# Blessing Israel™ 2023

## THE LEGACY OF ISRAEL

*Activities for Kids*

International Fellowship of Christians and Jews®

## Today's Story

**Explain to the children:**

Now, we are going to hear a story based on the Jewish Oral Tradition, teachings that were passed down through the generations since God gave Moses the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. Jesus would have heard this story. The Jewish Oral Tradition is now written down in what is called the *Midrash* (mid-raush). It's about when Abraham was a young boy, and how he came to believe in the One True God of Israel.

**Read the story:**

Once there was a little boy named Abram who lived in a cave. His mother had hidden young Abram there when he was just a baby in order to save his life. You see, there was an evil king named Nimrod, who had vowed to kill this little baby because he had been told this boy would light up the whole world. Nimrod was the most powerful man of his time, and he didn't want anyone to outshine him.

Baby Abram cried in his cave until God sent the angel Gabriel to take care of him. The angel stayed with Abram until he was old enough to take care of himself. When Abram was big enough, he left the cave for the first time.

It was nighttime.

Abram looked up at the night sky for the very first time. The stars lit up the dark night sky. They were spectacular! Abram could barely believe his eyes. In the middle of the stars was the biggest light of all – the moon. The moon was incredible! It lit up the darkness and was the brightest light in the sky. "This must be God!" Abram decided excitedly. He stayed up all night worshiping the moon and basking in its light.

But when morning arrived, the moon disappeared.

In its place, came an even greater light – the light of the sun. The sun was much brighter and more powerful than the moon. The sun gave warmth and light to the whole world. It was the most magnificent thing that Abram had ever seen. Abram thought, "I must have been mistaken. Surely the sun is God!" So Abram worshiped the sun all that day and basked in its glory. But when evening came, a great darkness swallowed the sun. Abram could no longer see the sun, and instead it was replaced by the moon and stars again.

Young Abram was confused. The stars were not God. The moon was not God. And the sun was not God. Abram realized that there must be something greater than the stars, better than the moon, and more powerful than the sun. There had to be something that caused the moon to come out at night and the sun to rise in the morning. Abram realized that there had to be one God, above everything in the world, Who ran the world, even if He could not be seen.

Abram worshiped  this God all night and then God revealed Himself to the boy. Abram promised to spend his life teaching the world about the One True God, Who created us all and loves everyone. Little Abram grew up to be the Patriarch Abraham, and indeed, he did light up the world with the news of the One True God.

(*Midrash* Hagadol, Genesis 11:28)

## Apply It — Rebus Prayer

Use the rebus prayer below to bless the children of Israel this week.

Dear God,

I 👏 for 🧒🧒🧒🧒 to have enough

🍛 to eat, to have 👕👖 to wear, and

to have a place to 👶 .

I 👏 that You will always keep your 👀

on the land of 🏳️ Israel and your 🧒🧒🧒 .

