

Abram saves Lot – Abram's faith



Genesis 14; 15 : 1-6; 17 : 1-9, 15, 16, 19

4

A king and his allies waged war against the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. They defeated the army of the Sodomites and took all the goods and many prisoners with them. Lot, too, was taken prisoner. Abram and his servants pursued the enemy and rescued Lot and the other Sodomites. After the victorious battle, the king of Salem, Melchizedek, met Abram and blessed him.

Later God appeared to Abram and promised him: "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able. So numerous shall your descendants be." Although Abram and Sarai were already old and had no children, they believed God. Later God appeared to Abram again: "I will make a covenant with you and increase your descendants." God gave Abram and Sarai new names: Abraham – (father of the multitude) and Sarah (princess).

The children perceive that God guides his own wondrously
and that he is ever close to them.

Abram is sitting in front of his tent. Some time has elapsed since his parting from Lot. Suddenly a stranger comes running up, directly towards Abram's tent. The stranger is out of breath and in his eyes are fear and despair. He is panting so much that he can hardly speak, and gasps: "Abram, something terrible has happened. Your nephew Lot, his wife and children and all his servants have been taken prisoner! A mighty king came and waged war on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. He robbed the people of all their possessions and took them prisoner."

Abram jumps up immediately and calls all his strongest servants and herdsmen together. "Arm yourselves!" Abram also asks his three friends, together with all their servants, to help him free Lot and his people. Soon Abram is in hot pursuit of the enemy together with more than three hundred men. Not that those are many when compared to the great army of the enemy. But Abram knows that God will be with him. He prays: "Lord, help us to rescue Lot and his people."

Abram and his followers have to travel an entire day until they catch up with the enemy in the middle of the night. Abram

divides his herdsmen and servants into several groups which close in on the army of his foe from various directions. A battle follows which Abram and his people win. The enemy has been taken by surprise so completely that they have all fled. Abram can now free Lot and the other prisoners. Also their possessions are secured. The king of Sodom is extremely happy about this liberation. He says to Abram: "You can keep all the goods, treasures and animals, only give back my people." But Abram refuses. "I do not want to take a thread or even a shoelace which belongs to you. No one will be able to say that the king of Sodom has made Abram rich. My friends may take their portion however."

Their return trip is a happy and joyful one. Suddenly they meet an aged, revered man. He brings wine and bread for the exhausted warriors. He is the king of Salem, a priest of God. His name is Melchizedek, king of righteousness. This priest of God now blesses Abram. Abram bows low before this messenger of God and gives him a tenth of all they have brought back. Now Abram is even happier to return to his tent where his wife Sarai has long been waiting.

1

Many years have passed since the rescue of Lot. Abram's herds have grown. The greatest promise which God has

God fulfils his promises – Abraham

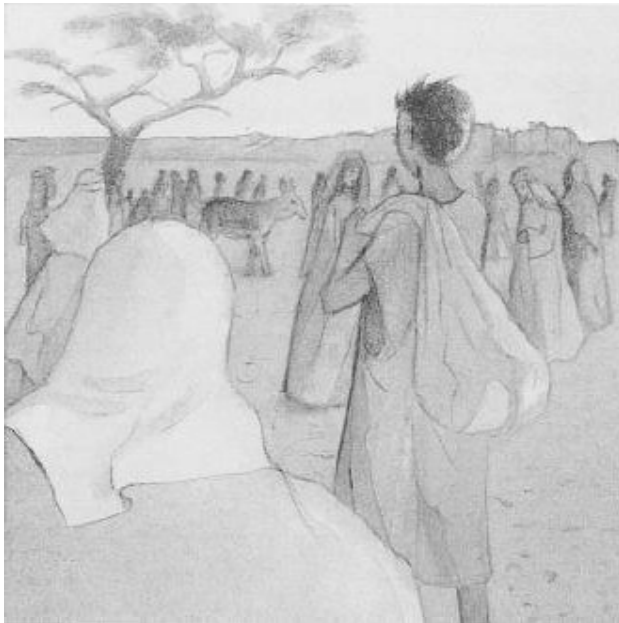
made to Abram, has however, not yet been fulfilled.

Abram and Sarai have grown old. "Will we still have a child? We have waited so very long. It will probably not happen any more. Has God forgotten us?" This is the voice of Satan. The Lord appears to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield and your protector, my blessing will be great indeed." But Abram answers: "Lord God, what will you give me? You have promised me so many descendants and yet I do not have a single child! Probably my first servant, Eliezer, will inherit all my possessions one day." But God says: "No, Eliezer shall not be your heir, but your own son." And now God takes the aged Abram out into the cool night. Above him the great, dark expanse of the heavens vaults the earth. Millions of stars sparkle all around him. God says: "Look towards heaven and count the stars. Are you able to count them?" Count the stars! Naturally no one can do that except God, who has created them. Then God carries on: "So

numerous will your descendants be." Abram believes the Lord.

After this meeting, further years pass. By now Abram is almost a hundred years old and his wife Sarai about ninety. Sarai just cannot imagine that she will still have a child. Once again the Lord speaks to Abram: "I want to make a covenant with you. You shall become the father of many nations. For this reason you will no longer be called Abram, but Abraham (father of the multitude). And Sarai, your wife, will be called Sarah (princess). You shall have a son in one year from now and you shall call him Isaac. I shall also establish my covenant with Isaac."

2



*God promised Abraham a new country and many descendants.
"I will make of you a great nation. Your descendants will
be as numerous as the sands of the sea or the stars in the heavens."
Abraham received the blessing which God had promised him.*

1 Abraham's attitude is thoroughly discussed with the children. Abraham, together with his servants, helps to rescue Lot. After his victory he does not wish to keep any of the captured possessions, which belong to the king of Sodom. He even gives Melchisedek a tenth of everything.

Melchizedek brings Abraham bread and wine. Abraham is glad to be blessed by the priest-king. Abraham rejoices at the blessing of God which has enabled him to be victorious.

2 We look at the picture. What has Abraham already received from the Lord? What does the heaven with its stars signify? What is Abram's name after God has made a covenant with him?