



# 1

# Isaac and Rebekah

## Key Themes

- God's plans are perfect.
- God is faithful to His promises.

## Key Passages

- Genesis 24:5–14, 24:22–27, 24:50–52, 24:63–67, 50:19–20

## Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Recognize God's perfect plan in the events leading to the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah.
- Recite what is meant by "God is sovereign."



## Lesson Overview



### Come On In

page 5

Students will complete a math story problem to determine how many trips to the well it would take to water 10 camels.



### Studying God's Word

page 5

When Abraham sent his servant to obtain a wife for Isaac, God demonstrated His control, even in difficult situations. God kept His promise, providing Rebekah for Isaac according to His perfect plan.



### Activity 1: Memory Verse Sort

page 10

Students will find candy with phrases from the memory verse in a dirty bag and then arrange the phrases into the proper order.



### Activity 2: Find It on the Map

page 11

Students will follow a list of directions for marking a map to help them explore the places referenced in the lesson.

# Lesson Preparation

## WHAT YOU WILL DO

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED



### COME ON IN

- Print one How Many Trips to the Well? story problem from the DVD-ROM for each student (or copy the story on the board before class).

- How Many Trips to the Well? story problem for each student
- Pencils



### STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print one Genesis 24 script from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.
- Print the Lesson Board Work outline from the Resource DVD-ROM for use in planning your lesson.

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Map of Mesopotamia and Canaan from your Bible or Bible Atlas
- Genesis 24 script for each student
- Lesson Board Work outline



### MEMORY VERSE SORT

- Divide the memory verses (Genesis 50:19–20) into several phrases. Write the phrases on separate strips of paper.
- Tape these verse phrase strips to pieces of candy.
- Place all the candy pieces with verse phrases into a crumpled, dirty paper bag. Be sure to include enough candy for each student in your class.

- Wrapped candy and verse phrases in a crumpled, dirty paper bag



### FIND IT ON THE MAP

- Print one Find It on the Map activity sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Find It on the Map activity sheet for each student
- Pencils



## Memory Verse

**Genesis 50:19–20** Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.”

► **Pace your lesson!** You can use the provided clocks to indicate the time each section should be completed to keep the lesson on schedule. While teaching, you can compare your anticipated times with the actual time and shorten or drop sections as necessary.





# Prepare to Share

## SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Read Genesis 24, asking God to give you understanding and joy in His Word.

With a solemn oath, a quest to a distant land, an unexpected stranger, and the search for a bride, Genesis 24 is the remarkable account of God's sovereign provision of a wife for Isaac. Through Isaac and Rebekah, God would keep His promises to Abraham—to increase his descendants to as many as the sand and the stars, to give them a rich inheritance in the land of Canaan, taking possession of the cities of their enemies, and to bless all nations on earth (Genesis 12:2–3, 22:16–18).

It is significant to mention two events that are described in Genesis 22, two chapters before the account of this lesson. The first event is God's dramatic test of Abraham's faith. Abraham demonstrated trust in the sovereignty of God (Hebrews 11:17) by not withholding his son, the son of promise—Isaac. God then reiterated his promise of blessing all nations through Abraham's descendant. The second event, although a seemingly obscure fact, is the birth of Abraham's grand-niece, Rebekah (Genesis 22:20–23). God was setting the stage for the fulfillment of His promises.

*Abraham*—By the opening of Genesis chapter 24, Abraham's beloved wife Sarah had died (Genesis 23). Abraham was experiencing the blessings of wealth promised by God (Genesis 12:2). However, though God had promised that he would have descendants as numerous as the stars (Genesis 15:5), as of yet, Isaac (his son) had given him no grandchildren. In chapter 24, Abraham called his oldest servant to return to his homeland, Nahor, and bring back a wife for Isaac. It is interesting that Abraham did not go himself, nor did he allow Isaac to leave Canaan. Isaac's future was to be in Canaan and nowhere else, for God had promised this land to Abraham's descendants (Genesis 12:1–9, 13:14–18, 15:1–21).

*The servant*—The servant proved obedient and loyal in every way, faithfully yielding to his master and the son. He modeled a walk of faith by praying for specific guidance while actively preparing, traveling, testing, and waiting for God's answer (Genesis 24:12–13). And when he received God's remarkable answer, the servant responded with worship and eagerness to return the bride adorned to his master's son (Genesis 24:52–54).

