

Introduction

Good morning and welcome to the month of July for summer Sunday school! Today we continue learning about Bible stories found in the Old Testament. Do you remember at the end of June learning about Abraham and Sarah or last week hearing about the Baby Named Laughter? Let's continue hearing more about their story using our "Good Shepherd" written by Rev. Brenda Stobbe. This month we will learn continue to learn about Abraham, Sarah, and their family. As a reminder, this curriculum helps our children continue to grow cognitively, emotionally, and spiritually in their relationship with God.

A note for parents/guardians – Your job as the parent/guardian is to facilitate your child(ren) through this lesson. Enjoy watching & listening to the story all together, talk through the wondering questions (please try your best to not answer these questions - let your child(ren) truly wonder – some questions we don't have answers to anyway), and help guide them through the activity they choose for the day. Not answering the wondering questions might be the most challenging part of this curriculum, but that is how we help them grow.

Here is what's included in this lesson:

- **What's Going On** - similar to the parent overview section in our previous Sunday school materials which provides background to the Bible story.
- **The Bible Story** – time to watch and read the Bible story lesson.
- **Wondering Questions** – available for both our younger and older friends.
- **Daily Activities** – interactive ways to help your child dive deeper into our weekly lesson.
- **Prayer**

What's Going On

The Good Shepherd children's curriculum has a section called "Teacher Helps". This section will help give you our parent/guardians a deeper background to today's story.

Teacher Helps (written by Rev. Brenda Stobbe)

As we continue to deal with the J source* we find a story unfolding that would seem to make it impossible for the promise of Yahweh to Abram to come true. Trying to prevent arguments among his large family Abram tells Lot that they can share this land to which Yahweh has sent them. In a generous offer Abram gives Lot first choice. Lot looks out over the Jordan Valley, rich and green with the bustling cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Then he looks back to the west--to the dry parched land of their recent wanderings. Many scholars believe that when Lot looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah he saw much of what they'd left behind in Egypt. Here were glittering cities and lavish entertainment as opposed to the rough life of a nomad. ([The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible](#); edited by Charles Laymon, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987, p. 13.) His decision is made swiftly and he moved to the area that God would least choose for God's people. In doing so, he may have assured that the blessings would go to Abram who remained faithful to the original call God gave him.

The story ends with a promise, but no action on God's part. The J source Yahweh holds us with anticipation. We, like Abram, have no idea that God will really fulfill God's word. We only sit with Abram at the Oaks of Mamre and wait.

The theological implications of the story are difficult for children. The idea of "waiting" is

God Blesses Abram's Choice

hard for children anyway and the fact that Abram didn't get any immediate rewards for taking the lesser of the pieces of land may be troublesome to some of the children. Abram had the faith to wait and see. Lot did not. Lot wanted all that was made ready for him, he did not choose to wait and see if God had anything better in mind.

The wondering questions begin with wonderments about how Lot felt about taking the better of the two pieces of land. Some children may say that Lot was happy that he got the best part, while others, usually a little older, may talk about Lot's feelings of guilt at taking the best land and leaving the other land to Abram.

The second question wonders if Abram was sad about having to take the brown, dry land. Again some children will believe that he must have been sad or they may even say he was angry. There will also be some children who may respond that God would make it OK for Abram later on.

The third wondering question is crucial. It's a faith development question. In the responses you get to this question you will begin to notice the various stages of the children in your classes. Some children will immediately say that God will bless Abram later, while others may hold back with that assurance. Those who are so certain of God's blessings have probably not had a major delusion yet of an adult figure not following through on a promise. Remind yourself that your promises to a child in the Good Shepherd room are helping to establish the child's faith development. If you promise a child they can paint today--they must be able to paint. If you promise any activity, do your very best to follow through and ALWAYS explain if something comes up that does not allow you to keep your promise immediately and make arrangements to fulfill it as soon as possible.

