

Unit 2: Promise Builder

Faith Focus: God keeps God's promises.

The LORD carried out just what he had promised. (Genesis 21:1)

SESSION 8

GROW IN FAITH

God's Promise to Sarah—Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7

In the twenty-four years after they left their home in Haran, Sarah and Abraham must have wondered how God was going to make a great nation out of them when they didn't have any children. However, when Abraham was ninety-nine years old, three men appeared at Abraham's tent. Abraham extended hospitality to them. What Abraham didn't know was that these three men were messengers from God. During their visit, the men told Abraham that he and Sarah would have a son. Sarah, listening at the door of the tent, laughed at this outrageous suggestion. After all, she was ninety years old.

But soon their son Isaac was born. The name Isaac means "he laughs." Isaac was another reminder of God's promises. As God promised, Abraham did have many descendants.

- Discuss family lineage and historical connection to Abraham.
- Explore how God is present in the life of each child.

SUPPLIES

crayons

scissors

tape

craft sticks

sticky notes

interlocking blocks

colored pencils

*TV and DVD player or
streaming device*

SESSION OUTLINE

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Faith Focus—God Keeps
God's Promises

Sarah's Story Mask
(Craft/Drama)

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Big Faith Video

Faith Response

Big Faith Ages 7–12
Leader Guide • Fall 2024

FUN WITH FAITH

Build a Nursery
(Building)

Family Tree
(Bible Literacy)

Theatrical Story
(Storytelling/Drama)

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in God

COME TOGETHER

Prepare to Learn

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, Activity Sheets, Activity Stickers

Prepare Ahead: Set up your area with supplies and activity pages needed for today's session. Display the Unit 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13) and Unit 2 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 6 & 19) to use later in the session.

- As children arrive, invite them to join you in a circle.
- Give each child a copy of the "Fall Sticker Page" (Activity Sheets—p. 29) and their own set of Activity Stickers. Have children place the baby sticker on the Session 8 space.

SAY: In the Book of Genesis, we learn all about the beginning of the world and the beginning of God's chosen people. We learn that God cares deeply for all people, but people do not always follow God. God uses willing people to carry out God's promise to take care of creation. God often cares for creation in surprising ways. Sarah is one of the people surprised by God's plans.

Faith Focus—God Keeps God's Promises

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 2 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 6 & 19).

- Show children the Unit 2 Faith Focus Poster.

SAY: Our faith focus for today is "God keeps God's promises." God's promises sometimes seem impossible. Today's story is all about one of those promises.

ASK: Have you ever tried to do something you thought was impossible? Did you succeed? What helped you do what you were trying to do?

- Give children time and space to share their ideas.

Sarah's Story Mask

Supplies: Activity Sheets, crayons, scissors, tape, craft sticks

Prepare Ahead: Tear out "Sarah's Story Mask" (Session 8 Activity Sheet) for each child.

SAY: We are going to decorate our own theater masks. These masks represent human emotions. Today's story is full of big feelings. Later, we will use these to interact with Sarah's story.

- Invite the children to decorate and cut out the theater masks.
- Have each child tape the theater masks onto a craft stick so that the mask can be flipped from happy to sad.

FAITH CONNECTIONS

Read the Story

Supplies: CEB kids' Bible or CEB Bible storybook

- Invite the children to join you a circle.
- Read Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7 in a CEB kids' Bible or your favorite CEB Bible storybook.

ASK: What did God promise Sarah? How did she respond?

Big Faith Video

Supplies: Big Faith DVD, TV, DVD player or streaming device

- Watch the Session 8 video on the Big Faith DVD or via your Amplify Media subscription.
- Give children time to respond to the questions on the screen. Discuss the questions as partner pairs, in small groups, or all together.

ASK: What was your favorite part of the Bible story?

Faith Response

Supplies: All-Ages Class Pack, sticky notes, crayons

Prepare Ahead: Display the Unit 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13), Unit 2 Faith Focus Poster (Class Pack—pp. 6 & 19), and Unit 2 Faith Response Poster (Class Pack—pp. 8 & 17) if you haven't already.

