

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
Lower Elementary		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: God loves families of all kinds.</p> <p>PROMISING FRIENDSHIPS: Kids watch a video clip in which unlikely characters form a family group.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles</p> <p>SUPPLIES: None</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: DVD player and TV, <i>Charlotte's Web</i> or <i>Lady and the Tramp</i></p>
Upper Elementary		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: God's love makes your love real.</p> <p>FAITHFULLY FUN FRIENDSHIPS FROM GOD: Kids watch a video clip in which characters meet new people and quickly become good friends.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: None</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: DVD player and TV, <i>Because of Winn Dixie</i> or <i>Bridge to Terabithia</i></p>
All Kids		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: God chooses us to do amazing things.</p> <p>GOD'S PERFECT PICKS: Kids watch a video clip in which unexpected and amazing events change characters' lives.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: None</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: DVD player and TV, <i>Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory</i> or <i>The Polar Express</i></p>



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content. Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find a downloadable Family Page for this rotation's story filled with ideas for families to use to explore this story and live out their faith at home.

Workshop Focus: God loves families of all kinds.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids, it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit www.sparksundayschool.org to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Isaac and Rebekah Storytelling

Gather in a circle, and begin when everyone arrives. **Welcome to Video. Today, we're going to talk about the story of Isaac and Rebekah, and God's promise to make a big family beginning with Isaac. What is life like in a big family, either from your own experience or from your guesses? How would it be to have a brother or sister 15 years older than you?** Allow time for kids to answer. **Isaac and Rebekah are one of the first families of the Bible. This one is interesting because God promised Isaac's dad, Abraham, that he would have many children and grandchildren. Now, that promise is about to come true through Isaac and Rebekah. It seems to be a sure thing that God loves families.**

What's life like in your family? What do you do for fun? What makes you laugh as a family? Allow a few shared responses.

Today's story about Isaac and Rebekah shows us God's love of family. This new family of Rebekah, Isaac, and their kids will lead to a bigger and bigger family. They will all be God's people, and they will all be important. Let's read the story.

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bible

Supplies
None

Read the story from the Spark Story Bible. Have everyone follow along and point out his or her favorite pictures.

What do you like about this story? What is surprising? What seems kind of weird? What seems kind of nice? Allow kids time to respond.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Promising Friendships

Set Up: Preview and select the DVD clip you would like to use. Collect the additional supplies for the video you will be showing. Set up the TV and DVD player in your space, making sure that everyone in the room will be able to see it. If desired, prepare a snack for the kids to enjoy while they watch the DVD. *Before serving any food, check with caregivers for kids with food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.*

Video Option 1: *Charlotte's Web* (1973, G, animated)

Start cue: (Chapter 4, 22:08) The sun is rising at the farm. Charlotte begins to sing "Chin Up" to Wilbur.

End cue: (Chapter 6, 41:48) The people come to see Wilbur, and the photographer says, "Hey pig, Some Pig, look this way."

Scene set-up: Wilbur and Charlotte become great friends and part of the barn family.

Activity Instructions for *Charlotte's Web*

Move to the area where you will watch the video, and invite kids to settle in. **Today, we're spending time thinking about the story of Isaac and Rebekah, and the love God had for their family. Remember that God made a promise to Abraham that he would have many, many children and grandchildren. So far, he has Isaac, but he's about to have some grandchildren in this story. It's an exciting time, and it's clear that God loves families.**

What do you think would be God's idea of a good family? What kind of family would God love the most? Allow time for kids to respond. **The truth is, God takes each of us as we are in whatever family we have. God loves us all.**

In *Charlotte's Web*, Wilbur, the pig will end up promising to take care of Charlotte's family. They become best friends, and by the end, Wilbur demonstrates that love. How does it feel to have someone love you, no matter what? Allow time for kids to respond. **It is well worth it to try to love people the way you want to be loved. Remembering that God loves you and your family makes it easier. Keep that in mind as we watch this clip.**

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Option 1: *Charlotte's Web*
DVD player and TV

Option 2: *Lady and the Tramp*
DVD player and TV

Show the clip using the start and stop cues above.

After the clip, discuss the scene using these questions or your own. **How do a pig and a spider become best friends? What makes their friendship special?** Allow time for kids to respond. **How often do you stand up for your friends? What can you do to show your friends you love them without getting all mushy gushy?** Allow thoughtful answers.

Wilbur had a family of spiders to watch over and God has a group of people to watch over in the story of Isaac and Rebekah. God loves families and spends a lot of time in the Bible reminding people about that love. Remember that God loves families, and keep that love in your heart at all times.

