

3

Playing the Waiting Game

Community
We reflect God's love in our families.

POWER TEXT

"And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised" (Hebrews 6:15, NIV).

KEY REFERENCES

- Genesis 16
- *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 13, pp. 145-147
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 1, pp. 156-161
- Student lesson on page 42 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 7, The Nature of Humanity
- No. 23, Marriage and the Family
- No. 22, Christian Behavior

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that trusting God's plan is always best.
- **Feel** willing to wait for God to fulfill His promise in His own time.
- **Respond** by trusting that God knows best how to solve family conflicts.

POWERPOINT

Following God's plan helps us avoid conflicts.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

God promises Abraham and Sarah a son, but they give up waiting for God to fulfill His promise in His own time. Believing that they have to somehow help God fulfill His purpose, Sarah, according to the custom of the time, suggests that Abraham take her servant girl to be his wife to raise up a son for him. As a result, Ishmael is born to Hagar. And when Isaac is born to Sarah according to God's promise, it brings a great deal of conflict and suffering to the home.

This is a lesson about community.

We can learn from this story to trust God's plans for our families. God promises that obedience to His will brings blessing to our families. Following God's guidelines, and trusting His timetable helps us avoid conflict situations.

Teacher Enrichment

"Abraham had accepted without question the promise of a son, but he did not wait for God to fulfill His word in His own time and way. A delay was permitted, to test his faith in the power of God; but he failed to endure the trial. Thinking it impossible that a child should be given her in her old age, Sarah suggested, as a plan by which the divine purpose might be fulfilled, that one of her handmaidens should be taken by Abraham as a secondary wife. Polygamy had become so widespread that it had ceased to be regarded as a sin, but it was no less a violation of the law of God, and was fatal to the sacredness and peace of the family relation. Abraham's marriage with Hagar resulted in evil, not only to his own household, but to future generations" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 145).

"If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 173).

How have I surrendered my life to God? What am I doing as I wait for God in His time?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at the door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	*A. Beat the Clock*	pom-pom or soft ball
		B. Trial and Error	Bibles, relay activities, prizes
* Prayer & Praise	15-20	See page 37. Prayer & Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, offering box/basket, tree outline, paper leaves, pencils, tape
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles, copies of responsive reading from page 146 OR no. 801 from *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*God's Timing*	papers, pencils, large envelope
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Scripture Reminder*	Bibles, index cards, pencils
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ large pom-pom OR soft ball

Beat the Clock

Say: **Your challenge this morning is to see how fast you can pass the pom-pom around the whole group. Everyone must touch it, and it must go from one person to the next.** (A group of 15 did it in less than a second by standing in a line, cupping their hands, and rolling the ball down.) When the students feel they have done the task in the shortest amount of time they are able, review how quickly the task was accomplished.

Debriefing

Ask: **What happened here? How did your group try to meet the challenge? What was the result? What kind of conflict did your group experience trying to decide how best to accomplish your task?**

Say: **Today things happen at high speed. Sometimes we try to hurry God, and create conflict we wouldn't have if we waited patiently for Him to fulfill His promises. Let's say together our power text, Hebrews 6:15:**

"And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised" (Hebrews 6:15, NIV).

Our lesson today includes a story about Abraham who found out that

Following God's plan helps us avoid conflicts.

B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ relay activities
- ☐ prizes

Trial and Error

Prepare in advance an activity in which each of two teams has to accomplish tasks in relay fashion. The activities might include: blowing up and tying off a balloon; putting a small puzzle together; filling in the blanks on a "quiz" sheet, etc. Explain that each team will need to complete each task in no particular order and that ***the most successful team*** will receive a reward.

At the end, reward the team who finishes last. As the ***fastest*** team begins to complain, ask: **What's the problem here? Why are you unhappy about the outcome of this activity**? (students may say: it's not fair, the wrong team won, or we finished first, we are the rightful winners)

Say: **I told you in the beginning that the most successful team would win. My definition of success is the team that worked together, took their time to find the right solutions, and worked carefully, intentionally, and cooperatively** (list any other things they may have done well).

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you think this might be like God's definition of success for us?** Say: **God views things very differently from the way we do. He wants us to know that His way is always the best way and He has a plan for helping us stay out of trouble.**

Give the losing team a prize as well and say: **Everyone who follows God's guidelines and instructions is a winner. Let's say together our power text, Hebrews 6:15:**

"And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised" (Hebrews 6:15, NIV).

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Prayer & Praise

Notes

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"Give Them All to Jesus" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 91)
"In His Time" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 93)
"We Must Wait (on the Lord)" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 129)

Mission

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map
- ☐ pushpins

Use Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. Using a world map, have the students identify and mark with pushpins the location where the mission story is taking place.

Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ offering box/basket

Continue to use the box covered with faces of people. Say: **We have the privilege of coming together to learn about God's plan and promises. Giving our offerings is one way of helping others to learn about Him and His plans for their lives.**

Prayer

YOU NEED:
- ☐ tree outline
- ☐ paper leaves
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ tape

Give each student a cutout of a leaf in autumn colors. Say: **Sometimes we have to wait for things. In winter we know spring is coming when we see the buds. In the fall we know winter is coming when the leaves change color. Sometimes we have to wait for God to answer our prayers. Write on your leaf something that you have been waiting for God to answer for a long time.** Invite students to hang their leaves on the tree used last week. Pray with them, asking for patience for each student. Close with a prayer for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.

2

BIBLE LESSON

Introducing the Bible Story

Ask: **When was the last time you had to wait? Wait until your folks are ready to go home from church, wait for your birthday, wait for a camp out. What is it like to wait? In our lesson today Abraham and Sarah got tired of waiting for God to keep His promise, and tried to fix it themselves. Who can repeat our power text or our power point? How do these relate to our story for this week?**

Let's say together our power text, Hebrews 6:15:

"And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised" (Hebrews 6:15, NIV).

Our power point reminds us that

Following God's plan helps us avoid conflicts.

Experiencing the Story

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ copies of responsive reading on page 146 OR no. 801 in *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*

Read Genesis 16 aloud together. Then divide the students into four groups. Assign each group one of the following characters: Hagar, Sarah, Abraham, the angel. Say: **Think of a way to retell the story from your character's perspective.**

After giving time for each group to retell the story, divide the students into two groups and read responsive reading found on page 146 of this guide OR from no. 801 from *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*.

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles

Exploring the Bible

Say: **Abraham got into a conflict situation because he tried to rush God and did not wait and follow God's guidelines. Let's read about other people in conflict situations and see what lessons we can learn from their experiences.** Divide the students into groups and give each group one set of the following Scripture references. Allow time for each group to report back to the group as a whole.

1. Genesis 37:5-8, 17-28; Genesis 50:15-21 (Joseph and his brothers)

Ask: **What was the difference between the way the brothers handled the conflict when they were young and when they were older? How did Joseph react with maturity? How can we deal with conflict situations when we know we are right? How did these conflicts come about? What would have kept these conflicts from occurring in the first place?**

2. 1 Samuel 24 (Saul and David)

Ask: **What was the effect of David's action? How can we apply David's attitude to current-day conflict situations? What would have kept this conflict from occurring in the first place?**

3. Luke 15:11-31 (The lost son)

Ask: **What were the sources of conflict? How did each person react? Which person do you consider a role model? What could have kept these conflicts from occurring in the first place? Let's say together our power text, Hebrews 6:15:**

"And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised" (Hebrews 6:15, NIV).

Our power point reminds us that

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YOU NEED:
- ☐ papers
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ large envelope

God's Timing

Prepare in advance paper and pencils for each student, and a large sealable envelope with the words, GOD'S TIMING, printed on the outside. Say: **There are all kinds of waiting experiences in our lives. Just like Abraham and Sarah, God sometimes calls us to wait so long that we feel tired and give up and make our own plans instead of waiting on His.**

Ask: **What is there in your life today for which you feel as if you've been waiting a long time? Take a piece of paper and a pencil and write down a word, sentence or picture of that waiting situation. When you are finished fold your paper.**

Ask each student to hold their folded paper as you pray: **God, we sometimes get so tired, achy, and grumpy waiting for Your guidelines and timing. You see everything we have written on these papers today. Please give us the courage and patience to give these things to You and to wait for Your timing and solutions, instead of rushing ahead with our own plans. Amen.**

Debriefing

Invite each student who wants to wait for God's timing to come and put their folded paper in the large envelope. When everyone who wants to place their folded paper in the envelope has done so, seal up the envelope & Pray: **Thank You Jesus, for promising to give us everything we need, *exactly* when we need it. Amen.**

Remember the power point:

Following God's plan helps us avoid conflicts.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ index cards
- ☐ pencils

Scripture Reminder

Invite students to share with the class their experiences from the past week. Ask: **Did you talk to someone who has waited for a long time to receive an answer to prayer or who is struggling with family conflicts? How did you encourage that person? What personal experience or Bible promise did you share that would help that person wait patiently on God's timing?**

Divide the students into pairs. Ask them to share with each other what kinds of conflicts might occur if they decided *not* to wait on God's timing in their lives. Direct each pair to read Psalm 40:1-3 and write out their favorite part on an index card. Ask them to be willing to call or e-mail each other and remind their partner of Psalm 40:1-3, and of their decision to wait on God's solutions for everything.

Remember the power point:

Following God's plan helps us avoid conflicts.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Pray for wisdom to wait on God to do things in His time.

