
ABRAHAM: UNDER THE BLESSING OF GOD

Grade Level:5-6 /10-12y




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Jewish Religious Education: Blessing – G'd's Covenant with Abraham

Author(s):

	<p>Jewish Religious Education</p>	<p>Susanne BENIZRI-WEDDE, Educational Consultant for the Israeli Religious Community of Baden and teacher of Jewish Religion in Karlsruhe, Pforzheim and Mannheim.</p> <p>Bruno LANDTHALER, Lecturer at the University of Jewish Studies Heidelberg</p> <p>Learning materials by: EVA JENNY KORNECK</p>
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Key Words

Abraham, covenant, circumcision, family

Competences/Learning Outcomes

- Students will understand the concept of blessing by differentiate the covenants of Noah, Abraham and Moses. Students can connect the covenant with Abraham with the growing of a family - respectively their own family
- Students know the different signs of each covenant.

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Descriptions



Jewish Religious Education: Blessing – G'd's Covenant with Abraham

Relation to life: With the Brit Mila, the covenant between Abraham, as the progenitor of the Jewish people (Bnei Israel), and God is renewed from generation to generation. Jewish parents have their sons circumcised on the eighth day after birth, if the child's health permits. The topic of circumcision is encountered by the 5th/6th grade students in everyday life through the discussions about the legitimacy of circumcisions. There are always boys without a Brit Mila who consider being circumcised in accordance with Jewish tradition.

Textual reference: The covenants of God with His people are constitutive for the Bnei Israel. While the sign of the Noahite covenant (Gen 6:18; Gen 8:22; Gen 9:8-17) is the rainbow (Gen 9:12f.), the covenant with Avraham is renewed by circumcision (Hebrew Brit Mila, Gen 17:10-14). Signs of the covenant at Sinai, where Moses makes the covenant with the Bnei Isarel (the 12 tribes) on behalf of Israel (Exodus 24), are the tablets of the law with the Ten Commandments (Ex 20.1-21).

Theological reference: The Tenach (Jewish Bible) describes various covenants between God and man. With these covenants, God enters into an obligatory relationship with human beings. The covenants of the Torah are of particular importance. In Bereshit (Genesis) and Shmot (Exodus), three essential covenants between God and man are reported: After the flood event, God makes a first covenant with Noah on behalf of all humanity (including creation), which includes God's obligation to preserve the world in the future (Gen 9:9-17) and requires human beings to observe minimal rules (Noachide commandments) towards God and his fellow human beings (Gen 9:6). In Genesis 17:4, the covenant between God and Awraham is the first time a covenant is made with an individual. The content of the covenant is the promise of numerous descendants and a land of one's own; the sign is circumcision (Brit Mila). At Sinai (Ex 24-34) God makes the covenant with the Bnei Israel (the descendants of Abraham); the people of Israel thereby enter into the obligation to keep the commandments of the Torah.

Ritual reference: The Brit Mila translates as "covenant of circumcision". According to Jewish custom, the foreskin of the male penis is removed. The Brit Mila is performed by a mohel, the circumciser, who is specially trained for this purpose. Circumcision is a commandment of the Torah that is followed even by most secular Jews, as it is considered an important part of Jewish identity. The Brit Mila is considered a sign of the eternal covenant between God and the Jews.



First Phase: Development of the Topic in Own Subject Lessons

Teaching Steps	Jewish Religious Education
Overall Lesson Objectives / Competences for the Forum	Students can explain the concept of blessing with reference to the covenants with Noah, Abraham and explain and present the story of Genesis.
	Presentation Material: M6/E (as a word puzzle)
Entry	Students try to count the grains that a handful of sand contains. They work either on their own or in groups. (Alternative: stars on M5). (Reference to the Abraham narrative)
Elaboration I	Students put the word puzzle M6/E in the correct order. Two students work together.
Fuse I	Students compare the results with the Torah (Gen 12:2 and Gen 22:17).
Elaboration II	Each student bears names of their preceding generations into the family tree (M7).
Fuse II	Teacher moderates a conversation in which students explain the meaning of Gen12:2 and 22:17 by means of the family tree.
Elaboration III	Students use M8/E to work out God's covenant offers.
Fuse III	The results are reviewed in conversation (M8/E).
Consolidation / Completion	Students formulate their own blessings for each other on paper stars (M3), stick them on a blue poster and hang the poster up as a "sky" in the classroom.

