News Story Summary

A winter storm blasted a region of the U.S. from Illinois to Kansas on the Monday after Thanksgiving, a day when many people return home after the holiday. The storm grounded thousands of flights and created treacherous road conditions for travelers and commuters alike. In some areas of Illinois, wind gusts topping 50 miles per hour combined with snowfall created whiteout conditions. Hardest hit was Chicago, but Kansas City, Milwaukee, Omaha and Des Moines were also affected. As a result, many travelers spent the night in airports unexpectedly. Some roads were closed because of snow and crashes, leaving travelers in limbo until the weather and roads improved.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the term "Midwest storm after Thanksgiving grounds flights and creates bad roads".)

Focus Attention

To supplement the Focus Attention idea, conclude by reading the news story above. Ask: *How would you feel if you were one of the travelers who was stranded at an airport? How would you feel if you were traveling alone–or if you were trying to drive a long distance?* Say: *Today's story focuses on Jacob, who traveled a great distance alone in order to avoid being murdered by his vengeful brother Esau. Although Jacob traveled alone, God reminded him that He was with Jacob and would keep His promises.*

Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge idea, call attention to the news story about the travel woes experienced as a result of the Thanksgiving weekend winter storm. Ask: *How might God have used stranded travelers to fulfill His purposes?* Record responses on a large sheet of paper or board (potential ideas: to share the gospel, to connect people to each other, to produce Christlike character). After several have responded, note that many of these purposes listed might apply to current circumstances in their lives. Say: *God may not speak to us in the desert with an audible voice, but we can be sure that He is with us in the good and the bad, and He will keep His promises to us.*