

God's Promise, Judgment, and Grace

Genesis 18–28 | Ages 10–13

Three Visitors and a Big Promise (Genesis 18–19)

One day, **three messengers from God** came to visit Abraham. “Where is your wife, Sarah?” they asked.

Then the Lord said, “About this time next year, I will return—and Sarah will have a son!”

Sarah overheard this and **laughed to herself**. She thought, “*How could I have a child? I’m way too old!*”

But God knew what she was thinking. He said, “Why did Sarah laugh? Is anything too hard for the Lord?”

God kept His promise. A year later, Sarah gave birth to a son named **Isaac**, which means *laughter*—because both Sarah and Abraham had laughed when they heard God’s plan.

God Judges Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18–19)

The cities of **Sodom and Gomorrah** were filled with terrible sin. God hated the evil things the people were doing and planned to destroy the cities. But first, He came down to **investigate**.

Wait—did God really need to investigate? No. God already sees everything—even what people are thinking in their hearts. But God wanted to show that He is **fair and just**. He doesn’t just punish without reason. He gives people chances. He investigates, gives warnings, and then judges.

Abraham begged God:

“Will you destroy the righteous along with the wicked? What if there are 10 good people in the city?”

God agreed—not to destroy the city if He could find 10 righteous people. Sadly, there weren’t even 10. But because **God loved Abraham**, and **Lot tried to live righteously**, God sent angels to rescue Lot’s family. The angels warned them to

leave quickly and **not look back**. But **Lot's wife disobeyed** and looked back at the destruction—and she turned into a **pillar of salt**.

🌟 **Wow! God Really Cared for Abraham**

Think about this: God **told Abraham** what He was going to do. He even **listened** to Abraham's prayer and was willing to **save the whole city** if just 10 good people were found. That's how much God **valued His relationship** with Abraham.

🎉 **The Promise Is Finally Here! (Genesis 20–21)**

Even though they were very old—**Abraham was 100, and Sarah was 90**—God kept His promise. Sarah gave birth to a son and they named him **Isaac**, meaning *laughter*. Why? Because both Abraham and Sarah had laughed when God told them it would happen! But God had the last laugh—because **nothing is too hard for Him**.

🔥 **The Ultimate Test of Faith (Genesis 22)**

Then God tested Abraham's faith. He told him to **offer his only son, Isaac**, as a sacrifice. That must have been confusing—Isaac was the one God promised would lead to a whole nation! But Abraham trusted God. He believed that if God **could even raise Isaac from the dead** (Hebrews 11:17–19). And just as Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, God stopped him and provided a **ram** instead. What faith!

👨👩👦 **Isaac's Family and God's Choice (Genesis 23–25)**

When Sarah died, Abraham didn't want Isaac to marry just anyone—especially not a Canaanite woman who worshiped false gods like **Molech**, who people sacrificed their children to. So Abraham sent his trusted servant to find a wife for Isaac from his own family. The servant **prayed to God** for help, and God led him straight to **Rebekah**, a kind and generous young woman. Rebekah and Isaac got married, and Rebekah became pregnant with **twins**—but the babies were already **fighting in her womb**! She asked God why, and He answered:

“Two nations are in your womb. The older will serve the younger.”

God chose **Jacob**, the younger one, to carry on His promise—not Esau, the firstborn.

Why Jacob?

Jacob didn't do anything to earn this. And Esau didn't do anything terrible. God chose Jacob to show that **His blessings are a gift**, not something we can earn. This is called **grace**—God's kindness, even when we don't deserve it. That way, no one can say, "I got chosen because I'm better." God chooses people not because they're great—but because **He is great**.

Jacob the Trickster (Genesis 27)

Even though God had already chosen Jacob, he still made some bad choices. First, he **tricked Esau** into selling his birthright. Then, he **pretended to be Esau** and **stole his blessing** from their father Isaac. Esau was **furious** and planned to kill him! So Jacob ran away to live with his uncle **Laban**.

Jacob's First Real Prayer (Genesis 28:20–21)

On the way, Jacob had a dream—he saw a **stairway to heaven** with angels going up and down. God spoke to him and promised to protect him.

Then Jacob prayed: "If God protects me and gives me food and clothes and brings me back home safely, *then* I will serve Him."

Even though Jacob grew up hearing about God from his dad and grandfather, this was when he started building his **own faith**. But his prayer was still **conditional**—he was saying, "*If you help me, then I'll follow you.*" God wants more than that. He wants us to seek Him, trust Him, and love Him—not just because we want something in return.

The Stairway to Heaven: The stairway showed how heaven and earth are connected—and later, Jesus would tell His followers, "**You will all see heaven open. You will see angels of God going up and coming down on the Son of Man**" (John 1:51 ICB).

Jesus is the true stairway to heaven. He connects us to God. He is the way, the truth, and the life!

Big Truths to Remember:

- God keeps His promises—even when they seem impossible.
- God is just and fair. He sees all and gives warnings before He judges.

- God chooses people to show His **grace**, not because they're better than others.
- Everyone must have their **own relationship with God**. You can't rely on someone else's faith.

Activities

1. "Promise Tracker" Game

Supplies: Cards with God's promises (e.g., Isaac's birth, protection of Lot, blessing of Jacob)

How to Play: Kids draw cards and decide if the promise was fulfilled immediately, later, or required faith. Discuss: Why does God sometimes wait?

2. Skit: "Don't Look Back!"

Act out the story of Lot's family escaping the city. One student plays the angel giving the instructions. Another plays Lot's wife who looks back. Freeze the scene and ask: "Why did God say not to look back?"

3. Discussion: "If... Then Faith"

Read Jacob's prayer in Genesis 28:20–21. Ask: Have you ever said, 'God, if you do this, then I'll trust you?' Talk about why **real faith** trusts God no matter what.

4. Journal Prompt

Jacob had to build his own relationship with God. What about you? How can you get to know God for yourself?

5. "God Sees All" Detective Game

Give clues that describe actions and thoughts (some good, some sneaky). Ask: Would God see this? Would He investigate or judge it? (Teaches that God sees the heart—and is a just judge.)