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **Sarah laughs in disbelief. We can trust God to keep His promises.**

Notes

Student lesson

Playing the Waiting Game

Waiting. It's such a hard thing to do. Wait for Christmas. Wait for your birthday. Wait till school's out. Wait till you can drive. "Be patient," your parents say. That's because parents know that the results of impatience are usually a disaster.

Abraham and Sarah lived at a time when a large family was a great honor. But at the age of 75 they were still childless. By then they had probably given up on having children. Then God spoke to Abraham and told him he would be the father of a great nation. No doubt the promise gave Abraham and Sarah new hope, and the waiting began again. Yet even several years after the promise, no child was born.

"You have given me no children," Abraham finally said to God, "so a servant in my household will be my heir" (Genesis 15:3, NIV).

"This man will not be your heir," said God, "but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir." Then God showed to Abraham by night the starry sky and said to him, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." The Lord then promised to Abraham, "So shall your offspring be" (verses 4, 5, NIV).

So they waited and waited and waited some more. Ten years went by, and still there was no baby.

Abraham and Sarah finally ran out of patience. They decided to take matters into their own hands.

Sarah gave her servant Hagar to Abraham as another wife. But ignoring God's plan would have disastrous consequences. Even though he lived among heathens who thought nothing of marrying several wives, until now Abraham had not adopted their customs. Yet Abraham didn't ask God for counsel when deciding to take Hagar as another wife. He was desperate. He had run out of patience.

So he took Hagar as his second wife, and sure enough, it wasn't long until she was pregnant. Abraham might have thought that would solve his problem, but he was mistaken. Disregarding God's plan for his family was disastrous.

In no time at all wife number one and wife number two were not getting along. Hagar was expecting the child that Sarah couldn't have, and she probably reminded Sarah about it every chance she got.

Sarah ran to Abraham. "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering," she wailed. "I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me."

"Your slave is in your hands," he replied. "Do with her whatever you think best" (Genesis 16:5, 6, NIV).

Sarah was certainly angry. Jealous. Even mean. She mistreated Hagar, and Hagar ran away to the desert. Out there in the desert, near a spring, an angel found Hagar all alone.

"Go back to your mistress," he said, "and submit to her. . . .

"You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your misery" (verses 9, 11, NIV). So Hagar returned, and Ishmael was born. At long last Abraham had a child, a son whom he loved, and things seemed to settle down.

But just as a roof that's been fixed superficially and in haste keeps things dry for only a while, Abraham's family problems were far from over. It wasn't until several years later when Isaac was born to Sarah that Abraham found out how big a mistake he'd made. The conflicts between his two wives and their sons became unbearable and tore his family apart. If only Abraham had trusted God. If he had waited for Him to fulfill His promise in His own time, Abraham could have saved himself a lot of grief.

Abraham was desperate for the heir God had promised and charged ahead with his own plan for a son. It wasn't until he was an old man that he finally learned he could trust God with everything in his life, especially what was most precious to him—his family.

KEY REFERENCES

- Genesis 16
- *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 13, pp. 145-147
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 1, pp. 156-161
- Our Beliefs, nos. 7, 23, 22

POWER TEXT

"And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised" (Hebrews 6:15, NIV).

POWER POINT

Following God's plan helps us avoid conflicts.







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 32.

Sunday

READ Read Proverbs 3:5, 6 and this week's story, "Playing the Waiting Game."

CHOOSE Choose an object that symbolizes patience and write your power text on a piece of paper next to it. Begin to learn the power text.

PRAY Pray that you may wait patiently for God's plans.

Monday

READ Read Genesis 16:1-4.

SEARCH Search the newspaper and find a story in which people have chosen to solve a problem their way rather than God's way.

CLIP Clip out the story and write how the story would turn out if they solved the problem God's way.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for the people involved in the story you have found.

Tuesday

READ Read Genesis 16:5, 6.

THINK How could Sarah and Abraham have avoided having a conflict with Hagar? In what ways could they have solved the conflict with her?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write your responses.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for patience so that you may avoid conflicts.

Wednesday

READ Read Genesis 16:7-10.

THINK How do people run away from family problems?

SHARE Share Psalm 40:1-3 with someone who may be struggling with family conflicts.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for those who feel that they can't cope.

Thursday

READ Read Genesis 16:11-16.

CREATE Write a poem about how God solves conflicts.

THINK What was Hagar's experience after she met the angel?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God that He is willing to help us work through our problems.

Friday

READ Read Psalm 40:1-3.

SHARE Share the poem that you wrote yesterday with your family.

ACT Act out the story of Hagar and the angel.

DISCUSS Discuss how you can, as a family, be better at managing conflict.

REPEAT Say aloud the power text from memory.

PRAY Thank Jesus for giving you safe guidelines for solving conflicts.