the microphone in front of them like a television reporter.]

Review (4 minutes)

Leader •Hello, I'm Anita Clue, and this is *Did You See That?* We are the show that puts the eyewitness in command. Our eyewitness just saw and heard how God communicated His plan to people in different ways. We have several witnesses to today's story with us. Who would be willing to tell us your version of what happened in today's story?

If you don't have a volunteer, ask the following questions:

1. Who did God tell that Jacob would rule his brother, Esau? (*Rebekah, Genesis 25:23*)
2. What did God tell Isaac to do? (*stay in Egypt, He would bless him and give him a large family; Genesis 26:2-5*)
3. How did God speak to Jacob? (*through a dream, Genesis 28:12*)
4. Who else received the same promise as Jacob? (*Abraham and Isaac, Genesis 28:13*)
5. What did Jacob see in his dream? (*angels going up and down a staircase, Genesis 28:12*)
6. Who would ultimately fulfill the promise made to Abraham? (*Jesus*)

Key passage (4 minutes)

Leader •There you have it! God communicated His plan to people in different ways. He told His plan through dreams, visions, and even direct communication. The next time you wonder *how did people know God's plan?* It's because **God communicated His plan to people in different ways.** Until next time, I'm Anita Clue saying so long and hey, did you see that?

[Stand still, continuing to smile for a few seconds and then address the kids directly.]

- key passage slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- "Wherever You Go"
- Bibles, 1 per kid

Leader •Wow! What a great story! Thank you all so much for being a part of today’s live report. You know, there was a verse from today’s story that really stood out to me. It’s Genesis 28:15. That’s the key passage for the next few weeks. Let’s read it together and then sing it together. Guide kids to read the key passage. Sing “Wherever You Go.”

Ask the kids to stand up and tell the verse to a neighbor. Tell them to choose another neighbor and share the verse again.

Group game (10 minutes)

Leader •It seems Earie believes you all have done so well that he wants us to play a game. Would any of you like to play a game? Me too! I’m going to send you a “text message.” If you have a cell phone or know someone who does, you know texting is a popular way for people to communicate now. I’m going to randomly send you a “text message” in a paperwad. If you agree to follow the instructions on the text message, say “deal.” Otherwise, say “no deal,” and bring the message back to me. I have a prize for those who say “deal,” and complete the task. Take five pieces of paper, and write a special direction on each one. Write each of the commands on a separate sheet.

- paper, 5 pieces
- small prizes
- pen or marker
- key passage slide (enhanced CD)
- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)

- Jump up and down while singing “Jesus Loves Me.”
- Find a Bible and read aloud Genesis 28:15 in 60 seconds.
- Do jumping jacks while saying the big picture question.
- Hold your nose and stand on your toes while you share the answer to the big picture question.
- Name four people from today’s Bible story in 30 seconds.

Wad up each piece of paper. Instruct the kids to spread out. They may not move from their seats; they may only get the message if it is within their reach. If they break this rule, they will be disqualified from the game. Toss one paperwad at a time to different areas of the room. If the kid who receives the message completes the command or attempts to, give him the prize. If he says “no deal,” toss the message again.

Leader • I chose to communicate my messages by text.

You could call God’s Word His text message to you. God wanted to make His covenant plan clear. *How did people know God’s plan? God communicated His plan to people in different ways.*

Missions (5 minutes)

Leader • Sometimes God communicates or shares His plan through us. Missionaries all over the world share God’s plan to millions of people. Before I leave today, I want to share another story I’ve been working on. Sometimes, God interrupts our plans so He can share His plan. That’s what happened to the Eardley family in South Asia. Here’s their story.

Share the following missionary story:

Leader • Have you ever ridden a train? The Eardley family was excited about taking the train to a South Asian city 13 hours away from where they live. The family went to the train station then found out the train was 13 hours late! [*Sigh*] They would have to sit in the waiting room a long time. Other people in the waiting room wanted to take pictures of their daughters—that always seems kind of odd—but the Eardleys came up with a great idea. They carry pictures of their daughters with them with the story of Jesus printed on the back in the local language.

While at the train station, they met some boys who were begging. That's nothing unusual at the train station, but these boys greeted the family with "Jai Masih ki!" That's how Christians greet each other. It means "Victory to Jesus Christ!" The Eardleys started talking to the boys. They all shared stories from the Bible and sang worship songs! A small crowd gathered and the boys told everyone about Jesus. It turns out that the boys were learning about Jesus from friends of the Eardleys. What an encouragement to know that God was using their friends to teach these boys, and the boys were telling others about Jesus everywhere they go.

The family sat in the waiting room from 9 p.m. one day until 5 a.m. the next. All night long they sat and talked with the people who wanted pictures of their daughters and with the boys who were begging. The Eardleys decided their train was not going to come in time for them to make their meeting, so they decided to just go home and thank God for their great trip ... to the train station!

Leader • The Eardleys were willing to share God's plan even though their plans fell through. God's plan may have started with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but that was the start of a plan that would eventually lead to Jesus.

Tip: Make any announcements from your children's ministry. If you are participating in a mission collection project, use this time to explain to the boys and girls what you are collecting and why.

Announcements (2 minutes)

Leader • What, Earie? It's time to go? OK! I'll see you eyewitnesses later. I have to go work on another story. I'm pretty sure it's going to win me an award. It's called, "Movie Theaters: Which Arm Rest Is Yours?"

Prayer (1 minute)

Leader • Before I go, let's review our big picture question and answer. *How did people know God's plan? God*

communicated His plan to people in different ways.

Until next time, pay attention ‘cause you never know when you will be on *Did You See That?*

Close in prayer.

Dismiss

Additional ideas

• masking tape

Communication Relay

Form two or more teams of five kids. Tape a long start line and a long finish line about 15 feet from the start. Ask a child from each group to stand on the other side of the room. Choose another student from each team to be the messenger. Take the messengers aside and give them a command (jump, hop on one foot, sing, whistle, skip). The messenger stands at the start line with one person behind him. The other two members of each team stand behind the opposite line. The carrier runs to the opposite line and whispers the command. The kid receiving the message runs to the start line and whispers the command to the next kid. When the last kid receives the whispered command, she races to the final member on the other side of the room, who must complete the action.

Leader • Communication is very important. *How did people know God’s plan? God communicated His plan to people in different ways.*

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

Jacob and Esau were typical sibling rivals. Rebekah had a difficult pregnancy because the twins struggled in her womb. Outside the womb, things didn't seem to get much better—strife still ruled their lives.

Once, when Esau was hungry, Jacob offered to give him some stew in exchange for his birthright. The birthright was an important part of the patriarchal culture. Upon the death of his father, Esau, as the older brother, would be given twice as much property and goods as Jacob. Esau satisfied his hunger and left, despising his birthright.

The Hebrew term *baza* (baw-zaw') can have any number of meanings, but basically it means to undervalue. Esau was more concerned with his grumbling stomach than with his right to succeed his father as family patriarch.

Isaac, blind and getting older, planned to bless Esau before he died. With instructions to cook savory food, reminiscent of the stew Esau received earlier, Esau “went on the hunt.”

Not to be outdone, Rebekah took up the cause of her favored son and set into motion a plan that would ensure that Jacob, not Esau, received the blessing from Isaac. After finding out about the deception, Esau planned to kill his brother. Jacob left home and lived with his uncle, Laban.

Similar to other stories we've seen, when people make their own plans and try to “help” God, their plans never prosper. Share with kids that God's plans are always perfect, and nothing can stop God's plans, even when we get in the way. God's plan from the creation of the world was to send Jesus Christ to be the Savior. No matter what plans people make to circumvent God's plan, His plan is always the best.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: The Stolen Blessing

Bible Passage: Genesis 25:27-34; 27:1-45

Question of the Week: What can stop God’s plans? Nothing can stop God’s plans because they are always perfect.

Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

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The BIBLE STORY

The Stolen Blessing

Genesis 25:27-34; 27:1-45

Jacob and Esau grew into young men, each with his own job. Esau was a hunter while Jacob worked at home. Isaac, their father, favored Esau because he was a hunter while Rebekah, their mother, favored Jacob. Jacob was cooking lentil stew one day when his brother came home from the field. “Let me eat some of that red stuff, because I’m exhausted,” said Esau. Jacob responded, “First sell me your birthright.” The birthright usually belonged to the oldest child and gave that child more of his family’s belongings when his parents died. “I’m about to die, so what good is a birthright to me?” Esau replied. He agreed to sell Jacob his birthright for stew and bread, proving he did not value his own birthright.

Isaac was aging and losing his eyesight. He called for Esau and told him that he wanted to bless him before he died. A father’s blessing, like the birthright, was very important. It was traditionally given to the oldest child and gave that child the right to be the new leader of the family along with other privileges. Usually the father gave the blessing with a meal, so Isaac asked Esau to bring back food from a hunt and cook it for him.

Rebekah overheard Isaac and Esau, and she went to Jacob and told him what his father had said. She then came up with her own plan. “Go to the flock and bring me two choice young goats, and I will make them into a delicious meal for your father—the kind he loves. Then take it to your father to eat so that he may bless you before he dies.” Jacob was worried because he had smooth skin and Esau had lots of hair. “Suppose my father touches me. Then I will be revealed to him as a deceiver and bring a curse rather than a blessing on myself,” Jacob said. Rebekah told Jacob she would take the blame if that happened, and she sent him on his way.

