

Abram follows God's voice



**a complete
Sunday school lesson
- 14 creative ideas -**

Genesis 12: 1 - 9

Abram follows God's voice

- a complete Sunday School lesson -

In this booklet we offer you fourteen creative ideas that you can use in your Sunday school, kids ministry, children's church or youth work on the Bible story of Abraham following God's voice.

Fourteen ideas for your Sunday school lesson:

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|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| * Which countries have you visited? | - an introductory activity |
| * Are you a good listener? | - a children's moment |
| * I am going on a journey... | - an icebreaker |
| * Which countries do you know? | - an icebreaker |
| * How do I tell the story of Abram? | - a storytelling tip |
| * Watch the video 'Scraps' | - YouTube video and discussion |
| * Build your own old fashioned phone | - a fun science experiment |
| * I know that sound! | - a creative activity |
| * Quite a walk! | - a creative activity |
| * A suitcase race | - a Bible game |
| * Let's travel to Canaan | - a Bible game / quiz |
| * Create your own paper sandals | - a crafts idea & game |
| * Footsteps in paint | - a crafts idea |
| * Let's build an altar together | - a creative prayer idea |

The Bible story in this lesson:

God tells Abram to leave his country and even leave his family. God promises him that he will tell him where to go. He also gives Abram a promise: many descendants and a large people! God is going to bless Abram. God tells him: "I will bless those who bless you and those who treat you badly I will punish."

Abram listens to God. He is 75 years old as he leaves Harran. Together with his wife and his cousin Lot they travel to Canaan. Once they arrive there with all their slaves and their animals, they stop at the great tree of Moreh. There Abram builds an altar for God, because God had promised to give him lots of descendants. Abram then travels further, to the hills east of Bethel. There he put up his tents, built an altar and prayed to the Lord.

(Genesis 12: 1 – 9)

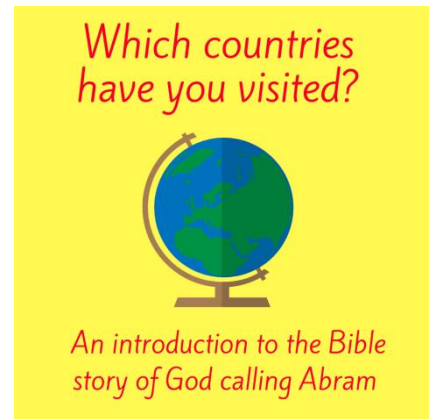


Introductory activity - Which countries have you visited?

Abram had to travel from Haran to Canaan. Two strange places with strange names. How can we help the children to place this story in some sort of geographical context?

"Where is Haran? Where is Canaan?" This activity will help the children to place the story of Abram in a geographical context.

Let's get a map of the world and make a start...



What do you need:

- a map of the world
- lots of little stickers

What do you do:

Do: Place a large map of the world and lots of a small round stickers or little flags on the floor.

Ask: Ask the children which countries they have visited or perhaps live

Do: They can then put a sticker on each country they have been to.

Ask: How many stickers are there on the map?

Tell: Today we are going to look at the story of Abram. God called Abram to travel from Haran to Canaan.

Ask

- Does anybody know where we can find Haran on the map?
- Can we place a (different coloured) sticker on Haran?
- In which country is Haran today?

Tell: Abram travelled from Haran to Canaan.

Ask

- Does anybody know where we can find Canaan on the map?- What is the name of this country today?
- Can we place a (different coloured) sticker on Canaan?

Children's moment / introduction - Are you a good listener?

You could use this for a children's moment in the church service, or as an introduction to your children's programme.

What do you do:

Do: Invite the children to come forward.

Ask: Who is a good listener?

Do: Ask all the children to stand. You are going to tell them to do various different things, such as jump, hop, stand on one leg etc.

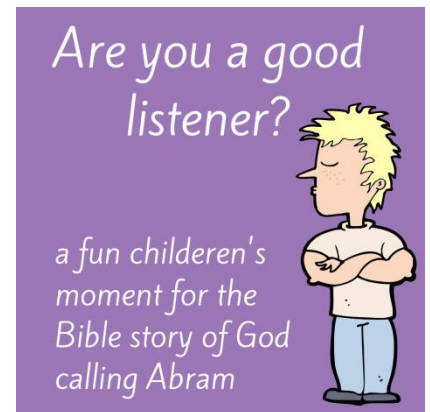
Explain to the children that they are only allowed to do these things if you first say 'Listen!'. For example when you say, 'Listen, jump!' they jump. But if you only say 'Everybody jump' then they have to stay standing still. If they do jump, they are out! For those that know the game, this is a version of 'Simon says'.

