



God Cares for Hagar and Ishmael

Genesis 21:8-21

Babies and toddlers have little concept of an all-powerful God who hears our prayers and answers them. But this young age is a wonderful time to lay a foundation for a later understanding of prayer. We can pray with babies and tell them what we're doing. Older toddlers who are beginning to talk can voice their own simple prayers. Very early childhood is a prime time to let children begin to know and understand that we can talk to God—and he hears us.




► **Bible Point**
God hears us when we pray.

Key Verse
“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you” (Luke 11:9).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will learn that God hears them all the time.

INFANT


LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Sing and Celebrate Listen to praise songs.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Bible Exploration	God Hears Us! Look at a picture of some people God hears.	Teacher Pack: “God Hears” teaching picture 	
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	God Hears Move to music.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
	I Hear, God Hears Use sound to illustrate that God hears them.	rattle, stacking cups	
	Weaving Faith at Home Take home their “Growing With Jesus” pages.	My Bible Snuggles or 1 copy per child of the “Growing With Jesus” page (at the end of the lesson)	Remove the Lesson 13 pages from each My Bible Snuggles student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





TODDLER

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Sing and Celebrate Sing or listen to praise songs.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Bible Exploration	God's Listening Learn that God hears them when they're in need.	Bible, 1 paper cup per child, water Teacher Pack: "God Hears" teaching picture 	Fill small paper cups half-full with water.
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Call to the Lord Create telephones while discussing how they can talk to God.	pretzel sticks, round cereal, crayons or washable markers, My Bible Snuggles or 1 copy per child of the "Calling God" page (at the end of this lesson), wet wipes (optional)	Remove the Lesson 13 pages from each My Bible Snuggles student book.
	Knock, Knock Play an activity about hearing.	large cardboard box	
	Weaving Faith at Home Take home their "Growing With Jesus" pages.	My Bible Snuggles or 1 copy per child of the "Growing With Jesus" page (at the end of the lesson)	


Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





2-YEAR-OLD



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Sing and Celebrate Sing or listen to praise songs.	CD player, 2 paper cups per child Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Bible Exploration	The Listening Lord Hear how God provided for Hagar and Ishmael.	Bible, 2 paper cups per child, water Teacher Pack: “God Hears” teaching picture, “God Provides” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) 	Fill small paper cups half-full with water.
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Calling God Create telephone pictures while discussing how we can talk to God.	pretzel sticks, round cereal, crayons or washable markers, My Bible Snuggles or 1 copy per child of the “Calling God” page (at the end of this lesson), wet wipes (optional)	Remove the Lesson 13 pages from each My Bible Snuggles student book.
	Ask, Pray, Talk Sing a motion song.		
	Weaving Faith at Home Take home their “Growing With Jesus” pages.	My Bible Snuggles or 1 copy per child of the “Growing With Jesus” page (at the end of the lesson)	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



God Cares for Hagar and Ishmael

Genesis 21:8-21



BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Ishmael Mocks Isaac

It was typical in Abraham’s culture to have a celebration when a child was weaned, which was usually when the child was around 2 or 3 years of age. The celebration for Isaac was probably even bigger than most because he was something of a miracle child.

Unfortunately the joyous occasion soon turned bitter. We don’t know if Ishmael’s mocking of Isaac happened on the day of the celebration, but it must have occurred soon afterward. Ishmael had been born to Abraham through Hagar, Sarah’s maidservant, after Sarah had decided to take things into her own hands and had Abraham sleep with Hagar to “build a family” (Genesis 16:2). By the time Isaac was 2, Ishmael was about 16 (Genesis 16:16; 21:5).

Sarah and Hagar had been at odds ever since Hagar was pregnant with Ishmael (Genesis 16:4-10). Abraham’s decision to send Hagar and Ishmael away had probably been a long time in coming.

Abraham Casts Out Hagar and Ishmael

Abraham didn’t want to send Hagar and Ishmael away. He knew it was wrong according to his culture and according to anyone’s standards of fatherhood. When God told Abraham to do what Sarah wanted, God didn’t say it was right. But God did promise to take care of Ishmael, eventually making a great nation of his descendants as well as Isaac’s.

The area where Abraham lived was desert, and the skin of water and the food Abraham gave them was probably as much as they could comfortably carry, but it wouldn’t have lasted very long.

God Responds to Hagar and Ishmael’s Suffering

Remember that Ishmael was at least 16 by this time. If Hagar had to put him under a bush, he must have been terribly weakened by fluid deprivation. He likely wasn’t far from death, as Hagar estimated (Genesis 21:16).

