

ABRAHAM'S FAITH JOURNEY / PART TWO

Thus far we have looked at four of faith's friends/ companions. **Word of God** (logos and rhema) **God of the Word** (faith in God / faith of God), **Hearing** and **Obedience**. God had spoken a 'rhema' word to Abraham, he listened carefully and obeyed God's direction to leave home.

- **Supernatural visitation FF#5**

Abram traveled to Shechem when 'the **Lord appeared** to Abram' and proclaimed that his seed would inherit the land. - Genesis 12:6-7. God appeared to Abram at least three times, for he had a special calling from God. God appeared to others in the Bible and sometimes even sent angels. God is pleased when we walk by faith and not by sight but **during special times, God deems it important to affirm His will directly**. God is aware that we are often like sheep, one of the most timid and helpless of his creatures. Visitations from God or angels are not to be sought nor are they to be dismissed, unless they reveal things that are contrary to scripture or God's nature and character. **Divine visitations usually occur during key transition times or events**. A virgin will give birth? One can understand why God revealed himself to Joseph, who was pledged to be married to Mary - Matthew 1:18-21. God sent the angel Gabriel to Mary - Luke 1:26-38.

As a 14 year old in India, Sundar had religious pursuits in Sikhism and questions about Christianity and Hinduism and even burned Bibles, but had found no meaning for his life. He cried out one night, and asked the 'true God' to reveal himself or he would throw himself on a railroad track the next day. Before morning arrived, Jesus appeared to him in a vision and said: **'I died for you. I am the Savior of the world.'** This powerful encounter led Sundar to dedicate himself to Jesus for the rest of his life. Sadhu Sundar Singh became like the apostle Paul, as he preached the gospel of Jesus fearlessly throughout India and beyond, despite many hardships and pressures. It is believed that he died as a Christian martyr in the Himalayas in Tibet at the hands of Buddhist monks. He gave his life for the sake of Jesus, the one who had given him the ultimate purpose for life. (Sadhu Sundar Singh, 1889-ca.1929)

- **Worship FF#6**

Abram was a man of worship who had a deep respect for God and close fellowship as evidenced by his frequent altar building - Genesis 12:7-8; 13:4,18; 22:5. He knew that God was his best source of strength, wisdom and provision.

Since Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith, we must stay unified with Him. Apart from Him we can do absolutely nothing so we must abide in the Vine. - John 15:5. In the **Old Testament**, the patriarchs are described as those who **'walked with God.'** In the **New Testament** the saints are seen as those who **'walked by faith'**. The Bible says that God 'inhabits the praises of His people' - Psalm 22:3. God sets up his throne around praise. Praise prepares the way for God's deliverance as seen in the experience of Paul and Silas in prison and Jonah in the big fish - Psalm 50:23, Jonah 2:3-10, Acts 16:22-31. Nothing brings us closer to God than true worship. Worship means 'worthship'. It magnifies God and demagnifies our fears and our problems - Psalm 34:3-6, 22:3. When we honor God and draw near to Him, He promises to draw near to us - James 4:8. Praise is a spark-plug of faith.

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- **Love FF#7**

There was quarreling among the herdsmen of Lot and the herdsmen of Abram because the land could not sustain both of their large herds. To keep peace, Abram showed kindness and unselfish love to Lot as he allowed him to choose which portion of land he wanted. - Genesis 13:8-10. This is the way of Christ followers, to **prefer one another** above ourselves - Romans 12:10. **Faith is hindered when strife is present.** God tells us that 'faith works through love' - Galatians 5:6. Faith expresses its power and energy in a love atmosphere. Without love, mountain moving faith is worthless and is a misuse of power. - 1 Corinthians 13:2.

'When we are strong in faith and weak in love, faith does not have a proper channel to work through.' - Judson Cornwall

Ephesians 3:17-21 speaks of God's power that works through the church and was Paul's prayer that we would be rooted in love and that Christ would **live** in our hearts by faith. That word **live** in the Greek = 'to settle down and be at home.' Jesus does not like to dwell among strife for it quenches the work of the Holy Spirit. When we love one another, God abides in us and love is perfected. Perfect love drives out all fear - 1 John 4:12,18. Walking in God's love gives us boldness to face whatever comes for love never fails.

- **Trust / FF #8**

Genesis 14:20-24 Abram trusted God to meet his needs and was a generous giver as he tithed unto the priest/king Melchizedek. He was offered the spoils of war by the king of Sodom, if he gave back the persons. Abraham responded:

'I have raised my hand* to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will take not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, "I made Abraham rich..." - Genesis 14:22-23 *sign of a promise

Luke 16:11 tells us that God will give **'true riches'** to those who are faithful in handling worldly wealth.