Tell: Talk afterwards with the children about how hard it can be to listen properly.

Ask: Are there some things that you wouldn't do even if I told you to do them?

Tell: Today we're going to listen to the Bible story in which God calls Abram to travel to a new, unknown country.

Ask: If you were Abram, would you listen to what God was telling you to do? Why (not)/?

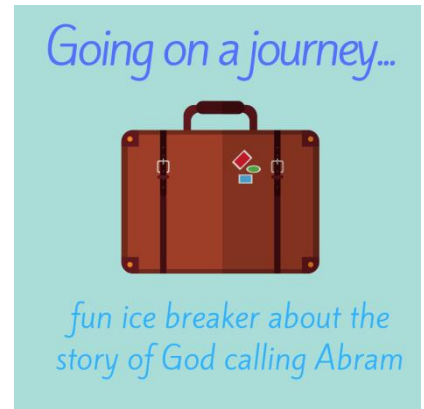


Icebreaker - I am going on a journey...

Abram is going to leave Haran and never come back. He has to take everything he owns with him on the journey.

What do you think Abram took with him when he left Haran knowing he was never going to come back? Can we make a list of all his belongings?

Let's play a fun game about going on a journey without forgetting all the important items that we want to take with us.



What do you do:

Do: All the children are sitting in a circle.

Tell: The leader tells the children that Abram went on a very long journey and he had to take everything he owned with him.

Ask: What would you have taken with you if you had to go on a long journey?

Do: The first child starts: "I'm going on a journey and I'm taking my dog with me. The second child has to repeat what the first child said and mention something else. "I'm going on a journey and I'm taking my dog and a television with me."

The third child goes: "I'm going on a journey and I'm taking my dog, a television and my grandmother with me," etc.

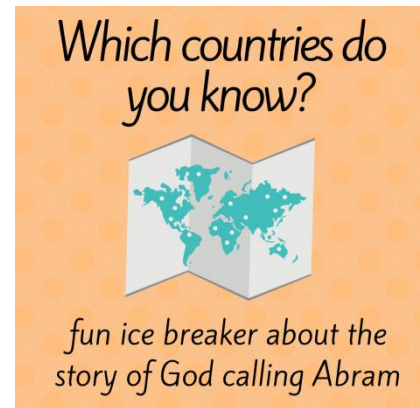
Ask: How many children can take part in this game until someone forgets one of the items?
How many items can we carry in our memory?

Icebreaker - Which countries do you know?

Abram had to travel from Haran to Canaan. Two strange places with strange names. How can we help the children to place this story in some sort of geographical context?

Teaching point:

Where is Haran? Where is Canaan? This activity will help the children to place the story of Abram in a geographical context.



What do you need:

- pen and paper

What do you do:

Ages: 4 - 7 years

Do: As the children are sitting in a circle you ask them which countries they know.

Ask: How many countries do we know all together?

Do: Write all the countries down on a big list.

Tell: Today we are going to look at someone who used to live in Haran and had to move to the country of Canaan. Who has ever heard of Haran and Canaan?

Ages: 8 - 12 years

Do: We are going to play the alphabet game. The children are placed in small groups of three or four children. Each group receives a pen and paper. The leader calls out a letter of the alphabet. Each group has to write down as many countries starting with that letter as they can think of. How many countries can they write down?

After each letter the leader asks which group has the most countries. They read them aloud. The winner is the group with the most unique countries. If a group has written the same name of the country, the name doesn't count. We are looking for countries no other group has thought of.

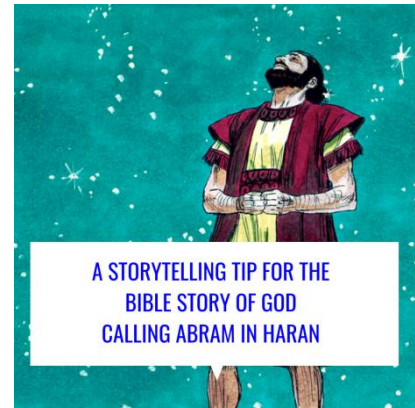
You end with the letter C. Afterwards you can talk about the country of Canaan and link this to the story of Abram.

How do I tell the story? - A storytelling tip

The children can act out the story while you are telling it.

What do you need:

Various pieces of material with holes cut in them to use as robes.



What do you do:

While you read or tell the story, have the children act it out in small groups. Divide the story into four scenes:

Scene 1: Abram hears God's voice in Haran (two children).

Scene 2: Abram convinces Sarah and Lot to go with him (three children).

