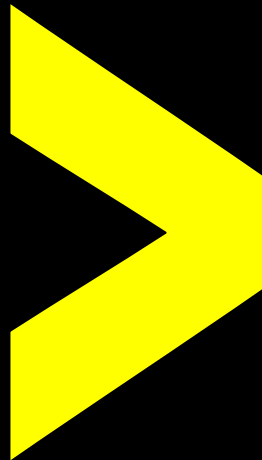


Hebrews 5-7 Part 3:
Greater than Abraham

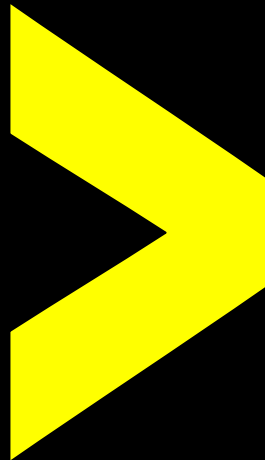
JESUS GREATER THAN

- ❑ In Hebrews 1 we saw that Jesus is not just a prophet - but greater than the prophets.



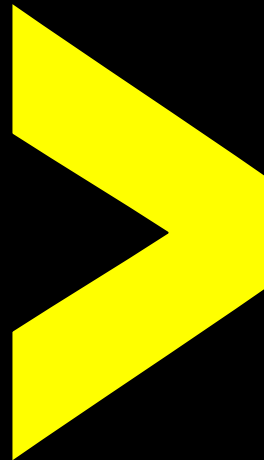
JESUS GREATER THAN

- We then saw that Jesus, the Son of God, is not an angel - but greater than the angels.



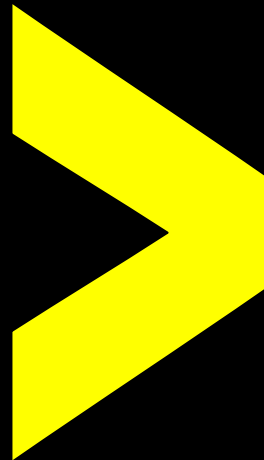
JESUS GREATER THAN

- In Hebrews 3 we saw that Jesus is greater than Moses, the mediator of the Old Covenant (Testament).



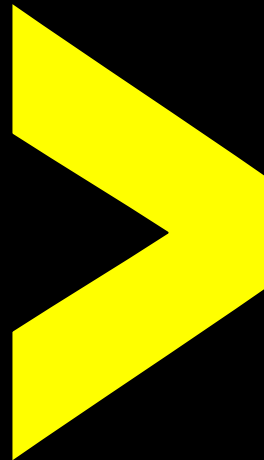
JESUS GREATER THAN

- In Hebrews 4 we saw that Jesus is greater than Joshua, because through him we enter the true rest (from works).



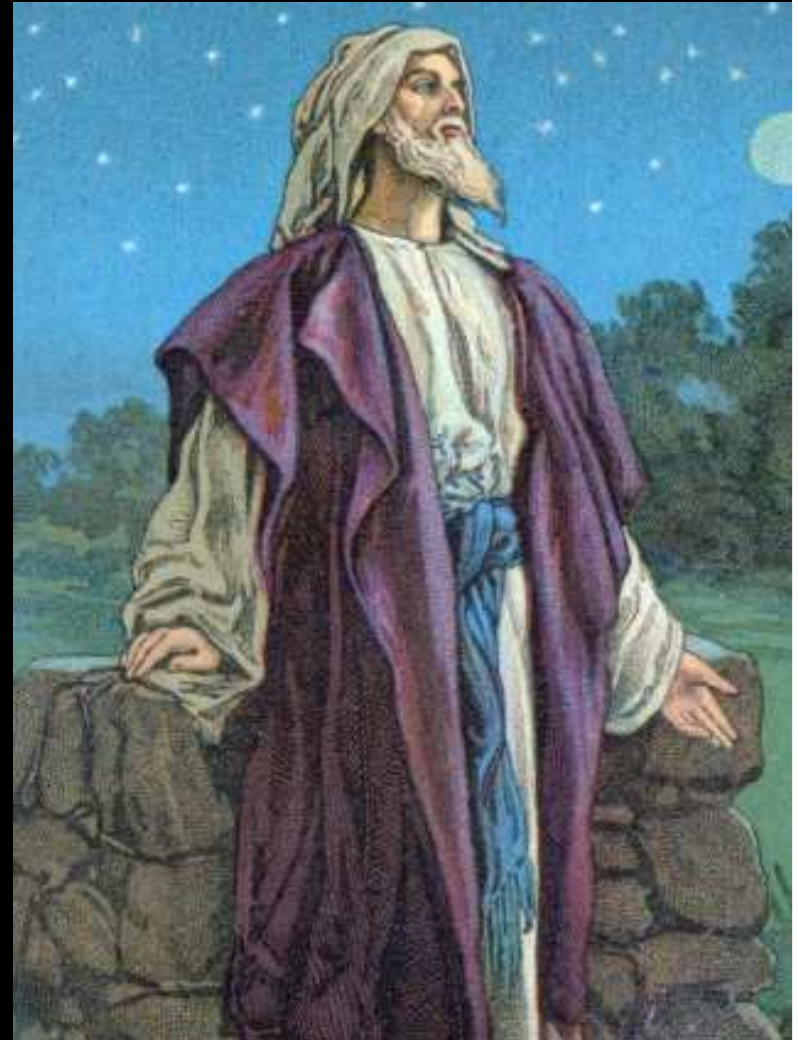
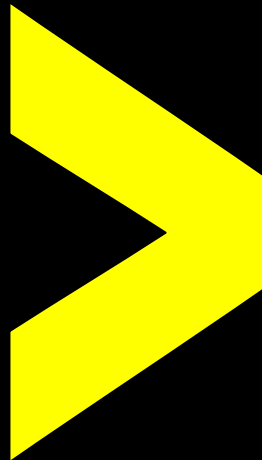
JESUS GREATER THAN