'Faith in the invisible God can be shown by power over material things. Enslavement to the visible makes faith in the invisible suspect.'
- John White / The Golden Cow

Abram was a wealthy man, but he knew that his blessing came from God and not from himself or others. The word **trust** is used about 140 times in the Old Testament. It has about five different meanings in the Hebrew. One meaning that is used about 30 times is **'to flee for refuge'** where **God is seen as a rock or shield** - eg. Psalm 91:4. The most prevalent meaning of the word trust is **'to confide in or lean upon'**. God is our most trusted friend that we can open our heart to and rely upon. We continue on with the companions of faith with Abram. Some may not be included in your faith journey, but they reveal what God deemed necessary in this situation.

- **Vision FF #9**

Genesis 13:14; 15:1-5 In Genesis 13 we see that God first has Abram walk out his inheritance and tells him that **he can have all that he sees**. His ancestors will be as numerous as the dust of the earth /13:16. **(Hearing combined with seeing enhances our faith)**. God has designed mankind to **visualize** things. Throughout the Bible we see how God uses dreams and visions to speak with people. There are 383 times in the Bible where one of these terms is used: **dream, vision, seer, look or eyes**. After Abram had his third vision from God (stars/ 15:5), he finally believed the Lord's word about his having a child and

a vast number of offspring. **Dramatic assignments** from God sometimes require **extraordinary confirmations** from God in order for us to believe. God had said in the vision:

- **'Do not be afraid Abram'** (God was his peace and comfort) - Genesis 15:1
- **'I am your shield'** (God was his protector)
- **'I am you exceedingly great reward'** (God was his rewarder and provider)

Peter was a man of faith, but he needed a vision from God in order to finally believe that God wanted to save the Gentiles too - Acts 10:9-15. (note: this vision was not about food, it was about a spiritual meaning). Jesus was powerful in faith because **He only did what he saw the Father doing** - John 5:19-20. He used his spiritual eyes and ears and did not rely on his physical perceptions - Isaiah 11:3. He relied on Holy Spirit perception HSP (not ESP).

- **Fear of the Lord FF #10**

The Lord confides (shares secrets) with those who fear/reverence Him - Psalm 25:14. NIV

The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear Him, and he makes known to them His covenant. - Psalm 25:14 ESV

Abram is described as a friend of God in James 2:23. Those who fear God lack nothing, including faith - Psalm 34:9,10; are greatly loved by God - Psalm 103:11; are full of faith and fearless - Psalm 112:1,7,8; they hate evil - Psalm 8:13. People who fear the Lord are not afraid of people's opinions. Jesus loved righteousness and hated wickedness and knew the difference - Hebrews 1:9. The Pharisees tried to trap Jesus in his words about whether they should pay taxes to Caesar to or not but prefaced this with these words to him.

Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are. - Matthew 22:16 NIV

Faith in God is diminished if we are led by what people think instead of what God says.

- **Belief FF #11**

After he saw the vision in the heavens, Abram believed the Lord about having numerous offspring. - Genesis 15:6. This was 11 years after the first word from God about the promise. Abram then asked God about the land inheritance and God makes a **blood covenant** with him. In chapter 16 we see how doubt came from listening to people who are not as close with God. Belief and unbelief increase based on what a person is meditating on. From Genesis 15:5 onward, Abram meditates on God's words and visions. Every night he could look at the **stars** and be reminded of God's promise. (read Romans 4:17-21). At the age of 99, Abram does not consider the old age of his body, but instead he believes God's word and promise are more real. Believing is mentioned about 400 times in the Bible and it refers mainly to man's response to God's 'rhema' word. Man can choose to believe or not do so - Deuteronomy 30:19; but it becomes easier the more that we know God and it comes through knowing God's names, for they reveal His character and ability.

Those who know your name will trust in you. - Psalm 9:10

One name that really impacted Abram's faith was the name El Shaddai - Genesis 17:1

EL SHADDAI

- God Almighty, All sufficient, the one who is mighty to completely nourish, satisfy and supply us. He is the God who is 'more than enough'.

Do you want more faith in God?

[Learn His names](#)

- God is not over advertised, but He is often under-believed. As we meditate on God's names, they will become part of our thinking and beliefs, not only in our minds, but in our heart, which is the very core of our being. Abraham eventually had the firm belief that God raises the dead and calls things that are not as though they were - Romans 4:17. Abraham believed God's promise and welcomed it - Hebrews 11:13. He put no confidence in the flesh but kept his eyes on God's word and faithfulness.

Abraham is called the 'father of our faith'. May we walk in 'his footsteps of faith.'

Romans 4:12

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