Video Option 2: *Lady and the Tramp* (1955, G, animated)

Start cue: (Chapter 9, 35:21) Lady is being carried into the shop where she will be fitted with her muzzle.

End cue: (Chapter 14, 49:41) The sun sets at the end of a perfect time together.

Scene set-up: Tramp tries to convince Lady that life away from her family is the better way to live. In the end, Tramp becomes part of Lady's family.

Activity Instructions for *Lady and the Tramp*

Move to the area where you will watch the video, and invite kids to settle in.

Today, we're talking about living God's way or another way. God loves families. It's obvious from the story about Isaac and Rebekah. They are the beginning of a new group of God's chosen people. They are part of a large tribe. Since God loves families, they will have kids and their kids will be important.

What do you do when you love someone? What things do you or other people say to people they love? What things do they do for them? Allow time for kids to respond. **When God chooses a family to love, what happens to other families? How much love can God offer at one time?** Allow time for kids to respond.

Speaking of love, there's an old love story that shows how two very different creatures can fall in love and end up together forever. Let's watch *Lady and the Tramp* and think about how positive love can be for all of us.

Show the clip using the start and stop cues above.

Following the clip, discuss the scene using these questions or your own. **How different were the lives of Lady and Tramp? What would happen if Lady went on the road with Tramp? How long would she survive on the street? In the end of this story, Tramp ends up a proud house dweller instead of being out on the street. Like Lady and the Tramp, the story of Isaac and Rebekah is the story of acceptance. God offers them love in the form of a family. When we see that God loves this family, we know that God loves all families.**

How can you show love for your family this week? How can you let God know how much you love your family? Allow time for kids to respond.

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received them, and come together for Wrap Up.

Thanks for your thoughts and your attention today. I hope that knowing God loves your family makes you feel really good. That love will be something you experience again and again. God's love for us never stops, no matter what!

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Make the shape of a heart with your hands by putting your thumbs down and together and your pointer fingers together. Hold that over your heart and remember God loves families. Hold it above and think of people in your family. Hold it down low and remember God loves you. Amen.

Workshop Focus: God's love makes your love real.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids, it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit www.sparksondayschool.org to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Isaac and Rebekah Storytelling

Gather in a circle, and begin when everyone has arrived. **Welcome to Video. Today, we're talking about the story of Isaac and Rebekah. Now, it's probably not called a love story very often—and I wouldn't want that to gross you out—but there is love in this story, and God's love makes your love real. It's like you can't have one without the other. We love because God loves us. We discover that in the story of Isaac and Rebekah. How easy or hard is it for you to say, "I love you" to someone important in your life? Is there something you would rather say? How often do you say "I love you"?** Allow time for responses. Make it clear that any answer is acceptable.

Let's read the story of Isaac and Rebekah and see if we can feel the love.

Read the story Rebekah and Isaac out loud. Read every other section in unison. Have a volunteer read the rest. Make sure you give time for people to add a sticker.

How do you think God feels about Isaac and Rebekah? What's God's reaction to the news that they will get married? How do they know God loves them? Allow time for kids to respond.

Spark Resources
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
None

Today, we'll watch a video clip that helps us think about God's love and about keeping it real.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Faithfully Fun Friendships from God

Set Up: Preview and select the DVD clip you would like to use. Collect the additional supplies for the video you will be showing. Set up the TV and DVD player in your space, making sure that everyone in the room will be able to see it. If desired, prepare a snack for the kids to enjoy while they watch the DVD. *Before serving any food, check with caregivers for kids with food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.*

Video Option 1: *Because of Winn Dixie* (2005, PG)

Start cue: (Chapter 1, 00:00) Beginning of the movie. Opal is pitching.

End cue: (Chapter 6, 19:26) Winn Dixie hops up to look in the pet store window.

Scene set-up: Opal meets Winn Dixie for the first time and offers him love that no one else will.

Activity Instructions for *Because of Winn Dixie*

Move to the area where you will watch the video, and invite kids to settle in.

Sometimes, one thing can change our whole life. That's the story behind the story of God's promise to Abraham as it comes true in the story of Isaac and Rebekah. Children. Many of them. And grandchildren. All sorts of them. God's one promise of children changed everything. God's love for families shines in the middle of all that change. God's love makes the love for others real.

When Opal meets Winn Dixie in the grocery store, something amazing happens. Her whole life is different. It's almost like Winn Dixie was just waiting to teach Opal a thing or two. Well, you'll see. Watch this clip and be ready to tell me who's in charge.