Jacob returned with the goats, and his mother made one of his father’s favorite meals. To make Jacob appear to be Esau, she gave him some of his brother’s clothes and put goat hair on his hands and neck. Jacob then took the food to his father.

“I am Esau, your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game so that you may bless me,” Jacob said. Isaac was

suspicious of Jacob, so he asked him to come closer. He felt Jacob's hands and told him, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." Jacob once again assured his father that he was Esau. "Serve me, and let me eat some of my son's game so that I can bless you," Isaac said. Jacob brought his father food and drink, and he ate.

After the meal Isaac told Jacob to come closer. He kissed him and, after smelling his clothes, offered him the blessing. The blessing included land, riches, and power. "May peoples serve you and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brothers; may your mother's sons bow down to you. Those who curse you will be cursed and those who bless you will be blessed," Isaac said.

Jacob left, and Esau returned from his hunt and cooked a meal for his father. When he offered the food to Isaac, his father told him that he had been tricked and Jacob had been given the blessing. Esau cried and begged his father to bless him, too. Esau protested, "Isn't he rightly named Jacob? For he has cheated me twice now. He took my birthright, and look, now he has taken my blessing." After repeated pleas by Esau for a blessing, Isaac answered him with a blessing opposite of what he gave to Jacob, including no land and riches. "You will live by your sword, and you will serve your brother," Isaac said. His blessing did end with a promise that he would eventually break free from serving Jacob. Esau was angry at Jacob and planned to kill him once Isaac died. Rebekah found out about his plan and sent Jacob to stay at her brother's house until Esau calmed down.

Christ Connection: Jacob is a perfect example of why a Savior was needed. Like Jacob, we seek a birthright and blessing that is not ours, but we cannot lie, deceive, or trick to receive it. Instead Jesus shared His birthright and blessing with us when He paid for our sins on the cross and gave us His righteousness.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: The Stolen Blessing

Bible Passage: Genesis 25:27-34; 27:1-45

Question of the Week: What can stop God's plans? Nothing can stop God's plans because they are always perfect.

Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

• microphone, real or fake
• earphone
• notebook
• pencil

[Enter with a big smile, carrying a microphone and a notebook and pencil. Wear an earphone in one ear. You can hide your lesson plans in your notebook.]

Leader • Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*] back with you for another week of *Did You See That?* Last week you were all eyewitness of how God communicated His plan to people in different ways. I am so ready for today's story. I have already made some notes, and I can't wait to get started. [*Grab ear as if receiving a message.*] What? [*To kids*] Sorry for the interruption. It's my producer Earie. [*To Earie*] What do you mean you're canceling my story? I think everyone who has ever been to a movie theater wants to know which arm rest is really theirs. You have something more important? No! I already have everything planned out. I know who we need to talk to. I have notes in my notebook. This is just not fair. What? You have a story more important for me to do. I can't imagine a more

important story. Well, what is it? You want me to look at the timeline. What do I do with all the plans I made? Earie. Earie! [*To kids*] I'm sorry, kids. It's just not right. I had these great plans but Earie is my producer, and I have to do what he says. Have you ever had plans that were suddenly stopped or changed?

Timeline map (1 minute)

• timeline map

Leader • Since my plans have changed, I guess we can at least see where our event that we will be reporting on will be. Let's take a look at our timeline map. Last week, we talked about the promise God made sure everyone knew. Today, we will get to learn about "The Stolen Blessing." Hmm. It wasn't what I wanted to do, but it does sound interesting.

Big picture question (1 minute)

• big picture question
slide or poster
(enhanced CD)

[*Grab ear as if receiving another message from the producer.*]

Leader • Earie, what do you mean ask the big picture question? I already had the question I wanted to ask. The arm rest on the right or the arm rest on the left, which is yours? Well, where am I supposed to find the real big picture question? You already put it up? Oh, there it is. [*To kids*] The big picture question is ***What can stop God's plans?*** That's an interesting question. Do any of you know ***what can stop God's plans?*** [*Allow kids time to answer.*] ***Nothing can stop God's plans because they are always perfect.***

Group demonstration (6 minutes)

• pencils, 2 per
volunteer

Leader • I'm still a little stressed about my plans changing, but Earie promises it will be worth it. He has a challenge

for us and wants three volunteers. He says he is sure he can trick all of you in a little test. All you have to do is touch two pencils together. Who wants to outsmart Earie? Provide each volunteer with two pencils. Explain that the three volunteers must close one eye. They must hold the two pencils horizontally at arm's length about three feet apart. The erasers should be pointed toward each other. With their arms straight out from their body and one eye closed, they must try to bring the two pencils together, touching erasers. The first one to touch the erasers together wins.

Leader • Was it harder than you thought it would be? I believe I can do it with no problem. Who wants to challenge me?

[Invite a few more volunteers and repeat the demonstration. Intentionally fail several times before getting it right.]

Leader • I don't understand. I had it all planned out. It looked like it would be easy, but I had to change the way I did it. The reason why this simple task was so difficult is our brain needs both eyes to help figure out how far away something is. Each eye sees things a little differently and our brain puts the information together to give us the true picture we need. *[To Earie]* What, Earie? Our story today is very similar. *[To kids]* Earie says that one father's plans for his kids didn't go the way he expected. God had another plan altogether.

• "Starry Night" and other songs of your choice

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

[Continue talking to Earie through your microphone. Hold the earpiece in your ear with your finger.]

Leader • Earie, we discussed this last week. I don't have any music to cue. You were talking to the sound board operator. Why don't you just say so? I liked the music last

week. Can we sing some of that again? Great. [*To kids*] Why don't you sing with me? I am so glad that God's plans are always right. ***Nothing can stop God's plans because they are always perfect.*** We worship a perfect God who is worthy of singing to and about.

Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- "Starry Night" (unit theme song)
- "Trustin' God"
- "My God Is Real"
- "You're Worthy of My Praise"
- "I Stand in Awe"

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

[*Hold ear as if receiving another message from Earie.*]

Leader • Earie, did you say we are about to go live? We can find the story in Genesis 25 and 27. Thanks! I'll get ready on this side for the report. [*To kids*] All right, everyone turn to Genesis 25:27-34. That's where today's story begins. Remember, you are the eyewitnesses. Once I start my report I need you to tell the television audience what you saw.

Open your Bible to Genesis 25. Invite kids to follow along in their Bibles. Choose to tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or show "The Stolen Blessing" video.

Leader • What an amazing story! I can't wait to start my report. I've been given the cue to start in five seconds. Do I look OK? Here we go.

[*Give a four, three, two, one with your fingers. Smile and act as if you are suddenly on television. Ask someone to*

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- "The Stolen Blessing" video (optional)

come up with a fake camera or you can just look intently over the heads of the kids. Invite volunteers to come up on stage or up front. Ask the review questions and place the microphone in front of them like a television reporter.]

Review (4 minutes)

Leader • Hello, I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*], and this is *Did You See That?* We are the show that puts the eyewitness in command. Our eyewitness just saw and heard how ***nothing can stop God's plans because they are always perfect.*** We have several witnesses to today's story. Would someone share what they saw and heard?

If you don't have a volunteer, ask the following questions:

1. Why did Esau sell his birthright to Jacob?
(He didn't think it was that important, Genesis 25:34)
2. Who did Rebekah and Isaac want to receive the blessing? *(Rebekah wanted Jacob, Genesis 27:6-10; Isaac wanted Esau, Genesis 27:1-4)*
3. How did Jacob trick his father? *(by pretending to be Esau, Genesis 27:19)*
4. Who actually received the father's blessing? *(Jacob, Genesis 27:28-29)*
5. How did Esau respond to what happened? *(He was angry and wanted to kill Jacob, Genesis 27:41)*
6. Jacob is a perfect example of why we need what?
(a Savior)

Key passage (4 minutes)

[Return to the stage.]

Leader • That's our story for today. A lot of people's plans didn't work out the way they wanted in this story. Isaac

- key passage slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- "Wherever You Go"
- Bibles, 1 per kid

wanted Esau to get the father's blessing. Esau wanted to get the blessing when it was too late. Rebekah lost her favored son because he had to run away from Esau.

Through it all, only one plan remained unchanged. ***What can stop God's plans? Nothing can stop God's plans because they are always perfect.*** Not even Jacob's sin would stop God's plan for him to be part of the covenant promise first given to Abraham and then to Isaac. That doesn't mean Jacob's sin didn't have consequences. He was separated from his family for years, but it didn't stop God's plans for him.

Remember, your plans may change, but God's plans are always better than yours anyway. Until next time, I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*] saying so long and hey, did you see that?

[Stand still, continuing to smile for a few seconds and then address the kids directly.]

Leader •Wow! That story was amazing. Thank you all so much for being a part of today's live report. I bet Jacob kind of felt like everything was out of control after being used in his mom's plan and having to leave town because of his brother's anger. It must have been comforting when God told him it would be OK in Genesis 28:15. That's our key passage. Let's read and sing it together.

Guide kids to read the key passage. Encourage the kids to read the verse as fast as they can. Increase the speed each time you read it together. Sing "Wherever You Go."

Group game (7 minutes)

Leader •Earie and I have another challenge for you.

We need some volunteers for another game. Is anyone interested?

