

Heroes of the Bible: Abraham

Lessons from the life of Abraham

Lesson 1: A head start – Gen. 11:31-12:1; Acts 7:2-4

³¹And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled there. ³²And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.

^{12:1}Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you;

^{7:2}And he said, "Hear me, brethren and fathers! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, ³and said to him, 'DEPART FROM YOUR COUNTRY AND YOUR RELATIVES, AND COME INTO THE LAND THAT I WILL SHOW YOU.' ⁴"Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans, and settled in Haran. And from there, after his father died, God removed him into this country in which you are now living.

Before Abraham set off on his own to follow God's call, his father Terah went with him on the first step. The call was on Abraham, but Terah supported him.

What could this mean to you in your life as a parent?

Lesson 2: Sometimes God doesn't tell us everything up front – Gen. 11:29

²⁹And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah.

God usually gave detail – excruciating detail – about the lineages and relationships among these people, yet here he leave out one pretty important detail. Sarai was Abram's half-sister.

^{20:12}"Besides, she actually is my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife;

Obviously God knew that we would read 9 chapters of Abraham's story before we got that detail. And that detail was relevant long before chapter 20! Like in chapter 12!

What conclusion do we jump to when we read chapter 12? Abram was lying to save his skin! Was that a true judgment? We judged before we knew the facts.

He was not lying. Whether or not he was trying to save his skin is another matter.

Consider also 18:17. God discussed whether or not he would hide something from Abraham.

What could this mean to you in your life? _____

Are there warnings for us in this lesson? _____

Lesson 3: God's call may require dramatic changes – Gen. 12:1

^{12:1}Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you;

What are at least four things God called Abraham to leave? And how could each be tough?

Country	<u>Safety, Identity, Property, Culture, Language, Belonging, Business, Climate</u>
Father	<u>Inheritance, No more contact, Became Patriarch, Status, Bones</u>
People	<u>Family, Identity, Known, Security, Traditions, Relationships</u>
Known	<u>Comfort Zone, Trust God?, No precedents, Religion</u>

Have you ever had a clear calling from God? ____ If so, what was it to do? _____

Did you have to leave anything? _____

Were there other dramatic changes required? _____

What if God were to call you today? Would you be willing to make dramatic changes in your life? ____ In the lives of your family? _____

Could you respond to God's call right now? Or are there things in your life that have you locked in? _____

Are those things an intentional "I can't" so you don't have to even listen for God's call? Are those things really impossible obstacles. Would you be willing to say "yes" to a call from God that required dramatic changes if He removed those obstacles from your life?

Are you using your family as a reason to avoid listening for a call from God? Remember Luke 9:

⁵⁷And as they were going along the road, someone said to Him, "I will follow You wherever You go." ⁵⁸And Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." ⁵⁹And He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Permit me first to go and bury my father." ⁶⁰But He said to him, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God." ⁶¹And another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home." ⁶²But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

^{10:1} ¶ Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. ²And He was saying to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

Will we miss the blessing of being called to stay close to our family? Abraham had to leave his father who died alone in Haran 60 years later. Or will we pressure our children or relatives to wait to serve God until after you are gone?

Are you willing? Are you willing to be made willing? Are you ready?

Lesson 4: Wealth is not bad – Gen. 11:31; 12:5; 12:16; 13:2

^{11:31}And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled there.

^{12:5}And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of Canaan.

^{12:16}Therefore he treated Abram well for her sake; and gave him sheep and oxen and donkeys and male and female servants and female donkeys and camels.

^{13:2}Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold.

Was God responsible for Abraham's wealth? _____ How do you know?
Was Abraham greedy? _____ How do you know? _____

What could this mean to you in your life? _____

Lesson 5: You have to go all the way – Gen. 11:31; 12:5; 12:16; 13:2

^{11:31}And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled there.

^{12:5}And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of Canaan.

After making the difficult decision to leave, and after the possibly even more difficult packing and leaving, it is very tempting to stop on the way and put down roots. But the command / promise is not about the leaving – it's about the destination.

Abraham did pack up and leave Haran on the second leg of the journey, but not everyone went with him.

Some have heard from God, and even "left Ur", but they stopped and settled somewhere before they accomplished God's plan for them. Could that be you?

