



The Call of Abram

Genesis 12:1-9

The Bible Barn was filled with excited campers. It was the final gathering of the summer at Camp Venture. The campers were laughing, chatting, and chasing one another around the spacious old barn.

Catastrophe cleared his throat and hollered, "Hoo-oo doggy! Howdy hi there, kids! This here's our last week here at the Bible Barn. Let's stand up and say Camper's Code one last time. Raise your right hand and let's say this together."

"I will love God with all my heart, I will love my neighbor as myself. I will be a light wherever I go!" The words rang out in unison across the barn.

Suddenly the barn door swung open and Wyoming ran through the door with a letter in his hand. "Catastrophe! Catastrophe! We got mail! We got mail!"

"Well, that is kind of exciting but we get mail everyday. Is there something special in today's mail?" Catastrophe asked calmly.

"I'll say it's special. I got offered a job," Wyoming answered bursting into tears.

"Usually gettin' a job is good news," Catastrophe put his hand on Wyoming's shoulder.

"Well, it is good news, sort of...I get to help build churches. It's just that the job is all the way in New Zealand," Wyoming began to weep uncontrollable.

"Well, that's great, Wyoming. I hear New Zealand is a real purty place," Catastrophe added in a soothing voice.

Wyoming cried, "I'm scared of all them 'New' places, like New Zealand and New Jersey and New Smyrna and Fig Newtons!"

"Well, hasn't God always takin' care of you before when you've obeyed His directions?" Catastrophe reminded him.

"But New Zealand is far away and the people will be all different and New Zealandy; not like all my friends here," Wyoming continued breathlessly, "and I'll have to leave you and GranMammy and there won't be no one there to make me no biscuits and gravy and what if it's scary?"

Catastrophe replied, "New places can be scary but, when God calls us, we put our trust in Him and follow where He leads."

"Are you tellin' me that God asks people to move sometimes?" Wyoming asked.

"Oh yeah, happens in the Bible all the time. Let's shoot down that can and I'll show ya." Catastrophe pulled out his wooden slingshot as the campers pretended to aim their imaginary ones. Catastrophe called out, "Ready? Aim. Fire!"

With that, Catastrophe's slingshot ricocheted off two cans and a third can wobbled off the shelf and fell to the ground with a clunk.

Wyoming pulled a note from the can and read aloud, "God Calls Abram. Hey, wasn't his name Abraham?"

Catastrophe answered, "Actually, his name was Abram at first but God was about to change his name."

"Can I get the Bible one last time?" Wyoming asked. Catastrophe nodded.

Wyoming retrieved the Bible and handed it to Catastrophe who began to read, "The Lord had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.'"

"So, Abram had to leave his country and his home and go to a place he had never even seen before?" Wyoming asked.

"Yep," Catastrophe replied, "but God was going to lead him to just the right place."

"But how did he know? How did Abram know God wouldn't make a mistake?" Wyoming wondered.

Catastrophe shook his head. "God don't make no mistakes. Anyway, Abram obeyed and trusted that God would give him exactly what he needed."

"Trusting is hard," Wyoming admitted.

"You just gotta have faith." Catastrophe looked at the campers seated everywhere in the barn. "These campers know what that means. Every year they have to move up to a new grade or sometimes a new school or maybe even a new town."

Wyoming turned to the campers. "How do you kids do it? That would make me very nervous!"

"Abram must have been nervous too, not knowing where he was going, but God said He would show Abram the way," Catastrophe turned the page in the Bible.

"So Abram felt safe, even though he had to go to a strange place, because he knew God would give Him everything he needed to get there," Wyoming said.

"Yup, including directions. So Abram obeyed God and went into the new land." Catastrophe added as he began to read. "'And God told him: 'To your offspring I will give this land.'"

Wyoming smiled, "Oh, that's nice! God promised Abram he was going to have a whole bunch of kids and God would bless them and they would make a great nation! Maybe that's why God is calling me to New Zealand, so's I can meet a beautiful wife and get married and just like Abraham we will have a whole mess of lil' Wyomings runnin' around."

"A whole mess of Wyomings running around?" Catastrophe teased, "Now that's scary!"

Wyoming replied, "Don't worry, I'm not scared any more. But I do have a question. Why is the rabbit the Camp Critter of the day?"

"Well, remember God promised to make Abraham the father of many?" Catastrophe asked. Just then, a pet rabbit named Mr. Sprinkles escaped from the arms of a camper.

"Oh right! And rabbits are famous for having lots and lots of baby rabbits," Wyoming said as he scooped up the rabbit. He gently rubbed the rabbit's soft fur and said, "You are the father of many aren't you, Mr. Sprinkles? That's why you remind us of Abraham."

Catastrophe added, "There's one more thing you need to remember about this story."

"What's that?" Wyoming asked.

Catastrophe explained, "One of the first things Abraham did in the new land was to build an altar to thank God for the new land."

"I bet Abram was really glad he had trusted and obeyed God. I can't wait to build some altars in New Zealand." Wyoming paused and turned thoughtfully toward the campers, and headed for his banjo. "But before I go, let's sing the final verse of our Camp Critter Song ... one last time!"

The campers let out a cheer and began to sing as Wyoming strummed along:

**I spied a RABBIT overhead.
Here is what that RABBIT said,
"God showed Abraham,
a brand new land."
Whew! I spied the RABBIT
who followed the FERRET
who followed the DOVE
who followed the COYOTE
who followed the OTTER
who followed the OWL
who followed the LOVEBIRDS
who followed a HOUND DOG
who followed a CATFISH
who followed an EAGLE,
And the EAGLE hollered,
"Yippee-kigh-yay!
At Camp Venture today!"**