

Chapter Four – God Calls Abraham

Abram was a descendant of Noah. He followed his father to Haran in Mesopotamia and settled there. God decided to make him the leader of a new and good nation that would be true to him. This was to become the Jewish nation from which Jesus Christ would come one day to save the world.

God told Abram in Haran, “Abram, leave your family and go to another land which I will show you. There I will make you the leader of a great nation. I will bless you and make your name well-known. I will bless all those who bless you and you will bring a blessing to all nations.” Abram packed up his possessions and left Haran together with his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot and his servants. He left everything familiar behind to follow God’s will and came to the land of Canaan, later known as Palestine. It is also sometimes referred to as the Promised Land. God told him that this land would belong to him and his offspring. Abram believed what God told him although, at that time, he and his wife were old and barren.

Abram and Lot became very rich and they each had a lot of cattle. However, their men were always fighting over the pasture to feed their animals. Abram became frustrated when the fights were getting more and more intense. One day he said to Lot, “We are a family and should not be fighting against each other. Take your family to the land that you prefer and my family will go the other way.” And that was how Abram and Lot separated.

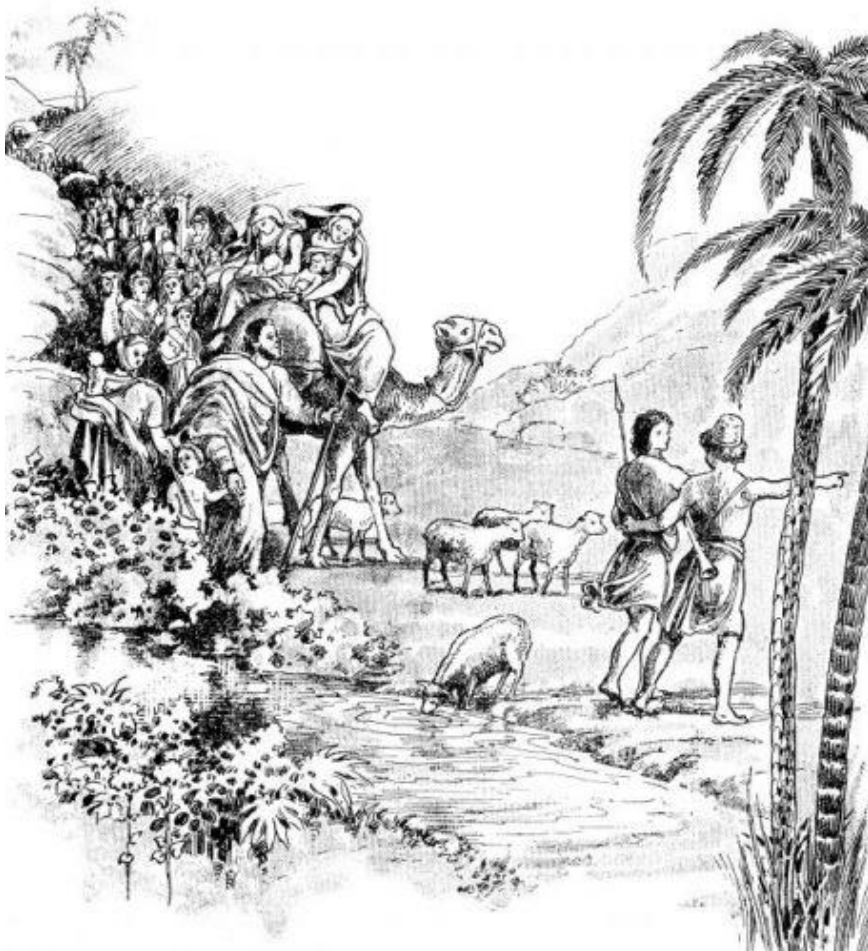
Years later, God appeared to Abram and said, “I will make a covenant with you. I will give you many descendants. Some of them will be kings. You will be the father of many nations. From now on, your name will be Abraham and your wife’s name will be Sarah. You will have a son and you should name him Isaac.”

Some days later, Abraham saw three men, who were angels in disguise, passing by his tent. At once he welcomed them into his tent and provided them food and water as he thought that they were tired and hungry and thirsty from the hot sun. When they had finished the food, one of the angels said, “By this time next year, your wife shall have a son.”

Sarah heard it and laughed as she and Abraham were both very old.

Then the angel said to Abraham, “Why does she laugh and ask whether she can become a mother in her old age? Can anything be too difficult for God?”

True to the angel’s promise, old Sarah gave birth to a boy at the very time the angel had foretold. Abraham gave him the name of Isaac, which means ‘one who laughs’, because his mother had laughed and also because the baby had brought happiness into the home. Abraham was then a hundred years old.



Abram and his family leave Haran

Questions:

1. Why did God choose Abraham to become the leader of a new nation?
2. Why did the families of Abraham and Lot fight with each other?
3. How can family quarrels be avoided?
4. Give examples to show how Abraham was the right choice as leader.
5. Why was Abraham's son called Isaac?
6. Why do people usually fear the unknown? How can such fear be overcome?