It wasn't that Abraham was out of God's will, necessarily, while he was in Haran. But there came a day when he had to finish the journey.

Lesson 6: When God makes you a promise, he may repeat it for confirmation – Gen. 12:1-3; 12:7; 13:14-17; 15:1-6; 15:18-21; 17:1-8; 17:16-21; 18:10, 14, 18-19; 22:15-18

^{12:1}Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; ²And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; ³And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

What is the benefit of confirmation of a promise? _____

Is it possible that God's confirmation may be proportional to the amount of time or difficulty between His promise and its fulfillment? _____
Consider the many many promises of the Messiah before His advent. And the many many promises of His second coming.

Abraham was around 75 when he first heard God's promise. He was 100 when Isaac was born.

Lesson 7: Altars are important reminders – Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:4; 13:18

⁷And the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him. ⁸Then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD.

^{13:4}to the place of the altar, which he had made there formerly; and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

^{13:18}Then Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD.

Do we have altars in our lives? _____ Explain. _____

Should we have more? _____

What benefit do they offer us today? _____

Might our altars benefit others, too? _____

Lesson 8: Abraham’s meekness – Gen. 13:5-13

⁵Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. ⁶And the land could not sustain them while dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together. ⁷And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock. Now the Canaanite and the Perizzite were dwelling then in the land. ⁸Then Abram said to Lot, “Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are brothers. ⁹“Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me: if *to* the left, then I will go to the right; or if *to* the right, then I will go to the left.”

¹⁰☪And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere--*this was* before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah--like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar. ¹¹So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan; and Lot journeyed eastward. Thus they separated from each other. ¹²Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom. ¹³Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD.

Who is this story about? Who was the older man? Who was the leader? Who was the called one? _____ Yet, Abraham deferred to Lot and allowed him to choose.

Consider Matthew 5:5:

“Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

(Just about every translation known to man uses “meek”, not “gentle.”)

1) mildness of disposition, gentleness of spirit, meekness

Meekness toward God is that disposition of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. In the OT, the meek are those wholly relying on God rather than their own strength to defend them against injustice. Thus, meekness toward evil people means knowing God is permitting the injuries they inflict, that He is using them to purify His elect, and that He will deliver His elect in His time. (Is. 41:17, Lu. 18:1-8) Gentleness or meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest. It stems from trust in God's goodness and control over the situation. The gentle person is not occupied with self at all. This is a work of the Holy Spirit, not of the human will. (Gal. 5:23)

Meekness is not weakness. Meekness is strength under control. A horse is said to be “meeked” when it has been tamed and taught to follow commands. It is no less strong than before, but it has learned submission. Be assured that meekness is not weakness! Meekness is when you have the power and ability to get something you want, but you choose instead to defer to God or someone else.

Was Abraham meek? _____ Or was he just weak? _____ What was the outcome of his meekness? Was the promise of Matthew 5:5 fulfilled? _____

Is there any relation between Abraham’s meekness and his being uniquely called the friend of God? (2 Ch. 20:7; Is. 41:8; Ja 2:23)

Lesson 9: Choosing comfort – Gen. 13:10-13; 14:12, 16

^{13:10}And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere--*this was* before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah--like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar. ¹¹So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan; and Lot journeyed eastward. Thus they separated from each other. ¹²Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom. ¹³Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD.

^{14:8}And the king of Sodom and the king of Gomorrah and the king of Admah and the king of Zeboim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) came out; and they arrayed for battle against them in the valley of Siddim, ⁹against Chedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goiim and Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar--four kings against five. ¹⁰Now the valley of Siddim was full of tar pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and they fell into them. But those who survived fled to the hill country. ¹¹Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all

their food supply, and departed. ¹²And they also took Lot, Abram's nephew, and his possessions and departed, for he was living in Sodom.

¹³¶ Then a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew. Now he was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner, and these were allies with Abram. ¹⁴And when Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. ¹⁵And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. ¹⁶And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his relative Lot with his possessions, and also the women, and the people.

