

Abraham, Isaac & Jacob

The Custodians of the Covenant and their Descendants

Part 4

Hebrews 11:1-22 AMPC

1 Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, [a]the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].

Romans 10:17 AMPC

17 So faith comes by hearing [what is told], and what is heard comes by the preaching [of the message that came from the lips] of Christ (the Messiah Himself).

James 2:17, 26 AMPC

17 So also **faith, if it does not have works (deeds and actions of obedience to back it up), by itself is destitute of power (inoperative, dead).**

26 For as the human body apart from the spirit is lifeless, **so faith apart from [its] works of obedience is also dead.**

2 For by [faith—[b]trust and holy fervor born of faith] the men of old had divine testimony borne to them and obtained a good report.

3 By faith we understand that the worlds [during the successive ages] were framed (fashioned, put in order, and equipped for their intended purpose) by the word of God, so that what we see was not made out of things which are visible.

4 [Prompted, actuated] by faith Abel brought God a better and more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, because of which it was testified of him that he was righteous [that he was upright and in right standing with God], and God bore witness by accepting and acknowledging his gifts. And though he died, yet [through the incident] he is still speaking.

5 Because of faith Enoch was caught up and transferred to heaven, so that he did not have a glimpse of death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For even before he was taken to heaven, he received testimony [still on record] that he had pleased and been satisfactory to God.

Genesis 5:21-24 AMPC

21 When Enoch was 65 years old, Methuselah was born.

22 Enoch walked [in habitual fellowship] with God after the birth of Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters.

23 So all the days of Enoch were 365 years.

24 And Enoch walked [in habitual fellowship] with God; and he was not, for God took him [home with Him].

6 But without faith it is impossible to please and be satisfactory to Him. For whoever would come near to God must [necessarily] believe that God exists and that He is the rewarder of those who earnestly and diligently seek Him [out].

Revelation 4:11 KJV

11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

2 Timothy 3:4 AMPC

...[They will be] lovers of sensual pleasures and vain amusements more than and rather than lovers of God.

2 Thessalonians 2:12

12 In order that all may be judged and condemned who did not believe in [who refused to adhere to, trust in, and rely on] the Truth, but [instead] took pleasure in unrighteousness.

7 [Prompted] by faith Noah, being forewarned by God concerning events of which as yet there was no visible sign, took heed and diligently and reverently constructed and prepared an ark for the deliverance of his own family. By this [his faith which relied on God] he passed judgment and sentence on the world's unbelief and became an heir and possessor of righteousness ([c]that relation of being right into which God puts the person who has faith).

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26 For as the human body apart from the spirit is lifeless, so faith apart from [its] works of obedience is also dead.

8 [Urged on] by faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and went forth to a place which he was destined to receive as an inheritance; and he went, although he did not know or trouble his mind about where he was to go.

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9 [Prompted] by faith he dwelt as a temporary resident in the land which was designated in the promise [of God, though he was like a stranger] in a strange country, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs with him of the same promise.

10 For he was [waiting expectantly and confidently] looking forward to the city which has fixed and firm foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God.

2 Peter 3:11-14 AMPC

11 Since all these things are thus [a]in the process of being dissolved, **what kind of person ought [each of] you to be [in the meanwhile] in consecrated and holy behavior and devout and godly qualities,**

12 **While you wait** and earnestly long for (expect and hasten) the coming of the day of God by reason of which the flaming heavens will be dissolved, and the [[b]material] elements [of the universe] will flare and melt with fire?

13 **But we look for new heavens and a new earth according to His promise, in which righteousness (uprightness, freedom from sin, and right standing with God) is to abide.**

14 **So, beloved, since you are expecting these things, be eager to be found by Him [at His coming] without spot or blemish and at peace [in serene confidence, [c]free from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts].**

11 *Because of faith also Sarah herself received physical power to conceive a child, even when she was long past the age for it, because she considered [God] Who had given her the promise to be reliable and trustworthy and true to His word.*

12 *So from one man, though he was physically as good as dead, there have sprung descendants whose number is as the stars of heaven and as countless as the innumerable sands on the seashore.*

13 **These people all died controlled and sustained by their faith, but not having received the tangible fulfillment of [God's] promises, only having seen it and greeted it from a great distance by faith, and all the while acknowledging and confessing that they were strangers and temporary residents and exiles upon the earth.**

14 Now those people who talk as they did show plainly that they are in search of a fatherland (their own country).

15 If they had been thinking with [homesick] remembrance of that country from which they were emigrants, they would have found constant opportunity to return to it.

Luke 9:56-62 AMPC

56 For **the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them [a][from the penalty of eternal death].** And they journeyed on to another village.

