



Abraham – The Father of Faith

Introduction

Among all the figures in Scripture, few stand as prominently in both Testaments as **Abraham**. Known as “the **father of faith**,” Abraham’s life marks the beginning of **God’s covenant** relationship with a chosen people through whom all nations would be blessed. His story, beginning in Genesis 12, is the foundation for the unfolding plan of redemption.

Abraham’s **faith** was not an abstract belief but an active trust in God’s promises, often against impossible odds. His life reveals what it means to walk by faith, to obey God’s call without full understanding, and to rest in the assurance that God’s Word never fails. Throughout his journey, God established the everlasting covenant, which reaches its fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the promised Seed.

The Call of Abraham

Abraham’s story begins in Ur of the Chaldees, a prosperous but idolatrous city. God called him to leave his country, family, and father’s house, saying, “Unto a land that I will shew thee” (Genesis 12:1). This call was radical; Abraham was asked to forsake security for faith, the seen for the unseen.

God’s promise to him contained three elements: a **land**, a **nation**, and a **blessing**. “I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing... and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:2–3). This covenant established the divine plan of salvation through Abraham’s lineage.

Abraham obeyed and went forth, “not knowing whither he went” (Hebrews 11:8). His obedience demonstrates that faith begins not with full knowledge but with trust in the One who calls.

Faith Tested and Refined

Abraham’s faith was tested repeatedly. Famine drove him to Egypt, where he faltered in fear, claiming Sarah was his sister (Genesis 12:10–13). Yet even in weakness, God preserved His promise. Faith is not flawless perfection; it is perseverance in trusting God despite human failure.



When Abraham and Lot parted ways, Abraham allowed Lot to choose the best land, content to trust God for his inheritance (Genesis 13:9). Later, when Lot was taken captive, Abraham displayed courage and loyalty by rescuing him (Genesis 14:14–16). Upon returning, he met Melchizedek, the king-priest of Salem, who blessed him in the name of “the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth” (Genesis 14:19). This encounter prefigures the eternal priesthood of Christ.

The Covenant Confirmed

In Genesis 15, God formalized His covenant with Abraham. Abraham expressed faith in God’s promise of descendants as numerous as the stars, and Scripture records, “He believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness” (Genesis 15:6). This verse later became central to Paul’s teaching on justification by faith, showing that righteousness has always been received by belief, not by works.

God **sealed** the covenant in a solemn ceremony. Abraham prepared sacrifices, and as darkness fell, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between the pieces (Genesis 15:17). This act symbolized God’s unilateral commitment; He alone guaranteed the promise. The covenant’s fulfillment did not depend on Abraham’s ability but on God’s faithfulness.

God also revealed that Abraham’s descendants would be strangers in a foreign land for four hundred years before returning with great substance (Genesis 15:13–14). This prophecy anticipated Israel’s sojourn in Egypt and the Exodus under Moses.

The Human Attempt to Fulfill Divine Promise

Despite God’s assurance, years passed without the promised child. **Sarah**, growing impatient, urged Abraham to have a child with her handmaid Hagar. Ishmael was born, but he was not the child of promise (Genesis 16:15). This act illustrates the danger of trying to accomplish God’s work through human effort.

At ninety-nine years old, Abraham received a renewed promise: Sarah would bear a son. God changed their names from **Abram** (“exalted father”) to Abraham (“father of a multitude”) and from **Sarai** to Sarah (“princess”) to reflect His purpose (Genesis 17:5, 15). The added *ha* sound in their names symbolized the breath of the Spirit, signifying divine life entering their destiny.



The Promise Fulfilled

At the appointed time, Sarah gave birth to Isaac, whose name means “laughter” (Genesis 21:3). The impossible had become reality. Abraham’s joy reflected the triumph of faith over doubt. Paul later wrote that Abraham “staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God” (Romans 4:20).

Through Isaac, the covenant line continued. Yet God would soon test Abraham’s faith to its utmost limit—to offer his beloved son as a sacrifice.

The Test on Mount Moriah

In one of the most profound moments in Scripture, God said, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest... and offer him... upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Genesis 22:2). Abraham obeyed without hesitation.

On Mount Moriah, Isaac carried the wood, and Abraham prepared the altar. When Isaac asked, “Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Abraham answered, “My son, God will provide himself a lamb” (Genesis 22:7-8). This prophetic statement looked beyond the immediate moment to the cross, where God would indeed provide the Lamb.

As Abraham raised the knife, the angel of the Lord stopped him, saying, “Now I know that thou fearest God” (Genesis 22:12). A ram caught in a thicket was offered in Isaac’s place, prefiguring substitutionary atonement. The Lord renewed His covenant, declaring, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 22:18).

Abraham’s Faith and God’s Plan of Redemption

Abraham’s obedience on Moriah foreshadowed the sacrifice of Christ, the true Son of promise. Just as Isaac was offered on Mount Moriah, Christ was crucified near the same region centuries later. The parallel is deliberate; Abraham’s test reveals the heart of God, who “spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all” (Romans 8:32).

Through Abraham’s seed, the blessing of salvation extends to all nations. Paul wrote, “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29). The covenant made with Abraham thus finds its ultimate fulfillment in the gospel.

The Legacy of Faith



Abraham's life was not without weakness; yet, his enduring trust in God made him a model of faith for all generations. He looked beyond his present circumstances to a heavenly hope: "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). His faith transcended geography and time, anchored in the eternal purposes of God.

Through his example, believers learn that faith involves both waiting and walking. Abraham waited for decades for God's promise, but he continued to walk in obedience. True faith holds fast even when the promise seems delayed, knowing that God's timing is perfect.

The Everlasting Covenant

The covenant God made with Abraham remains central to Scripture. It established Israel's national identity, pointed to the coming Messiah, and confirmed God's unchanging nature. The land promise, the blessing, and the seed converge in Jesus Christ, through whom all nations are blessed.

God's dealings with Abraham assure us that His word cannot fail. What He begins, He completes. The God who called Abraham out of Ur still calls His people to walk by faith, trusting that His promises will be fulfilled in His time.

Conclusion

Abraham's journey from Ur to Canaan, from doubt to faith, mirrors the believer's spiritual pilgrimage. His life teaches that faith is not the absence of struggle but the perseverance of trust. Through Abraham, God revealed the pattern of grace, divine calling, human response, and ultimate fulfillment in Christ.

As "the father of faith," Abraham stands as a witness that righteousness comes by believing in God. His story reminds us that God's promises transcend generations and that faith, though tested, always triumphs. Through his lineage came the Savior, and through his example, we learn that faith obeys, faith waits, and faith endures.