Please keep them safe in your 🤲 .
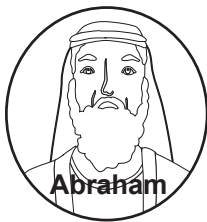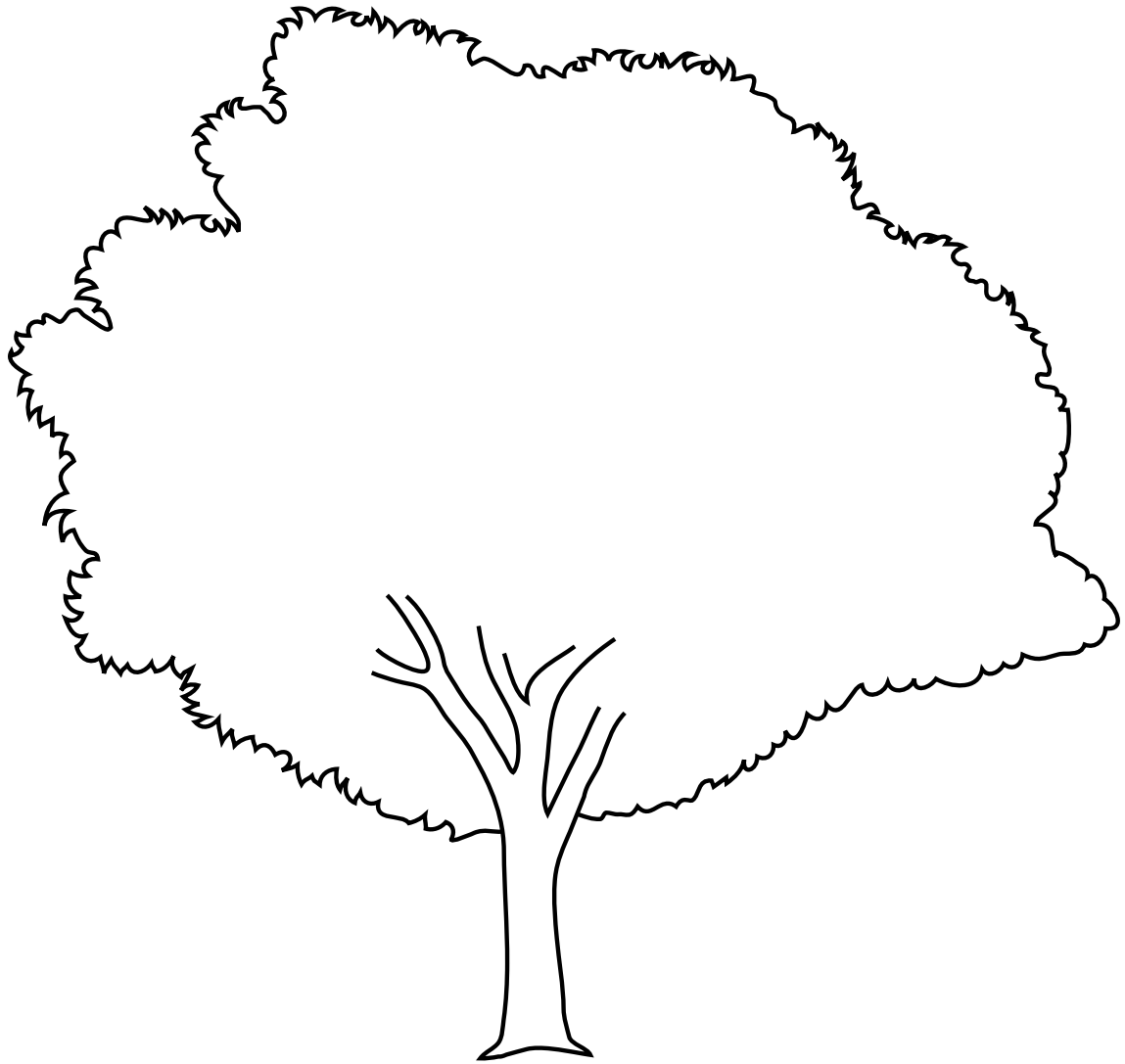
Thank you, God, for your promises and

for your ❤️ for 🏳️ Israel and for me!

Amen

## Apply It — Write Your Own Prayer

Write your own prayer to bless the children of Israel this week.

Dear God,

_____

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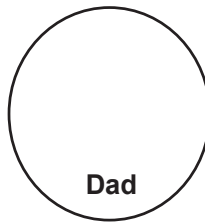_____

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## Activity — God's Family Tree

Color in the tree below. Color the characters, and then cut them out.
Paste them on the tree. Be sure to add you and your family to the tree!
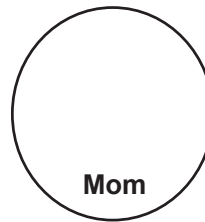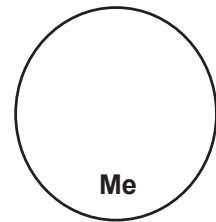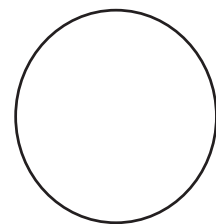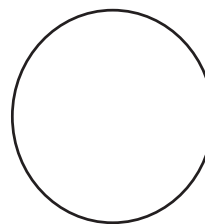