- In Hebrews 5-7 we see that Jesus is greater than Aaron, because he has a better priesthood.



JESUS GREATER THAN

- In Hebrews 5-7 we also see that Jesus is greater than Abraham.



Importance of Abraham



IMPORTANCE OF ABRAHAM

- ❑ Abraham, whose birth name was Abram, is honoured by adherents of the 3 great monotheistic "Abrahamic" religions namely Christianity, Judaism and Islam.
- ❑ After Moses who is mentioned 80 times (NASB), Abraham is the most frequently mentioned Old Testament character in the New Testament. He is mentioned 73 times in contrast to David (59) and Elijah (30).

NO.	PERSON	TIMES MENTIONED IN NT
1	MOSES	80
2	ABRAHAM	73
3	DAVID	59
4	ELIJAH	30

- ❑ The Lord told Abram to leave his country and people for a land that God would show him. (Gen 12)



IMPORTANCE OF ABRAHAM

- ❑ Abraham is listed with the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11 . Here he is commended for his faith in obeying God's call to leave his homeland.
 - Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.⁹ By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.
- ❑ In this way he typifies the Christians who are "aliens and strangers on earth" (Heb 11:13) and who by faith are "longing for a better country - a heavenly one." (Heb 11:16)

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

- ❑ God promised to make of him a great nation, to bless those who blessed him and curse those who cursed him, along with the promise that all peoples on earth will be blessed through his seed:
 - Gen 12:2-3 "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 earth will be blessed through you."
 - Gen 22:18 "and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."
- ❑ And so the promised Messiah would be the seed (descendant) of Abraham and would bring blessing to all people on earth.

- ❑ When Abram and Lot's herdsmen quarrelled over land for pasture, to avoid further conflict Abram graciously suggested that Lot have first option in choosing a separate area. Lot chose the well-watered plain of Jordan to the east, while Abram went south to Hebron (Gen 13).

PEACEMAKER



A painting of an elderly man with a long white beard and hair, wearing a purple robe over a white tunic. He is looking upwards towards a night sky filled with stars and a large, bright full moon. The background shows dark silhouettes of trees and a body of water.

FAITH

- ❑ Later on God promised him that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars and that his offspring would claim the land from the Nile River to the Euphrates (Genesis 15).

FAITH

- ❑ Again Abraham is commended for his faith in God's promises, because both he and his wife were well advanced in years and Sarah had always been barren.
- Heb 11:11 By faith Abraham, even though he was past age - and Sarah herself was barren - was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise.¹² And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

FAITH

- Rom 4:18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be."
¹⁹ Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead - since he was about a hundred years old - and that Sarah's womb was also dead. ²⁰ Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, ²¹ being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. ²² This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." ²³ The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, ²⁴ but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness - for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

TRUE SONS OF ABRAHAM

- ❑ In the NT the Jews, particularly the Pharisees, took pride in the fact that Abraham was their father (Matt 3:9, John 8:39, Rom 11:1, 2 Cor 11:22).
 - John 8:39a "Abraham is our father," they answered.
- ❑ But although they were physical descendants of Abraham, Jesus said that they were not his true spiritual children:
 - John 8:37 I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word... ³⁹ ... "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did.
⁴⁰ As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things."

