



A mother of nations

Genesis 17-18:19, 21:1-7

God repeated the promise to Abram and Sarai many times.

Each time it was the same promise.

Each year it got harder and harder to believe the promise, because each year

Sarai and Abram got older and older.

One day God said to Abram. "Remember my promise. Always remember. And because of my promise, I want you to change your name."

"Right now your name is Abram, which means 'important father.' But from now on, your name will be 'Abraham' which means 'the father of many.'

"And Sarai should change her name too. Call her 'Sarah' which means 'Princess'. Sarah will be the mother of many nations."

Abraham told Sarah about his talk with God. "But how can that be," he said. "I'm too old to be anybody's father."

Then one day, when Sarah was working inside the tent and Abraham was sitting under a tree outside, they had some visitors. Sarah looked out through the door of the tent. "Are they sent by God?" she wondered.

Abraham and Sarah were always kind to visitors when they

came. So Sarah baked some bread and Abraham got some meat, and soon they had a nice meal ready.

After the meal, while Abraham and the three visitors sat under the tree outside the tent, one of the visitors said something hard to believe.

"I'll be coming back this way in about a year," he said. "By then, Sarah will have had a baby."

Sarah was listening inside the tent. At first she just giggled a little at the idea of it. A woman, as old as a grandmother, having a baby. Then she started to laugh. She laughed so hard she could hardly stop.

"Why is Sarah laughing?" said the man. "Is anything too hard for God?"

"Oh, I didn't laugh," said Sarah.

"You laughed all right," said the man. "But remember, a year from now, you'll have a baby."

When they heard this Sarah and Abraham both laughed until their sides ached.

Then one day it happened. Sarah became pregnant. Even though she was very old, she had a baby.

She and Abraham were so happy as they looked at their tiny baby boy, with his little fists and his tightly closed eyes.

So they gave their baby a special name. They called him Isaac, which means "laughter."

God's promise was coming true after all. Sarah and Abraham knew this as they smiled at the little baby in their arms.

They would become great,
great, great, great
grandparents. And
all because of
God's promise
and a baby named
Isaac. A baby
named
Laughter.

