

— POSSESSING —
THE LAND

by Cherie Noel

Possessing the Land - Student Manual

First Edition by Cherie Noel

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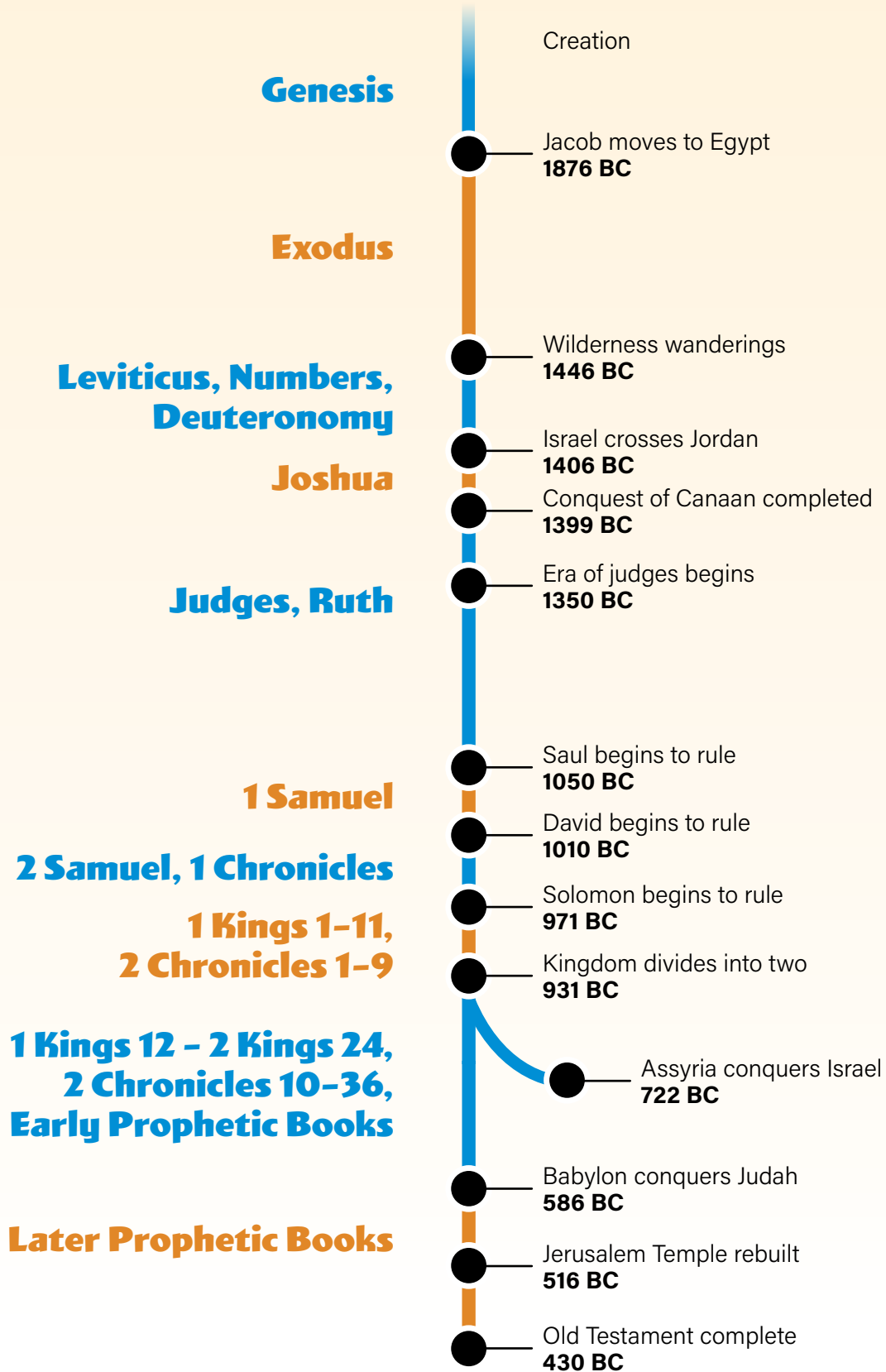
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Timeline of the Old Testament





LESSON 1

The Word of God

Vocabulary

- **The Bible** – The collection of 66 books inspired by God
- **Scripture** – Sacred writings; another name for the Bible
- **Prophet** – Someone who shares a spiritual message, often from God
- **Prophecy** – A truth said by a prophet; often about future events
- **Inspiration** – The way God worked through human writers to record Scripture; “God-breathed”
- **Testament** – A promise or set of promises; an agreement or covenant

1-A God's Miracle Book

Pick a book off your bookshelf, flip to the title page, and you probably won't see more than one or two authors. Most books are written within a few years by only a few authors.