The final question brings the wonderment home. Perhaps the children have shared with a friend and have allowed the friend "a better portion". Or maybe the children have had to give up something special when a new child joined their family or when they moved. Allow time for feelings to be expressed before moving into the work/art response time.

* The Old Testament is made of several different sources. They have marked differences, while also containing some similarities. The J source (standing for Jahwhist as in Y[J]ahweh) brings us a God who seems very human. This God talks with others; comes down from heaven to check things out; has worries and concerns about power; intervenes with personality, though not always logic; and remains always bound to God's people. The J source never explains away this everyday God, but rather accepts that it's God's choice to be however God chooses to be. (The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible; edited by Charles Laymon, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987) (The Book of J; translated by David Rosenberg and interpreted by Harold Bloom, New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990)

The Bible Story

Please watch the story, using the link provided. The Bible lesson has also been provided too if you would like to read the story.

- **Watch the Story** (Biblical adaptations written by Rev. Brenda Stobbe)
Together, watch the children's story time found on Manchester UMC's website under Children & Families: Sunday Morning: <https://manchesterumc.org/sunday-morning/>
- **Scripture Lesson – Genesis 13:1-18**
Encourage your elementary kiddo(s) to find & read this story in the Bible. Assist as needed and take turns reading if you would like.

Wondering Questions

"Wondering Questions" are open ended discussion questions. Parents/Guardians, try as hard as possible to NOT answer these questions for your child(ren). ☺

Wondering Questions for Children (written by Rev. Brenda Stobbe)

1. I wonder how Lot felt about his choice of the good, green land?
2. I wonder if Abram was sad that he was left the brown, dry land?
3. I wonder if God did bless Abram later on?
4. I wonder if you've ever given up something that was really nice to someone else?

Wondering Questions for Older Children (written by Rev. Brenda Stobbe)

1. Share a time when you took less and let a sibling or friend have the better part. (Small pieces of candy bar, etc.) How did you feel?
2. Was there anything wrong with what Lot did? Should he have offered to take the poor land?
3. Does God always bless the person more who chooses to take less than another person?

Daily Activities

All Ages

Please find the attached puzzles, activities, and coloring pages. These can be used by all students participating in today's lesson.

All Ages – Walking & Sharing

What you need: outside toys / an area to play

SAY: Today's story has many important messages, but let's dive deeper into two specific ones. First, it is always important to remember to share with others and not always think of yourself first as Lot did in our story. Our second message, is that Abram and his wife had to do a lot of waiting and trusting in God for what was to come. Do you think that was easy? Let's think about this as we do our activity for today!

- Take a walk together as a family. Look around at the space outside during your walk. Does anything outside remind you about our story today? Do you see an area that is very lush & green, while another area might be brown and dry?
- For younger friends, practice directions by having them point left and right. You can also have them do different actions while you walk like hold up your right hand, stomp your left foot, touch your right eye, etc. Remember, Lot went to the right, Abram went to the left.
- Once you get back from your walk, encourage your family members to play outside and choose activities that encourage sharing. It isn't always easy to share or put someone else first, but let's try it together!

Activity adapted from: <https://www.gracelink.net/assets/gracelink/Lessons/Kindergarten/2018/Q1/Kindergarten/Teacher/K-18-Q1-L11-T.pdf>

Preschool – Sing "Father Abraham"

What you need: computer or other smart device

SAY: Let's have fun singing and dancing around to this song that helps us remember our last few weeks of Good Shepherd stories. We've learned a lot about Abraham's family. What can you remember?

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- Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ASXowiv3FAc> to sing and dance along with the song "Father Abraham."
- Have fun and once you are done, go back through today's wondering questions.