57 And it occurred that as they were going along the road, **a man said to Him, Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.**

58 And Jesus told him, Foxes have lurking holes and the birds of the air have roosts and nests, **but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head.**

59 And **He said to another, [b]Become My disciple, side with My party, and accompany Me! But he replied,** Lord, permit me first to go and bury ([c]await the death of) my father.

60 But Jesus said to him, Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and publish abroad [d]throughout all regions the kingdom of God.

61 **Another also said, I will follow You, Lord, and become Your disciple and side with Your party; but** let me first say good-bye to those at my home.

62 **Jesus said to him, No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back [to the things behind] is fit for the kingdom of God.**

16 *But the truth is that they were yearning for and aspiring to a better and more desirable country, that is, a heavenly [one]. For that reason God is not ashamed to be called their God [even to be surnamed their God—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob], for He has prepared a city for them.*

17 *By faith Abraham, when he was put to the test [while the testing of his faith was [d]still in progress], [e]had already brought Isaac for an offering; he who had gladly received and welcomed [God's] promises was ready to sacrifice his only son,*

James 2:17-26 AMPC

17 So also **faith, if it does not have works (deeds and actions of obedience to back it up), by itself is destitute of power (inoperative, dead).**

18 But someone will say [to you then], You [say you] have faith, and I have [good] works. Now you **show me your [alleged] faith apart from any [good] works [if you can], and I by [good] works [of obedience] will show you my faith.**

19 **You believe that God is one; you do well. So do the demons believe** and shudder [in terror and horror such as [a]make a man's hair stand on end and contract the surface of his skin]!

20 **Are you willing to be shown [proof], you foolish (unproductive, spiritually deficient) fellow, that faith apart from [good] works is inactive and ineffective and worthless?**

21 **Was not our forefather Abraham [shown to be] justified (made acceptable to God) by [his] works when he brought to the altar as an offering his [own] son Isaac?**

22 You see that [his] faith was cooperating with his works, and [his] faith was completed and reached its supreme expression [when he implemented it] by [good] works.

23 **And [so] the Scripture was fulfilled that says, Abraham believed in (adhered to, trusted in, and relied on) God, and this was accounted to him as righteousness (as conformity to God's will in thought and deed), and he was called God's friend.**

24 You see that **a man is justified (pronounced righteous before God) through what he does and not alone through faith [through works of obedience as well as by what he believes].**

25 So also with Rahab the harlot—was she not shown to be justified (pronounced righteous before God) by [good] deeds when she took in the scouts (spies) and sent them away by a different route?

26 For as the human body apart from the spirit is lifeless, **so faith apart from [its] works of obedience is also dead.**

18 Of whom it was said, Through Isaac shall your descendants be reckoned.

19 For he reasoned that God was able to raise [him] up even from among the dead. Indeed in the sense that Isaac was figuratively dead [potentially sacrificed], he did [actually] receive him back from the dead.

John 8:55-56 AMPC

55 Yet you do not know Him or recognize Him and are not acquainted with Him, but I know Him. If I should say that I do not know Him, I would be a liar like you. **But I know Him and keep His word [obey His teachings, am faithful to His message].**

56 Your forefather Abraham was extremely happy at the hope and prospect of seeing My day (My incarnation); and he did see it and was delighted.

20 *[With eyes of] faith Isaac,* looking far into the future, invoked blessings upon Jacob and Esau.

21 *[Prompted] by faith Jacob,* when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons and bowed in prayer over the top of his staff.

22 *[Actuated] by faith Joseph,* when nearing the end of his life, **referred to [the promise of God for]** the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt and gave instructions concerning the burial of his own bones.

23 *[Prompted] by faith Moses,* after his birth, was kept concealed for three months by his parents, because they saw how comely the child was; and they were not overawed and terrified by the king's decree.

24 *[Aroused] by faith Moses, when he had grown to maturity and [f]become great, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,*

25 Because he preferred to share the oppression [suffer the hardships] and bear the shame of the people of God **rather than to have the fleeting enjoyment of a sinful life.**

Hebrews 11:25 KJV

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, **than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;**

26 He considered the contempt and abuse and shame [borne for] the Christ (the Messiah Who was to come) to be greater wealth than all the treasures of Egypt, for he looked forward and away to the reward (recompense).

27 *[Motivated] by faith* he left Egypt behind him, being unawed and undismayed by the wrath of the king; for he never flinched but held staunchly to his purpose and endured steadfastly as one who gazed on Him Who is invisible.

28 **By faith (simple trust and confidence in God)** he instituted and carried out the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood [on the doorposts], so that the destroyer of the firstborn (the angel) might not touch those [of the children of Israel].