It seems odd that God responded to Ishmael’s cry but sent an angel to speak to Hagar. It may be that Ishmael was simply too weak to even get water for himself. It also is likely that the well had been there all the time but Hagar didn’t see it until God “opened her eyes” — God was actually there taking care of them and providing the water they needed, but they couldn’t see it until they acknowledged their need for God.

The Jesus Connection

Pray about a challenge you’re facing right now. You can cry out to God. Because of Jesus, we can trust that God always hears us. You can write your prayer here.





INFANT


1 GETTING
STARTED



Sing and Celebrate


What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Sing "God Hears Us" (track 18 on the CD) to the tune of "Three Blind Mice" anytime during the lesson. Hold a baby on your lap and touch baby's ears as you sing "hears."

 **God hears us, God hears us.**
God hears us, God hears us.
God hears us when we laugh and play,
When we're near or far away.
God listens to us every day.
God hears us.
(Repeat.)

Afterward, say: ► **GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

Sing "Is God Listening?" (not on the CD) to the tune of "Frère Jacques" anytime during the lesson. As you sing, gently touch infants' faces as described:

 **Is God listening? Is God listening?** *(touch baby's ears)*
Yes, he is. Yes, he is. *(touch baby's nose)*
God can hear me singing. *(touch baby's mouth)*
God can hear me crying. *(run fingers from baby's eyes to cheeks)*
Yes, he can. Yes, he can. *(touch baby's nose)*

Afterward, say: ► **GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

**Sing and Celebrate
Supplies**

-
- CD player
 - Teacher Pack**
 - CD: "God Hears Us"
(track 18)

2 BIBLE
EXPLORATION

God Hears Us!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As crawlers are playing on the floor or as you hold an infant, show the "God Hears" teaching picture. While you look at the picture together, point to each section.

**God Hears Us!
Supplies**

-
- Teacher Pack**
 - "God Hears" teaching
picture





God Hears Supplies

CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: “Lullaby” (track 19)

I Hear, God Hears Supplies

rattle
stacking cups

Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

My Bible Snuggles or 1
copy per child of the
“Growing With Jesus”
page (at the end of the
lesson)

Weaving Faith at Home Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 13
pages from each My Bible
Snuggles student book.

Say: **Look. See these people? God can hear them no matter where they are. The Bible tells us about a boy named Ishmael who called out to God, and God heard him. See, God hears you when you’re in your highchair in the kitchen. God also hears you when you’re here at church. God can hear you anywhere—even when you’re away from home. ► GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

God Hears

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Sit on the floor facing an older baby as you play “Lullaby” (track 19 on the CD). Stand and carry younger babies who can’t yet sit up. Demonstrate movements to the rhythm of the music, such as swaying from side to side, swinging your arms, or shaking your head. Hold the baby’s hands as you do this, and encourage the baby to imitate you.

Say: ► **GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

I Hear, God Hears

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Place a young baby on your lap, facing you. Get the baby’s attention by gently shaking a rattle on either side of his or her head.

Whisper: **God hears you.** Repeat the whisper in the baby’s other ear.

For older babies, provide stacking cups, blocks, or other plastic toys. Encourage babies to bang the objects together to create sounds. Each time a baby makes a sound, say: **God heard that sound, [baby’s name]. ► GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their “Growing With Jesus” pages. Encourage parents to do the activities with children to help them grow with Jesus. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.



TODDLER

1 GETTING
STARTED

Sing and Celebrate

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Sing "God Hears Us" (track 18 on the CD) to the tune of "Three Blind Mice." Sing this song anytime during the lesson. Demonstrate the motions in parentheses.

- 🎵 **God hears us, God hears us.** (*put hand to right ear and then left ear*)
 - God hears us, God hears us.** (*put hand to right hear and then left ear*)
 - God hears us when we laugh and play,** (*put hands on belly to show laughter*)
 - When we're near or far away.** (*point close and then far*)
 - God listens to us every day.** (*point up*)
 - God hears us.** (*put both hands to ears*)
- (Repeat.)

Afterward, say: ► **GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

Sing "Is God Listening?" (not on the CD) to the tune of "Frère Jacques" anytime during the lesson. First sing the song in a normal voice, then in a loud voice, and then in a whisper. Tell children that God can always hear us, whether we speak and sing loudly or softly.