Choose six volunteers and form two groups. Tape a start

- masking tape
- coins, several

line and several feet away, tape a small square about one foot in width and length. Do this for each group. Give each group several coins. Explain that each team will try to get as many coins in the square as possible. They may only advance the coins by tossing or flipping them. Every coin must first be tossed or flipped from the start line. Kids may not take any steps with a coin. If it does not land completely in the box, one of the team members must stand where it landed and flip or toss it again. Give the teams 30 seconds to come up with a plan and one minute to play. Count the number of coins. The team with the highest number of coins in the box or the first team to get all their coins in the box wins. Form other teams and play as time allows.

Leader • Each team had its own plan about how to get the coins in the box. Sometimes our plans work out, and sometimes they don't. Fortunately that's not true of God. *What can stop God's plans? Nothing can stop God's plans because they are always perfect.*

Missions (5 minutes)

Leader • Missionaries all over the world rely on God's plans as they seek to share Jesus with others. Jacob stole his father's blessing. No matter what, stealing is a sin. There are kids today in parts of the world who steal as a way to survive. During my investigative reporting, I've come upon a couple of missionaries who are trying to share God's plan with some boys in Tanzania.

Show "Home is Where the Heart Is." This video shares the story of a boy who was rescued from the streets of Tanzania by two missionaries.

Leader • Wow! After today's Bible story and mission story, I guess I should apologize to Earie for being so upset when he changed my plans. He was right. These stories

• "Home Is Where the Heart Is" missions video

are much more important than the one I had planned. I guess God was proving how much better His plans are than mine. His plans lead us to a Savior who was willing to give us His birthright and blessing. That Savior is Jesus. We can join in God's plan by trusting in Jesus.

• Bible

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (5 minutes)

Use your Bible and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Encourage kids to ask their parents or other adults any questions they have about becoming a Christian.

Announcements (2 minutes)

Leader • Look at the time. I can't believe it's time for me to go. I'll head out and come up with another plan for next week's story and apologize to Earie. OK! I'll see you eyewitnesses later. I have to go work on another story. I'm pretty sure it's going to be the one that puts me over the top. It will probably make me anchor of the evening news. It's called, "The Funny Bone: Why Don't I Laugh When I Hit It?"

Make any announcements from your children's ministry. If you are participating in a mission collection project, use this time to explain to the kids what you are collecting and why.

Prayer (1 minute)

Leader • Who can tell me today's big picture question and answer? *What can stop God's plans? Nothing can stop God's plans because they are always perfect.*

Until next time, I'm Anita Clue, saying pay attention 'cause you never know when you will be on *Did You See That?*

Close in prayer.

Additional ideas

Brother, who art thou?

Ask the kids a series of questions and statements about Esau and Jacob. The kids must choose which brother is the answer to the question or statement. They can choose Jacob with a thumbs up or Esau with a thumbs down. Below is a list of possible questions that could be used.

1. Which brother was a hunter? (*Esau*)
2. Who had hairy arms? (*Esau*)
3. Who did Rebekah like more? (*Jacob*)
4. Who stayed at home most of the time? (*Jacob*)
5. Who was born first? (*Esau*)
6. Which brother ran away from home? (*Jacob*)
7. Who did Isaac want to give the blessing to? (*Esau*)
8. Who smelled like a field? (*Esau*)
9. Which one wanted to kill the other? (*Esau*)
10. Which brother did God choose to continue His covenant with Abraham? (*Jacob*)

Say • These twins had some difficult times. Things didn't always go like they planned, but God's plans never stop. *What can stop God's plans? Nothing can stop God's plans because they are always perfect.*

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

After living in a foreign land for several years, God instructed Jacob to get up and go home. Jacob settled with his father-in-law the wages he was owed, then Jacob and his family left.

Jacob sent his servants ahead to meet his brother Esau. The servants returned with the message that 400 men accompanied Esau as he came to meet Jacob. Consider the past and what prompted Jacob's leaving. How would you feel to hear this news? How do you think Jacob felt? Read Genesis 32:7.

Jacob was concerned; the Bible says he sent extravagant gifts, hoping that whatever hatred Esau still had for him might dissipate with these gifts. Guarding against complete annihilation, Jacob sent the servants and part of the animals ahead and stayed with his family and the rest of the animals. Soon Jacob sent his wives and children across the river.

While Jacob was alone, God Himself came down and wrestled with Jacob. By morning light God blessed Jacob and changed his name to Israel, which means "He strives against God." This name not only indicated the struggle the night before, but also, as the future name of God's covenant people, indicated the life they would live in constant struggle against God.

From this moment on God changed not only Jacob's name, but also his heart and attitude. In the morning Jacob changed his plan which he had made in fear, struck out ahead of his family, and met Esau with open arms.

This story clearly illustrates that God's plan for redemption through Jesus Christ culminates in a change of heart and attitude. When a person becomes a Christian, God changes both and makes a new creation. Jacob's new name would become the name of God's special people, the Israelites. From the nation of Israel, Jesus would come to earth to be our Savior.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: Jacob’s New Name

Bible Passage: Genesis 32–33

Big Picture Question: What new name did God give Jacob? God changed Jacob’s name to Israel, which became the name of God’s covenant people.

Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Unit Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

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The BIBLE STORY

Jacob's New Name

Genesis 32–33

After Jacob lived many years away from his home because of his sin, God told Jacob to return to his home. Jacob began the trip with all of his family and possessions. Just as He promised, God was with Jacob as he traveled home. Returning home meant that Jacob would have to see his brother Esau again. Jacob was afraid that Esau would still be angry with him for stealing his blessing from their father Isaac. Jacob sent messengers to tell Esau that he was coming. The messengers were to tell Esau, “I have sent this message to inform my lord, in order to seek your favor.” He told the messengers to call him Esau’s servant as a sign of honor. This was something he had not done when he stole Esau’s blessing. When the messengers returned, they told Jacob that Esau had 400 men with him.

Jacob was very afraid and distressed, so he divided his family and servants into two groups, hoping that if Esau attacked one group, the other group could escape. Jacob then prayed to God, asking Him to keep His promise that Jacob would prosper and have a family as numerous as the sand of the sea. He prayed, “I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness You have shown. Please rescue me from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid of him; otherwise he may come and attack me.” Then Jacob sent a large gift of goats, sheep, camels, cows, bulls, and donkeys to try to make Esau happy so Esau would forgive him.

Later that night Jacob moved his family across the stream where they had camped, but he stayed behind. A man, who was actually God, appeared and wrestled with Jacob all night. Jacob refused to let the man go, so the man injured Jacob’s hip. The man told Jacob, “Let me go, it is daybreak.”

Jacob refused and said, “I will not let you go unless You bless me.”

The man replied, “Your name will no longer be Jacob. It will be Israel because you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed.” The man blessed Jacob. God changed Jacob and gave him a new name that became the name of God’s covenant people. Jacob renamed the place “Peniel.” He said, “I have seen God face to face and I have been delivered.” For the rest of his life Jacob limped because of the injury to his hip.

After his encounter with God, Jacob looked and saw Esau and his 400 men coming to meet him. The day before, Jacob had put everyone in front of him, so Esau would see Jacob's family before he saw Jacob. Jacob thought this would help Esau stop being angry with him. But during his encounter with God, God changed Jacob. Now Jacob went first to meet Esau. To show Esau respect, Jacob bowed seven times as he approached his brother. However, Esau was not angry with Jacob anymore. Instead, Esau ran to Jacob and hugged him. Together the two brothers cried. Jacob introduced the family that God had given him. Esau asked why Jacob sent so many animals as a gift. Jacob replied that he wanted to please Esau. Esau said, "I have enough, my brother. Keep what you have." Jacob urged him to take his gift by saying, "Please take my present that was brought to you because God has been gracious to me, and I have everything I need." Jacob no longer wanted to take from his brother Esau. He had truly changed and wanted to give to Esau some of the things God had blessed him with. Esau agreed to take the gifts, and he returned to his home. Jacob and his family traveled to Shechem, and Jacob purchased land for them to live. He had finally returned home to the land God had promised him.

Christ Connection: Jacob's meeting with God changed his life as reflected in his new name, Israel. Jesus came so that we might have a changed life, forgiven of sin (2 Corinthians 5:17). Jesus' death and resurrection provided sinful people with the way to be adopted into God's family. When we are adopted into the family of God we also receive a new name — children of God (John 1:12).

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: Jacob's New Name

Bible Passage: Genesis 32–33

Big Picture Question: What new name did God give Jacob? God changed Jacob's name to Israel, which became the name of God's covenant people.

Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Unit Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

• countdown video

Countdown

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

• microphone, real or fake
• earphone
• notebook
• pencil

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

[Enter with a big smile, carrying a microphone and a notebook and pencil. Wear an earphone in one ear.]

Leader • Welcome back, eyewitnesses, to *Did You See That?* I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*]. You have been great eyewitnesses for the last two weeks. Our stories have shown us that God communicated His plan to people in different ways, and nothing can stop God's plans because they are always perfect.

People tend to ask me what makes a good story. It all comes down to a combination of what people want to see and need to see. Something unusual is always a plus, too. Well, today's Bible story has all of those qualities and then some. Earie has already shared some details with me. Once again, I won't get to share the story I originally planned: "The Funny Bone: Why Don't I Laugh When I Hit It?" Oh well, maybe some other time.

- big picture question slide or poster (enhanced CD)

Big picture question (1 minute)

[Grab ear as if receiving another message from the producer.]