But when you open your **Bible**, you're looking into a library of **Scripture**—a wealth of books, passages, and poems written by many different authors over 1,600 years. The people who wrote these words were shepherds, rulers, poets, priests, teachers, fishers, and soldiers. Some were educated, and some were not.

Despite so many authors, the Bible is unified. The books fit together well, and we find that a few important ideas come up again and again. In book after book, the Bible tells the same story—God is amazing, and He wants to build a relationship with us.

► So how did such a great library fall into our hands? Read **2 Peter 1:20-21**.

- In verse 20, Peter writes that no one made up the prophecies in Scripture.
- Instead, according to verse 21, how did the writers of Scripture speak?

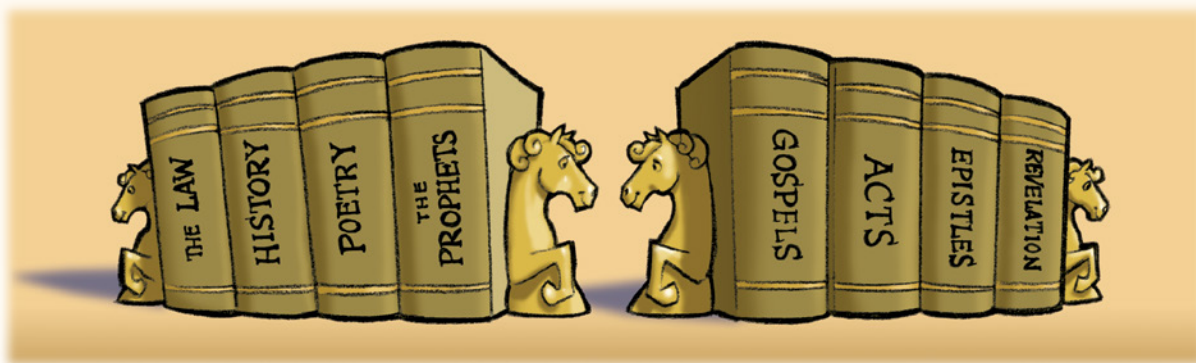
They spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The Bible seems like one story because it has one Author. Before humans wrote anything, God knew it all from the beginning. His Spirit worked through human writers to leave us these books. We call this idea **inspiration**.

- ▶ God's words are as reliable as God Himself. Complete the following table.

Verse	What does the verse say about God's Word?
Isaiah 40:8	<i>God's word will stand forever.</i> _____ _____
Matthew 24:35	<i>Heaven and earth could pass away, but God's words will not.</i> _____ _____
1 Peter 1:23	<i>The word of God is living and abiding.</i> _____ _____
After reading these verses, what do you think they say about Scripture?	
<i>It will last forever.</i> _____ _____ _____	

1-B The Beginning and the End



Few things spoil a book more than skipping to the end before you've read the middle. But with the Bible, it helps to know where the story is going. This library of Scripture spreads out like a vast landscape, and sometimes we need a good map.

All of Scripture follows the same big story—how humans turn from God, but God reaches out to us anyway. At the end of time, God will make all things right. So as you read through the ups and downs of the Old Testament, don't forget that there's a good ending.

► Look near the beginning of your Bible for the table of contents, which lists all 66 books.

What is the name of the first book?

Genesis

A book of beginnings

What is the name of the last book?

Revelation

A book about how God will reveal Himself at the end of time

Look up these verses in the first book and complete the sentences.

In the beginning . . .

1:1	God creates the heavens and the earth _____.
1:5	God calls the light " day _____," and He calls the darkness " night _____."
1:16	God makes the sun and the moon so we would have light. He also makes the other stars _____.
3:1	The tricky serpent _____ lies to Eve. We learn later that this was Satan, the devil.
3:19	Because Adam and Eve sinned, people now suffer and die. We all return to dust/ground _____.
3:23	God sends the first people away from Him, out from the Garden of Eden.

Look up these verses in the last book and complete the sentences.

In the end . . .

