

Walking With God

Patriarchs: Abraham & Sarah

UNIT

1

Lesson
Three



Prayer Starter

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit...
Dear Lord, help us to welcome new things into our lives every day and learn from our experiences. We trust that life will lead us in interesting directions. We know that your love and guidance can help everything we do bring us closer to you. Amen.

Hye-Q

What do you remember about Noah and the Ark? Discuss the following questions with your teacher:

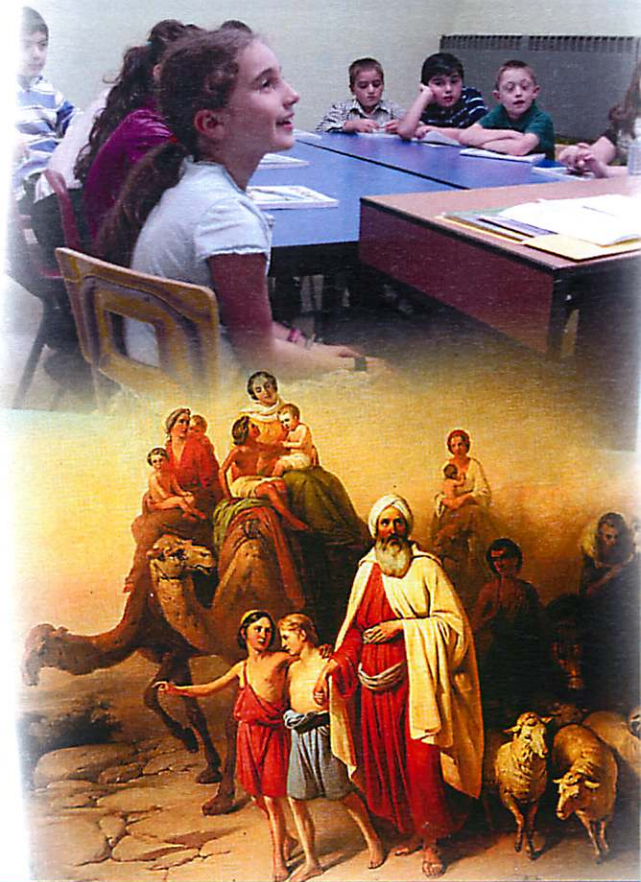
- How did Noah know how to build the Ark?
- Why was Noah so sure that the Ark would save him, his family, and the animals?
- How did Noah and his family know that the flood was over and that there was land nearby?

Daily Bread

Change can be scary and difficult. But sometimes, we must change what we are used to being or doing in order to follow God and make our lives better.

Abram was a descendant of Noah. He and his wife, Sarai, lived in a place called Haran all of their lives. They had servants and livestock and their nephew, Lot, lived with them. They had no children of their own. God had great plans for them, so he asked Abram to leave his home and move to a place called Canaan. This was a very scary thing to do in those days. Abram could not look up Canaan on a computer to find out what it was like. There was no way to learn if the weather was good there, or if there was enough food and water to keep his household alive.

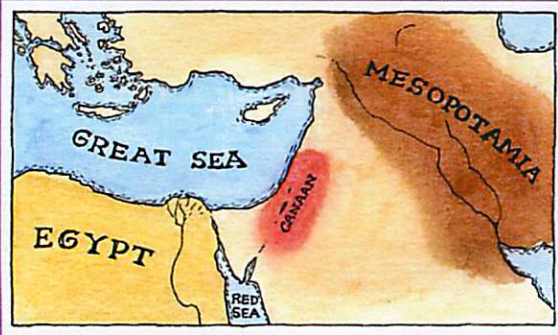
Abram trusted God, so even though he was unsure of how this change would turn out or how long it would take, he followed God's word. It took many years and adventures for Abram and Sarai to finally get to Canaan



and be settled there. Their experiences were not always easy, but they trusted God and were persistent. God changed his faithful servants' names to Abraham and Sarah. He made a covenant with Abraham, promising him that he would be "father of many nations."

Abraham questioned this since he did not have any children. Then God promised him that his wife, Sarah, would have a son. At first, neither he nor Sarah believed it. They thought they were too old to be able to have a child. But, after a few years of living in Canaan, Sarah did have a healthy son whom they named Isaac.

Abraham and Sarah were patient and in the end God delivered to them a family and their own land. So even though they left what they were used to, they ended up with something better.