TRUE SONS OF ABRAHAM

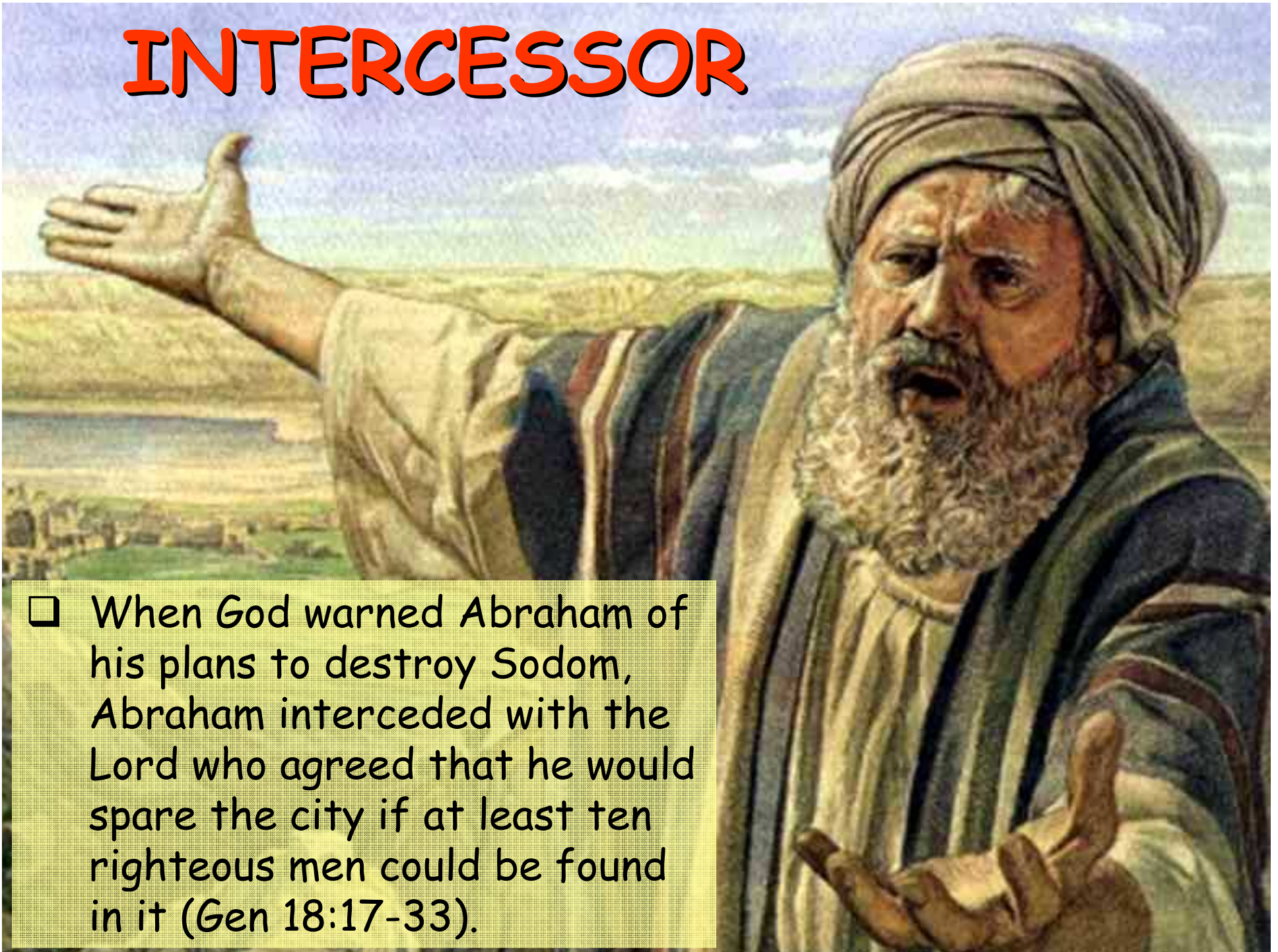
- ❑ Paul shows that although Abraham had many physical descendants, this promise was completely fulfilled in the spiritual descendants of Abraham - who had the "faith of Abraham":
 - Rom 4:16 Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring - not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.¹⁷ As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations."

