

date: **9/24/17**

**Bible Passage: Genesis 18; 21—22**  
(Abraham and Isaac)

## God Is Provider

### REMEMBER VERSE

**Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.  
Psalm 90:2**

### Inspire

*Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives*

When I think about God providing for me, I instantly think of tangible things, such as money for rent or new brakes for my car. But in Matthew 6:31–32, Jesus said, “Do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.”

God has provided something so much better for us: a substitute, a Lamb, whose sacrifice paid for our sin. God has provided the way into direct relationship with Him. God provides because He knows all of my needs—both tangible and intangible.

God has provided for my soul by giving me peace when I spend time with Him. God has provided for my heart by giving me love through the people in my life. He has provided hope for my future because I know He’s always with me. And He’s provided eternity, which I get to spend with Him!

Because of these reasons and many more, I’m convinced that “my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19). The Lord will provide for you, in this life and in the life to come.

*Tori Funkhouser*  
**ROCKHARBOR Church**

1

## Equip

*Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

The Lord always provides. The story of the birth of Isaac shows us this while offering us a picture of God as mysterious and sovereign as well as loving and attentive.

As we read the account of Abraham and Isaac in Scripture, we can infer that Abraham must have felt extreme heartbreak at the moment of the almost-sacrifice. God required a sacrifice, and He also required Abraham's obedience. God required Abraham to have faith that He had a plan and that He would provide. And God did provide—He provided a sacrifice to take Isaac's place. (To read more about Abraham's faith in the context of the New Testament, see Hebrews 11.)

God also provided the reward for Abraham's faith—the reaffirmation of His covenant promise. Not only that, but God also added more to the promise. For the first time, God previewed the sacrifice that His Son would ultimately make for the sins of mankind.

## Mount Moriah

The mountain where Abraham laid his son, Isaac, on the altar was called Mount Moriah. Many scholars believe that this was the same place where, 2,000 years later, the Father sacrificed His only Son Jesus.

## Abraham's Tent

People in Abraham's time moved around often while looking for fresh pasture for their flocks, so they needed their homes to be portable. They lived in large, rectangular tents with a flap dividing the inside of the tent into two sections. Typically, the men lived and conducted business in the front section while the women and children lived in the back section. These tents were made out of goats' hair or dark sheep's wool woven on large looms and were secured with wooden pegs. The women worked together to move the tents when the clan needed to travel.

## Support

*Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

As you prepare for the lesson, read through Genesis 16, 18, and 21—22. Spend time praying, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you through the narrative your children will hear. Think of times God provided for you in your own life. Have you ever faced a lack of money for the month and watched God provide the funds just in time? Have you ever experienced extreme discouragement and felt God heal your heart? If appropriate, tell these stories to the children, and pray that the Holy Spirit would use your stories to transform them.

Pray that God will use you to bring the kids into times of experiencing Him, both at church and at home with their families. Pray that your kids and parents will be transformed by their encounters with God, that they will know Him better, and that they will respond to Him with faith and obedience. If possible, find a time to even pray with the parents for their roles as spiritual leaders.

**SMALL GROUP**  
SECTION**EXPLORE//** 10 min.

Small Group Leaders

*Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.*

God faithfully provides shelter for us. Shelter gives us safety, warmth, and a sense of home. Abraham's shelter was a tent. Help children work together today to build shelters out of various materials.

**Sweet Shelters****SUPPLIES**

- Toothpicks (about 24 per child)
- Gumdrops (about 20 per child)
- Bowls (several)
- Fruit leather (2 rolls per child)

**SET UP**

Place the toothpicks and gumdrops in a few bowls and set them out along with the fruit leather.

**RELATE**

Invite the children to build small shelters using the items. They can work alone or with partners. Suggest they use the gumdrops to connect toothpicks to each other and fruit leather to create roofs or floors. Encourage the kids to get creative! (Remind them not to eat the building supplies as they will be well-handled and therefore not sanitary.) As the kids work, talk with them about shelters. What are the characteristics of a good shelter? What shelters would work best in different environments—cold weather, the desert, etc.?

Once the kids finish their shelters, ask them to share their creations with the rest of the group. You might have the kids vote to determine winners in certain categories, such as most unique shelter, sturdiest shelter, and most spacious shelter.

**LARGE GROUP**  
SECTION**DISCOVER//** 30 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

*Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible Verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.*

3

## Traditions and Remember Verse

### SUPPLIES

- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)
- [Remember Verse image](#) (see Resources)

### RELATE

Give the children mementos (such as rocks, marbles, or blocks) for accomplishments such as memorizing the Remember Verse or bringing their Bibles. Have them put the objects into a clear container or add them to a structure, and celebrate when it's complete.

This week's Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

**Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. Psalm 90:2**

## Connect

Encourage the members of your community to get to know one another through engaging questions, energizing games, and creative activities.

### Question

**Would you rather camp in a tent and cook over a fire or stay in a hotel and eat at a restaurant? Why?**

## The Big God Story

**Bible Passage: Genesis 18; 21—22**

**Storytelling Technique: Props and Audio**

**God Is Provider**

### SUPPLIES

- [Timeline image](#) (see Resources)
- [Audio: Wind, Sheep](#) (see Resources)
- Bibles
- Photo of someone important to you
- Sticks (4–5, small)
- Table
- Rope
- Tablecloth

### PREPARE AHEAD

If possible, have the person in the photo join your group for the Storytelling time.

### SET UP

Cover the table with the tablecloth and place it at the front of the Storytelling area along with the sticks and rope.

