



## SESSION

## 3

## A son for Abraham

**MEETING AIM**

To discover that God keeps his promises.

**BIBLE PASSAGE**

Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-8

**BACKGROUND**

Since the last time we saw him, God has given Abram and Sarai new names, and renewed his promise of a son. Yet, Abraham seems to have lost some faith in God's promise. He has taken matters into his own hands and had a son by Sarah's slave. In today's passage, God turns up and puts a timescale on his promise. Our children may not have much concept of time, but they can discover that God keeps his promises.

**+ 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. Chat about families. Does anyone have any brothers or sisters? Be aware of the different types of families and be sensitive to any children for whom this might be a difficult subject.

**+ BREAD MAKING**

**You will need: recipe and ingredients to make bread; baking equipment; access to an oven; cover-up and clean-up facilities**

Show the children your ingredients and make the bread together. You can find a link to make Irish soda bread at [youthandchildrens.work/links](http://youthandchildrens.work/links). If baking isn't your thing or you struggle to find all the ingredients, why not buy a packet mix? Ensure that all the children wash their hands before you start, and stay aware of food hygiene and allergy issues. As you work, chat about food the children like and what makes a good party. If you have a large number of children, it would be easier to do this in smaller groups, as long as you have enough oven space to bake all your loaves! Leave the bread to bake as you explore the Bible story.

**+ BIBLE STORY**

**You will need: cushions, mats and / or rugs; pitta bread; natural yogurt; milk; cups, plates and spoons**

Arrange the cushions, mats and / or rugs in a circle and sit the children down. Ask them what happens when people come to their house for a visit or a meal. Do their parents / carers cook food? Make tea? How do you make people welcome?

Explain that Abraham has a new name, Abraham. God reminded Abraham that he and his wife, Sarah, were going to have a son. Abraham has pitched his tent near a place called Mamre. That is where he lives now. Ask the children if they can imagine sitting on mats outside Abraham's tent. It's hot and the sun is shining. Go on to tell the following story:

One day, Abraham was sitting by the entrance to his tent, just like we are doing. He looked up and saw three men standing nearby. Who do you think it was? *Ask the children for their thoughts.* It was God and two angels! He ran to meet them and bowed down on the floor. *Encourage the children to run across the room and bow low, then come back to the circle.*

"Come and eat with me," said Abraham. He led his visitors to the circle and rushed off with his wife Sarah to organise a meal of bread, meat, yogurt and milk. *Share the bread, yogurt and milk with the children, still sitting on your rugs or cushions.*

While they were eating, God said: "I will come back this time next year. When I do, you will already have a son."

Sarah, Abraham's wife, was standing by the entrance to the tent. When she heard God, she laughed, because she was very old; too old to have a child.

God asked Abraham: "Why did Sarah laugh? I am God. Nothing is too difficult for me! It will all happen as I promised."

And that's what happened. Exactly when God said they would, Abraham and Sarah had a child, a baby boy. And they called him Isaac. In Abraham and Sarah's language, 'Isaac' means 'to laugh'. Sarah said: "God has made me laugh. Now everyone will laugh with me."

**+ 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 would you say to God if you had lunch with him?

- What makes you laugh?
- How do you think Abraham and Sarah felt when they had the baby?

**+ CREATIVE RESPONSE**

**You will need: bread from 'Bread making'; bread knife and board; butter; jam; paper plates; plastic knives; household play equipment**

Once your bread from 'Bread making' has baked and cooled, cut slices and share it among your group. Help the children spread the bread with butter and jam, if they wish.

Show the group the household equipment you have brought and let them play at mealtimes and homes, using the bread and butter as the food. Encourage them to play with the story as well, role-playing the meal Abraham had with God, and Abraham and Sarah cradling their baby boy. As you play, chat about the story and what the children remember.

If you didn't bake any bread, go straight to the free play part of the activity.

**+ PRAYER**

**You will need: smiley faces cut from paper; crayons or felt-tip pens**

Share out the smiley faces and explain to the children that they should try to think of something they want to give thanks to God for. What makes them laugh? What are they happy about? You might need to give one or two examples if the children are struggling to come up with their own ideas.

Encourage them to draw those things on the back of their smiley face. Once everyone has finished, ask the children to hold the smiley faces up in front of their faces. Say this prayer, inviting the children to shout out what they want to say thanks to God for at the right time:

*Thank you, God, that you kept your promise to Abraham.*

*Thank you, God, that you keep your promises to us.*

*Thank you, God, for... (Leave a gap for children to shout out.)*  
*Amen.*

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