

Bible background

Genesis 13

Aim of lesson

To show

- (a) that Abraham thought it more important not to quarrel than to get the best land and
- (b) that he trusted God and knew that God kept his promises.

Preparation required

You will need colouring material and some sweets.

Suggested outline of lesson

1. Put some sweets in uneven piles and ask the children which they would choose. Draw the lesson that everyone likes to choose the best for themselves, but ask how the others would feel if you gave the biggest pile to one child. Would they argue or quarrel if they did not get the best?
2. Abraham once had a choice like this. He had come to the new land that God had promised him, with his nephew Lot and all their families, servants and sheep. Tell the children how the numbers of their cattle and sheep multiplied, because God was with them. Talk about all the grass the sheep would need to eat, and how they needed rain to make the grass grow. Sometimes there was not enough rain, and then there were problems. Once there was not enough for them to live, and for a while they had to go all the way into Egypt to get food. Abraham knew that God would look after him, but sometimes he needed all his faith to trust that God had not forgotten him.
3. Their sheep and cattle grew and multiplied so much that even in the good times there was not enough grass for them all, and the herdsmen of Abraham and Lot quarrelled. Abraham did not like quarrelling, and so he suggested that they should separate. Show how Abraham let Lot choose. He did not demand the best for himself.
4. Use the pictures in the activity sheet to discuss the choice Lot faced. Talk about the things in Sodom that were attractive:
 - Good food and plenty of water to drink (and for Lot's sheep).
 - Safety provided by the city walls, and the king's army.
 - Plenty of friends.
 - Money - Lot would be able to sell wool and meat in the market easily.
 - Plenty of shops to buy things they wanted.But it was full of wicked people.
Tell the children how Lot found the wealth and comfort more attractive and ignored the danger.
5. Now talk about Abraham's choice. Ask the children if Abraham needed all the things above - food and water, safety, friends, being able to buy and sell; where would he get them from? He knew that God would make sure that he was safe and had everything he needed.
6. God was very pleased with the choice that Abraham had made, and so he promised him that he would have all the land, as far as he could see in every direction - even, one day, where Lot had gone. With older children you may be able to talk about the fact that God promised the land to Abraham and his descendants for ever, and that this will only happen when Jesus returns and Abraham is raised from the dead.
7. If there is time, the children can colour the pictures on the activity sheet. You may like to sing last week's song 'Abraham, Abraham' and add this week's verse.
8. Ask the children what they would do with the sweets if they were being kind like Abraham. Let them share out the sweets!

Alternative activities

1. If you made the sand tray model for lesson 4, re-use it for this lesson. Can the children re-tell the story?
2. Make a large scale collage picture using different textures and colours of paper and fabric to show the different areas chosen by Abraham and Lot. Pre-cut some house, tent and animal shapes for the children to stick on.
3. Create stencils for one or more of the following animals; camel, sheep, goat, cow, by drawing or tracing the animal in the middle of a piece of card or very strong paper and then cutting out the middle to leave a hole in the shape of the animal. If you have a large class it may help to make 2 or 3 of each type of animal. The children can then fill in the stencil using poster paint and a sponge or thick brush. (Younger children might need help to hold the stencil still. A thin bit of sticky tac in the corners of the stencil works well if an extra pair of hands is not available!) Help the class to take turns stencilling Abraham and Lot's herds - either on one large piece of paper or individual ones.

Relevance to the children's lives

Ask the children if they can learn this lesson of not quarrelling if they think things are not fair. Can they offer someone else the best? God is pleased when we think of others and do not demand the best for ourselves. You could also talk about keeping promises as God always keeps his.

Prayer

Ask for prayers about being generous or not quarrelling, or about trusting what God promises us.

Verse

'Let us not have any quarrelling between you and me.' Genesis 13:8.

Song

Abraham Abraham (continued from lesson 4)

v.2 Abraham, Abraham, come with me,
 Abraham, Abraham, look and see
 The hills all around you, the valleys and streams
 In plenty and beauty, a land of your dreams,
 A land of your own,
 A land of your own;
 God said, 'I'll give you a land of your own!'