

Abraham's Children

Old Testament

Themes & Words

Angel of the LORD
Circumcision
Fasting
Line of the Savior
LORD
Sabbath
Tithes and Firstfruits
Zion

New Testament

Themes & Words

Apostles
Body of Christ
Children of God
Gospel
Kingdom of God
Persecution
Reconciliation
Repentance

Figures of Christ

David's Son
King Priest
Prophet
Rock
Shepherd and Sheep
Slaves and Servants
Son of Man

Salvation Words

Covenant
Faith
Glory of the Lord
Grace
Holiness Redemption
Resurrection
Righteousness
Sacrifice for Sin

Important Symbols

Anointing
Fire
Idolatry and Adultery
Light and Darkness
Seven
Twelve
Water
Wind and Spirit
Yeast

Christian Life

Themes & Words

Abraham's Children

False Teaching
Holy Spirit's Presence
Law
Miracles, Signs, Wonders
Names
Presence of Christ
*Retribution and
Restitution*
Testing Faith
Witnesses

Genesis 15:2,5-6—*Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless" ... [The LORD] took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall you offspring be."*

1. This is God's promise to Abram. Some of you know the story well. Give the background of why this promise was needed. Also tell how God fulfilled this promise.

John 8:39,40—*"If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did. As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things."*

2. Jesus implies that the Jews around him were not really Abraham's children. How could he say such a thing?

3. How did many of the physical descendants of Abraham lose their place in God's family?

Matthew 3:9—*Do not think you can say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham.*

4. Why is it "easy" for God to raise up children for Abraham?

Romans 9:6-7—*Not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children.*

5. What in the world does this passage mean?

Helps

1.) Abraham was promised that he would be the father of a great nation, but at the time of the passage, Abraham was about 85 years old and had no son. God fulfilled his promise by providing a miracle baby when he was 100. 2.) Jesus didn't look at genetics, but at the heart. 3.) Many did not look to Jesus as the promised Messiah and Savior. 4.) Because it has nothing to do with natural lineage, God creates a child of Abraham every time he leads someone to faith. 5.) As mentioned in the two previous passages, God counts Abraham's children in a way other than how we count descendants. 6.) "Those who believe are children of Abraham" and "Those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith" are key phrases. 7.) Some of the many faithful things Abraham did were his generosity to Lot, he faithfully obeyed God's command of circumcision, boldly prayed for Lot when he lived in Sodom, willingly sacrificed Isaac at God's command, confidently buried Sarah in a land that still was only his by promise, and was concerned to get Isaac a God-fearing wife. When we take this seriously, we can desire to live up to that legacy. 8.) There are several different phrases which emphasize this point. Pick one! 9.) Modern Jewish people often consider their Judaism only an ethnic heritage; others believe it gives them guidance for this life and a way to gain eternal life. We have a special debt of love, on account of their faithful ancestors, to reach them with the good news of Jesus. See Paul's attitude in Romans 9:1-5.

Galatians 3:6-9—Consider Abraham: “He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

6. From Galatians 3:6-9, show that people have always been saved by faith, even during the days when Moses' law was in effect, Old Testament believers and New Testament believers are saved in the same way.
7. As a spiritual father, what are some of the things that Abraham did in faith? What does this fact motivate you to do?

Romans 4:16—Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.

8. What part of this passage shows that believers of the Old Testament believers and New Testament believers are of equal status?
9. What do Abraham's physical descendants believe today? Why do Christians have a special desire to reach the Jewish people who do not trust in Jesus?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, parent to Abraham and to us, bestow upon us a solid confidence in you, as Abraham so beautifully displayed. Lead us to live lives that always reflect to others the excellence of our spiritual heritage. Amen.

Answers

- 1.) Abraham was promised that he would be the father of a great nation, but at the time of the passage, Abraham was about 85 years old and had no son. So the idea that he would have a son, and become a great nation through that child, was beyond imaging. God fulfilled his promise by providing a miracle baby when Abraham was 100.
- 2.) Jesus didn't look at genetics, but at the heart and actions: "Abraham did not do such things."
- 3.) Many or most did not look to Jesus as the promised Messiah and Savior. We should be careful here to avoid the wrong idea that the Jews as a nation are cursed or rejected by God. Jesus was a Jew. All his apostles were Jews.
- 4.) Because God is almighty. But more than that, it has nothing to do with natural lineage, as we will see in the next couple passages.
- 5.) As mentioned in the two previous passages, God counts Abraham's children in a way other than how we count descendants. When the Bible passage separates "Abraham's Children" from "Abraham's Descendants," it has implications for our earthly relationships. We welcome all Christians, however different they may be from us, as our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- 6.) "Those who believe are children of Abraham" OR "Those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith" are key phrases. Also it says both that Abraham's faith was credited as righteousness and that God justifies the Gentiles by faith.
- 7.) Some of the many faithful things Abraham did were his generosity to Lot, he faithfully obeyed God's command of circumcision, boldly prayed for Lot when he lived in Sodom, willingly sacrificed Isaac at God's command, confidently buried Sarah in a land that still was only his by promise, and was concerned to get Isaac a God-fearing wife. When we take Abraham's life of faith seriously, we can desire to live up to that legacy.
- 8.) Pick one! "The promise comes by faith" OR "grace...guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring" OR "not only of the law but also to those who are of the faith" OR "Father of us all"
- 9.) Modern Jewish people often consider their Judaism only an ethnic heritage; others believe it gives them guidance for this life and a way to gain eternal life. Most do not believe in Jesus as their Savior, nor are they waiting for a Messiah to save them. We have a special debt of love, on account of their faithful ancestors, to reach them with the good news of Jesus. See Paul's attitude in Romans 9:1-5.