

Lesson #3-2

God's Promise to Abram

Genesis 15:1-6

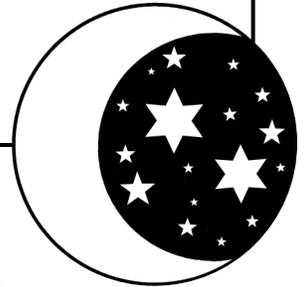


Key Verse:

[God] brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then [God] said to him, "So shall your descendants be."
Genesis 15:5

The Point:

God cares for us as communities, families, and individuals.



Introduction

The Lord calls Abram (later renamed Abraham) to travel to a new land. The Lord promises Abram that from him would come a great nation, and that the land that they inhabit would belong to them. Immediately, Abram and his family leave, following God's promise. The Lord repeats the promise when Abram questions his ability to father children at such an advanced age. Abram believes the Lord and is blessed because of it. This is an excellent example of faithful questioning. Abram had faith in God's promise, but he did not fully understand it. Abraham questioned God, and his faith is strengthened.

The Point

God cares for us as communities, families, and individuals. God has a special relationship with Abram. God makes a promise to Abram that he would be the father of a nation, with as many descendants as stars in the sky. Abram responds, not with fear or mistrust, but in faith. God follows through on this promise, and we all reap the benefit of this promise. God invited Abram to count the stars in the sky. Each of those stars is an individual, about to be known and counted, just as each of us is a descendent in faith of the promise that God made, and that Abram believed.

Activities a la Carte

Activities

Supplies

Introduction

Family Ties

Discuss family relationships.

10 min.

- † White paper
- † Crayons
- † Scissors
- † Brown grocery bags
- † Glue sticks

Learning the Story

God's Promise to Abraham

Depict the Bible text.

15 min.

- † Bible
- † Magazines
- † Construction paper
- † Glue sticks
- † Scissors

Activities

Our Shield

Constructing a symbolic shield.

10 min.

- † Activity Sheet #3-2.A
- † Markers or crayons

Father Abraham

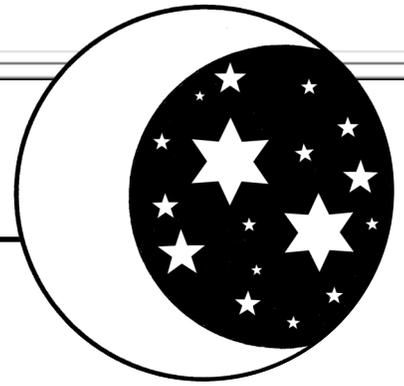
Reimagining an old song.

10 min.

- † Activity Sheet #3-2.B
- † Pens or pencils

Prayer

God's Story @ Home



Introduction (10 minutes)

Family Ties

Discuss family relationships.

Supplies:

- † White paper
- † Crayons
- † Scissors
- † Brown grocery bags
- † Glue sticks

Instructions:

1. **Discuss the following questions. Remember to listen to everyone and give everyone a chance to tell their story. A good way to do this is for each person to invite the next person to speak when they are finished. Everyone has the opportunity to accept the invitation to speak or to pass.**
 - Who are the members of your family?
 - Who did you think of when you heard the term “family?”
 - Was it just your immediate family? Was it extended family? Friends who are close enough to be family?
 - What is the best thing about your family?
2. **Today's story is all about family, so take a few minutes to create a family tree. Use the supplies to create a tree. You can draw the tree on the white paper, or cut it out of the brown paper and mount it on the white paper. Write the names of family members going back a few generations on the branches. Do you have friends who are as close as family? Maybe you could include them as ornaments or leaves hanging from the branches. This is your tree, so make it unique.**



Learning the Story (15 minutes)

God's Promise to Abram

Depict the Bible text.

Supplies:

- † Bible
- † Magazines
- † Construction paper
- † Glue sticks
- † Scissors

Preparation:

1. Decide whether your family will be working together to make one collage or if each person will create their own. Prepare supplies to fit that number.

Instructions:

1. **The first few Bible stories that we will explore this year focus on promises between God and humanity. In today's story, we will hear about a promise that affects all of humanity. You will create a collage that represents what you hear of God's promises. While I read the story, each of you can begin cutting out pictures that represent something you hear. After the story is finished, create your collage.**
2. Read Genesis 15:1-6.
3. Pause to create a collage.
4. Talk about the following:
 - Which parts of the story stood out most to you?
 - Where do you hear God's promise?
 - Describe how your collage represents the story.
 - How are you, as a child of God, part of this promise?
5. **God's promise to Abram is a promise for all of us. God has promised to make a nation of Abram's descendants. As his children in faith, we are charged with keeping God's story and passing it on through the generations.**

Activity (10 minutes)

Our Shield

Constructing a symbolic shield.

You will need:

- † Activity Sheet #3-2.A
- † Markers or crayons

Before class:

1. Print copies of Activity Sheet #3-2.A for each person.

During class:

1. Hand out Activity Sheet #3-2.A and crayons or markers to each person.
2. **In today's reading, God encourages Abram to not be afraid, because God would be Abram's shield. How is God your shield? How does God protect you?**
3. **Using Activity Sheet #3-2.A as your template, create a shield that includes symbols of the ways in which God is your shield. When you are finished, share your shields with each other.**

Activity (10 minutes)

Building Trust

Reimagining an old song.