Leader • What, Earie? Yes, I know. I'm prepared for the big picture question this week. Besides, researching getting hit in the funny bone is no fun. *[To kids]* Today's big picture question is ***What new name did God give to Jacob?***

Before we see the answer, did you know your name has a special meaning? *Anita* means "grace, gracious, or merciful." *[Ben means "son."]* Unfortunately, I don't always act graceful *[or like an obedient son for Ben]*. During Old Testament times, the meaning of a name was often very important. God had a reason to change Jacob's name, which brings us to the answer to the big picture question. ***What new name did God give Jacob? God changed Jacob's name to Israel, which became the name of God's covenant people.***

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

- class roll

Leader • While I was investigating this story this week, I realized that my name is very important. That's how people recognize me. That's also how people find me in a crowd. I'll prove it to you.

Take roll and call out names of the kids who are in the room. If a roll of the kids is not available, call out random common names. Explain to the kids that the goal is to find someone whose name was called out and be the first to come up front with him. Explain that if your name is called out, you must remain quiet until asked by another child if that is your name.

Leader • Names are very important because they identify who we are. Jacob got his name by grabbing his brother's

heel. *Jacob* literally means “heel catcher.” However, God planned to give him another name that would tell us about a change in Jacob. ***What new name did God give Jacob? God changed Jacob’s name to Israel, which became the name of God’s covenant people.***

• timeline map

Timeline map (1 minute)

Leader • Earie says we should look at our timeline map, so we will know a little more about what we are reporting on today. Our story is “Jacob’s New Name.” Obviously, we are talking about Jacob again, and we know his name changes. He also comes home to see his brother again. Remember, Jacob left because he and his brother were not getting along. It will be interesting to see how the two act when they get back together. At least they are hugging in this picture.

• “Starry Night” and other songs of your choice

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

[Hold the earpiece in your ear with your finger as you talk to Earie.]

Leader • What, Earie? Yes! I have a brother. Do we always get along? Sure, well sometimes. Sometimes we fight. When we do it’s always his fault. Maybe it might occasionally be my fault. Huh? Well, of course I still love him and he still loves me. Yes, I suppose. I guess that’s true. *[To kids]* Earie says sometimes we mess up or sin, but God loves us and can change us. When God changes us, we will no longer have the same desire to sin. Isn’t God amazing? Let’s sing to him.

Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- “Starry Night” (unit theme song)
- “Trustin’ God”
- “My God Is Real”
- “You’re Worthy of My Praise”
- “I Stand in Awe”

- Bibles, 1 per child
- “Jacob’s New Name” video

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

[Hold ear as if receiving another message from Earie.]

Leader • What? It’s almost time to go live on camera.

OK, I’ll get them ready. *[To kids]* Remember, you are my eyewitnesses. Pay attention as the details of the story unfold. That way, when I talk to you in a few minutes, you will be able to tell the television audience exactly what you saw and heard. Let’s grab our Bibles and get ready.

Open your Bible to Genesis 32. Tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or you may choose to show the video “Jacob’s New Name.”

Leader • Wrestling with God, getting a new name, and finally facing his brother. What a great story about Jacob! I can’t wait to report on it. I’ve been given the cue to start in five seconds. Are you ready?

[Give a four, three, two, one with your fingers. Smile and act as if you are suddenly on television. Ask someone to come up with a fake camera or you can just look intently over the heads of the kids. Invite volunteers to come up on stage or up front. Ask the review questions and place the microphone in front of them like a television reporter.]

Review (4 minutes)

Leader • Hello, I’m Anita Clue *[Ben Clueless]*, and this is *Did You See That?* We are the show that puts the

eyewitness in command. Our eyewitnesses just saw and heard how God changed Jacob and gave him a new name that became the name of God's people. All of that came after a wrestling match with God that changed who Jacob was. We have several witnesses to today's story with us. Would someone like to share what they saw and heard today?

If you don't have a volunteer, ask the following questions:

1. Did God keep His promise and return Jacob safely home? (*Yes, Genesis 33:18*)
2. What happened when Jacob was on his way to meet Esau? (*Jacob wrestled with a man who was really God, Genesis 32:28*)
3. What did God change Jacob's name to? (*Israel, Genesis 32:28*)
4. How did Jacob's meeting with God change him? (*He was willing to face Esau and admit his sin, Genesis 33:3*)
5. Did Esau attack him? (*No, Esau ran to Jacob and hugged and kissed him; Genesis 33:4*)
6. What new name do we receive when our life is changed by knowing and loving Jesus? (*children of God, John 1:12*)

Key passage (4 minutes)

[Return to the stage.]

Leader • Another amazing true story from God's Word!

Jacob's sin drove him from his family. On his way back home years later, he met a man who was really God, and Jacob's life was changed. So was his name. ***What new name did God give Jacob? God changed Jacob's name to Israel, which became the name of God's covenant people.*** That will do it for today's report. Until next time,

- key passage slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- "Wherever You Go"
- Bibles, 1 per kid

I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*] saying so long and hey, did you see that?

[Stand still, continuing to smile for a few seconds and then address the kids directly.]

Leader • That story is even more proof that God keeps His promises. God promised to bring Jacob back to the land God promised him. He also promised to watch over Jacob, too. Do you know how I know that? It's what our key passage says. Let's read it together and sing it together.

Guide kids to read the key passage. Encourage the kids to read the verse until they get to the word *you*. Explain that when they say "you," they should jump and turn 180 degrees and continue to say the verse. They can jump back around when they get to *you* again. Continue jumping at the word *you*. Read along to keep them in sync, emphasizing "you." Repeat the game using the key passage song, "Wherever You Go."

Group game (8 minutes)

[Hold earpiece as if talking to Earie.]

Leader • Have I ever played what? Change Up? I don't think so. Ask them if they would like to play a game? *[To kids]* Earie wants to know if you would like to play a game. *[To Earie]* I think they would. OK! That sounds fun. Got it! *[To kids]* I need some volunteers to play the game Change Up.

Choose three or four volunteers to come to the front. The rest of the audience will be the judges. Give the volunteers four simple commands: snap, clap, jump, and stomp. Stomp should be completed with one leg, so that it will not be confused with jump. The volunteers must complete the correct commands. Call the commands in any order, slow

at first and then faster. A child is eliminated from the game when an action does not match the command. Start over as each child is eliminated until only the winner remains. Repeat with new volunteers if time allows.

Leader • This game was not too hard until we changed the pace. Things in life do change and people do change, but there is no better change than when God changes you.

What new name did God give Jacob? God changed Jacob's name to Israel, which became the name of God's covenant people.

Missions (5 minutes)

Leader • It's time for our missions story for today.

Thousands of people called *missionaries* are trying to help others find the same change that happened to Jacob. Every summer thousands of teens become World Changers for one unbelievable week.

Show "World Changers" mission video. This video reveals teenagers on mission during a week at World Changers.

Leader • That's amazing! We should always be working to share how God can still change people through Jesus Christ. First, you have to understand how Jesus wants to change you.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (5 minutes)

Use your Bible and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Encourage kids to ask their parents or other adults any questions they have about becoming a Christian.

Announcements (2 minutes)

Leader • It's time for me to head out of here. I'll see you eyewitnesses next time. I have to go work on another

• "World Changers"
missions video

• Bible

story. This one may get me my very own show, like *59 Minutes* or *30/30*. It's called "What Does Cheese Say When It Gets Its Picture Taken?"

Make any announcements from your children's ministry. If you are participating in a mission collection project, use this time to explain to the boys and girls what you are collecting and why.

Prayer (1 minute)

Leader • I do want to hear that big picture question and answer one more time. *What new name did God give Jacob? God changed Jacob's name to Israel, which became the name of God's covenant people.* Great! Until next time, I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*], saying pay attention 'cause you never know when you will be on *Did You See That?*

Close in prayer.

Dismiss

Additional ideas

Paper Tug of War

Cut a piece of paper horizontally into ½-inch strips. You should get 22 strips per page. Make sure to cut enough for each child to get two strips. Distribute one strip of paper to each child. Explain to the kids that they must choose a partner and loop the paper strips together with each player holding the ends together of her own strip. When the leader counts to three, the kids will pull. One of the partners from each group will have her strip tear completely down the middle and will be eliminated. Ask those whose strips are still intact to find another partner and repeat. If both strips rip, both kids are eliminated. Repeat until only one child is

• paper, 2 pages per
22 kids

left. That child is the winner. If time remains, distribute the other strips, one per player. Repeat the game.

Say • This little wrestling match with pieces of paper was nothing like what Jacob experienced. He wrestled with God until God blessed him and changed his name. *What new name did God give Jacob? God changed Jacob's name to Israel, which became the name of God's covenant people.*

Insights for Large Group Leaders

Here are some tips to guide you as you present the gospel to kids in a large group setting.

- Focus on the gospel. Don't stress about reading every Scripture and every statement given in the guide. Focus on helping kids see their need for a Savior and how Jesus defeated sin.
- Allow kids an opportunity to respond without pressure from adults or peers. Try to have counselors available to meet one on one with kids. Make sure kids know who they can talk to and when they can talk.
- Be as concrete as possible. Avoid abstract or highly symbolic phrases like "inviting Jesus into your heart" or "the blood of Jesus covers you." Abstract phrases often lead to distraction and confusion for concrete thinkers.
- Pray. Pray. Pray. Spend time in prayer as you prepare for the large group session. Pray during the large group time. Pray throughout the week for the kids who heard the gospel presentation.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

Joseph, his father's favorite son, was the son of Rachel, his favorite wife. Jacob gave his son Joseph a gift that the other boys did not get. Of course this did not endear him to his siblings. Can you imagine that strife was a constant at their home? After sharing his dreams with his brothers and father, he was rebuked by his brothers and his father. In Bible times God often spoke to people through dreams. Joseph's dreams were hard for his family to "swallow" and believe.

