

LESSON 8

ABRAM RESCUES LOT

BEFORE YOU TEACH

City-kingdoms

During Abram's time, cities were often fortified and ruled by a king or priest-king. They were in constant conflict with one another, and sometimes one city would gain control over others, thus creating a small empire. This domination would last for a while and then they would either be conquered by another king or would just pass away. Sodom and Gomorrah were two such city-kingdoms.

Warfare in Abram's Time

Before the days of the monarchy (David, Solomon, etc.), warfare was a case of "every man for himself." This was true for Abram, as we see in this story. When Lot was taken prisoner, Abram took 318 fighting men from his own household. The *hanik*, "armed retainer" in Hebrew, were "trained men." They were individuals capable of making a successful attack against imposing odds.

Being skilled in fighting, Abram set a strategy that involved two elements. The first was a night attack for maximum confusion. The second, a divided force attacking from several directions. The result was a surprise that scared the soldiers into fleeing for their lives. Then Abram's men chased them for 50 miles or more, north of Damascus. It was a complete rout. Abram's objective was not to destroy the Mesopotamian army, but to rescue Lot. Indeed, Lot and all the captives, plus all the property seized by the Mesopotamians during their Palestinian campaign, were recovered. Abram marched home a victor.

Understanding Abram

Abram's rescue of Lot reveals to us that he was resourceful, thoughtful, and able to lead when he knew that God could and did lead. He planned a quick, successful raid that accomplished his purpose to rescue Lot. He was also faithful—even to one who was selfish enough to demand the best-looking land for himself. Even though Lot selfishly took the best of the land, Abram valiantly set off with his 318 men to rescue his nephew, and put aside any petty grievances he might have had. Abram knew that God would give him the victory; he was not going into battle relying solely on his own strength. Abram must have been a good neighbor, in that he gained the favor of Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner, who joined him in pursuing after his nephew's captors to regain what was lost. After his victory, the king of Sodom sought Abram that he might reward him.

Understanding Lot

Lot was not careful when he set his eyes upon the choice piece of land, and his greed brought his enemies upon him. We should be careful of what we set our eyes upon, as it may not be what God wants for us. If we remember to keep our eyes on the Lord, He will give us the best.

BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 13:10-14:24

BIBLE TRUTH

God blesses those who selflessly help others.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To help others who need it.
2. To be courageous to help the needy.
3. To rely on God for help.

MEMORY VERSE

"Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love."

(Romans 12:10a)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. O Lord, we gather here today to worship You and learn more about Your word. We know that You bless those who selflessly help others. Please show us how to help others who need our help and how to be courageous to help by relying on You! Hallelujah! Amen.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

It is a natural inclination for most children around this age to want to help. We can encourage this tendency by pointing out practical ways they can help the people around them. They can help others wherever they are: at church, at home, or at school. Let your students think of ways they can help in all of these places. At church, they can help the teacher by listening attentively, passing out papers, etc.; at home, they can help by obeying their parents, doing their chores, etc.; and at school, they can help by obeying the rules, listening attentively, talking to a new classmate, etc.

Sometimes, the students may want to help but are discouraged because they are told they are too young. Help them understand that no matter how old they are, their help will always be valuable to someone. Although there are things that they are not able to help with now, they will be able to help in the future. For now, they can concentrate on the possibilities they came up with earlier. By helping others, they will not only enjoy the blessings of the Lord, but will also find an intrinsic satisfaction in their actions.

VOCABULARY

tar pits: big holes full of thick, black, sticky stuff

prisoner: someone who is taken by the enemy

priest: someone who serves God and is in charge of worship

REVIEW

[Take out the same map from last week. Be sure to remove the attached pieces beforehand.] Last week we learned about Abram and how he obeyed God by leaving his home. Do you remember where Abram's home was? [Take out the figure of Abram and pretend to put him in a place that's obviously wrong, like the Dead Sea. The children should react with laughter and an emphatic "No." Pretend to put Abram somewhere else. Finally, invite a student to put Abram in the right place.] That's right. Abram lived here in Haran. Who else lived in Haran with Abram? [Let students answer. If a student answers "Lot," invite them to put the figure up on the map as well.] Abram, his family and his nephew Lot were very comfortable in Haran. But when God told Abram to move, they all obeyed and moved to Canaan. [Move the figures to Canaan. You can choose to have students participate by sitting at their seats and using their fingers to point to where they want the figures to go.] God promised Abram that He would make him a great nation and give this land to his descendants. We also learned that God blessed Abram and Lot abundantly in Canaan so that they had many sheep and cattle, to the point that Abram and Lot's herdsmen started to fight over the grass area.

Do you remember how Abram solved this problem? [Let students answer. Use the map and figures as visual guides if they need help remembering.] They separated. Abram told Lot that they were a family and should not quarrel. So he asked Lot to choose the land first, and Lot chose the flat land of Jordan, where there was much grass and water. However, this flat land was near some very wicked cities. One of them was called Sodom and the other was called Gomorrah. [Put the map away.]

