



GOD'S CREATURES TELL THE STORY

Abraham and Sarah

Teacher's Packet

FREE ♦ PHOTOCOPY FREELY FOR YOUR CLASS

Five lesson plans, discussion questions for two age bands, a new reproducible Bible Detective worksheet, a ten-question quiz with answer key, background notes covering four subjects the book names but never explains, and projects that need a clear night and a calculator. Built for readers ages 11–17 from the full narrative of *Abraham and Sarah*.

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How to Use This Packet

Three tracks, one book. Pick the one that matches your setting and ignore the other two. Everything here may be photocopied for your own class or family.

Track One — Family Devotions (three weeks)

- Fifteen chapters, a prologue, and two bonus chapters. One chapter a night runs about three weeks.
- Close each reading with one question from page 4, chosen for the age at your table.
- Assign each family member a reporter to follow — Penny, Professor Hoot, or Dominic — and have them report what their reporter noticed that the others missed.
- Use the devotion starters and prayer on page 6 for the Sunday evenings.

Track Two — Sunday School (five weeks)

- **Week 1 — The Call.** Prologue and chapters 1–3. Leave your country, your people, and your father’s house — for a destination not yet named.
- **Week 2 — The Covenant.** Chapters 4–6. Lot chooses first, and God makes a promise while Abraham sleeps through the signing.
- **Week 3 — The Shortcut.** Chapters 7–8. Twenty-five years is a long time, and Sarah has a plan that is legal, ordinary, and wrong.
- **Week 4 — The Visitors.** Chapters 9–10. A meal under a tree, a laugh behind a tent flap, and a man bargaining with God over a city.
- **Week 5 — The Test.** Chapters 11–15 and the bonus chapters. A birth, a wilderness, a mountain, and a substitute in the thicket.

Track Three — Homeschool (across subjects)

- **History.** Ur, Haran, and Canaan in the Bronze Age; the Mari and Nuzi tablets and what they confirm about family law.
- **Science.** Desert water, goat-hair tent engineering, animal husbandry, and the geology of the Dead Sea rift. All four are covered on page 8.
- **Geography.** Ur to Haran to Canaan to Egypt and back — roughly a thousand miles on foot, with herds.
- **Astronomy.** A dark-sky star count. See page 7.
- **Writing.** A journal entry in Ishmael’s voice. See page 7.

WHAT THIS PACKET LEAVES OUT

Two subjects in the book’s own discussion appendix are not carried into this packet: Lot’s offer of his daughters to the mob at Sodom, and the questions framing Hagar’s status in terms of consent. Both are legitimate adult study. Neither belongs on a sheet handed to a room of twelve-year-olds without warning. Hagar is very much present here — pages 3, 4 and 6 — as a woman God sought out and named by a well.

Before the First Session

- Read page 8. Four subjects the book’s science appendix names but never explains are written out there in full.
- Photocopy pages 5 and 9 — one per student. Everything else is for you.
- Check the weather. One activity needs a clear, dark night.

Five Lesson Plans

Each lesson names a key verse, the chapters to read, one main point, and one activity that can be done in the room. The lessons require the book; the verses are ones the narrative itself puts on the page.

1. Go — and He Didn't Ask Where

READ Prologue and chapters 1–3 · **KEY VERSE** *Genesis 12:1–4*

Main point: God names three things to leave — country, people, father's household — and one thing to go toward: a land He will show him later. Abraham was seventy-five, wealthy, and settled. The command is subtraction before it is addition.

Activity: Three columns on the board for the three things left behind. Ask the class which of the three would be hardest for them, and why the order might not be accidental.

2. The Promise He Slept Through

READ Chapters 4–6 · **KEY VERSE** *Genesis 15:6*

Main point: In that world both parties walked between the divided animals, meaning: let this happen to me if I break my word. God puts Abraham to sleep and walks the path alone. Every consequence of a broken covenant lands on God. Paul builds an entire argument on the verse just before it.

Activity: Read Genesis 15:6, then Romans 4:3, then Galatians 3:6. Ask why the New Testament keeps returning to a single sentence about a man believing something.