Second and Third Phase: Presentation and Exchange in Mixed Small Groups at Stations

- Find these phases in the "Guidance for Teachers" on:

www.sharing-worldviews.com

Fourth Phase: Reflection in Own Subject

- Find these phases in the "Guidance for Teachers" on:

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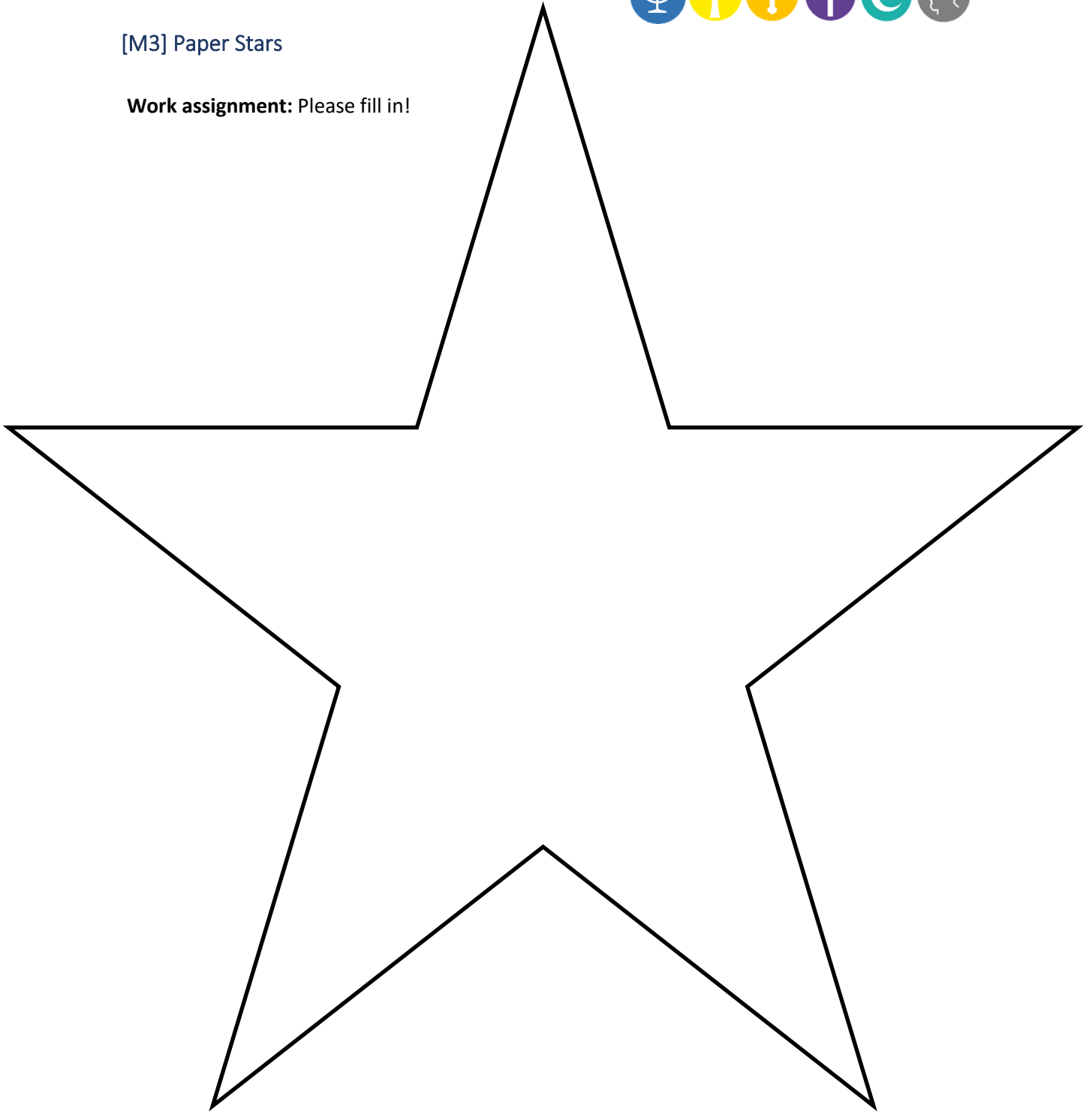


