

The Man Who Trusted God— Abraham



GENESIS 12:1-8

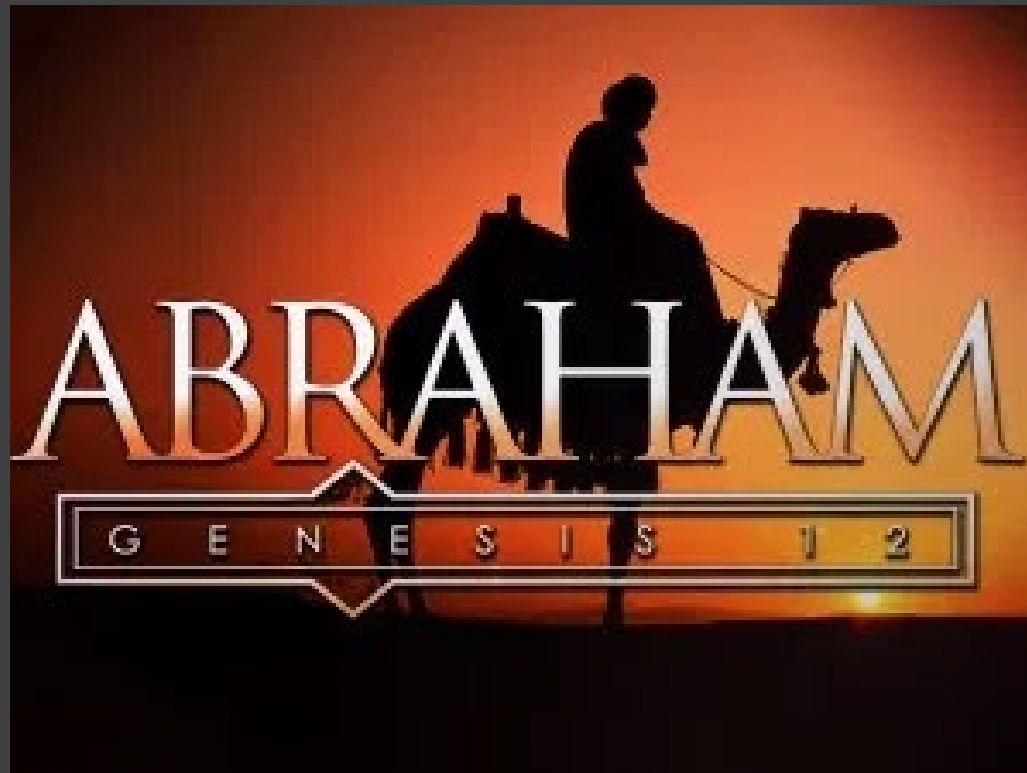
¹ Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

⁴ So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵ And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, ⁶ Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸ From there he moved to the hill country 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.

- There were 10 generations from Noah to Abraham.
- Abraham is the **first Jew**.
- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are referred to as “the **Patriarchs**” because they were the fathers of the Jewish people.
- His original name, **Abram**, means ‘the father is exalted.’
- God changes his name to **Abraham** ‘father of a multitude’ of nations.



- Abraham takes one of the strangest and most important journeys in history.
- No map. No GPS. No idea of where he was going or when he would stop.



Abraham shows what can happen when you trust God and answer His call on your life.

