# The Promised Baby

I CAN BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISES TO BE FULFILLED, BECAUSE GOD IS FAITHFUL.



**MEMORY VERSE**

**"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23).**

## Word of the Week—Fulfill:

To do something that is expected or has been promised. For example: He went out to the garden to fulfill his promise to water the plants.

This week's lesson is based on Genesis 15:1-6; 17; 18:1-16; 21:1-7; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 137-139; and *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 320-328. **Extra Reading:** *The Bible Story*, vol. 1, pp. 156-161.

SUNDAY

# Waiting, Waiting . . .

Time ticked slowly by . . . God had promised Abram and Sarai many descendants, but they were *still* waiting to cuddle a baby of their very own. Friends their age had become parents, grandparents, and some even great-grandparents. But still no baby came to Abram and Sarai. They waited.

When Lot and his family moved away, it must have been even harder to wait. Abram and Sarai now shared their household with their workers, instead of a family of their own. Abram wondered if it would always be that way—would a servant inherit everything God had given him? He asked God, "Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless?" (Genesis 15:2).

God answered him in an amazing way. We learned all about it in week 10—can you remember the shining promise? Discover it again in **Genesis 15:5.**

Abram rested under a canopy of twinkling stars in the nighttime silence.

"Abram believed the Lord. And the Lord accepted Abram's faith, and that faith made him right with God" (Genesis 15:6, ICB).

It's not easy to wait. But God promises more than just the end reward for us when we do. He kindly gave Abram a boost *while* he waited, and He says He will do that for you too.

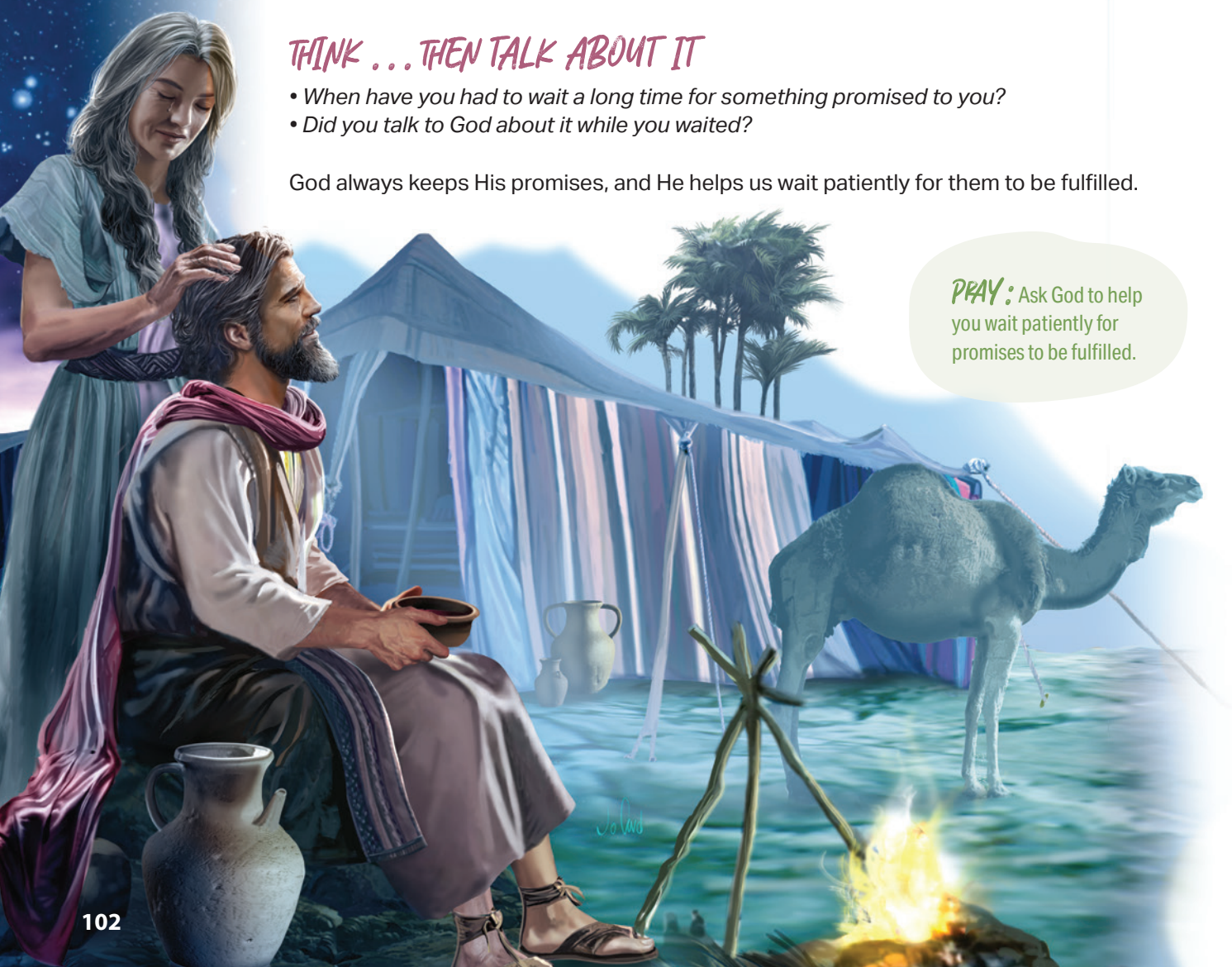
The Bible says, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23).

