

SESSION 3

THE COVENANT

SESSION AIMS

To introduce Abraham and his family line and to consider the promises given to them by God that would lead to the rescue of all people. God, in his love and mercy reached out to us and set this rescue plan in place, and he wants us to trust him.

BIBLE REFERENCE

Genesis 12–50

GAME: RESCUE THE JELLY BABIES

You will need: two bowls of jelly containing jelly babies (prepared in advance), newspaper or a cover for the table, baby wipes and paper towels to clean up.

Choose two pupils to take part in the challenge. Give to both pupils a bowl of jelly with some jelly babies in them. Get the pupils to try to “rescue” the jelly babies by picking them out of the jelly with their teeth. See who can be the first to rescue all their jelly babies.

WEEK 2 RECAP

Last week we discovered what happened when people with free will entered God's perfect creation – and it wasn't pretty. Everything was messed up: people's relationships with one another, their relationship with God, their relationship with good and evil. God was faced with an unenviable decision. Should he just start again? In some ways he did, sending so much rain that most of the world was wiped out. But in other ways God chose to keep his relationship with people, promising someone who could pay the price for the evil humans had inflicted.

WHAT ARE WE COVERING THIS WEEK?

It's clear that there is a problem. God's world is in a mess. People, the pinnacle of God's creation, those he made in his image for relationship with him and to care for this world in which we live, have turned their backs on their Creator, and in pride and disobedience are going it alone. But what does God do? What he always planned to do...because none of this is a surprise to him. In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul writes this: "Long ago, even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure." Ephesians 1:4,5

Let's find out how he sets this plan in motion...

WATCH THE EPISODE ►

GROUP WORK

Discuss: What examples can you think of in this account where God was kind to the people?

- ◆ *God came to Abraham and told him that through him all the families of the earth would be blessed. Nobody on earth had come looking to God to be rescued. Even Abraham hadn't cried out to God. God made the first move.*
- ◆ *The brothers were forgiven, and they survived the famine.*
- ◆ *Judah, one of the brothers, who had put Joseph down the well, was promised that the Saviour of the world would come from his family line.*

What do we learn about God from this? Are you surprised? Does this differ from your view of God?

He is loving and merciful. He gives us what we don't deserve.

God tested Abraham's faith and obedience. Why was this important to God? What do you think about this?

God wants us to love him more than anything or anyone in the world, not because he is an ego maniac but because he knows that is where we will find true joy and peace. The angel said to Abraham – "Now I know that you truly fear God." To fear God is to absolutely trust God, to love with all of our hearts, soul, mind and strength because he is all he says he is.

Read Genesis 50:20. Which points in the story tell us that God was in control of all that was going on? What are the implications of this on our lives today?

Through all the difficult things that Joseph was experiencing the Bible tells us that God was with Joseph. Joseph told his brothers in Genesis 50:20: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good, to save many lives." Difficult things come our way in life, but we can know that, as his children, God never abandons us. Through difficult things God is at work. God is always in absolute control.

PRAY TO CLOSE