TRUE SONS OF ABRAHAM

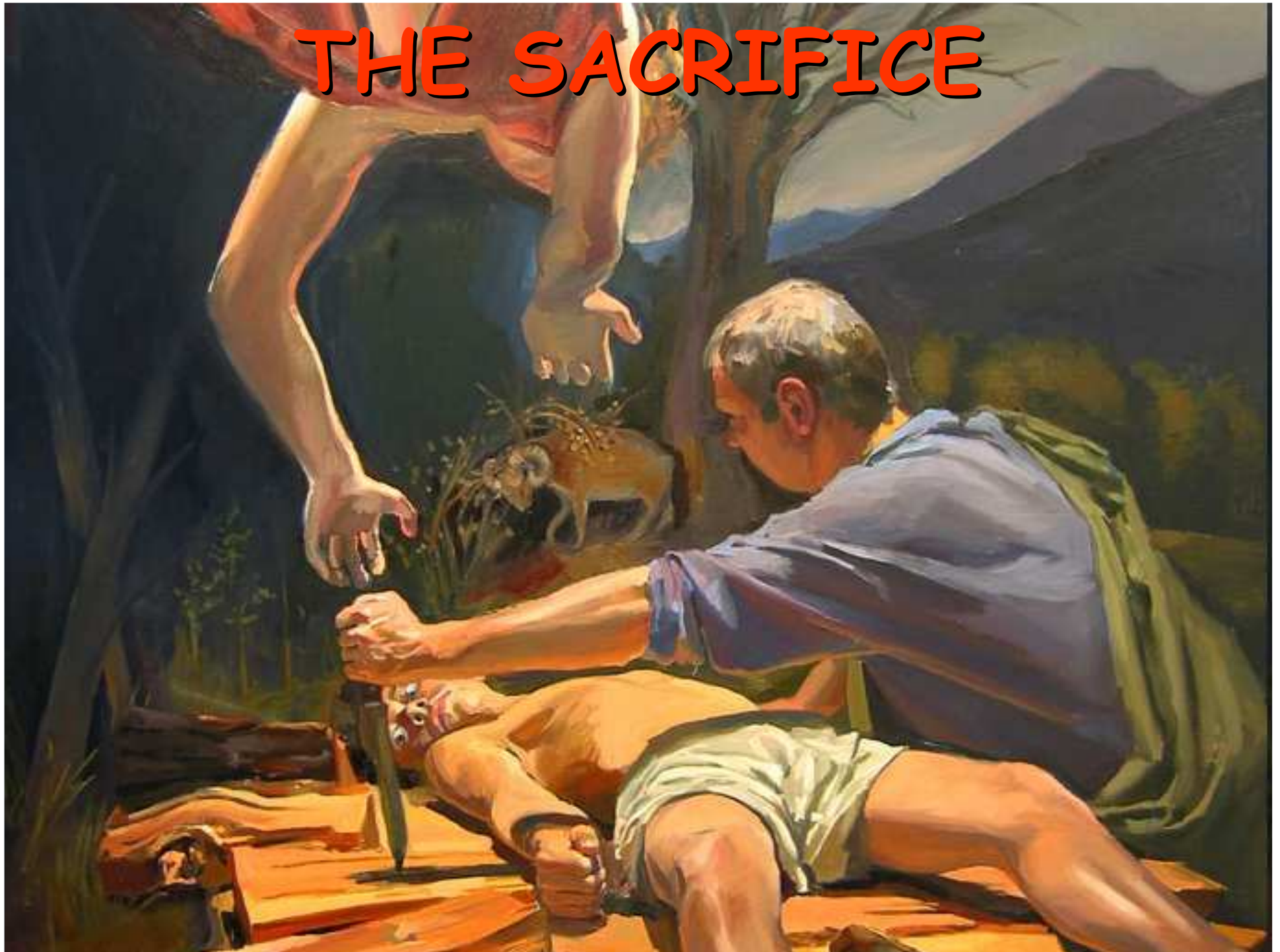
- Rom 4:9 Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness.¹⁰ Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before!¹¹ And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them.¹² And he is also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

INTERCESSOR

- When God warned Abraham of his plans to destroy Sodom, Abraham interceded with the Lord who agreed that he would spare the city if at least ten righteous men could be found in it (Gen 18:17-33).



THE SACRIFICE



THE SACRIFICE

- ❑ When God commanded Abraham to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice, in faith Abraham obeyed even though Isaac was the son of the promise. An angel intervened and a ram was provided as a substitute sacrifice (Gen 22).
- James 2:20 You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹ Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³ And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. ²⁴ You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.

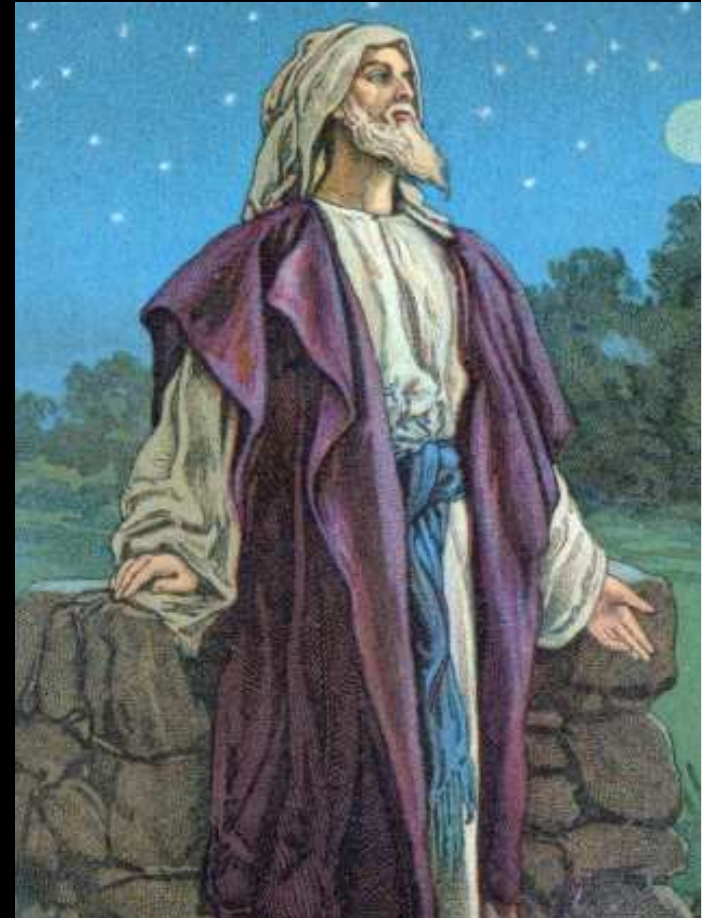
THE SACRIFICE

- ❑ The author of Hebrews explains the greatness of Abraham's faith in this case. Abraham believed that Isaac was the son of promise through whom his seed or offspring would come. He was convinced that if Isaac were killed, God would have to raise him from the dead in order to fulfil his promises.
- Heb 11:17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son,¹⁸ even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."¹⁹ Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.