21:1	The writer John sees a new heaven and earth _____.
21:25	The new city of God has no more night _____.
21:23	The new city does not need the sun or moon _____ because God Himself shines there.
20:10	The devil who deceived people is thrown into a lake of fire _____. God defeats him forever.
21:4	There is no more death, sorrow / mourning / crying, or pain _____.
22:4	The people in heaven finally get to see His/God's face _____.

1-C Exploring the Word

The Teacher of Our Hearts

The Bible is sometimes confusing. The books are long, and they use a lot of words we have to look up. But with patience, hard work, and some help from others, we can learn so much from Scripture.

► Thankfully, Christians have plenty of help. We have teachers, family, and leaders from our church, but there's also someone else. Read **John 14:25-26**.

◉ Jesus explains that when He is gone, the Father will send the **Comforter/Helper/Advocate** who is the Holy Spirit. (v. 26)

◉ The Spirit will teach Jesus' followers **all things** and help them remember what Jesus said to them. (v. 26)

► Read **1 Corinthians 2:9-13**, which explains more about the Holy Spirit.

◉ Paul explains that the Spirit helped him understand things about God that no one could ever imagine. God's Spirit sees everything, even the **depths/deep things** of God. (v. 10)

◉ Can anyone understand spiritual things without first receiving the Spirit? Yes No

► Read **1 Corinthians 3:16** and **Romans 8:9**. If we trust in Christ and receive the Spirit, where does the Spirit live? **Inside us**

The Value of Scripture

► What kinds of things do Christians learn from the Spirit? Look up the following passages and complete the table.

Psalm 119:11	We can remember God's Word so we do not <u>sin</u> against God.
Proverbs 1:1-3	What are some of the things we can learn from the Book of Proverbs? <u>Answers will vary. Wisdom, instruction, understanding, fairness</u>
John 20:30-31	Why did John record Jesus' teachings and miracles? So readers would believe that Jesus is the <u>Christ/Messiah</u> , the Son of God—and therefore have life through Him.

- ▶ In **2 Timothy 3:15-17**, the writer Paul explains the value of Scripture. Using these verses, list at least four of the ways that the Bible can help us grow.

Answers will vary. Scripture can give wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ. Scripture is profitable for doctrine/teaching, rebuke/reproof, correction, and instruction/training, all to prepare us completely for every good work.

Possessing the Land

- ▶ Think of one or two big questions you have about the Bible. Write them below, and make time in the next few weeks to research them or ask your teacher.



- ▶ Ask your teacher or another Christian adult about any advice for studying the Bible. Write your notes below.



LESSON 2

Sin and Redemption

Vocabulary

- **Creation** – Everything God brought into being; the universe
- **Sin** – The decision to break God’s law; turning away from God
- **The Fall** – Humanity’s turn from God toward sin and death; the results of the first sin
- **Redeem** – To buy back what was lost

2-A Creation and the Fall

Scripture tells the story of its Author, God Himself. The Bible explains how God revealed Himself to the world—most importantly, through the person of Jesus Christ. Everything in Scripture points us to Jesus in some way.

- ▶ Read **Genesis 1:26–31** and complete the following.
 - ◉ After God finishes creating the rest of the world and all the animals, who does God make? (v. 26) **Man/mankind/humanity**
 - ◉ God makes Adam and Eve in His own image, as **male** and **female**. (v. 27)
 - ◉ What does God bless them to do? (v. 28) **Multiply and rule/subdue the earth**

 - ◉ God gives them all of **creation** to enjoy, and He knows that everything He made is very **good**. (v. 31) Adam, Eve, and God live in peace and happiness together for a time, but this does not last.
- ▶ Read **Genesis 2:16–17**. What does God say would happen if Adam ate fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? **Adam would die.**



► Before long, Satan appears as a serpent and tempts Eve to eat the fruit. Read **Genesis 3:1-8** and complete the following table.

Verse 1	The tricky serpent asks the woman if God _____ really said she should not eat from every tree in the garden.
Verses 2-3	Eve says that she can eat from every tree except the one in the middle of the garden. She says that if she eats the fruit or even touches it, she will die _____.
Verses 4-5	The serpent tells her that she will not surely/certainly die _____. He says that God doesn't want Adam and Eve to understand good and evil.
Verse 6	So Eve looks at the fruit and chooses to eat it. She then gives some of the fruit to her husband/Adam _____, and he eats it, as well.
Verses 7-8	Adam and Eve are ashamed, and they cover themselves with clothing made of fig leaves _____. They hide when the Lord God comes to talk with them.