*Rebekah*—Through the providence of God, Rebekah was gracious and eager to submit to His plans for her life in fulfilling His eternal purposes.

*Isaac*—Just as Isaac once trusted his father's will even though it meant stretching out on an altar for sacrifice, he now trusted his father to secure a bride for him.

The history of Isaac and Rebekah is a small reflection of the Creator God's great story of redemption. From before the time sin first entered the world, God has had a plan to call out a people for Himself. He has poured out the awful penalty of sin upon His holy Son and then raised Him up. He sent His Spirit into the world to prepare a bride for His Son, the church. Those who have abandoned all, putting their trust in God, share fully in the inheritance promised through the Son (Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 19:29, 25:34; Ephesians 1:3–12; Colossians 1:22; Revelation 19:7).

## APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

It was important to Abraham that Isaac's wife be a relative from his homeland, Haran (Genesis 24:4). The history and descendants of Isaac's grandfather, Terah, are given in Genesis 11:27–32, allowing us to confidently determine the relationship between Isaac and Rebekah. Terah was the father of three sons: Abraham, Nahor, and Haran. Of Terah's three sons, Abraham moved to Canaan, Nahor remained in northwest Mesopotamia, and Haran died in Ur (Genesis 11:28).

Abraham's brother, Nahor, became the father of eight sons. One of those sons, Bethuel, became the father of Rebekah (Genesis 22:21–23). Thus, God records for us that Rebekah and Isaac were first cousins once removed.

In considering marital unions in the Old Testament between family members like that of Rebekah and Isaac, keep in mind what Genesis 5:4 teaches. Adam and Eve had sons and daughters. This was the way the world was populated at the beginning and repopulated after the Flood. The law against close relatives marrying didn't come until the time of Moses (Leviticus 18–20). Before then there were few genetic defects (mutations) that today make it inadvisable for close relatives to marry. God's Word has the answers—we need to begin with His truth.

Often people are quick to discount the Old Testament as untrue, unrelated, or unreliable. However, God has provided this information—all of

it—so we can see that it is precisely recorded and intended to weave a tapestry of redemption from beginning to end.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

God often reveals things in the world today that confirm His history. This account we are studying is a good example.

Because of what we know today of the city of Ur, we can understand Abraham's reluctance for his son to return to Mesopotamia. And we can see why God had to call Abraham away from that city. Archaeological discoveries in this area reveal that it was once a religious center devoted to the worship of the moon god, Sin. There are rather horrifying accounts of royal burial pits which include not only a royal personage but numerous servants and musicians who evidently committed cheerful mass suicide. It becomes clear that God intended Abraham, the one through whom He planned to bless all the families of the earth, to journey to a new location—one which, by the way, was in a far more strategic spot for disseminating this global blessing.

The fact that the ancient city of Haran still exists today is further confirmation of the Bible's history. The Bible tells us that this is where Abraham's father, Terah, took Abraham, Sarah, and Lot (Genesis 11:31). In this same area, Turkish villages still bear the name of Abraham's grandfather and great-grandfather, Nahor and Serug (Genesis 11:22). God's Word is true and provides us with answers to questions we may encounter from skeptical friends.



## BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear God, Creator of heaven and earth, I come before you as simply a servant rejoicing in the privilege of ministering to your children. In trust, I leave my worries at your feet and ask you to call the students of my class to follow you with their whole lives. I rejoice in the privilege of serving your Son, and I ask you to speak through your Word to call this generation to follow you wholeheartedly and with joyful abandon.



## COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- Pass out copies of the How Many Trips to the Well? story problem.

*Answers to story problem:*

1.  $30 \text{ gallons per camel} \div 5 \text{ gallons per jug} = 6 \text{ jugs to water one camel}$
2.  $6 \text{ trips down} \times 10 \text{ camels} = 60 \text{ trips down}$
3.  $60 \text{ trips up}$
4.  $60 \text{ trips down} + 60 \text{ trips up} = 120 \text{ trips!}$



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



## REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



# Studying God's Word

## READ THE WORD

We will read our verses today using this **Genesis 24 script**. *Pass out the Genesis 24 script and ask for six volunteers to read the parts. The parts are Narrator, Abraham, Servant, Isaac, Rebekah, and Laban & Bethuel.*

Before we get started, let me give you a little background. God had promised that Abraham would be the father of many nations and have many descendants. But Isaac had no children. In fact, he didn't even have a wife, and he was already 40 years old. Abraham was getting ready to send his servant 500 miles away to look for a wife for Isaac. The servant was going back to Haran—Abraham's homeland. Abraham wanted Isaac's wife to be a relative from his homeland.