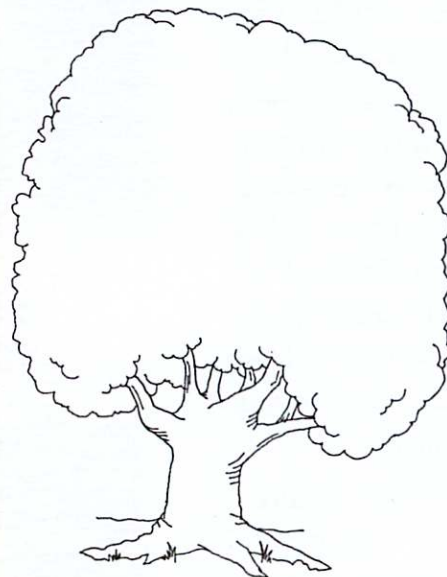


In the time of Abraham and Sarah, the land of Canaan was located between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. There were several different tribes of people living in that area then.



CELEBRATE WITH GOD

Faith Family Tree





PATRIARCHS ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

A long time elapsed after the building of the tower of Babel, and people spread all over the world.

At that time, a good and God-fearing man, by the name of Abraham, lived in the city of Haran. He always listened to God and fulfilled all His commandments. One day, God appeared to Abraham and said to him: **“Depart from your country, from your kindred and your father’s house and go to the land that I will show you.”** God promised the land to Abraham and his seeds (descendants) and to make him patriarch over many nations.

Abraham did all that God had commanded him. He took his wife Sarah and his nephew Lot and went to Canaan, the land that God had showed him.

Many years passed. Abraham and Sarah had aged, but the old couple did not have any children yet. One day, God’s three angels visited Abraham and told him that his wife Sarah would have a son on the same day a year later. Sarah did not believe the words she overheard and started laughing within herself, as she was already ninety years old and past childbearing age. But God’s angel said to Abraham: **“Is there anything impossible with God? I shall return to you next year at the same time, when Sarah will have a son”**.



Exactly one year later, a son was born to Abraham and Sarah and they named him Isaac, which means “**My Smile**”. Isaac was wise and God-fearing boy. Abraham loved him very much and glorified God for having given him such a son.

After a few years, God decided to test Abraham’s faith. He commanded Abraham to offer his beloved son Isaac as a sacrifice to Him. Although God’s demand was harsh, Abraham obeyed because he loved God very much. He took Isaac and two helpers to the place that God indicated. And right at the moment when he was preparing to sacrifice his son, he heard God’s voice saying: “**Do not touch the boy; do not hurt him, since I know that you fear God, because you did not spare your son for my sake.**”

Instead of Isaac, God provided a ram as an offering, while Isaac was freed.

God, seeing Abraham’s loyalty, rewarded him plentifully, for his genuine faith and love. He blessed Abraham and promised to increase his seed to as many as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore.

QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1. Who was Abraham and where did he initially live?**
- 2. Why did Abraham leave his father's houses?**
- 3. What did God's angel say when Sarah laughed within herself on hearing his words.**
- 4. Why did God test Abraham?**
- 5. How did God reward Abraham for his genuine faith and love?**

A SHORT PRAYER TO LEARN

**Jesus, whose name is "Love",
Soften my hardened heart with your love.
Be gentle and merciful
and give me a new life.**



words, the *students must not imitate you*. So you can give several instructions this way: “Simon says put your hands on your head. Simon says put your hands on your shoulders. Simon says bend down. Stand up.” Students who “stand up” are out of the game since that instruction was not preceded by the words “Simon says.”) Afterward, point out to the children that they participated in the game by being obedient, by listening carefully to “Simon.” Explain how they obeyed because they knew that was the best way to try to win the game.

5. As you end the Simon Says game, ask the children to return to their seats. Tell them you will be reading them verses from the Bible that might surprise them. 5 min.

6. Read the Bible from Gen 9:8-17. Then ask one of them to read **Scripture Source** aloud. Discuss when they have seen rainbows and what they felt seeing one (wonder, happiness, excitement). Ask how knowing what it symbolizes might change the way they react to a rainbow. Distribute the construction paper and the “Rainbow Covenant” handout from the back of this manual. Have children write in their answers to the questions. (Use a dictionary to help students define a rainbow.) Discuss. Then ask them to color the mountains and rainbow, cut out around that box, including the title and Bible quote and glue it on the top half of the construction paper. Finally, they may cut around the question box and glue that on the bottom half. Direct students to make sure they share it with their parents at home. 20 min.