Show the clip using the start and stop cues above.

After the clip, ask some questions to make connections between the video and the story of Isaac and Rebekah. **What kind of love do Winn Dixie and Opal seem to share? Is it conditional or unconditional? Why?** Allow kids time to respond. **Opal says Winn Dixie gave her all of her great adventures. What would it be like to feel that way about God? How would other people react if you said, "Everything fun in my life comes from God"?** Allow time for kids to respond.

Like Winn Dixie, God leads people to new experiences to help them understand something about themselves. God uses relationships to put people back together when they feel broken, and God doesn't ask for anything in return.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Option 1: *Because of Winn Dixie*

DVD player and TV

Option 2: *Bridge to Terabithia*

DVD player and TV

Winn Dixie didn't really ask for much either. What can you give away in a loving way this week without expecting someone to give you something in return?

Allow thoughtful answers.

Isaac and Rebekah were given great news from God. Even through the struggles they faced as a family, God's love for them made their love for each other real. God loves families!

Video Option 2: *Bridge to Terabithia* (2007, PG)

Start cue: (Chapter 4, 14:10) The camera pans to show Jess drawing. Leslie looks over her seat and offers him gum.

End cue: (Chapter 6, 33:44) Jess imagines their kingdom for the first time and asks, "What are we going to call this place?" Leslie smiles and says, "Terabithia."

Scene set-up: As Jess and Leslie create an imaginary world, they help each other through their own difficult situations.

Activity Instructions for *Bridge to Terabithia*

Move to the area where you will watch the video, and invite kids to settle in. **Isaac and Rebekah didn't know each other until just before they got married. They only had a little time to get to know each other before they were married forever. A lot can happen in a short time. We can see that when God puts two people together, good things happen. God loves families, and this story shows that. If you were Isaac or Rebekah, what would you be planning to do in the future?** Allow thoughtful answers.

In *Bridge to Terabithia*, Jess meets Leslie in the fall, and they quickly become best friends. They create an imaginary village that is just for them. Like Isaac and Rebekah, Jess and Leslie feel like they have a special blessing over them. As in many Old Testament stories, tough times happen and people struggle. But in the time they have, Jess and Leslie have great fun. Let's watch a clip and see how it connects with our story today.

Show the clip using the start and stop cues above.

After the clip, ask some questions to make connections between the video and the story of Isaac and Rebekah. **How is Jess and Leslie's imagined world like the Bible story?** (*It's amazing. It's sort of like an old Bible story.*) **How important is the friendship of Jess and Leslie? How is that different from Isaac and Rebekah, especially since they hardly met before their marriage?** Allow time for kids to respond. **What do you hope happens to both sets of friends?** Accept thoughtful responses.

When we see the love of friends and the love of Isaac and Rebekah, we see the results of what God can do for us. God's love makes our love real.

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Thanks for your participation today. I hope you know a little bit more about the story, and I hope you feel confident that God loves you. That love from God makes your love for others real.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Have everyone link arms and rock back and forth as they repeat this prayer.

Thank you, God, for loving me.

Thank you, God, for teaching me to love.

Thank you for helping me to see that all love comes from you.

Amen.

Workshop Focus: God chooses us to do amazing things.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

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Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Isaac and Rebekah Storytelling

Gather in a circle, and begin when all kids have arrived. **When I was little, I wouldn't have known many people who needed help or visitors, but that doesn't mean they weren't there. I just didn't know about them. This story reminds us that there are people in need at all times. Isaac and Rebekah, surprised by God, found themselves beginning a family and having the responsibility for a lot of people. It must have been shocking at times, fun most of the time, and scary once in a while. How would you react to hearing God's voice telling you what to do? Would you be scared? Would you be excited?** Allow time for kids to respond.

Let's listen to the story about Isaac and Rebekah, and think about what God has done for them.

Read the story aloud from the Spark Story Bible. When finished, pair up the older and younger kids to select a sticker for the Spark Bible. Maybe they'll want to mark a spot that amazes them.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bible
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

None

What amazed you about the story? What seemed really normal? What will you forget soon? Allow time for kids to respond. **Isaac and Rebekah are an important Bible family. They are grandparents to the 12 tribes of Israel. Lots of what we talk about now goes all the way back to them.**

Today, we're going to watch a video that reminds us that God chooses us to do amazing things.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

God's Perfect Picks

Set Up: Preview and select the DVD clip you would like to use. Collect the additional supplies for the video you will be showing. Set up the TV and DVD player in your space, making sure that everyone in the room will be able to see it. If desired, prepare a snack for the kids to enjoy while they watch the DVD. *Before serving any food, check with caregivers for kids with food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.*

Video Option 1: *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* (1971, G)

Start cue: (Chapter 33, 1:19:05) Willy is staring ahead and says, "I know what you're thinking . . ."

