

SKY

Learning to Trust God
Series 3—Lesson 1

StoryTime



A Promise is a Promise

Primary 3-7

Bible Text:

Genesis 12:1-9

Lesson Aim:

To teach children the importance of faith and keeping a promise.

Memory Verse:

"Commit thy way unto the Lord: trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass"

(Psalm 37:5)

Words to Learn:

- Promise
- Covenant
- Dependable
- Altar

Always Close in Prayer

The Teacher's Bible Study

Abraham is called the "Father of the Faithful." He had complete faith in the promises of God. It is through these promises to Abraham that God revealed He had a long-range plan. God commands that "the just shall live by *faith*." In every facet and area of his life, Abraham did just this.

One must fully live by faith because God has made promises which affect virtually every part of man's existence. He has promised to help us in trials if we are faithful, and to answer every prayer that is prayed according to His will and in faith. These expressions of faith are not ends in themselves. In fact they are secondary as compared to the Christian's main thrust of faith which is belief in God's promise of the resurrection from the dead and in salvation.

In the beginning Abraham's name was Abram, and he and his family lived in the city of Ur. The city of Ur was located on the banks of the Euphrates River, and about 140 miles southeast of the site of old Babylon. This is where Abram spent his childhood.

Ur was in the southern section of the region of Mesopotamia. It was a bustling trade center. Traveling merchants and ships would bring exotic goods from India and other regions to trade such as: copper ore, ivory, gold, hardwoods, and the alabaster used in statue making. Farmers also would trade a variety of foods. Education in Ur was well developed. Students learned to read, write, and do arithmetic. The religious worship of the region was completely pagan. "Gods" with names like Nanna (the moon-god), Ningal, and Nannar were worshiped there. Private homes had private niches that its inhabitants used to worship these clay idols.

From this city filled with idolatry, God called Abraham and told him to go to another place. When God told Abraham to leave Ur, his family moved nearly 800 miles northwest to a place called Canaan.

Abraham followed the Fertile Crescent as he journeyed from Ur to Canaan. The Fertile Crescent is what its name implies: a large crescent-shaped strip of land that has fertile soil and plenty of water in the wilderness. This fertile land stretched northwest from Ur toward Haran, a city where Abraham lived for a while on his way to Canaan.

Abraham is also called the father of the Israelites. The story of Abraham is told in Genesis 12–25.

A Promise Is a Promise

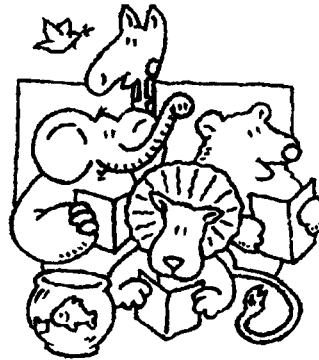
In addition to emphasizing what it means to have faith, discuss what a PROMISE is. Promises are only as good as the people who make them intend them to be.

A promise is a *contract*, or *covenant*. It indicates a solemn assurance that one intends to follow through. When we make a promise we must always follow God's example and fulfill it.

God will keep His promise EVERY TIME! We can completely trust in God. The covenant, the pledge, the oath, and the promise are solemn assurances that you will fulfill an agreement.

God does not like for a person to not keep their word. It is dishonest. □

Simple as 1,2,3...



1. Additional Reading for Teacher Study

Romans 4

Hebrews 6:13–20

2. Are You Listening?

After you read or tell the story you may ask the following questions:

1. True or false: Abram's name was changed to Abraham—TRUE
2. True or false: Abraham is called the "Father of the faithful"—TRUE
3. True or false: God called Abram out of the city of Ur—TRUE
4. True or false: Abram hesitated to obey when God told him to leave the city of Ur with his family?—FALSE
5. True or false: An idol represents the imagination of the man who makes it—TRUE.
6. True or false: A promise is a covenant—TRUE
7. True or false: God never breaks a promise—TRUE
8. True or false: A promise is a very solemn and serious thing—TRUE

3. Word Definitions

These definitions were taken from *Webster's New World Dictionary*.

- **Promise**—a declaration that something will or will not be done; an assurance; a covenant.
- **Dependable**—worthy of trust; to be relied on.
- **Covenant**—an agreement between two or more persons to do or not to do something specified.
- **Altar**—an elevated structure where religious sacrifices are offered.