IMPORTANCE OF ABRAHAM

- ❑ Paul uses him as an example of justification by faith in Romans 4:
 - Rom 4:1 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? 2 If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. 3 What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

Greater than Abraham



AN OATH

- ❑ When God made a covenant with Abraham He confirmed it with an oath:
 - Heb 6:13 When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself,¹⁴ saying, "I will surely bless you and give you many descendants."¹⁵ And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.¹⁶ Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument.

AN OATH

- ❑ Likewise the eternal priesthood of Jesus was confirmed by an oath (Ps 110:4 The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.")
- Heb 6:17 Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath.¹⁸ God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged.¹⁹ We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain,²⁰ where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

TITHE

- ❑ Earlier on when Lot had been captured by Kedorlaomer and his allies, Abraham and his men rescued him along with the people of Sodom and Gomorrah and the plunder that had been taken.
- ❑ We saw last time how Abraham then gave the priest king of Salem, Melchizedek a tithe (or tenth) of the plunder. This indicates that the principle of tithing predates the Law.



GREATER THAN ABRAHAM

- The author's point though is that by receiving the tithe from Abraham, it demonstrates that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham and indirectly both Levi and Aaron.
- Heb 7:4 Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder!
⁵ Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people - that is, their brothers - even though their brothers are descended from Abraham. ⁶ This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham... ⁹ One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, ¹⁰ because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

BLESSING

- ❑ The author of Hebrews also uses the blessing Melchizedek bestows on Abraham to demonstrate that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham (the greater always blesses the lesser):
 - Heb 7:6 This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.⁷ And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater.



GREATER THAN ABRAHAM

- ❑ The implication was that by being a priest in the order of Melchizedek, Jesus too was greater than Abraham.
- ❑ Jesus already made this claim to the Jews of his day:
 - John 8:53 Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?"
... ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."
⁵⁷ "You are not yet fifty years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!"
⁵⁸ "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"
- ❑ In fact, in the Gospels, Jesus is consistently shown to be greater than the prophets and 'heroes' of the OT.

➤ John 4:12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well...?"

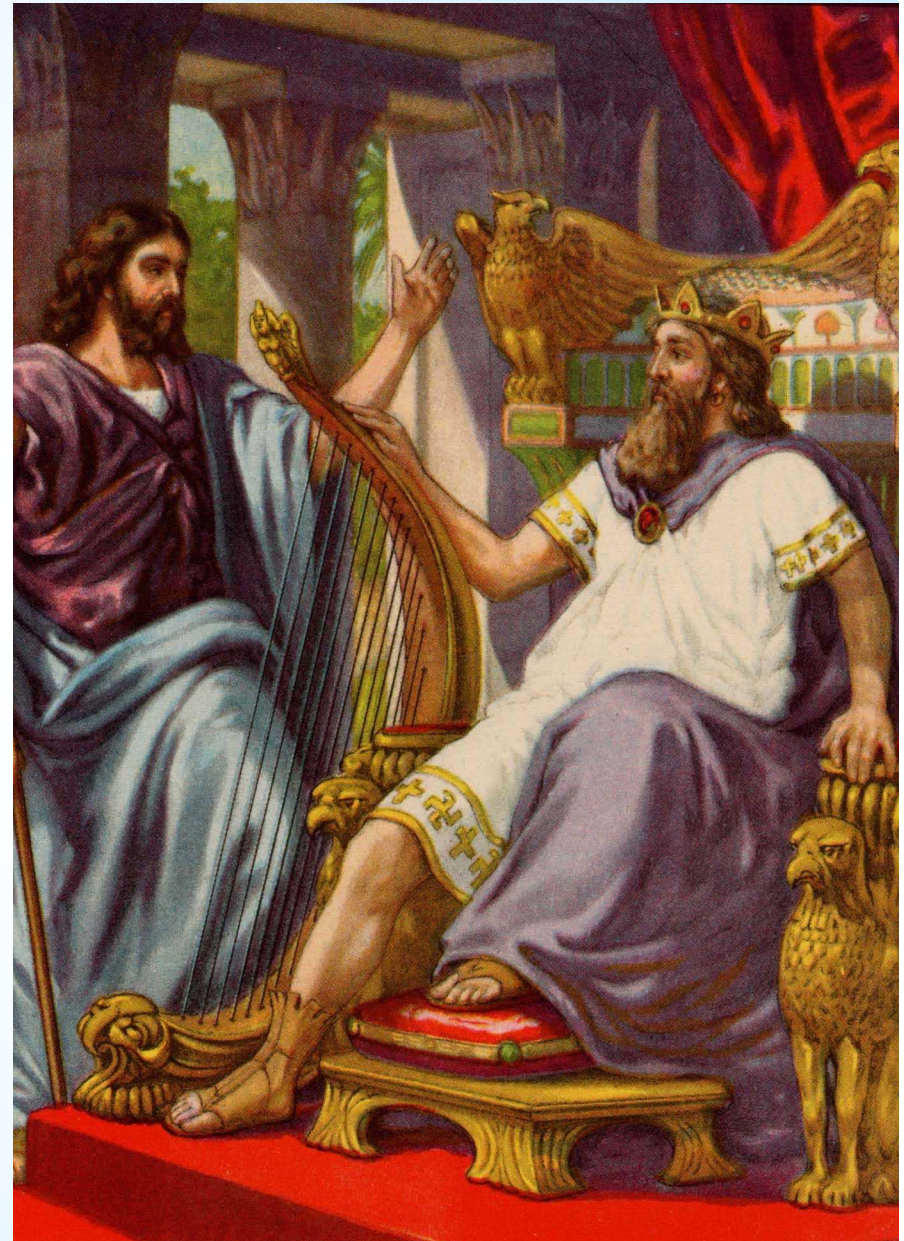
¹³ Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst..."



