

The Story of Abraham

Background

Focus: the Father of the Great Family (Genesis 12:24-25:11)

“The Great Family” has become as many as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand in the desert. But there is still an original mother and father to remember, honor, and learn from.

Material

The basket for The Story of Abraham is on one of the Old Testament shelves.

It contains:

- a tan felt strip underlay
- 3 rocks in a small box
- clear boxes of sand, dust, and stars
- statue of three strangers
- bunch of twigs wrapped in twine
- bowl of fire
- knife and long piece of twine in a small box
- ram
- cave



Movements

Move with deliberation to the shelf where the material waits.

Pick up the basket containing the material and return to the circle. You may need to say:

Take the underlay from the basket and begin to unroll it – just enough to place the first object – right to left (storyteller’s perspective).

Words

Watch. Watch where I go.

Everyone needs to be ready.

This is the story of Abraham, the father of the Great Family. He and Sarah went from Ur to Haran and then on into a new land.

Place the three rocks representing the altars at Shechem, Bethel, and Hebron on the underlay as you say "God was there" at each place

And when they came into the new land, Abraham went up on a hill at Shechem to pray and God was there. He prayed to God at Bethel, and God was there. Then they pitched their tents in Hebron, and God was there, too.

Place the three clear boxes containing sand, stars, and dust on the underlay as you say what each box represents.

God promised Abraham and Sarah that they would be the mother and father of a great family. The family would be as many as there are grains of sand in the desert, stars in the sky, and dust in the land.

But Abraham and Sarah had no children.

Place the statue of the three strangers on the underlay.

Then three strangers came out of the desert and told them that they would have a child. They laughed. The child was born. And they named him "laughter."

Place the bundle of twigs wrapped in twine on the underlay.

Isaac grew. And when he was a boy, God appeared to Abraham and said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. Offer him as a burnt offering upon the mountain." The next day he cut the wood and took a donkey, two helpers, and his son and began to walk towards the mountain. On the third day, they could see it.

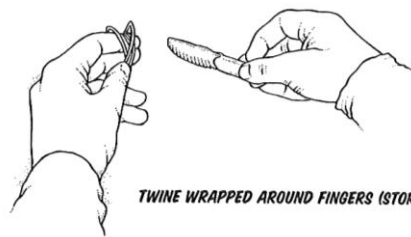
Place the bowl of fire and the small knife on the underlay.

Abraham told his helpers to stay there with the donkey, and he and Isaac went on alone. Isaac carried the wood for the offering. And Abraham carried a bowl of fire and the knife.

Isaac said, "Here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the offering?" Abraham said, "God will provide."

Wrap the long piece of twine around your finger as you talk about tying up Isaac, holding the knife in your other hand. Place the twine and the knife on the underlay.

When they came to the place for the sacrifice, Abraham tied up Isaac. He picked up a knife and was about to kill him for the sacrifice when an Angel came and said, "No. You do not need to do this."



TWINE WRAPPED AROUND FINGERS (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)

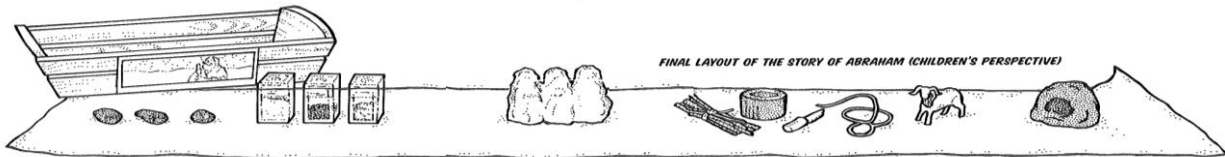
Place the ram on the underlay when you speak of the ram appearing.

Then Abraham looked, and there was a ram caught in the bushes. God provided the ram for the sacrifice.

Abraham untied Isaac and they went down the mountain. The angel called to him again and said, "God says, 'I will make you the father of a great family... as many as the grains of sand in the desert and the stars in the sky. And I will make of you a great blessing, because you obeyed me.'"

Place the cave on the underlay.

Then Sarah, Abraham's beloved wife, died, and he buried her in a cave at the end of the field near the Oaks of Mamre. After Abraham helped find a wife for Isaac, he died and was buried in the cave beside Sarah. Isaac and his wife Rebekah had twins, Esau and Jacob, so the Great Family grew.



Sit for a moment and look at the story from beginning to end to let the story rest. Then begin the wondering.

- I wonder what part of the story you liked best?
- I wonder what part of the story was the most important?
- I wonder what part was about you or what part you were in?
- I wonder if we could leave any of the story out and still have all that we need?

After the wondering is over, put the story away carefully. Pick up each object in reverse order and remind children what the

*object is, saying, for example,
“Here is the cave where
Abraham and Sarah were
buried,” After all of the story is
back in the basket, carefully
model how to roll the underlay
back up and place it in the
basket as well. Return the
lesson to its spot on the shelf.
Then return to your spot in the
circle and dismiss the children
one by one to do their work*

Jerome W. Berryman, *The Complete Guide to Godly Play Volume 6: 15 Enrichment Presentations for Fall* (2006), pp. 32-37.