End cue: (Chapter 40, 1:38:50) Charlie gives Willy a hug and says, "He lived happily ever after."

Scene set-up: Charlie is chosen to be new owner of the candy factory.

Activity Instructions for *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*

Isaac and Rebekah are chosen to be the next generation after Abraham to create a new generation of people. It's amazing to think of how important they really are. Because of them, we know that God's promises come true. We know God can make great things happen, and we know that God chooses us to do amazing things. That's a big deal.

Charlie Bucket in *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* is chosen to be the next owner. He has one chance after another to make a mistake, but in the end, everything works out amazingly well.

Isaac and Rebekah end up at the very beginning of a new wave of immigration and growth for their people. Just because they have children, they become important Bible people. Just like Willy Wonka becomes famous "just because" he sells candy. By learning about all these people, we can know that God chooses well. When God chooses you, it's to do amazing things. Let's watch the clip to see how Charlie is chosen.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Option 1: *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*
DVD player and TV

Option 2: *The Polar Express*
DVD player and TV

Show the clip using the start and stop cues above.

Following the clip, discuss the scene using these questions or your own. **How did Charlie last longer than the other children? What do you think of Willy Wonka? How do you feel about Charlie winning the big prize?** Allow time for kids to respond. **What do you think will happen to Charlie in the future? Will he be successful? Will he be like Willy Wonka?** Allow time for kids to respond. **You could ask the same of Isaac and Rebekah. What do you think will happen to Isaac and Rebekah? Will they have a happy life? What will make life hard for them?** Allow time for kids to respond.

God loves us as we are. When God chooses us, we can do amazing things.

Video Option 2: *The Polar Express* (2004, PG, animated)

Start cue: (Chapter 15, 57:10) The kids are watching the elves. One elf says, "All right, boys, let's shut it down."

End cue: (Chapter 19, 1:16:15) The reindeer are jumping and Hero Boy steps off the sleigh.

Scene set-up: The one who finally believes is chosen to receive the first present of Christmas.

Activity Instructions for *The Polar Express*

Move to the area where you will watch the video. **Those who are chosen by God don't seem to regret it. When Isaac and Rebekah are chosen to create a new nation, they don't complain, they don't whine, they don't say "No." They just follow God's direction. How good are you at following directions? Have you ever gotten in trouble because you didn't like the directions you were told to follow? Have you ever wished you could do all the choosing?** Allow time for kids to respond.

In *The Polar Express*, you get the idea that very few people are ever chosen to ride the train. Then, there are a variety of mysteries while they are onboard. In the end, only one person will be chosen for a great moment, but you're never quite sure it's going to work out until it does.

In other words, the ones who believe do the best. That fits with our story today, because when you are chosen by God, you can do amazing things. Let's watch the clip.

Show the clip using the start and stop cues above.

Following the clip, discuss the scene using these questions, or you own. **Why can't he hear the bells? When happens when he finds an ornament at his feet? How would you like to trade places with that kid at the moment when Santa picks him up?** Allow time for kids to respond.

In today's story, Isaac and Rebekah are chosen to make God's promise come true. It's a great moment in the Bible. God's promise for them is true, so we can know it's true for us. We can wait for God to choose us so that we can do amazing things. If you could do something amazing, what would it be? Allow time for kids to respond. **Remember that God chooses you to do amazing things. Maybe that very thing you just mentioned as being amazing that you could do is God's inspiration for you to do it. I'm sure you'll get your chance. Don't miss it.**

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Thank you for your attention and participation today. I hope this was a fun way to learn a little more about the story of Isaac and Rebekah and our loving God. If you remember that God chooses you to do amazing things, that will lead you to keep your eyes and ears open for what those opportunities might be.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Select two or three older kids to be your helpers. Tell them their line is "God chooses you!" **We're going to pray mostly silently today. As you have your hands folded and eyes closed, one of us will come by and make the sign of the cross on your head. We will say, "God chooses you" as a reminder that you have been chosen. Now you get to find out through your prayers where that choice leads you.** Make your way through the crowd and end with a celebratory **Amen.**