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *When have you had to wait a long time for something promised to you?*
- *Did you talk to God about it while you waited?*

God always keeps His promises, and He helps us wait patiently for them to be fulfilled.

**Pray:** Ask God to help you wait patiently for promises to be fulfilled.



MONDAY

# A New Name

God's promise to His friend Abram was very, very, *very* important. So important that God shared it *again*! Abram learned that the promise was part of something special called a covenant, in which God and he would make a promise to each other (Genesis 15). In Genesis 17 God's part of the covenant was His promise to make Abram the father of a great nation. Abram's part of the covenant was to love and obey God as his very best friend. To show that he understood how special the covenant was, Abram bowed facedown to the ground and reverently listened as God continued to speak. What else did God tell Abram? **Read Genesis 17:5.**

In Bible times names were chosen carefully, because the meaning of a name was important. It described the person or told something special about them. The name Abraham means "father of a great number," so when God changed Abram's name, it became a reminder that He would fulfill His promise.

Sarai also had a part in God's covenant, so He changed her name to mean princess. What was it? **Read Genesis 17:15**.

God knows our hearts, so when we get to heaven, He will give each of us a new name too. These new names will reflect our friendship with God and all we have been through.

God tells us that He will write our new name in two places: "I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it" (Revelation 2:17). And "for each there is a crown, bearing his own 'new name' " (Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy,* p. 646).

A white stone with your new name and a sparkling crown will be such precious gifts. We can patiently wait to receive them, for our loving God fulfills His promises.

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *What might your new name mean? Think about how God would describe your friendship with Him, or something in your heart that God would be pleased with.*

**Pray:** Thank God for the beautiful things He has promised to give you in heaven.

**Do:** Construct a crown, write your name on it, and decorate it. Alternatively, look for a small stone and write your name on it. Find out the meaning of your name, and the names of friends and family.



☐ TUESDAY

# Entertaining Strangers

The scorching midday sun drove Abraham into the cool of his tent. Glancing out the open doorway, he noticed three travelers approaching. Abraham had never seen them before, but without a second thought he leaped up from his mat and hurried outside to greet them. As was the custom, he bowed facedown to the ground before speaking politely to the leader of the little group.

"Sir, if you think well of me, please stay awhile with me, your servant. I will bring some water so all of you can wash your feet. You may rest under the tree. I will get some bread for you, so you can regain your strength. Then you may continue your journey" (Genesis 18:3-5, ICB).

Flashing Abraham a grateful smile, the leader quietly replied. What did he say? **Read Genesis 18:5.**

Leaving the dusty visitors to stretch out and rest in the shade of a spreading tree, Abraham rushed into the tent in search of Sarah. He quickly asked her to make lots of tasty bread. Meanwhile, he hurried out to get a tender calf for the servant to roast. Then Abraham grabbed a basin of water so the weary travelers could wash their dusty feet.

With everyone working together, the meal was soon ready. Abraham was delighted to share the best he had with his guests. Carrying steaming bowls of food, crusty bread, and cool milk, he served them himself.

