



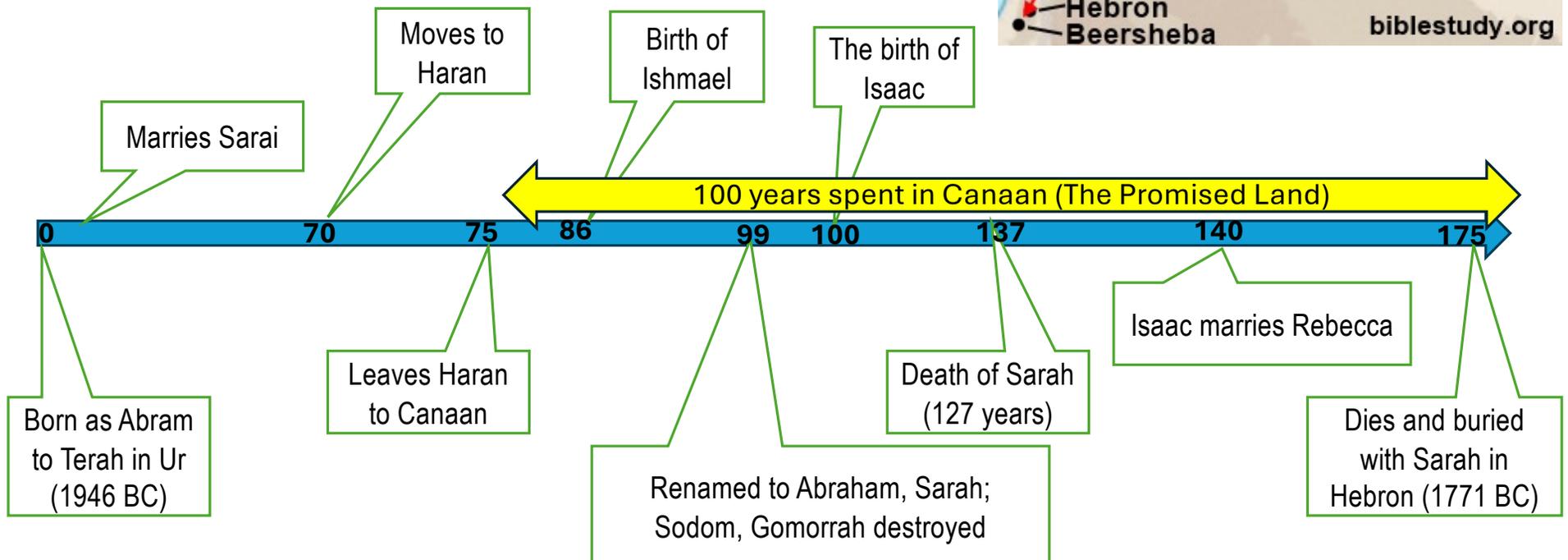
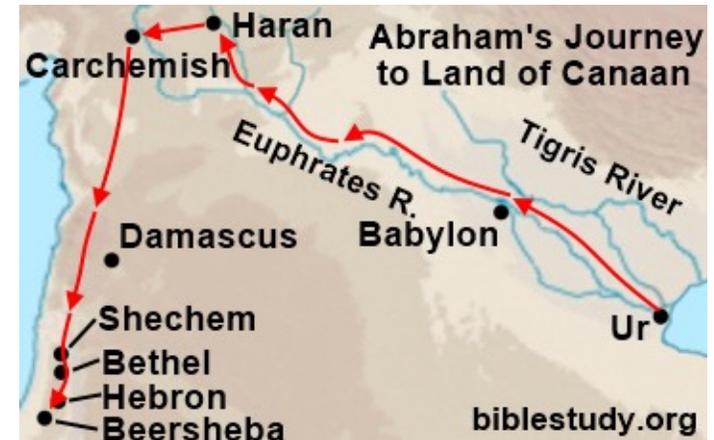
Stories of Great Influencers (4): Abraham

Feb. 22, 2026; Shalom Ministries International

Abraham: The Father of Faith

- Abraham (Abram): The friend of God
 - He was called God's friend (James 2:23).
 - Israel...you descendants of Abraham my friend (Isaiah 41:8).
 - Did you (God) not give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? (2 Chronicles 20:7).
- The father of faith
 - He is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised (Romans 4:12).
 - By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." Abraham **reasoned** that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death (Hebrews 11:17-19).
 - Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:6).

The Life of Abraham



What is Faith?

- Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1).
- Faith is confidence in what we hope for
 - **Confidence**: Hope about the divine promises of God; A tangible sense of future fulfillment.
 - Abraham lived in tents, trusting in God's promise for future generations rather than immediate gratification.
 - Travel to an unknown land, trusting in a future inheritance despite not knowing his destination.
- Faith is **assurance** about what we do not see
 - Assurance (Conviction): Spiritual truths exist and are valid, even though they cannot be seen or felt.
 - Abraham obeyed and went to a new land, without knowing where he was going.
 - Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:6).

The Power of Faith

- Faith leads us into the unknown
 - (God to Abram): Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you... So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran (Genesis 12:1, 4)
 - God promised Abraham that He blessed him in significant ways, but Abraham first had to leave everything he knew.
 - He didn't know where he was going, but he was willing to follow God.
- Faith forces us to change our priority
 - Faith forces a shift from self-centered, temporary concerns to eternal, God-centered priorities.
 - He abandon his homeland, culture, and inheritance at age 75 for an unknown destination. He traded earthly comfort for a promise-driven life, prioritizing God's covenant over his own legacy.
 - (Abram to Lot): Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herders and mine, for we are close relatives (Genesis 13:8).

The Power of Faith (2)

- Faith gives us power to act
 - Abraham's faith was proven through his actions.
 - So Abram went (Genesis 12:4).
 - Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac (Genesis 22:3).
 - God doesn't ask if we are able, He only asks if we are willing. If the answer is yes, there is no limit to what we can accomplish through faith in God.
- Action-oriented obedience
 - By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did (Hebrews 11:4).
 - By faith Enoch was taken from this life...he pleased God (Hebrews 11:5).
 - By faith Noah...built an ark to save his family (Hebrews 11:7).
 - By faith Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice (Hebrews 11:17).
 - By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau (Hebrews 11:20).
 - By faith Jacob blessed each of Joseph's sons (Hebrews 11:21).
 - Faith acts on God's promises, transforming hope into righteous action.

3 Stages of Faith Development

1. Separation from the world value

- Abram an idol worshipper for 75 years: Long ago your ancestors, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River and worshiped other gods (Joshua 24:2).
- God appears to him: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Harran (Acts 7:2).
- The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you” (Genesis 12:1).
- God’s calling and identify shift
 - Lived in Ur for 70 years; Moved to Haran and lived there for 5 years.
 - God asked him to **go** (lek-leka): to determinate dissociate himself from his current environment. God called Abram to a new life, but he had to leave his old life behind.
 - God called Abraham to separate himself from his father's house and his idolatrous environment to fulfill a new, divine purpose.

Stages of Faith Development

2. Partial Obedience

- God's initial call at Ur, telling him to leave his country and kindred (Acts 7:2-4).
- Abraham's father, Terah, initially led the family from Ur toward Canaan but settled in Haran (Genesis 11:31).
- Second/renewed call at Haran: After Terah died, God reiterated the call to Abraham in Haran (Genesis 12:1-5), prompting him to finally move to Canaan.
- Examples of partial obedience
 - King Saul (1 Samuel 15)
 - Moses (Numbers 20)
 - Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5)
- Consequences of partial obedience
 - Abraham brought Lot, which resulted in unnecessary complications and conflict later.
 - The stop in Haran, where he took his father, is considered a halfway obedience before he finally moved to Canaan.
 - To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams (1 Samuel 15:22).

Stages of Faith Development

3. Total Obedience

- (God to Abraham): Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you (Genesis 22:2).
- Did Abraham know what will happen?
 - God promised Abraham that his descendants would be many six times before the binding of Isaac (Genesis 12:2, 13:16, 15:5, 17:4-6, 18:18, 21:12). -> Abraham believes this promise.
 - (Abraham to servants): Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you (Genesis 22:5).
 - Abraham **reasoned** that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death (Hebrews 11:19).
 - He is fully convinced that what God has promised Him, and he believes.
 - Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1).
 - Total obedience: Partial, delayed obedience is disobedience.

When God Doesn't Make Sense

- Remember that God is powerful enough to keep His promises
 - Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for **he who promised is faithful** (Hebrews 10:23).
 - His promises are anchored in His divine nature, making them trustworthy even when circumstances are difficult, as He operates on perfect timing to bring them to pass.
- Reason God's attributes and character
 - Abraham **reasoned** that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death (Hebrews 11:19).
 - **Reason** (faith as logical trust in God's power over death): Abraham, knowing Isaac was the promised heir, believed God would restore him rather than break His word.
- Think about the giver rather than the gift
 - The gift (temporal) vs. **The giver** (eternal).
 - Focusing on God's unchanging character (the Giver) rather than temporary circumstances or blessings (the gift).