

Christian Students @ SAC
College Meeting - Fall 2022
Week 11

THE FAITH OF OUR FATHER ABRAHAM

Scripture Reading: Rom. 4:12; Acts 7:2; Gen. 12:1-3, 7-8; 13:14-17; 15:1; Heb. 11:1, 8;
12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18

God appeared to Abraham again and again. Many of us have held the wrong concept about Abraham, the concept that he was a giant in faith. The only giant of faith is God Himself. God, as the giant of faith, transfused Himself into him: After Abraham had spent time in God's presence, he could not help believing in Him, because he had been transfused with God. Thus, Abraham was attracted to God and reacted to Him in believing. His reaction was his believing. Suppose a poor man visited Abraham and said, "Abraham, I know you don't have a child. Next year I will enable you to have a child born of your wife." Abraham would have driven such a man away from him, telling him not to talk nonsense. Who actually appeared to Abraham? The God of glory. The incident in Genesis 15 was not God's first appearing to him. Several other appearances preceded it.

The first appearing was that recorded in Acts 7. Two more appearances are found in Genesis 12: in the first of these (vv. 1-3) God told Abraham to leave his country, his kindred, and his father's house; in the second one (vv. 7-8) God promised Abraham to give the land to his seed. After this, Abraham, who had little experience in believing, fell into Egypt. God's fourth appearing to Abraham was in Genesis 13:14-17, when He told Abraham to lift up his eyes and look in every direction at the land. Therefore, the appearing of God in Genesis 15:1-7 was the fifth; it was nothing new to Abraham. God had appeared to Abraham repeatedly, and Abraham had experienced the riches of God's appearing, coming to have confidence in them. During the first four appearances, God's element had been transfused and infused into Abraham's being. When God appeared to Abraham, He did not leave suddenly. He stayed with Abraham for a length of time. How long

did God remain with Abraham in Genesis 18? He stayed with him for about half a day, conversing with him for hours as with an intimate friend. Throughout that whole visitation Abraham was infused with God. During the fifth appearing (Gen. 15) God told Abraham that the number of his seed would be like the stars of heaven. As a result of the fifth appearing, Abraham had experienced such a rich infusion of God that he believed. "And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness" (Rom. 4:3; Gen. 15:6).

Abraham's faith did not come from his natural ability and it did not originate with himself. His believing in God was a reaction to the heavenly radium, a response to the divine infusion. Figuratively speaking, Abraham's believing was simply God working like radium within him. What is the proper faith? Genuine faith is the working of God within us. This is why God counted Abraham's faith as righteousness. It seemed that God was saying, "This faith is something of Me. It corresponds to Me. This is Abraham's righteousness before Me." What was that righteousness? It was the righteousness of God.

Faith is not our natural ability or virtue. Faith is our reaction toward God, which results from God's transfusing Himself into us and infusing His divine elements into our being. When God's elements permeate our being, we react to Him, and this reaction is faith. Faith is not a human virtue; it is absolutely a reaction caused by a divine infusion, which saturates and permeates our being. Once we have such a faith, we can never lose it. It is deeper than our blood, for it has been infused into us and constituted into our being. Although we may try not to believe, we can never succeed. This is what the Bible means by believing in God.

At least two or three times Paul mentions "the faith of Jesus" (Gal. 2:16, 20, literal), a phrase that troubles most translators. Some, finding it difficult to define such a phrase, have changed the preposition from "of" to "in." If we change the preposition, the phrase will read "faith in Jesus" and mean that we believe in Jesus by ourselves. This is not Paul's meaning. Paul means that we believe in the Lord Jesus by means of the Lord Jesus Himself

as our faith. Since we do not have the ability to believe, we must take Christ as our believing ability. We need to believe in the Lord Jesus by His faith. (Life-study of Romans, ch. 8, pp. 93-94, 90-91)

Questions

- 1.** Why did God appear to Abraham multiple times? Is this your experience? Explain and/or share examples.
- 2.** What is faith? And where does it originate? Use verses to back up your answer.