Now some of you are going to read Genesis 24:5–9. Everyone listen very carefully so you will be prepared to answer some questions. *Have the students assigned to the parts read the script. Stop at verse 9.*

Genesis 24:5–9

## EXAMINE THE WORD

Let's stop here for a few moments and ask some questions about the text.

### Observe the Text

Abraham was from Haran and the surrounding area, including the city of Nabor. This was where Abraham's servant was headed. *Show the map of Mesopotamia and Canaan from your Bible or a Bible Atlas so students see where this took place.*

► Print the Lesson Board Work outline from the Resource DVD-ROM for easier planning.

## SOVEREIGN

*(Refer to Attributes poster.)*

- ? **What was the servant worried about in Genesis 24:5?** *The woman may not be willing to follow him back to Canaan. Should he take Isaac with him on the journey?*
- ? **Look at verse 6. What did Abraham tell his servant?** *Do not take my son back there.*
- OK. Read verse 7 carefully and tell me the things Abraham said about God. I'll list them on the board. *Encourage the children to come up with the answers. Write them on the board: "1) He is the Lord, the God of heaven; 2) God took Abraham from his father's house and the land of his family; 3) God spoke to Abraham; 4) God promised him that his descendants would have this land (Canaan); 5) God would send His angel ahead of the servant."*
- ? **And what did Abraham say at the end of verse 7? He was very confident of something. What was it?** *You shall take a wife for my son from there.*

### Discover the Truth

- ? **In your own words what was Abraham asking his servant to do?** *He wanted his servant to return to his country or homeland and bring back a bride from Abraham's relatives to marry Isaac.*

Abraham was a man known for believing God. He knew Him and he trusted that God would keep the promises made years before.

We will see that Abraham also understood that God is sovereign. Will someone read what that means from the Attributes of God poster? *Assign a student to read. God is sovereign—in complete control of everything; does all that He pleases.*

Keep that in mind as we continue our lesson. We are about to see more of God's sovereignty.



Genesis 24:10–14

### READ THE WORD

Now let's read Genesis 24:10–14 to see what happens next. Are my actors ready? *Have the students assigned to the parts read the script. Stop at verse 14.*

### EXAMINE THE WORD

#### Observe the Text

- ? **Where did this take place? Read Genesis 24:10 if you aren't sure.** *Mesopotamia, the city of Nahor. Again, show the map so the students get an idea of where this all took place.*

Nahor was actually the name of Abraham's grandfather. This confirms that this was the land of Abraham's family. And the ancient city of Nahor still exists today!

Abraham's servant had been given a big assignment. He was to make a long trip, about 500 miles. He was to go to a family that didn't know him and bring back a wife to a groom she had never seen! One of the first things he did when he arrived was to pray.

- ? **What did the servant pray? Look in Genesis 24:12.** *He prayed for success this day and kindness to Abraham. Write these on the board.*

Someone read verse 14 again. *Assign a reader.*

This is a pretty specific prayer, isn't it? He prayed that he would meet a young woman at the well. And when he said to her, "Please let down your pitcher that I may drink," the young woman would say, "Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink." And the young woman who said those very words would be the woman he was looking for! This shows us that the servant really trusted that God was in charge of everything—even who would be at the well on this day at this time, what she would say, and what she would do.

## Discover the Truth

This servant really believed that God is sovereign over everything in history. In fact, these words stand out to me in his prayer. He said, "Let her be the one You have *appointed* for Your servant Isaac."

The sovereign God had a plan and a particular wife *appointed* for Isaac. The servant didn't know who the right girl was for Isaac, but he trusted that God knew, so he asked God to clearly direct him.



## READ THE WORD

This is such an amazing account. The Bible is exciting! The servant was at the well praying that just the right woman would come and answer the questions in just the right way. And guess what? The beautiful Rebekah arrived at the well before the servant was even finished with his prayer. She offered the servant a drink and even offered to water all 10 of his camels.