Once Joseph was sent to Egypt, God blessed him in the house of Potiphar, a wealthy and influential man in Egypt. Remaining faithful to God, Joseph ended up imprisoned for quite some time.

After Joseph had spent years in prison, Pharaoh had a dream which he could not understand. After he described the dream to Joseph, Joseph shared the divine interpretation with Pharaoh. Joseph was made the master of the storehouses and an important official within Egypt. Can you imagine going from prison to second in command ... overnight?

Joseph had two sons whose names were significant to his ordeal. *Manasseh* means "God has made me forget all my hardship in my father's house," and *Ephraim* means "God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction." Joseph recognized who had been with him during his years of separation.

Joseph was falsely accused of a crime, which caused him to be sent to prison. Joseph was violently mistreated, ridiculed, and rejected by his family. This was a foreshadowing of how Jesus Christ would be violently mistreated, ridiculed, and rejected by His people. Jesus was also falsely accused of a crime, leading to His death on the cross. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, anyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: Joseph Sent to Egypt

Bible Passage: Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1–41:57

Big Picture Question: Who is always with us? God is always with us, even when things happen we don't understand.

Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Unit Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

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The BIBLE STORY

Joseph Sent to Egypt

Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1-41:57

Jacob settled in Canaan, the land God promised to Abraham and his family. Jacob's family included several sons, but his favorite son was Joseph. To show his favoritism toward Joseph, Jacob gave him a robe of many colors. At 17 years old, Joseph told his father that some of his brothers were not tending to the sheep like they were supposed to. For this Joseph's brothers hated him and were not kind to him.

Joseph shared with his brothers a dream he had. He dreamed that he and his brothers were putting together bundles of grain. Suddenly Joseph's grain stood up and the others bowed down to his. Joseph had another dream that he shared with his brothers and Jacob, too. This dream had the sun, moon, and 11 stars bowing to Joseph. Jacob even rebuked Joseph this time because this dream meant all of Joseph's family, including his mom and dad, would one day bow down to Joseph. This made his brothers jealous.

Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers, who were tending to the family's sheep several miles away. When the brothers saw him, they decided to kill him. When Reuben, his oldest brother, heard about their plans, he convinced the others to throw him into a pit instead. Reuben planned to rescue him later.

The brothers took off Joseph's robe and threw him into the dry pit that was sometimes used to store water for the sheep. While eating a meal, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites heading to Egypt to sell supplies. The brothers sold Joseph to them as a servant. When Reuben returned to the pit, he found that Joseph wasn't there.

The brothers decided to dip Joseph's coat in goat's blood and show it to Jacob. Jacob thought an animal had killed Joseph. He mourned his son's death for a long time.

Meanwhile, the Ishmaelites sold Joseph to an Egyptian officer named Potiphar. The Lord was with Joseph and made him successful at everything he did. Potiphar realized this and put him in charge of everything under his authority as his personal assistant. The Lord blessed Potiphar, too.

Potiphar's wife tried to get Joseph to sin against God and Potiphar, but

Joseph refused. This angered her, and she accused him of doing something he didn't do. Potiphar listened to her, and Joseph was thrown in jail, where the king's prisoners were held.

Even in jail, God was with Joseph and blessed him. The jail warden put all the prisoners under Joseph's care, and the Lord again made everything Joseph did successful. While in prison, Joseph was put in charge of two of Pharaoh's top officials, his cupbearer and his baker. Both shared dreams they had with Joseph, and he told them the meaning of the dreams. The dreams meant the cupbearer would serve Pharaoh again, but the baker would not. Joseph asked the cupbearer to tell Pharaoh that Joseph had been unfairly put in prison.

The cupbearer forgot about Joseph until two years later when Pharaoh had two dreams. In his dreams seven fat cows were eaten by seven skinny cows, and seven fat heads of grain were eaten by seven thin heads. Pharaoh could find no one to tell him what the dreams meant. That's when the cupbearer remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh how Joseph could interpret the dreams.

Pharaoh asked Joseph if he would tell him the meaning of the two dreams. Joseph said he couldn't, but God could use him to tell what they meant. Pharaoh shared his dreams with Joseph. Joseph explained to the Egyptian king that God was warning him about what was about to happen. The dreams represented seven years of lots of food followed by seven years with no food. Joseph told Pharaoh that he should pick someone to save food during the good years to use during the bad years.

Pharaoh listened and realized that God's spirit was with Joseph. At age 30 Joseph was made second in command in all of Egypt. Joseph stored away food during the good years, and during the famine, people came from all nations to buy grain from Joseph.

Christ Connection: God sent Joseph to Egypt and blessed him, so that he rose to a position of great power. In that position, he was God's instrument for saving his family and many others in the world from death by starvation. Jesus gave up his position of great power to be God's instrument for saving people. Christ's life and death made a way to save people from spiritual death, which is the penalty of sin.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: Joseph Sent to Egypt

Bible Passage: Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1–41:57

Big Picture Question: Who is always with us? God is always with us, even when things happen we don't understand.

Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Unit Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

- microphone, real or fake
- earphone
- notebook
- pencil

[Enter with a big smile, carrying a microphone and a notebook and pencil. Wear an earphone in one ear.]

Leader • I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*], your host for *Did You See That?* Welcome to another episode where you get to be the eyewitness. In this series so far, we have talked about how God has shared His covenant plan with people in different ways and how nothing can stop His plans. They are always perfect. Last time, we learned that God changed Jacob and gave him a brand new name, Israel. That name became the name of God's chosen people, the name of a nation. We've had three incredible stories from God's Word.

As you know, I have also been working on my own line of stories about some topics dear to my heart. All my life, whenever anyone takes a picture of me, they ask me to say "cheese." I started thinking. What if you took a picture of cheese? What would it say? OK, so cheese

can't talk, but what if it could? It makes me kind of sad to think of poor cheese. Maybe it would say, "people." Really if you think about it, this is worthy of a headline story—maybe the evening news!

Timeline map (2 minutes)

• timeline map

[Grab ear as if receiving another message from the producer.]

Leader • What, Earie? That's not very nice. I happen to think this crowd would be very interested in my cheese story. It is not cheesy! OK, it is cheesy, but not in the way you mean. You have another story, one that really matters. Well, you have done a good job with supplying me with stories lately.

Oh ... a two-part series. *[To kids]* Earie says our story today is a two-part series. I've finally arrived. You know you have moved up in broadcasting when you get to do a series. Of course, I have to get ready. I'll need someone to do hair and makeup. I'll need a satellite truck, an extra camera man. *[To Earie]* What? I just need a Bible? That's what really matters. You're right, Earie. I guess I got carried away. Speaking of carried away, why don't we look at our timeline map to see a little bit about our story? "Joseph Sent to Egypt." That sounds like some trip. Maybe it was like a vacation.

Big picture question (2 minutes)

• big picture question
slide or poster
(enhanced CD)

[Grab ear as if receiving a another message from the producer.]

Leader • What, Earie? This was no vacation? I don't know. I would love to have visited Egypt in Old Testament times, walk like an Egyptian, and maybe meet a pharaoh. *[To kids]* What do you all think of that? *[To Earie]* Oh,

that doesn't sound like a vacation. They really treated him that way? You mean he got treated that way more than once? Poor Joseph. Introduce the big picture question. Oh, you're asking me to introduce the big picture question. *[To kids]* Are you ready for the big picture question? Here it is: ***Who is always with us?*** Does anyone have any ideas? ***God is always with us, even when things happen we don't understand.***

- cheese, 1 slice or piece
- gelatin cup

Tip: If a child volunteers to eat one of the snacks before they are revealed. Ask her to come up front and wait. Once you unveil the item, let her eat it.

Group demonstration (4 minutes)

Leader • I have some snacks here. I was wondering if someone would like to try them. Let's see. Who would like some sour milk? Anyone? How about some boiled animal tissue? Yum! Any takers? Is anyone interested? I really don't understand.

[Take a piece of each item out of a bag or box as you unveil what it is and eat it. The sour milk is the cheese. The boiled animal tissue is the gelatin dessert mix.]

Leader • I guess that means you don't want some cheese, which starts as soured milk. What would it say if I took its picture? Sorry, still wondering. Nobody wanted gelatin dessert mix, which uses boiled animal tissue to hold its form. It turns out those gross things are part of products that are really good. Sometimes life is like that, too. We have some really bad times, but later we realize that those bad times can lead to some really great times.

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

[Hold the earpiece in your ear with your finger as you talk to Earie.]

Leader • I know, Earie. I have had some tough times in my life too. It just doesn't seem fair. *[To kids]* Have you ever had something happen to you that you just thought

- "Starry Night" and other songs of your choice

wasn't fair? It's during those times that God really wants us to remain faithful. It's also those times that help us see how blessed we are when we are having good times in our lives. God is always good and worthy of praise during good and bad. Let's all sing to Him.

Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- "Starry Night" (unit theme song)
- "Trustin' God"
- "My God Is Real"
- "You're Worthy of My Praise"
- "I Stand in Awe"

Tell the Bible story (8 minutes)

[Hold ear as if receiving another message from Earie.]

