



## On your marks

There are many 'journey' stories in the Bible. To reinforce the travelling/moving/changing theme, you might like to tell them in a similar style to this one, actually moving from place to place around your church or hall.

If the whole story is too much to learn, try having a different storyteller at each stop, then they only have to learn a little chunk.

This version owes a lot to Jerome Berryman's Godly Play summary of the story of *The Great Family*.

## Get set

All the equipment is unnecessary but fun. It would be brilliant to have a tent up at Shechem, Bethel and Mamre, or a parachute to sit under to hear the story. Check out the map of Abraham's journey in a Bible to get the basic layout of the room. Some children might like to follow the journey on a map. You may want to use questions like these after either version of the story:

- I wonder what they found it hardest to leave behind at each place?
- I wonder what they enjoyed about being on the journey?
- I wonder why God asked them to go on the journey?

## Go!

### 1 Ur

*You'll need: a picture of a ziggurat, something to represent the sun, moon and stars, tents, sleeping bags, plastic animals (ELC), luggage, a length of blue wool leading to the next stop.*

Long long ago, not long after Noah and the Flood, a boy called Abram grew up in the ancient city of Ur. He marvelled at the huge temples to all the different gods and saw the people round him worshipping the sun and moon and stars. But Abram wondered who it was that had made the sun and moon and stars, and started thinking about a God who might be even bigger than the sun and moon and stars. He got married to a beautiful girl called Sarai, but although they loved each other very much, they were very sad, because they didn't have any children. Then Abram's granddad, Terah, decided to move the whole family from the comfortable city of Ur to another city miles and miles away, called Haran. So the whole family packed their bags and their tents, got together their sheep and cows and camels, and set off along the banks of the River Euphrates.

### 2 Haran

*You'll need: A picture of a city and a picture of a desert, or some sand.*

The family settled down in the city of Haran and spent some years there. But the one true God called to Abram and told him to leave the city of Haran and move on. They still didn't have any children.



But Abram and Sarai and all their helpers packed all their things again and set off into the desert. Oh dear - there's no map and no river to lead us this time!

### 3 Shechem

*You'll need: enough stones for one per child.*

But God was leading them. After many adventures, the travellers arrived at a place called Shechem. God told Abram that one day all this land would be his. So Abram built an altar to the Lord. They still didn't have any children.

*(Get the children to pile up the stones)*

Then they moved on again. Oh dear! Still no map - how do we know where to go?

### 4 Bethel

*You'll need: stones again.*

God was still leading them. After even more adventures, they arrived at a place between Bethel and Ai. Abram built another altar to the Lord. They still didn't have any children.

*(Get the children to pile up the stones here too.)* Then they set out again with God leading them all the time.

### 5 The oaks at Mamre

*You'll need: leaves or branches to represent oak trees, little silver stars, bread, milk, yoghurt, water, cold beef in small pieces.*

And they arrived at the oaks of Mamre, near Hebron. Abram and Sarai were still very sad that they had no children. But God said to Abram one night, 'Look up at the stars in the night sky. Can you count them? That's how many there'll be in your family.' *(Give each child a silver star.)* And God changed their names to Abraham and Sarah.

Then one day three mysterious travellers arrived at their tent by the oak trees. Abraham and Sarah rushed to make them welcome, and set out a good meal for them. *(pass round the food for the children to eat)*. The mysterious travellers told Abraham that he and Sarah would have a son although they were so old, because nothing is impossible for God.

And although Abraham and Sarah found this hard to believe, because they were as old as grannies and granddads, in fact, they did have a son, just as God had promised them, and they called him Isaac. And Isaac's children grew up and had more children and they had more children and they had more children year after year after year until centuries later, your parents and then you were born. So God's promise to Abraham came true.