



SESSION **4**

A wife for Isaac



MEETING AIM

To learn how Isaac and Rebekah trusted God, and how we can do the same.



BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 24



BACKGROUND

Desert customs and traditional arranged marriages will be alien to most children in church, and even a whiff of romantic love will prompt many in this age group to cry: "Yuck!" The task here is to set the scene, enjoy the foreignness (how many other love stories feature camels?!) and then help children explore common ground with Isaac, Rebekah and their families.

+ CIRCLE TIME



As the children arrive, chat about weddings. Who has been to one? What usually happens at church weddings? Does anyone know about any different kinds of weddings?

+ MY OWN HOME



You will need: internet access and the means to show the final scene of Disney's *The Jungle Book*: 'My own home' (from YouTube or DVD. The clip lasts for around 2 minutes 50)

If anyone hasn't seen the film, recap briefly that Mowgli has been brought up in the jungle by animals. Watch the clip, and afterwards ask: "What happened in this scene? What do you think Mowgli's life will be like from now on?"

Explain that your story is about a beautiful young woman called Rebekah, who went to fetch water from a spring like this. She met a man called Isaac, who – a bit like Mowgli – was brought up among strangers and wanted to make a home with his own kind.

+ BIBLE STORY



You will need: loose coins; bottle(s) of water with lid(s); a sound effect of 'Heaven's choir' (search online for suitable clips, or use a recording of a large, joyful choir)

Use your resources to create the sound effects for these cue words:

Gold: shake the coins

Water: shake the water bottle (lid on)

Desert: blow across the top of the water bottle (lid off)

Trusted in God: a second or two of 'Heaven's choir'

Camels: everyone snorts

Practise each one a few times and then tell the following story.

This story starts with Abraham, remember him? God promised that he would have a huge family and a land of his own. Abraham **trusted in God**, but he was old, he lived in a land of strangers and his only son, Isaac, wasn't married.

Abraham called his servant and said: "Promise me that you'll find Isaac a wife. But I don't want him to marry a stranger. Go back to where I came from and find him a wife of his own kind."

The servant said: "What if she won't come back here with me?"

Abraham **trusted in God**. He said to the servant: "God will find my son Isaac a wife from my own family and she will come back here with you."

The servant set off on the long journey across the **desert**. He took lots of gold with him and ten **camels**. Then he reached a spring bubbling with fresh **water**. Lots of women were filling their water jars. The servant **trusted in God** and he prayed: "O Lord! Find me a wife for my master's son here. Whoever offers me and my **camels** a drink, let her be the one!"

Before the servant had finished speaking, he saw a beautiful young woman called Rebekah. The servant said: "Please may I have a drink?" Rebekah said: "Of course!" She gave him some **water**. Then she said: "Let me give some to your **camels**!"

The servant asked: "Who is your family?" She answered: "My granddad is Abraham's brother." The servant cheered: "God has found Abraham's son Isaac a wife from his own family!" He **trusted in God** even more.

He gave Rebekah lots of bracelets made of **gold**. She invited him and his **camels** to stay the night with her family.

The servant told his story to Rebekah's dad and brother. He asked: "Can I take Rebekah home with me to marry Isaac?"

Rebekah's dad and brother **trusted in God**. "Yes!" they said. "God has chosen her." Then they asked Rebekah: "Will you go?"

Rebekah **trusted in God** and she said: "Yes!"

So the servant and Rebekah set off across the **desert** with all the **camels**.

When they got home, the servant said to Isaac: "God has found you a wife from your own family and she has come back here with me."

Isaac **trusted in God**. He fell in love with Rebekah and they got married immediately!

+ CHATTING TOGETHER



Discuss the children's reactions to the story using these questions:

- In this story, who are you most interested in and why?
- If you were Rebekah, what would you think about marrying Isaac?
- If you were Isaac, what would you think about marrying Rebekah?
- What helped the people in this story to trust God?
- What questions would you like to ask God about this story?

+ CREATIVE RESPONSE



You will need: some sand or beige fabric for the desert; a pot of water; three to six human figures, for example Playmobil, Lego, Nativity or Godly Play sets

Invite the children to reflect on the story and think "What if?" Use the figures, sand and water to play out alternative scenarios. Wonder together, for example: "What if the servant had got lost in the desert?" "What if Rebekah had said no?" "Where is God in this story?"

+ PRAYER



You will need: the 'Heaven's choir' sound effect from 'Bible story'

Play a long version of the sound effect and invite children to talk to God about trusting him. In a short quiet period, take it in turns to pray silently or aloud: "Please God, help me to trust you when..." Say "Amen" together at the end.

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