3. A Shortcut That Was Perfectly Legal

READ Chapters 7–8 · **KEY VERSE** *Genesis 16:2*

Main point: What Sarah proposed was ordinary, culturally accepted, and written into the law codes of the day. It was still not what God said. The consequences fall hardest on Hagar, who had no say in any of it — and God goes looking for her in a desert.

Activity: Ask the class to name something that is legal, normal, and still not right. Then ask how a person tells the difference in the moment, twenty-five years into waiting.

4. The God Who Sees

READ Chapters 9–12 · **KEY VERSE** *Genesis 16:13*

Main point: A foreign slave woman, pregnant and running, is the first person in Scripture to give God a name. Not Abraham. Not Sarah. El Roi — the God who sees me. In between, Abraham talks God down from fifty righteous people to ten, and God lets him.

Activity: Read Genesis 18:23–33 with two students taking the parts. Then ask what Abraham's willingness to keep asking says about what he believed God was like.

5. The Mountain and the Substitute

READ Chapters 13–15 and the bonus chapters · **KEY VERSE** *Genesis 22:8*

Main point: A father, a son who carries the wood up the hill, three days of walking, and a substitute God provides at the last moment. Abraham names the place “the Lord will provide” before he knows the whole of what that will mean.

Activity: List the parallels students can find between Genesis 22 and the crucifixion — the beloved son, the wood, the mountain, the substitute, the third day. Then ask what is different, and why the difference matters most of all.

Lesson three is where most classes get quiet. Let them. It is the only lesson in the set where the main characters are wrong.

Discussion Questions

Choose three or four per session. This book records more failure by its heroes than any other in the series, and the second band is written to take that seriously.

AGES 11–13

1. God told Abraham to leave and did not say where he was going. Would you have gone? What would you have asked first?
2. Abraham let Lot pick the best land first, even though Abraham was older and could have chosen. Why give away the advantage?
3. God told Abraham to look at the stars and count them. Why stars, instead of just saying a number?
4. Sarah laughed when she heard she would have a baby, then said she hadn't. Why do you think she denied it?
5. God named the baby "he laughs." What does it say about God that He turned Sarah's laugh into a name instead of a punishment?
6. Hagar was alone in a desert when God found her and gave her a promise of her own. Who might feel forgotten in your school or neighborhood right now?
7. Abraham kept asking God to spare Sodom for fewer and fewer people. Would you have kept asking, or stopped after the first time?

AGES 14–17

1. Only God walks between the pieces in Genesis 15, while Abraham sleeps. What kind of promise is that, and who is carrying the risk?
2. Genesis 15:6 says Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. Paul builds the doctrine of justification by faith on that one line. What does it mean that the verse comes *before* the covenant sign and long before the mountain?
3. Abraham lied about Sarah being his sister — twice — and it was technically a half-truth. What did he get right about his fear, and wrong about his solution?
4. Sarah's plan with Hagar was legal and customary in her world. Why does Scripture still treat it as a failure? What does that suggest about using culture as a moral standard?
5. Hagar, not Abraham, is the first person in the Bible to name God. Why might Scripture give that to a foreign slave woman rather than to the patriarch?
6. Abraham bargains God down from fifty to ten. Is that boldness or presumption? When does persistent prayer honor God, and when does it stop being prayer?
7. Genesis reports Abraham's failures at length and never softens them. How does that honesty strengthen rather than weaken the account?
8. Hebrews says Abraham lived in tents, looking for a city with foundations he never saw. What does it look like to hold a promise you will not live to receive?

Bible Detective

“A good reporter always checks the details twice.” — Penny the Squirrel. Answer from the book, then verify each one against the verse listed. Answer key on page 10.