GREATER THAN JACOB

GREATER THAN DAVID

- ❑ Although as the Messiah (Christ) Jesus was the "Son of David", yet David calls him 'Lord' (Adonai).
- Matt 22:43 He said to them, "How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'? For he says, ⁴⁴ 'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet."⁴⁵ If then David calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?"



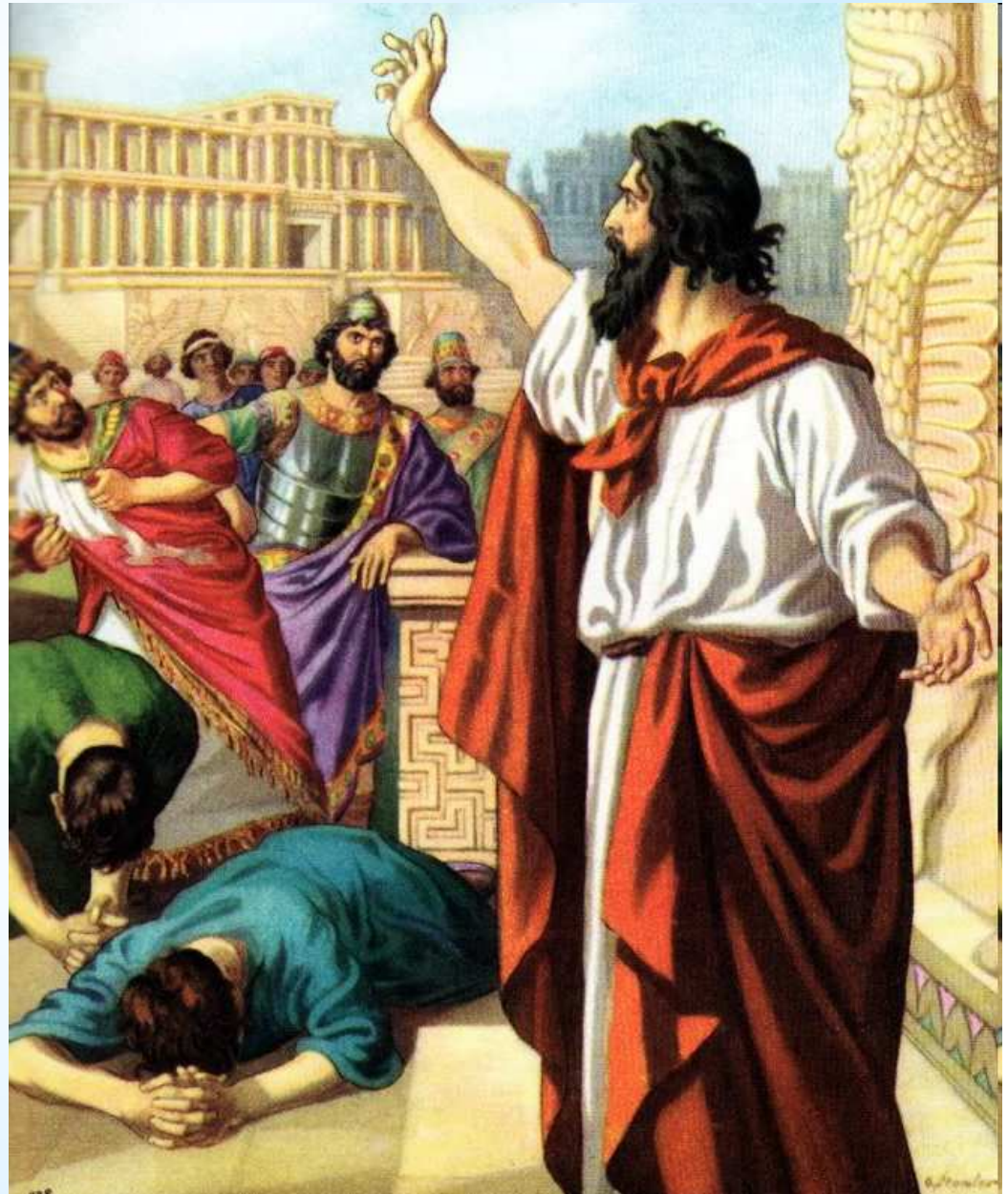
GREATER THAN SOLOMON

- ❑ He also claimed to be greater than the wise king Solomon, the first “son of David” to be king.
- Matt 12:42 The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here.



