



# Abram and Sarai Went

Goal: To trust and obey God.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

### . . . In Genesis 12:1-8

In the first eleven chapters of Genesis, God is involved with the whole world through its creation, its destruction in the flood, and the scattering of humanity throughout the world. Every attempt God makes at relating with people, God's own creation, is thwarted by humanity turning its back on God. Thus far, we see God's relationship with humanity from the 30,000-foot view.

Genesis 12 is a shift from that perspective. The focus zooms in, and one family is in the picture. The story is now about God, Abram and Sarai, and their promised descendants. God chooses this couple, through no merit of their own. They are not special. They did nothing to earn God's attention. In fact, as the story plays out in subsequent chapters of Genesis, they are flawed and fallible. God's call is one of grace.

God has a command for Abram and Sarai, to get up and go. God will lead them to a land, give them children and descendants, and bless them to be a blessing to the world. Abram and Sarai's response is not one of incredulity or even laughter, at this point, but trust and obedience. Without any evidence, they believe and act.

### . . . In Your Children's Experiences

As a child, whether they recognize it or not, one's whole life thus far is an experience much like Abram's and Sarai's. They are often told to get up and go, and probably with no promises of future benefits given. Parents will say, "Let's go!" and children go. They may fuss or question, but in the end, they will trust and obey, unless they have learned not to trust the individual making the command. Children have the benefit of learning to trust the individual. As far as we know, this was Abram's and Sarai's first encounter with God. They learned of God's faithfulness by doing. Future generations look back to their experiences to demonstrate God's faithfulness.

### . . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Children's first sense of understanding who God is comes through their relationships with others, particularly adults, and primarily their parents. As a teacher or leader, you are a caring adult in their lives who models basic concepts of relationships. Trust is a key element in any relationship, particularly with children because they are developing that sense of who in their world is trustworthy and who is not. Showing up, being a caring adult, listening, and following through on what you say is important in building that trust.

*Gracious God, may I be a trustworthy and caring presence in the lives of the children I encounter. Amen.*



## Supplies

**Music & Melodies**  
(MM) 2023–2024

**Stories, Colors & More**  
(SCM) i–iv, 3, 15, 18

basic supplies  
(see p. vii)

blanket or mats

snack

## Guided Play

choice 1: large tote bag  
(reusable grocery bag,  
paper sack, or small  
suitcase) for each child

choice 2: copies of  
**Grace Notes (GN) 1**

## Exploring

choice 3: copies of **GN 2**,  
star stickers, heart  
stickers, small bowl of  
sand

choice 4: copies of **GN 3**

## GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

### Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Use **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Select the activities that will work best for you and for your children. You do not need to do everything suggested!

“Exploring God’s Grace” choice 3 requires more prep.

### Welcoming and Guided Play

Greet children as they arrive, and say, “Grace and peace be with you.” Prompt them to respond, “And also with you.” Be sensitive to any children who might be coming for the first time. Introduce yourself to parents/caregivers you do not know personally. Tell them that today’s story is about how Abram and Sarai trusted and obeyed God when God told them to move to a new land. Invite the children to choose a guided-play activity to start:

- 1. Packing Up**—Set out large tote bags (reusable grocery bags, paper sacks, or small suitcases), one for each child. Invite the children to pretend they are going on a long trip. Ask them to think about what they will pack to go on their trip. If time allows, let them choose a few things from the classroom to pack for their trip. When they are packed, encourage them to pretend that they are traveling. You might wish to set up a few chairs as a pretend car or airplane. If you have a wagon or other riding toys in your class, let the children use these to “travel.”
- 2. Obey**—Provide copies of **GN 1**. Tell the children that they need to obey the directions and they will find out something about the story for today. The directions are to color in all the X squares with one color, and color in all the O squares with another color. If they obey, they will find a word!
- 3. Following Directions**—Invite the children to play a game of hiding a small object, then guiding another child to find it using the directions “you are getting warm/hot” when the child is close, and “you are getting cold” when the child gets farther away from the hidden object. Demonstrate how the game is played then let the children play together in pairs or groups.

**T** *Transition times can cause children to act out. Giving children something that they enjoy doing provides a way to deal with these times.*

## Transitioning to Story Time

When you sense the children are ready to move into story time, play the following game:

### Follow the Leader

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Invite the children to follow you, and tap each child on the shoulder. Instruct them to get in line behind you and follow where you go. Wander throughout the room and end at the story corner.