- 🎵 **Is God listening? Is God listening?**
- Yes, he is. Yes, he is.**
- God can hear me singing.**
- God can hear me crying.**
- Yes, he can. Yes, he can.**

Afterward, say: ► **GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

2 BIBLE
EXPLORATION

God's Listening

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Gather a group of toddlers together. Open your Bible to Genesis 21:8-21, and tell children this is God's special book.



Sing and Celebrate Supplies

- CD player
- Teacher Pack**
- CD: "God Hears Us" (track 18)

God's Listening Supplies

- Bible
- 1 paper cup per child
- water
- Teacher Pack**
- "God Hears" teaching picture

God's Listening Easy Prep

- Fill small paper cups half-full with water.



Say: **The Bible says a mother and son were outdoors together. They ran out of water. The mother cried because her son, Ishmael, was very thirsty. God heard her crying and showed her where to get water. She was so happy because God heard her prayer. God hears us, too, when we cry out to him and talk to him. ► GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

Hold up the “God Hears” teaching picture. Help toddlers point to the picture of the baby in the highchair.

Say: **That baby is thirsty like Ishmael was. Are you thirsty?** Give each toddler a cup of water. **God hears us when we’re thirsty. Doesn’t the water taste cool and nice?** When you’ve helped toddlers finish their water, collect the cups.

Hold up the teaching picture again, and invite toddlers to point to the children in the church nursery.

Say: **We’re in the church nursery. God can hear us right now.** Point to the picture of the family camping. **Wherever we go, ► GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

3

WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Call to the Lord

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Set out large crayons or washable markers, pretzel sticks, round cereal, and copies of the “Calling God” page. Have children clean their hands.

Help toddlers place pretzel “antennas” and cereal “push buttons” on the telephones on their pages. Then let them eat their snacks as they color their handouts.

Ask: **Who do you like to talk to on the phone?**

Say: **We don’t need to call God on the phone because he hears us all the time. We can just talk to him wherever we are. ► GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

Call to the Lord Supplies

pretzel sticks
round cereal
crayons or washable
markers
My Bible Snuggles or 1
copy per child of the
“Calling God” page (at
the end of this lesson)
wet wipes (optional)

! ALLERGY ALERT

Call to the Lord Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 13
pages from each My Bible
Snuggles student book.



Knock, Knock

What You'll Do

Set a large cardboard box on its side so the flaps are like doors. Encourage pairs of toddlers to crawl into the box and close the flaps. Knock on the “doors.”

Say: **Can you hear me? I'm knocking on your door. God hears me. Can you hear me? ► GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

Repeat the activity until everyone has had a turn to crawl inside or as long as children are interested.

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their “Growing With Jesus” pages. Encourage parents to do the activities with children to help them grow with Jesus. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.


2-YEAR-OLD

1 GETTING STARTED

Sing and Celebrate

What You'll Do

Sing “God Hears Us” (track 18 on the CD) to the tune of “Three Blind Mice” anytime during the lesson. Demonstrate the motions in parentheses.

-  **God hears us, God hears us.** (*put hand to right ear and then left ear*)
 - God hears us, God hears us.** (*put hand to right hear and then left ear*)
 - God hears us when we laugh and play,** (*put hands on belly to show laughter*)
 - When we're near or far away.** (*point close and then far*)
 - God listens to us every day.** (*point up*)
 - God hears us.** (*put both hands to ears*)
- (Repeat.)

Afterward, say: ► **GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**



Knock, Knock Supplies

.....
large cardboard box

Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

.....
My Bible Snuggles or 1
copy per child of the
“Growing With Jesus”
page (at the end of the
lesson)


Sing and Celebrate Supplies

.....
CD player
2 paper cups per child
Teacher Pack
CD: “God Hears Us”
(track 18)





Sing “Is God Listening?” (not on the CD) to the tune of “Frère Jacques” anytime during the lesson. Give each 2-year-old two paper cups, and as you sing have children use the cups to do the following motions:

 **Is God listening? Is God listening?** (*hold cups to ears*)
Yes, he is. Yes, he is. (*nod head*)
God can hear me singing. (*put cups to mouth*)
God can hear me crying. (*put cups over eyes*)
Yes, he can. Yes, he can. (*nod head*)

Afterward, say: ► **GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

The Listening Lord

What You'll Do

Gather children together. Roll the “God Hears” teaching picture into a “megaphone.” Talk into the megaphone in a low whisper.

Ask: **Can you hear me?**

Let children respond. Then open the picture, and point to the family camping together.

