

Introduction to OT Patriarchs

Goals:

- To see Jesus more clearly in the OT
- Acquire/strengthen a working knowledge of some of the prominent figures in Genesis so. . .
 - Devotional life is enriched
 - Scripture is "easier" to read

Goal #1) To see Jesus more clearly in the OT:

- New Testament = full picture
- Old Testament = snapshots to put the picture together

Goal #2) To enrich devotional life:

- Relating to real people
 - with real struggles. . .
 - in faith
 - life-changing decisions
 - family life
 - relationships with outsiders
 - emotions
 - patience

Goal #3) To help in understanding Scripture

- The name "Abraham/Abram"
 - Some 230 times in the Bible
 - 67 times in the NT
 - "Abram" occurs 60 times
- "Isaac"
 - 127 times
- "Jacob"
 - 361 times
- All three
 - As part of God's name
 - Referenced as the "Fathers," hence the title "Patriarchs"
 - The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the God who sent Jesus

Context:

- God had scattered the people all over the world from the Tower of Babel
- Terah (Abraham's father) had set out with his family from Ur (in present day Iraq) to settle in the land of Canaan
- However, Terah and his family ended up settling in Haran (present day Syria)
- Abraham was married to Sarah who was barren
- Terah died and Abraham (age 75) was still in Haran
- The year at the start of Genesis chapter 12 is around 2050 B.C.

Read Verses 1-3

1) How would following the LORD's command in verse 1 be a struggle for Abraham?

2) In what way(s) could you say that Abraham's struggle of faith was different (or maybe even easier) than the struggles of faith you and I experience?

3) How many promises did the LORD give to Abraham in the covenant he made with him in verses 2 and 3? Which of these promises is a "snapshot" of Jesus? What does this snapshot reveal to us?

4) The name "LORD" is used in the Bible for God when he is making a covenant with his people and also emphasizes his grace and compassion. What was unique about this covenant?

5) Describe how the covenant the LORD made with Abraham would require a great amount of trust on Abraham's part? (cf. 11:30)

Read Verses 4-9

1) When Abraham traveled through the land, all he saw were Canaanites firmly entrenched in fortified cities. How did the LORD strengthen his faith? Accordingly, how is our faith strengthened?

2) What was Abraham's response to God appearing to him and repeating his promise? Accordingly, what is our response?

Read Verses 10-20

1) The Eighth Commandment and its meaning reads: "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor." *What does this mean?* "We should fear and love God that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him or give him a bad name, but defend him, speak well of him and take his words and actions in the kindest possible way." What two sins against this commandment did Abraham commit?

2) Explain how our salvation was in danger because of Abraham's doubt.

3) How did the LORD intercede so our salvation was not compromised?

4) How did Abraham's actions damage the name of the LORD?

5) How can called workers and members of a church damage the ministry of the gospel as Abraham did? What encouragement does that give us?

