

Abraham's Principles of Faith

(Part 3)

January 28, 2018

The Life of Abraham and Principles of Faith (Gen 12:1 - 25:17)

Last week we covered:

1. Abraham leaves Babylon (Gen 11:26-32).
2. Conversion, call and promise of God to Abraham (Gen 12:1-5)

3. The first test of Abraham's faith (Gen 12:6-20).

Abraham goes to Egypt, because of the famine, lies about Sarah and his relationship to Pharaoh.

There is a famine in the very land where God led him!

We can be in the will of God and still suffer trials.

It has been said that "faith is living without scheming," but Abram began to scheme. He was walking by sight and not by faith, it almost cost him his wife.

Note: "Going down to Egypt" is Bible language for getting out of the will of God.

Blessing leads to testing

Faith is tested for at least three reasons:

To prove that our faith is real (Jas 1:2-3, 12; 1Pt 1:7 Ps 11:5; Isa 1:25; Zec 13:9; Mal 3:3).

To help our faith grow (Jas 1:1-8).

To bring glory to God (1Pt 1:6-9).

4. Abraham and Lot part ways (Gen 13:1-18)

Abraham returns to the land he never should have left.

When we fail, the Lord is ready to forgive and restore (1Jn 1:5-2:2).

"The victorious Christian life is a series of new beginnings," (Alexander Whyte).

Two reasons why Abraham and Lot part ways:

because the land couldn't sustain both of their flocks (13:6).

because of the strife between their helpers (13:7).

The pain and stress that comes from family are the hardest tests of all.

Abraham was a peacemaker as he lived by faith

Lot was a troublemaker because he lived by sight (13:10).

Abraham chose a heavenly city (Heb 11:13-16)

Lot chose an earthly, wicked city, soon headed for destruction.

Abraham was generous

Gen 13:9 "Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me; if to the left, then I will go to the right; or if to the right, then I will go to the left."

Faith prefers others and isn't selfish.

Unselfishness = Putting the concerns and interests of others before one's own.
Putting others first is fundamental in Christianity (Rom 12:10; 15:1-2; 1Co 10:24; 1Ti 6:18).

Phil 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Abraham was wealthy

Gen 13:2 Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold.

Faith is willing to suffer loss.

Ps 15:4 ... He swears to his own hurt and does not change;

Abraham was courageous

Gen 14:14 When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.

Abraham was independent, not following the crowd (Gen 14:21-23).

God confirms His Word, telling Abraham to lift his eyes and see and walk the land.

After a time of testing, the person of faith will receive confirmation from God.

Let others take what they want; our God gives us far more than they can ever imagine (Ps 16:5; 33:12).

Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the land. He lifted up his feet and claimed it by faith (Josh 1:3). Then he lifted his heart and worshiped God.

5. Abraham wins three victories in rescuing Lot (Gen 14:1-16).

1. Victory over Lot.

Abraham could have let Lot suffer the consequences of his own choices. A man of faith is called "to be a blessing," so Abraham went to the rescue. Lot was family, he was a brother who needed help.

2. Victory over the kings.

Abraham rescues Lot with a small army and faith in His God.
Abraham was victorious because he battled by faith (1Jn 5:4-5; 1Tim 1:18; 6:12).

3. Victory over himself.

Abraham took none of the spoils of victory for himself. He may have been tempted to use this victory for personal gain, but he refused the king of Sodom's offer (14:21).

Abraham fulfills his vow to God (13:22-24). Even a shoelace from Sodom would have violated Abraham's godly walk!

After every victory of battle be aware of the devil's bargains. "Let us be as watchful after the victory as before the battle," (Andrew Bonar). If you aren't careful, you may win the war and lose the victory.

6. Abraham tithes of all he has (Gen 14:17-24).

The **king of Sodom** came with a bargain
[the refugees return to Sodom; the spoils belong to Abraham]

The **king of Salem** came with a blessing, and with bread and wine [communion].

The translation of Melchizedek's name = king of righteousness (Heb 7:2).

The translation of "king of Salem" is king of peace.

Melchizedek is a type of Jesus (Heb 7:1-3).

Tithing is an act of faith.

Abraham established tithing (Gen 14:20).

Jesus affirms tithing (Mat 23:23; Lk 11:42; 18:12).

The Epistles confirm tithing.

Heb 7:1-10 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. 3 Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually. 4 Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils. 5 And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham. 6 But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed the one who had the promises. 7 But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater. 8 In this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on. 9 And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, 10 for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

Phil 4:15 You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;