Elementary – Choices Artwork

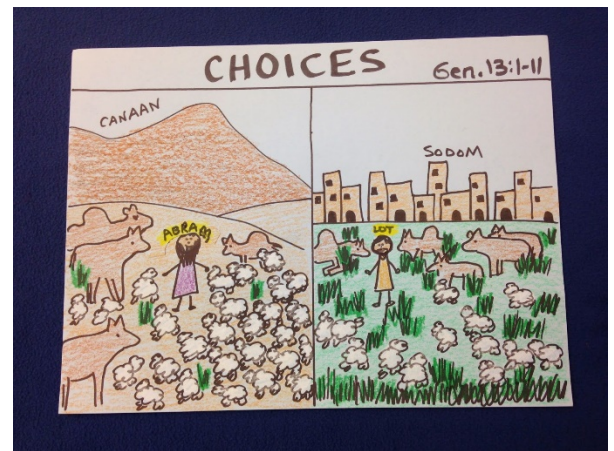
What you need: paper, crayons, and pencil/pen

ASK:

- What was today's Good Shepherd story about?
- Did Abram and Lot always get along? Why did Abram decide to split up the land?
- Which part of the land did Lot decide to take? Why?
- What can you take away from today's Good Shepherd story?

SAY: Let's create a special drawing that will always help us remember this story and the importance of choices.

- Give your child(ren) a piece of paper. Have them (or assist them) draw with the pencil/pen a line (about 2" down from the top) from side to side. From the middle of the line, draw another line down the middle. Like an upper-case "T."
- On one side, have your child(ren) draw mountains, hills, and little grass.
- On the other side, have your child(ren) draw a city and LOTS of grass.
- Add "Gen. 13:1-18" at the top of their paper.
- Draw Abram and Lot in the middle of their sides of the paper.
- Draw in different kinds of livestock.
- Add the words "Sodom" and "Canaan" on the correct sides of the paper.
- Color in the picture.



Activity adapted from: <http://childrensbiblelessons.blogspot.com/2014/03/lesson-lots-choice.html>

3rd - 5th Graders – Genesis 13:1-18 (Diving Deeper – Bible Study)

What you need: Your Deep Blue Kids Bible

- Read **Genesis 13:1-18**
- As you go through your reading, stop at the Sailboat (pg. 15) "Generous." How would you describe Abram as being generous?
- Go back through today's wondering questions and see how you may have responded to Lot if you were Abram.

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for the stories of Abraham and Sarah. Remind us about the importance of generosity, sharing, and patience. All three of these things can be very challenging at times, but you call us to do all three. When we trust in you and follow Your Word, we know anything is possible. Amen.



