

Abraham

Lesson 6

INTRO:

- A. Aside from Moses, Abraham is probably the most familiar Old Testament character.
 - 1. His story covers a good portion of the book of Genesis.
 - a. Abraham is mentioned more times in the New Testament than anyone in the Old Testament.
- B. He is called the “*father*” of the faithful (**Romans 4:11**)
 - 1. and “*the friend of God*” (**Isaiah 41:8**).
- C. Today three major religions consider him a significant religious figure: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.
- D. His life is filled with many accomplishments as well as failures that we should not fail to take note of and learn from the lessons.

I. Lesson #1: Be Willing To Give Up Everything For God.

- A. Abraham is called the father of the faithful for good reasons.
 - 1. When God called him to leave his homeland he immediately “*went out, not knowing where he was going*” (**Hebrews 11:8**).
 - 2. The test of his faith did not stop there.
 - a. God asks him to offer his only begotten son.
 - 1) Can you imagine the anguish and fear that might have raced through Abraham’s mind?
 - 2) If you are a father, would you have the strength and courage to put your beloved son on an altar and offer him to God?
 - 3. His faith was obviously bigger than any fears he might have had because he believed God was able to raise Isaac even from the dead (**Hebrews 11:19**)
 - 4. Abraham was fully convinced what God had promised He was able to perform.
 - a. This is the type of faith that makes strong Christians.
 - 5. His faith is so strong that he is willing to give up EVERYTHING for God.
 - a. He was ready to leave behind everything familiar to him; even his own son, he was willing to offer up to God.
 - 6. His faith was such that the Holy Spirit devoted Romans chapter 4 to Abraham.
- B. We may not always understand why God commands us to do something, but we can be 100% sure that it is for our own good (**Psalms 84:11**).

II. Lesson 2: Though A Man Of Great Faith, He Was Still Human.

- A. As strong as his faith was, he was still human and subject to frailties and weaknesses.
- B. Abraham and Sarah were old and had no son.
 - 1. God promised Abraham would be the father of “*a great nation*”. (**Genesis 12:1-2; 13:16; 17:6**).
 - a. The fulfillment of the promise was not immediate.
 - 2. Because of this, Sarah grew impatient and gave her handmaid, Hagar, to Abraham.
 - 3. Hagar had a son and he was named Ishmael.

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4. This mistake of Abraham caused division within his family.
 - a. When Isaac finally was born to Sarah, Ishmael and his mother were driven out.
 - b. Ishmael eventually became the father of the Arab nation, while Isaac became the father of the Jews.
5. Though we can see that Abraham was not perfect, he is still considered the friend of God.
 - a. We can find comfort from his life that though we may commit sin, God is always faithful to forgive as long as we repent and change our ways.

III. Lesson #3: Faith Is Both Believing and Doing.

- A. Paul said, *"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law"* (**Romans 3:28**).
 1. On the other hand, James said, *"You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only"* (**James 2:24**).
 - a. Did Paul and James contradict each other? **NO!** Paul and James were in agreement.
 - b. Both Paul and James used Abraham to explain their point.
 - c. Abraham believed God but did not just let that belief remain in his mind. He acted upon his belief.
 - d. Paul and James both included in their writing that *"Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness"* (**Romans 4:3** and **James 2:23**).
- B. Faith is demonstrated through action.
 1. Believing is one thing but acting on that belief is completely different.
 2. Abraham demonstrated what true and living faith is.
 - a. Abraham's belief in God caused him to act upon his belief.
 - b. Abraham had faith and how would God know if he really had faith? Through his actions! *"...now I know..."* (**Genesis 22:12**)
 - 1) Faith is both belief in God and doing His commandments.
 3. Abraham shows us that no one can earn salvation and yet it is equally true that salvation cannot be obtained without works.

IV. Lesson #4: When Making A Decision, Think Of Not Only Now But The Future.

- A. Abraham was a man of decision.
- B. Whether we like it or not, we are all presented with different choices.
 1. Some are minor, while others might be really significant.
- C. The life of Abraham shows us every action leads to another.
 1. This was true in Abraham's life and it is certainly true in our life today.
 2. Abraham made a decision that did not just affect his life but also the life of other people.
 3. The effects of his decision did not just affect his immediate lifetime but also down through the history of man.

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4. The decision of Abraham to take matters into his own hands concerning the fulfillment of God's promise caused a tremendously negative effect.
 - a. One decision led to the beginning of different nations that exist today.
 - b. Because of his decision to obtain a son through Hagar, he started a domino effect that has ran through the ages.
 - 1) We now see the Middle East as a powder keg of strife and war.
 - 2) His descendants are always in conflict because of the family feud that had started with Ishmael and Isaac thousands of years ago.
- D. The story of Abraham and his descendants show us the decisions we make can potentially affect everything around us.
 1. For this reason, before we yield to temptation, we must also remember that sin can put a toll on us personally and on others..
 2. How often have we seen people suffer not because of their own actions but because of the sin of other people.
 3. Sin can affect the person doing it and the people around him.
- E. In Abraham's case, what he did affected not just himself but also his family and descendants.

V. Lesson #5: When God Makes Promises, He Always Keeps Them.

- A. God's promise: **Genesis 17:19**
- B. Yet, God commands Abraham to offer Isaac as burnt sacrifice: **Genesis 22:2**
- C. What seems to be a breaking of God's promise is not that at all: **Genesis 22:12**
- D. What has God promised us?
 1. **Matthew 6:33; Acts 2:38-39; 1 Timothy 4:8; Hebrews 4:1; 9:15; 13:5**
1 John 2:25

CONCLUSION:

- A. Abraham is called the father of the faithful.
- B. Whether we are a Jew or gentile, an Israelite or non-Israelite, we can be part of Abraham's seed (**Galatians 3:26-29**).
- C. It is important for us to think about the life of Abraham and learn the lessons from his life.
- D. May we all let these lessons be evident in your life through faith that comes from the hearing of God's word and our actions always in harmony with His word.