**DAY 6**

**AGAINST ALL HOPE**

*“Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became…”*Romans 4:18-21

Some prayers seem more likely to be answered than others, while some situations in life appear to be beyond hope or reason. So why even pray? We come to false conclusions about hopeless situations because we often view prayer, and God’s ability to answer prayer, from a finite perspective that is jaded by our track record of delays and failures. **God can do anything at any time and at a rate that is far more than we could ask or imagine!**

*“Never doubt God’s mighty power to work in you and accomplish all this. He will achieve infinitely more than your greatest request or your most unbelievable dream. He will exceed your wildest imagination! He will outdo them all, for his miraculous power energizes you.”* Ephesians 3:20 (TPT)

Today I want to consider our prayer focus and intensity in light of the people and situations in our lives that appear to be “beyond hope.” We all have that relative, physical condition, persistent bondage, or whatever else it might be that you’ve thrown your best prayers at for a prolonged period of time only to be mocked by the unwavering status of the situation and the strength of the enemy involved. Today I want us to pray “against all hope.”

Let’s consider the prayer life of Abraham:

*“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.’ Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was good as dead – since he was about a hundred years old – and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.”*  Romans 4:18-21

Is there anything more hopeless than being 100 years old with a 90-year-old wife while trying to hang onto a promise of a pregnancy and a promised child? I believe God uses this over-the-top scenario to show us how faith and persistence work in our lives. There are a few things from Abraham’s story that can help us pray effectively and receive the promises of God:

* **FACE THE FACTS**

Abraham was not in denial of the reality of the situation nor did he glibly confess that his impossible circumstance did not exist. He faced the facts and took his problem head-on. Don’t be afraid to do the same. Tell God how messed up your situation is, how long it’s been that way, and how unlikely it is that change will ever occur apart from His supernatural intervention. But don’t stop there….go to the next step! If we state the facts without declaring God’s ability to change them, then what some people consider to be prayer is just complaining. This never works out well (consider the children of Israel in the wilderness.)

* **DON’T WEAKEN IN YOUR FAITH**

This part is on us. God will do what He has promised if we will continue to believe and not waver. But how do we not waver when circumstances around us are saying we should be getting weaker instead of stronger? Be filled with the Word and speak it out over the situation. When delays continue and our emotions tank, when people who love us have given up hope and told us to “move on,” here’s our to do: **hold your present circumstances up against the promises of God and then choose which one you will focus on and confess.** Faith only comes by hearing the Word of the Lord! (Romans 10:17)

* **PRAISE GOD FOR WHAT IS COMING**

*“Abraham was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God.”*

Romans 4:20

This is where belief turns into confession and our hope takes on a vocabulary that brings real change! This type of praise usually falls into the category of “sacrificial praise” (Hebrews 13:15). When we have yet to experience the fulfillment of the promise, a faith-filled sacrifice of praise is required. When we are between the prophecy and manifestation of it, this is where we worship, not based on what we see but upon the reality of who God is and what He has promised. Giving glory to God during extended times of waiting and unanswered prayer is all about focusing on who He is, what He has done and why it’s likely that He will do it again!

**TAKE A MOMENT**

Stop and praise God for what is coming. Begin to lift the name of Jesus over that impossible situation and thank Him, out loud, for the impending breakthrough and victory. Tell God how big He is and how this situation is a little thing for Him. Remind God of some of His greatest miracles throughout history and then declare that “If He did it then…He can do it again.” We give glory to God when we don’t let go of His promises. We magnify or make God big when we give glory to Him during the waiting by declaring who He is and what He will do, long before He does it.

* **LIVE FULLY PURSUADED**

Faith means “to be convinced or fully persuaded.” When we believe God and pray in faith, it means that we have come to a place where we wholeheartedly believe that God is going to do what He said He was going to do, no matter how long it may take or how hopeless the circumstances may seem. I challenge you today to become that kind of prayer warrior. Be a man or woman of God that lives fully persuaded!

Before praying, I’d like to point out one more thing from Abraham’s story. The Word says that Abraham was “persuaded that **God had the power to** do what He promised.” Abraham didn’t know when or how, but he **believed** God had the power to accomplish anything He promised!

This is the kind of faith that can hope against hope and pray hope into hopeless situations. Hope can be defined as a **“confident and joyful expectation of what is** **to come.”** What is your expectation level during these days of ***Pursuit?*** What is your level of confidence and joy concerning what God is going to do?

* **REVISIT THE ENCOUNTER**

There were 25 years of delay between the promise and the fulfillment for Abraham, yet he was able to reflect back on key moments of encounter and promise as the years slipped by. He was 75 when God told him his decedents

would be a blessing to every nation on the earth. Fast forward 24 years and Abraham is encountered again by angelic beings and the Lord himself to confirm that he and Sarah were only one year out from the promised son’s arrival (see Genesis 17). I believe Abraham went back, mentally and emotionally, to that powerful moment of the original covenant, as well as the tent encounter to encourage himself and strengthen his faith. I would encourage you to do the same! Revisit those “holy moments” in the history of your journey with the Lord. Perhaps get out a journal and recount that moment He made you a promise about your future, called you to ministry, revealed that your family would all come to faith or whatever amazing promises you have been holding onto. As you go back to the place of encounter and promise, you will find hope springing up again and your faith being strengthened to believe again for the impossible, to***…”hope against all hope.”***

**MEMORY VERSE**

“He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises."

Romans 4:21

**PRAYER DIRECTIVE**

Knowing that nothing is too difficult for God, let’s pray some hope-filled prayers over hopeless situations. The enormity of our problem does not diminish His power or put our prayers in a “probably won’t be answered” category. Go to the Word and find the promises that apply to your most hopeless scenarios and relationships. Hold those promises up against the facts and choose to declare the Word of God over them. Even if the answer to your prayer seems delayed, determine that you will wait in faith like Abraham living fully persuaded that…**God can and will do it!**

**THOUGHTS & NOTES**