NAME _____ DATE _____ SCORE _____ / 9

1. How old was Abram when God called him to leave Haran, and how old was he when Isaac was born? (*Genesis 12:4; 21:5*)

2. What two names did God change, and what were they changed to? (*Genesis 17:5, 17:15*)

3. In the covenant ceremony, who passed between the pieces — and what was Abraham doing? (*Genesis 15:12–17*)

4. What name did Hagar give to God, and what does it mean? (*Genesis 16:13*)

5. How far down did Abraham bargain for Sodom — what number did he start at, and where did he stop? (*Genesis 18:23–32*)

6. What does the name Isaac mean, and who first laughed? (*Genesis 17:17; 18:12; 21:6*)

7. Challenge. What did Abraham tell Isaac when Isaac asked where the lamb was? (*Genesis 22:7–8*)

8. Challenge. How old was Sarah when she died, and where was she buried? (*Genesis 23:1–19*)

9. Super Sleuth. Genesis 25:9 names the two sons who buried Abraham. Who were they, and why is it surprising that both were there?

Family and At-Home

Five devotion starters, a prayer, and one application to carry into the week. None of these require a craft table or more than fifteen minutes.

DEVOTION STARTERS

One — Leaving before knowing. God named what Abraham had to leave and not where he was going. Ask what our family would need to know before saying yes to something, and what God might not tell us. Read Genesis 12:1–4.

Two — Letting someone else choose first. Abraham had every right to pick the good land and handed the choice to his nephew. Ask where each person could give up the first pick this week. Read Genesis 13:8–12.

Three — The long wait. Twenty-five years between the promise and the baby. Ask what our family is waiting on, and what we have tried to force. Read Genesis 15:5–6 and 16:1–2.

Four — Seen by name. Hagar was a servant with no standing, and God came looking for her and asked her a question. Ask who in our lives would be surprised to be noticed this week. Read Genesis 16:7–13.

Five — God will provide. Abraham named a mountain for something that had not happened yet. Ask what our family is calling by faith rather than by sight. Read Genesis 22:8–14.

MEMORY VERSES

- *Genesis 12:2* — blessed, in order to be a blessing.
- *Genesis 15:6* — he believed the Lord, and it was credited to him.
- *Genesis 16:13* — You are the God who sees me.
- *Hebrews 11:8–10* — he went out, not knowing where.

A FAMILY PRAYER

Father, You asked Abraham to leave before You told him where, and he went. Give us that kind of trust when the next step is the only step we can see. Keep us from forcing what only You can give. Help us to notice the people no one else notices, the way You noticed Hagar in the desert. And thank You for a promise You signed alone, so that keeping it never depended on us. In Jesus' name, amen.

APPLICATION FOR THE WEEK

God told Abraham to go outside and count stars he could not count. One clear night this week, take the whole family outside, away from the porch light, and try. Stay out long enough for your eyes to adjust — it takes about twenty minutes, and the sky roughly triples. Then read Genesis 15:5 standing up, outdoors, the way it was first said.

Then pick one promise God has made in Scripture that this family has trouble believing, write it on a card, and put it where everyone will see it every day this week. Abraham had one sentence and a sky. That was the whole of his evidence for twenty-five years.

Activities and Projects

Ordinary household supplies only — a cup of water, a bedsheet, a map, a dark yard. Nothing here needs a craft store.

AGES 11–13

Count the Stars. *Supplies: a dark yard and twenty patient minutes.* Go out, let your eyes adjust, and count every star inside one outstretched fist held at arm's length. Multiply by the number of fists it would take to cover the sky. Then read Genesis 15:5 and consider that Abraham had no streetlights anywhere on earth.

The Evaporation Test. *Supplies: two identical cups of water.* Set one in full sun and one in shade, mark the levels, and check twice a day for three days. Then read Genesis 21:14–16 and work out what a single skin of water meant to a woman walking in that heat with a child.

Build a Black Tent. *Supplies: a dark bedsheet, chairs, a spray bottle.* Drape the sheet over two chairs and sit under it. Then mist the outside and feel how the fabric tightens. Page 8 explains why goat hair does exactly that when it rains.

What a Cave Cost. *Supplies: Genesis 23.* Read the whole negotiation for Sarah's burial plot — it is one of the most detailed real-estate transactions in the Bible. Then answer: why does a man who has been promised an entire country insist on paying full price for a single field?