SKY Story Time

A Promise is a Promise

A long, long time ago in a city called Ur, there lived a lot of people. The people in the city were very busy. When you walked down the streets you could hear many strange languages being spoken by the people. You could see many strange and wonderful things. You could smell many strange scents. It was fascinating!

However, the people in this city worshiped many different "gods." These idols were made by the hands of men. They were made of stone, clay, and wood.

These idols could not talk, they could not walk, they could not see, and they could not hear. Someone had to pick the figures up to move them from one place to another! These idols were fashioned after the imaginations of men. An idol is a creation of man.

Idols represent a lie because man did not *create* God, God cre-ated man. To worship at the feet of a handcrafted idol is blasphemous and an insult to the true and living God. This is why our Creator forbids the worship of idols.

Ur and Him

There was one man within this city who worshiped the true God. He worshiped the God who brought into being the materials from which man fashioned *their* little images!

The man's name was Abram and God later changed his name to Abraham. He trusted God completely. He knew God was good, wise, powerful, and faithful.

Abram knew that if God said He was going to do something He certainly could and would do it!

God had told a distant relative of Abraham's to build a boat and fill it with animals; it was going to rain for forty days and forty nights! And it did!

He knew God was not to be found in the puny images that others worshiped all around him. God noticed this, just as He had noticed the man who built the boat.

How Many Stars?

Abraham's wife was named Sarah, and she was very beautiful. But Sarah and Abraham were childless. Sarah was very sad about this. She wanted to have sons and daughters.

God told Abraham to leave his home, his country, his brothers, and his father's household. This departure from all that was familiar to Abraham required a tremendous amount of faith. Many people depended on Abraham and he wanted to lead them to a better life.

God made certain promises to Abraham, God told him that He would make from Abraham a

great NATION. God told him to look into the heavens and count the stars! That was to indicate how BIG his family would become. God would bless the families of all the earth through Abraham.

What a promise!

So Abraham, Sarah, and his nephew Lot packed their clothing and personal belongings. They put them on the backs of camels and into carts and with the help of servants they gathered their herds of sheep and cattle. They were now ready for the long journey to the new land God would show them.

Abraham said his goodbyes to friends and family. Everyone was probably a little bit afraid and a little bit sad. But, they all trusted Abraham, and Abraham trusted God.

After traveling for many, many days, Abraham arrived at last in the land that God promised. It was beautiful and fertile. Abraham could see that the land was good land. He knew that he and his family would be very happy living there.

Abraham immediately built an altar when he arrived in the new land. He and his family prayed to God, thanking Him for leading them to this new land.

Let's Talk About It...

Always remember *God ALWAYS keeps promises!* In turn God wants us to fulfill any promise or pledge that we make. If we say we will do something then we must do it.

Have you ever been

promised something and the person did not keep his or her promise? How did it make you feel? Disappointed? Sad? Hurt? Probably a little of each.

When a promise is not kept it becomes hard for people to believe the person who makes the "promises." The person is not trusted to be dependable.

A promise is a very serious thing. Never make a promise to someone lightly.

Abraham knew how good, wise, and dependable God is. God's promises can be trusted. He knew God would never ask something of him that would not be good for him and for his family. God will also do this for us. Isn't this a wonderful thing?

Because Abraham showed this type of faith, he is called the "Father of the Faithful." We too must learn to be faithful like God. □ **The End**

Crafty Idea

Remove top from detergent bottle. Use scissors to carve out a 1/2" deep hole from the bottom of the Styrofoam ball—measure to fit the neck of the bottle. Cut yarn into 4" lengths for man's hair; 2" lengths for beard; or 8–12" lengths for a woman's hair. Cut a length of yarn for the belt. Cut a hole for the neck in a 7"x18" rectangle of fabric (figure A). Place the fabric over the neck of the bottle (figure B). Glue on the wiggle eyes to the foam ball; draw on the nose and mouth; glue on the yarn hair and beard. Use yarn for a belt (figure C). □

Crafty Ideas

He's a little Character



Materials To Use:

- Plastic detergent bottle
- 3" Styrofoam ball
- felt pens and glue
- Yarn for hair and beard
- wiggle eyes
- Solid color fabric