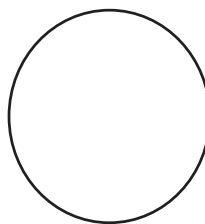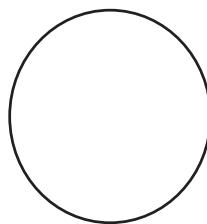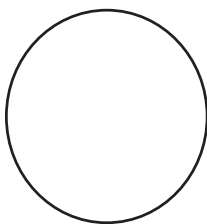**Abraham**   **Sarah**   **Dad**   **Mom**   **Me**
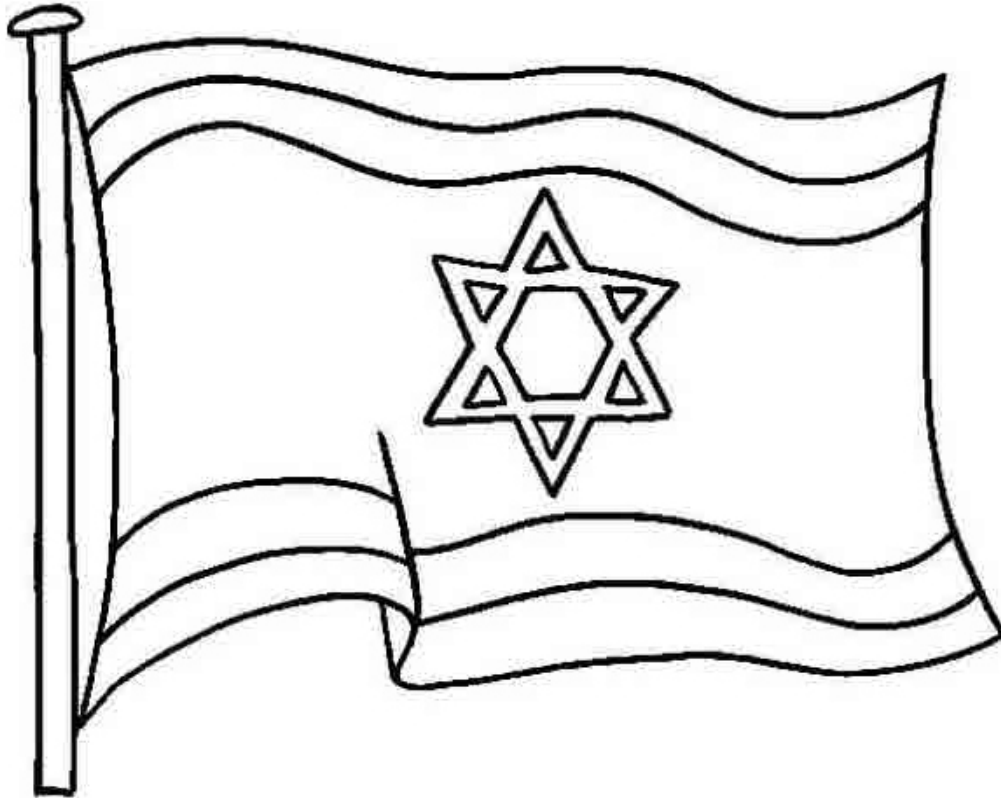
## Activity — Map of Israel

Color in the map below. Use different colors for each area.

West
Bank

Gaza

ISRAEL

© Free Vector Maps.com

## Activity — Flag of Israel

Color in the flag of Israel below. Have fun using the colors
of the Israel flag!

## Activity — Emblem of Israel

Color in the emblem of Israel below.