Scene 3: Abram travels with his whole family and all his slaves and animals.

Scene 4: Abram sees God in Canaan and builds an altar (two children).

You can use simple pieces of cloth with holes cut in them to put over the children's heads and use as robes.

During the story you can ask the children who are acting the story, and also the children who are watching a number of questions about what is happening.

For example:

How do you think Sarah would have reacted?

What do you think might have happened on their journey?

YouTube video and discussion - Scraps

Using this secular YouTube video you can talk with the children about issues raised in the Bible story of Abram.

A mouse wants to go to the moon because he thinks that the moon is made of cheese. He builds a rocket, flies off and lands on a large piece of cheese. He thinks that this is the moon, but he has landed on a large piece of cheese in the cheesemongers.

So what makes this film suitable for a discussion on the story of Joseph?

Both Abram and the mouse go on a journey because they have a dream. Abram dreams of the promised land and a large number of descendants. God has promised him this. Do they both reach their destination? Why (not)?

Important questions:

Before showing this video to the children it's important to ask yourself the following questions:

- is this something I want to show to the children?
- is it compatible with the age and the context of the children with whom I work?

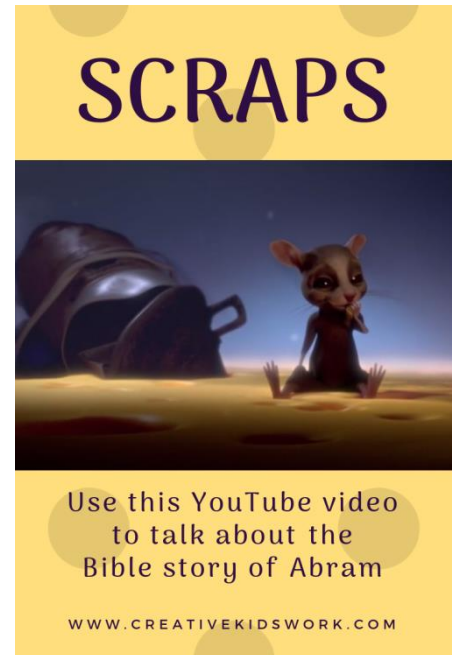
Step 1 – A bite of cheese

Give all the children piece of different sorts of cheese to taste. Which cheese is your favourite?

Step 2: Watch the film Scraps together

You can find this video here on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2KZP2FZqrE&t=5s>

The film lasts a couple of minutes.



Step 3: Throw the mouse at the cheese

What do you need:

- a toy mouse – preferably a cuddly toy
- a piece of cheese wrapped in plastic, or a piece of yellow cardboard.

What do you do:

Do: Divide the group into two. Ask each group in turn one of the following questions. If they get the answer right, one of the children in the group can try to throw the toy mouse at the cheese. How often can they hit the cheese with the mouse?

Ask: In what way is the mouse like Abram?
- they both went on a journey to follow their dream.

What was the mouse's dream?
- to reach the moon which was made of cheese.

What was Abram's dream?
- to reach the promised land.

In what way did the mouse fulfil his dream?
- he landed on a huge piece of cheese

In what way did the mouse not fulfil his dream?
- he didn't reach the moon.

In which way did Abram fulfil his dream?
- he reached the promised land.

God promised Abram a new country and a large people. Did Abram see both of these dreams fulfilled?
- no, he never saw Gods promise of a large people fulfilled.

How do you think the story of the mouse ends?

How do you think the story of Abram ends?

Fun science experiment - Build your own old fashioned phone

It is not always easy to listen well. Sometimes we ask ourselves, “Did I really hear that?”

Do you think Abram sometimes wondered if he had really heard God speaking? How did Abram know that it was God calling him, and how do you think he heard God?



What do you need:

- empty drink cans / plastic cups
- pieces of string
- a sharp nail

What do you do:

Tell: Tell the children that you can make your own telephone using two cans / cups and a piece of string.

Ask: But does it really work? Can you really hear each other through something as simple as two cans / cups and a piece of string?

Tell: Let's find out!

Do: Take a sharp nail and make a hole in the bottom of each can / cup. Thread one end of the string through the bottom of each can / cup. Tie a big knot in both ends of the string. The knot is just here to keep the string from slipping through the bottom of the can / cup. When you pull the string tight and you talk through one of the cans / cups the sound waves move through the tight string to the other can / cup and transform into sounds again.

Ask: That's the theory, but does it really work?

Do: Try it out!

Ask: How do think Abram heard God? Of course not through a phone, but do you think he heard God with his ears or maybe in his mind. What do you think?