Adam and Eve chose to break God's rule. Instead of trusting God's word, they listened to Satan's lies. Instead of enjoying God's gifts, they wanted the one thing they shouldn't have. Because of this decision, they would face the terrible consequences of **sin**. We call this moment **the Fall**, when people first turned away from God.

2-B The Results of Sin

Adam and Eve did not just hurt themselves. Every person throughout history has suffered because of sin—from Adam and Eve’s first children all the way down to us today. In Genesis 3 and 4, we read about some of these awful results.

► Read **Genesis 3:6-13** and mark the correct ending to the following sentences.

When God walks through the garden, Adam and Eve . . .		
<input type="checkbox"/> rush to meet Him, happy that He has come to speak with them.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> hide behind some trees, out of guilt and fear.	<input type="checkbox"/> prove to Him that they are just as smart and powerful as He is.

When God asks Adam if he ate fruit from the forbidden tree, Adam . . .		
<input type="checkbox"/> explains that the fruit helped him become a better husband.	<input type="checkbox"/> says that he’s sorry for disobeying God’s command.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> blames the woman God gave him.

When God asks Eve to explain what she did, Eve . . .		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> blames the serpent for lying to her.	<input type="checkbox"/> says that she’s happier now that she understands ideas like good and evil.	<input type="checkbox"/> says that she’s sorry for ignoring God’s warning about the fruit.

► Look ahead to **Genesis 3:16-24**. Here God explains to Adam and Eve the results of their sin. In the table below, match the verses to the results they describe.

Verse 16	Verses 17-18	Verse 19	Verses 23-24
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Verses	Results of Sin
23-24	People could no longer live in the Garden of Eden.
17-18 (19)	Adam would need to work very hard to grow plants or crops.
16	Eve would bear children only through pain and suffering. Men and women would try to control each other.
19	People would die and return to dust one day.

▶ Because of their sin, Adam and Eve felt things they never had before. Based on what you've read, how do you think they felt as they talked with God?

◉ Feelings toward God: **Answers will vary; fear, guilt, shame, sorrow**

◉ Feelings toward each other: **Anger, blame**

▶ Read the story of Cain and Abel in **Genesis 4:1-12**.

◉ Cain doesn't make the right kind of offering to God, and God refuses it. How does Cain feel about that? (v. 5) **He is angry/ashamed.**

◉ So God tells Cain to control himself and guard against sin (vv. 6-7). But what does Cain do instead? (v. 8) **He kills his brother.**



▶ But this doesn't end Adam and Eve's story. According to **Genesis 4:25**, Adam and Eve have another son named **Seth**. His children would learn to pray to God.

2-C The Hope of Redemption

Even though God cast Adam and Eve out of the Garden, He had a plan to bring people back to Himself. Humanity was trapped in sin, and no one could do enough good things to earn a way back into the Garden. So God planned to **redeem** His children. He would pay the price of their sin so they could know Him and walk with Him again.

▶ Turn back to **Genesis 3:15**. Here God curses the serpent that lied to Eve.

◉ The snake and the woman would be enemies. Their **offspring / seed** would also be enemies. Someone would injure the serpent's head, and the serpent would only bruise Him on His **heel**.

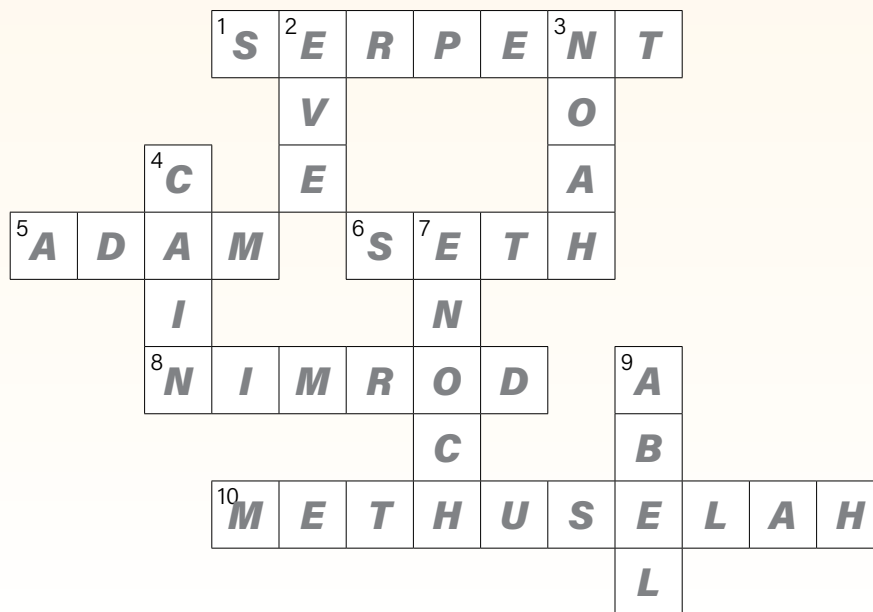
At first, Genesis 3:15 sounds like a promise that a lot of people won't like snakes. But this is not about snakes and people—this is a prophecy about Satan and Jesus.

