

Chat with the Children

- Very young children's toys: *is that what (slightly older) children would play with?*
 - Topics from nursery: *is that what you do at school?*
 - Maths examples on screen - different stages...

 - Change is part of growth
 - *Lord help us grow...*
-

Setting the Context

- Where does this incident occur in the narrative flow?
 - God called Abraham...
 - lived in Canaan for a period - Isaac, Jacob... Joseph...
 - gone down into Egypt to avoid famine... stayed... enslaved
 - rescued under Moses, Passover, crossing Red Sea....
 - time in the wilderness/desert - pillar of fire, pillar of cloud, giving of the law...
 - coming to the end of the 40 years in the wilderness

There has been change

- From personal relationship with Abraham, through developing relationship with Isaac and Jacob through which more of God's character has been revealed and more of what it means to be a "friend of God" has become clear
 - God's faithfulness through trouble, his formation of character in his people - Joseph
 - defining rescue of God's people, before they really fully knew him
 - commands showing what it means to live as God's people...
- There's been change in their worship
 - there's been growth in their behaviour
 - there's been development in their discernment/following
- Not always easy - it has been said that it took a few days for God to get the people out of Egypt, but 40 years to get Egypt out of the people!

There will be change

- And there is more change ahead:
 - where have the people been heading all this time?
 - *the promised land* - place of blessing, of home, of settledness, of provision
 - no longer wanderers, but settlers
 - no longer homeless, but at home
 - no longer vulnerable, but secure
 - no longer dependent on daily dole outs, but able to provide for themselves
 - *maturing...*

There is continuity

- God hasn't changed!

Application

- Dip toe into application:
 - changes in the cultural and ecclesial situation
 - changes in our own local context - changes in people, life stages, situations
 - God hasn't changed!
- Which direction are we going in? Forward with God, into adventure of faith?