What was the outcome of the decision? Short-term? _____
Long-term? _____

Lesson 10: What was the difference between Abraham and Lot? – Gen. 11:27-28, 31-32; Deut. 2:9, 19; 2 Pet. 2:7-8 **This is a very very important lesson for us as parents!**

^{11:27}Now these are *the records* of the generations of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran became the father of Lot. ²⁸And Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

³¹And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled there. ³²And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.

^{12:4}So Abram went forth as the LORD had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of Canaan.

^{13:5}Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. ⁶And the land could not sustain them while dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together. ⁷And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. Now the Canaanite and the Perizzite were dwelling then in the land. ⁸Then Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are brothers. ⁹"Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me: if to the left, then I will go to the right; or if to the right, then I will go to the left."

¹⁰¶ And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere--*this was* before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah--like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar. ¹¹So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan; and Lot journeyed eastward. Thus they separated from each other. ¹²Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom. ¹³Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD.

^{14:12}And they also took Lot, Abram's nephew, and his possessions and departed, for he was living in Sodom.

¹³¶ Then a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew. Now he was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner, and these were allies with Abram. ¹⁴And when Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. ¹⁵And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. ¹⁶And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his relative Lot with his possessions, and also the women, and the people.

^{19:1}¶ Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw *them*, he rose to meet them and bowed down *with his* face to the ground. ²And he said, "Now behold, my lords, please turn aside into your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way." They said however, "No, but we shall spend the night in the square." ³Yet he urged them strongly, so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

⁴¶ Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the people from every quarter; ⁵and they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have relations with them." ⁶But Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him, ⁷and said, "Please, **my brothers**, do not act wickedly. ⁸"Now behold, **I have two daughters who have not had relations with man**; please let me bring them out to you, and do to them whatever you like; only do nothing to these men, inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof." ⁹But they said, "Stand aside." Furthermore, they said, "This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge; now we will treat you worse than them." So they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door. ¹⁰But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. ¹¹And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied *themselves trying* to find the doorway.

¹²¶ Then the men said to Lot, "Whom else have you here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, bring *them* out of the

place; ¹³for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it.” ¹⁴And Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, “Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city.” But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting.

¹⁵☩ And when morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up, take your wife and your two daughters, who are here, lest you be swept away in the punishment of the city.” ¹⁶But he hesitated. So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, for the compassion of the LORD was upon him; and they brought him out, and put him outside the city. ¹⁷And it came about when they had brought them outside, that one said, “Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountains, lest you be swept away.” ¹⁸But Lot said to them, “Oh no, my lords! ¹⁹“Now behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness, which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest the disaster overtake me and I die; ²⁰now behold, this town is near enough to flee to, and it is small. Please, let me escape there (is it not small?) that my life may be saved.” ²¹And he said to him, “Behold, I grant you this request also, not to overthrow the town of which you have spoken. ²²“Hurry, escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there.” Therefore the name of the town was called Zoar. ²³The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar.

²⁴☩ Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven, ²⁵and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.

²⁶☩ But his wife, from behind him, looked back; and she became a pillar of salt.

²⁷☩ Now Abraham arose early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before the LORD; ²⁸and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the valley, and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a furnace. ²⁹Thus it came about, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived.

³⁰☩ And Lot went up from Zoar, and stayed in the mountains, and his two daughters with him; for he was afraid to stay in Zoar; and he stayed in a cave, he and his two daughters. ³¹Then the first-born said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of the earth. ³²“Come, let us make our father drink wine, and let us lie with him, that we may preserve our family through our father.” ³³So they made their father drink wine that night, and the first-born went in and lay with her father; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. ³⁴And it came about on the morrow, that the first-born said to the younger, “Behold, I lay last night with my father; let us make him drink wine tonight

also; then you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve our family through our father.” ³⁵So they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger arose and lay with him; and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. ³⁶Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. ³⁷And the first-born bore a son, and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. ³⁸And as for the younger, she also bore a son, and called his name Ben-ammi; he is the father of the sons of Ammon to this day.

² Pet 2:7 and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men ⁸(for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day with their lawless deeds), ...