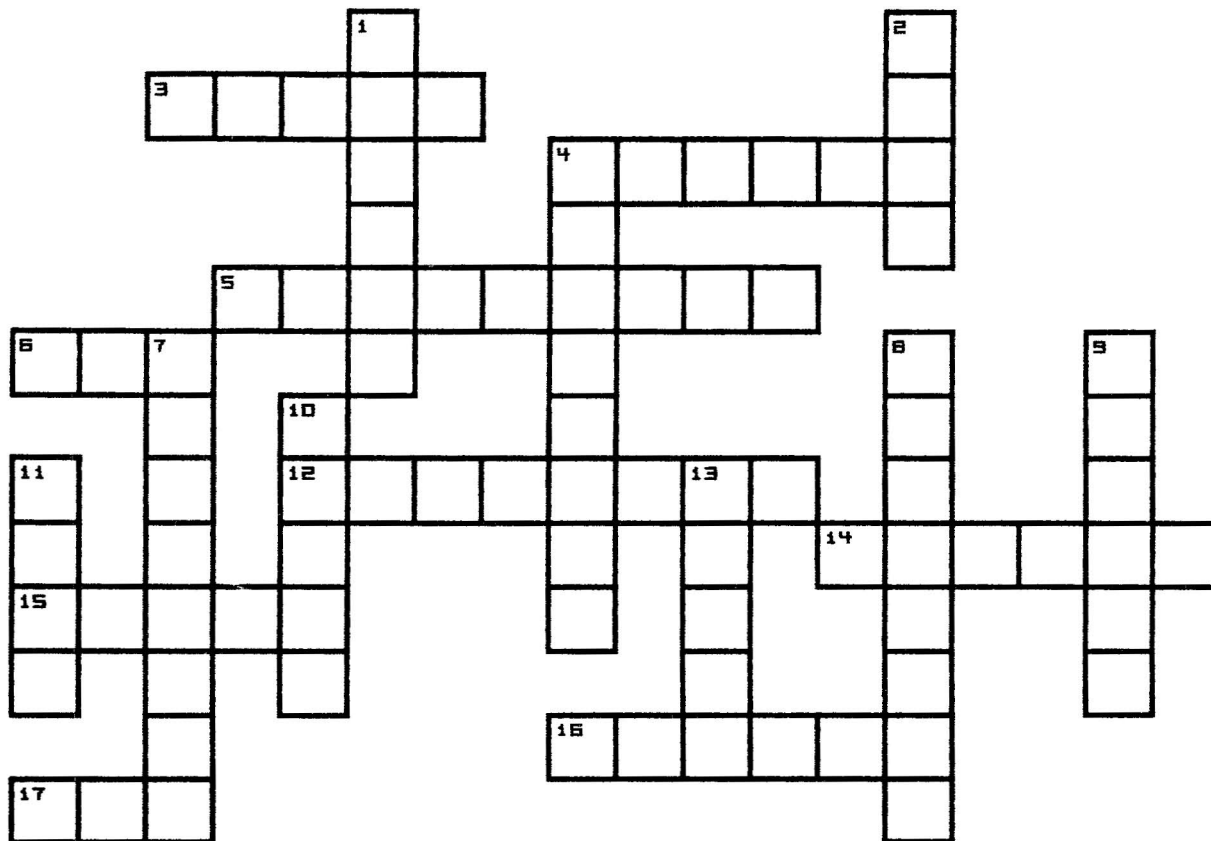
FKESEVCEH
ACBRNTDCANYJUEX
YAHWEHGTNTNSMVHRAL
NTDSIFLHSRBDEABSEFNGI
GYJDFTLYAFGVRWRNANTDXDRE
RTHCVHJEADRIMENDBTHHNAEBQEB
RHDSWFNIRRVJFIRAMFCREWETNYSEHM
TFDTERMADOESGHELOTNTCBTPHNRSERVM
MYIMYFANNMTMEMQNJYMBUIDHBFMYIYMVWQRARN
NTANMFRAAEGBYOMIRTWRLIEYFRGMWEGJRSATHK
JTRYTABLESSINGSHBNQWRAGTWSHEEPNYORLUSOIPG
FTRAVELEDHUKRDRYNYULETTMDFRAKGKMRFGDEAQFNUEL
TYKESMGGNKGDRRWHMYUILWQWICKEDDTJRTYNQZEYTFJTCMS

Search for these words.

Abram
Children
Egypt
Gomorraah
Sarai
Traveled

Blessings
Desert
Famine
Land
Sad
Wicked

Canaan
East
Families
Lot
Sheep
Yahweh



ACROSS CLUES

3. The wife of Abram.
4. They left Egypt and traveled to this country.
5. Abram chose to live in Hebron and wait for these.
6. Abram's nephew.
12. Lot moved to the east and lived near this city.
14. The people of the east were unkind and ____.
15. Abram owned many of these.
16. Abram went to Egypt because there was a ____.
17. Abram was ____ when his people fought with Lot's people.

DOWN CLUES

1. He promised to give Abram many, many children.
2. Abram and Lot went to a place where they could see the whole ____.
4. Yahweh promised that Abram would have many ____.
7. Abram ____ to many places.
8. The ____ would no longer fight if they divided the land.
9. The west was dry, brown ____.
10. Abram went there once.
11. The opposite of west.
13. ____ took the land to the west.