When you arrive at the story corner, play “Wherever I May Wander”—**MM 2; SCM 15**. Invite the children to march in place as they listen to the song. Encourage the children to hug themselves when they hear “God’s care is over me.”

### Listening

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Instruct the children to find a place against one wall. Tell them that you will give them instructions. They need to listen carefully and obey the instructions. Use directions, such as take one giant step, turn in a circle, take two tiny steps, take a hop, or those of your own choosing. Give directions that move children away from the wall and back to the story corner.

### Hearing the Story

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Open the Bible to Genesis 12 so the children know the story comes from the Bible. Tell the children that today’s story is about how Abram and Sarai trusted and obeyed God when God told them to move to a new land.

Read **SCM 3**. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, “Amen.”

Tell the children that when they hear the story the second time, whenever you say “God” they should say “Listen!” and cup hands around their ears as if they are listening carefully. Tell them that when you say “Abram and Sarai,” you will ask them what Abram and Sarai should do. They can answer, “Trust in God and obey God!” and hold hands out, palms up, with eyes upward, as if ready to receive a blessing. Read the story again, prompting the children to respond as described above.



Today’s story can be found in *Growing in God’s Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), [www.pcusastore.com](http://www.pcusastore.com).



## EXPLORING GOD'S GRACE

### 1. Abram and Sarai Song

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Teach the children the following song using the tune “Are You Sleeping?” Have them follow your actions. Start with your hands behind your back with your thumbs up.

Here is Abram, *(bring one hand out, thumbs up)*  
 here is Sarai. *(bring the other hand out, thumbs up, and place thumbs side by side)*  
 God said trust, *(lift one hand)*  
 they obeyed. *(lift the other hand and put thumbs back together)*  
 Abram trusted God's word. *(wiggle thumbs)*  
 Sarai trusted God's word. *(wiggle thumbs)*  
 Off they go, off they go! *(move hands back and forth together)*

**L** *Following a story with many directions can be a challenge for children who struggle with attention and get easily distracted. Be attentive to their actions and break down motions as needed so they have an easier time participating. Maintain eye contact to ensure their focus is on you and the motions you are leading.*

### 2. Who Can You Trust?

L C B

Gather the children in a circle. Ask the children to think about things to say that are either true or not true. For example, “Cows eat grass” is true, but “Cars eat grass” is not true. Statements can be serious or silly. As each person shares a statement, the others can say, “I believe it” or “I don't believe it!” Be prepared for some children to be very silly in their statements and responses! Take turns sharing statements until everyone has had at least one turn. At the end of the game, tell the children: Here are some things you can ALWAYS believe.

- ▼ You can trust God! *(I believe it!)*
- ▼ God loves you! *(I believe it!)*
- ▼ God bless you! *(I believe it!)*

**C** *For some children, listening, forming answers, and speaking may take longer. Allow time for these children to formulate answers and to feel truly a part of the session. Be patient and encourage other children to do the same.*



### 3. Three Promises



*Before the session, place some sand in a small bowl.*

Remind the children that God made three promises to Abram and Sarai. See if the children remember what the promises are: children, land, and blessings. Hand out copies of **GN 2**. Point out the three blessings: at the top “Big Family,” in the middle “Land,” and at the bottom “Blessings.”

Tell the children to color the top section either dark blue or black to be the night sky. Give each child star stickers and encourage the children to put the stars on the night sky. Explain that God told Abram and Sarai that they would have as big a family as stars in the sky. The stars remind us of God’s promise of a big family.

Direct the children’s attention to the middle section of the 3. Tell them that it shows part of a map of Canaan, the place where God told Abram and Sarai to go. Suggest that they color the water blue and the land green. Place a thin line of glue on the land section of the picture. Invite children to take a pinch of sand and drizzle it on the glue. Have them shake off any excess sand back into the bowl of sand. Remind the children that the land that Abram and Sarai went to was like a desert, full of sand.

Finally, have the children look at the bottom of the 3. Wonder together what the blessing is that God promised Abram and Sarai. Invite the children to color the picture as they wish. Give each child a heart sticker to place on this section.

### 4. Coloring Page

Hand out copies of **GN 3** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture of Abram, Sarai, and the people and animals. Engage the children in conversation as they color, using the following questions:

- ▼ I wonder, “How did Abram and Sarai feel about moving?”
- ▼ I wonder, “Who went with Abram and Sarai?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What would we do if God told us to do something?”

Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wondering questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.

## LOVING AND SERVING GOD



Call the children to snack time, singing “Praise God, Praise God”—**MM 7; SCM 18**. Repeat words and phrases as seems appropriate.

Have each child put away one toy or object. Invite everyone to sit around a table or on the floor.

Serve the snack that you have planned, and invite the children to repeat the blessing after you.

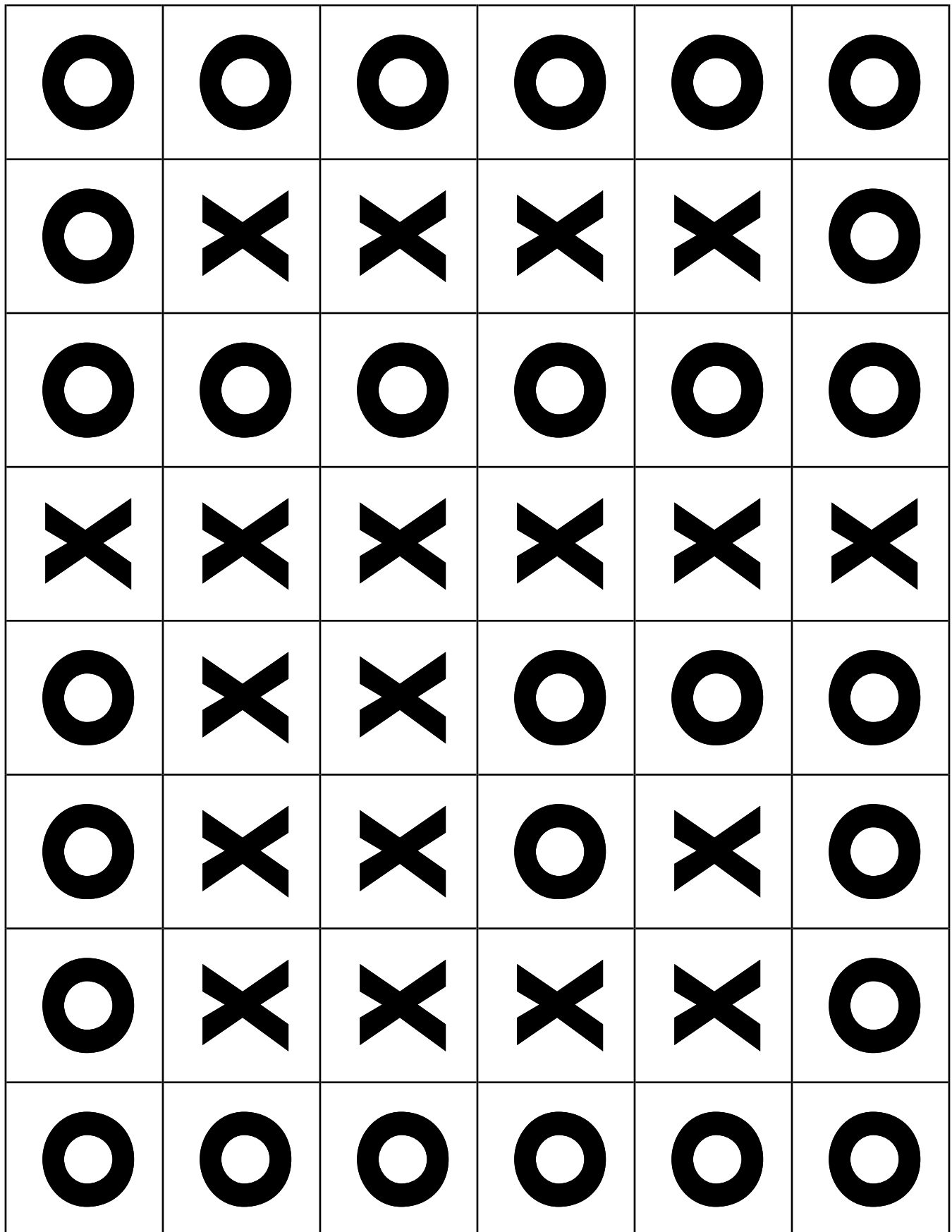
Thank you, God, /  
for the food before us. /  
Thank you, God, /  
for the friends beside us. /  
Thank you, God, /  
for the love between us. /  
Amen. /

Enjoy the snack.