29 **[Urged on] by faith the people crossed the Red Sea** as [though] on dry land, but when the Egyptians tried to do the same thing they were swallowed up [by the sea].

30 **Because of faith the walls of Jericho fell down after** they had been encompassed for seven days [by the Israelites].

Romans 10:17 AMPC

17 So faith comes by hearing [what is told], and what is heard comes by the preaching [of the message that came from the lips] of Christ (the Messiah Himself).

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31 **[Prompted] by faith Rahab** the prostitute was not destroyed along with those who refused to believe and obey, because she had received the spies in peace [without enmity].

32 **And what shall I say further?** For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets,

33 **Who by [the help of] faith subdued kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promised blessings, closed the mouths of lions,**

34 Extinguished the power of raging fire, escaped the devourings of the sword, out of frailty and weakness won strength and became stalwart, even mighty and resistless in battle, routing alien hosts.

35 [Some] women received again their dead by a resurrection. Others were tortured [g]to death with clubs, refusing to accept release [offered on the terms of denying their faith], so that they might be resurrected to a better life.

36 Others had to suffer the trial of mocking and scourging and even chains and imprisonment.

37 They were stoned to death; they were lured with tempting offers [to renounce their faith]; they were sawn asunder; they were slaughtered by the sword; [while they were alive] they had to go about wrapped in the skins of sheep and goats, utterly destitute, oppressed, cruelly treated—

38 [Men] of whom the world was not worthy—roaming over the desolate places and the mountains, and [living] in caves and caverns and holes of the earth.

39 And all of these, though they won divine approval by [means of] their faith, did not receive the fulfillment of what was promised,

40 Because God had us in mind and had something better and greater in view for us, so that they [these heroes and heroines of faith] should not come to perfection apart from us [before we could join them].

Note: _____

Let's look at the life of Abraham or Father Abraham, the friend of God,. He wasn't perfect, he had some doubts at times and occasionally made some unwise decisions. He sometimes acted without consulting God for guidance but, God did not give up on him and now Abraham is revered by all Jews, Christians, and Muslims; he serves as a common link.

He is the patriarch of the Jewish nation, a spiritual father to Christians, and Muslims regard him as a mighty prophet. Abraham is called in Scripture the **“servant of God”**.

Genesis 26:24 AMPC

*24 And the Lord appeared to him the same night and said, I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with you and will favor you with blessings and multiply your descendants for the sake of **My servant Abraham.***

Abraham is called in Scripture God's **“friend”**

Isaiah 41:8 AMPC

*8 But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of **Abraham My friend,***

Abraham is called in Scripture the **“father of Israel”**

Exodus 3:15 AMPC

*15 God said also to Moses, This shall you say to the Israelites: **The Lord, the God of your fathers, of Abraham,** of Isaac, and of Jacob, has sent me to you! This is My [a]name forever, and by this name I am to be remembered to all generations.*

He is known to us by two names: “Abram”, which means beloved or exalted father; and “Abraham”, the name God gave him, which means father of multitudes. Names were important in Bible days. The meaning of a name revealed an individual's character or contribution. When God changed someone's name it often meant that person was being singled out for a significant mission.

A name change indicated a turning point in that person's life. To be called "father of multitudes" when he was yet childless was a testimony to the anticipated promise of the Almighty. God assured Abraham that he would be the father of a chosen, select people, who would receive God's special revelation, presence, and blessing.

Genesis 22:15-18 AMPC

*15 The Angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time
16 And said, I have sworn by Myself, says the Lord, that **since you have done this and have not withheld [from Me] or begrudged [giving Me] your son, your only son,***

*17 In blessing I will bless you **and in multiplying I will multiply your descendants** like the stars of the heavens and like the sand on the seashore. And your Seed (Heir) will possess the gate of His enemies,
18 And in your Seed *[[a]Christ]* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed and *[by Him]* bless themselves, **because you have heard and obeyed My voice.***

Abraham, is the first person referred to as Hebrew in the Bible. From him all Jewish or Hebrew people trace their heritage; and through him the entire world is blessed for through the children of Abraham came God's redemption, in the person of the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Genesis 14:11-13 AMPC

11 [The victors] took all the wealth of Sodom and Gomorrah and all the supply of provisions and departed.

12 And they also took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods away with them.

*13 **Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew [one from the other side],** who was living by the oaks or terebinths of Mamre the Amorite, a brother of Eshcol and of Aner—these were allies of Abram.*

We began part 4 reading about Abraham in Hebrews 11 with is the "hall of faith". Try to imagine yourself in Abraham's sandals...