Ask: **What is this family doing?**

Say: **This family is camping. Have you ever been camping? When you go camping, you have to bring your own food to eat and water to drink. Sometimes you have to walk for a while to find a place to put your tent. Let's pretend we're walking and looking for a place to camp.**

Lead 2-year-olds on a quick walk around the room and back to your story area.

Say: **I think we can camp here. Let's lie down and sleep in our tent.** Have children lie down for a few moments and pretend to snore. **Oh, it's morning already. Time to sit up and listen to what happened in the Bible.**

Open your Bible to Genesis 21:8-21. Show children the words and tell them the Bible is God's special book. Set the “God Provides” poster on the floor and point to the picture.

Say: **The Bible says a mother named Hagar and her son Ishmael were camping together. They ran out of water. The mother began to cry because she thought her son would die with no water. Boo-hoo.** Have children rub their eyes and pretend to cry.

The Listening Lord Supplies

Bible
2 paper cups per child
water

Teacher Pack

“God Hears” teaching
picture
“God Provides” poster
(from the Big Bible
Poster Pack)

The Listening Lord Easy Prep

Fill small paper cups
half-full with water.



God heard her crying and showed her a place to get water. She was so happy because God heard her prayer. God hears us, too, when we cry out to him and talk to him.

► **GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

Give children cups of water, and have them place the cups on top of the poster for Ishmael. Then give each child a cup of water to drink. While children are drinking, show them the other two illustrations on the “God Hears” teaching picture. Remind them that God hears them when they’re at home and when they’re at church.



3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Calling God

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Set out large crayons or washable markers, pretzel sticks, round cereal, and copies of the “Calling God” page.

Help children place pretzel “antennas” and cereal “push buttons” on the telephones on their pages. Then let them eat the pretzels and cereal as they color the handouts.

Ask:

- Who do you like to talk to on the telephone?
- If you could call God on the phone, what would you say to him?

Say: We don’t need to call God on the phone because ► **GOD HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.** When you see your phone picture, remember to talk to God.

Ask, Pray, Talk

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Sing the following song to the tune of “Ten Little Indians.” Lead 2-year-olds in doing the motions as they sing:

🎵 **Ask,** (*frame mouth with hands*)

Pray, (*fold hands*)

Talk to God, (*make talking motion with hands*)
(Repeat 2x.)

And God will hear you. (*cup hands around ears*)

Calling God Supplies

- pretzel sticks
- round cereal
- crayons or washable markers
- My Bible Snuggles or 1 copy per child of the “Calling God” page (at the end of this lesson)
- wet wipes (optional)

**! ALLERGY
ALERT**

Calling God Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 13 pages from each My Bible Snuggles student book.





Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

My Bible Snuggles or 1
copy per child of the
“Growing With Jesus”
page (at the end of the
lesson)

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their “Growing With Jesus” pages. Encourage parents to do the activities with children to help them grow with Jesus. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

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Growing With Jesus



Your child learned that God hears us when we pray (from Genesis 21:8-21). Your child participated in one of the following activities today. You can use these activities with your child to help your child grow with Jesus throughout the week.

INFANT

I Hear, God Hears

Place your baby on your lap, facing you. Get your baby's attention by gently shaking a rattle on either side of his or her head.

Whisper: **God hears you when you pray.** Repeat the whisper in your baby's other ear.

For older babies, provide stacking cups, blocks, or other plastic toys. Encourage your baby to bang the objects together to create sounds. Each time your baby makes a sound, say: **God heard that sound, [baby's name]. God hears us when we pray.**

TODDLER

Knock, Knock

Set a large cardboard box on its side so the flaps are like doors. Encourage your toddler to crawl into the box and close the flaps. Knock on the "doors."

Say: **Can you hear me? I'm knocking on your door. God hears me. God hears everyone.**

Repeat the activity as long as your child is interested.

Say: **God hears us when we pray.**

2-YEAR-OLD

Ask, Pray, Talk

Sing the following song to the tune of "Ten Little Indians." Lead your child in doing the motions as you sing together:

Ask, (*frame mouth with hands*)

Pray, (*fold hands*)

Talk to God, (*make talking motion with hands*)
(Repeat 2x.)

And God will hear you.
(*cup hands around ears*)

Say: **God hears us when we pray.**



We All Can Talk to God

Babies and toddlers have little concept of an all-powerful God who hears our prayers and answers them. But this young age is a wonderful time to lay a foundation for a later understanding of prayer. We can pray with babies and tell them what we're doing. Older toddlers who are beginning to talk can voice their own simple prayers. Very early childhood is a prime time to let children begin to know and understand that we can talk to God—and he hears us.