When we share the best we have with strangers as Abraham did, we are sharing God's love in a special way.

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *If you had been one of the strangers, how would Abraham's kindness have made you feel?*
- *How friendly are you toward people you don't yet know?* **Read Proverbs 18:24** *for some encouraging advice.*

**Pray:** Pray for the courage to always be kind and hospitable to new people you meet.

**Service Challenge:** Think of people your family doesn't know very well. Plan to invite them over for a meal. Work with your mom or dad to plan a simple menu. Find ways to both show and tell them about God's great love.

**For You, Parents:** Be encouraged that God will enable and bless you when you share your home and heart with those who may need it (Luke 6:38). Your hospitality and kindness will also be a powerful example to your child.

WEDNESDAY

# Entertaining God

Abraham was a perfect host. As his guests ate, he stood close by, ready to serve them more food or fresh milk. He may have wondered where they had journeyed from and where they were going to, but he waited for them to finish their meal before asking.

The travelers, however, paused their eating to ask him a question of their own. "Where is Sarah your wife?" (Genesis 18:9), they asked.

Looking back at the tent, Abraham replied, "Here, in the tent" (Genesis 18:9).

One of the men responded, "I will certainly return to you about this time a year from now. At that time your wife Sarah will have a son" (Genesis 18:10, ICB).

Abraham's mind raced: how did the stranger know Sarah's name; how did he know she would have a baby; and how did he know it would be a boy?

Suddenly he realized this kind man was the Lord Himself! Disguised as a man, God had come to deliver the good news. What a privilege to be able to serve the God of heaven and two of His angels!

Imagine if Abraham had simply let the strangers stroll on by. He would have missed the excitement of knowing he would soon be a dad; he would have missed the chance to meet and serve God!

Almost 2,000 years later a Bible writer remembered Abraham's kindness and gave us some wise advice. *Read Hebrews 13:2.*

Just like Abraham, we may one day have the privilege of entertaining holy angels that look just like people. What a blessing that would be.

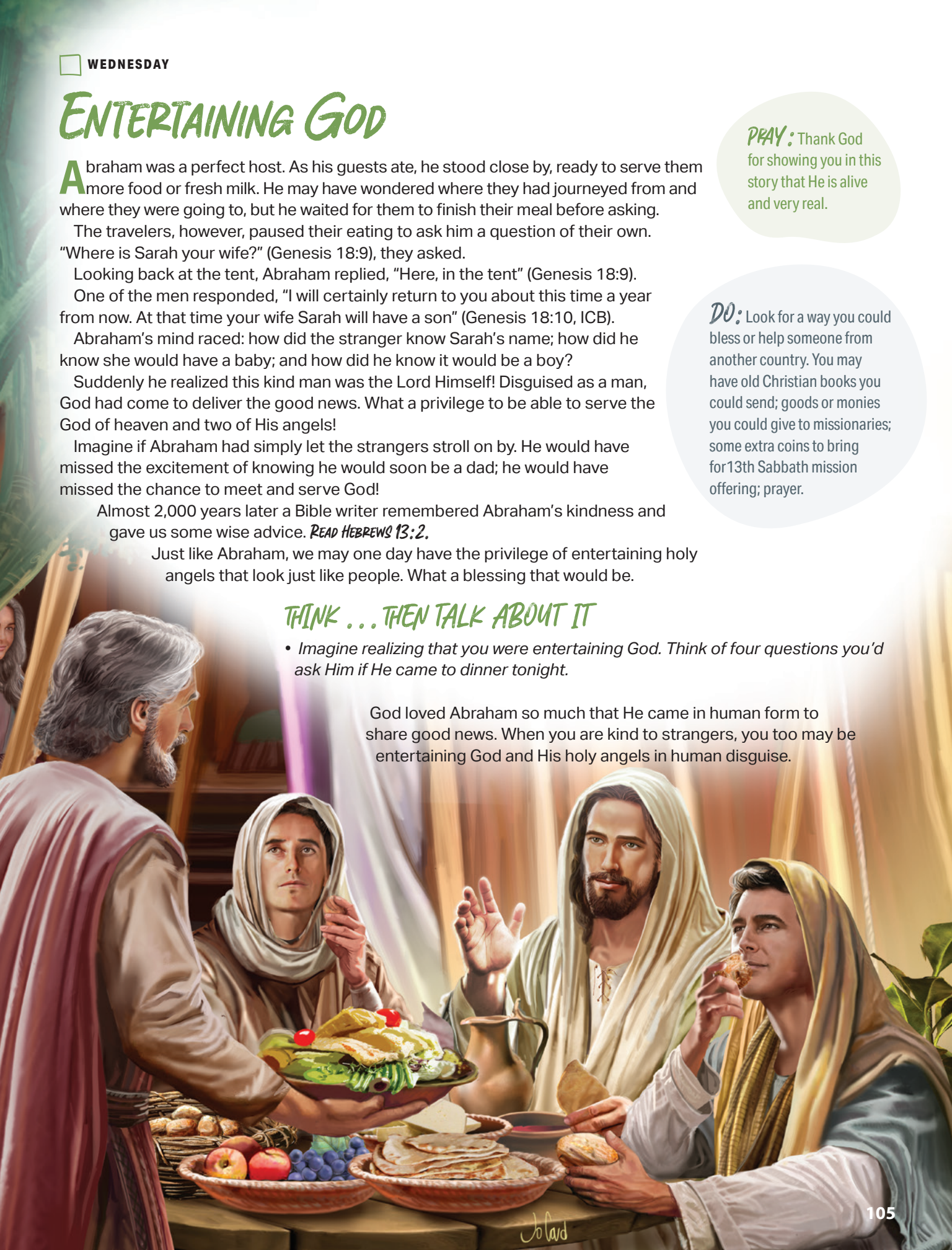
**PRAY:** Thank God for showing you in this story that He is alive and very real.

