

Lesson 185

TEXT Genesis 22:6-14; 24:1-8,62-67; 26:1-5,17-33

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that to be outstanding in God's sight does not always require great courage or feats of valor, but qualities we can each develop. Isaac's attributes included submission, meditation, affection, peaceableness, and prayerfulness. Following his example, we, too, can be triumphant and used of God.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. — Zechariah 4:6

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. — 1 Corinthians 1:27

**ANSWER
TITLE:**

Give God Something Special

**SEARCH
TITLE:**

Isaac

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Isaac was born so late in the lives of Abraham and Sarah that they laughed in disbelief when God first promised them a son (Genesis 17:17; 18:12). Isaac's name in Hebrew means "laughter." As a young man, he accompanied his father to Mount Moriah in obedience to the divine command given to Abraham to sacrifice his son. Isaac's life was spared when God intervened at the last minute. Isaac accepted Rebekah as his wife after a trusted family servant brought her from Abraham's home country. Isaac became the father of twins, Esau and Jacob. During a fam-

ine he took his family to Gerar. Isaac grew wealthy during his sojourn with the Philistines, and they became jealous. After a series of incidents over water rights, Isaac and the Philistines reached an understanding: Isaac and his flocks stayed in the area of Beersheba. Isaac in his old age, blind and feeble, was tricked by Jacob and Rebekah into bestowing his final blessing on Jacob, the younger son, instead of the older son Esau who was Isaac's favorite. Isaac was buried with his parents at Hebron.

YOUR OPENER

Isaac

TEXT: Genesis 22:6-14; 24:1-8,62-67; 26:1-5,17-33

KEY VERSE: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. — 1 Corinthians 1:27

RESPONSES

1. Isaac was the promised son God gave to Abraham, and through him all the families of the earth would be blessed. God made this promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18, and again to Isaac in Genesis 26:4. This promise was fulfilled in Jesus Christ and His death on Calvary for our sins. Jesus' earthly ancestry came through Abraham and Isaac.

2. Abraham's offering of Isaac: Isaac was obedient and submissive to his father's will, and did not resist when Abraham offered him for a sacrifice, even though he was probably twenty-five years of age (according to Josephus and other Bible scholars) and could well have done so. Jesus willingly obeyed His Father and became a sacrifice for us. Bring out that whereas God provided a substitute for Isaac, none was provided for Jesus. He died as a substitute for us. Abraham's servant's seeking a bride for Isaac: Isaac did not interfere when Abraham sent his servant to find a bride for him from among his own people, even though he was approximately forty years of age. When Rebekah was brought to him, Isaac took her as his bride. The heavenly Father is sending His Spirit to find a bride for Christ.

Impress upon your students the submissive quality Isaac exemplified in both of these instances. In what circumstances might they need to exhibit the same quality? What benefits can it bring into their lives?

3. Isaac was in an attitude of meditation. Ask your students if they feel this was an exception to Isaac's usual pattern of behavior. They should see that Isaac did not know the servant was returning at that moment; therefore, this was likely a part of his daily practice. Ask your students to define *meditation* with regard to spiritual pursuits. They should bring out that it is, "to think for a period, deeply and continuously, on spiritual truths." Some verses which bring out the value of meditation are Joshua 1:8; Psalms 1:2; 63:5,6; 1 Timothy 4:15. It may be appropriate to caution your students regarding the dangers of becoming involved in the type of meditation popular in many circles in the world today which directs the attention away from the true God.

4. Isaac took Rebekah for his wife, and he loved her. Your students should see that Isaac felt more than a sense of duty toward Rebekah, or an obligation to honor the wishes of his father. He truly felt affection for her. God-given affection between a husband and wife is an important aspect of the Christian life.

Isaac was Abraham and Sarah's only son, born when Abraham was one hundred years of age and Sarah ninety. Before Abraham died, he gave all that he had to Isaac (Genesis 25:5). Isaac had been an obedient son, and he became a great man (Genesis 26:13), but never sought place or fame. He was a man of peace, one who loved God, and one whom God loved and blessed.

1. What prominent place did Isaac fill in God's plan of salvation for mankind, as shown in Genesis 21:12 and emphasized in the New Testament in Romans 9:7 and Hebrews 11:18?

2. What significant similarities do we find in the life of Isaac and the life of Jesus, as shown in the following accounts?

Abraham's offering of Isaac — Genesis 22

Abraham's servant's seeking a bride for Isaac — Genesis 24

3. When Rebekah and the servant returned, in what attitude did they find Isaac? See Genesis 24:63. How can this attitude be beneficial to a Christian?

4. When Isaac heard the report from the servant concerning his meeting with Rebekah, what did he do? What was his attitude toward Rebekah?