There are many religions, gods, different ways to practice the same religion (sound familiar) but when he heard the Truth, when He believed the One True God, and HE tells you to leave your comfortable home, your friends, your job, your career, your wealth and travel to a destination and life unknown, to be disclosed at some future time - Abraham does it.

Abraham breaks the news to his bride, gets his house in order, alerts his servants/employees, packs up his possessions and rolls out, even though he doesn't know where he'll end up.

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How did Abraham get to this place? What happened in his life that led to him leaving his old way of living, thinking, friends, wealth all behind?

First, Abraham rejected idolatry or other gods of not just his day but today as well. The god of comfort, the god of the known, the god of comfort in what everyone else does... Abraham's hometown was the city of Ur, a prosperous city in ancient Babylon, just northwest of the Persian Gulf, located in what is now Iraq.

The pagan god of Ur was Nanna, the moon god. Archeologists have uncovered an impressive ziggurat (tower) that served as a focus for the worship of Nanna.

Idolatry reveals and depicts human desires and is a subtle form of self-worship. Idolatry offers no reason for living and fails to provide guidance or strength. The primitive religion Abraham turned away from offered only sexual perversion and mindless ritual.

Jude AMPC

*4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, **turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness,** and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Lasciviousness defined: filled with or showing sexual desire/ perversion: lewd, behavior and or speech. (Days of Lot)

5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

8 Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. 12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16 These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Over the years I have read many historical books about Abraham. From commentaries, Rabbinical history and Jewish historical documents. They address Abraham's inner struggle with idolatry, which led him to faith in the One True God. Abram expresses his doubt about the god of Ur: "Nanna must be nothing higher than what he calls for. He must be nothing higher than you or I, and therefore not deserving of our worship!" In a world of pagan worshippers, Abram was able to gaze up at the moon in the starry sky and know Who to thank.

Paul suggests in Romans 4 that if anyone was nearly saved by their goodness it was Abraham but it was his faith, not his deeds, that saved him. The evidence of Abraham's faith was his obedience to God. If we say we believe in God and don't obey Him, then we're not His followers. We may know of God, but are we under His command?

Romans 4:1-3 AMPC

1 [But] if so, what shall we say about Abraham, our forefather humanly speaking—[what did he] find out? [How does this affect his position, and what was gained by him?]

2 For if Abraham was justified ([a]established as just by acquittal from guilt) by good works [that he did, then] he has grounds for boasting. But not before God!

*3 For what does the Scripture say? **Abraham believed in God, and it was credited to his account as righteousness (right living and right standing with God).***

Abraham did what he did to please God, or be righteous. The motivator behind his good/righteous actions/deeds were in direct response to obedience. Faith without the acts of obedient leads to death.

Romans 4:13-25 AMPC

13 For the promise to Abraham or his posterity, that he should inherit the world, did not come through [observing the commands of] the Law but through the righteousness of faith.

14 If it is the adherents of the Law who are to be the heirs, then faith is made futile and empty of all meaning and the promise [of God] is made void (is annulled and has no power).

15 For the Law results in [divine] wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression [of it either].

16 Therefore, [inheriting] the promise is the outcome of faith and depends [entirely] on faith, in order that it might be given as an act of grace (unmerited favor), to make it stable and valid and guaranteed to all his descendants—not only to the devotees and adherents of the Law, but also to those who share the faith of Abraham, who is [thus] the father of us all.

17 *As it is written, I have made you the father of many nations. [He was appointed our father] in the sight of God in Whom he believed, Who gives life to the dead and speaks of the nonexistent things that [He has foretold and promised] as if they [already] existed.*

18 *[For Abraham, human reason for] hope being gone, hoped in faith that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been promised, So [numberless] shall your descendants be.*

19 *He did not weaken in faith when he considered the [utter] impotence of his own body, which was as good as dead because he was about a hundred years old, or [when he considered] the barrenness of Sarah's [deadened] womb.*

20 *No unbelief or distrust made him waver (doubtingly question) concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong and was empowered by faith as he gave praise and glory to God,*

21 *Fully satisfied and assured that God was able and mighty to keep His word and to do what He had promised.*

22 *That is why his faith was credited to him as righteousness (right standing with God).*

23 *But [the words], It was credited to him, were written not for his sake alone,*

24 *But [they were written] for our sakes too. [Righteousness, standing acceptable to God] will be granted and credited to us also who believe in (trust in, adhere to, and rely on) God, Who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,*

25 *Who was betrayed and put to death because of our misdeeds and was raised to secure our justification (our [a]acquittal), [making our account balance and absolving us from all guilt before God]*



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