Eze 16:49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom: pride, fulness of bread, and prosperous ease was in her and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

What are the differences between Abraham and Lot in these areas?	
Abraham	Lot
Childhoods	
	Orphan, “uncled”
Character:	
Meek, unselfish, loyal, merciful, wasn't proud	Entitled, hospitable, caring, indecisive, disobedient, presumed blessing, unbelieving, negotiated, knows better than God, wanted his way, childish, morals of an alley cat, selfish
Decisions:	
Military prep, took action	Easier, went “east” toward ungodliness, In Sodom, chose to be solely around unrighteous, got drunk, carried lots of wine, never consulted God
Goals:	
Looked for God	Looked for help
Leadership:	
Military, took action	Had no influence, even with Sons in Law, hesitant, compromise, unwise, set a pattern of poor (fleshly) decisions, no good influence on anyone, made decisions w/o regard for his charge
Outcome of their decisions:	
Father of God's people, saved Lot's life	Father of ungodly generations, lost family

^{De 2:9}“Then the LORD said to me, ‘Do not harass Moab, nor provoke them to war, for I will not give you any of their land as a possession, because I have given Ar to the sons of Lot as a possession.

De 2:19¹ And when you come opposite the sons of Ammon, do not harass them nor provoke them, for I will not give you any of the land of the sons of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot as a possession.'

De 23:3⁴ "No Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the assembly of the LORD; none of their *descendants*, even to the tenth generation, shall ever enter the assembly of the LORD, ⁴because they did not meet you with food and water on the way when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you.

1Ki 11:7⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for **Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab**, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for **Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon**.

Mt 1:5⁵ and to Salmon was born Boaz by Rahab; and to Boaz was born Obed by **Ruth**; and to Obed, Jesse;

Why did God save Lot, was it because of him or Abraham?

What was the state of Lot's wife's relationship with God?

What happened to the sons? The sons-in-law?

Where had Lot's daughters learned about that?

It may be that Lot was righteous, but as you step through the lives of his family, that becomes less and less true. Lot, wife, daughters, sons-in-law.

Solomon and Lot were similar. "Solomon lived a life of untamed passions – with tragic results." Zacharias

Are you more like Abraham or Lot?

Lesson 11: You never know when you may meet another believer – Gen. 14:17-20

¹⁷¶ Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). ¹⁸And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. ¹⁹And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tenth of all.

[See also 1 Kings 19:9-18.] Elijah could see angels on chariots of fire, but couldn't see other faithful Jews when he was discouraged.

What could this mean to you in your life?

Lesson 12: God's words are often for you alone – Gen. 14:21-24; 17:10

²¹¶ And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself." ²²And Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, ²³that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' ²⁴"I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share."

But not always!

^{17:10}¶ This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised.

What could this mean to you in your life?

As a spouse?

As a parent?

As a leader?

Lesson 13: It's not always wise to accept a gift – Gen. 14:21-24; 23:3-20

²¹¶ And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself." ²²And Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, ²³that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' ²⁴"I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share."

Why did Abraham not receive the gift?

What could this mean to you in your life?

As a spouse?

As a parent?

Are we often tempted by greed to receive gifts that cause us to compromise?

^{23:3}¶ Then Abraham rose from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying, ⁴"I am a stranger and a sojourner among you; give me a burial site among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight." ⁵And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, ⁶"Hear us, my lord, you are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our graves; none of us will refuse you his grave for burying your dead." ⁷So Abraham rose and bowed to the people of the land, the sons of Heth.

⁸And he spoke with them, saying, “If it is your wish *for me* to bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and approach Ephron the son of Zohar for me, ⁹that he may give me the cave of Machpelah which he owns, which is at the end of his field; for the full price let him give it to me in your presence for a burial site.” ¹⁰Now Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the sons of Heth; *even* of all who went in at the gate of his city, saying, ¹¹“No, my lord, hear me; I give you the field, and I give you the cave that is in it. In the presence of the sons of my people I give it to you; bury your dead.” ¹²And Abraham bowed before the people of the land. ¹³And he spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, “If you will only please listen to me; I will give the price of the field, accept *it* from me, that I may bury my dead there.” ¹⁴Then Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, ¹⁵“My lord, listen to me; a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that between me and you? So bury your dead.”

