

Son of laughter

God's special promise to Abraham, from Genesis 12–21

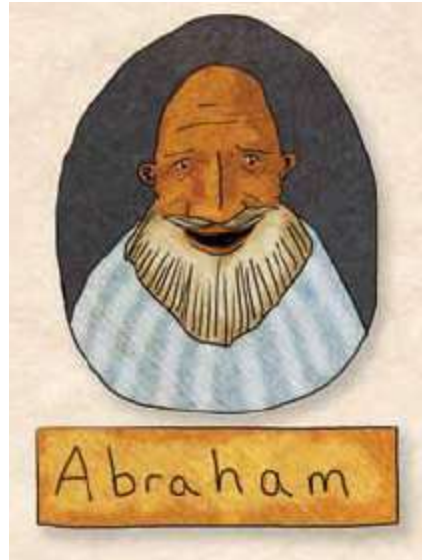
YEARS PASSED and things didn't get any better. People were still just as cruel and mean to one another. They still got sick and died. God's world was still full of tears. It was never meant to be like this.

But God was getting ready to do something about it. He was going to make all the wrong things right, and he was going to do it through...a family.

"Abraham," God said. "How many stars are there?" (God was about to tell his friend a wonderful secret.)

"Let me see," Abraham said, rolling up his sleeves. (But have you ever tried counting stars? Then you know how hard it is.) "993, 994, 997. Uh-Oh. No. Wait. 1, 2,..." Of course, he kept losing count. "Too many!" he said.





“Guess what!” God laughed.

“I will give you so many children and grandchildren and great grandchildren, you won’t be able to count them either.”

Abraham couldn’t help gig-gling at such a wonderful idea. But he stopped himself. How could he have a family? Don’t be silly. He didn’t have any children, let alone grandchildren.

He wiped away a tear. Anyway it was far too late for him to start having babies at his age, he was 99 years old! What could God mean?

“Abraham,” God said. “Believe me.”

And then God told Abraham his Secret Rescue Plan. “Abraham, I will make your family very big,” God promised. “Until one day, your family will come to number more than even all the stars in the sky.”

Abraham looked up at the dark night sky, thick with stars.

“You will be my special family, my people, and through you everyone on earth will be blessed!”

It was an incredible promise—God was going to rescue the world through Abraham’s family! One of his great-great-great grandchildren would be the Child, the Promised One, the Rescuer.



“But it’s too wonderful!” Abraham said. “How can it be true?”

“Is anything too good to be true?” God asked. “Is anything too wonderful for me?”

So Abraham trusted what God said more than what his eyes could see. And he believed.

Now when Abraham’s wife, Sarah, heard God’s promise, she just laughed to herself. But it wasn’t a happy laugh, it had tears in it. She’d always wanted a baby, could her dream come true? Could she really have a baby when she was 90 years old? No, of course not, don’t be silly, it was far too late.

Sarah didn’t believe God could do what he promised. She had forgotten that when God says something, it’s as good as done. (Of course, it was as easy for God to give her a baby son as it was for him to make all the stars in the sky.)

Sure enough, nine months later, just as God had promised, Sarah gave birth to a baby boy. They named him Isaac, which means “son of laughter.” And Sarah laughed. But this time it was a glorious, happy laugh. Her dream had come true.

God would do as he promised. He would always look after Abraham’s family, his special people.

And one day, God would send another baby, a baby promised to a girl who didn’t even have a husband. But this baby would bring laughter to the whole world. This baby would be everyone’s dream come true.