1. Answering God's call on your life will take you out of your comfort zone.

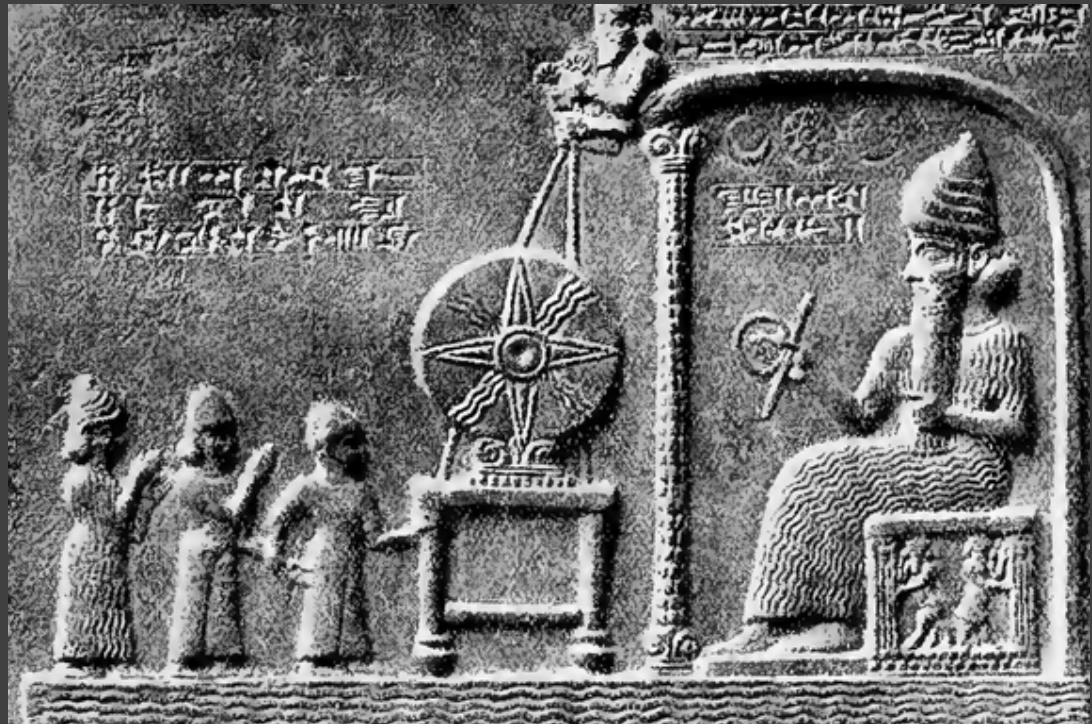
Genesis 12:1

¹ Now the LORD said to Abram,
“Go from your country and your
kindred and your father's house to
the land that I will show you.



- When God called Abraham he was a prosperous, settled, middle-aged man.
- He had a home, a family, a business, and property. He had put down roots.
- God called Abraham to leave the security of his past, to give up all that he held dear for an unknown land promised by God.

- Abraham was also a **pagan** when God called him.
- He was a Chaldean living in southern Babylon.
- Babylonian religion was based on astrology.



The only thing Abraham knew about his destination was that it was the land that God would show him.





Genesis 12:4

⁴ So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him.

- With no other guarantee of success except God's word, Abraham responded with **immediate, joyful obedience**.

- When **Anne Graham Lotz** and her husband, **Denny**, attend football games at his alma mater, UNC, thousands of people cram in the parking lots, and she can't see where she's going. However, her husband, a head taller at **6'7"**, can look over the crowd, so he takes her hand and leads them to their seats.

"The way I get from the car to my seat is just by holding his hand and following him closely through the crowd."

- She follows the same procedure with the Lord.

"I just try to faithfully follow the Lord step by step and day by day. Ten years from now, I just want to look back and know that to the best of my ability I have been obedient to God's call on my life."



2. Answering God's call on your life usually involves overcoming obstacles.

- Abraham's first obstacle was that at the time God promised to make his family into a great nation, he was not only *childless*, but his wife, Sarah, was *barren*.

Genesis 11:30

³⁰ Now Sarai was barren; she had no child.

- Abraham was keenly aware of this obstacle. He and Sarah were both were *advanced in age*. Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born and Sarah was past 90.

Genesis 15:1-6

¹ After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ² But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir."



⁴ And behold, the word of the LORD came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir.” ⁵ And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”



- A **second obstacle** is that the Promised Land was already occupied by the **Canaanites**—a fierce, warlike people.

- When Abraham arrived in Canaan, he did two powerful symbolic acts: first, he **built an altar to Jehovah** in a place that was probably a Canaanite shrine.



Genesis 12:6-7

⁶ Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” **So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.**

- By *building an altar* to Jehovah in the Canaanite sacred grove at Shechem (Moreh means “teacher”—it was a place where oracles could be obtained), Abraham declared his allegiance to the God who had called him out of Ur of the Chaldeans.



Second, by *pitching his tents* in Canaan and *traveling the length of the land*, Abraham declared that he was taking possession of the Land God had promised him.

In the face of all his obstacles, Abraham believed God.