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ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. What statements can we make regarding Isaac's prayer life, and how can we profit by the example? See Genesis 25:21; 26:24,25.

6. One Bible commentator brings out that Abraham's long residence in this part of the country had left its traces in many a valley by the wells he dug. After his death, the Philistines seemed to have hastened to obliterate the witnesses of their treaty with him. What spiritual lesson can we learn from the account of Isaac's digging again the wells which the Philistines had stopped? See Genesis 26:18.

7. What did Isaac do when there was strife between his herdsmen and those of the Philistines over the wells his servants had dug? What characteristic did this exemplify and why is this a commendable trait?

8. As we read the account of Isaac's life, what miracles or feats of valor and courage come to mind?

9. What reward did the Lord give to Isaac for his obedience and integrity? See Genesis 26:3,12,24.

5. Your students' answers may bring out that Isaac evidently had faith and a knowledge that the Lord could intervene in the affairs of men because he entreated the Lord for his wife, and she bore twins. He was in communication with the Lord—he listened as well as asked—because when the Lord came to him in Beersheba, he heard His words in the night and built an altar. Your students should be able to see the benefits of following Isaac's example in both of these instances. This might be a good time to ask your students for personal examples of times when the Lord answered prayer in their own lives.

6. Give your students an opportunity to express their thoughts. One possibility might be that the devil will attempt to clog our spiritual lives with cares and temptations, and it takes strong effort in prayer and obedience to God's Word to keep our lives clear of the things of the world. Another thought could be that our journey through life should leave some marks or witnesses that we have passed this way. But the devil is trying to destroy the evidence of our spiritual gains or endeavors, and we must actively resist his attempts.

7. He avoided controversy several times by giving up the wells and moving to a new location. This shows that Isaac was a peaceable man. Paul said: "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men" (2 Timothy 2:24). Bring out that this may be difficult at times, but God expects us as Christians to make every effort to do so.

8. He performed none of these. He is included among the heroes of faith because of his obedience as a son and the blessings he gave as a father (Hebrews 11:17-20). Bring out that the favorable qualities we find in Isaac's life are attainable by each of us.

9. God was with Isaac and blessed him and gave him riches, land, and countless descendants. Because of Isaac's obedience, God was able to continue the promise to Abraham, that through his seed the whole world should be blessed. Conclude your lessons by emphasizing the thought that we can all receive God's presence and blessing in our lives, and inherit eternal life if we obey and follow God wholly as Isaac did.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

How do you think Isaac felt when his father bound him and laid him on the altar?

Why did the Lord tell Isaac he would make his seed to multiply as the stars of Heaven?

In what ways do you feel Isaac is a good example for us to follow?

What are some ways you can be obedient and supportive to your parents, and to Jesus, as Isaac was to his father and heavenly Father?

What does Genesis 22:7-9 indicate about Isaac's personality?

What does Genesis 24:7 show about Abraham's trust and belief in God's promises?

What do you think the key verse means? How may we apply the key verse to our lives?

What did Abraham say to Isaac on their way to the sacrifice that would indicate he knew God would come to his help?

After reading the ANSWER story, tell why you think we should give only our best to God.

THINGS TO DO

Take a gyroscope or a top and show how it can do nothing on its own. But pull the string or spin it and it works. Liken this to our lives. We cannot work for God unless His power and Spirit are in our lives. Then He can help us do just the work He has in mind for us.

On a tray, have a number of items which represent things we might want to accomplish for God. (Each item should be made of metal, or have metal attached in some way, so that it can be drawn by a magnet.) Point to the items with your finger and show how they won't move when you point

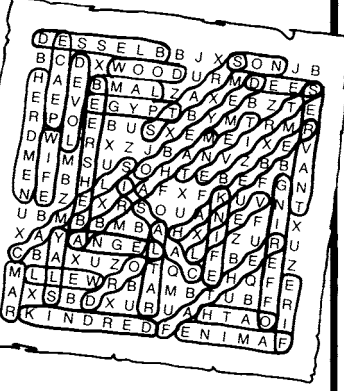

at them. Then take a magnet and move it toward the items one at a time, picking them up. The magnet represents the power of God. By our might or power we cannot draw them to us. But, as the magnet can lift the objects, so it takes God's power in us to accomplish anything for Him.

Bring a flashlight, computer, calculator, or similar item which requires a battery. Bring out the point that without the battery's power it won't work. The same is true with our spiritual lives. We have to be saved—connected to the Power Source—before we can work for God.

Answers for ANSWER

Let's Follow Isaac's Example!

If we want God to use us in His work we must obey Him. We must be loving and peaceable and prayerful. Isaac was all of these things and God used him. The words on the list below are from our Bible text. Find them in the puzzle and circle them.



Find Romans 12:18 in your Bible and write it in the box below. It tells what God wants you to do.

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."