BIBLE STORY

Lot Moves to Sodom

After Lot and Abram moved away from each other, Lot shepherded in the plains of Jordan. There was a lot of grass and water for the flocks and herds. This seemed like a great place to live. But Lot was not satisfied. He saw how the people in Sodom and Gomorrah were wealthy and lived a comfortable life. Slowly, Lot started to move closer and closer to these cities. He knew that these cities were wicked. That meant there was a lot of violence and sin in the cities. But Lot could not resist. He really wanted the good life. So finally, he moved out of his tent and began to

live in the city of Sodom. Life in Sodom was definitely more interesting than life on the plain. There was much more to do in the city than just looking after the sheep every day.

Four Kings Against Five

At that time, most cities were ruled by kings. After Lot had moved to Sodom, the king of another city called Elam wanted to go to war. The king of Elam got three other kings together and prepared to fight the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, and three other cities. So it was four kings

against five kings.

All these kings gathered for battle in a valley by the Dead Sea. The four kings were much more powerful than the five kings. Soon the five kings, including the one of Sodom, were defeated. The armies of the five kings fled and some of them escaped into the mountains. But there were many tar pits in this area, and some of the men fell into the tar pits and could not escape.

Lot Is Taken Prisoner

The four kings who won the battle marched into the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and took everything that was valuable or precious. They took all the gold, silver, beautiful clothes, and food from the cities. They also took the people as prisoners. They took men, women, and even children. These people would become servants or slaves when they were brought back to the other cities.

Do you remember who lived in the city of Sodom? Yes, Lot lived in Sodom at that time. He, too, was captured by the army of the four kings. Lot and all his possessions were carried off by the armies.

Abram Rescues Lot

One of Lot's servants escaped from Sodom and went to look for Abram. He told Abram everything that had happened. How do you think Abram felt when he heard this news? [Let students respond. When they propose an answer, you can lead them in making the facial expression that matches that feeling.] If you were Abram, what would you have done? Would you have left Lot alone or would you have tried to save him? Why? What would God have expected Abram to do? Abram was a brave man, so when he heard that his nephew Lot was taken prisoner, he immediately prepared to go and rescue him. Abram had 318 trained men in his house, and he called all of them out. They began to chase the king of Elam and the three other kings who were on their way home.

Abram was very courageous; he was willing to risk his own life for Lot. Abram's group of 318 men was very small compared to the armies of the four kings. If Abram had lost, then he also would have been taken captive. In fact, he could have even been killed. We can see that he truly loved Lot and he also believed that God would help him save Lot.

So Abram followed the king of Elam a long way, and finally he and his 318 men caught up with the armies of the four kings. Abram made a plan; he divided his men into groups and attacked the enemies at night. The four kings were surprised by the attack, and they fled. Abram and his men chased them until they won the battle. Abram rescued Lot and all the other people who had been taken from the cities. He also took back everything the four kings had looted.

The King of Salem Blesses Abram

After Abram won the battle and came back with all the

rescued people and goods, the king of Sodom came out to thank him. At that time, Melchizedek, the king of Salem, also came out to meet Abram with bread and wine. Melchizedek was not only a king, but also a priest of God. He blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand." Melchizedek asked God to bless Abram and also gave praises to God for giving Abram victory over the enemies.

Abram was very thankful to God for His great help in the battle against the four kings. God helped Abram save Lot and bring back everything the kings had taken from the cities. Abram gave one-tenth of everything he took back from the battle to Melchizedek the priest to show his thanks to God. This was also the beginning of offering tithe, which means giving one-tenth of what we have to the Lord to thank God for giving everything to us. How do you think Abram felt when he was giving tithe? [Let students respond. When they propose an answer, you can lead the class in making a facial expression to match the feeling.]

The king of Sodom also wanted to thank Abram with more than just words. The king told Abram to let the people whom he had saved return to their homes. But everything else, all the gold, silver and other precious goods, Abram could keep for himself. What do you think Abram did? Did he take all the goods that he had recovered? [Allow students to respond.] No, Abram did not take anything from the king of Sodom. He told the king of Sodom, "I will not take even one string or a strap of a sandal," because Abram knew that it was God who had helped him. He knew that he could not have won by himself and by not taking anything, Abram gave all the glory to God. This also showed that Abram was not greedy and was content with all that God had already given him.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. Where did Lot go after he separated from his uncle Abram? What were the people like there?

He went to the plain of Jordan, and then gradually he moved into the city of Sodom; the people there did evil and sinned against God.

2. There was a battle after Lot moved to Sodom. Which kings were involved in the battle and who won the battle?

The king of Elam together with three other kings fought against the king of Sodom and four other kings; the four kings won over the five kings.

3. What happened after the four kings won the battle?

They went to Sodom and Gomorrah and took all the goods and people.

4. How did Abram save Lot?

He took 318 trained men with him and chased the four kings. When he caught up to them, he divided his men into groups and attacked the enemies by night.

5. Who came out to bless Abram when he returned from battle? What did Abram do?

Melchizedek, king of Salem, came to bless Abram; Abram gave one-tenth of everything to Melchizedek.

