

Sunday school lesson – Upper Primary

BIG IDEA	God can do anything
Bible Reading	Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7
Preparation	<p>Read Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7 It has now been 24 years since Abraham left Ur. Abraham and Sarah still remain childless. The situation has now passed from the unlikely to the impossible. The phrase in verse 11 that Sarah was “past the age of childbearing” makes this abundantly clear. Why did God wait so long to fulfil his promise? It seems that God delights to work through impossible situations, so that we may believe (John 11:15). When God works through the impossible, it becomes clear that it His work and not ours. We learn to rely on him, rather than on ourselves. Note that Genesis 18:14 needs to be taken in the context of a promise. God is fully able to make good on his promise, so we need not doubt. A similar verse can be found in Luke 1:37, which is also in the context of a promise that has been given. If Genesis 15 showed us that God has the WILL to keep his promises, Genesis 18 and 21 show that he also has the ABILITY to keep his promises. That makes God’s promises a very sure thing!</p> <p>Take home message: God can do anything. He has the power to keep his promises. Trust his promises.</p> <p>Prepare for “Getting Started”: Get hold of pictures of a giant boulder, someone who looks very strong and someone who looks very weak (cartoon characters would work).</p>
Getting Started	<p>Tell the children you are going to tell them a story about a village. The people in the village needed to grow some more crops. They found a suitable field, but there was a large boulder in the middle of the field that needed to be moved (show the picture of the boulder). The weak man (“Fred”) addresses the villagers (show the picture of the weak looking man). He confidently promises that tomorrow he will come and move the boulder, all by himself. Now show them the picture of the strong man. Say that next “Arnold” comes and addresses the villagers. He also makes the same promise that the next day he will come and move the boulder. Of the two men, whose promise would you believe? Talk about the fact that it is one thing to want to keep your promise, but it is another thing to have the ability to keep your promise. The weak man might have wanted to keep his promise, but wasn’t able to. Whereas the strong man both wanted to, and was able to keep his promise.</p>
Finding Out 1. God visits Abraham (Genesis 18:1-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remember from last week, God had made Abram a promise. • Q: <i>What did God promise Abram (land, children, to be with him, blessing to the world)</i> ➤ God had given the promise to Abram when he left Ur when he was 75 years old, then repeated it as we heard last week. He again repeated the promise to Abram several years later. At that time, he even changed Abram’s name to Abraham, as another sign that he would keep his promise. Abraham was now 99 years old. It had been 24 years since he left Ur – and still no children. • Q: <i>How do you feel if you had to wait 24 years for something to happen?</i> <p>Read Genesis 18:1-8</p>

<p>2. God insists on his promise despite impossibilities (Gen 18:10-13)</p> <p>3. God can do the impossible (Gen 18:14; 21:1-7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Abraham prepares a “quick snack” for his visitors! ➤ Then his visitors pass on a message to Abraham from God <p>Read Genesis 18:9-10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: What is different this time compared to the previous times God gave this promise?</i> ➤ This time God gives details about how the promise will be fulfilled, including the specific time. Adding details to the promise implies that the Promise-Giver is very sure of the outcome! Leaving it vague would have been much easier. <p>Read Genesis 18:11-13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: But there is a big problem with this promise – what is the problem? How many times do these verses mention age?</i> ➤ This is not just a difficult situation, this is impossible! 100 year olds don’t have babies. Sarah knows this – that’s why she laughs. She knows it is impossible. <p>Read Genesis 18:14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: What question did God ask Abraham?</i> ➤ God had given a promise to Abraham, and Sarah showed by laughing that she didn’t believe God was able to keep his promise. God is saying that whatever he promises, he is able to do, so you can always trust that he will keep his promises. ➤ Last week we learnt that God’s desire (what he wants to do) is to keep his promises. Today we learn that he has the power to keep his promise. So he both WANTS to keep his promises, and is ABLE to keep his promises. That makes God’s promises very certain! (Refer back to the “Getting Started” activity) ➤ Sure enough, exactly one year later, Sarah has a baby. <p>Read Genesis 21:1-7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: What name did Abraham give to the new baby? What does this name mean?</i> ➤ “Isaac” means laughter (v.3 and 6). Sarah had laughed in disbelief, now she laughs with joy that God has done the impossible. • <i>Q: Why do you think God waited until it was impossible for Abraham and Sarah to have children before he gave them a baby?</i> ➤ By using an impossible situation, it became very clear that God was the one who was responsible for Isaac’s birth. It reminded Abraham and Sarah to rely on God, not on themselves. ➤ God often does this! For example, the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:37).
<p>So What?</p>	<p>Sometimes, God’s promises can seem like they are impossible. For example, he promises to forgive all our sins no matter what they are. He promises that after we die, his people will live forever with him. Do these seem impossible to you? Remember his promise to Abraham. You can trust the God of the Impossible to keep his promises because he can do anything.</p>
<p>Memory Verse</p>	<p>Psalm 145:3 <i>Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.</i></p>