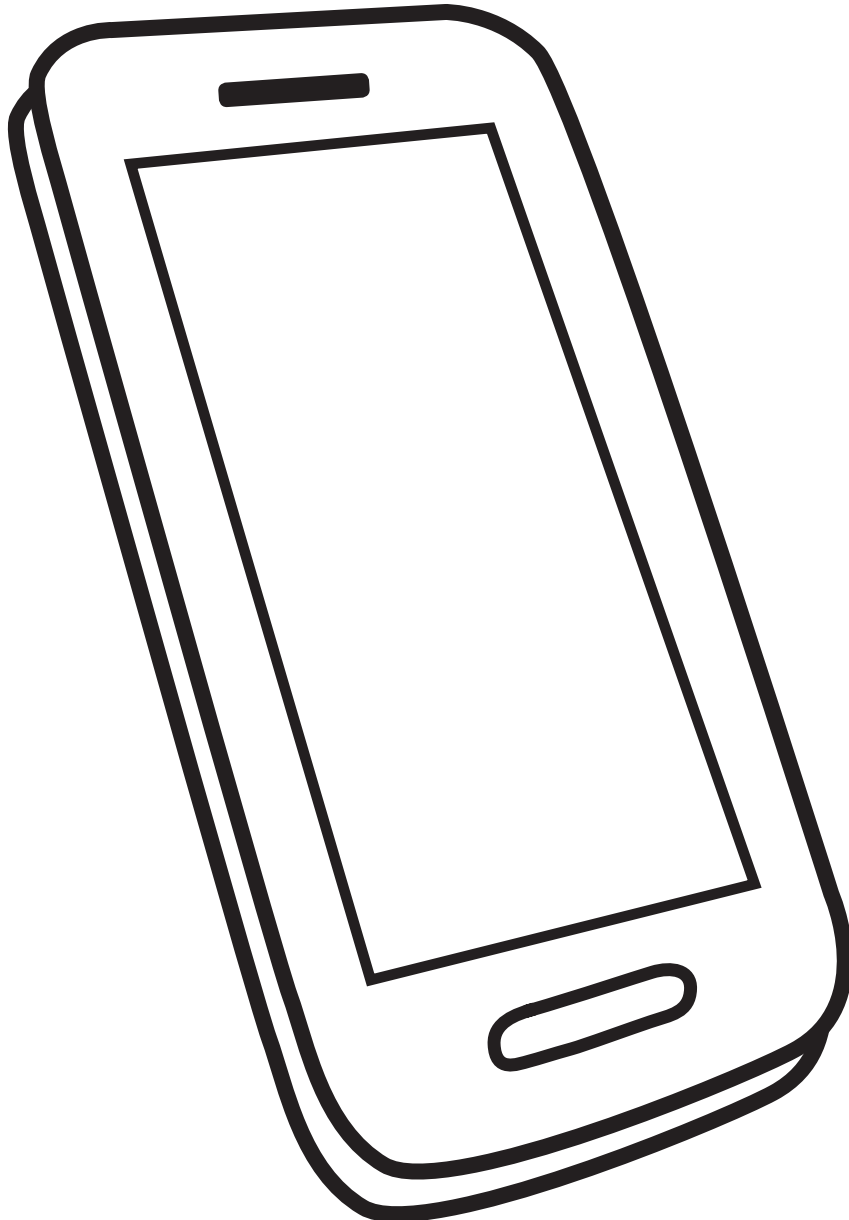


Use these ideas to help your child become a FaithWeaver:

- **Day 1:** "Pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17) today. Speak out loud so your child can hear you.
- **Day 2:** As you soothe your child's cries, say, "Mommy [Daddy] hears you. God hears you, too."
- **Day 3:** Give your child a pot and spoon, and let him or her make a joyful noise for God to hear.
- **Day 4:** Go on a "listening" walk. Each time you hear a sound, say, "God hears [name of sound]."
- **Day 5:** Encourage your child to imitate your loud and soft sounds. Point out that God hears them all.
- **Day 6:** At mealtime, hold your child's hand and pray a simple prayer of thanks. If your child can, have him or her repeat the words after you.
- **Day 7:** Record your child's sounds or words. Play the recording back, and tell your child that God hears him or her.



Calling God



OK
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