THE FAITHFULNESS OF THE LORD

Lesson Aim: Depend on the faithfulness of the Lord to keep His promises to you.

Suggestion: Have the students read the Scriptures and answer the questions in the student lesson and insert the following questions where they fit the lesson for class discussion.

The Lord was faithful to Abraham when he did what was right and even when he did what was wrong. Sin created problems for Abraham, but the Lord would not forget His promises to him because "His compassions are new every morning: great *is* thy faithfulness" (Lam 3:22).

Who were the three men that visited Abraham? Gen 18:1, 2, 22; 19:1; Jn 8:56-58
The LORD appeared to Abraham with two angels. Who was the LORD? It could not be the Father, because no one can see Him in His glory and live. Also, He is spirit and never took on the appearance of a man. It could not be the Holy Spirit, because He is like the wind, so He cannot be seen. The LORD was none other than the Son of God in his pre-incarnate state. He looked like a man, but He was not yet born as a man. Jesus spoke of this occasion when He told some religious leaders in Jerusalem that Abraham rejoiced to see Him. The only Person in the Godhead that has been seen by the human eye is the Son of God. Some day all believers will see Him and then we will be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is (1 Jn 3).

Why did the LORD visit Abraham? Gen 18:9-15

The LORD came to tell Sarah personally that she would bear a son for Abraham. He had just told Abraham that Sarah would have a son within a year (17:15-19), but He wanted to be certain that Abraham had told her this news. Apparently Abraham had not told her, because she laughed within herself when she heard the LORD say that she would have a son in her old age. The Lord knew she laughed and rebuked her saying, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" She was afraid and denied that she laughed, but the LORD insisted that she did laugh. This encounter with the LORD changed her life and she no longer doubted the LORD about His promise to give her a son in her old age (Heb 11:11). It is necessary for Christian growth to have faith in the promises of the LORD.

How did Abraham differ from Lot in training his family? Gen 18:19; 19:8-38

The LORD said Abraham would train his children and household to do what was right and just, so they would keep His way**.** Lot trained his family to get along with the godless society of Sodom; he even let his daughters marry unbelievers (19:14). We must train our children not to love the world (1 Jn 2;15)..

How did Abraham's lie about Sarah affect the LORD's covenant with him? Gen 20

Abraham was afraid Abimelech would kill him to take Sarah as his wife, so he told Abimelech that Sarah was his sister. Abimelech took Sarah as his wife, but God kept him from a sexual contact with her and warned him in a dream to return her to Abraham or die. If he kept Sarah as his wife, God would not be able to provide Abraham a son by Sarah. Keep from sin so you can do God's will (Rom 12:2).

How do Hagar and Sarah illustrate the Old and New Covenants? Gen 21:9-12; Gal 4:21-31

Hagar was a bondwoman and had Ishmael by Abraham through the works of the flesh; it illustrated the works of the Law of God under the Old Covenant which Moses received on Mt Sinai. The works of the flesh in trying to keep the Law of God cannot save us. They were given to Moses to show us that we have come short of God's standard for righteousness. The works of the flesh keep us in bondage.

Sarah was a freewoman and had Isaac by Abraham through the promise of God; it illustrated faith in the promise of God under the New Covenant which Christ provided on Mt Calvary. Faith in the promise of God to provide the righteousness that He demands was accomplished by the works of Jesus Christ. He lived a life without sin so He could take our sins and pay our death penalty on the cross. But that was not sufficient to give us eternal life. He had to rise from the dead to share His life with us. Faith in the promise of God sets us free from our sins and gives us eternal life.