

Abraham

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I. Introduction.

A. A professor wanted his students to be able to identify Abraham so he asked the difference between Abraham and Opium. Opium is the juice of poppies, and Abraham is the Poppy of the Jews.

B. The lives of Abraham and Noah overlapped 58 years.

C. Whether they had contact it is unclear, but Noah's impact likely impacted the world.

II. Beginning matters - the testimony of Josephus.

A. By the testimony of Josephus, Abraham was some kind of astronomer.

B. He was a man of great sagacity and very persuasive - he was the first to publish the notion that there was one God, the creator of the universe.

C. Josephus thinks that He had to leave because he stirred up controversy in Ur concerning the one true God.

D. It is said that he taught the Egyptians math and sciences.

III. The events of Abraham and his spiritual level.

A. He left Haran to go into Canaan.

B. He built an altar in Moriah.

C. He built an altar in Bethel.

D. He went down to Egypt because of a famine.

1. This would seem normal, but Abraham was rich and could organize an army.

2. Here he likely made a contribution to Egypt, whatever the case.

E. He separated from Lot.

F. He built an altar at Hebron.

G. He defeated some armies because they had captured Lot and his family.

H. He believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness at a high point.

I. He conceived Ishmael in unbelief eleven months later.

1. This was a spiritual low point for Abraham.
2. This affects us now - because of the descendents of Isaac and Ishmael we can feel pain at the gas pump today.

J. He interceded for Lot and his prayers were answered.

K. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed.

L. He had another "lapse".

M. Isaac was born. This was another high point.

IV. The names of God throughout Abraham's life.

A. Jehovah.

1. Jesus in the New Testament is the Old Testament Jehovah.
2. The name when written by the Jew in the Old Testament Scripture was written in a different form in order to keep it holy.
3. The name was not spoken aloud by a Jew. There was a deep reverence for the name of God.
4. The closest one can come to translating this name is "the one who is always making himself known" or the one who is in continual living activity.
5. Here He is in relation to time.

B. El Elyon - possessor of Heaven and Earth in relation to the universe.

C. Master over humanity.

D. El Shaddai - all sufficient one as the miracle worker.

E. El Olam - the everlasting God in relation to eternity.

F. Jehovah Jireh - the LORD will provide in relation to his own spiritual requirement.

V. Practical implications.

A. The chart has little accuracy in the view of God. The difference between how we look at our lives and how God looks at our lives is that we see in segments and He sees the whole.

B. After Abraham believed God he bore Isaac. James, however, accredits the faith afterwards. (James 2:23)

C. This is God's file photo. He remembers and talks about the high point.

D. God has a file photo of you of your greatest act of trusting him.

1. We live in the memory of guilt, but we are not thinking like God.

2. We need to think of the high points like God does in Hebrews 11.

E. There is a discrepancy in the count of years between the Exodus as listed and as being counted. What happened apparently is that they did not count the years of evil. (I Kings 6:1)

1. When God deletes something from his records, as far as he is concerned it never existed.

2. While historians say that the period was 594 years, the Holy Spirit says 480 years.

3. If we do not remember it, it does not exist. This is the New Testament doctrine of justification.

F. Make your own spiritual chart of spiritual highs and spiritual lows. Note that you cannot finish it though because your final hour is coming.

VI. Conclusion.

A. God only looks at you in light of your finest act.

B. For Abraham, his finest hour was coming. (James 2:23)

B. The speaker's primary concern is that we attain to a new level of spirituality in Jesus Christ, but regardless we can never drop below the finest photo God has of us.

Application questions.

1. What observations did the speaker make about the inconsistencies in Abraham's spiritual life?

2. How is it that God can simply forget about the low levels in Abraham's life? What does this mean?

3. Make a chart of your own spiritual life up to this point. What will you do with the low points? What are you looking forward to in the future?