Remind the children that Abram and Sarai trusted God and obeyed God. They listened to God, and God blessed them. Bless each child by making the sign of the cross with your thumb on forehead or hand (let the child choose which they prefer), saying, “(Name), trust and obey God!” Invite the other children to say, “Listen!”

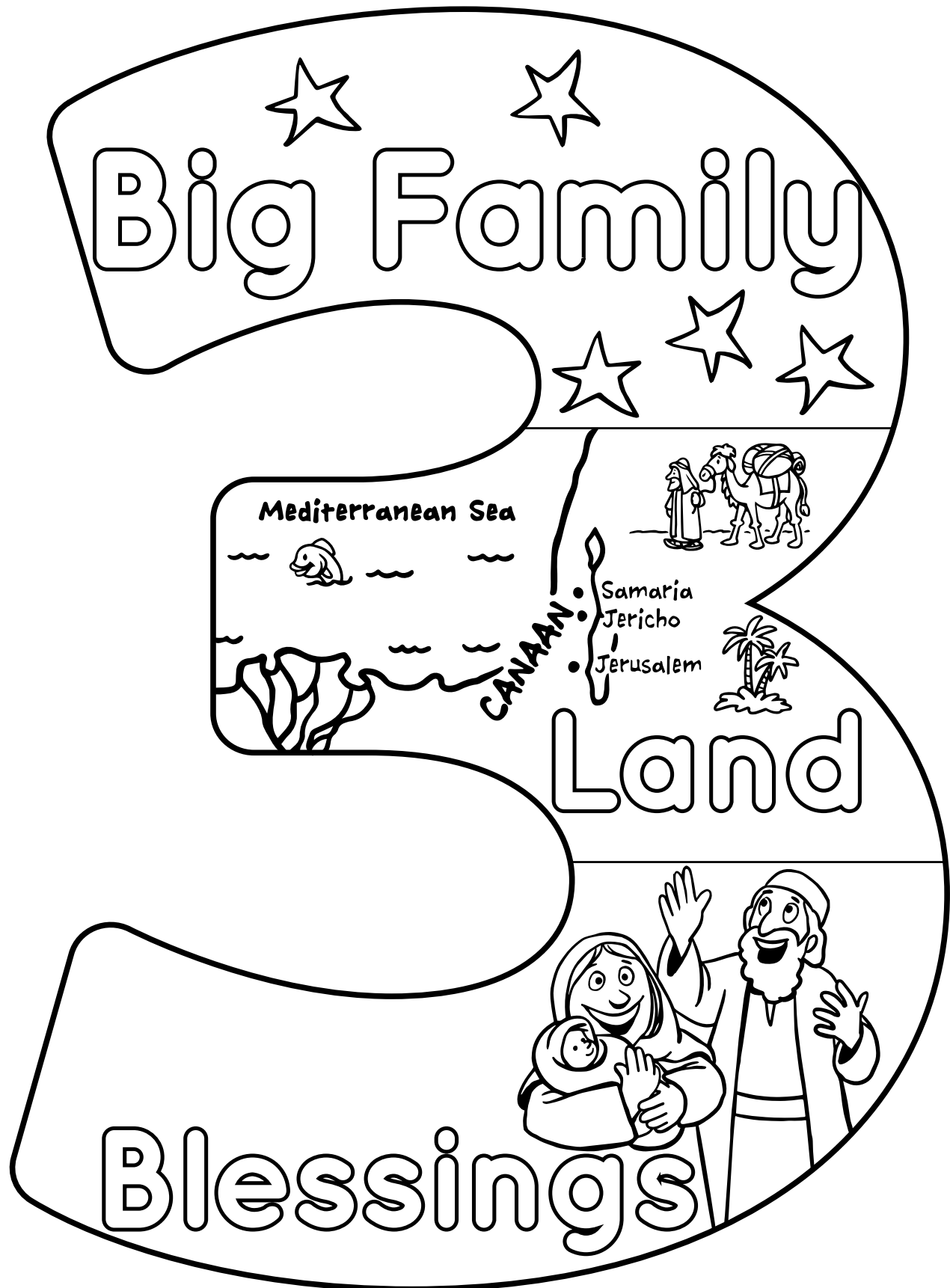


Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit [www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads](http://www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads). Remind the parents and caregivers about the story audio (see p. vii).











## Abram and Sarai Went



Abram and Sarai trusted and obeyed God, moving to a new land.