Two Wells. *Supplies: paper.* Hagar meets God at a well twice — Genesis 16:7–14 and 21:14–19. Chart what is the same and what has changed: who speaks first, what she is promised, and what she is able to see the second time.

AGES 14–17

Map the Thousand Miles. *Supplies: a map app.* Plot Ur, Haran, Shechem, Bethel, Egypt, Hebron, and Beersheba in order. Total the distance, then divide by the pace of a herd of sheep — about ten miles a day at best. Convert the answer into months.

The Covenant Ceremony. *Supplies: paper.* Research how a suzerain treaty worked in the ancient Near East: who walks, who witnesses, what the penalty clause says. Then write one page on what changes when only one party walks the path.

Ishmael's Journal. *Supplies: paper.* Write eight hundred words as Ishmael, an old man on the day he stands beside Isaac to bury their father (Genesis 25:9). Do not resolve his feelings for him and do not make him bitter by default.

The Bargaining Table. *Supplies: nothing.* Stage Genesis 18:23–32 as a live negotiation with two students. Run it twice: once with Abraham pushing hard, once with him hesitant. Then ask the class which version the text actually supports, and what evidence they used to decide.

Write the Missing Entries. *Supplies: the book's Appendix H and page 8 of this packet.* Four entries in that appendix describe content that was never written — each begins “this would explain.” Find all four, then research and write one of them properly, in Dominic's voice, in about three hundred words.

For the Teacher

The book's science appendix names four subjects and then describes what an entry about each one would say. Here they are, written out.

DESERT WATER SOURCES

Wells in that country were dug to a water table fed by winter rain, then lined with stone and capped — the covering stone in Genesis 29 is standard equipment, not decoration. Herders also read the landscape: a line of green in a dry valley marks shallow groundwater, and springs collect where porous limestone meets a harder layer beneath. Because a well took enormous labor and could not be moved, water rights were property, and disputes over them were treaty matters (Genesis 21:25–31). Abraham's conflicts with neighbors are almost all about water.

TENT ENGINEERING

Black goat hair is coarse and spun loosely, so a dry tent has visible gaps that vent hot air and let a breeze through while the dark fabric blocks direct sun — shade without a heat trap. When rain hits it, the fibers swell and the weave closes, and the roof sheds water. The material is heavy, repairable a panel at a time, and can be woven wider each year as a household grows. Interior curtains divide it into rooms, which is why Sarah can be listening from inside while three visitors eat outside (Genesis 18:9–10).

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

A Bronze Age herder's wealth was managed, not just owned. Flocks were kept mostly female, with few males, since one ram serves many ewes — which is why gifts of livestock in Genesis list precise ratios. Breeding was timed so lambs arrived in late winter, when new grass could feed the ewes. Sheep gave wool and milk; goats gave milk, hair, and tolerance for rough browse, so mixed flocks were safer than either alone. Everything moved on foot, so herd size was limited by pasture and water within a day's walk — which is exactly why Abraham and Lot had to separate (Genesis 13:5–6).

THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM

The cities of the plain sat in the Dead Sea rift, an active fault zone with natural bitumen and petroleum seeps — Genesis 14:10 mentions tar pits there directly. Proposed natural mechanisms include an earthquake igniting those deposits, and there is ongoing debate about an airburst event at one candidate site. Excavations around the Dead Sea have found towns abandoned abruptly in the Bronze Age, some with burn layers. None of this identifies Sodom with certainty, and the honest summary for students is that the setting is real, the mechanism is debated, and Genesis attributes the timing to God rather than to the geology.

TWO NUMBERS WORTH STATING CAREFULLY

The book says people in Abraham's time could see about 8,000 stars. Roughly 9,000 are visible to the unaided eye across the whole sky, but only a few thousand are above the horizon at any one moment — still dozens of times more than most students have ever seen. And “two gallons of water a day” is the high end of the range for hard desert labor, not a daily average. Both are close enough to teach; neither should be quoted as exact.

WHAT THE TABLETS CONFIRM

Clay archives from Mari and Nuzi document the family law behind several scenes: a barren wife providing a servant to bear a child on her behalf, adoption and inheritance customs, and the legal weight of a purchased burial plot. They do not mention Abraham. What they establish is that the customs Genesis reports were real customs of that era — the story fits the world it claims to happen in.