Genesis 15:6

⁶ And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

- Paul quotes this verse in Romans 4 to show that God justifies sinners by their faith in Christ.
- Galatians 3 and James 2 also quote this verse.

3. Answering God's call on your life brings incredible blessings.

Genesis 12:2-3

² “And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

God promised to bless Abraham and to *give him a family that would become a great nation*.

- God called a man so that he could give him a family that would become a great nation.
- From him would come Isaac, Jacob, the 12 tribes, the nation of Israel, the royal House of David, and ultimately Jesus Christ the Messiah.

God promised to give Abraham *a great name*.

- Even today Jews, Moslems, and Christians alike revere the name of Abraham.

God promised to give Abraham *divine protection*.

- “I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse.”
- I believe that no real and lasting harm can come to those who trust God.

God promised to *make Abraham a blessing*.

- Ultimately, the Messiah would come from Abraham's family, and through him all the nations on earth would be blessed.
- Of the four promises, this is the one I yearn for the most.

Application

How can you know God's call on your life?

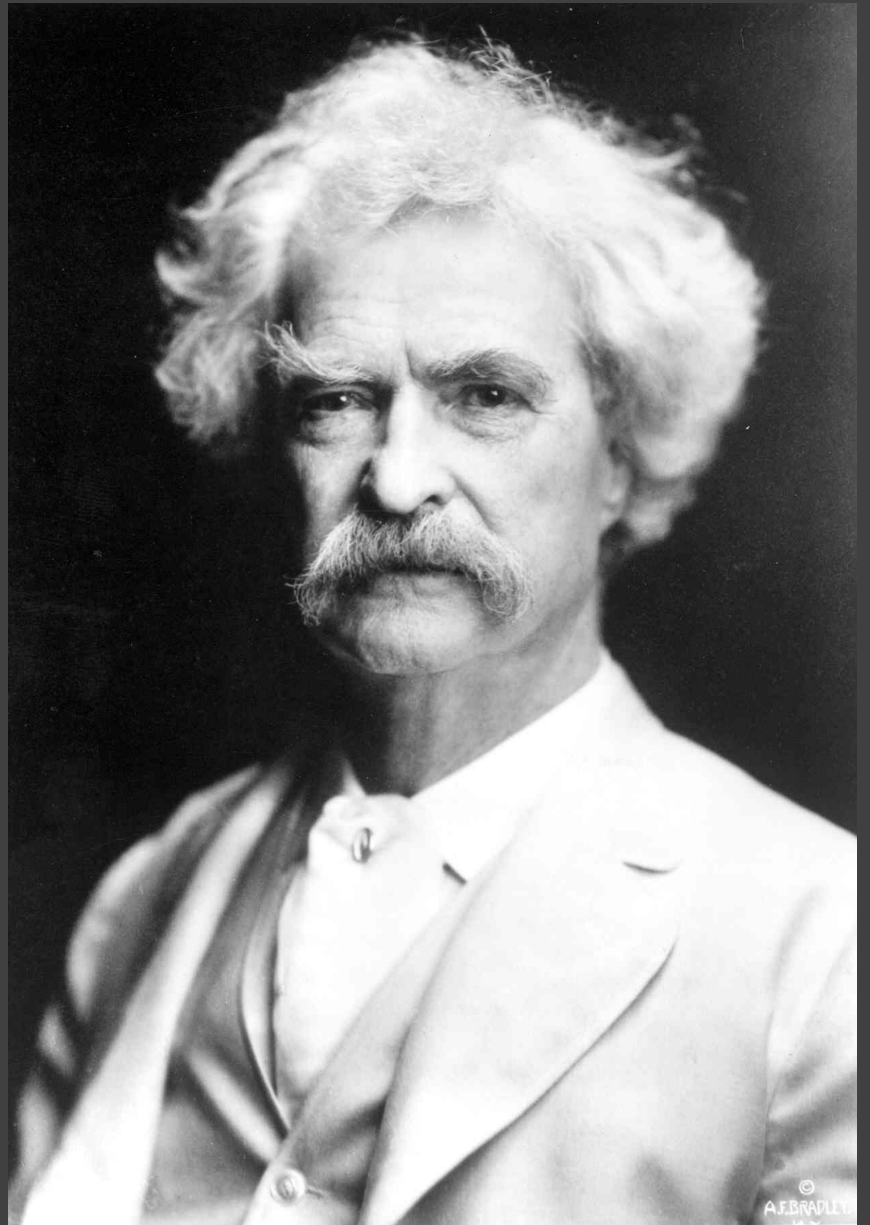
1. The Bible is the surest way to know God's will for any life.

