

Transcript* - Abraham – John Klundt 2/23/2025

Good morning everybody. I trust you're having a great, great morning. My name is John Klundt, one of the pastors here. Also, welcome to those of you that are on live stream this morning. Great to have everybody. So we just wrapped up a series. So it's a great day to be here. We just wrapped up a series last week out of Romans chapter eight called God Is for Us.

And if you didn't get to be a part of that, I will encourage you to go back to our website, bccmesa.com, and catch up on those sermons. And today we're starting a new series and the title of our series is called It's Complicated. I don't know if you've ever made anything complicated in your life. This series isn't necessarily about that, but about some stories in particular in Scripture that have some complications to them.

And so we're going to look at some stories. Probably some of these are very familiar to you as well. Some people stories in the Bible. And look at parts of these stories that seemingly have some complications to them. We're going to take this, up to the week before Easter and then out of Easter, we're going to do a, a second part of the series on some of the hard teachings of Scripture in, in regards to that.

But the new series, New Time, best day, to be here because again, we are starting new and you just will come every week and never miss. And that'll be great. Right? So we're going to be in Genesis chapter 12 today. Also, we're going to be in Genesis chapter 20. We're going to be in those two chapters because the story that we're reading comes out of that.

But I just want to say there, if you if it's been a minute since you've read Genesis, I would just encourage you to go back and read it again. There's just some funny nominal stories in the book of Genesis. And you're going, yeah, we know. But really like, read through it and, and take your time reading through it as you go through there and just see some of the incredible stories that are in there.

Sometimes we just, you know, I don't know if you for if you forget, but sometimes I, I do forget just a little bit and then I go through it and get reminded. But some great, great stories in there. And today we're going to look at a story of a guy and his name is Abraham. And actually that wasn't his name as he began with, with this story.

His name was Abraham. But for our purposes, we're going to call him Abraham. And his wife also had a different name, Sarah, and we're going to just call her Sarah. For the purposes of of our story today, I do I do want to say when oftentimes when we see God's work in the life of of people in Scripture, he does, he does a name change.

And I think that's just so the transformational work that's happening in the lives of the people that God is working with, and that's just incredible to kind of get an idea like how he's saying, hey, this is was your

name, but now this is your name, and this is what I'm doing in your life. And I think God does that transformational work in our life as well.

He just doesn't give us a different name, but maybe he would like to in that regard. So chapter 12 starts off and we need a little bit of the story actually just unfolds at the end of, of chapter 11 where we see Abraham introduce it with, with the story of like his family lineage and, and, we, we kind of get to the end of chapter 11.

But then in chapter 12, God calls Abraham to basically just follow him, and he makes some promises to to Abraham. But I want to say as, as he's doing that and he calls him Abraham and I, I really, truly believe this when God speaks in a in an audible way. And I'm not saying he can't do that in our culture today, but if he does you, you'll know, like you're not going to go, was that God?

I'm not really sure. Abraham was absolutely, 100% sure that when God was speaking to him and he was going to like, say, hey, I'm going to have you go out with your family and you're going to leave your family, which was a really big deal. Like in regards to where he was, family was huge and it's still huge today.

The family that we have, the tribe that we associate with, means so much, and it meant so much in that culture because it meant, hey, this is where this is where you had your your food and this is where you had your, your wealth and your survival. And this is where your protection was in regards to that. And God saying, hey, I'm calling you out of that and we're going to create a new nation.

It's going to be something new. And and you're going to be the one who is going to, to lead out in that way. And so he makes some promises. And every time, by the way, that God makes a promise, there's a blessing that follows. I truly believe that that's the case. And it was the case with Abraham. So he gives them some some promises.

And the promises will always that God gives always depend on God, not on us. And so he gives the promise. He says, first of all, I'm going to show you the land, where where you're going to basically end up. And, and I'm going to get, get you to get your eyes on it, and I'm going to show you.

And then he goes on to say, here's, here's the covenant Abraham that I am making with you. And again, this is so dependent on God as the promise keeper, as the one who is saying, hey, here's what I'm going to do with you. And so he makes some of these promises I'm going to make. I'm going to make you into a great nation.

And and as you're listening to these, you're going, man, this is like if if God's telling you this stuff, this is really good. Way to start off like great nation. And it might not be that way in the immediate because God saying, hey, this is going to be what I'm going to do through you and how it's going to unfold is is going to require you, Abraham, to learn to have faith and trust in and who I am.

But in the meantime, when God gives us, promises that are not necessarily immediate, that doesn't mean that there aren't blessings in the immediate and there doesn't mean that there is not promises that he wants us to hold on to. And in the in the now moments, it's just I'm going to make you into a great nation.

Then he says, I'm going to bless you. So again, anytime God makes a promise, there's a blessing that comes with it. And Abraham, I'm going to make your name great. And all of us are going, wow, that's that's some incredible promise is like and to this day, Abraham does have a great name and he is well known.

He's well known because of the word of God and all the stories that we know. But he was he was definitely lifted up as as the patriarch of, of the of the nation of Israel. And so I'm, I'm going to make I'm going to bless you, make your name great. And, and then what's going to unfold is that, is that so that you will be a blessing.

And when there's a, a promise from God and there's a blessing that follows also what begins to happen is that we will start to be a blessing to those around us, and we should be becoming a blessing to those around us, not because of the fact that the promises depend on us, but because of what God is doing in, in our life and, and the work that he's doing.

So then he says, hey, now, this is important to lean into what he's saying right here, because this really has a lot to do with the story that we're going to talk about. And then he says, hey, I'm going to for those when you when you travel and you go wherever I'm going to take you, I'm going to I'm going to be a blessing to you.

But anybody, that that comes up against you and wants to cause you harm, I'm going to I'm going to curse them. I'll bless those who bless you. And and I'm basically going to curse those who curse you. And he wraps it up with. Because of because of the promises I'm making to you, you're going to be a blessing for all.

And what a great thing that is that God sets up with, with Abraham and the covenant that he sets up. And I, I don't think there was any way at this particular time that Abraham was closing in on what that meant and how that would unfold and what God would be doing and, and how he would play a part in all of it.

But but God knew and God was making the promises to Abraham. And so Abraham and his family set out him, his nephew lot, and and their tribe of people. They set out. And of course, the first thing that God did say was, hey, I'm going to show you the land. And he did. He showed him the land. But almost immediately, and this is chapter 12, almost immediately a famine broke out.

And when a famine happened in that particular time and culture, it was it was devastating. I mean, people, they couldn't they couldn't. The most important thing is they couldn't find food to eat and they couldn't provide for themselves or for their family. And so Abraham set off to, to go to the nation of Egypt. By the way, a little bit of foreshadowing about what would unfold in the days to come.

And Egypt with the story of Moses. But he sets off to go, to Egypt because of the famine that's in the land. And as I think as they're heading this way, and maybe as they get a little bit closer. Abraham, he he looks over at his wife. By the way, Abraham is like 75 at this time, and his wife Sarah was in her 60s and he was like, hey, you're you're really beautiful.

And if you're going to get somebody to do something for you, that's a good way to start. He's like, you're, you're beautiful. And I know that. And I know once the people of Egypt see you, they're going to they're going to know that, too. And basically, if they find out that I am your husband, they are going to kill me.

And so he says, here's what we're going to do. You're going to tell them that I'm your brother. And that way they won't kill me. And and yet you'll still get taken away. So for whatever reason, they they agree that this is what they're going to do. They get into Egypt and sure enough, they take a look at her and they say, hey, you're beautiful and the Pharaoh's going to want you.

And so they take her away and then they start to, like, bargain for her value. And they, they're determining like, she's worth so much livestock. No comment on that, whether that's a good thing or bad. But that was a cultural thing in that time. And so, okay, we're going to we're going to have you, we're going to have you get some livestock and we'll take your sister away.

And so he began to accumulate some livestock. And he was getting all this. And then what unfolds next again seems a little bit complicated. So, so far in the story, Abraham has received the promises of God, which come with blessings and not too far off into his journey, because all that promises was in chapter 12 and it hasn't been very long.

And he ends up in Egypt because of the famine, and he's concerned. And so he basically does some trickery and what we would actually call just an outright lie and says, hey, this is my sister, and I'm not going to say that she's my wife because I don't want to die. I was the reason that he gave.

And and yet his sister gets taken away and Abraham receives some livestock because of that. And so far in the story, if you were just looking at it, you would say, well, who's who's causing the issue here and all of us would go was probably Abraham, because he's not being honest. And God made some promises to him and it seems like he's not depending or and, and holding to the promises that God has made for him.

And then, the story goes on, it's like the people of Egypt start to have plagues come on them. So the first time that Egypt had plagues, caused by God is not the story that we typically think of or the story of, of Moses and the Ten Commandments. No, it was way before that. And here's some foreshadowing again about what's going to come to to the people of Egypt later on.

But in this moment, they have the plagues unfold with them. And Pharaoh, for whatever reason, he just knew that this was related to what happened with with Abraham and Sarah. And he goes to him directly and he says, what did you do? What did you do? And Pharaoh really rebukes him, and he's the one who calls him out and says, I, I can't believe that that you did this.

And so they basically end up sending Abraham and Sarah and their family away, and they leave with more livestock than what they had when they came. And again, if you think about the story, it's like, well, wow, this is this is an unusual story. And it seems at its face value, like, okay, if you think about the promises, one of the last promises that he made is I have.

I'll bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. This seems like that's that's unfolding in that context, but it seems a little peculiar that that Abraham isn't the one that is getting in trouble with God. And it seems like, oh, okay, he just goes off and they leave and no harm, no foul. Well that's interesting if that just happened once, but it happens again, almost identical to to this story in chapter 12.

It unfolds again in chapter 20. Now I know, I know, everybody in this room is a little bit different. We're unique because once we do something where we blow it and we we make a bad choice, we're not going to say mistake because mistakes are that's not Abraham didn't make a mistake. He made a choice. Right? We know we understand the how that unfolds.

But in this regard he he makes a choice. He blows it. And it seems like he's the one that gets the blessing. And the people that he tricked got kicked in the head and it. And again it unfolds again in the story. But I know in this room, when anybody here makes a bad decision, we only make one bad decision.

And then we never do it again. Right? I mean, it never happens again. We never go, oh, I blew it, man. I'm really going to learn from this, and I will. I will be never making that decision again. No. Typically we we do. And so if we looked at our own story and we mirror it to, to Abraham's story, we could see like, oh yeah, okay, he did it once and it seems like either before that happen or sometime after they just decided or Abraham decided like, hey, if you could just say that you're my sister.

As we continue to travel around like that would be the norm for us, so that when we go into places this and they say, who are you? And they look at you and of course you're beautiful and and I don't want to die. So that's our agreement that you'll say, you're my sister. And so again, they they come up into a new nation with the kingdom of Melek and with a melek.

Again, just like the story, what we saw in chapter 12 and unfolds and they go and they see her and they were like, hey, our King would like her. And they take her. They take her away because they think again, that's his sister. This is agreement that they came up with. And so God, God comes to Abimelech again a Abimelech is not really confused about who's talking to him.

He he really knows. And God says to this, to him this way. This would be a terrible way to hear the first words of God ever speaking audibly to you. I'm going to kill you. Imagine hearing those words from God. And he's like, well, why would you kill I didn't what did I do? I didn't, I was, I was acting, I'm really innocent and I was acting in good faith.

And they said that this was they were brother and sister and how could you kill me because of what they did? And not only that, he. And this moment, God caused all the the women and and their nation to not be able to have children and and and so again, Abraham comes in, has received the blessings of God, the promises and the blessings that come with it, and the the people who are going through their experiences with Abraham and and his family are the ones who are getting the kick in the head.

So Abimelech goes to Abraham and he asks him this question, similar to the question that the Pharaoh asked him. But he was like, hey, what is it that before you came in and you saw us? I mean, what is it that you saw that made you choose to do what you were going to do? What did you see?

He ask him. And he was like, well, I saw that you you do. You don't fear God. And because you don't fear God, I knew you would kill me.

And so basically God tells me, okay, have Abraham pray over you. And then set them free. And they got more livestock and got sent on their way. Okay. Now, maybe for you that that's not complicated, but for me, I would like. How come Abraham doesn't get in trouble? Does that seem normal? Like he's the one who wasn't being honest.

And yet he was supposed to be the one who was representing God and traveling and and doing all this stuff. And and it's to me, it's a little bit complicated. There's two stories similar in nature. And these other people who have come into contact with them are the ones that that have the consequences. So what is what is the what do these stories teach?

Like what can we learn from these particular stories? And I think the first thing that we can learn today through the story is that Abraham found it way easier to trust in the far off promises of God than than the immediate right now needs. Right? Like we and I think we can do the same thing because we get we get a lot of hope from God telling us, hey, when you put your faith and your trust and your hope in Jesus, there, there is, there is the promise of eternal life.

There's a promise of heaven, and there's hope that comes from that. There's hope that comes from, hey, one day when I take my last breath and I know that I'm going to be in heaven in eternity, because I

believe in Jesus, and there's a, there's a, there's a blessing that comes with that. And Abraham was told, hey, I'm going to make your I'm going to make you into a great nation.

I'm going to make your name great so that you can be a blessing and that anybody who does anything to you that they're going to, they're going to, if they bless you, great. But if they don't, they're going to experience a curse that's going to come on them. And that's how it's going to be. But but eventually and ultimately you're going to you're going to be a blessing to all peoples everywhere.

And so when God tells us, hey, you can you can trust me. You can trust in the, in the in the promises that I make you. You can trust in that. I think one of the one of the promises that God makes us is he says to us, hey, I, I want you to know that I will never leave you or forsake you said in the Old Testament and said again in the New Testament reminds us of of the promises of God.

Not that, not that things won't be hard or difficult, but in the midst of all that, he's he's with us. He walks through that with us so we can lean on him and and trust in him. And and he's going to he's going to be with us, which is such a great promise. But sometimes in that initial like thing that we face, and usually this happens right out of becoming a follower of Jesus and we say, yes, I believe in Jesus, and I believe that he is the Son of God.

And I want to commit my life to him. And and we were so, I believe, were so wanting to be faithful. And we're so determined to to trust in the Lord and grow in the Lord. And immediately I believe it feels like things start to come at us, to make us discern whether we really are going to do that or not.

And we're going to stay faithful and trust in the Lord and and believe in, in the promises that he that he makes to us. And boy, once we look at the the things that we're facing in the immediate, it can be really easy to start making excuses and justifications and rationalizing maybe some making choices that aren't good. And a blessing for us.

So if we want to do the story, I think it helps us to also understand that if we want to do something wrong, we can find some good reasons to do it. Amen. Yeah, everybody laughs because it's true. Mean we're good at really rationalizing. Abraham. He did the same thing. So when it came to him and he's like hey what did you see.

And he begins to see like hey, I saw that you guys were you didn't fear the Lord and I knew that you would kill me. And then he says, by the way. He said, by the way, cheat. I mean, I wasn't completely lying to you. She she is my sister. We have the same dad, but not the same mom.

That's a whole nother complication. We'll have to talk about another time. So he's like, I was. It was even though. Yeah, she's my wife now. I'm. I mean, we are brother and sister, but I, he she was his wife and they are husband and wife. So he knew he was being dishonest. But saying hey, I was kind of just.

Maybe not completely being true, but there was a little bit of truth to it. So I felt, okay, this is what he's saying. And then he goes on to say, and you know what? Also is that God, God caused me to wander. So he's like, hey, I did a little bit of a truth, but I'm also I want to I want you to know that in the midst of this, like, I'm out here, I'm trying to figure these things out, and it doesn't seem like God's given me all the the help that I need or all the information that I need.

And as I'm going into these places, maybe he was saying, I don't know how else to handle it, but in Scripture, speaking of that particular word, wanderer, it's it's a word that's never used in a positive way. It's not used in a way that makes you go, oh, he's traveling and he's enjoying life, and he's a he's on vacation and he's going to these different places and same thing.

So he's wandering and basically saying, God caused me to get out here. And then and then he kind of takes his hands off.

So he's my, my and God's like I get, well, I give me partial truth. So if we want, I believe we can be pretty good at this. If we want to rationalize or find a reason. As we look at the promises of God to not trust, it's usually because of the circumstances that are right before us. And it seems like because God's not showing up like the the best thing that we can do is help God with our choices.

And maybe that's what Abraham felt he was doing. He felt he was trying to help God so he wouldn't die.

So if we want to find things, and the things that the story teaches is that God blessed Abraham even when he chose not to do the right thing. He didn't. He didn't do what he was supposed to do. And even though God doesn't rebuke him specifically, it's implied that Abraham didn't make the good choice. But even Pharaoh saw that it wasn't a good choice and rebuked him.

And he recognized, hey you! You made a decision to do something that inherently wasn't wasn't okay. So does does God still bless us even when we blow it? Does he? Oh, yeah, he does. Because he promises us that if we ask for forgiveness, he's faithful to forgive.

God makes a lot of promises that we're blessed by, even though sometimes our choices reflect otherwise.

So we get and we receive a blessing. We receive a blessing of of forgiveness. We receive a blessing of mercy. We receive. We receive that that promise that that God's doing that work in our life in such an incredible way. There is blessing in and he he was blessed. And remember, the promises always go back to the promises of God.

What did God promise Abraham? He promised him. Hey, those that bless you I bless, and those that come up against you and cause you harm. I'm going to curse them.

I don't think he wants us to be abusive with that though. I think he wants us to recognize that even though, yes, we can, we can have forgiveness and we can have his grace, and we can have his mercy. That doesn't mean that we just go on sinning so that grace may abound. Because ultimately, what begins to happen with the relationships that Abraham has with his, his wife and and his family is they also start to make choices to help get out.

We know that that's what happened because God promised that they would be a great nation and that Abraham's name would be great. And the way that that's going to happen is if he has a child, a boy, a son, and that wasn't happening. So they said, hey, God's obviously not coming through, so we're going to help him, figure out how we can have a kid so that he can have an heir so that his name can be great and and all this can unfold.

And when they did that, they cause more problems than they could have ever imagined.

So the blessing is still there. But if we're not careful, we can. We can cause a lot more harm than we know. And even though, yes, there was blessing, the choices that they made were still not okay, they still were not good, and they did cause harm.

When we receive the forgiveness of God's grace. And what a wonderful thing that his church. Still oftentimes those choices that we made to not trust in the Lord come with a lifetime of consequences, a lifetime, because even forgiving sin has consequences. So the last thing that we learned, and this is such a blessing to us this morning, is that God did not call back his promise to Abraham, because the promise didn't depend on the promise depended on God, not on Abraham.

Aren't we glad that the promises depend on God and not on us? Because if they depended on us, they would have been dismissed a long time ago. Because we're not we're not inherently good at making the choices that God always wants us to make us. Because of our human, our sinful nature, we typically tend to blow it. And because God's promises will always be true and they will always come through, we receive the blessing.

We are the ones who received the blessing because of God's promises, and they don't depend on us, thank goodness, but they depend on the Lord. And when he makes a promise to you in church, he's made plenty. I think the best thing that we can do is go back and be reminded consistently and constantly, the promises of God in our life, and have that be the funnel into the way we make choices today and each and every day.

I don't depend on you. I don't depend on me. The promises depend on the Lord and we are blessed because of it. Amen. Father, we thank you for our time together this morning. We thank you for the

story of Abraham and Father. We're grateful today that we have received your promise, the promise that you've given us through your son, Jesus.

Father, who is the Christ, the Messiah, the son of the living God and Father. We desired him to be the Lord and Savior of our life. And because of that today, father, we want to hold on to these promises, and we want to see them, father, every day and be reminded of them and have them, a part of our of our head and our heart and, father, our whole being and father, that we can make the choices that, reflect the promises that you have made us today.

And so we thank you for that today. We thank you for those promises and for the blessing that comes from them. And we pray this today in Jesus name. Amen.

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