Now we're going to move on and read Genesis 24:22–27. *Have the student actors read their parts from the script. Stop at verse 27.*

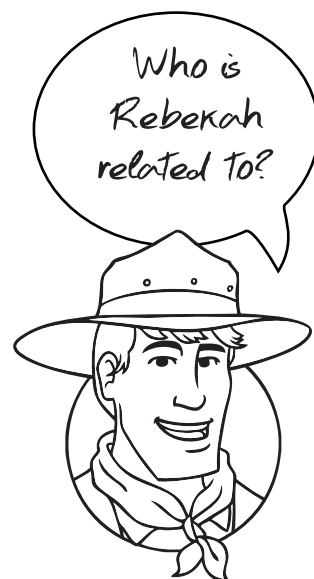
Genesis 24:22–27

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

- ? Who was Rebekah's dad? *Genesis 24:24. Bethuel.*
- ? Who was Rebekah's grandpa? *Genesis 24:24. Nahor.*
- ? Who was Nahor's brother? Look back at Genesis 24:15. Who can find it first? *Abraham.*

That's right. Earlier in Genesis God told us that Abraham had two brothers: Haran and Nahor. Haran died young, but Nahor married and had a son named Bethuel. Bethuel had a daughter named Rebekah. This made Rebekah Abraham's grandniece—his relative and exactly what he **hoped for**. *To make this connection clear to the children, write this little family tree on the*



board: Terah had three sons—Abraham, Haran (who died), and Nahor; Bethuel was Nahor's son, and Rebekah was Bethuel's daughter.

- ? **How did the servant respond to this amazing news?** *Genesis 24:26. He worshipped the Lord.*

### Discover the Truth

- ? **Why do you think the servant responded this way?** *Allow the children to come up with some answers.*

I believe he was completely overwhelmed and grateful for God's sovereignty and faithfulness. God guided the servant 500 miles right to Abraham's relatives—and that is exactly what Abraham and the servant had prayed for.



### READ THE WORD

Moving on in this wonderful account about God, we see that Rebekah's brother Laban ran out to invite the servant home for dinner. The family was very hospitable to the servant and all those with him. The servant was anxious to tell his story, and after telling Rebekah's family of his search for a wife for Isaac, he waited for their response.

Genesis 24:50–52

This is where we will pick up our reading again, beginning with verses 50–52. *Have the assigned students read their parts on the script.*

### EXAMINE THE WORD

#### Observe the Text

- ? **The servant was eager to hear the family's response. Would they allow Rebekah to leave home to be Isaac's wife? What did they tell him?** *Genesis 24:50–51. This comes from the Lord. Rebekah can be Isaac's wife. You can take her.*
- ? **What did the servant do as soon as he heard their answer?** *Genesis 24:52. He bowed down to the earth and worshipped the Lord.*

He worshipped God again. He was showing his gratefulness to God for being so faithful.

### Discover the Truth

When God plans something, nothing can stop it. And His plans are perfect. God directed the servant, Abraham, Rebekah, Rebekah's father, and Rebekah's brother in such a way that His plan would be fulfilled. God always accomplishes His purposes. God is sovereign. *Point to the Attributes of God poster. Encourage students to repeat the definition of sovereign.*





## READ THE WORD

Well, from here things really started speeding up. The servant gave precious gifts to Rebekah and her family, and by the next morning Rebekah was saying goodbye to her family and leaving for a whole new life.

Now let's read the happy ending. Follow along from verse 63 to the end of the chapter. *Have the actors read from the script while the others follow along.*

Genesis 24:63-67

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

- ? Who is mentioned now? *Genesis 24:63. Isaac.*  
That's right. Isaac, the groom.
- ? Where was Isaac just as Rebekah was coming? *Genesis 24:63. Walking in the field.*
- ? How did Isaac feel about Rebekah? *Genesis 24:67. He loved her and made her his wife.*

### Discover the Truth

This is a true love story. The same God who provided a specially chosen bride for Isaac sees you, too. He is powerful and can be trusted to work all things together for good for those who belong to Him.

Rebekah was invited to leave her old life behind and belong to someone grand. Jesus calls to us as well. And He has far more blessings to offer than Isaac could ever offer Rebekah. We are wise to eagerly answer His loving call to follow and obey Him wherever He leads.

He offers us a new life as well if we trust Him as our Lord and Savior, if we believe His Word and obey it, and if we are sorry for our sins and ask forgiveness. His death on the Cross assures eternal life for everyone who truly believes in Him.

