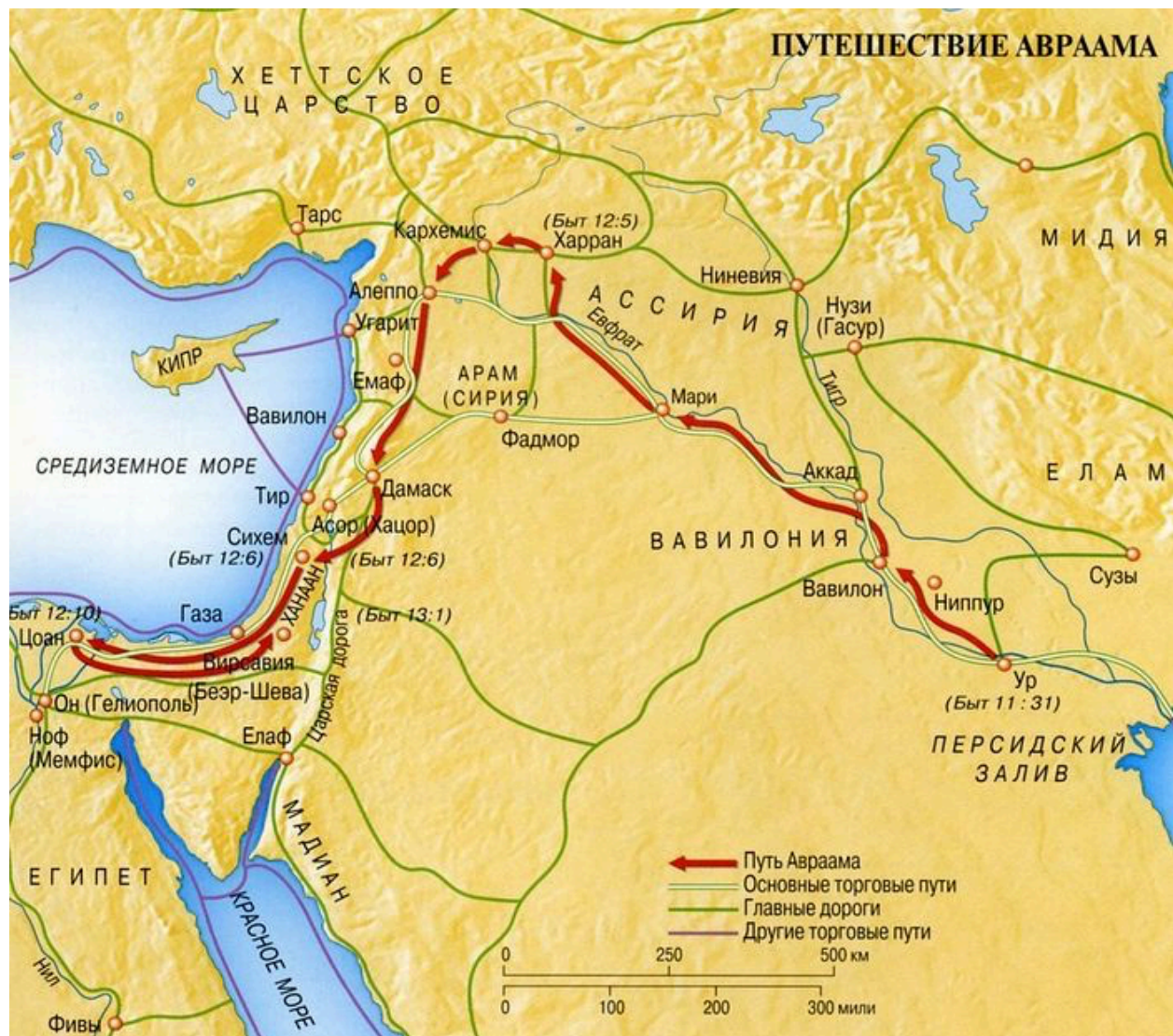


Lecture 3 The Life of Abraham (Part Two)



8 The Covenant of Circumcision and the New Names

When Abraham was ninety-nine years old, God appeared to him again, made an everlasting covenant, and established circumcision as the sign of this covenant (Genesis 17). God changed Abram's name ("exalted father") to Abraham ("father of many nations"), and Sarai's name to Sarah ("princess"), highlighting their new calling.