One day, Jesus Christ would be born to a human mother and grow up to destroy Satan's power. Satan might be allowed to hurt Him a bit, but the serpent would not win.

People from Genesis 1-10

► Look up each verse below and write the name of the person described.

Across	Down
<p>1. Genesis 3:1 The creature who lied to the first woman</p> <p>5. Genesis 2:7, 20 The first man, made by God from dust</p> <p>6. Genesis 4:25-26 Adam and Eve's third son, whose children followed God</p> <p>8. Genesis 10:8-9 A mighty hunter who built many cities after the Great Flood</p> <p>10. Genesis 5:27 A man who lived 969 years—longer than anyone else in history</p>	<p>2. Genesis 3:20 The first woman and therefore the mother of everyone born since</p> <p>3. Genesis 6:13 The man God told to build an ark and help save people and animals from the Great Flood</p> <p>4. Genesis 4:1, 8 The first son and the first murderer</p> <p>7. Genesis 5:24 A man that walked with God before being taken away</p> <p>9. Genesis 4:2 A shepherd and the second son of Adam and Eve</p>



Possessing the Land

If you have trusted Jesus to forgive you for your sins, you don't need to be controlled by anger, guilt, or fear. God has redeemed you back to Himself. If you do something bad, you can run to God, ask His forgiveness, and live like His child again.

- ▶ Is there ever a good reason to blame others for something we've done wrong? Yes No
- ▶ Is there ever a good reason to hurt others with our anger? Yes No
- ▶ What should you do when someone tells you that you've done something bad?

- ◉ If I believe that I've done wrong, I should ***Answers will vary.*** _____

- ◉ If I don't believe I've done something wrong, I should _____



LESSON 3

Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac

Vocabulary

- **Hebrews** – God’s chosen people; later known as Israelites or Jews
- **Faith** – A belief in something we cannot see or prove; trust in God
- **Covenant** – A binding agreement between two or more people; a promise
- **Famine** – A time when many people have very little food
- **Sacrifice** – To give up something, often to serve or worship God
- **Altar** – A place to offer sacrifices; often a stone mound or table

Humanity fell into sin, but God had a plan to redeem people back to Himself. He chose to send Jesus into the world through one special nation. These chosen people were called **Hebrews**. Later on, they were known as *Israelites* or *Jews*.

Early in the Book of Genesis, this nation did not exist yet. God would build them up through just a few people who were willing to trust Him.

3-A The Call of Abraham

► God chose a man named Abraham to be the father of this new nation. Read **Genesis 12:1-7** and fill in the blanks below.

- Abraham was a wealthy man. He was 75 years old and had many servants and animals. What does God tell him to do? (v. 1) Leave his country and father’s house to go to a land that God would show him

- Does God tell Abraham right away where he needed to go? Yes No

To follow God, Abraham needed to have **faith**. He needed to trust God for something he couldn’t see or feel yet. He had to jump before he knew where he would land.

- God offered Abraham a **covenant**—that is, a promise or agreement. God told Abraham that he and his children would be blessed in great ways. Complete the parts of the covenant below.

Verse	The Promise
Genesis 12:1	God will show Abraham a land _____.
Genesis 12:2	God will make from Abraham a great nation _____.
Genesis 12:3	God will bless those who bless _____ Abraham, and also curse those who curse _____ Abraham.
Genesis 12:3	Because of Abraham and his descendants, all the peoples of Earth will be blessed _____.
And later . . .	
Genesis 15:4–5	Through Abraham’s own son, God will give him many descendants—just like the stars _____ in the sky.
Genesis 15:18	God will give Abraham’s descendants a land between Egypt’s river and the great river called Euphrates _____.