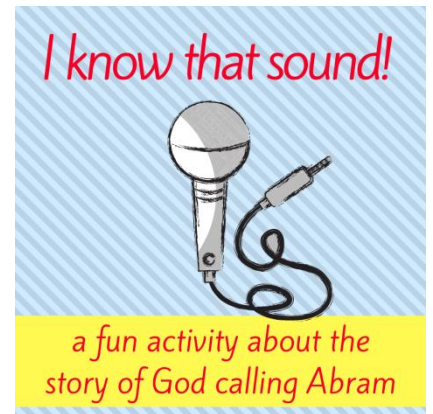
For more information:

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/talk-through-a-string-telephone-bring-science-home/>

Creative activity - I know that sound!

It is not always easy to listen well. Sometimes we ask ourselves, “Did I really hear that?”

Do you think Abram sometimes wondered if he had really heard God speaking? How did Abram know that it was God calling him, and how do you think he heard God?



What do you need:

- pen and paper
- lots of objects that can make a sound, like ringing a bell, a ball that you can bounce, a piece of paper that you can tear, etc.

What do you do:

Do: Give each child a piece of paper and a pen. Ask them to turn around so they can't see what you are doing. You could even ask them to close their eyes so that they can listen better. Let them hear a collection of different noises. Ask the children to write down what they think they are hearing.

Which of the children can guess most of the sounds?

Tell: God asked Abram a hard question, to leave everything behind and travel to a country he didn't know.

Ask:

- Can anybody think of a hard question that God could ask of us?
- How would you react if God asked you to do something very hard?

Creative activity - Quite a walk!

Abram and his family had to walk for 700 kilometres from Haran to the promised land. That is quite a distance. How does it feel to walk such a long way? Of course we cannot replicate this amazing journey with the children, but we can let the children experience some of it.

This is going to be quite an experience for the children!



What do you need:

- a large shallow plastic container filled with an inch of soft sand
- a large shallow plastic container filled with an inch of gravel
- a large shallow plastic container filled with an inch of pebbles
- a large shallow plastic container filled with a layer of pine cones
- a large shallow plastic container filled with a layer of fir needles
- a large shallow plastic container filled with a layer of mud
- a large shallow plastic container filled with a layer of (ice) cold water
- towels

What do you do:

Tell: There are seven large plastic containers on the floor. In the first container there is sand, in the second gravel, in the third pebbles, in the fourth pine cones, in the fifth pine needles, in the sixth mud and in the last cold water.

Do: Children can take their shoes and socks off and walk in turn through the seven containers. After the last container they receive a towel to dry their feet. Once their feet are dry they can put on their socks and shoes again. When everybody has gone through the experience, you can have a group conversation.

Ask: Which container was the nicest to walk through? Why?
Which container was the hardest to walk through? Why?
How would it be to walk through the desert, through ice cold rivers and over high rocky mountains for more than 700 kilometres?

Game - A suitcase race

Abram had to travel 700 kilometres or 440 miles to go from Haran to Canaan. He didn't travel alone. He went together with his family, servants and all his animals. It must have been quite a sight! How fast do you think they travelled? In this game we are going to race with suitcases.



What do you need:

- two suitcases
- an obstacle course

What do you do:

Do: You fill two suitcases till they are both quite heavy. Then you create an obstacle course through which the children will have to run with their suitcase.

Divide the children into two teams. In a relay race they will have to carry the suitcase through the obstacle course before they can give the suitcase to the next child. The quickest team wins!

Tell: Abram's journey wasn't a race. I think it went quite slowly. They couldn't let all the animals run for hundreds of miles. So it was quite a slow journey. Especially because they had to take so much with them.

Game - Let's travel to Canaan

With this quiz you can act out the journey of Abram and go through the story again by asking the children different questions. Children love quizzes. They are also very helpful as teaching tools.

Three quick benefits that a quiz will bring you:

1. If you tell the children beforehand that you are going to do a quiz and that you are going to ask questions about the Bible story that you are going to tell, they will listen better to the story.
2. As you go through the quiz questions you tell the story a second time without the children noticing it. This reinforces the teaching in the story.
3. As the children answer the questions they will explain the teaching points in the story to you. Because the children talk about the important elements of the story they understand it better and will remember it longer.



