



Lesson **13**


God Cares for Hagar and Ishmael





Genesis 21:8-21



Bible Point:
 God hears us.

Key Verse:
 Ask and God will hear you (adapted from Luke 11:9).

Weaving Faith Into Life:
 Children will talk to God in daily life.

Lesson Sequence	What Children Will Do	Materials/Supplies	Teacher/Back Supplies
1 Getting Started <i>about 5 min.</i>	Welcome and Worship Welcome each other, and praise God through music.	CD player	CD: "Kids, Come Join Us" (track 2); "Are You Going to Praise the Lord?" (track 6) 
2 FaithWeaver Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	God Will Hear Sing a song, and talk about how they ask for things.	Bible, CD player	CD: "Ask and God Will Hear You" (track 26) 
3 Bible Story Exploration <i>about 15 min.</i>	Puppy Pointers Hear how Theo received a cup of water.	CD player, Theo puppet, cup, tape	CD: "Here, Theo" (track 4) 
	Story Time: Hagar and Ishmael Participate in telling the Bible story.	Bible, box, sheet of poster board, canteen, pitcher of water, one 5-ounce paper cup per child, 2 sticky notes, glittery marker, green construction paper, scissors	"God Provides" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) 

Lesson Sequence	What Children Will Do	Object/Component(s)	Teacher Pack Supplies
4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i>	Center 1: God Hears Ishmael Hide Ishmael, and retell the Bible story.	Lesson 13 from My Bible, Hugs, scissors, 5 yellow 3-inch sticky notes per child	
	Center 2: A Desert Dessert Make a snack that looks like a desert.	1 clear cup and 2 to 3 vanilla cookies per child, vanilla pudding, resealable plastic bags, pretzel sticks (optional)	
	Center 3: Never Seeing, Ever Hearing Try to find a hidden timer.	Kitchen timer	
	Center 4: A Loving Listener Make hanging hearts to remind them that God hears them.	1 piece of red construction paper per child, finger paints, baby wipes, ribbon or yarn, hole punch, scissors	
5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 10 min.</i>	Be a FaithWeaver Make a challenge for the week ahead.		
	Action Prayer Ask God for something they need.		

God Cares for Hagar and Ishmael

Genesis 21:8-21

It was typical in Abraham's culture to have a celebration when a child was weaned, which was usually around 2 to 3 years of age. The celebration for Isaac was probably even bigger than most because he was something of a miracle child.

Unfortunately the joyous occasion soon turned to bitterness. We don't know if Ishmael's mocking of Isaac happened on the day of the celebration, but it must have occurred soon afterward. Ishmael had been born to Abraham through Hagar, Sarah's maidservant, after Sarah decided to take things into her own hands and have Abraham sleep with Hagar to "build a family" (Genesis 16:2). By the time Isaac was 2, Ishmael was about 16 (Genesis 16:16; 21:5).

It's easy to understand why a mother would be upset by a 16-year-old teasing her 2- or 3-year-old. But the animosity ran deeper than the teasing. Sarah and Hagar had been at odds since Hagar was pregnant with Ishmael (Genesis 16:4-10). Abraham's decision to send Hagar and Ishmael away had probably been a long time in coming.

Abraham didn't want to send Hagar and Ishmael away. He knew it was wrong according to his culture and according to anyone's standards of fatherhood. When God told Abraham to go ahead and do what Sarah wanted, God didn't say it was right. But God did promise to take care of Ishmael, eventually making a great nation of his descendants as well as Isaac's.

The area where Abraham lived was desert, so Hagar and Ishmael would have had a tough time finding food and water. The skin of water and the food Abraham gave them was probably as much as they could comfortably carry but wouldn't have lasted very long. Abraham had to have known that without God's help, the two wouldn't live a week.

Remember that Ishmael was at least 16 by this time. If Hagar had to put him under a bush, he must have been terribly weakened by fluid deprivation. He likely wasn't far from death, as Hagar estimated (Genesis 21:16). We don't know for sure why God responded to Ishmael's crying and not to Hagar's sobs. It may have been because of God's commitment to Abraham to take care of Ishmael.

It seems odd that God responded to Ishmael's cry but sent an angel to speak to Hagar. It may be that Ishmael was simply too weak to even get water for himself. It also seems likely that the well had been there all the time but Hagar didn't see it until God made it visible to her. God was actually there taking care of them and providing the water they needed, but they couldn't see it until they acknowledged their need for God. When they cried out to God, God heard and responded. And we can count on God to always do the same for us!

Devotion for Teachers

Jesus, because of you we know that God always hears us. We praise you for that and for revealing the power of God to meet every need, even before we ask.

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: Look through a photo album, and pick one picture that represents a challenging time for you. During that time, did you seek God's help or sense his presence? Or was it more difficult to rely on him? Pray about a challenge you're facing right now. Ask God to reveal some ways that show he hears you.