

“Faith of Abraham”
Scripture – Genesis 11:31 – 12:9
Text – Hebrews 11:8, 9, 17

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Introduction:

1. Three different religious groups claim Abraham
 - a. Mohammadans – Koran full of Abraham
 - b. Judaism – Old Testament mentions 188 times
 - c. Christianity – Paul says Abraham is father of all faithful
2. No wonder, because he is referred to three times as friend of God
 - a. Twice in Old Testament
 1. 2 Chronicles 20:7
 2. Isaiah 41:8
 3. James 2:23
 - b. No other man in the Scripture is so described
 1. Many have other things said about them
 2. Only Abraham has this description
3. Why would he be called “friend of God”?
 - a. John 15:14 – “Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.”
 - b. Abraham surely qualified for this highest of all friendships that with God
4. It not only showed Abraham’s faith, but it most surely was a high example of faith.
 - a. Let us see how he demonstrated his friendship by obedience because he had faith.

I. Verse 8 – He emigrated following God

1. How he came to know God
 - a. Traditions tell us his parents were worshippers of the stars and that one night Abraham noticed that the moon was so much brighter than the stars and so came to worship the moon. But that one morning as he saw the sun rise in the East and dim the light of the moon he came to worship the sun, but then decided how foolish it was to worship a crated thing and began to worship God.
 - b. Whether this is true or not we do not know. At any rate, he came to believe in God.
2. He was called to leave Ur and follow God. This was difficult.
 - a. What he was leaving
 1. Parents
 2. Old home associates
 3. Culture and refinement of Ur. Time was when Sceptics said no such place as Ur, but archaeologists have now unearthed remains. Among other things they dug up the remains of a house in which was a clay tablet which had been left unfinished. On that unfinished tablet there was an unfinished problem in trigonometry and they are still working on that problem at Oxford and Cambridge universities.
 4. No spiritual life in Ur.

- b. He did not know where he was going – he simply started by faith to follow God
- 3. Others have done this
 - a. My own case. I did not know what God wanted me to do but was willing to follow Him. He said He would lead me step by step.
 - b. Pilgrim fathers started out from their native shores to follow God to a place where they could worship Him as they pleased.
- 4. How did he know God was speaking to him?
 - a. I cannot answer that.
 - b. Somehow we do know when God is speaking.
 - 1. When we were talking about moving to Jackson, Mrs. Lowe and I almost continually talked about doing what God wanted us to do. Barbara asked at one time how God would speak and how we would know He was telling us. I answered I did not know, but we would know. After it became clear to us that He wanted us to come, Barbara also said I do not know how He did it, but I do know we all feel that is what we should do. And many times all three of us have said how grateful we were God had led us here.

II. By being a sojourner

- 1. Abraham was a lodger.
- 2. Land was promised to him but he never received any of it.
 - a. He sought cave at Machpelah
 - 1. All ground he ever owned
 - b. He dwelt in tents
 - c. Lot was not satisfied to do this
 - 1. Cities appealed too much to him
 - 2. He moved to Sodom and Gomorrah
- 3. Abraham looked for a more permanent abode
 - a. City which had foundations
 - b. Here was to be his permanent abiding place
 - c. He could have returned if he wished
 - 1. But he kept his face toward heaven

III. Prolonged waiting for fulfillment of God's promises

- 1. God had made promises
 - a. Genesis 12:1-3
- 2. Yet he became an old man
 - a. Promise was not fulfilled
- 3. He attempted to assist God but wrong way
- 4. Finally Isaac was born
- 5. Often takes more faith to wait on God than any other one thing
 - a. We too often doubt promises of God because they are not fulfilled when and how we think they should be.
- 6. Abraham waited

IV. In offering up Isaac

1. Here was supreme test of his faith
 - a. He had not reached this point all at once
 - b. For years he had been following God
 - c. He had come to know God
 1. Supreme authority of God – dejected Ishmael
 2. Unlimited power of God – had saved Lot out of Sodom and Gomorrah. Had brought Isaac into the world.
 3. Unchanging fidelity of God. Would keep his promise.
2. Now called upon for supreme test of obedience
 - a. Abraham had natural inclination to offer up human life
 - b. Isaac was especially precious to him
 - c. He was to be one through whom promise of God were to be fulfilled
3. Yet he obeyed
4. Why and how could he do it
 - a. Knew supreme authority of God
 1. He had called before and he had obeyed
 2. He had rejected Ishmael when seemed no other hope yet He knew best.
 - b. Knew unlimited power of God
 1. Isaac had been born in a miraculous manner
 2. Lot had been saved out of Sodom and Gomorrah
 3. Knew God could raise Isaac from the dead if necessary
 - c. Knew of his unchanging fidelity
 1. God had kept all promises to him
 2. Knew he would find a way to keep this one
5. Sometimes God calls upon us to make supreme sacrifice
 - a. Surrender our all to him
 - b. Takes from us our most precious possession
 - c. Can we trust Him?
 1. His authority
 2. His power
 3. His love

Conclusion:

1. Do you have faith?
 - a. Are we willing to follow God?
 - b. Are we willing to be sojourners here on earth?
 1. Looking for heaven
 - c. Are we willing to trust His promises?
 1. All things work to good for those who love the Lord