What do you need:

- 15 printouts that you can download at:
<https://www.creativekidswork.com/images/bijlage/New/Travel-to-Canaan.pdf>
- a bag
- 3 cards with numbers 1/2/3 on them

What do you do:

Do: Place the printouts in order in a giant circle on the ground. Put the children into two groups. One of the children in each group is going on a journey. Ask each group a question in turn. If they answer the question rightly, they can put their hand into a bag containing the three cards. Each of these cards has a number written on it: 1, 2 or 3. Depending on which card they pull out of the bag, they can move one, two or three pieces of paper forward. The first group to arrive in Canaan has won.

- Ask:**
- What is the name of the main character in this Bible story?
 - In which town or city did Abram live?
 - What did God say to him?
 - What did God promise him?
 - Which country did he have to travel to?
 - How old was Abram when he left?
 - How far was the journey to Canaan?
 - How did they travel?
 - What was Abram's wife called?
 - Who else joined him on his journey?
 - What was the name of Abram's nephew?
 - Who did Abram meet in Canaan?
 - Why did Abram build an altar?

Crafts idea & game - Create your own paper sandals

Abram had to travel 700 kilometres or 440 miles to go from Haran to Canaan. He didn't have a car, a train or a plane. He would probably have walked this distance. How difficult is this?

In this activity we are going to make paper sandals and wonder: "How far can we walk on these?"



What do you need:

- coloured piece of A4 paper
- pens / pencils
- scissors
- staplers

What do you do:

Do: The children are allowed to take their shoes off. They place their foot on a coloured A4 piece of paper. With a pencil or felt pen they draw around their foot. Now they have a picture of the sole of their foot on the paper.

Cut out the sole. Cut a strip of 20 x 2 cm from the rest of the paper, or use more paper if necessary. This strip becomes the buckle of the sandal. You staple the buckle on the sole and you have a sandal which is very easy to make.

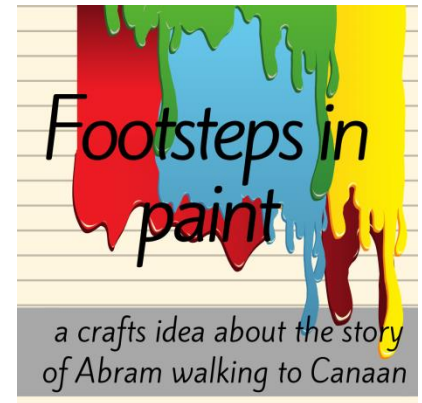
Ask: But would you be able to walk 700 kilometres on a sandal like this?

Do: Create an obstacle course and see which sandal lasts the longest.

Crafts idea - Footsteps in paint

This is quite a messy activity, which could easily result in dirty clothes!

So why would you do it? Well, on the other hand this will create a fun and lasting memory of your group walking through the stories in the Bible, starting with Abram.



What do you need:

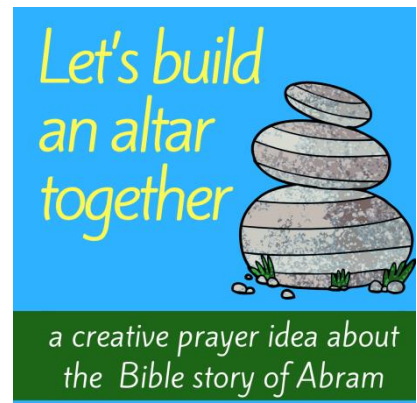
- paint brushes
- different coloured water-based paint
- large piece of painting canvas or wooden board

What do you do:

Do: All the children are allowed to paint the sole of one of their feet with a certain colour. In turn they place their painted foot carefully on the canvas and we are left with a colourful piece of art: lots of feet in different sizes and colour. As a lasting memorial of our journey together through the scriptures.

Creative prayer ideas - Let's build an altar together

After arriving in the promised land the first thing Abram did was to build an altar of stones. It was an altar of thanksgiving and of worship. Today we are going to build our own altar of thanksgiving and worship to God.



Prayer idea 1

What do you need:

- grey paper cut out in the shape of stones
- pens
- paper glue
- scissors

What do you do:

Do: Give each child a 'stone' and a pen, and encourage them to write or draw something to God. This may be something that they want to thank or praise him for. It may be something they want to ask Him.

When everybody is finished, put the stones on the floor and build an altar to God together, just as Abram did, when he just arrived in the promised land

Prayer idea 2

What do you need:

- stones
- felt pens

What do you do:

Do: There are lots of different sizes and shapes of stones lying on the floor. Some are small, others large. Each child can choose their own stone. Each child gets a marker pen and is encouraged to write or draw something to God on their stone. Maybe something they want to thank or praise Him for. Maybe something they want to ask Him.

When everybody is finished, put the stones together on the ground to build an altar to God. Maybe you can leave this altar for a few weeks as a lasting memorial.