¹⁶¶And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed out for Ephron the silver which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, commercial standard. ¹⁷So Ephron’s field, which was in Machpelah, which faced Mamre, the field and cave which was in it, and all the trees which were in the field, that were within all the confines of its border, were deeded over ¹⁸to Abraham for a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city. ¹⁹And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field at Machpelah facing Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. ²⁰So the field, and the cave that is in it, were deeded over to Abraham for a burial site by the sons of Heth.

Why did Abraham not receive this gift?

What could this mean in your life?

Lesson 14: God doesn’t need our help to fulfill His promises – Gen. 16:1-4; 21:9-11

^{16:1}¶Now Sarai, Abram’s wife had borne him no *children*, and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar. ²So Sarai said to Abram, “Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing *children*. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children through her.” And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. ³And after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram’s wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife.

⁴¶And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight.

This was Abraham at his best. Do we need to see ourselves at our best, or God at His best?

What was the outcome of Abraham’s “best?”

^{21:9}¶Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking. ¹⁰Therefore she said to Abraham, “Drive out this maid and her son, for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac.” ¹¹And the matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son.

What could this mean to you in your life?

Lesson 15: Often God’s promises are not fulfilled immediately – Gen. 12-21

Abraham was 75 when he first received God’s promise. He was 85 or 86 when he made his attempt at “helping God” and had Ishmael. He was 100 when Isaac was born.

What could this mean to you in your life?

As a parent?

Lesson 16: God could have stopped Islam – Gen. 16:7-12; 21:14-20

⁷Now the angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸And he said, “Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from and where are you going?” And she said, “I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.” ⁹Then the angel of the LORD said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority.”

¹⁰¶Moreover, the angel of the LORD said to her, “I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they shall be too many to count.” ¹¹The angel of the LORD said to her further, “Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son; And you shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has given heed to your affliction. ¹²¶And he will be a wild donkey of a man, His hand *will be* against everyone, And everyone’s hand *will be* against him; And he will live to the east of all his brothers.”

^{21:14}¶So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave *them* to Hagar, putting *them* on her shoulder, and gave *her* the boy, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba. ¹⁵¶And the water in the skin was used up, and she left the boy under one of the bushes. ¹⁶¶Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away, for she said, “Do not let me see the boy die.” And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept. ¹⁷¶And God heard the lad crying; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, “What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. ¹⁸¶Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand; for I will make a great nation of him.” ¹⁹¶Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a

drink. ²⁰And God was with the lad, and he grew; and he lived in the wilderness, and became an archer.

Why would God allow Islam by allowing Ishmael to live?

Lesson 17: A time of silence – Gen. 16:16-17:1

^{16:16}And Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him.

^{17:1}¶Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless.

Abraham experienced 13 years of apparent silence.

What could this mean to you in your life?

Lesson 18: No man has seen God? – John 1:18; Gen. 17:1, 18:1-2

^{John 1:18}¶No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.

^{17:1}Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless.

^{18:1}Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. ²And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw *them*, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth, ³and said, “My lord, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by.

Abraham spent time with God regularly face-to-face. (18:10 visit promised, but not recorded in 21, so there were more visits we don't know about.)

So how could Jesus have said what he did in John?

Lesson 19: Laughing off the promises of God – Gen. 18:12-15

¹⁰And he said, “I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. ¹¹Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. ¹²And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?” ¹³And the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I indeed bear a *child*, when I am so old?’ ¹⁴“Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time

next year, and Sarah shall have a son.” ¹⁵Sarah denied *it* however, saying, “I did not laugh”; for she was afraid. And He said, “No, but you did laugh.”

What dreams / promises do we dismiss as impossible?

What could this mean to you in your life?

Lesson 20: Promises can be contingent – Gen. 18:19; 22:15-18

^{18:19}¶For I have chosen him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice; **in order that** the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.”

^{22:15}Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, ¹⁶and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, **because you have done this thing**, and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸“And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, **because you have obeyed My voice.**”

What could this mean to you in your life?

Lesson 21: The Ultimate Sacrifice – Gen. 17:19; 22:1-14; Heb. 11:17-19

^{17:19}But God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and **I will establish My covenant with him** for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

The promise was through Isaac!

