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Superheroes of the Bible

"By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, event though he did not know where he was going...by faith Abraham, even though he was past age...was able to become a father..." Hebrews 11:8-12

"The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people, and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing; I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you, I will curse; and all peoples on the earth will be blessed through you...To your offspring I will give this land." Genesis 12:1-7

In recognizing the 'superheroes' of the Bible we must count Abraham, the father of the faithful, among the most important. We know nothing much about this man of faith except that he was, of course, descended from Noah. But in Genesis 12, God calls Abraham to ***"Leave your country, your people, and your father's household and go to the land I will show you."***

Like all of us, when God calls, Abraham was faced with that basic choice of faith. He must decide if he will obey and follow or disobey and stay where he is. That makes Abraham's choice sound pretty easy doesn't it? Follow God or stay where I am?

But understand that in deciding to follow God, Abraham is not going to a predetermined location. The Hebrew author tells us, ***"By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, event though he did not know where he was going."*** God is not calling Abraham to follow him to a recognized and understood location. God is asking Abraham, as he oftens asks us, to follow him into the unknown.

Superheroes of faith tend to have this in common. They choose, by faith, to follow God even when they have no idea where he might be taking them. In return for Abraham's obedience God makes five promises. ***"I will make you a great nation...I will make your name great...I will bless...and curse...through you all...will be blessed...To your offspring I will give this land."***

These five promises make up the underlying structure of the rest of the Biblical story. As Abraham follows God, as his offspring seek to follow God, and as you and I seek to follow God, that same God fulfills these promises. Abraham's offspring would become the nation of Israel and would possess Palestine. Three major world religions trace their roots to Father Abraham. And God protected Abraham throughout his lifetime in situations that would otherwise have cost him his life.

And, of course, through Abraham comes our greatest blessing, Jesus the Christ. Even though Abraham is often called the 'Father of the Faithful', his faith in the God of promises was not always strong. Abraham's great faith makes him a Biblical 'superhero', but we need to remember that his faith was not always perfect and that it fully developed over many years and many experiences.

The God of Heaven promised that he would bless those who blessed Abraham and curse those who cursed him. Basically God promises to protect Abraham at all times. And yet at least twice the Patriarch lied and encouraged others to lie in order to protect himself.



God promised to make Abraham a great nation and to give his offspring the land of Canaan, but Abraham was childless until having children seemed impossible to him and to Sarah.

Like all of us, Abraham's faith developed over time. Sometimes we are impatient for our faith to grow, but each experience with God generated by our decision to follow him, even into the unknown, helps develop our faith even more.

All of God's 'superheroes' have the faith to follow the Creator, but all of these 'superheroes' also struggle with that faith. At the end of his life we see how strong Abraham's faith has become when the God of Heaven calls on him to sacrifice his son, Isaac, and this old Patriarch seeks to obey. In the same way, you and I need to understand that our faith will grow every time we choose to follow God, because every time we will find he is, ultimately, the promise-keeper.

