

### **104.7. FALTERING FAITH. ABRAHAM'S CHOICES**

God chose a man, Abram (Abraham), as the Father of Faith, to become a great leader & who He called, the Father of many nations.

God knew Abraham's heart & knew that he would instruct his children & household in the ways of the Lord, as Abraham was not only a man of faith; he was also a faithful man & he lived & obeyed & carried out the wishes of God, as God instructed.

Abraham was chosen by God & was promised a major role in God's eternal plan of redemption, as Abraham's lineage would lead to the birth of Jesus Christ, which God would fulfill this promise 1800 years later, when Christ was born.

Abraham's life brought the 1st mention of God's righteousness, as the way of salvation, Gen. 15:6. Abraham was told that he would be the father of many nations & he trusted & believed God, Gen. 22:17, but his wife was very old & they had doubts & even laughed; due to their old age, when God mentioned children, but Sarah, Abraham's wife, had Abraham sleep with her handmaid (not unusual for the time) & their son Ishmael was born (father of the Arabic nations). The problem here was that God's promise, regardless of improbability, was for Abraham & Sarah, Gen. 15:3-4, to whom Isaac (Grandfather of the 12 tribes of Jerusalem) was soon born, proving that we can trust God, even for the impossible.

Abraham was called by God to move his family & told to take his son Isaac, to Mt. Moriah & offer him as a sacrifice, Gen. 22:2.

Through faith, Abraham did this, but God intervened & provided a different sacrifice, via a ram caught nearby. So, Abraham's faith had been tested & proved.

This is a good place to see why it is so important to always be listening & watching, as we never know what God has next & think what might have happened if Abraham would have taken his eyes off God, just for a moment, he may have missed the replacement sacrifice & went through with his sons? Remain alert & vigilant for God.

Abraham had a rough journey & at times couldn't see the road ahead, but he held strong to God's promises & his story shows, that God keeps His promises & that we may not always have the answers, but God does. So, Abraham obeyed God's call & with each step of faith, God revealed more to him, Hebrews 11:8, just as He does with us when we follow His calling on us.

Abraham arrived in Canaan (Israel) & God said, look around, all that you see I will give you & your family & will make your family as uncountable, as the dust of the earth, Gen. 13:14.

Abraham's son Isaac, fathered Jacob (who God named Israel), who fathered 12 sons that became the 12 tribes of Israel & a great mighty nation.

Now as for his son Ishmael, God said, I will bless him; I will make him fruitful & He will be the father of 12 rulers & will be a great nation, but my covenant is with Isaac, Gen. 17:20-21.

God's promises are always fulfilled e.g. The Lord gave Israel all the land sworn to them, Joshua 21:43 & blessed Abraham abundantly, Gen. 24:34.

Abraham's name is great among God's people & he is the father of faith. So those who bless Abraham are blessed & those who curse him are cursed, as seen in the plagues on Pharaoh & the fall of empires in

Babylon, Greece & Rome & even America has prospered due to its support of the Jewish people.

Abraham knew God would justify the Gentiles by faith, as promised; All nations will be blessed through you, Gal. 3:8. Now Abraham was still human & even his faith wavered at times, as he questioned God & needed assurance, but God is there for all & He knows true faith is not easy, but it is the quality of our faith that He desires & that should be our goal, true faith, through open obedience.

Now before the promised land could be secured, unbelief had to be dealt with; as it is disobedience & sin & Abraham & Sara's doubt & lapse in judgement & having Abraham sleep with the handmaid, instead of waiting on God to fulfill His promise, had started a chain of events, that would bring affliction upon Abraham's seed, before all the promises could be fulfilled.

From this lapse of faith, along with so much disobedience to God, from the people of Canaan (Israel), a great famine was prophesied & did come to the land.

Abraham's grandson, Jacob & his tribe moved to Egypt, Gen. 45-47, where his son Joseph, whom he believed dead, as he was sold into slavery many years earlier by his brothers & through a strange series of events now worked for Pharaoh, & so was able to support his family for many years, until things started changing in Egypt, to which the Israelites ended up as slaves, of the new Pharaoh, after the old one had died.

The story of Joseph, his coat of many colors & his brothers' betrayal, is one of great redemption & forgiveness, as well as of the mysterious ways of a loving God & how He uses evil for good, which can be found in Genesis, chapters 37-50 & is well worth studying yourself.

God we pray that you not only know the desires of our heart, but that you actually change & give us new desires, to serve you & your will for our lives, that we may receive the desires of our heart, from you, as you instill those desires in us, so that your desires for our heart, will in effect become the desires of our heart, with a burden of love for all of your children's hearts, from the lost, to the found.