

Power of Encouragement

- To ABRAM
- To APOSTLES
- To US

Some are discouraged, because Life is complex.

- Job said, “Man, that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.” ([Job 14:1](#))

Thankfully, there is the “**POWER OF ENCOURAGEMENT**”, which is the title of the lesson this morning.

From the context of Gen.15:1-6, We can see how,

I. God Encouraged Abram

Notice,

A. The Call To Conquer Fear

- [Gen.15:1](#) reads, “After these things the Word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear **NOT**, Abram: I am thy **SHIELD**, and thy **EXCEEDING GREAT REWARD**.”

B. Abram’s Response was,

- “Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is THIS Eliezer of Damascus? ³ And Abram said, Behold, to me Thou hast given NO seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.” ([Gen.15:2-3](#))

Notice,

C. The Divine Assurance

[Gen.15:4-5](#) reads,

- “behold, the Word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall **NOT** be thine **HEIR**; but he, that shall come forth out of thine own bowels, shall be thine heir. ⁵ And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy **SEED** be.” (that’s, [Gen.15:4-5](#))

[Gal.3:16](#) says,

- “Now to Abraham and his **SEED** were the **PROMISES** made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of **ONE**, And to thy **SEED**, which **IS Christ**.”

...and in [Gal.3:26-29](#), we find these words:

- “For ye are all the children of God **BY** faith **IN** Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you, as have been baptized **INTO** Christ, have put **ON** Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all **One IN** Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And **IF** ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s **SEED**, and **HEIRS** according to the **PROMISE**.” (that’s [Gal.3:26-29](#))

Now, Consider some thoughts concerning,

D. Abram's Acceptance

- [Gen.15:6](#) reads, "And he (that is, Abram) **BELIEVED** in the Lord; and He (that is, God) counted it to him (that is, Abram) for **RIGHTEOUSNESS.**"

Abram's Faith Took God at His Word

- "he **staggered NOT** at the **PROMISE** of God through unbelief; but was **STRONG** in faith, giving **GLORY** to God; ² ¹ and being **FULLY** persuaded (that is, absolutely confident) that, **WHAT** He had **PROMISED**, He was **ABLE** also to **PERFORM.**" ([Rom.4:20-21](#))
- "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ² and I will **MAKE** of thee a great nation, and I will **BLESS** thee, and **MAKE** thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³ and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and **in thee, shall all families of the earth be BLESSED.**" ([Gen.12:1-3](#))

The Bible says,

- "By **FAITH** Abraham, when he was called to **GO** out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, **OBEYED**; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. ⁹ By **FAITH** he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him, of the same promise: ¹⁰ for he looked for a city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." ([Heb.11:8-10](#))
- "the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he, an altar unto the Lord, Who appeared unto him. ⁸ And he removed from thence, unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and **Called upon the Name of the Lord.**" ([Gen.12:7-8](#))
- "And he went on his journeys from the south even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai; ⁴ unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there **Abram Called on the Name of the Lord.**" ([Gen.13:3-4](#))
- ""After these things, the Word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear **NOT**, Abram: I am thy **SHIELD**, and thy **EXCEEDING GREAT REWARD.**" ([Gen.15:1](#))

Abraham trusted God, and well as he should, as the Bible says,

- "Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; His understanding is beyond measure." ([Psa.147:5](#) - ESV)

II. The Lord's Words of Encouragement, To The Apostles

A. He Promised That Sorrow, Would Be Turned to Joy.

- [Jn.16:20](#) reads, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but **your SORROW shall be TURNED into JOY.**"

And in [Jn.16:22](#), we find these continued thoughts of Encouragement.

- "And ye now therefore, have sorrow: but I will **SEE** you again, and your **Heart** shall **REJOICE**, and your **Joy**, **NO** man **TAKETH** from you."

B. Jesus, Foretold Future Blessings for them.

In [Jn.16:23-25](#), He said,

- "in that day ye shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall **ASK the Father, IN My Name**, He will give it you.

²⁴ Hitherto have ye asked **NOTHING** in My name:

ASK, and ye shall **RECEIVE**, that your **JOY** may be **FULL**.

²⁵ These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall **SHEW** you plainly of the Father."

C. Our Lord, Foretold Their Weakness, When "the moment of truth" Came.

- In [Jn.16:31-32](#), we are told that "Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? ³² Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and ye I am not alone, because the Father is with Me."
- "Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of Me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." ([Matt.26:31](#))

D. A Summary of His Encouragement.

- Is recorded in [Jn.16:33](#), "These things I have spoken unto you, that **IN Me** (that's IN Christ) ye might have **PEACE**. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but **BE** of **GOOD CHEER**; I have **OVERCOME** the world."

Now let us Consider,

III. Powerful Encouragement, That God Gives Us Today

A. Afraid? He says, "Fear Not".

- John wrote in [Rev.1:17-18](#) that, "when I saw Him, I fell at His feet **AS** dead. And He **LAI**D His right **hand UPON** me, saying unto me, **Fear NOT; I AM** the **first** and the **last**: ¹⁸ **I AM** He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, **I AM ALIVE** for evermore, **AMEN**; and have the **KEYS** of hell and of death."

God Gives US Powerful Encouragement, through

B. Assurance, From A Shield of Protection.

- "For ye are dead, and your **LIFE** is hid **WITH** Christ **IN** God." ([Col.3:3](#))

He provides a Shield against Satan's snares.