7. Read **In the Armenian Tradition**.

8. Invite the students to share the **Family Focus** page at home. Close with this prayer: “Dear Lord, thank you for the obedient and loving example of Noah. Whenever we see a rainbow we will remember his courage and the trust that he had for your word; it will help us to trust you even more and know that in following you, everything will work out well in the end. Amen.” Dismiss the class. 5 min.

UNIT
1
Lesson
Three

Walking With God

Patriarchs: Abraham and Sarah

Key Concepts

1. Sometimes we must change what we are used to being or doing in order to follow God.
2. Leaders are open and adventurous about new directions.
3. The bold leadership of Abraham and Sarah and Armenia’s King Drtad and Queen Ashkhen established enduring communities of believers.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Review the story of Noah.
2. Explore the importance of change and growth in life.
3. Learn about the lives of Abraham and Sarah and how their leadership enabled the first monotheistic religion, Judaism, and by extension, Christianity.
4. Create a “Faith Family Tree.”
5. Discuss how King Drtad and Queen Ashkhen enabled Armenia to become the first Christian nation.

Materials Needed

Scissors
Construction paper
Glue sticks
Crayons, markers
Family Tree handout (from back of this manual)
Individual photos of students (that they brought in)

Note to the Teacher

Look up the meaning - not all will have a specific meaning - of your students’ names (see procedure # 4) and be prepared to share that information.

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and say the opening prayer together.
2. Review the story of Noah in **Hye Q**. Answers
 1. God told him how. (Gen 6: 14-16)

2. Because God told him that his family would be all right. Noah obeyed and trusted God's word. (Gen 6:18) 3. When a dove brought back an olive branch. Noah knew then that there was dry land nearby. (Gen 9:11-12) 10 min.

3. Tell the children that what happened to Noah was a big change not only for the world but in his life. "Today we are going to look at how changes can be a good thing in people's lives and can bring us closer to God and to each other." Stand at the board and ask them if they are the same as the day they were born? (The answer should be "No.") Ask them how they have changed? As they answer, write their answers on the board or have each child come up and write their own answer on the board. Possible answers are: They are bigger; they learned to talk and walk; they didn't go to school when they were babies and now they do; they didn't know math when they were babies, but now they do, they did not know how to read, etc.

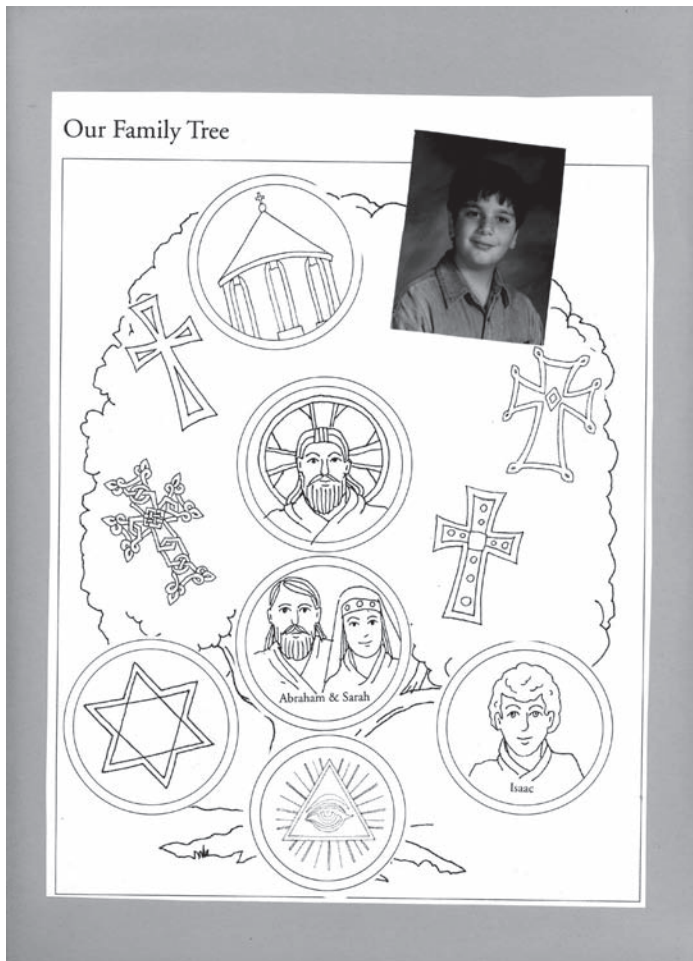
Explain how those changes in their lives took a lot of time – years – and that they would not be who they are today if those changes did not happen. There are also going to be more changes in their lives as they get older and that these can be very good if they help us follow God and make decisions that take us down the right path. 10 min.