^{22:1}Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ²And He said, “Take now **your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac**, and go to the land of **Moriah**; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.”

³¶**So Abraham rose early in the morning** and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance. ⁵And Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go yonder; and **we will worship and return to you.**” ⁶And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So

the two of them walked on together. ⁷And Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" ⁸And Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together. ⁹Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there, and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. ¹⁰And Abraham stretched out his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

¹¹But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ¹²And he said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." ¹³Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son. ¹⁴And Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the LORD it will be provided."

Throughout this passage we see a wonderful example of obedience in Abraham's actions and attitude. "Here I am", "rose early", ...

Did Abraham think God would stop him?

^{Heb 11:17}By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; ¹⁸it was he to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." ¹⁹He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type.

How is this a picture of Christ?

"your son" – Luke 1:35

³⁵And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God.

"your only son" – John 3:16

¹⁶"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

"whom you love" – Matt. 3:17

¹⁷and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

"Isaac" / "Jesus" – Luke 1:31-33 – The promise was through Him.

³¹"And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. ³²"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; ³³and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end."

Moriah – Area where the temple was built in Jerusalem or Calvary

How likely is it that a ram could get itself caught in a bush? Just a little less likely than that God would allow Himself to be sacrificed for the sins of His creation.

But God did provide for Himself a Lamb!

Lesson 22: Have a need? Pray for others! – Gen. 20:17-21:2

¹⁷And Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his maids, so that they bore children. ¹⁸For the LORD had closed fast all the wombs of the household of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

^{21:17}Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised. ²So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him.

What was Abraham's greatest desire at this time in his life?

Is it a coincidence that the "plague" God had stricken Abimelech's people with was barrenness?

What is your greatest desire right now?

What might God's will be for you right now in the light of this passage?

Lesson 23: Nearly half of us will bury our spouse – Gen. 23:1-2

¹Now Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. ²And Sarah died in Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan; and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.

It's not pleasant, but it is true.

What should this mean for us right now?

Lesson 24: Everything you do affects others – Gen. 26:2-5; 7-10; 30:3-13ff; 34:13-31

Both for good:

^{26:1}Now there was a famine in the land, besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. So Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines. ²And the LORD appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. ³"Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. ⁴"And I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ⁵because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws."

Also consider the story of Jacob's son's killing all the inhabitants of Shechem after the prince raped Dinah.

And for evil:

^{26:7}When the men of the place asked about his wife, he said, "She is my sister," for he was afraid to say, "my wife," *thinking*, "the men of the place might kill me on account of Rebekah, for she is beautiful." ⁸And it came about, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out through a window, and saw, and behold, Isaac was caressing his wife Rebekah. ⁹Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Behold, certainly she is your wife! How then did you say, 'She is my sister'?" And Isaac said to him, "Because I said, 'Lest I die on account of her.'" ¹⁰And Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us."

And the story of Rachel and Leah giving their maids to Jacob to have children. (29:31-30:7)

And the stories of Jacob's sons lying: About Joseph's death (37:31-35), and about Jacob's last words to Joseph (50:15-17)

"What parents allow in moderation, their children excuse in excess." – Bill Gothard

What difference do you make?

Is it just the big things? What little things matter?

Everything you do matters. So do it! (Ps. 34:14) "Depart from evil and do good."

Lesson 25: Do you act differently when you have a promise from God? – Gen. 12:1-3; 15:1-21

^{12:1}Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; ²And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And

so you shall be a blessing; ³And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

What could this mean to you in your life?

As a parent?

[Read 14:17-24] Abraham gave a tenth of all he had. Abraham did not take the spoils from the victory.

Could having a promise from God make a difference in the way you regard money and possessions?

[Read 12:10-20; 14:13-16; chapter 20]

Could having a promise from God make a difference in the way you approach danger?

[Read chapter 18] Abraham was not surprised when God came to meet him. He was comfortable around him. He was bold enough to ask God not to destroy Sodom on account of Lot. God chose to reveal His future actions to Abraham.

Could having a promise from God make a difference in the way you approach God?

In the way God approaches you?

[Read 17:5] God changed Abram's name to Abraham.

Abram = "exalted father"

Abraham = "father of a multitude"

Could having a promise from God make a difference in how you are known to others?