- Look at **Genesis 15:6**. Why did the Lord call Abraham righteous? ***Abraham believed in the Lord. He trusted what God said.***

3-B Journeys of Abraham and Sarah

- On the next page is a map of the Middle East. This shows some of the places that Abraham and Sarah went during their lifetime. Complete the map by following these instructions:
1. On the western side of the map is the largest body of water, **colored blue**. Label this the **Mediterranean Sea**.
 2. There is a **large river** flowing into the Mediterranean Sea from the south, in the country of Egypt. Label this the **Nile River**.
 3. The **black dots** mark the location of cities. Look for the city that is farthest north and label it **Haran**.
 4. Near Haran are the two rivers called the Tigris and the Euphrates. Follow them both southeast until they meet and flow into each other. Draw a dot near this area to mark a city and label it **Ur**.
 5. The **green triangle** near the Mediterranean Sea is a mountain. Label it **Mt. Moriah**.
 6. There is one city a little north of Mt. Moriah. Label it **Bethel**.



- ▶ Read the verses below and fill in the blanks. Then draw four lines on the map to show the routes taken by Abraham and Sarah.

Verse	Route
Genesis 11:31	Abraham's father took the family from Ur to Haran _____.
Genesis 12:7-8	After hearing God's call, Abraham and Sarah journeyed southwest toward Canaan. God said that He would give this land to Abraham's descendants. So Abraham camped east of the city of Bethel _____.
Genesis 12:10	During a famine , Abraham decided to stay in Egypt _____.
Genesis 13:1-3	Later, Abraham and Sarah left Egypt to travel through the Negev region. Once again, they set their tents near Bethel _____.

- ▶ After a while, Abraham and his nephew Lot separated their flocks and went different directions. Abraham chose to remain in Canaan, and God appeared to him again. Read **Genesis 13:14-17** and summarize God's promise to Abraham.

God would give Abraham's many descendants everything that Abraham could see to the north, south, east, and west.

3-C God Provides for Isaac

Abraham and Sarah waited a long time before God fulfilled His promise of a son. When Sarah was about 90 years old, she gave birth to a baby boy. Abraham named him *Isaac*, which means “laughter.”

- Even though God had finally given Abraham and Sarah a son, He had not finished testing their faith. Read **Genesis 22:1-19** and use the words below to complete the story.



Abraham	altar	angel	Isaac	knife	lamb	Moriah	ram	wood
---------	-------	-------	-------	-------	------	--------	-----	------

God chose to test Abraham's trust in Him. God told Abraham to take his son Isaac to the land of Moriah and offer him as a sacrifice on one of the mountains there. Killing your children is wrong, so Abraham may have been confused. But he chose to obey anyway.

Abraham and Isaac traveled for three days before reaching the mountain. They started to walk up, leaving behind their donkey with the servants. Isaac carried wood, while Abraham held the fire and the knife. Isaac asked his father where they would find a lamb to offer. Abraham replied that God would provide one.

When they reached the place, Abraham bound Isaac and laid him on the altar and the wood. Even though Isaac was his very own son, Abraham picked up the knife to kill him. But an angel of the Lord called out to Abraham and stopped him. Abraham had proven that he feared God and would give up anything for Him.

Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in a nearby thicket. God had provided His own sacrifice to take Isaac's place.

► Many years later, Abraham sent a servant back to his homeland to find a wife for Isaac. The servant promised to do everything he could to bring a woman back, so long as she was willing. Read **Genesis 24:10-22** and answer the questions.

- The servant wanted God to show him which woman would be a good wife for Isaac. What did the servant hope this woman would do? (vv. 13-14)

Offer water to the servant as well as his camels

- Who showed kindness to the servant? (v. 15) ***Rebekah***
 - What did the servant give her as thanks? (v. 22) ***A large gold ring and two bracelets***
-



- Look ahead to **verse 58**. Did Rebekah decide to go and marry Isaac? Yes No
- Read **verses 62-67**. Was Isaac happy to meet Rebekah? Yes No

Possessing the Land

Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and the servant all showed great faith to do what God wanted them to do. Like everyone else, they sinned and made mistakes, but they trusted God to fulfill what He promised.

► Write one way your faith is being tested right now. How can you show that you trust God?

Answers will vary.