Leader • Earie, are we ready to go live? In just a few minutes we will. Great! *[To kids]* I need all of my eyewitnesses to watch and listen closely, so you can tell everyone what you saw and heard. Make sure you have your Bible ready to go, too. Part one of a two-part series. The event is about to happen right before your eyes. I'm so excited!

Open your Bible to Genesis 37. Tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or you may choose to show the video "Joseph Sent to Egypt."

Leader • Joseph had some tough things to deal with, but he didn't give up being faithful to God. It turns out God was with him the whole time. ***Who is always with us? God is always with us, even when things happen we don't understand.*** I think we are ready for our live report.

[Give a four, three, two, one with your fingers. Smile and

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- "Joseph Sent to Egypt" video (optional)

act as if you are suddenly on television. Ask someone to come up with a fake camera or you can just look intently over the heads of the kids. Invite volunteers to come up on stage or up front. Ask the review questions and place the microphone in front of them like a television reporter.]

Review (4 minutes)

Leader • Hello, I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*], and this is *Did You See That?* We are the show that puts the eyewitness in command. Our eyewitnesses just saw and heard how Joseph was rejected by his brothers and by strangers. He still remained faithful, however. We have several witnesses to today's story with us. Would someone like to share what you saw and heard today?

If you don't have a volunteer, ask the following questions:

1. What son did Jacob favor? (*Joseph, Genesis 37:3*)
2. How did this make his brothers feel? (*angry and jealous, Genesis 37:4,11*)
3. How did they reject him? (*put him in a pit and sold him into slavery, Genesis 37:24,28*)
4. Who else rejected Joseph? (*Potiphar's wife and Pharaoh's cupbearer, Genesis 39:19-20; 40:23*)
5. By remaining faithful, what happened to Joseph? (*He was put in charge of all of Egypt, Genesis 41:41*)
6. Joseph was given authority to save God's people. Who gave up His authority to save God's people? (*Jesus*)

Key passage (5 minutes)

[Return to the stage.]

Leader • I bet Joseph had no idea he would one day be second only to Pharaoh, especially when he was placed in

- key passage slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- "Wherever You Go"
- Bibles, 1 per kid

that pit by his brothers, accused of something he didn't do by Potiphar's wife, and forgotten for years by Pharaoh's cupbearer. Yet, God was always with Joseph.

Who is always with us? God is always with us, even when things happen we don't understand. What will happen next to Joseph? Find out next time as part of a two-part series. Until then, I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*] saying so long and hey, did you see that?

[Stand still, continuing to smile for a few seconds and then address the kids directly.]

Leader • Through all the bad things that happened to Joseph, God was still with him. That reminds me of the promise God made to Joseph's father, Jacob. That also happens to be our key passage in Genesis 28:15. Let's see, who remembers it?

Guide kids to read the key passage. Then, hide the verse and ask for kids to volunteer to say it from memory. If no one volunteers, repeat it a few more times and ask again. Sing "Wherever You Go."

Group game (8 minutes)

[Hold earpiece as if talking to Earie.]

Leader • Prizes? Of course I like prizes. [*To kids*] Do you like prizes? Well, first I need some volunteers. Who is interested in a little game?

Before worship, take five small pieces of paper and print 1–5, one number per piece of paper. Place the pieces of paper in a bag. Choose five volunteers to come to the front. Allow each volunteer to draw a number from the bag. Invite each volunteer to read aloud the number on his piece of paper. Ask each one to do a simple task like give you a high five. Let each one choose small prizes, like pencils or candy, in the amount of his number.

- paper, 5 small pieces
- bag
- small prizes, several

Leader • Do any of you think it is fair that one kid got five prizes and another got one for doing the same thing? They took a piece of paper from the same bag and followed the same directions. Sometimes we face things in life that don't seem fair to us. We often feel rejected. All we need to do is be faithful and trust God to take care of us. *Who is always with us? God is always with us, even when things happen we don't understand.*

Missions (5 minutes)

• "Rio de Janeiro"
video

Leader • It's time for our missions story for today. Kids in many places in the world must feel like Joseph did when he was tossed in the pit or thrown in jail. Fortunately, God has called missionaries to help kids with needs find God and His plan for them. Here's an example of one such group of people.

Show "Rio de Janeiro." This video details the ministry of the Reese family to the people in Rio de Janeiro.

Leader • When we are faithful to God by ministering to others, He will use us to bless others and tell them about Jesus. You need to know about Jesus, too. Joseph rose to a position of power to save God's people, but Jesus gave up his power to save those who know and love Him.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (5 minutes)

• Bible

Use your Bible and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Encourage kids to ask their parents or other adults any questions they have about becoming a Christian.

Announcements (2 minutes)

Leader • I guess I better go. Once again, you have been wonderful eyewitnesses. Oh, yeah, I almost forgot to

share with you another groundbreaking story I'm working on: "Why Are There Always Holes in Crackers?" I bet all of you have wondered that before. Maybe this will be the story that finally launches my career to a whole new level. Make any announcements from your children's ministry. If you are participating in a mission collection project, use this time to explain to the boys and girls what you are collecting and why.

Prayer (1 minute)

Leader • Don't forget this week's big picture question and answer. *Who is always with us? God is always with us, even when things happen we don't understand.* Until next time, I'm Anita Clue, saying pay attention cause you never know when you will be on *Did You See That?* Close in prayer.

Dismiss

Additional ideas

- sponges (green or purple), 1 per group
- buckets, 1 per group
- cups, 1 per group

Pharaoh's cup

Cut a few purple and green sponges into circles, like grapes. Form groups of three to five. Place a bucket with water beside an empty cup for each group. Each group will line up around the bucket, and the first person will grab a sponge. That child must dip the sponge in the water and squeeze the water into the cup. The child hands the sponge to the next person in line. Repeat until a group fills their cup first. Repeat.

Say • The cupbearer forgot his promise to tell Pharaoh about Joseph. Imagine how Joseph must have expected that he would be released soon after the cupbearer got his job back. It was two years later

before the cupbearer remembered Joseph, but God was always with him. *Who is always with us? God is always with us, even when things happen we don't understand.*

Insights for Large Group Leaders

Here are some tips to guide you as you present the gospel to kids in a large group setting.

- Focus on the gospel. Don't stress about reading every Scripture and every statement given in the guide. Focus on helping kids see their need for a Savior and how Jesus defeated sin.
- Allow kids an opportunity to respond without pressure from adults or peers. Try to have counselors available to meet one on one with kids. Make sure kids know who they can talk to and when they can talk.
- Be as concrete as possible. Avoid abstract or highly symbolic phrases like “inviting Jesus into your heart” or “the blood of Jesus covers you.” Abstract phrases often lead to distraction and confusion for concrete thinkers.
- Pray. Pray. Pray. Spend time in prayer as you prepare for the large group session. Pray during the large group time. Pray throughout the week for the kids who heard the gospel presentation.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God

created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Teacher BIBLE STUDY

Once Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent his sons to Egypt, except for Benjamin. No one in Canaan knew how long the famine would last, and later clues lead us to believe that it was early into the famine when Jacob sent his sons to Egypt.

Joseph recognized his brothers immediately, but they did not recognize him. Through several rounds of tests, Joseph determined that his brothers' hearts had changed and that they were sorry for selling him into slavery.

Jacob was hesitant to let his sons return to Egypt for more grain, especially with Benjamin in tow. He reluctantly let Benjamin go with Judah's promise of protection for him. Can you image Jacob's fear after losing Joseph?

Joseph's final test involved Benjamin; it played heavily on his brothers' concern for their father and Jacob's desire not to lose another son. Unable to hold his composure any longer, Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers.

Focus now on Genesis 45:4-8. Joseph explained why God allowed him to be taken to Egypt. Even though his brothers intended this for his harm, God actually intended this for good. Have you ever struggled to see how bad situations in your life can lead to positive results? Joseph told his brothers they would be set apart as a remnant for "a great deliverance."

God told Abraham many years before about what would happen. (See Gen. 15:13.) Little did Joseph know that his brothers and their families would be in Egypt for the next 400 years.

Joseph was to go to Egypt to prepare a place for his family to survive and become a great nation—the nation of Israel. God's plan of redemption through Jesus Christ was sustained through the remnant left in Egypt for 400 years.

Kids WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Session Title: Joseph's Dreams Came True

Bible Passage: Genesis 42:1–46:34; 50:15-21

Big Picture Question: Why did God send Joseph to Egypt? God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.

Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Unit Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

Worship Experience

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

Timeline map (2 minutes)

Big picture question (2 minutes)

Sing and offering (3-12 minutes)

Tell the Bible story (8 minutes)

Review (5 minutes)

Key passage (4 minutes)

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (5 minutes)

Group game (7 minutes)

Missions (5 minutes)

Announcements (2 minutes)

Prayer (1 minute)

Additional Ideas (10 minutes)

The BIBLE STORY

Joseph's Dreams Came True

Genesis 42:1–46:34; 50:15-21

When Jacob learned that Egypt still had food despite the famine, he sent 10 of his sons to buy some of the grain. Benjamin stayed home. Joseph was in charge of who received food, so the brothers came to him and bowed down. Joseph recognized them, but they did not recognize him. Joseph remembered his dreams where his brothers bowed down to him.