- "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: ⁹ whom **RESIST** stedfast **IN** the **FAITH**, knowing that the same afflictions are **ACCOMPLISHED** in your brethren that are in the world." ([1Pet.5:8-9](#))

God Provides A Shield, **Against opposition of the world.**

- "If God be for us, who can be against us?" ([Rom.8:31](#))

God Provides A Shield, **Against the fear of death.**

- "through death, He (that is, Christ) might destroy him, that had the power of death, that is, the devil; ¹⁵ and **DELIVER** them (that is, christians) who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." ([Heb.2:14b-15](#))

Through God, We **CAN** Overcome.

- "For whatsoever is born of God **OVERCOMETH** the world: and this is the **VICTORY** that overcometh the world, even our **FAITH**." ([1Jn.5:4](#))
- "To him that **OVERCOMETH** will I grant to **SIT** with Me in My Throne, even as I also **OVERCAME**, and am **SET** down With My Father in His Throne." ([Rev.3:21](#))

We can have Assurance from a Shield of Protection, because God is ALL Powerful.

- "He **UPHOLDS** the universe (or all things) **BY** the **Word of His POWER**" ([Heb.1:3](#) - ESV)
- "He is before **ALL** things, and **IN** Him **ALL** things, **HOLD TOGETHER**." ([Col.1:17](#))
- ...because He has "**ALL POWER**" ([Matt.28:18](#))
- No wonder, "God causes **ALL** things to **WORK TOGETHER** for good, to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." ([Rom.8:28](#) - NASB) ...that is **CALLED** according to His purpose THROUGH the GOSPEL ([2Thess.2:14](#))

Oh, how we should give praise and Thanks, for God, as...

- He "is **ABLE** to **DO** exceeding abundantly **ABOVE** all that we ask or think, according to (His) **POWER**" ([Eph.3:20](#))

God Gives US Powerful Encouragement!

C. He Gives HIMSELF as our Reward.

- “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, ¹⁸ and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” ([2Cor.6:17-18](#))

Assurance of God's love, strengthens and encourages us.

- “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” ([Jn.3:16](#))
- “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” ([Rom.5:8](#))
- “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for **OUR** sins.” ([1Jn.4:10](#))
(NOTE: propitiation means “reconciliation with God by atoning for sins; or sin-offering”)

He is our Reward for: **Sacrifices cheerfully made.**

- “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His Name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.” ([Heb.6:10](#))

He is our Reward for: **A faithful trusting life.**

- “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded, that He is **ABLE** to keep that ,which I have committed unto Him against that day.” ([2Tim.1:12](#))

He is our Reward: **So we can now have peace.**

- “Be careful for nothing (that is, don’t worry); but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” ([Phil.4:6-7](#))

God Gives US Powerful Encouragement!

D. Here are Some Things We Can Do:

Center our focus on God: Meditate on His great power to save.

- Paul said, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” ([Rom.1:16](#))
- “the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” ([Rev.22:17](#))

Some Things that We Can Do: **Keep our eyes on the goal.**

- “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” ([Col.3:2](#))
- “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, **forgetting** those things which are behind, and **reaching forth** unto those things which are before, ¹⁴ I **press toward** the mark, for the prize, of the high calling of God **IN** Christ Jesus.” ([Phil.3:13-14](#))

Some Things that We Can Do: **Be positive: Have gratitude toward the Only True God of Heaven.**

- “It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy Name, O Most High.” ([Psa.92:1](#))
- “For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work: I will triumph in the works of Thy Hands.” ([Psa.92:4](#))
- “Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.” ([Phil.4:4](#))
- “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;” ([2Cor.4:17](#))
- “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.” ([Rom.8:37](#))
- “For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” ([2Cor.1:20](#))

Some Things that We Can Do: **Being Patient is a Powerful Key.**

- “For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before Thine eyes: nevertheless Thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto Thee.” ([Psa.31:22](#))
- “Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that Hope **IN** the Lord.” ([Psa.31:24](#))

Some Things that We Can Do: **Do something for others.**

- “let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:” ([Heb.10:24](#))

Some Things that We Can Do: **Continue God's cycle of aid.**

- “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” ([Matt.7:12](#))

Some Things that We Can Do:

Realize that We Don't have to be eloquent, to renew zeal and confidence in others.

- “Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.” ([Prov.12:25](#))
- “Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” ([Rom.12:15](#))
- “We then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.” ([Rom.15:1](#))
- “exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” ([Heb.3:13](#))

God Gives US Powerful Encouragement!

E. We Are Rich, When In Fellowship.

- “that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.
4 And these things write we unto you, that your **JOY** may be **FULL**.” ([1Jn.1:3-4](#))
- “The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: **Thou** Maintainest my lot (in life).” ([Psa.16:5](#))

IV. IN-CLOSING

Our salvation is important to ourselves, and others.

Which will it be on earth?

- [Acts 28:24](#) says, “some **BELIEVED** the things which were spoken, and some believed NOT.”

Which will it be, in the eternal spiritual realm (after physical death)?

- The ungodly “shall go away into Everlasting PUNISHMENT: but the righteous into **LIFE eternal.**” ([Matt.25:46](#))

If you have need, **COME**, believing ([Heb.11:6](#)), repenting ([Lk.13:3](#)), confessing ([Acts 8:37](#)), and be baptized INTO Christ ([Gal.3:26-27](#)),

...While **TOGETHER**, we stand and sing.

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