**DO:** Look for a way you could bless or help someone from another country. You may have old Christian books you could send; goods or monies you could give to missionaries; some extra coins to bring for13th Sabbath mission offering; prayer.

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *Imagine realizing that you were entertaining God. Think of four questions you'd ask Him if He came to dinner tonight.*

God loved Abraham so much that He came in human form to share good news. When you are kind to strangers, you too may be entertaining God and His holy angels in human disguise.



THURSDAY

# A Laugh and a Lie

Abraham and Sarah would have a son! The incredible news must have made Abraham's lonely heart nearly burst. But when Sarah heard the words of promise, she thought they sounded crazy! How could a 90-year-old woman ever have a baby? Impossible! And how could a very, very old man become a dad? Never! The very idea made Sarah laugh to herself.

No one *heard* her laugh, no one saw her laugh, but God knew about it. What did He say about her laugh? **Read Genesis 18:13.**

Filled with fear and shame at being found out, Sarah lied, "I did not laugh." The Lord responded kindly but seriously, "No, but you did laugh!" (Genesis 18:15).

Sarah's laugh and her lie must have saddened God, for His Word says that it is never good to lie (Proverbs 12:22). Sarah had been waiting 24 years after their arriving in Canaan for a baby to fulfill God's promise, and that's a long, long time to wait. Doubt had crept silently into Sarah's heart, and now it burst out as a laugh.

But the laughter didn't last. It was replaced by hope and joy as Sarah remembered God's question "Is anything too hard for the Lord? No! I will return to you at the right time a year from now. And Sarah will have a son" (Genesis 18:14, ICB). Yes, God would fulfill His promise. The time had come.

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *How did God know Sarah laughed?*
- *Have you ever felt fear and shame after you were caught lying? What did you do to make things right?*

Lying is no small thing to God. Did you know that God cannot lie (Hebrews 6:18), because He is truth (John 14:6)? When we make mistakes, as Sarah did, God understands and helps us to make things right. When our hearts feel weighed down, He can use that to help us tell the truth and say we're sorry. He sent Jesus to die for us so that He could forgive our mistakes and help us to do the right thing. *Nothing* is too hard for our God!

**Pray:** Praise God that nothing is too hard for Him. Ask Him to help you to always tell the truth.

**Do:** God answers our prayers in different ways: sometimes yes, sometimes no, and sometimes wait. Make Psalm 27:14, "Wait on the Lord," into a poster to remind you and your family to wait patiently for God's answers to your prayers.



**Parent Faith Talk:** Share a time you have waited for God's answer to a specific prayer.

**For You, Parents:** Be encouraged that God is right beside you when you work to instill in your children the importance of telling the truth (Isaiah 41:10).