You will need:

- † Activity Sheet #3-2.B
- † Pens or pencils

Before class:

1. Print one copy of Activity Sheet #3-2.B.
2. If you are unfamiliar with the song “Father Abraham,” search for it on the Internet.

During class:

1. **Can you name any songs about Abram (or Abraham)?** Allow for various answers. If no one names “Father Abraham,” mention it, and maybe sing a line or two.
2. **We have already discussed the idea that we all are part of God’s promise to Abram, since we are all God’s children in faith. We began our time together by talking about our ancestors. Now, let’s remember how we are all part of Abraham’s family by writing our own family into the lyrics of “Father Abraham”.**
3. Gather around Activity Sheet #3-2.B.
4. As a family, fill in the names of some of your ancestors.
5. When you are finished, sing your Father Abraham family song.

Prayer

Encourage everyone to hold hands in a circle. Begin and end the prayer, but leave enough silence in the middle for people to participate.

Now, let's pray together:

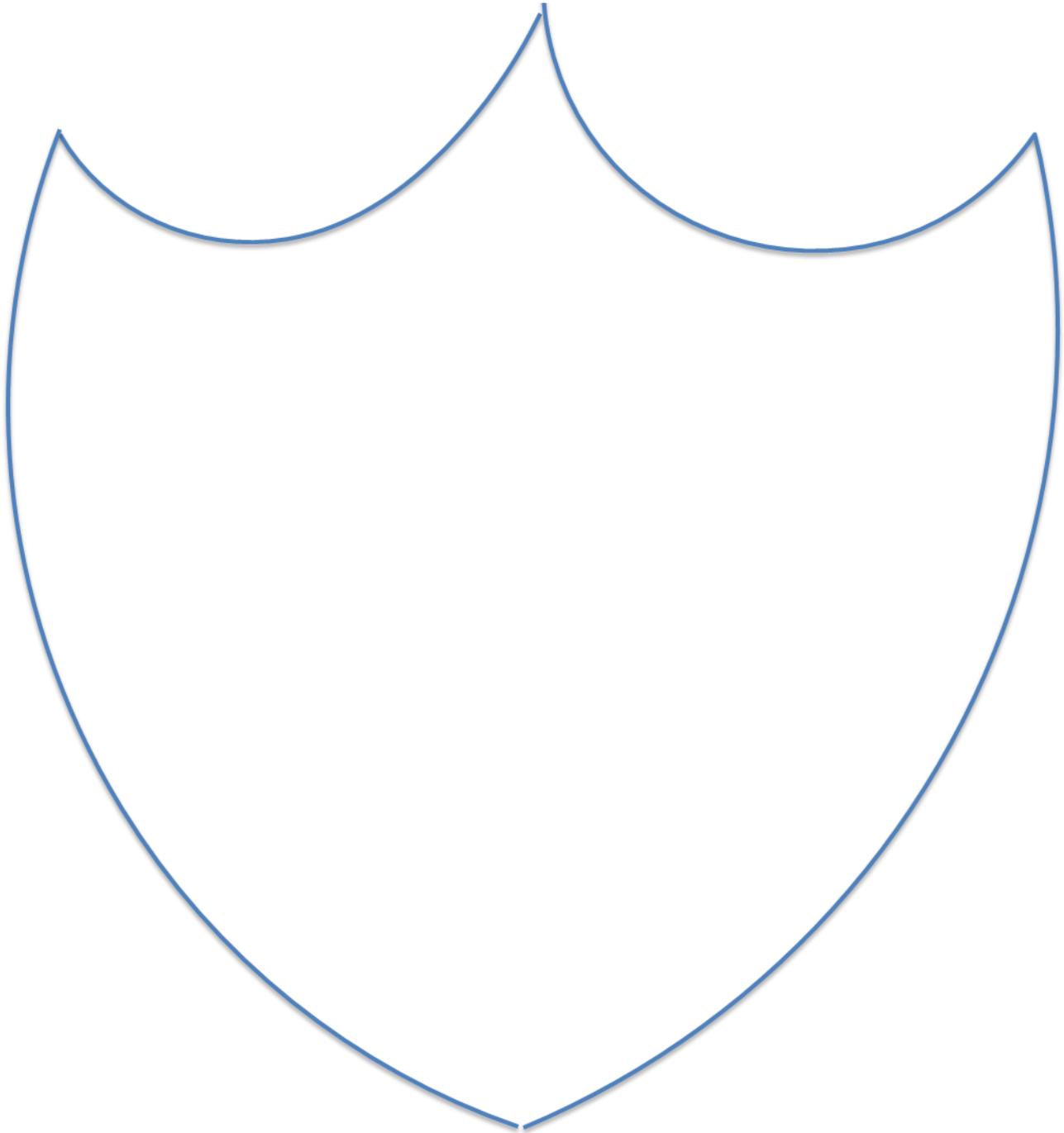
Loving God,

Thank you for the promise that you made to Abram, and that you continue to make to us. Thank you for our families, and for those who are like parents in the faith to us. We thank you for all of our family members who have gone on before us. Invite participants to name ancestors at this time. Please inspire us to live out God's promise this week, and to inspire others to follow God's promise. Amen.

If you have the "Living the Word: Sharing God's Story @ Home" sheet, remember to use it throughout the week as a part of your family devotions!

Our Shield

Constructing a symbolic shield.



Father Abraham

Reimagining an old song.

Father Abraham had many kids! Many kids had Father Abraham.

_____ is one of them, and so is _____,

so let's name lots of names:

We are all God's kids!