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Material

[M3] Paper Stars

Work assignment: Please fill in!





[M6] Word Puzzle

According to Gen 12:2 and Gen 22:17

Work assignment: Find the right order!

And I will make you
and make big and several
yours of the sky and how
the sand,

of the marginal people
Descendants
that I will bless you
your reputation

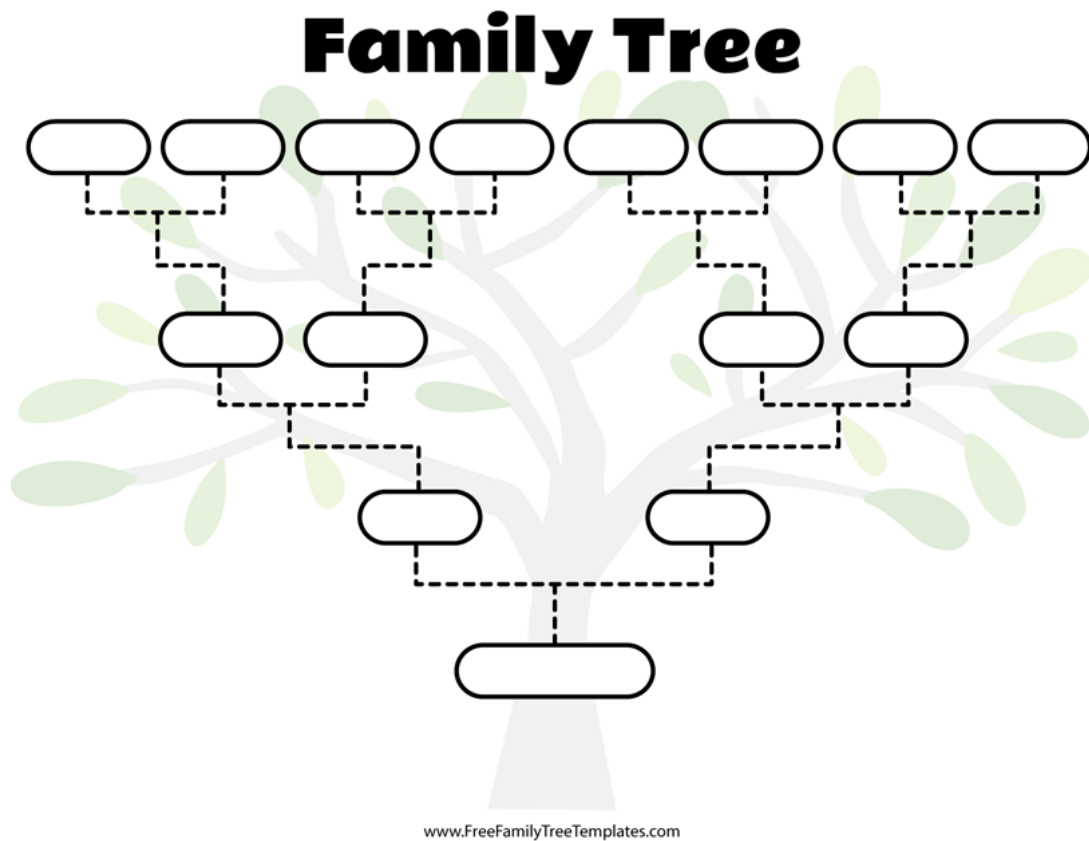
and you shall be like
the stars one
To be a blessing, to
a large one of the
Sea is





[M7] Family Tree (Genealogical Table)

Work assignment: Write your name on the bottom board, then the names of your parents, then your grandparents, then their parents and so on... How far have you got?