FRIDAY

# A Baby Boy Fulfills the Promise

A sharp, loud cry pierced the silence. The baby boy was here! Happy shouts and praises erupted. Excitement rippled through the camp. God had fulfilled His promise! Sarah had given birth to a miracle baby at the grandmotherly age of 90. How old was Abraham when Isaac was born? **Read Genesis 21:5.**

Sarah lovingly wrapped her baby and snuggled him close. As she stroked his soft cheeks, happy laughter welled up from her heart. Only one short year before, Sarah had laughed in unbelief. Now she laughed with pure joy. "And Sarah said, 'God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me' " (Genesis 21:6).

God must have known this tiny baby would bring peals of happy laughter, for He had said, "And you shall call his name Isaac" (Genesis 17:19). The name Isaac means "to laugh."

Abraham must have gazed in wonder at this gift of happiness. This tiny son of promise was the first of Abraham's many descendants: the first twinkling star, the first tiny speck of dust. And 25 years of waiting for this shining star made him even more precious.

God fulfilled His promise, as He always does. For nothing is impossible for God. The Bible says, "Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You" (Jeremiah 32:17).

## Think . . . Then Talk About It

- *Think of a time a family member fulfilled a promise to you. How did you feel and what did you say?*
- *What promises has God made to you? Can you trust Him to fulfill them?*

God always fulfills the promises He makes to His people. We may have to wait a long time, but when a promise is finally fulfilled, we will appreciate it more.

## Friday Night

### Share and Praise

Invite family members to share times God has fulfilled promises or answered prayers in their lives. Sing praise songs to God, and hymn no. 100, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness," from *The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*.

### Family Journal

- Learning about Abraham and Sarah this week has taught me that . . .
- One thing I would like to ask God to help me with is . . .

### Pray

Thank God:

- For this beautiful story of how God fulfills His promises.
- That you can look forward to the promise of heaven and a new name.

### Do

Say your memory verse for your family. Talk about who might have said these words in this week's story, and why.



SABBATH SPECIAL

# The Miracle Bible

Mya Htet (a pseudonym) smiled as she listened to her teacher tell a Bible story. Mya Htet was in the eighth grade and had just arrived at the Taw Oo Adventist School (a pseudonym) in Myanmar. Her parents were Buddhists, and she had never heard such wonderful, true stories before.

As Mya Htet went to the prayer meetings and worship services, and as her teacher shared stories from the Bible, something started to change inside her heart.

It took time. Mya Htet's family did not want her to become a Christian. But one day, during a week of prayer program, Mya Htet stood and gave her heart to Jesus. She was then baptized. She didn't tell her parents, but they soon found out and were furious!

When Mya Htet went home, her parents demanded that she give up her new Christian beliefs. At first, they offered to give her whatever she wanted, if she would give up her faith in God. But when she refused, they got very angry. They beat her and locked her in a room.

While she was locked in the room, Mya Htet prayed to God and read the promises in her Bible. But when her family saw that she had a Bible, they grabbed it from her and began trying to tear it to pieces.

They pulled at the paper but somehow, the pages wouldn't tear! Confused, her parents ran over to the fireplace and threw the Bible into it. Mya Htet's horror turned to amazement when she saw that the Bible wouldn't burn!

Her parents couldn't believe their eyes, but they wouldn't give up. Full of anger, they grabbed the Bible out of the fire and threw it into a bucket of water. But when they pulled it out, there wasn't even a drop of water on the pages. Her parents saw they couldn't destroy her Bible, so they locked her again in the room.

When Mya Htet saw that her Bible hadn't been destroyed, her faith grew even stronger. She knew that God's promises were true. She would keep trusting Him! She prayed and waited patiently to see what God would do.

God is always faithful, and soon after, when her parents left the house, a kind relative came and unlocked the door. Quickly, Mya Htet grabbed a few belongings and ran to hide in a field until someone from the school came to pick her up. They drove her back to the school.

Some years later, Mya Htet became a teacher in an Adventist school. She loves to tell others how God's promises never fail.

Mya Htet's Miracle Bible. ASAP Ministries supports more than 90 Adventist mission schools and 700 local missionaries serving the marginalized and unreached in Southeast Asia.