

## Abraham

*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." Genesis 12:1-3*

*No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. Genesis 17:5-6 ESV*

Read Genesis 15-25 for the true Biblical story of Abraham. Some things have been added to the movie.

Abram and his family lived in Haran, which was a culture that worshipped many man-made gods. The God who created the heavens and earth revealed Himself to Abram and called him to follow Him to a new land. God changed Abram's name to Abraham and promised to make him a great nation. Abram and his wife Sarai (who became Sarah) had no children. Abraham trusted God and followed Him.

Do you think God calls us to follow Him today? What are some of the ways we can follow Him?

In the movie Abraham is portrayed as paying the price for the life of Eliezer who was an escaped slave. This is a good example of how Jesus redeemed us. He willingly paid the price for our sins so that we can be free. Although Abraham set Eliezer free, Eliezer chose to return and be part of Abraham's household out of gratitude for what had been done for him. Because God redeemed us, we choose to follow Him.

Have you experienced the freedom of God's grace? When we confess our sins God will forgive us.

Even though Abraham believed that God had promised him a son, neither Abraham or Sarah could see how that could happen since they were getting very old. Sarah asked Abraham to have a child with her slave so that they would have an heir. Later God sent the promised child, Isaac. Instead of waiting for God's answer Sarah and Abraham took the matter into their own hands and it resulted in conflict and contention.

Are you a strong-willed person, insisting on your own way? Can you trust that God has a better way?

Lot chose to separate his people from Abraham's believing he could be more prosperous on his own. When he and his family were captured by warring kings, Abraham and his people came and rescued them. Later when God came to Abraham and warned him that He was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because of the wickedness, Abraham pleaded with God to save the cities if there were only ten righteous people. Two angels warned Lot and his family to flee for safety. Lot lost everything but his daughters.

*Jeremiah 29:11-13 says, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will hear you. 13 You will seek Me and find Me, when you seek Me with all your heart." When God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac He was testing Abraham's love for Him. Because Abraham was willing to obey, God sent Abraham a ram to sacrifice instead. God wants us to know that He is a God of love and mercy.*

We no longer offer sacrifices in our worship. When Jesus died on the cross His life was the perfect sacrifice that fulfilled all of the requirements of the law. Because of God's grace we can be sons and daughters of the King of kings and Lord of lords. *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV*

God loves us and wants us to turn away from our selfish ways and follow Him. Will you follow Him?

*Dear Lord, sometimes it is difficult to trust in You. It is easier for us to rely on things that we can see and touch and hear. Like Abraham, we're not always very good listeners. We want to follow You and obey You, but when times get hard it is easy to wonder if we heard You correctly. Thank You for paying the price for our sins. Please forgive us and set us free to love and serve You all the days of our lives. Bless and keep Your people all over the world. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.*