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## Activity — Israel Word Search

Can you find all twelve of the words ralated to Israel below?

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Y H Y Q B I B L E Q E Z A F A
J I I S R A E L B V R N J Z O
O V S R T K C Y N G X V S I N
L G P S B N A B U E N G B R M
O R C R E T C H R I S T I A N
R S T L O C S I Q V S Z S D C
D B B E L M U P R O P H E C Y
G N L G L O I R S G X E S H W
A R A A H N Z S I I P N A B K
F L N C Q X T B E T A J J C S
I G I Y R N E R X D Y B O Q U
H O T Y P F K D W E L G L A E
V D D S A J E W I S H A Z Q Q
I R R U J H P E Q I F O N D Y
E F N G Q I P O V E R T Y D L
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|---|---|---|---|
| Promised Land | Christian | Prophecy | Bible |
| Security | Poverty | Israel | Lord |
| *Aliyah* | Jewish | Legacy | God |

# Let's Learn Hebrew

# Family Time

## Blessing with Love

*"I will bless those who bless you,*
   *and whoever curses you I will curse;*
*and all peoples on earth*
   *will be blessed through you."*
GENESIS 12:3

**Twice a year, on special Jewish holidays,** people from all over the world come to the Western Wall, one of the holiest places in the Jewish faith. It is the last remaining part still standing of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem where all Jews came to worship, including Jesus and his family. The people crowd into the plaza to receive a special blessing that Aaron, the High Priest and Moses' brother, first gave to the children of Israel in biblical times. In fact, the priests who give the blessing today can trace their family ancestors all the way back to Aaron!

**The first time we see a priest blessing the children of Israel** is in Leviticus 9:22, where we read: *"Then Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them."* Yet, while this practice of blessing others became a firm tradition for both Christians and Jews, there is no place in the Bible where the priests are actually *commanded* to bless anyone.

The Jewish sages, who were wise students and teachers of the Jewish Bible, explain why this is so. A blessing, by its very nature, must come from the heart. They taught that a blessing must come from a sincere desire to shower another person with love and favor. This is why God could not command the priests to bless others. It had to come from love, not from duty or obligation.

**In Genesis, we learn that God promised** that those who bless the people of Israel would themselves be blessed. At The Fellowship, we have actually seen this promise come true over and over again.

## Here is one story:

Jay and Jo Anne are a couple who wanted to bless the Jewish people and Israel. After hearing about *The Fellowship*'s program that helps poor Jewish people from other countries come home to Israel, they decided to give enough money for four Jews to return home – one person for each member of Jay and Jo Anne's family.

On the very day they decided to do that, Jay and Jo Anne received not one, not two, but four unexpected checks in the mail. But do you know what was most amazing about those checks? When they added up the money, it was the EXACT amount they had planned to donate.

**How cool is that? But the story doesn't end there.**

Jay and Jo Anne continued to bless the people of Israel many times and contributed in different ways – from donating money for food boxes, for orphanages, and to help bring more Jews back to Israel. Soon, Jay and Jo Anne saw many of God's blessings come to them. Their children were successful at work. Their granddaughter was healed of her allergies. Other family members were also healed.

**What a wonderful story. But the real reason to bless Israel is because God wants us to.** And most important, we need to bless Israel because we want to do that, too. Like the priests, we need to bless with love.

All blessings are valuable – in the form of prayer, in giving to others, or in working on behalf of the people of Israel. But as you bless Israel, remember to also love Israel and the Jewish people.

The greater your love for Israel, the greater your blessing will be!

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### Family Talk

1. Going clockwise, let one family member tell the person next to them what they love about them.

2. Discuss how you can bless each other as a family.

3. Ask how your family can be a blessing to your community.

4. Share why it is important for Christians to love Israel and the Jewish people.

5. Share with your family the ways you thought about blessing Israel in class during the prayer activity. Now, think about ways your family can work together to bless Israel.

6. Discuss what your legacy is.

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