Sunday school lesson – Lower Primary

BIG IDEA	God can do anything
Bible Reading	Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7
Preparation	<p>Read Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7 It has now been 24 years since Abraham left Ur. Abraham and Sarah still remain childless. The situation has now passed from the unlikely to the impossible. The phrase in verse 11 that Sarah was “past the age of childbearing” makes this abundantly clear. Why did God wait so long to fulfil his promise? It seems that God delights to work through impossible situations, so that we may believe (John 11:15). When God works through the impossible, it becomes clear that it His work and not ours. We learn to rely on him, rather than on ourselves. Note that Genesis 18:14 needs to be taken in the context of a promise. God is fully able to make good on his promise, so we need not doubt. A similar verse can be found in Luke 1:37, which is also in the context of a promise that has been given. If Genesis 15 showed us that God has the WILL to keep his promises, Genesis 18 and 21 show that he also has the ABILITY to keep his promises. That makes God’s promises a very sure thing!</p> <p>Take home message: God can do anything. He has the power to keep his promises. Trust his promises.</p> <p>Prepare for “Getting Started”: Get hold of pictures of a giant boulder, someone who looks very strong and someone who looks very weak (cartoon characters would work well).</p>
Getting Started	<p>Tell the children you are going to tell them a story about a village. The people in the village needed to grow some more crops. They found a suitable field, but there was a large boulder in the middle of the field that needed to be moved (show the picture of the boulder). The weak man (“Fred”) addresses the villages (show the picture of the weak looking man). He confidently promises that tomorrow he will come and move the boulder, all by himself. Now show them the picture of the strong man. Say that next “Arnold” comes and addresses the villages. He also makes the same promise that the next day he will come and move the boulder. Of the two men, whose promise would you believe? Talk about the fact that is it one thing to want to keep your promise, but it is another thing to have the ability to keep your promise. The weak man might have wanted to keep his promise, but wasn’t able to. Whereas the strong man both wanted to, and was able to keep his promise.</p>
Finding Out 1. God visits Abraham (Genesis 18:1-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remember from last week, God had made Abraham a promise. • Q: <i>What did God promise Abraham?</i> ➤ God had promised that Abraham would have lots and lots of children. ➤ God had promised this to Abraham when he left Ur when he was 75 years old. Abraham was now 99 years old. It had been 24 years since he left Ur – and still he had no children! • Q: <i>How would you feel if you had to wait 24 years for something to happen?</i> <p>Read Genesis 18:1-2</p>

<p>2. God insists on his promise despite impossibilities (Gen 18:10-13)</p> <p>3. God can do the impossible (Gen 18:14; 21:1-7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: Who came to visit Abraham while he was having a nap outside his tent?</i> ➤ Abraham asked his visitors to stay for lunch. So, he goes off to get Sarah to make some bread, while he goes off to arrange for a cow to be killed! (A bit more effort that we normally go to for lunch!) ➤ While they are eating lunch, the visitors pass on a message from God <p>Read Genesis 18:9-10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: What does God tell Abraham he is going to do for him?</i> ➤ God repeats his promise to Abraham about having children – but this time he tells Abraham exactly when it will happen. God is still going to keep his promise! <p>Read Genesis 18:11-13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: But there is a big problem with this promise – what is the problem?</i> ➤ This is not just a difficult situation, this is impossible! 100 year olds don't have babies. Sarah knows this – that's why she laughs. She knows it is impossible. <p>Read Genesis 18:14a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: What question did God ask Abraham?</i> ➤ God told Abraham that nothing is impossible for God. He can do anything! That means that if he promises to do something, even though it seems impossible, he will make sure it happens. ➤ Even though Abraham and Sarah were very old, God had promised they would have a child, so he would make sure that they would. ➤ Refer back to the "Getting Started" activity – God is like the strong man. If he says he will do something, and he is always able to do what he says, because he is a big, strong God. • <i>Q: What do you think happened exactly one year later?</i> ➤ Exactly one year later, Sarah had a baby boy. <p>Read Genesis 21:1-3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: What name did Abraham give to the new baby?</i> <p>Read Genesis 21:6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: What does the name "Isaac" mean?</i> ➤ "Isaac" means laughter (v.3 and 6). Sarah had laughed when God told her she would have a son because she didn't believe it was possible. Now she laughed with joy that God had done the impossible.
<p>So What?</p>	<p>Sometimes, God's promises can seem like they are impossible. For example, he promises to forgive all our sins no matter what they are. And he promises that after we die, his people will live forever with him. Do these seem impossible to you – remember his promise to Abraham. God can do anything, which means he can keep any promise that he has made. You can trust God to keep his promises because he can do anything.</p>
<p>Memory Verse</p>	<p>Psalm 145:3 <i>Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.</i></p>

