

CASKET EMPTY:

God's Plan of Redemption through History

Old Testament Overview

Session 2 - Abraham, Genesis 12-50

Approximate Dates: 2100-1450 BC



Abraham's Call

- God calls Abraham out of Ur (Gen 12:1-3).
- Abraham is 75 years old when God calls him.
- Abraham's wife Sarah is elderly, barren, and she has no child (Gen 11:30, 18:11).

God's Covenant with Abraham

- God makes promises to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3; 17:1-8).
- He will have many descendants.
- He and his descendants will have a relationship with God.
- He is given "promised land."
 - See Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-16
- God will be with him.
- The nations (*ethnos*) will be blessed in Abraham's "seed."
 - See Acts 3:25-26 and Romans 4:16-17
- Abraham will be the father of many nations.
- Kings will come from Abraham's line (Judah)

Abraham's Faith

- Abraham believes that God will perform what He has promised (Gen 15:6).
- God justifies Abraham on account of his faith — it is the Gift of God by His Grace.
 - See Romans 4:13

The Sign of Circumcision

- God confirms His promise by making a COVENANT with Abraham (Gen 15:7–21).
- Circumcision is a covenant sign (Gen 17:9–14).

Resurrection Faith & God's Provision

- Abraham offers up his beloved son Isaac “by faith,” and in obedience to God (Gen 22).
- God provides a ram in place of his son Isaac.
 - See John 3:16

Heirs of God's Promises

- Not Abraham's firstborn son Ishmael — but his son Isaac (Gen 18, 21).
- Not Isaac's firstborn son Esau — but his son Jacob (Gen 25–28).
- God's covenant with Abraham is established with Isaac and with his grandson, Jacob.
- God changes Jacob's name to Israel (Gen 32:28; 35:10).
- Jacob (Israel) has twelve sons.
- The sons of Israel are enslaved in Egypt (Exod 1:1–7).
- But God “remembers” His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob — deliverance is coming.

Discussion

- 1) Consider the themes that came up in the first session on creation (the Spirit bearing God's life-giving presence, humanity as royal representatives, failure to trust God's word, exile from the presence of God due to sin, etc.). Do you notice any of these themes recurring in the story of Abraham? How do God's promises to Abraham hint at God making things right?

- 2) Even as we may be inspired by the faith and obedience of people in the Bible like Abraham, we recognize that they are still sinful humans struggling to trust God's promises. So, we must be intentional about remembering who the true hero of God's story is, the perfect Son of God, Jesus Christ. What are some practical ways you can fix your eyes on the "True Hero" of the Bible during your personal and communal Bible study?

- 3) *Read Romans 4:20-25.* In looking to the story of Abraham, how does Paul teach us to think about "faith" in these verses? For instance, what is the object of faith? How do we grow in faith? What is the result of this faith?

- 4) What does it mean that Abraham and Sarah were called to have a "resurrection faith?" Why does God's ability (and desire) to bring life into barren situations continue to be important for us today?