Practical Application:

1. God renews His promises in His time

Abraham was 99 when God reminded him of His covenant.

✓ Don't lose faith if God's promise feels delayed — He is faithful and works at the right time.

2. **True faith is proven through obedience**

Circumcision became the outward sign of an inner covenant with God.

✓ Show your faith through your actions — obedience to God is just as important as words and beliefs.

3. **A new name means a new purpose**

God changed Abraham's and Sarah's names to point to their calling.

✓ Let God reshape your life toward His purpose — you are more than your past.

4. **God's plans go beyond human logic**

God promised nations through an elderly man and a barren woman.

✓ Don't limit God by your experience — trust Him even when it seems impossible.

9 The Promise of Isaac's Birth

God promised Abraham that Sarah would bear a son — Isaac (Genesis 17:19; 18:10). At first, Abraham and Sarah laughed and doubted the possibility of having a child at such an old age, but God confirmed His word.

Practical Application:

1. **Nothing is impossible for God**

Abraham and Sarah were old and childless, yet God gave a promise beyond natural circumstances.

✓ When it seems too late, remember — God works supernaturally and right on time.

2. **Doubts are not the end of faith**

Abraham and Sarah doubted at first, but God did not reject them — He confirmed His word.

✓ Even if you struggle with doubts, keep following God. He will strengthen your faith step by step.

3. **God's promises do not depend on our strength**

The birth of Isaac was not because of Abraham's and Sarah's effort, but by God's grace.

✓ Don't rely on yourself — God's plans are fulfilled by His power, not your abilities.

4. **God's words require patience and trust** Years passed between the promise and the fulfillment, but God never forgot.

✓ Learn to wait — God always keeps His promises, even if it takes time.

10 Abraham's Intercession for Sodom Abraham stood before God as an intercessor for Sodom, pleading that the city might be spared for the sake of even a few righteous people (Genesis 18:23–33). But not even ten righteous were found there, and the city was destroyed, while Lot and his family were rescued.

Practical Application:

1. **One person can change the destiny of others**

Abraham prayed for an entire city — and God listened.

✓ Pray for your family, friends, and even your city — your prayer may be the starting point of someone's salvation.

2. **God's justice is always joined with mercy** Abraham didn't argue with God but appealed to His righteousness and compassion.

✓ Learn to see God both as Judge and Father — His decisions are always wise, even when they are hard.

3. **True love shows itself in prayer for others** Abraham didn't rejoice at the downfall of others; he cared even for a sinful city.

✓ Don't condemn people — instead, pray that God would show mercy and bring them salvation.

4. **A small number of righteous people can hold back judgment** Abraham hoped that at least ten righteous could keep destruction away.

✓ Be salt and light where you are — your faithfulness may be what protects others from disaster.

5. **Intercession doesn't always change the outcome, but it brings us closer to God**

The city was destroyed, but through prayer Abraham drew nearer to God and saw His justice and compassion.

- ✓ Even when you don't see immediate results, keep praying. God values your love and faithfulness in intercession.
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11 The Fulfillment of God's Promise: The Birth of Isaac

Just as God had promised, Sarah gave birth to Isaac when Abraham was one hundred years old (Genesis 21:1–5). This became a powerful testimony of God's faithfulness and strength.

Practical Application:

1. **God's faithfulness is stronger than circumstances**

Abraham was 100 years old — humanly impossible.

- ✓ Don't measure God's power by your age, experience, or strength — nothing is impossible for Him.

2. **God's glory is revealed through miracles**

Isaac's birth was a testimony to all that God can accomplish the impossible.

- ✓ Share your testimony of God's faithfulness — your story can strengthen the faith of others.

3. **Sometimes God makes us wait to strengthen our faith**

God did not give Isaac immediately, but the waiting strengthened Abraham's and Sarah's faith.

- ✓ When God makes you wait, it's not rejection — it's preparation of your heart for a greater blessing.
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12 The Casting Out of Hagar and Ishmael

At Sarah's request and by God's instruction, Abraham sent away Hagar and Ishmael. Though it was painful, God comforted Abraham, promising to bless Ishmael and make him into a great nation, but the covenant inheritance would remain with Isaac (Genesis 21:8–21).

