GET PRAYERS ANSWERED (series)

**4—PERSISTENT FAITH**

**Mark 11:22–24 (NKJV)** So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. **23** For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. **24** Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

**LET’S FOCUS ON THIS PART…**

**Mark 11:24 (NKJV)** Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and **you will** **have them** **[future tense]**.

**(NASB 2020)** Therefore, I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and **they will be granted to you**.

**LET’S SEE HOW MATTHEW QUOTED THIS…**

**Matthew 21:22 (NKJV)** And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, **you will receive.**”

**THAT DOES NOT MEAN YOU ALREADY HAVE THEM.**

**I ALREADY “BELIEVE,” BUT I DON’T ALREADY “HAVE.”**

**BUT SINCE I DO BELIEVE… I “WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT.”**

**2 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)** For we walk by faith, not by sight.

**LET’S LOOK AT SOME OTHER SCRIPTURES ABOUT THIS**

**Habakkuk 2:2–3 (NASB 2020)** Then the Lord answered me and said, “Write down the vision And inscribe it clearly on tablets, So that one who reads it may run. **3** “For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hurries toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it delays, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay long.

**Hebrews 10:35–36 (NKJV)** Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. **36** For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

**Galatians 6:9 (NKJV)** And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

**LET’S TAKE A LOOK AT ABRAHAM, THE FATHER OF FAITH**

**Galatians 3:9 (NKJV)** So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

**Romans 4:11 (NKJV)** And [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be **the father of all those who believe**, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also,

**Romans 4:16 (NKJV)** 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**.

**SAY THIS OUT LOUD… “IF I COULD ONLY BE LIKE ABRAHAM.”**

**LET’S TAKE A LOOK AT THIS “FATHER OF FAITH.”**

**IN GENESIS 12, GOD MADE A PROMISE TO ABRAHAM:**

**Genesis 12:1–3 (NKJV)** Now the Lord had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you. **2** I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

**AND HE CONTINUED TO EXPLAIN THE PROMISE IN GENESIS 17:**

**Genesis 17:4 (NKJV)** “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations.

**BUT IT WASN’T SMOOTH SAILING TO FULFILLMENT… HIS LIFE HAD MANY CHALLENGES.**

**CHALLENGE #1:** Abraham has a big problem. His wife Sarah is barren.

**Genesis 11:30 (NKJV)** But Sarai was barren; she had no child.

**CHALLENGE #2:** In Genesis 12, a famine drives Abraham into Egypt where he, being fearful for his life, tells Pharaoh that Sarah is his sister. So Pharaoh takes her into his harem, and God had to intervene so that she didn’t become Pharoah’s wife.

**CHALLENGE #3:** In Genesis 14 and 15, Abraham, to save Lot and his family, gets caught up in a Middle East war which exposes him to retaliation, but God promises to protect him and reveals to Abraham that his own son will be his heir.

**CHALLENGE #4:** In Genesis 16, Abraham and Sarah come up with a plan to get the promise to come to pass with human power. So Abraham takes Sarah’s maid as a second wife, and she bears him a son named Ishmael. But it didn’t work. God later made it clear to Abraham that his fleshly and fearful efforts could never bring a promise of God to pass.

**CHALLENGE #5:** In Genesis 17, 24 years after the promise was made, when Abraham was 99 years old, God appeared to him and confirmed that he and Sarah were going to have a son, but he also told Abraham that he wanted him to be circumcised, and to circumcise every male in the whole company… several hundred men

**CHALLENGE #6:** Also in Genesis 17, when God reiterates that Abraham’s descendants will multiply abundantly, Abraham said to God, “Just let Ishmael be the one through whom the promise comes to pass. But in verse 19, God said, “No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac.

**CHALLENGE #7:** In Genesis 18, now less than a year away from Isaac’s birth, the situation looked more impossible than ever. But God appeared to Abraham and told him again that Sarah was going to have a child. And Sarah was just inside the tent listening to the conversation, and when she heard God say that, she laughed to herself and thought, *“Can an old couple like us have intimacy and get pregnant?”* And God heard it and said, **“Why did Sarah laugh? Is anything too hard for the LORD?”** And Sarah, being afraid said, “I didn’t laugh,” but God responded and said, “No, but you did laugh.” And that was the end of that conversation.