Psalm 119:105

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

“It ain’t those parts of
the Bible that I can’t
understand that
bother me, it is the
parts that I do
understand.”

—Mark Twain



2. Godly friends, pastors, and teachers can often help us discern God's will for us.

Proverbs 12:15

¹⁵ The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.

Hebrews 13:7

Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. . . .

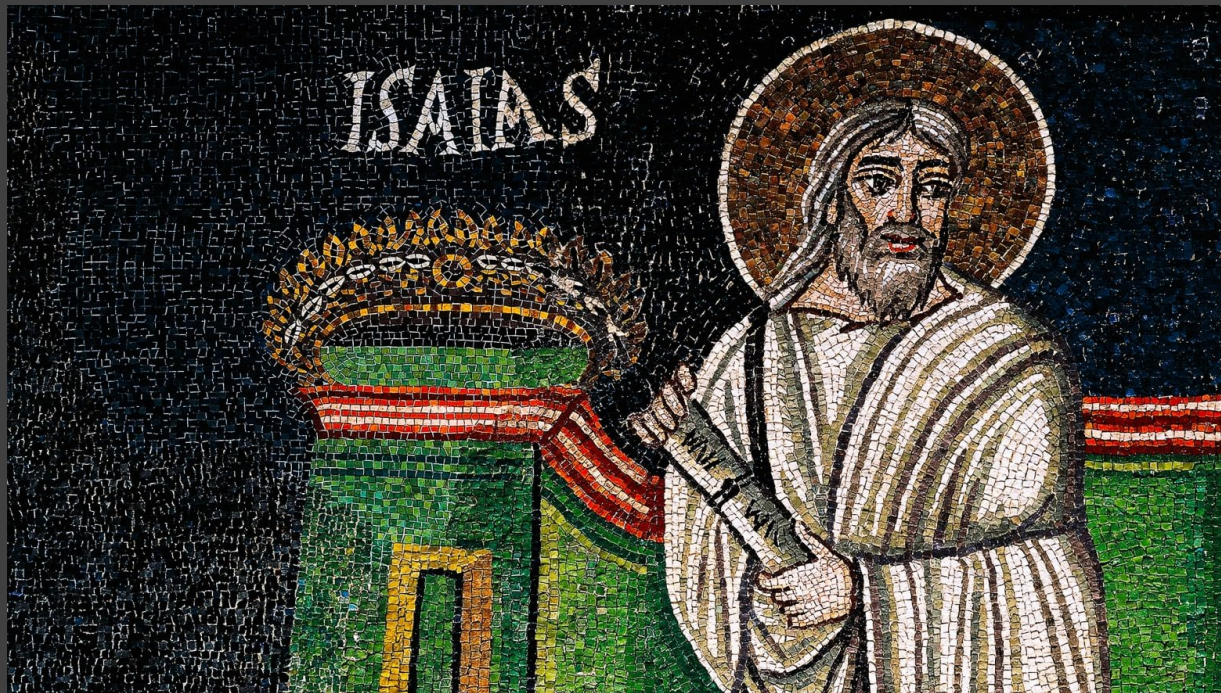
1 Corinthians 11:1

Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

- The good example of a time-proven disciple who models Christian behavior, values, and faith is a great help.

3. Often circumstances will present themselves in a way that is clearly the work of God.

- When we trust God, when His Word and will become our guide, then we know the sweet fellowship of walking with Him.



- In Isaiah's day the people of Judah had turned from the Lord.
- He prophesied their judgment, but he also told of a time when they would repent and return to the Lord—a time when they would readily listen to their spiritual guides, such as the prophets and priests, and be sensitive to God's leading.

Isaiah 30:21

²¹ And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.

- Those who are **sensitive** to God’s word and **ready** to do his bidding have the **greatest awareness** of God’s leading.