[M8] The Covenants of G'd's with His People

Work assignment: G'd makes a covenant with people again and again. What external signs of this are you familiar with? Read the passages from the Torah and fill in the table.

obligation of the people			
G' d's promise			
sign of covenant			
covenant between G' d' s and...			
torah	Gen 9:1-13	Gen 17:1-12 Gen 12:1-2	Ex 19:1-21



Expectation horizons for the materials



Jewish Religious Education: Blessing - G'd's covenant with Abraham

M3/E:

Entries in the stars: I wish my fellow human beings: Health; that God is close to them; that they have good friends...

M6/E:

And I will make thee a great nation, and magnify thy fame; and thou shalt be a blessing, that I will bless thee, and multiply thy seed as the stars of the flames, and as the sand that is upon the brink of the sea.

M8/E:

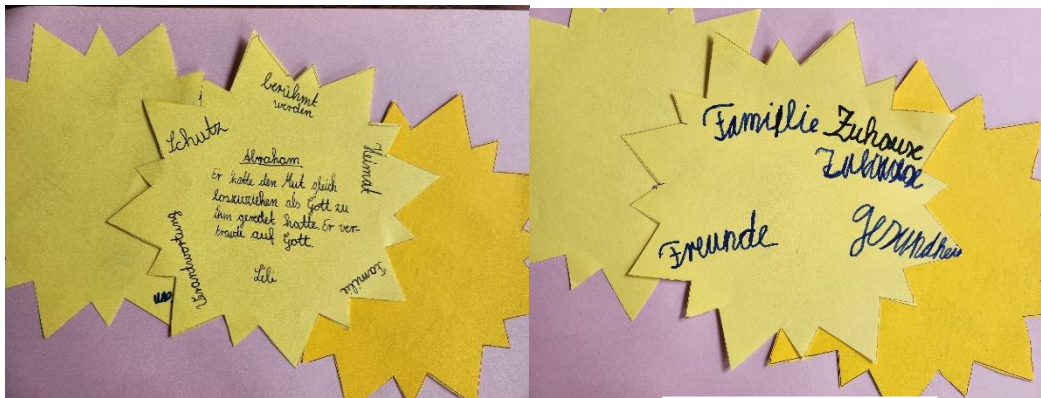
Torah	covenant between G'd and...	sign of covenant	G'd's promise	obligation of the people
Gen 9:1-13	Noah	rainbow	11: no more flood	eat kosher meat, do not kill another human being; fill the earth
Gen 17:1-12 Gen 12:1-2	Awraham	renaming Awram to Awraham and Sarai to Sarah	4ff: Awraham becomes the progenitor of many peoples; land of Canaan; eternal covenant also for descendants	circumcision
Ex 19:5 Ex 20:1-21	Moses	Ten Commandments	19:5: Israel is G'd's own people; 20:6: G'd shows mercy to those who love Him	Keeping the Ten Commandments



M3/E:

What blessing means to Abraham: "God's protection and companionship on the way from Ur to Canaan (Gen 12:1-9); that God wants a great nation to arise from him (Gen 12:2); that God wants to make him famous (Gen 12:2); that God wants to bless people through Abraham (Gen 12:3); that he can pass on God's blessing (Gen 12:3)"

Examples for securing results M3/E:



Blessing for Abraham
and Sarah

There I have
experienced
blessings



Bibliography

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