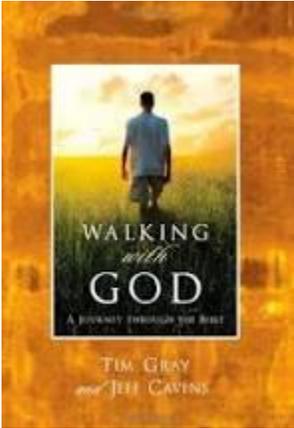


# Walking with God Session Two

## Chapter Two: Patriarchs



### Reflect:

- St. Paul calls Abraham “our father in faith.” This is extraordinary in that St. Paul was addressing Gentiles, not Jews. How is Abraham our father in faith?
- Do you see God’s love story unfolding in the lives of the Patriarchs?

### Act One: Abram/Abraham: A New Start

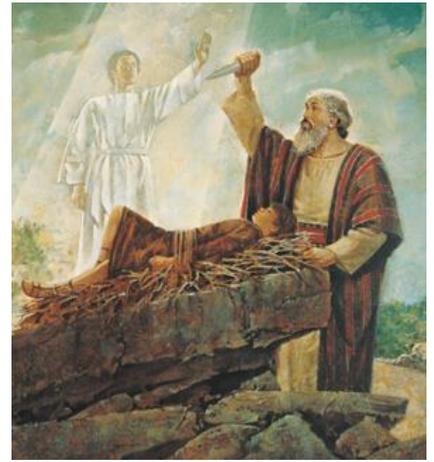
- How do the promises God makes to Abram build upon one another?
- Each of God’s promises to Abraham were raised to the level of a covenant. What is the difference between a promise and a covenant?
- None of God’s covenants were fulfilled in Abraham’s lifetime. Can you emulate Abraham’s faith in God and continue to believe, even when His answer seems to be not “yes,” but “no” or “not yet”?
- How did the Hebrew scripture subtly indicate sin in a patriarch?
- Do you see in your faith journey towards God similar times of trusting and doubting, times of great faith and times of testing?



Recollection: What are some recurring themes in this chapter of God’s love story? Do you recognize any of these themes in your life or in your relationship with God?

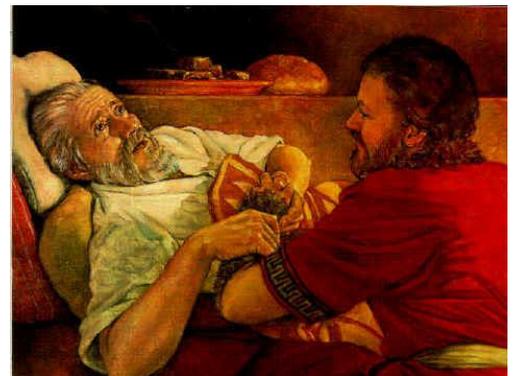
## Act Two: Isaac and the Seed of Abraham

- What are the results of Hagar bearing Ishmael to Abram?
- Why does God make circumcision a part of the renewed covenant with Abraham?
- How can we call Abraham “our father in faith” when he was surprised by the birth of Isaac?
- Hebrew narratives expect the reader to consider the whole story and not to read any one chapter in isolation. Is this the Catholic way of interpreting Scripture, “according to the whole”?
- Reading the sacrifice of Isaac according to the whole, what is God telling Abraham?
- Consider the chart on page 47 which indicates how Jesus fulfills what Abraham foreshadowed and the explanation of the *shofar*, the ram’s horn, which the Jewish people still use in their synagogues and on their high holy days. What speaks to your heart?



## Act Three: Jacob the Deceiver

- God blesses those who obey Him. First-born sons are blessed to carry on God’s promise. Which sons are blessed in these first patriarchal families? Which son flees into exile upon receiving the blessing?
- Does the deceit of Jacob profit him?
- Does God approve of Jacob’s deceit? How do we know?
- How do we see Jacob’s repentance and what comes of it?



## Act Four: Joseph, the Favored Son

- Jacob’s sins are borne out in the relationship of his sons. What do the brothers do to Joseph?
- “You meant this for evil, but the Lord meant it for good.” What happens to Joseph? Can we be this faithful and forgiving?
- What parallels are there between Joseph and Jesus?
- Jacob sees his sons returning home a second time with silver but minus a brother. “Doubling” means intentionality in the Hebrew scriptures. Where else in the Jacob/Joseph narrative is there a “doubling”?