Abram
Egypt
Lot
Wicked

Blessings
Famine
Sarai
Yahweh

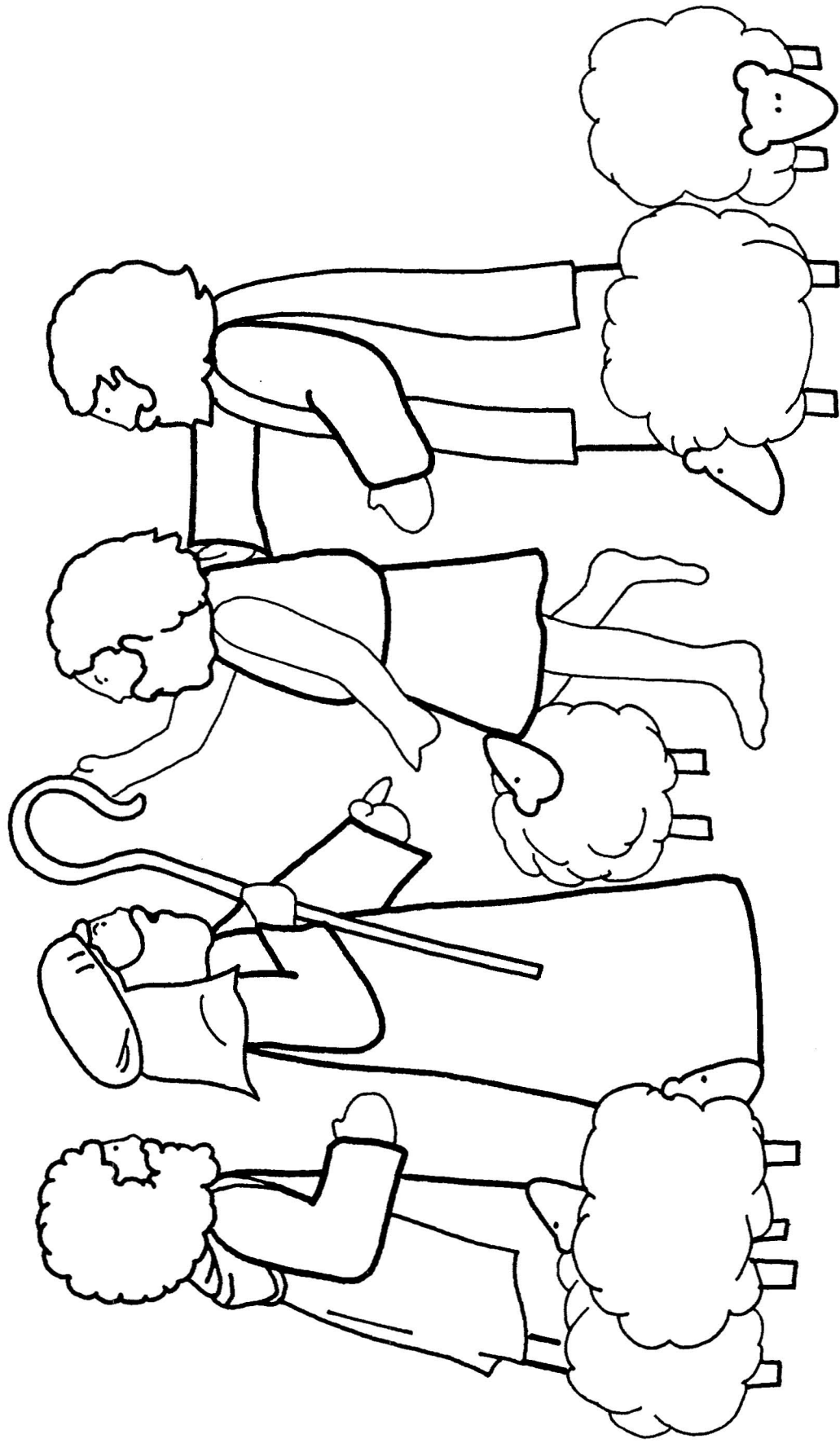
Canaan
Families
Sad

Desert
Gomorrah
Traveled

East
Land
Sheep

*How many words can you make from
the letters in*

TRAVELED



Why are Lot's and Abram's shepherds fighting?



God Blesses Abram's Choice



God Blesses Abram's Choice