GREATER THAN JONAH

- ❑ Jesus also claimed to be greater than Jonah (the prophet):
 - Matt 12:41 The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.

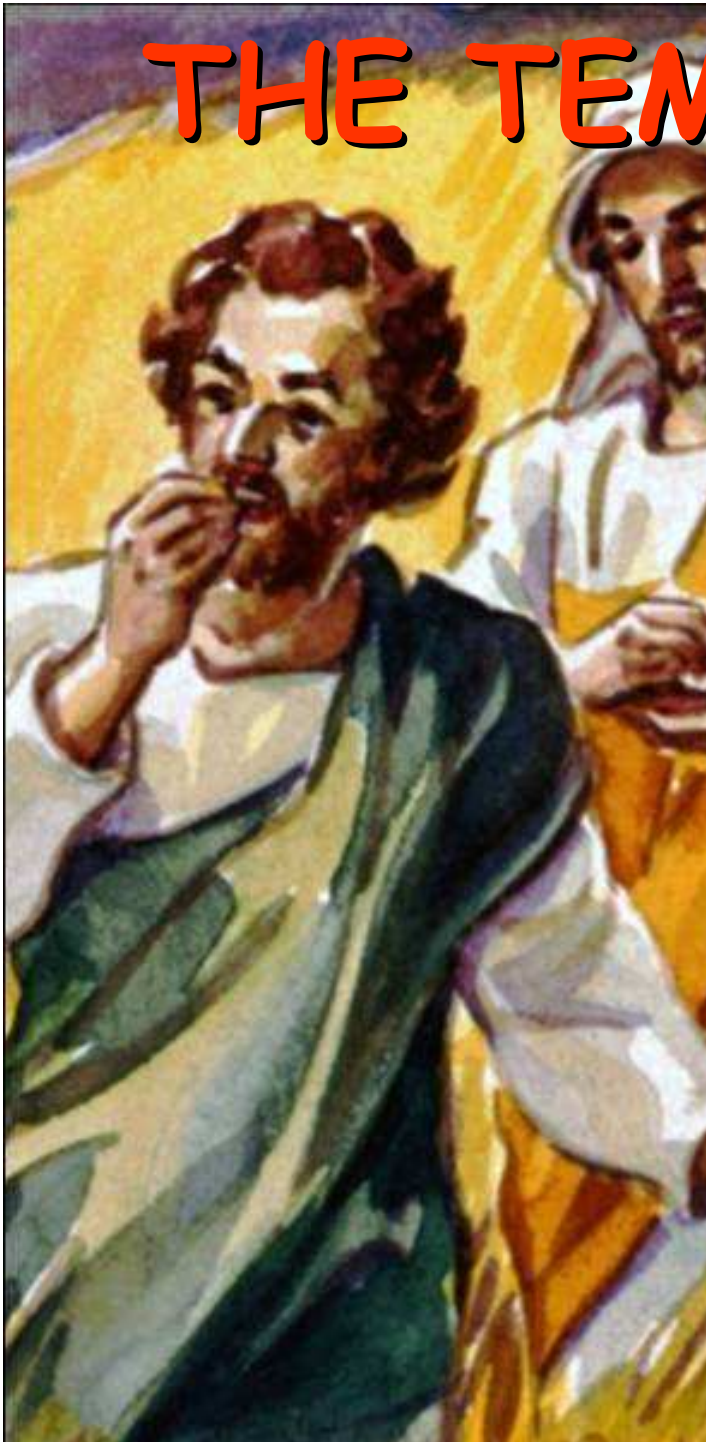


JOHN THE BAPTIST

- ❑ When John the Baptist's disciples complained that all the people were now going to Jesus instead of to John, John told them:
 - "He must become greater; I must become less. The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all." (John 3:30-31)



THE TEMPLE & SABBATH



- When Jesus was challenged by the Pharisees because his disciples were picking grain to eat on the Sabbath, he claimed to be greater than the temple and the Sabbath: "Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? I tell you that one greater than the temple is here... For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." (Matt 12:5-8)

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

- ❑ God had promised Abraham that in his "seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (NASB).
- ❑ And in the Messianic Psalm 72, David shows that this would be fulfilled by the Messiah, the son of David:
 - Ps 72:17b All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed.
- ❑ The promises made to Abraham's seed were fulfilled in Jesus:
 - Gal 3:16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ.