Sunday school lesson – Pre-School

BIG IDEA	God can do anything
Bible Reading	Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7
Preparation	<p>Read Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7 It has now been 24 years since Abraham left Ur. Abraham and Sarah still remain childless. The situation has now passed from the unlikely to the impossible. The phrase in verse 11 that Sarah was “past the age of childbearing” makes this abundantly clear. Why did God wait so long to fulfil his promise? It seems that God delights to work through impossible situations, so that we may believe (John 11:15). When God works through the impossible, it becomes clear that it His work and not ours. We learn to rely on him, rather than on ourselves. Note that Genesis 18:14 needs to be taken in the context of a promise. God is fully able to make good on his promise, so we need not doubt. A similar verse can be found in Luke 1:37, which is also in the context of a promise that has been given. If Genesis 15 showed us that God has the WILL to keep his promises, Genesis 18 and 21 show that he also has the ABILITY to keep his promises. That makes God’s promises a very sure thing!</p> <p>Take home message: God can do anything. He has the power to keep his promises. Trust his promises.</p> <p>Prepare for “Getting Started”: Get hold of pictures of a giant boulder, someone who looks very strong and someone who looks very weak (cartoon characters would work well).</p>
Getting Started	<p>Tell the children you are going to tell them a story about a village. The people in the village needed to grow some more crops. They found a suitable field, but there was a large boulder in the middle of the field that needed to be moved (show the picture of the boulder). The weak man (“Fred”) addresses the villages (show the picture of the weak looking man). He confidently promises that tomorrow he will come and move the boulder, all by himself. Now show them the picture of the strong man. Say that next “Arnold” comes and addresses the villages. He also makes the same promise that the next day he will come and move the boulder. Of the two men, whose promise would you believe? Talk about the fact that is it one thing to want to keep your promise, but it is another thing to have the ability to keep your promise. The weak man might have wanted to keep his promise, but wasn’t able to. Whereas the strong man both wanted to, and was able to keep his promise.</p>
Finding Out 1. God visits Abraham (Genesis 18:1-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remember from last week, God had made Abram a promise. ● <i>Q: What did God promise Abraham? (Remind them about taking Abraham out to look at the stars)</i> ➤ God had promised to give Abraham lots of children. But he had given the promise to Abraham a long time ago. It had been 24 years since God gave Abraham that promise, and he was now 99 years old – and he still didn’t have any children! ● <i>Q: How would you feel if you had to wait 24 years for something to happen?</i> ➤ One day, while Abraham was having an afternoon nap outside his tent, 3 men came to visit him. Abraham got up and asked them if they would like to stay for lunch.

<p>2. God insists on his promise despite impossibilities (Gen 18:10-13)</p> <p>3. God can do the impossible (Gen 18:14; 21:1-7)</p>	<p>They said, “yes please”, so Abraham went off to get Sarah and they made some lunch for their visitors.</p> <p>➤ While they were eating lunch, the men passed on a message to Abraham from God</p> <p>Read Genesis 18:10a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: <i>What does God promise to Abraham?</i> • Q: <i>When does God say that this will happen?</i> <p>➤ God told Abraham he was still going to keep his promise – even though it had been a very long time. They were going to have a baby boy in one year’s time!</p> <p>Read Genesis 18:12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: <i>But there is a big problem with this promise – what is the problem?</i> <p>➤ Abraham and Sarah were very old. They were nearly 100 years old – older even than your grandparents! 100-year olds don’t have babies! So how could Sarah have a baby now that she is so old?</p> <p>Read Genesis 18:12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: <i>What did Sarah do when she heard God say this? Why did she laugh?</i> <p>➤ Sarah knows it is impossible for 100-year olds to have babies – that’s why she laughed. She knew it is impossible.</p> <p>➤ This is what God said to Sarah and Abraham</p> <p>Read Genesis 18:14a</p> <p>➤ God told Abraham that nothing is too hard for God. He can do anything! That means that if he promises to do something, he will make sure that it happens.</p> <p>➤ Even though Abraham and Sarah were very old, God had promised they would have a child, so he would make sure that they did.</p> <p>➤ Refer back to the “Getting Started” activity – God is like the strong man. If he says he will do something, and he is always able to do what he says, because he is a big, strong God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: <i>What do you think happened exactly one year later?</i> <p>➤ Exactly one year later, Sarah had a baby boy, exactly as God had promised.</p> <p>Read Genesis 21:3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: <i>What name did Abraham give to the new baby?</i> <p>➤ “Isaac” means laughter (v.3 and 6). Sarah had laughed because she didn’t believe God, now she laughed because she was so happy!</p>
<p>So What?</p>	<p>Sometimes, God’s promises can seem like they are impossible. Give examples of promises that seem impossible E.g. He promises that after we die, his people will live forever with him. God can do anything, which means he can keep any promise that he has made. You can trust God to keep his promises because he can do anything.</p>
<p>Memory Verse</p>	<p>Psalm 145:3 <i>Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.</i></p>
<p>Alternative to worksheet</p>	<p>Make a baby Isaac puppet (use the picture from the worksheet – print on card and cut out). Get the children to colour in and attach a stick to the back.</p>