

Arabs. Ishmael was not the heir that God promised to give to Abraham through his wife.

- Abraham's second son was born to his wife, Sarah. His name was Isaac, who became the ancestor of the Jews. God revealed to Abraham that God's promises would bring blessing to the world through Isaac and the Jews.
- When Jesus was born, He was a Jew, a descendent of Isaac. Thus, the promises made to Abraham brings blessing to all those who put their faith in Jesus. Muslims, too, need to believe in Jesus.

Have the **children** present what they have prepared.

Ask for testimonies.

- How has God's power changed the lives of new believers?
- How has God answered prayers or kept his promises?

To introduce the **Lord's Supper**, briefly recount from Genesis 15 Abraham's sacrifice and how God showed His presence. Explain that God confirms His promises with a sacrifice. Abraham chased vultures away from the sacrificed meat. Birds in Jesus' parables represented Satan's influences. Sacrifices are very important to God. We respect them, to honour God. We confess our sins before eating the Lord's Supper, to chase away Satan's 'birds' as we partake of Christ's body.

**Poem:** "The Enemy of Faith". [If you translate this poem, you do not have to make it rhyme.]

The hungry dragon likes to yell,  
 "Most men desire to come to hell!"  
 He wants hell's imps to plainly see  
 how wicked some men want to be.  
 He hates the truth but still admits,  
 Not even men with half our wits  
 Are fooled in full by our deceit,  
 unless our lies they want to eat!"

Form tiny **groups** of two or three to counsel and pray for each other and confirm plans.

**Memorize** Ephesians 2:8-10.

## Abraham, Father of the Faithful

Those who teach children should read study #93 for children.

**Prayer.** "Dear God in heaven, please use this study to help my flock grow in faith like Abraham did, so that they will both hear and do your Word and not be hearers only. Help us to obey the things that we believe. In Jesus' name, amen."

### 1. Prepare your heart and mind with Prayer and God's Word.

**Memorize** James 1:22.

**Learn** about faith from Abraham.

- **Consider** that Paul said Abraham is our example of faith, Galatians 3:6-9. Abraham had weaknesses the same as we do, and he made mistakes. However, when God promised to multiply his descendants, as many as the stars in the sky, He believed God. God saw his faith and declared him to be righteous, Genesis 15:1-6. Let us also believe God's promises and do our part to help thousands of unbelievers to become spiritual sons of Abraham by believing as he did.

**Find** in Genesis...

- In 12:2-3 what God promised Abram (before changing his name to Abraham, 17:5).
- In 15:1-6 what Abram believed so that God counted him as righteousness.
- In 15:7-21 how God affirmed His promise to Abram. Was it only because of Abram's effort in sacrificing and in keeping away the birds? (*Answer:* God was fully in control.)
- In 16:1-16 Abram's attempt by his own effort to fulfil God's promise.
- In 18:1 through 19:29 how Abraham's faith saved his nephew Lot and Lot's daughters.
- In 22:1-18 how God tested Abraham's faith, and what God promised to all believers because Abraham trusted God.



Please take a moment to remember from how your own faith came to you. From the testimony of friends? The Word? A dream or vision? The quiet assurance of the Holy Spirit? Through prayer? Because of a miraculous healing in the name of Jesus?

## 2. Plan with your co-workers activities to do during the week.

If any of the believers are struggling with weak faith, then go, **visit** them and tell them about Abraham, and tell them your own testimony of why you believe.

**Demonstrate** your God-given faith by serving needy neighbours in some practical way.

**Pray** with those who struggle with weak faith.

You could **encourage** them by doing in their homes some of the worship activities under part 3.

## 3. Plan with your co-workers the upcoming worship time.

**Choose** activities that fit the believers' needs and local customs.

**Tell** or dramatize parts of Abraham's story.

**Explain** these truths:

- God told Abraham to leave his relatives and go into a foreign land. By faith he obeyed. He took his wife and servants, and travelled hundreds of kilometres.
  - While Abraham was in that land, God spoke again and promised him many descendants. Abraham believed God's promise, and God considered that faith as righteousness.
  - God promised that He would bless all nations through one of Abraham's descendants.
  - Abraham did not know how these promises would be fulfilled, because he had no child to be his heir.
  - God then told Abraham to prepare a sacrifice. God always required sacrifices to establish a covenant with humans. Jesus said the Lord's Supper is our covenant in His blood.
  - Abraham tried to scare the vultures away, but he grew tired and fell into a deep sleep. He saw a vision of God walking through the midst of the sacrifice while Abraham did nothing.
  - Abraham still did not understand that it was God alone who would fulfil his promise.
  - Later, Abraham's wife Sarah suggested that he have a son with her slave girl, Hagar, to beget his heir.
  - Abraham's foolish effort has caused much misery. One of Hagar's descendants later introduced Islam.
  - At age 100, Abraham saw the promise of a son fulfilled, when Sarah gave birth to Isaac. It was not Abraham's sacrifice or effort that fulfilled the promise, but God's power alone.
- Note:** If believers live near Muslims, then explain that Abraham had two sons. His first son was born to Abraham's wife's slave girl, Hagar. His name was Ishmael, who became the ancestor of the