

Baby Talk

Some of your baby's first words may sound like these.

Spanish: Mamá y Papá

[ma-MA ee pa-PA]

French: Maman et Papa

[mamah ay papa]

German: Mutti und Vater

[MOO-ty oont FAH-tair]

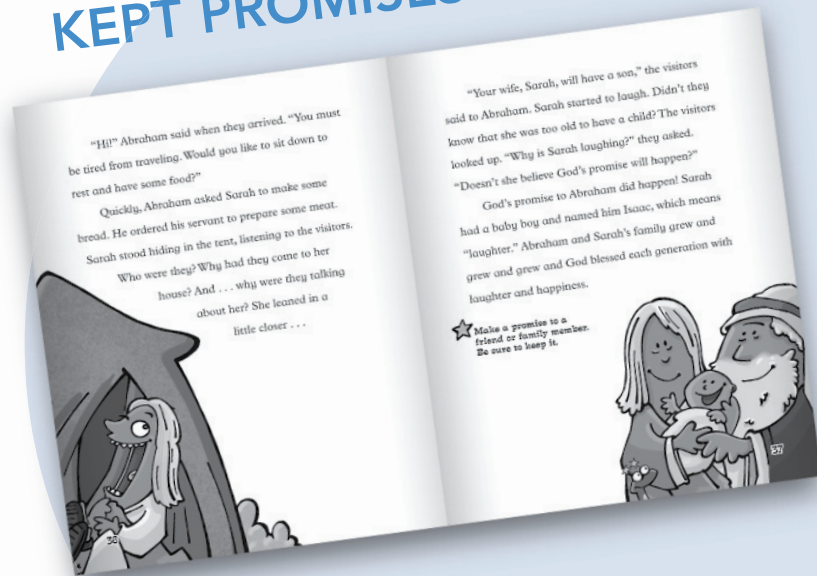
Norwegian: Mamma og Pappa

[MA-ma oh PA-pa]

Dutch: Mamma en Vader

[ma-MA ain FAH-der]

KEPT PROMISES



Ha! Dive into Abraham's and Sarah's remarkable story of faith. Let joyous laughter resound when God's promises to us are fulfilled.



Purchase the Spark Story Bible at sparkbibles.com.

Copyright ©2011 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced.

3 Months

3 Months

3

Parent Pages **Splash!** Birth to Three Faith Formation

Splash! Parent Pages

Where Faith Begins

by Dr. Diane Hymans

Babies come into the world completely dependent on those who provide for their most basic needs. The roots of faith lie in this reality. What counts as faith for an infant is found in the experience of being cared for by others.

Each stage of development related to our emotional lives presents a particular challenge that grows out of the relationship between our emotions, our biological growth, and the social world in which we live. For infants, that challenge is to develop a healthy sense of trust in the surrounding world. This is necessary for children to grow into dependable persons who trust their ability to handle the circumstances of life, and who are able to relate to others in healthy ways. Trust must be appropriately balanced by a sense of mistrust. Not everyone in our world is trustworthy and children must be able to discern this reality for their own survival. In healthy individuals, trust outweighs mistrust, but everyone needs some of both.

The source of this trust is found in the most basic care a child receives from loving parents. When a child realizes that someone will feed her when she is hungry, comfort him when he cries, change her when she is soiled, or offer protection when he feels afraid, that child will likely come to trust that the world is a good and safe place to be.

When parents provide loving care, they are sowing seeds of faith.

In a sense, parents stand in for God at this point in the child's life.

Faith can be understood as a profound sense of trust in God. To have faith in God is to trust that God will keep God's promises to us. When parents keep faith with their babies by giving them the loving care they need, they are sowing the seeds of faith that we pray will produce fruit as children grow.

Diane Hymans, Ed.D., is professor of Christian education and associate academic dean at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio. She teaches courses in ministry with children and youth.

One Parent's Perspective

With the birth of my first child, I realized that I was no longer on the bottom of the generational ladder. Now I'm on the middle rung of child-parent-grandparent.



Laughing Baby

Do you remember your emotions on the day you learned that this baby was coming? Imagine the surprise that the elderly Abraham and Sarah experienced when their guests informed them that they, of all people, would have a baby! We know that Sarah laughed, and the Bible suggests that it was laughter of unbelief rather than joy.