6. What did Abram do when the king of Sodom asked Abram to keep the goods and just give him back the people? Why?

Abram did not take anything from the king of Sodom because he knew that it was God who had given him victory; Abram gave all the glory to God.

7. Why do you think Abram was willing to do something as dangerous as fight the king of Elam to rescue Lot?

Answers may vary.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.

You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love.” (Romans 12:10a)

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. Sodom
2. Elam
3. four
4. possessions
5. False; he went to save Lot.
6. False; he took 318 trained men.
7. False; Melchizedek was the king of Salem.
8. True
9. False; Abram refused to take anything.
10. Answers may vary.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

1. It was not a good choice for Lot to move into Sodom. Although he might have only intended to move closer at first, he was eventually tempted to move into the city and give up the life of shepherding. What we can see with our eyes, like the wealth and excitement of the city of Sodom, isn't always good for us. We need to make wise choices every day.

Before we make choices each day, do we think about whether they are choices God would like for us to make? For example, when we watch a movie with a lot of fighting in it, does that seem like a good choice? What about skipping Sabbath to go to a friend's party? The more we make these poor choices, the more we will think that they don't matter, just like Lot. As he moved closer and closer to Sodom, he probably told himself that it didn't matter. But it did matter in the eyes of God.

2. When Abram found out that Lot had been captured, he immediately set out with 318 trained men to rescue the people who had been taken. Abram was not afraid of the kings, even though they had more soldiers than him, because he knew that God was on his side.

Help others because it is the right thing to do, even when it is hard. God will bless those who help others. Think of ways you can help out at church, at home, and at school. Think of ways to help your classmates, your teacher, your parents, and your siblings.

Can you think of a time when you were like Lot, when you didn't deserve to receive help or comfort, and someone still helped you? What happened? Were you grateful to that person? Did that encourage you to act differently afterwards?

Can you remember a time when you were like Abram, and you helped someone because it was the right thing to do, even though you knew you wouldn't gain anything from it?

3. Melchizedek gave praise to God, asking God to bless Abram. Abram gave one-tenth of the goods he recovered to Melchizedek the priest to show thanks to God.

Thank God for His help. We should praise God, not ourselves. How can we praise God? We can give tithe, pray to Him, sing praises to Him, and be humble. One way to train ourselves to be humble is by thinking about all the things we are grateful to God for at the end of the day, before we go to sleep. If we constantly remember that all good things come from God, then we will not become proud very easily.

ACTIVITIES

1

What Can I Do to Help?

Objective: To help students think of ways to help others.

Instructions

Divide the class into groups of two or three students. Ask each group to discuss what they would do in one of the following scenarios and have them act it out for the class. Encourage the students to be helpful and creative in their scenario.

1. If there is an old lady standing on the train or the bus, I would...
2. If my mom is busy cleaning up the dishes, I would...
3. If a little girl falls down on the ground, I would...
4. If there is trash in the classroom, I would...
5. If my younger brother is crying, I would...
6. If my younger sister breaks her toy, I would...
7. If a friend at school forgets to bring his lunch, I would...
8. If my dad is very busy with his work, I would...

2

Be a Good Helper**Objective:** To help students understand the characteristics of a good helper.**Instructions**

1. Explain each of the following characteristics and why these characteristics are important when we help.
2. Have students do the word search. The words can be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, or backward.

Characteristics of a Cheerful Helper

Willing: Be ready and eager to help others, not because others told you so, but because you want to help.

Cheerful: Be happy when helping others; do not complain.

Loving: Love the person you help.

Kind: Be nice and show care when we help.

Brave: Be courageous to help others with their problem.

Humble: It is God who gives us the ability to help others, so we need to give all glory to God.

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| C | W | I | L | L | I | N | G |

E1 Year 1 Book 1 Lesson 8—Abram Rescues Lot

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: God blesses those who selflessly help others.

Lesson Objectives:

1. To help others who need it.
2. To be courageous to help the needy.
3. To rely on God for help.

Bible Reading: Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a checkmark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

| | Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Bible Reading | | | | | | | |
| Prayer | | | | | | | |

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Romans 12:10a)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

Fill In the Blanks

(possessions Elam four Sodom)

1. After going to the plains of Jordan, Lot moved into the evil city of _____.
2. The king of _____ and three other kings fought against the king of Sodom and four other kings.
3. The _____ kings won over the five kings.
4. The victorious kings went into Sodom and captured all the people and their _____.

True or False

5. When Abram heard the news that Lot had been captured, he stayed home with his family. _____
6. Abram took 818 trained men to fight against the four kings. _____
7. Melchizedek, king of Elam, came to bless Abram for his victory. _____
8. Abram gave one-tenth of everything to Melchizedek. _____
9. When the king of Sodom asked Abram to keep the goods and just give him back the people, Abram kept all the treasure. _____

Life Application

10. Aside from giving one-tenth (tithe) of our money to God, name a few other things we can offer to Him or to our brothers and sisters who are in need.