4

**RELATE**

**We all have people in our lives who are important to us. We love them, and they love us. Close your eyes for a minute and think about someone special to you.** Pause and then have children open their eyes. **Someone who's very important to me is (person's name).** Show person's photo and tell the children about him, including why he's important to you. If the person is there, introduce him to the kids. You might also ask him to share a few things about himself and his relationship to you. **Today in The Big God Story we'll see that God is Provider. To provide means to take care of things. God used an important person in Abraham's life, someone he loved and cared about deeply, much like I care about (person's name), to show that He will always provide what we need. Let's pause and pray together before we begin.** Lead children in Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

**God made a covenant promise to Abram, whose name God later changed to Abraham. What promise did God make?** Invite responses. **God promised Abraham and his wife Sarah that they would have a child. God also promised Abraham that he would have so many descendants—children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and so on—that he wouldn't be able to count them all! That's why God changed Abram's name to Abraham—Abraham means "father of many nations."**

**One day three visitors came to speak with Abraham. Through these visitors, God told Abraham that Sarah would have a son by the next year. When Sarah heard this, she laughed. She didn't believe it! Let's look at Genesis 21:1 to see what happened.** Ask a volunteer to read verses 1–2. **Just as God had promised, Sarah gave birth to a baby boy. God provided a child to Sarah in her old age. She said, "God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me" (verse 6). Abraham and Sarah named their baby Isaac, which means "he who laughs."**

**This would be a great story if it ended here. But it didn't! God's covenant promise was very important, and God had an unexpected plan for how He would fulfill this promise. Because of this, God tested Abraham's faith again.**

**God told Abraham to do something very unusual. Let's turn to Genesis 22. Read verse 2 as kids follow along. Wow! Today, when we sin, we can pray and ask Jesus to forgive us because Jesus died on the cross and paid for our sin. But before Jesus came to earth, God told people to sacrifice an animal, usually a perfect lamb, to cover their sins. This gave them a picture of how one day Jesus would pay for their sins by providing Himself as the sacrifice.**

**The Bible says Abraham never questioned God's request. He obeyed God and took his son up a mountain to sacrifice him to the Lord. Though we don't know exactly how old Isaac was at that time, the Bible tells us he carried his own wood for the fire up the mountain.** Give each stick to a volunteer. Ask children to keep the sticks in their laps for now.

**As Isaac and his father walked up the mountain, Isaac asked Abraham where the animal for the sacrifice was. Let's go to verse 8 to see what Abraham said.** Ask a volunteer to read verse 8. **Abraham knew God is Provider. He believed that God would take care of bringing the animal for the sacrifice.**

**The Bible says, "When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it" (verse 9). Tech: Cue Wind audio.** Call the children with sticks to come forward a few at a time and place their sticks on the table. Slowly wind the rope loosely around your hand or arm as you read the rest of verse 9 and 10: **"He [tied up] his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood."**

Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.”

**Wow! Let’s look at verses 11 and 12 to see what happened next.** Have a volunteer read the verses as kids follow along. Unwind the rope and place it on the floor. **Let’s all take a big breath together. Phew! Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a prickly bush.** *Tech: Cue Sheep audio.* **Abraham sacrificed the ram to thank God for His provision and named the place “The Lord Will Provide.” God also repeated His covenant promise, saying, “because you ... have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you” (verses 16–17). God promised that the Redeemer would come from Abraham’s family line.**

**Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his only son, the son whom he loved, gives us a picture of another part of The Big God Story that would happen many, many years later. God would send His only Son Jesus, the Son whom He loved, to earth to die on a cross (pick up two sticks and hold them in the shape of a cross) as a sacrifice for our sin—maybe on the very same spot where Abraham and Isaac sacrificed the ram. God provided Jesus as our perfect Lamb. He fulfills God’s covenant promise. He saves us from our sin and allows us to be in perfect relationship with God forever.**

**God provided an animal for Abraham and Isaac to sacrifice, and He provided Jesus as the final sacrifice for you and me. God will always provide for us. God provides food for us to eat, homes to live in, and friends in our faith community. But, most importantly of all, God gave us His Son Jesus to save us from our sins. What a loving God!** Share a personal story of a time you experienced God’s provision.

## SMALL GROUP

# RESPOND// 15 min.

*Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through creative activities and games.*

## Reflect: God Is Provider

Encourage the kids to open their Bibles and read the suggested passages.

### Questions for Younger Kids

- **How did God provide for (take care of) Sarah in today’s part of The Big God Story?** Genesis 21:1–2, 6
- **How did God provide for (take care of) Abraham in today’s part of The Big God Story?** Genesis 21:1–2; 22:12–13
- **What did Abraham name the place where he went to sacrifice his son?** Genesis 22:14
- **In what ways does God provide for us today?**
- **How have you seen God provide for you or your family?**

### Questions for Older Kids

- **Why did Sarah laugh when the visitor said she would have a son?** Genesis 18:11–12 • **How did God**

6

- **provide for (take care of) Sarah in today's part of The Big God Story?** Genesis 21:1–2, 6
- **How do you think Isaac may have felt as he climbed the mountain with his dad?**
- **How did God provide for (take care of) Abraham in today's part of The Big God Story?** Genesis 21:1–2; 22:12–13
- **What did Abraham name the place where he went to sacrifice his son?** Genesis 22:14
- **In what ways does God provide for us today?**
- **How have you seen God provide for you or your family?**

## BLESS// 5 min.

Small Group Leaders

*Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.*

### SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- Bible

### RELATE

Encourage the children to hold their hands in front of them, palms up. This posture symbolizes a willingness of heart to respond to God's Holy Spirit and receive what God has for them. Invite them to remain in this posture as you bless them.

Open a Bible and read Psalm 107:1, 8–9:

**Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever ... Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.**

End this time by blessing each child individually. Use the blessing as written or add your own words of truth unique to each child and his situation.

(Child's name), **our God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19). May you know that God is your Provider. May you trust in His provision and follow Him wherever He leads you.**