

Abraham and Isaac- Genesis 22:1-18

THE POINT

Focus:

God is able to provide in unlikely circumstances.
God blesses those who trust and obey him.

Application:

We can trust God by obeying.
We can worship God with our whole hearts.

Last Week:

2 Weeks Ago:

HEART CONNECTION (4-6 MINUTES)

MATERIALS:

- wrapped present containing a toy
- Optional: Other birthday decorations like party hats, signs, or balloons

Content: Set the scenario for an object lesson involving sharing a new toy by having the kids pretend their at a birthday party. Choose a child (Maybe the one with the closest birthday?) to unwrap the present... emphasize that this is just a pretend party to help us understand today's lesson!

Continue with a dialogue similar to this:

Now, you just opened a present on your birthday. Do you want to share it right away? Or do you want to play with it by yourself for a little while?

Let them respond... they might want to play with others, or they might think "share" is the right answer for church. It won't ruin the illustration! Open the conversation up to the rest of the class:

Have you ever received a gift that you didn't want to share? Maybe it was a special item that was breakable, or something you had waited for a long- time to open.

Last week in our story we met Abraham who had waited a long time to have a son. We're going to read today about how Abraham trusted God, even though it was very, very hard!

STORY CONNECTION (9-12 MINUTES)

MATERIALS:

- God's Presence candle*
- Figurines- 5 wooden figures
- wood sticks (easily found outside on the ground outside)
- background felt
- smaller (~6x6in) square of felt
- felt mountain
- altar square
- flames
- donkey and ram (felt, wood, or plastic)

Instructions: Instructions here:

*In many Old Testament stories, we use a candle to signify God's presence in the story, and God's presence through the Holy Spirit in our classroom. God guided the Israelites with a flame by night, and showed the presence of his Holy Spirit to the church at Pentecost through a flame. Many churches around the world continue to practice this tradition by lighting a "Christ light" candle at Sunday Services and baptisms. **Many battery-operated "flameless candles" are available for those concerned about safety.**

Have the children sit in a circle for the story. This helps include children who might feel shy, and it helps each child feel equally engaged. It reassures children that they are seen and welcome in the community.

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Background: The prospect of child-sacrifice is alarming, and many teachers question if this story is appropriate for children. It's important to remember that children have a different understanding of the permanence of death, and that stories are often a way for them to work through questions and fears in a removed and healthy manner. One way you can combat fear is emphasizing Abraham's trust in God's provision throughout the story, instead of building suspense. You can tell them the end from the beginning: "God is going to provide a miracle, and Abraham is trusting him. Let's see how God provides and protects"

Genesis 22:1-18.

Set-Up: *Place the story background in the middle of your circle. Place the small felt square in one corner as "home". Stand 1 person (Abraham) here to begin. Directions will be in italics between the text.*

Last week we heard about how God had promised Abraham and his wife Sarah a son, even though they were very old. God himself visited them to make this special promise! This week we're going to see another way that God taught and provided for Abraham.

"Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied.

2 Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah.

Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you."

Place felt mountains in the opposite corner of the story mat.

3 Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac.

Place 3 more figurines, and the donkey, at the home square. Place the sticks with them.

When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about.

Begin to move the group toward the mountains. If you focus your eyes on the objects instead of the children, they will focus, too. If they have questions, remind them to save them until the end of the story!

4 On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. 5 He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you."

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(continued, Genesis 22:7-18)

Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together,

Have Isaac and Abraham walk with the wood sticks toward the mountain.

7 Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, “Father?”

“Yes, my son?” Abraham replied.

“The fire and wood are here,” Isaac said, “but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”

8 Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them went on together.

Bring the two figures to the top of the mountain.

Lay out the altar felt. As you read below, lie the figure for Isaac on the altar.

9 When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. 10 Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. 11 But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!”

“Here I am,” Abraham replied. 12 “Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not harm him. Now I know that you would do anything for God. You have not held back from me your son, your only son.”

Lift Isaac from the altar, and place him beside Abraham.

Place the ram on the altar as you read below.

13 Abraham looked around. There in a bush he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram. He sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham named that place The Lord Will Provide. To this day people say, “It will be provided on the mountain of the Lord.”

God spoke to Abraham and provided a sacrifice. That was God’s presence with the people. Let’s light our candle that represents God’s presence and place it in the story.

15 The angel of the Lord called out to Abraham from heaven a second time. 16 He said, “I am giving you my word that I will bless you. I will bless you because of what you have done,” announces the Lord. “You have not held back your son, your only son. 17 So I will certainly bless you. I will make the children born into your family as many as the stars in the sky. I will make them as many as the grains of sand on the seashore. They will take over the cities of their enemies. 18 All nations on earth will be blessed because of your children. All these things will happen because you have obeyed me.”

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WONDER CONNECTION (3-5 MINUTES)

MATERIALS: None.

I wonder what it was like for Abraham to be asked to give up someone whom he loved so much?

I wonder what it was like for God to see Abraham's obedience.

I wonder what Abraham felt when he saw the ram God provided?

What do you wonder?

SPIRIT CONNECTION (7-10 MINUTES)

MATERIALS: Coloring supplies: paper, crayons, pencils, hard drawing surfaces (floor, clipboard, or a table).

Take a few minutes to talk quietly with the Lord while you draw, write, or just think inside your heard. Talk with God about the story today. This is a quiet time for you to spend with the Lord, not with your neighbor or anyone else.