

Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Proper 9 (A)

Old Testament: Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

BACKGROUND

The Season After Pentecost is the longest season of the church year, spanning almost half the calendar year. The weeks after Pentecost are called Ordinary Time coming from the word “ordinal” which means counted time. This time is not ordinary as in common or regular, but it is the time of counted weeks between Pentecost and Advent. The liturgical color of the season is green. It is often thought of as a season of growth both in our personal faith and in the life of the church. Common themes to focus on throughout the season are:

- Our relationship with God.
- Our relationship with Jesus Christ and with one another through our prayers, the sacraments and life in the body of Christ.
- The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- The Church and its work for God’s mission.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK’S READING

The Book of Genesis provides the foundational stories of our faith, God’s calling of a people, their often-failed responses to God and God’s steadfast love throughout. The Abraham Saga tells of the formation of the d with the wickedness of men, God separates out one family line to bring divine blessing to all nations of Israel, beginning with the faithfulness of its patriarch Abraham. Although disillusion subsequent families of the world. Abraham the model of absolute faithfulness, trust and obedience is symbolic of Israel’s idealized self. At the request of God Abraham has left his homeland to travel to a promised land. He has entertained angels unaware and trusted God’s promise of an heir even at the ridiculous old age of he and his wife Sarah. Abraham has passed God’s test of faith by agreeing to sacrifice his only son Isaac. His willingness is proof enough for God who spares Isaac and provides a ram instead for the offering. For God’s promise of making a great nation from Abraham, Isaac must now marry. Abraham makes his servant swear an oath that he will not find a wife for Isaac from the Canaanite people [who had corrupt religious practices], but from one of Abraham’s relatives. So the servant sets out with gifts and camels to the Mesopotamia city of Nahor to seek a wife for Isaac. Before he leaves he seeks God’s guidance and blessing on his mission.

THEME

God Shows the Way

BEFORE CLASS

For today's drama activity you will need a bowl or pail of water, cups, bracelet or piece of wool or rubber band to make a bracelet and a towel or piece of fabric to make a veil. Fill the bowl or pail with water. Create a safe area for the drama to take place. Have all props ready. Cut out a triangle and put Rebekah's name on it. [See below for chart.]

BEGINNING

God had a plan for Abraham. God's plan for Abraham was to make him the father of a great nation. God always has a plan. God has a plan for me and God has a plan for each of you. When God has a plan, God doesn't let anything get in the way. The problem is we can't always see what God has in mind or understand what the plan is. So how can we know what to do? How can we try to live according to God's plan for us? We can learn a lesson from Abraham's servant in today's story. He prayed for God's help and blessing on the job he had to do.

OPENING PRAYER

Dear Lord, Teach us to be trusting and faithful like Abraham and his servant and to seek your help in everything we do. Amen.

THE STORY: GENESIS 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

Can you count all the stars in the sky? There would be way too many, but that's how many relatives God promised Abraham in the generations to come. We know God always keeps promises. God gave Abraham and Sarah a baby when they were very, very old. Isaac was Abraham's and Sarah's only son and it was time for him to get married. So Abraham sent his trusted servant on a journey to the land where Abraham's relatives lived to find a wife for Isaac. He sent the servant with camels and gifts to give to the bride and her family.

The servant knew this was a very important job. He wanted to be sure he chose the right wife for Isaac. So the servant prayed to God for help and guidance. He prayed, 'O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, if now you will only make successful the way I am going! I am standing here by the spring of water, let the young woman who comes out to draw water, to whom I shall say, "Please give me a little water from your jar to drink" and who will say to me, "drink and I will draw water for your camels also," let her be the woman who the Lord has chosen for my master's son.'

Just as the servant was finishing his prayer, Rebekah came to the well to draw water. The servant asked her for a drink. Rebekah was a kind and generous young woman. She took her water jar off her shoulder and offered it to the servant. Rebekah said, "Drink and I will also water your camels." The servant's heart was filled with joy. God had lead him to just the right woman. The servant gave Rebekah the gifts he had brought and he bowed down and gave thanks to God for leading him in the right direction.

Rebekah and the family agreed to the marriage. Her family blessed Rebekah, wishing her many successful children. Rebekah and her nurse traveled with the servant back to Isaac's home. Rebekah saw Isaac from a distance. She got down from her camel and asked the servant who he was. The servant answered that he was his master. Rebekah felt happy when she saw Isaac and she knew she wanted to be his wife. So she quickly covered herself with a veil. The servant told Isaac everything that had happened. Isaac brought Rebekah to his home and married her. Isaac loved Rebekah very much. Everyone gave thanks to God for helping them make such good choices. **[Put Rebekah's triangle up on the chart.]**

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- I wonder if you remember what the servant prayed to find the right wife?
- Why do you think he wanted to see who would offer to water his camels? [It would show kindness and generosity, or hospitality]
- Have you ever traveled in a desert or very dry place?
- I wonder what would be very important to have with you? [water]
- Have you ever asked God to help you make a good choice or show you what to do?

ACTIVITY: FINDING A WIFE FOR ISAAC

This game will help the children remember the main ideas of the story. Young children love anything that involves water.

Let's pretend we are traveling in the desert looking for a wife for Isaac. (Choose someone to be the servant. Choose several children to be people at the well, one child to be Rebekah, some children to be the family and one child to be Isaac. Do not let the servant know which one is Rebekah.) Tell the children that the women of a village usually gathered at the well early in the morning or late in the day. It was a time for visiting and sharing news. The children gather around a bowl or pail of water. They each have a cup. The action goes like this:

The servant has to pray for guidance.

The servant asks each person for a drink of water.

Each person gives him some water, which he or she must drink.

The servant listens to their answers until he hears someone say, "And I will water your camels also." This reveals who is Rebekah.

The servant puts a ring or a bracelet on Rebekah.

The servant kneels down and thanks God for his help.

The servant asks the family and Rebekah to the marriage.

Rebekah puts on a veil.

Servant and Rebekah walk around the room to Isaac.

Isaac says, "Will you marry me?" Rebekah says, "I will."

Class responds, "Thanks be to God."

You can instruct the first group of actors at the well to say things like, no, I'm busy or just sure here's the water. Only Rebekah offers to water the camels.

Change actors and repeat.

ACTIVITY: ASKING GOD

Invite the children to draw pictures either of the story or of a time when they asked for God to help them.

GETTING CLOSURE

Invite the children to pick up the supplies and clean up. Then invite them to share what they created.

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear God, Thank you for answering our prayers and showing us the way to go. Amen.

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Abraham's Family Tree

