

Chronological: A Journey Thru Scripture

The Journey of Abraham's Faith Genesis 12, 15, 17 & 22

Welcome church to week 3 of our sermon series...

Chronological: A Journey Thru Scripture

I hope you are hearing the Lord speak as you read each day. I have been encouraged and challenged by our reading.

I would **encourage you to journal** what the Lord is saying to you. Journaling will **help you remember** what you have read and will give you space to **write your thoughts and applications** from the text. Which is the primary goal!

Let me remind you that I will not have time to cover all the reading for the week, but I do **encourage you to partner** up with someone and discuss the reading each week to see how God is working in each other's lives. And if you have questions about what is read please feel free to contact me and I will try to answer your question.

You can also find my **sermon notes on our website** under the media tab if you miss something during the sermon.

Our reading this week covered **Genesis 10 – 29**. A large chunk of scripture. I want to give a **quick overview** and then we are going to slow down and take a look at something more specific.

Through the reading this week...

- ◆ We learned where the nations and languages came from...God separated mankind into nations after their rebellion at Babel. G. 10-11
- ◆ We learned about faith as we followed Abraham. G. 12-25

- ◆ We learned that tithing existed way before the law was given. G. 14
- ◆ We learned about the influence a wicked society can have on a family as Lot's family fell apart. G 18-19
- ◆ We learned that we should care for and have compassion on those who fall under God's condemnation...Abraham pleaded with God on the behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah. G. 18
- ◆ We learned how the sins of the father can impact the proceeding generations...Abraham was a liar and so was his son Isaac. G. 12, 20 & 26
- ◆ We saw that "*what you sow you reap*". Jacob deceived his father Isaac and later was deceived by Laban. G. 29

And they say **the bible is boring**...they just never read it! Makes me glad God isn't still writing because He certainly did **not hide the flaws of His people**.

Today I want us to look at...

The Journey of Abraham's Faith

Before we do here is one more observation from our reading...chapter 12 is a major division in Genesis. We move from all the peoples of the earth to one man, Abraham. We move from nations to one nation, the Hebrew nation.

Abraham is the father of the Jewish nation. He was chosen by God and responds in faith...and I want us to look at his faith this morning to see what we learn about faith.

I want you to see his...

1. Obedient Faith

Genesis 12:1-4 (NKJV) – 1 Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. **2** I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." **4** So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

Abram is living in Haran where he settled with his father **Terah**. After some time, his **father dies**, and **God the Father reveals Himself to Abram**.

His response to God would **require faith**. He was called to **leave all that was familiar** to him – family, land, home – to a place he **knew nothing about**.

All he had was **God's promises...**

- ⇒ I will show you a land
- ⇒ I will make you a great nation (no children yet)
- ⇒ I will make your name great
- ⇒ You shall be a blessing
 - Bless those who bless you
 - Curse those who curse you
 - All families of the earth shall be blessed

Abram **responds with obedient faith**. He packs up and moves out.

Hebrews 11:8 (NKJV) – 8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Look back at **verse 3** and here what the Father said...*"in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."*

What a great promise...this is a reference to the blessing of **salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord**. Here we have God's plan that included the whole world – Jews and Gentiles.

The Apostle Paul says...

Galatians 3:8 (NKJV) – 8 *And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."*

I am thankful for Abram's obedient but not let's look at his...

2. Saving Faith

One of my **favorite verses** in the bible is...

Genesis 15:1 (NKJV) – 1 *After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."*

I am reminded that the **Father Himself** is my **protector** and **reward**! What else do we really need?

Abram is fine with rewards but who is he going to pass them along to, he **doesn't have any children**. His concern was that all he had was already going to be left to his slave, Eliezer.

God response in **grace**. He **promises Abram a child** and then takes him outside and gives him an **astrology lesson**. Count the stars if you can...*"so shall you descendants be."*

Now look at Abram's response...

Genesis 15:6 (NKJV) – 6 *And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.*

Abram believed...he expressed saving faith. Paul would use this passage in Romans 4 to make his argument that salvation is by "grace through faith alone." Here it is...

Romans 4:16–25 (NKJV) – 16 *Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all* **17** *(as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; 18* *who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." 19* *And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. 20* *He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, 21* *and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. 22* *And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." 23* *Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24* *but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25* *who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.*

Salvation is not of works but faith! But now let's see...

3. Struggling Faith

Have you ever **struggled in your faith?** Has there ever been a time when **doubt creeped in?** Abraham was no different.

God had promised him offspring and as we just read in Romans 4, he knew God would come through. But he still struggled.

We have already seen him **take matters into his own** hands by having a **son with Hagar**. But that **wasn't God's plan**. Look at...

Genesis 17:15–19 (NKJV) – 15 Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. **16** And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her." **17** Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" **18** And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!" **19** Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him."

See his struggle...his **wife is old; he is old** how can this be? Besides **he already has a son**, why not let him be the heir of promise?

Because that **wasn't God's plan!**

Just because he struggled...just because you struggle doesn't mean you lost your faith. As a matter of fact, I like what John **MacArthur reminds us...**

"Sincere struggling with spiritual problems comes from strong, godly faith. Such faith refuses to doubt and trusts in God's promises, even when no way of fulfillment is humanly imaginable."¹

We have seen Abraham's Obedient Faith, His Saving Faith, His Struggling Faith now let's see His...

¹ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). [Romans](#) (Vol. 1, p. 265). Chicago: Moody Press.

4. Tested Faith

God will **never lead us into temptation and sin**, but He will at times **test our faith**.

Abraham has waited **25 years for God** to fulfill His promise in the birth of Isaac. He was overjoyed and loved his boy. But then God asked him to do **something unimaginable...sacrifice him to God**.

Genesis 22 gives us the account. Abraham response in obedience. He takes his son to the mountain God shows him to offer Isaac up as a sacrifice.

And we would have went through the plan if God had not stopped him. How you say...his faith!

***Genesis 22:12 (NKJV) — 12** And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now, I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."*

Abraham passed the test! His faith was tested, and he passed with flying colors. We learn more from...

***Hebrews 11:17–19 (NKJV) — 17** By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, **18** of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," **19** concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.*

He knew God was able!

And we too will be tested that our faith will be strengthened...

James 1:2-4 (NKJV) — 2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, **3** knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. **4** But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Now before we close this morning...you have to see the wonderful analogy here between Abraham offering up Isaac and God the Father offering up Jesus.

⇒ Abraham's only son – God's only Son

⇒ Lamb Substitute – Jesus Our Substitute

Isaiah 53:4-6 (NKJV) — 4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. **5** But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. **6** All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

CONCLUSION: