

## A Godly Father

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by Wayne Goff

*“For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him” (Genesis 18:19, KJV)*

### God’s Promise To Abraham

Abraham was a godly father and the Lord attributed as much to him in the account of **Genesis 18** where angels unwittingly visited Abraham and Sarah on their way to warn Lot and his wife of the doom and destruction coming upon Sodom and Gomorrah.

There is a little discrepancy in the language of the NKJV and NASB and the KJV. NASB, NKJV, NIV all read something a little different: *“For I have **chosen** him, so that he may command his children and his household after him ...” (NASB)*. I think this leaves the Calvinistic impression that God had to work on Abraham’s heart through the Spirit to **cause** him to be the kind of father that he needed to be in order for God to bless him. The **NKJV** isn’t much better when it reads: *“For I have **known** him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him,...”*

I prefer to believe that God **knew** the kind of man Abraham was, the kind of faith he possessed, and the kind of reaction he would have when given a challenge of faith.

This is confirmed in **Genesis 22** when God finally gives Abraham a son, Isaac, and then asks him to sacrifice him on an altar on a mountain in the land of Moriah! There God is testing Abraham to see if his faith in God is greater than his love for his beloved son. Abraham passed the test!

Again, Abraham was asked to believe that God was able to give him a son in his old age through his wife, Sarah, who was past the age of childbearing by nature, **Genesis 17**. *“Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, ‘Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?’” (Genesis 17:17)*. But indeed the Lord did return to Abraham and Sarah *“according to the time of life” (Gen. 18:14)* and Sarah bore a son (**Gen. 21:1-7**)!

### Abraham’s Faith

I love Paul’s inspired remarks on this event in **Romans 4:16-22**:

*“Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (as it is written, ‘I have made you a father of many nations’) in the presence of Him whom he believed – God, **who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did**; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. **He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.** And therefore ‘it was accounted to him for righteousness.’”*

First, *“contrary to hope, in hope believed.”* In other words, Abraham’s faith was in the supernatural, not the natural. This was not because he was a blubbing fool, but because he knew God.

Second, *“was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.”* True faith makes a person stronger in will and determination. Abraham’s trust and faith was in God, not in himself! May God give us fathers today like Abraham.

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