**CHALLENGE #8:** In Genesis 20, Abraham traveled to the South and met Abimelech, the king of Gerar. So in fear, Abraham told Abimelech that his 90-year-old wife Sarah was his sister. And Abimelech took Sarah into his Heram. So what would happen if Abimilech decided to sleep with her. Would the supernatural heir be considered Abimelech’s? And once again, God had to intervene.

**AND THIS IS THE FATHER OF FAITH?**

**FRIENDS… YOU’RE NOT DISQUALIFIED!**

**FINALLY… IN CHAPTER 21….**

**Genesis 21:1–7 (NKJV)** And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken. **2** For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. **3** And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him—whom Sarah bore to him—Isaac. **4** Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. **5** Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. **6** And Sarah said, “God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me.” **7** She also said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have borne him a son in his old age.”

**PRAISE GOD… THE PROMISE CAME TO PASS, AND THE PROBLEM IS SOLVED… RIGHT?**

**WRONG! THE PROMISE WAS NOT MERELY TO HAVE A SON, BUT TO BE THE FATHER OF MANY NATIONS… AND THERE WERE STILL MORE CHALLENGES.**

**CHALLENGE #9:** In Genesis 22—when, according to the ancient historian Josephus Isaac was 25 years old—God asked Abraham to take Isaac to a certain mountain, to kill him, and sacrifice him like a lamb as a burnt offering to God. And now we really see Abraham’s faith because he attempted to do it. God had to intervene again, but this time because he was walking in faith. So God finally let him know that it was only a test.

**LISTEN TO…**

**Hebrews 11:17–19 (NKJV)** By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, **18** of whom it was said, “In Isaac your seed shall be called,” **19** concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

**BUT IT DIDN’T END THERE EITHER…**

**CHALLENGE #10:** Isaac was about 40 years old, and still not married. So Abraham sent his servant to Sarah’s family to find a wife for Isaac, and God guided the servant to a beautiful young lady named Rebekah, and Isaac married her.

**PROBLEM SOLVED, RIGHT?**

**WRONG!**

**CHALLENGE #11:** Genesis 25:21 it says…

**Genesis 25:21 (NKJV)** Now Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife, because she was barren.

**AND OF COURSE, GOD ANSWERED HIS PRAYER AND SHE BORE TWINS**

**CHALLENGE #12:** God chose to pass the blessing of Abraham down to Isaac’s younger son Jacob, and not only does Esau decide to kill Jacob, but Jacob flees and falls in love with a beautiful young lady named Rachel… who… you guessed it… is barren.

**WHAT’S THE POINT?**

**THE PATH TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROMISE IS NOT ALWAYS PRETTY!**

**OKAY, NOW WATCH THIS…**

**Romans 4:19–21 (NKJV)** And not being weak in faith, [Abraham] did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. **20** He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, **but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God**, **21** and **being fully convinced** that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

**NOTICE… ABRAHAM WAS STRENGTHENED IN FAITH “GIVING GLORY TO GOD.”**

**LISTEN TO THIS SCRIPTURE…**

**Philippians 4:6 (NKJV)** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

**Luke 18:1–8 (NKJV)** Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, **2** saying: “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. **3** Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’ **4** And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man, **5** yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.’ ” **6** Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said. **7** And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? **8** I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”

**EX –** When we first started The Rock, my brother David––who was our worship pastor––said, “Jerry, the sound system is SO BAD in here… we really need a new sound system.” He was right, but we didn’t have the money… but I said to him, “Don’t worry David, we’ll have everything we need”… and we did!

**EX –** I remember Scott Stark, Mike Stark’s brother, having some wrought iron frames welded to hold up so large, Walmart tube TVs for the West Auditorium… and now we have state of the Art LED screens. All by divine supply. At first we only had “State of the Start” ☺