Joseph accused them of being spies and put them in prison for three days. On the third day he told them they could all go home except for one. The brothers could prove they were not spies by bringing their brother Benjamin on a return trip. Joseph told his servants to fill each brothers' sack and give their money back without telling them. When they discovered the money, they were afraid of being accused of stealing it.

They told their father everything, but Jacob would not let the brothers take Benjamin because he was afraid he would never see Benjamin again. However, when all the grain was gone, Jacob asked the sons to return. Judah said they would only go back with Benjamin and promised to return with him. Jacob agreed and told them to take enough money to pay for the grain they received the last visit, too. They also took a special gift for Joseph.

When Joseph saw the brothers arrive with Benjamin, he invited them to his home for lunch. They offered to return the money from last time, but a servant assured them they did not owe anything. When Joseph arrived, the brothers gave him his gift and bowed before him. When Joseph saw his younger brother, he left and cried.

After eating, Joseph instructed a servant to fill each man's bag with grain and again put their money back. In addition, the servant was to put one of Joseph's silver cups in Benjamin's bag. After the brothers left, Joseph told his servant to pursue them and accuse them of stealing the cup. They denied taking it and agreed that if anyone was found with the cup, they would all become Joseph's slaves. When the cup was found in Benjamin's bag, they all returned to Joseph's house. Joseph told the brothers that only Benjamin would be kept as a slave. Judah pleaded with Joseph. He offered

to stay instead.

Joseph was overcome with emotion and sent away all of his attendants. He told his brothers who he was. They didn't respond because they were scared Joseph would want revenge. Joseph assured them, "God sent me ahead of you to establish you as a remnant within the land and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. Therefore it was not you who sent me here, but God." Joseph told his brothers to go home and gather all their family and belongings and come back to Egypt, where they would live free from the famine. Joseph sent supplies for the return trip and gifts for Jacob.

When the brothers returned and explained to Jacob what had happened, he was stunned and didn't believe them until he saw all the supplies they came back with. Jacob was happy and excited to go see Joseph.

On the way Jacob had a vision, and God spoke to him. "I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you back." All of Jacob's family, from sons to great-grandsons, headed to Egypt. Joseph met his father and they hugged and wept.

The family was blessed in Egypt, but Jacob got older and died. Joseph's brothers were worried that he would finally have revenge on them, so they told him that Jacob had asked that he forgive his brothers for their sin. Joseph responded, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You planned evil against me; God planned it for good to bring about the present result—the survival of many people." Joseph comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Christ Connection: Joseph recognized that though his brothers intended evil, God planned his circumstances for good—to establish a remnant of God's people (Genesis 45:7). Likewise, though those who crucified Jesus intended it for evil, God's plan for the sacrifice of His Son was for the good of all people. Through Jesus' death on the cross, God again saved a remnant of people.

Kids Worship LEADER

Session Title: Joseph's Dreams Came True

Bible Passage: Genesis 42:1–46:34; 50:15-21

Big Picture Question: Why did God send Joseph to Egypt? God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.

Key Passage: Genesis 28:15

Unit Christ Connection: Despite difficult circumstances, God remained faithful to the people to whom His promise was given, in preparation for the salvation that would come through Jesus Christ.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (2 minutes)

• microphone, real or fake
• earphone
• notebook
• pencil

[Enter with a big smile, carrying a microphone and a notebook and pencil. Wear an earphone in one ear.]

Leader • I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*], your host for *Did You See That?* I'm sorry to say that this will be our last show together. I finally got the job I've been waiting for. I'm going to work for another show called *59 Minutes*. I understand you have a new adventure waiting, too. I'm sure that my new opportunity is because of my excellent reporting skills and my most recent investigative report "Why Do Crackers Have Holes in Them?" I'll let you in on that secret in a minute.

Let me say it has been an amazing five weeks. In this series so far, we have talked about how God has shared His covenant plan with people in different ways and how nothing can stop His plans. They are always perfect. We learned that God changed Jacob and gave him a brand new name, Israel. Finally, we learned from Joseph that

God is always with us even when things happen we don't understand.

Today, we get to see more about Joseph. I'm glad you will get to witness part two of this two-part series. Before we get into our story for today, it turns out those holes in your crackers are there for a purpose. Stunning reporting allowed me to discover the real answer. At first, I thought it was so the crackers wouldn't float in my soup. Then, I wondered if they were there so you could fill them up with peanut butter or cheese. As it turns out, none of that was right.

Group demonstration (5 minutes)

- large sheet of paper or poster board
- tape
- Any of the following items: rubber band, a piece of gum, putty, play dough, dry sponge

[Grab ear as if receiving another message from the producer.]

Leader • What, Earie? What do you mean I'm boring them? *[To kids]* Am I boring you? *[To Earie]* These kids know good journalism when they see and hear it. You want to test them on that? You have a challenge to see how smart they are. *[To kids]* My producer, who is again talking to me through my earpiece, wants to know if you are up for a challenge.

Attach a large sheet of paper or poster board to the wall. Put several long pencil marks on the paper. Provide things that kids can use to try to erase the marks: a rubber band, a piece of gum, putty, play dough, and a dry sponge. Choose the same number of volunteers as you have items. Ask each volunteer to pick an item and a line to try to erase with the item. Give them one minute to erase as much of the line as possible. Let the kids vote on which item erased best. The kid who used that item will be the winner.

Leader • A pencil is not the only thing that will leave a mark. When someone rejects us, it leaves a mark, too.

Tip: Feel free to substitute the items suggested.

It's not a mark that can be erased, but it is a mark we can choose to forgive. In part two of the story of Joseph, we see how he handles the rejection of his brothers when he comes face to face with them again.

Timeline map (2 minutes)

• timeline map

[Grab ear as if receiving a another message from the producer.]

Leader •Yes, Earie. I know this is a great chance to see a little more about today's report. *[To kids]* Let's take a peek at our timeline map. Where's last week? Here it is. Before we talk about where we are on the timeline, I forgot to tell you why crackers have holes in them: so you can see through them. *[To Earie]* What do you mean that's not true? I had an expert tell me that. What kind of expert? He said he was a crackerologist. Really? That's not even a word? Oh, maybe I should just tell the kids where we are on the timeline. *[To kids]* OK, our story title is "Joseph's Dreams Came True." Do you guys remember Joseph's dreams? Can anyone tell me about one of his dreams?

Big picture question (2 minutes)

• big picture question
slide or poster
(enhanced CD)

Leader •It's the final week, but I came prepared with this week's big picture question. ***Why did God send Joseph to Egypt?*** I think I know this one. He sent him because his brothers threw him into a pit and sold him to some travelers who sold him into slavery. *[To Earie]* What? That's not the answer? It is what happened, but the question is why? I see. Really, that's why? I'll tell them. *[To kids]* Earie just told me the real answer. Here it is. ***Why did God send Joseph to Egypt? God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.***

- “Starry Night” and other songs of your choice

Sing and offering (3–12 minutes)

[Hold the earpiece in your ear with your finger as you talk to Earie.]

Leader • Oh thanks, Earie. *[To kids]* In case you are wondering, a *remnant* is a group of people who are saved from a disaster, like a famine. God not only saved Joseph as we learned last time, but God used Joseph to help save others, too—the same ones who had rejected him. I don’t want to give too much away before you witness today’s story. I can tell you, though, that God loves every one of you and wants to save you, too. We’ll talk about His plan to do that a little later. First, let’s praise Him for that plan. Provide kids with an opportunity to participate in an offering as a part of worship during one song. Choose three or four songs to sing during this time.

Song suggestions:

- “Starry Night” (unit theme song)
- “Trustin’ God”
- “My God Is Real”
- “You’re Worthy of My Praise”
- “I Stand in Awe”

- Bibles, 1 per child
- “Joseph’s Dreams Came True” video

Tell the Bible story (8 minutes)

[Hold ear as if receiving another message from Earie.]

Leader • Today’s story is about to happen live? I’ll get everyone ready. *[To kids]* Earie says you are about to see and hear today’s event. Remember, you are the eyes and ears that will share the story with our television audience. Pay close attention.

Open your Bible to Genesis 42. Tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided, or you may choose to show the video “Joseph’s Dreams Came True.”

Leader • Wow! Joseph really had a chance to get revenge

on his brothers who had been so mean to him, but he forgave them. He understood that God had been in charge when all of that was happening. God was the reason Joseph was in Egypt. ***Why did God send Joseph to Egypt? God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.*** We are ready to go live with our report.

[Give a four, three, two, one with your fingers. Smile and act as if you are suddenly on television. Ask someone to come up with a fake camera or you can just look intently over the heads of the kids. Invite volunteers to come up on stage or up front. Ask the review questions and place the microphone in front of them like a television reporter.]

Review (5 minutes)

Leader • Hello, I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*], and this is *Did You See That?* We are the show that puts the eyewitness in command. Our eyewitnesses just saw how God used the bad things that happened to Joseph to save the covenant people. Would someone like to share what you saw and heard today?

If you don't have a volunteer, ask the following questions:

1. What did Joseph remember when his brothers bowed before him? (*his dreams of them bowing to him, Genesis 42:9*)
2. How did Joseph test them? (*by calling them spies, Genesis 42:14-15*)
3. Who pleaded with Joseph to let Benjamin go? (*Judah, Genesis 44:18-34*)
4. What did Joseph and his father do when they were reunited? (*hugged and cried, Genesis 46:29*)
5. What did Joseph tell his brothers when they were worried he would take revenge? (*not to be afraid because it was God who sent him there,*

Genesis 45:5; 50:19)

6. Joseph was mistreated, but it was for the good of all people. How is this like Jesus? (*He was also mistreated for the good of all people.*)

Key passage (4 minutes)

- key passage slide or poster (enhanced CD)
- "Wherever You Go"
- Bibles, 1 per kid

[Return to the stage.]