Professor Hoot's Quiz

Ten questions. Circle one answer for each. Scoring guide and answer key on page 10.

NAME _____ DATE _____ SCORE _____ / 10

1. Where did Abram originally come from?
a) Egypt b) Ur of the Chaldeans c) Jerusalem
2. What did God promise Abraham?
a) Military victory b) A peaceful, settled life c) Land, descendants, and blessing for all nations
3. How did Abraham respond to God's first call?
a) He obeyed and went b) He asked for a sign first c) He refused
4. How old was Abraham when Isaac was born?
a) Seventy-five b) Eighty-six c) One hundred
5. What does the name Isaac mean?
a) He laughs b) Gift from God c) Promise kept
6. In Genesis 15, who passed between the divided animals?
a) Abraham alone b) God alone c) Both together
7. What name did Hagar give God at the well?
a) El Shaddai — God Almighty b) El Roi — the God who sees me c) Jehovah Jireh — the Lord provides
8. Abraham bargained for Sodom down to how many righteous people?
a) Fifty b) Twenty c) Ten
9. What did Abraham tell Isaac about the lamb?
a) "God Himself will provide it" b) "You are the lamb" c) "We will find one on the way"
10. According to Genesis 15:6, what was credited to Abraham as righteousness?
a) His hospitality b) His obedience on the mountain c) His faith in God's promise

Bonus. Abraham made serious mistakes and Genesis records every one of them. Name one, and say in a sentence why you think Scripture kept it in.

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Answer Keys and Where to Go Next

QUIZ ANSWER KEY — PAGE 9

1	b — Ur of the Chaldeans	6	b — God alone
2	c — land, descendants, blessing	7	b — El Roi
3	a — he obeyed and went	8	c — ten
4	c — one hundred	9	a — God Himself will provide
5	a — he laughs	10	c — his faith

Bonus. Accept any of: lying about Sarah twice, the arrangement with Hagar, sending Hagar and Ishmael away. Good answers notice that a story willing to record its hero's failures is a story trying to tell the truth rather than sell a man.

Question 10 is the one to slow down on. Not his hospitality, not the mountain — and the mountain came decades later.

BIBLE DETECTIVE ANSWER KEY — PAGE 5

- Seventy-five at the call; one hundred at Isaac's birth — twenty-five years (12:4; 21:5).
- Abram to Abraham, Sarai to Sarah (17:5, 17:15).
- God alone, as a smoking firepot and blazing torch; Abraham was in a deep sleep (15:12–17).
- El Roi — the God who sees me (16:13).
- He began at fifty and stopped at ten (18:23–32).
- "He laughs." Abraham laughed first, then Sarah (17:17; 18:12; 21:6).
- That God Himself would provide the lamb (22:8).
- One hundred twenty-seven, buried in the cave of Machpelah near Hebron, in a field Abraham purchased (23:1–19).
- Isaac and Ishmael — the two sons who had been separated for most of their lives stood together at the burial (25:9).

SCORING GUIDE

9–10 correct — Senior Correspondent. Reading at the level of detail Penny would sign off on.

7–8 correct — Field Reporter. Solid. Send them back for the two they missed and let them find the verse themselves.

5–6 correct — Cub Reporter. The story landed; the covenant chapters did not. Re-read chapters 5 and 8.

Under 5 — Back to the Newsroom. Not a failing grade. Read the book together rather than assigning it.

WHERE TO GO NEXT — MORE FREE DOWNLOADS

- **The Six Sacred Rules of Divine Reporting** — one-page classroom poster.
- **Meet the Divine News Team** — one page, four character cards.
- **The Divine News Team: An Origin Story, David and Goliath, Daniel in the Lions' Den, Elijah and the Prophets of Baal, Noah's Ark Adventure, Joseph and the Coat of Many Colors** — Teacher's Packets.
- **52 Questions: A Year of Family Bible Conversations** — one a week, from across the series. Coming soon.

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