- Invite children to wonder about the images on the posters.
- Encourage children to say the Bible verse with you.

SAY: God promised Sarah a baby. But Sarah thought she was too old for a baby. God built a nation of people out of a family tree that no one believed could begin with Sarah. That family tree was the start of God's chosen people. God wanted to make sure that all of creation had an example for following God. God wanted creation to experience the love and joy that comes from following God. God's promises help remind us of that.

ASK: How can you remember God's promises?

- Place the Faith Response Poster on the floor or a table and invite the children to gather around it.
- Give each child a sticky note and crayons.

ASK: What do you see on our poster?

SAY: Each picture on our poster is a symbol of God’s promises. Today, we will look at the symbol for Sarah’s story., the baby.

- Have each child write on his or her sticky note one thing he or she can do to remember God’s promises and place the note on the poster.

FUN WITH FAITH

Build a Nursery

Supplies: interlocking blocks

SAY: Sarah did not believe she would have a baby. But even in her old age, she had baby Isaac. Help Sarah prepare for her baby by helping her build a nursery. The next time you build with blocks, take a moment to remember Sarah and her family, the beginning of an important family tree.

- Give each child interlocking blocks.
- Invite children to brainstorm items a baby might need in a nursery room. Encourage the children to work together to build everything a baby might need out of the interlocking blocks.

Family Tree

Supplies: CEB kids’ Bibles, colored pencils

Prepare Ahead: Make copies of the reproducible “Family Tree” (Leader Guide—p. 58).

SAY: In today’s story, Sarah finds out she is going to have a baby. The baby will be the start of a great nation. Let’s learn about what happens to this family by looking up the story of the family. We will use our Bibles and a family tree. A family tree tells us how generations of a family are connected to each other.

- Have the children divide into small groups.
- Give each group a copy of the “Family Tree” reproducible.
- Encourage the children to work together to look up the stories in Scripture to fill out the family tree.

SAY: The story of God’s people tells us that God can do impossible and surprising things. The story of each of these people in this family is full of ups and downs. But God always keeps God’s promises.

ASK: How do you think we can honor God in our lives? How can we remember God’s promises in our lives? What helps you remember God?

Theatrical Story

Supplies: *CEB Kids' Bible or CEB Bible storybook, theater masks from Activity Sheets*

SAY: Today, we will read the story of God's promise to Sarah. As I read, hold up your mask showing the feeling you think Sarah is having, either happy or sad.

- Read Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7 in a CEB kids' Bible or your favorite CEB Bible storybook.
- Invite the children to hold up the theater masks when you read of Sarah feeling happy or sad.

SAY: God kept God's promise to Sarah, even when she did not believe that God would do it.

SHARE YOUR FAITH

Big Faith Idea—Faith in God

Supplies: *All-Ages Class Pack*

Prepare Ahead: *Display the Fall Big Faith Idea Poster (Class Pack—pp. 4 & 21).*

Photocopy the Unit 2 Family Faith Letter (Leader Guide—pp. 93–94) if needed.

- Show children the Big Faith Idea Poster.

SAY: Sometimes we have a hard time believing God is keeping God's promises. Sometimes the promise might seem impossible. Or sometimes our situation seems too hard. But God does not leave us. God loves us. And God will keep God's promises. When things seem hard, it can be helpful to be quiet with God. Let's practice a very short quiet time with God now. Quiet times help us to slow down, take a deep breath, and remember God's promises.

- Have the children gather in a circle.
- Invite the children to hold hands and spend one to three minutes in silence.

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for helping us follow and honor you, even when it is hard. Thank you for giving us the Bible to teach us how to follow you. Amen.

- Send the Family Faith Letter home with each child who hasn't received one.
- Send home any activities or items made during today's session.

REPRODUCIBLE SESSION 8 Family Tree

Work with partners to look up each Scripture and fill in the family tree. There were more people in this big family, but this tree tells us the story of God's promise to Sarah and Abraham.