Practical Application:

1. Obey God — even when it's hard

It was painful for Abraham to let Hagar and Ishmael go, but he submitted to God's word.

✓ Sometimes God calls you to take a difficult step — trust Him, even when your heart resists.

2. God doesn't forget those rejected by people

Hagar and Ishmael were left alone in the wilderness, but God heard them and cared for them.

✓ Even if others reject or abandon you, God is near. He sees your pain and comes at the right time.

3. God has a plan for every person

Though Ishmael was not the heir of the covenant, God promised to make him a great nation.

✓ Even if your role seems small, God still has a unique purpose for you.

4. God's blessings don't mean everyone's path is the same or easy

Isaac was the heir of promise; Ishmael became a great nation — but both had their own challenges.

✓ Don't compare your life to others — accept your path and serve God where He has placed you.

13 The Test on Mount Moriah

God tested Abraham's faith and obedience by commanding him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice (Genesis 22). Abraham showed complete trust in God. The Lord stopped his hand and provided a ram for the sacrifice. God then confirmed His blessing for Abraham and his descendants.

Practical Application:

1. Faith is revealed through obedience

Abraham was ready to give up his most precious treasure because he fully trusted God.

✓ True faith is not just words — it's a willingness to obey God even when it's hard.

2. **God tests in order to strengthen**

The test was not cruelty but a way to reveal the depth of Abraham's trust.

✓ When God tests you, it's not punishment — it's an opportunity to grow stronger in faith.

3. **God Himself provides the sacrifice**

The ram caught in the thicket pointed to Christ, who took Isaac's place.

✓ You cannot save yourself by your own efforts — God has already given the Lamb, Jesus, to save you.

4. **God looks at the heart, not just the outcome**

Abraham did not actually sacrifice Isaac, but God accepted his faith and obedience as the offering.

✓ What matters most to God is not what you bring, but the sincerity of your heart.

14 Abraham's Final Years and Legacy Abraham experienced the death of Sarah and buried her in the cave of Machpelah (Genesis 23). He arranged for Isaac's marriage by sending his servant to find a wife from among believers (Genesis 24). Abraham lived 175 years, "satisfied with life," and was buried by his sons Isaac and Ishmael in the cave of Machpelah (Genesis 25:7–10). His life left a great spiritual legacy of faith for future generations.

Practical Application:

1. **Caring for family is part of spiritual responsibility** Abraham arranged Isaac's marriage with a woman of faith.

✓ Don't leave everything to chance — pray and take action to guide your children in God's ways.

2. **Grief should not stop your journey** After Sarah's death, Abraham continued to live, make decisions, and serve his family.

✓ Even in loss, keep walking with faith — trust God for each new day.

3. **A long life is not the main thing — a full life is** Abraham died "satisfied with days" — his life was rich with meaning, not just years.

✓ Aim not just for length of life but for a life filled with faith, obedience, and fruit for God.

4. **Peace in the family is part of your legacy**

Isaac and Ishmael buried their father together — despite past conflicts, they came in unity.

✓ Strive for reconciliation and peace in your family — it's more important than being "right."

5. **The legacy of faith is greater than possessions**

The greatest thing Abraham left was an example of living faith and obedience, not wealth.

✓ Leave behind a legacy that leads others to God — that is the most valuable inheritance.

? **Group Reflection Questions**

- ① How do you usually respond when you face a difficult choice: do you trust God, or rely more on yourself?
- ② In what situations in your life might God be calling you to show generosity and peace?
- ③ Who in your life could you start praying for, like Abraham prayed for Sodom?

Homework

♦ **Practical Assignment:** This week, choose one situation where you can act with generosity (for example, giving up your own way, helping someone, or bringing peace between people). Write down briefly what you did and how it changed the situation.

♦ **Creative Assignment:**

- Draw a map of Abraham's journey (from Ur of the Chaldeans to Canaan, passing through Haran and Egypt).
Or: Write a short prayer of intercession for a friend, just as Abraham prayed for Sodom, and commit to praying that prayer throughout the week.
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