



SESSION

1

God chooses Abram



MEETING AIM

To discover that God chooses us, just as he chose Abram.



BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 11:26-12:9; 13:14-18



BACKGROUND

God choosing Abram, and the promises he makes to him, marks the start of the people of God. Abram's descendants include us today, but it is difficult for young children to see the impact of this ancient story on their lives. We should try to help them see that the God who was kind to Abram and chose him to be his friend is the same God who is kind to, and chooses, us. You may not get that far, but it is enough just to introduce this story of faith to the children to lay the foundations that can be built on in future years.

+ CIRCLE TIME



As they arrive, invite the children to sit down with you in a circle. Share out any refreshments you have and ask them about their week. Share in their excitements and disappointments, and enjoy being a group together. Ask the children if they have any stories about people who have been kind to them this week. What about their friends? And their families?

+ THE FARMER'S IN HIS DEN



You will need: lots of small paper/card copies of a sheep

Sing this well-known rhyme together. Stand the children in a circle, holding hands. Choose one child to be the farmer, who stands in the centre. The song starts:

The farmer's in his den,
The farmer's in his den,
Ee-I-Ee-I-dio
The farmer's in his den.

The following verses follow the same pattern, but with the lines:

The farmer wants a wife / husband...
The wife / husband wants a child...
The child wants a dog...
The dog wants a bone...
We all pat the bone...

For each verse, another child is chosen to join the farmer and their growing family in the middle. During the last verse, everyone (gently!) pats the bone.

When you have finished, talk about what it feels like to be chosen. Also chat about what it's like to be in a family (though be sensitive to all the different kinds of family in your group).

+ BIBLE STORY



You will need: travel equipment including coats, bags, walking sticks (whatever you can gather together); shoeboxes

Show the children the travelling equipment you have brought. Say that you're all going to pretend to go on a journey, so everyone needs to get ready! Give everyone some dressing up props, then tell the following story:

Once, long ago, there was an old man called Abram. Abram loved God. One day, all of Abram's family decided to move house. They gathered all their belongings, as well as their sheep and their cows, and set off.

Encourage the children to put on coats and scarves, pick up bags and get ready to go. If some children want to be cows or sheep, get them to practise their best 'baa!' or 'moo!' Then all start walking around your space.

It was a long, hard journey, but finally they got to a place called Haran. They put all their bags down and Abram's father decided he would live here.

Everyone puts their bags down and takes off their coats. Sit them in a circle.

One day, God visited Abram. *Invite a child to stand up and be Abram.* What do you think God said to his friend? *If the children have any ideas, let them share those now.* Well, God said this: "Abram, I'm going to make your family into a great group of people! You will be famous and everyone will admire you."

Abram was quite old; he was 75. But he gathered his household, possessions, sheep and cows, and set out into the desert.

Encourage the children to put on coats and scarves, pick up bags and get ready to go once more. Start walking to another part of your space.

Finally, Abram came to a place called Canaan. *Stop everyone and ask your Abram to step forward.* God came to see his friend again. He said: "This land will be your home for ever."

Abram built an altar to God, so that he could remember what God said, and worship him there. *Together, build an altar out of cardboard boxes.*

Later, God came to see his friend again. *Ask your Abram to step forward.* God said: "Look all around you! All this will be home for you and your family. Your family will be as big as the number of grains of sand on the Earth."

+ CHATTING TOGETHER



Ask the children these questions, giving everyone a chance to respond if they would like to:

- What's your favourite part of the story?
- What didn't you like about the story?
- How do you think Abram felt when God chose him?

+ CREATIVE RESPONSE



You will need: shoeboxes; paper; crayons

Give the children a shoebox and ask them to think about what they would take on a long journey. What do they need? Invite suggestions such as food, clothes, money or a cuddly toy. Listen to all the suggestions, as some children will think things that seem trivial to us are the most important. Ask them to draw these things and then put them in their box.

As you work, chat about the story and see if any of the children can imagine themselves in Abram's place. If not, explain that God chooses us, just as he chose Abram. What is their reaction to that? This might be a good time to share a story you have which is similar to that of Abram's.

+ PRAYER



You will need: boxes from 'Creative response'

Ask the children to pick up their boxes and walk around the room as you say this prayer:

Thank you God that you chose us as you chose Abram.

Thank you that we can also be your friend.

*When things are hard, please help us!
Amen.*

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