

UNEXPECTED

God's Promise to Abraham

Genesis 12:1-7

December 6, 2020

Have you ever thought about how big of a deal Christmas is to our society? Do you realize that the whole world's calendar revolves around Christmas? - We have B.C. which stands for Before Christ and A.D. which DOES NOT stand for After Death. A.D. is latin for Anno Domini which means, "the year of our Lord". So the birth of Jesus is so important that it split history. That's a big deal.

But for thousands of years, even before Jesus, people have been excited about Christmas. How could they be excited about Christmas before Jesus? He's the reason we have Christmas. Exactly!! Our Old Testament heroes lived in expectation of Jesus. The promises that God had given so many Old Testament prophets were now able to be fulfilled through Jesus. Daniel spoke of an eternal throne for the Messiah. King David had been telling of the coming Christ. Isaiah had prophesied the Messiah would be born of a virgin. Jacob would see the promise God gave him fulfilled through Jesus. All of these amazing people in the Bible were anticipating that first Christmas when Jesus would come in an unexpected way.

Today we want to look back where it all started with Father Abraham. He was a father and he had many sons. Many sons had Father Abraham. I am one of them, and so are you. Ok, you get it. But Abraham, outside of Jesus himself, is probably the most well known person in the history of the world. Did you realize that all 3 major monotheistic religions trace their heritage back to Abraham? You have Christianity which is traced back through Isaac, the son of Abraham. The Jewish people claim Abraham as their father in faith. And even Islam traces their heritage back to Abraham through Ishmael (Abraham's son with Hagar).

Genesis 12:1-7 is the beginning of Abraham's story. We see in this passage that God calls Abraham to leave everything he knows and go to a land the he will show you (12:1). Imagine what kind of faith Abraham had. God asked him to leave the city he knew, leave his family, and go to a land that I will show you. If you do this, I will make you a great nation, I will bless you, and make your name great. Did I mention that Abraham is 75 years old at this time, and his wife couldn't have kids? Those are important facts in Abraham's amazing story.

Abraham's story extends over 15 chapters of Genesis so it's a lot to cover in one sitting. God elaborates on the promise that he makes over the course of Abraham's life. Here are a few of the passages where God continues to bring clarity to the original promise he made to Abraham.

- The initial promise given at Ur – Genesis 12:2-3
 - Abraham would become a great nation and a great name.
 - God would bless those that blessed him and curse those that cursed him
 - That in Abraham eventually ALL nations will be blessed.
- Genesis 12:7
 - Abraham would have children (seed) who would inherit the land
- Genesis 13:14-17
 - Abraham and his seed would inherit the land of Israel forever

- He would make his descendants as dust on the earth
- Genesis 15:1-12; 17-20:
 - God promises Abraham a son from his own body
 - God makes a covenant with Abraham by sacrifice.
 - The boundaries of the land which God would give to Abraham and his seed are defined.
- Genesis 22:15-19:
 - That Abraham's seed would possess the gate of his enemies - they would defeat the cities to take over the land of Canaan
 - That in this seed all nations would be blessed.
 - The promise was confirmed by an oath from God.

Why is the promise to Abraham relevant today?

- **Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise God made to Abraham**
 - In Matthews genealogy of Jesus we see that he comes through the line of Abraham through Isaac
 - *Rom 15:8 - Christ has come...to confirm the promises given to the fathers,*
 - *Gal. 3:6-8 - those who are of faith are sons of Abraham*
- **The promise to Abraham is evidence that God will always keep his promises**
 - God's promise to Abraham was not based on Abraham's faithfulness but on God's.
 - *Gen. 15:6 - Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.*
 - *Heb. 11:1 - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*

Big Idea: God's promises are gifts of Confidence

We can look at the promise that God made with Abraham and that gives us confidence that he will uphold the many other promises that are made throughout scripture. Things like, "he will never leave us," "he will give us wisdom if we ask", "comfort in our trials", "salvation to all who believe", "he will return for us", etc...(Heb. 13:5; Js 1:5; 2 Cor. 1:3-4; Rom. 1:16; Jn 14:2-3) The list goes on and on.

God still wants to do unexpected things through unexpecting people. Maybe he's waiting on you to trust him to take the next step even when you don't know what that next step is. Maybe he's calling you to something he will show you later.

Family Discussion Questions

1. How does it make you feel when someone doesn't keep their promise? What emotions do you have?
2. God called Abraham to trust him and leave everything he knew. What things do you own that would be really tough to leave behind?
3. God's promises are always 100% fulfilled, but not always in the way we would like. Have a couple of people give some examples of promises that God has fulfilled in their life?
4. Can someone share an example of how God answered a prayer in a way they were not expecting?

5. Pray that God will show you an area that you and your family need to trust his promises.

Small Group Discussion Questions

Have someone Read Genesis 12:1-9

1. What jumps out to you in this passage?
2. How hard would it be to leave behind most of what you know?
3. What do you think God is trying to teach Abraham by asking him to do this?
4. Why do you think God didn't give him more direction?

Read Prov. 3:5-6 - How do you think this relates to the passage and to your life?

Have your group try to list out 5-10 promises that are made in the New Testament. Use your phones and Google some if needed.

5. Are there any promises that jump out to you?
 6. Would someone share why that particular promise means a lot to you?
- Is there a particular area that you need to trust God in this week?