Genesis 18:1-15

Like Abraham and Sarah, your baby may be learning to laugh. Use a children's Bible to tell this story to your child or retell the story in your own words. Hold her in front of a mirror during this story time. Laugh out loud together and share the joy of knowing that nothing is impossible for God.



Share the joy of knowing

Reassuring Promises

Life does not always unfold in the ways in which we hope it will. Although we are sometimes disappointed or discouraged, we can trust God to keep every promise God makes. God promises to love us always, without condition. In Genesis, God made a promise that Sarah, although advanced in years, would have a son. God keeps every promise.

During family devotion time, snuggle with your baby as you retell the story of God's promise to Abraham and Sarah. Your infant will not understand "promise," but your constant love builds the foundation for that understanding. Your child is comforted, nurtured, and made to feel safe by the sound of your voice and your loving touch. Hold him and softly sing, "God keeps every promise, promise, promise. God keeps every promise, because God loves us so."



Smiles All Around

Some churches arrange to have Sunday school during worship times to ensure a quieter worship atmosphere. However, many church members, young and old, enjoy meeting and watching little ones as they begin to learn about God's love through worship. The worship service may still be time for a good nap, but expect that before, during, and after the service when your child is awake he will be fascinated with what is taking place in the pews behind you as well as up front near the altar. What a great way to introduce the generations who worship God together!

Good Night, God

At the end of the day before those little eyes close, there comes a wonderful few minutes for sitting quietly with your baby. As you turn down the lights and settle in a rocker, tell your baby "Now it's time to say good night to God." Some parents enjoy praying the bedtime prayers they said as children. Others may prefer to talk with God about the events of the day. Taking time to pray before sleep brings peaceful and comforting closure to your day and encourages your child to develop a lifelong routine of ending the day with God.

that nothing is impossible for God.

Family Conversations

Your infant is beginning to take note of his surroundings. Family voices are recognizable. At this stage, infants may be excluded from family mealtimes; however, baby's mealtime can provide some wonderful moments not just between mother and baby but also between members of the entire family. It may take extra effort, but try to schedule at least one feeding time together each day when the family can gather around as the baby is fed. Include the baby in the conversation. This is the beginning of a family tradition, using mealtime as a time to gather the family together.

The Songwriter Speaks

John Hermanson: Twin Cities, Three Bands and More

Q: *So many people rave about the music in Minneapolis/St. Paul. What's it like?*

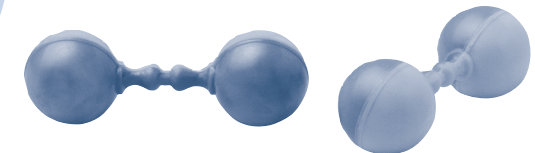
A: "The music scene in the Twin Cities is great. I think a lot of it has to do with the many music venues that put a premium on creating great listening environments. It's a privilege to be a part of such a great community of musicians."

Q: *What about your musical projects?*

A: "I have a studio in Lowertown St. Paul and record my own music and produce other bands and singer-songwriters as well. I'm in three bands: Storyhill, Alva Star, and the Hopefuls. I'm grateful to be able to make a living making music, though I feel pretty scattered most of the time. I also work as co-music director at Oak Knoll Lutheran Church in Minnetonka and have been writing liturgy and music for services there."

John's song "Every Grain of Sand" is Track 3 on the Sleepy Time Tunes CD.

Crib Notes by John Bush



Tummy Time Peek-a-Boo

Encourage your infant's head and neck muscle development with a game of Tummy Time Peek-a-Boo. This game will help introduce your baby to this new, vulnerable position on her belly, and place you at her level to help put her at ease. Place her belly-down on your bed, surrounded by pillows. Kneel on the floor next to the bed, so that you are face-to-face. Peek up over the edge of the bed and call her name in a sing-song tone. Duck down to hide, then peek up again. Begin with just a few minutes of play, adding time as she grows stronger and more comfortable.



Family Kin-nections: Sing a Little Song

Research has shown that music helps a young child develop language patterns. Make up your own tunes about things your child's grandparent does with her such as "Poppy loves Rosie, and sends a kiss, kiss, kiss," or "Nana and Papa are coming soon, soon, soon," or "God loves Gracie's family, Mommy, Daddy... Gram and Gramp."