

What Saith the Scripture?

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They That Wait Upon The LORD: Part 2: Abraham

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint"
(Isaiah 40:31).

"That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous... He that walketh with wise men shall be wise"
(Proverbs 2:20; 13:20).

by David Stewart

Preface

Let's walk in The Way with Abraham, God's friend. "Abraham believed God... and he was called the Friend of God" (James 2:23).

When Abraham left Haran, he was 75 years old, and childless. "Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran... But Sarai was barren; she had no child" (Genesis 12:4; 11:30). "Abram" and "Sarai" were a married couple that had accepted the fact (God's will) that there was to be no fruit of children in their life together. They loved the LORD, and for men of their time-- uniquely so-- and obeyed Him when He commanded them to embark on a journey with a destination unknown. "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee" (Genesis 12:1).

The Promise

With this command was given a Promise. The Promise was supremely more unusual than the command. Abram was to have seed-- a son. And this son would father a nation. This nation would be blessed by God. And because of the blessing on the nation fathered by his son, Abram would become a blessing to all peoples of the earth-- for eternity. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:2,3). Just as a nation is born "in one day" before the Second Coming of Christ, even so-- to have awakened that morning, childless forever, and ended that evening, a father of the world-- well, by faith, Abram could have said of this Promise, "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once?" (Isaiah 66:8). "For the Promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith" (Romans 4:13).

Outside of the Promise

Because Abram "was a man subject to like passions as we are" (James 5:17), after waiting 11 long years-- with no birth in sight-- and listening to Sarai's nagging, he backslid into fathering a child outside the promised union, thinking he could shortcut the process. "And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. And Abram was fourscore and six years old [or 86], when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram" (Genesis 16:15,16). "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive **any thing** of the LORD" (James 1:6-7).

"This is My Covenant"

It wasn't until 13 years had passed, that the LORD renewed **His** grounds for His Promise, i.e., Covenant:

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine [99], the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; *walk before Me, and be thou perfect*. And I will make My Covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, *As for Me, behold, My Covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish My Covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an Everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.*

"And God said unto Abraham, *Thou shalt keep My Covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is My Covenant, which ye shall keep, between Me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the Covenant betwixt Me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and My Covenant shall be in your flesh for an Everlasting Covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken My Covenant.*

"And God said unto Abraham, *As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.*

"Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, *Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish My Covenant with him for an*

Everlasting Covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. ***But My Covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.*** And He left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

"And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son" (Genesis 17:1-26).

As An Old Man

So, after having lived most of his life with Sarah, with no thought or expectation of children until the age of 75, and then knowing of the physical improbability of the Promise being fulfilled as the years progressed-- hence, Ishmael's birth-- and finally, after hearing God's terms **firmly** pronounced, Abraham reaffirms his position with God in this Covenant. "Before Him whom he believed, even God, Who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, ***So shall thy seed be.*** And **being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the Promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform**" (Romans 4:17-21).

"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; **to the end the Promise might be sure to all the seed;** not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all" (Romans 4:16).

So, as an old man, who was past the age for fathering children, Abraham finally-- after being tossed to and fro-- stood upon the things "which was spoken, ***So shall thy seed be***", and saw the day arrive where Sarah delivered him a son, Isaac. "For ye have need of patience, that, **after** ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the Promise" (Hebrews 10:36). "My soul, wait thou **only** upon God; for my expectation is from Him" (Psalm 62:5). "I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and **in His Word do I hope**" (Psalms 130:5).

Commonness

We have a great deal in common with this "Friend of God".

- First-- by believing God, this act of faith in God was accounted to Abraham as righteousness. Not self-righteousness, but God's righteousness "imputed to him". "And therefore it was

imputed to him [Abraham] for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but **for us also**, to whom it shall be imputed, **if we believe on Him** that raised up Jesus our LORD from the dead" (Romans 4:22-24). So, God's own righteousness "shall be imputed, **if we believe on Him**"-- the same as it was for Abraham, the "Friend of God". "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, **if ye do whatsoever I command you**" (John 15:13-14).

- Second-- Having seen the Promises of a Pre-Tribulational Rapture, we are "persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that [we are] strangers and pilgrims on the earth"-- just like Abraham, and the saints of old, "...having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Hebrews 11:13).
- Third-- That having stated what we believe for all the world to hear and know, we "declare plainly that [we] **seek a country**", Heaven-- even so, like Abraham and the saints of old, "for they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country" (Hebrews 11:14). "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out **into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance**, obeyed" (Hebrews 11:8).
- Fourth-- "And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned" (Hebrews 11:15). As Abraham, and the saints of old, were faithful to their "Promised Land" calling-- may we also, by God's grace, be faithful to our "Promised Land" calling of the Rapture. If we are "mindful" of the false glitter of this life ("for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...") then we will return to it. But the false glitter "... is **not** of the Father, but is of the world" (1John 2:16). Just as Abraham, and the saints of old, did not return to it, so we **will** not to return either. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is **not** in him" (1John 2:15). "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and **ye shall not fulfil** the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16). "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise" (Psalm 57:7).
- Fifth-- And finally (for our purposes), as Abraham, and the saints of old, were zealous of that which **is** of God, for "they desire a better country, that is, an Heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a City" (Hebrews 11:16)-- even so, we walk with wise men, for "he that walketh with wise men shall be wise". "For he [Abraham] looked for a City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). In our "watching" and "waiting" for our LORD, we also look "for a City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God". "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

Conclusion: "Walk in the Way of Good Men"

The LORD knows our path. He knows His Test of refinement will lead His people to His "imputed" righteousness. "The way of the just is uprightness: Thou, Most Upright, dost weigh the path of the just" (Isaiah 26:7). But if the path is too hard for some, then they do **not** fit the description of being

His people. "But they that wait upon the LORD **shall renew** their strength; they shall **mount up** with wings as eagles; they shall run, and **not** be weary; and they shall walk, and **not** faint" (Isaiah 40:31). They "being **not** weak in faith" will consider **not** their own bodies "now dead", but will be as Abraham, who "staggered **not** at the Promise of God through unbelief; but was **strong in faith**, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform". "Even so faith, if it hath **not** works, **is dead**, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and **I will show thee my faith by my works**. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that **faith without works is dead**? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? **Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?** And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:17-24).

His Test has an end. Cross the finish line. "For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off... So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off" (Proverbs 23:18; 24:14).

More on the "Watching and Waiting" Abraham

Hebrews 11

11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

(an example of tremendous faith)

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.

18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.