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

- ❑ Peter too speaks of these promises being fulfilled in Jesus:
 - Acts 3:25 "It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.' For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways." (NASB)

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

- ❑ So this promise was fulfilled by the gospel:
 - Gal 3:6 Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." ⁷ Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. ⁸ The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." ⁹ So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.
- ❑ Which is why Jesus could say:
 - John 8:56 "Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

- ❑ In Matthew's gospel where he traces the genealogy of our Messiah, he speaks of "Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt 1:1). In other words he was the promised 'seed' of Abraham.
- ❑ And the priest Zechariah, father to John the Baptist, saw in Jesus the future fulfilment of the covenant with Abraham:
 - Luke 1:72 to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant,⁷³ the oath he swore to our father Abraham:⁷⁴ to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

INTERCESSOR

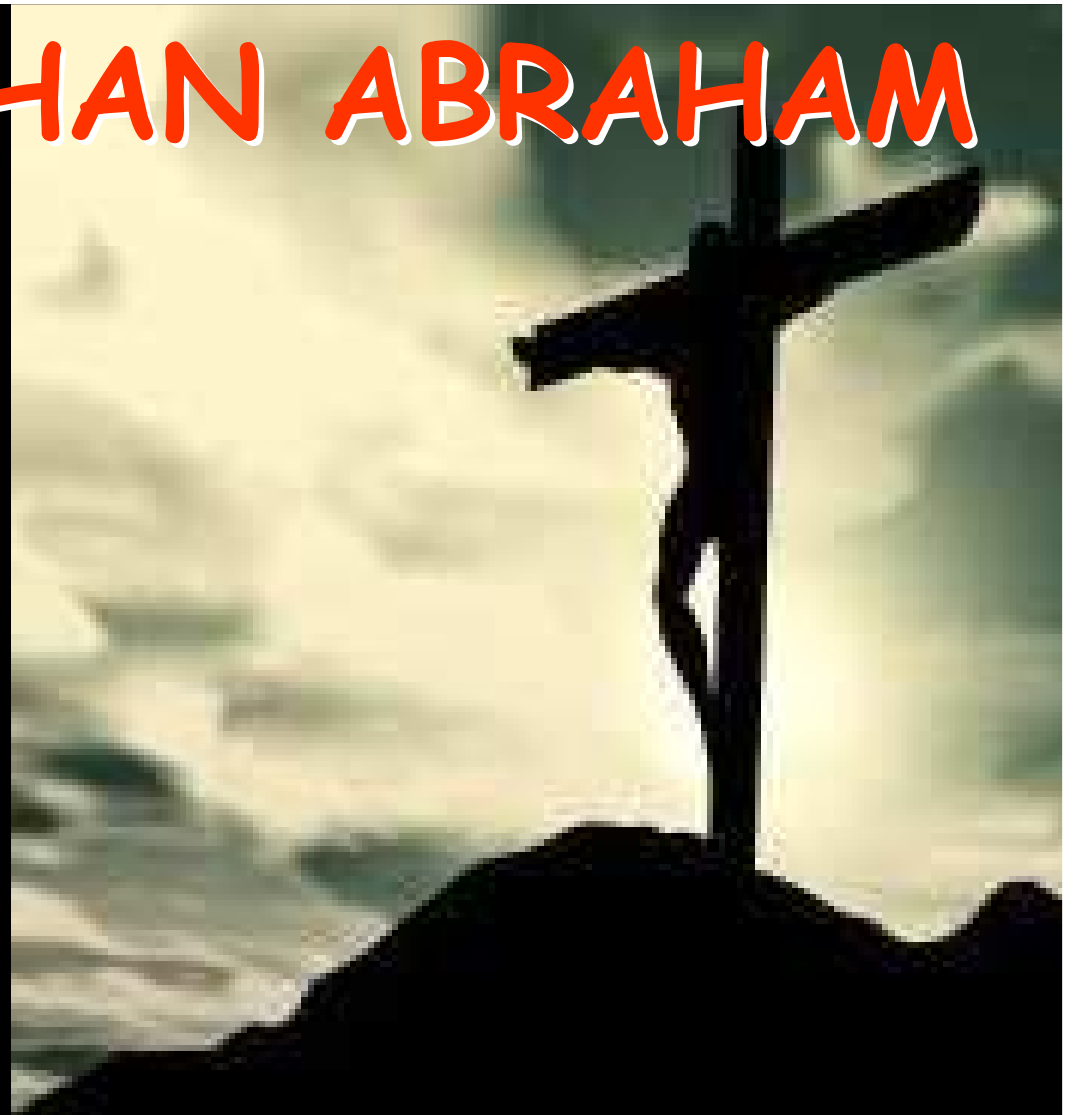
- ❑ Just as Abraham interceded for a city, so Jesus forever intercedes for all his elect.
- Heb 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.
- Rom 8:33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died - more than that, who was raised to life - is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.
- 1 John 2:2b But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

PEACEMAKER

- ❑ Just as in the case of Lot and the herdsmen, Abraham was a peacemaker - Jesus is a greater peacemaker, having made peace between God and man.
- Rom 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ
- Col 1:20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.
²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation

GREATER THAN ABRAHAM

- We saw how Abraham was prepared to offer his son as a sacrifice. This imagery of a father sacrificing his son is a type of God the Father offering his Son Jesus at Calvary.
- Unlike the case of Isaac though, there was no substitute sacrifice for Jesus - he himself was the substitute for us.
 - He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. 1 John 2:2



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