We have seen today that God is sovereign and faithful. We are going to start memorizing our verses for this quarter. They also talk about God's sovereignty. Let's read the verses together. *Have the children read the verses from the Memory Verse poster.*

These verses are found much later in the book of Genesis when God tells us about Joseph. We will be learning about him in a few weeks. But today we need to know that Joseph also trusted in God through some very difficult times. He remembered that even when people did evil things, God meant it for good to fulfill His purpose.



Genesis 50:19-20



# Memory Verse Sort

## MATERIALS

- A piece of wrapped candy for each student with a phrase of the memory verse taped to some of the candy pieces
- A crumpled, dirty paper bag

## INSTRUCTIONS

*Place the candy pieces with the verse phrases taped to them into the crumpled bag before class. Add enough extra candy to the bag to ensure that each student will get a piece when the activity is complete.*

*Students will arrange the phrases into the correct order as they reference the Memory Verse poster or their Bibles.*

God always directs events to accomplish just what He had in mind to do all along. God wants us to know that He is in control.

Things often look a lot like this crumpled paper bag—a big ugly mess; but we need to remember that things aren't always as they seem. Who is willing to reach into this bag to find out what is inside?

**Aha! It is a treat!** *Have each child now pick one piece of candy from the bag.*

This candy has paper taped to it. It is our memory verse! Before we eat the candy, remove the memory verse phrases and work together to put them together in the **right order**. *Have the children read the verse several times together, or gather the strips of paper, shuffle them, and have the class put them together again.*

## CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

When we memorize Bible verses we are learning God's Word. In these verses we are reminded that nothing is out of God's control. Even situations that seem bad will be used for God's good purpose. Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, and the servant were able to confidently follow God because they trusted Him and knew that He was able to accomplish all that He promised.





## Find It on the Map

### MATERIALS

- Find It on the Map activity sheet for each student
- Pencils

### INSTRUCTIONS

*Students follow a list of directions to help them explore the map for the places referenced in the lesson.*

- Find Ur on the map. It is northwest of the Persian Gulf.
- Cross out the word Ur because Abraham left Ur.
- Follow the Euphrates River up until you find the city of Haran.
- Draw a line from Ur to Haran because Abraham traveled there with his father.
- Cross out Haran because God called Abraham out of Haran.
- Find Canaan along the Mediterranean Sea.
- Draw a line from Haran to Canaan.

- Draw a tent in the land of Canaan because Abraham and Isaac lived there in tents.
- Find the city of Nahor back near the city of Haran.
- Draw ten humps between Canaan and Nahor to represent the ten camels Abraham's servant took with him.
- Draw a jug of water at Nahor to represent Rebekah carrying water to all the servant's camels there.

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Unfortunately, we sometimes slip into thinking that the history of the people in the Bible isn't real because it was so long ago. However, these people lived as surely as you do and their cities were just as real as your city is today.

The same God who completed His plan through Abraham, his servant, Isaac, and Rebekah will complete His plan in your life.



## Applying God's Word

### WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

God had promised Abraham that He would make a great nation from the descendants of Isaac. Although it seemed like a very difficult task for Abraham's servant—travel 500 miles, find just the right girl from people he had never met, and expect her to leave her family to marry a stranger from another land—it was not too difficult for our God, who is sovereign. He is in complete control of everything and does all that He pleases. His plan for Isaac and Rebekah was perfect, and His plans for us are perfect too. Abraham and his servant trusted that God would provide and

provide perfectly. They trusted Him because they knew Him, they knew what He had done, and they knew His Word.

God showed us again today that He is faithful to His promises and His plans are always perfect.

## GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

The next time you are worried and upset about things in your family or about getting along with others, stop to think like Abraham.

He remembered who God is—that God is sovereign, the Lord of heaven and earth. He remembered what God had already done for him. God had kept His promises. He remembered what God said.

One thing He has promised to all those who belong to Him and love Him is to work all things together for good. That doesn't mean we get everything we want just because we want it, but it does mean that God's purposes for us will bring Him glory and be good for us too.

Those whom God calls to Himself can stop worrying, and instead confidently trust that God will work out a very good plan in their lives, at home and in their friendships. If you have been trying to ignore or fight against God, ask God today to change you and make you able to trust Him.



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice their memory verse this week.



### MEMORY VERSE

**Genesis 50:19–20** Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.”



### GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for His promises and perfect plans to fulfill them.
- Ask God to remind us throughout the week of who He is, what He says, and what He has done.