Leader • What a great story of forgiveness! Much bigger than that is what it means in God's covenant plan. God promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that their families would become kings and nations. God used Joseph to keep those who were part of the promise alive during the famine. ***Why did God send Joseph to Egypt? God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.*** For the last time, I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*] saying so long and hey, did you see that?

[Stand still, continuing to smile for a few seconds and then address the kids directly.]

Leader • Not only was God with Joseph through all those tough times, God was directing Joseph so that he would become a leader to save God's promised people. That promise is what our key verse has been all about. Let's see who has Genesis 28:15 memorized.

Allow volunteers to share the verse. Invite others to grab one or two friends and try to say the verse together.

Leader • God had a plan to save and use Joseph, and Joseph realized that. God has a plan to save us, too.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (5 minutes)

- Bible

Use your Bible and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Encourage kids to ask their parents or other adults any questions they have about becoming a Christian.

- three containers
- penny
- nickel
- dime
- marker

Group game (7 minutes)

[Hold earpiece as if talking to Earie.]

Leader • Speaking of plans, how about a game? I need six volunteers to see how well you can figure out plans.

Form two groups of three. Take three containers and line them up. Label them *red*, *blue*, and *green*. One team will whisper to the leader a “plan” for a pattern using these three colors, like blue-green-red. The other team must try to guess the plan by placing a penny in what they think is the first container, a nickel in the second container, and a dime in the third. Encourage the rest of the kids to help them guess. Then, the guessing team can ask the planning team if they figured out their plan. If they have not, the planning team must tell them which container is first in the pattern. They guess the order again, and ask again. The teams swap roles and repeat. The winning team is the one who figured out the other team’s plan the fastest. In case of a tie, play again.

Leader • Guessing the other team’s plan was difficult the first time, but much easier the second time because you understood part of the plan. Joseph may not have realized in the beginning what God’s plan was, but he was able to look back and see what God was doing. ***Why did God send Joseph to Egypt? God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.***

Missions (5 minutes)

Leader • You may be wondering why some things have happened to you that you didn’t understand at first. Perhaps God has a plan you just haven’t realized yet. If you remain faithful like Joseph, you may look back and understand one day, too. God’s plan and the timing of His plan is always perfect. Listen to the story of a missionary

in Zimbabwe.

Share the following missionary story.

Leader • I love to go to church—we sing songs, we visit with friends, we worship God. THAT’s the best part. But I have to say, I’m not used to staying a-a-a-all day. I really mean all day. Missionary Donna Fort went to speak at a women’s meeting in Zimbabwe. The group started at 4:30 in the morning and had studied the Bible all day. Yes, 4:30 a.m. until 9:45 p.m.—they had been meeting for seventeen hours already when it was Donna Fort’s turn to teach! I think they stopped for lunch and dinner, but still ... that’s a long day.

They had no electricity, and the room was dark. There were just two candles for light. Donna was yawning, and some of the women were already asleep. “Will anyone hear the message God has given me?” wondered Donna.

Donna spoke three sentences, then heard someone outside say “*Nyoka!*” That meant “snake.” Everyone woke right up! In this culture in Zimbabwe, a snake is the symbol of the Devil and has to be destroyed. The women threw rocks at the snake and killed it. Then they went back to the Bible lesson.

God’s timing was perfect! The women were wide awake from all that excitement. Donna taught from Joshua and everyone listened.

God used the events in Joseph’s life the same way, so He could establish a remnant of people He would call His own.

Announcements (2 minutes)

Leader • It’s almost time for me to go. I’ve really enjoyed sharing these stories with you. You have been such great eyewitnesses. I hope you’ll catch me on my new show.

Make any announcements from your children's ministry. If you are participating in a mission collection project, use this time to explain to the boys and girls what you will be collecting for the next unit.

Prayer (1 minute)

Leader • One last time, let's hear that big picture question and answer. *Why did God send Joseph to Egypt? God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.* Until next time, I'm Anita Clue [*Ben Clueless*], saying pay attention cause you never know when you will be on *Did You See That?*

Close in prayer.

Additional idea

Forgiveness relay

Form teams. Tape a start line and a finish line several feet apart. Send an equal number of kids from each team to each line. The first kid at the start line for each team will race to the finish line and hand a bible to a teammate. During the exchange, the one handing the Bible should say "forgive me." The one receiving the Bible must say "I forgive you" before running back to the start line to the next team member. Continue until each team member has completed the relay.

Leader • God offers us forgiveness. God's Word tells us to forgive others, too. When we don't forgive others, we end up angry and bitter. Joseph saw the big picture and chose to forgive. *Why did God send Joseph to Egypt? God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.*

- Bible, 1 per group
- tape

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from her Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

A Christ-Centered Curriculum

If you are looking for creative, fun-filled, and family-focused approaches to children's discipleship curriculum, there are plenty of options available. But we've heard from a number of children's pastors who are dissatisfied with what they've seen.

Though they appreciate these offerings for their creativity and the way they connect to parents seeking to disciple their children, these leaders are concerned that the primary message we are giving our children is simply that they need to "be good."

What sometimes gets lost in the journey through Bible stories is the good news of what Christ has done to save the lost. In other words, in focusing on behavior, we may be missing the heart-change brought about by the gospel.

The Gospel Project for Kids is an attempt to bring a gospel focus back to children's curriculum. In walking through the Bible stories chronologically, we want children to discover several truths.

Truth #1

The Bible tells one big story. When we take Bible stories out of context to glean moral lessons from them, we can leave kids with the impression that the Bible is much like Aesop's fables—interesting tales with moral application.

But even though the Bible has moral application and does give us some terrific stories, it actually tells one overarching story. These stories fit together. They tell us the story of our world—where we've come from and where we are going.

We believe it's important that children recognize how these Bible stories are connected.

Truth #2

The Bible is about God. Once we recognize that the Bible is telling us a great story, we discover that we are not the main characters. The Bible is first and foremost about God. He is the hero.

These stories provide us with moral application, yes. But before we get to application, we ought to ask, "What does this story tell us about God?" What attributes and characteristics of God are on display in this story?

If the Bible's big story is about

God's bringing about redemption of His fallen world, then what picture of God do we see in the smaller stories?

Truth #3

The Bible points us to Jesus. A statement I like to make from time to time (for shock value, I admit!) is "Bible study won't necessarily change your life." What I mean is this: Just because you know the Bible doesn't mean the word will bear fruit in your life.

It is possible to know the Scriptures, read the Scriptures, revere the Scriptures, and study the Scriptures and miss the point entirely. Jesus told the Jewish leaders of the day that even though they had meticulous knowledge of the Old Testament, they had missed the truth that the Old Testament is ultimately about Him (John 5:39).

Whenever we study the stories of the Bible, we need to ask how they point us to Christ. The reason God's Word changes our life is not because of our personal study but because in the Scriptures we are introduced to Jesus, the Author.

Truth #4

The Bible calls for obedience that is grounded in the gospel

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and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Now, back to moral principles and application. Does the Bible have them? Absolutely. But biblical behavior should not flow

from obligation and compulsion. God cares about our hearts. Our hearts are not changed by the commands of the Law. Our hearts are changed when they overflow with love for the Savior. As we experience the grace of what God has done for us in Christ, our hearts are free to worship and obey.

It's important that we take care not to give our children commands without showing them how the Holy Spirit, through the gospel, gives them the strength to obey these commands.

The purpose of our Bible study is to know God and make Him known. The Bible unveils Jesus Christ as the focal point of human history. All creation exists by Him, through Him, to Him, and for Him (Rom. 11:36; Col. 1:16). Our children's curriculum should exist for Him too. That's the only kind of Bible study that will change your life.

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Insights for Worship Leaders

Big picture question: Each week the worship leader will introduce a big picture question to help teach kids Bible truths systematically.

Christ Connection: One of the goals of this curriculum is to make sure every kid understands that each Bible story leads to God's plan of redemption through Jesus Christ. That's why you will notice two ways to connect Christ to each lesson. The first is a unit Christ Connection. This is used to help teachers understand how all the sessions of a unit connect to Christ. The second is for the kids and can be found at the end of each Bible story. This allows the kids to see how every lesson relates back to the big picture of God's plan.

Timeline map: If space is limited, hang one or two sections of the timeline map at a time. When you review the Bible stories from the previous weeks, point out the Bible stories on the timeline to allow kids to see the progression of chronology.

Connecting worship: Though in different forms, many of the same elements presented in worship are also presented in Bible study. This is intentional to help kids walk away with one clear Bible story, big picture question, and Christ connection.

Estimated times: The times given in the session plans are minimal estimates. While interaction with the kids is important, remember that time can quickly get away from you. Keep in mind that not every idea given in the session has to be completed. On occasion you may need to spend more time in one element and eliminate another. As you teach each session you will gain more insight into the time you need for your group to work through each element.

Leader: These lines are written as a monologue to give you a flow through the worship plan. However, you do not have to say any of them word for word. Customize the scripted lines to fit your needs and situation.