4. Read **Daily Bread** together. Discuss how God changed Abram and Sarai's names (Genesis 17: 5, 15) when he made a new covenant with them. Tell them about how your name is part of your identity. Ask students if they were named after a family member. Share the meaning of some names. Write them on the board (including students' names if you have researched them): Michael = Hebrew for "who is like God," Elizabeth = Hebrew for "oath of God," Abraham = Hebrew for "father of many," Sarah = Hebrew for "lady," Marissa = Latin for "the sea," etc. Ask them: "When do people usually get named? (when they are born) What might this say about Abram and Sarai at this time in their lives?" (they, too, were being born into a new life, being God's children, entering into a covenant with him) Also, let them know that when a priest becomes ordained, his name is changed. This is to

symbolize that he has become a new person and he will devote his life to his church and Christ.

Discuss the concept of taking a long trip, the way that Abraham and Sarah did. Ask them how they would feel if they were going to leave their homes without knowing where they are going or how long it would take to get there (scared, excited, worried). What might be some of the challenges of such a trip? (shelter, food, water, rest, transportation, etc.) 10 min.

5. Turn to **Celebrate with God**. Give each child a copy of the handouts, a sheet of construction paper (they might want to choose their own color), markers and crayons, and a pair of scissors and ask them to start coloring the tree, then trim the handout around its border (include the title) and glue it onto the construction paper. Next they will color the circle images and cut them out. (Crosses should be cut out of their circles so that everything can fit on the tree. While they are working, read the **Scripture Source** Bible quote to them. Either read the explanation out loud, or explain in your own words how Abraham was the father of the Jewish nation and how Jesus came from the Jewish nation. Point out and explain each of the cut-outs as the children glue the images onto the tree according to your directions. Explain how each of the symbols is connected to each other as time passed, just the way branches grow from a tree. They should be glued in as follows: God in the roots, Abraham and Sarah in the trunk, Isaac and the Star of David on either side, Jesus above in the middle; above him, the Armenian dome, and then crosses scattered at the top. (See sample below.) They should place their own photo among them. End by referring back to the Bible quote that all nations are blessed by the descendants of Abraham. 20 min.



to change and growth, too! Amen.” Collect family trees to mount on a bulletin board or in class (they can be sent home later in the year). 10 min.

UNIT
1
Lesson
Four

Walking With God

Liberators: Moses

Key Concepts

1. Courage is an important virtue in a living faith and in leadership.
2. God called on Moses to lead his people. Even though it was difficult for him, Moses did his best with God’s help.
3. St. Gregory demonstrated great courage throughout his suffering and long imprisonment. Once liberated, he led the King and Queen of Armenia to Christianity.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Discuss occasions in their own lives when courage is important.
2. Answer review questions on Abraham and Sarah.
3. Complete a “Life of Moses” maze and survey the events of his life.
4. Review the Ten Commandments.
5. Learn and act out the story of St. Gregory and the conversion of Armenia to Christianity.

Materials Needed

Crayons or markers

Maze handout (from back of this manual)

A clear space in the room to be a “stage” with two chairs

Index cards or paper strips with assigned roles (see procedure # 6)

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and say the opening prayer together. Ask students: “We’ll be talking about a special kind of courage today, the courage to do difficult things and encourage others to do the same. Let’s think together a moment. What are some occasions in your life when it might be important to have courage?” Discussion might

6. After clean-up, tell children that many people all over the world follow Jesus and about how Armenia was the first nation to embrace Christianity. “King Drtad and Queen Ashkhen became Christian and wanted to convince the whole country to follow Jesus Christ. This was also a *huge* change from what people were used to. Let’s read about that in **In the Armenian Tradition.**” (Please note that the full story of St Gregory and the enlightenment of Armenia is in the next lesson.)

7. Now have children stand in a circle, holding their family tree in front of them. Thank them for coming to church to learn with you and say the following prayer: “Dear Lord, thank you for bringing us together today to learn more about the amazing people who trusted and followed you. Help us keep their example in our hearts this week. Let us especially remember the example of Abraham and Sarah who left their home and everything they knew behind to follow you and create a new world of believers. Help us to be open