

BACK TO THE BIBLE



*Unshakable*  
**FAITH**

**Meet**  
**With God** *Studies for Groups, Families and Individuals*  
**BY WOODROW KROLL**

## Unshakable Faith

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### BACK TO THE BIBLE

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MEET WITH GOD SERIES

*Unshakable*  
**FAITH**

WOODROW KROLL

# Welcome

Welcome to Back to the Bible's *Meet With God* series. In our last study, we delved into the character and works of our Lord Jesus Christ. This month's devotionals allow us to incorporate Christ's character into our lives as we study the process of growing in our faith. Let's make this month a time of faith in *action*. We trust that through practice, you will enjoy a strengthened faith and a renewed relationship with God.

The biblical insights you are about to consider have been selected from the radio teaching ministry of Woodrow Kroll. We trust these lessons will be an ongoing and encouraging extension of the ministry of Back to the Bible in your walk with Christ. You don't have to listen to *Back to the Bible* to use your study booklet. But if you can listen, the study will be even more powerful.

We hope this series will not only encourage you to read the Bible but also to study it. On the following pages you'll find devotional readings, questions to help you review and meditate on Scripture passages, and practical suggestions for applying the truth of the Bible to your everyday living.

Our prayer is that as you use the *Meet With God* series, you will experience rich dividends of biblical knowledge and spiritual growth.

# *From the Author*

God does not ask us to be faithful without offering examples of faith, although some of the portraits He gives in Genesis may seem surprising. During this month, we'll not only discover the achievements of faith giants but also the frailties and challenges of normal people living out their daily lives. What we'll see, finally, is a picture of ourselves, with all the gritty details.

I anticipate exploring with you the spiritual journeys of Abraham and several of the people surrounding his life. As we learn from both their successes and failures, we will continually return to the mercy of God, which sustains us through all things.

At the beginning of this month, I thank God for your willingness to persevere in the journey of faith. I pray that we will each grow more sensitive to the voice of God, guiding us to live wisely in the world. Let's begin this month together, exploring and experiencing the intricate process of faith.

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Woodrow Krolf". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

## Remember It

Answer the following questions on the passage you read this week. See answers below.

1. What two relatives did Abram take with him on his journey?
2. When Abram got to Canaan, he stayed there the remainder of his life. True/False
3. Abram went to Egypt because there was a \_\_\_\_\_ in the land.
4. Because Abram was afraid that he would be killed, he asked Sarai to say she was his sister. True/False
5. God struck Pharaoh's house with \_\_\_\_\_ because of Sarai.
  - a. locusts
  - b. boils
  - c. plagues/diseases
  - d. darkness

## Week One

*This week, think about ways your faith has been strengthened through both successes and setbacks.*

## The Difference between Falling and Failing

**Key Passage:** Read Genesis 12

*Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your kindred and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you" (Gen. 12:1).*

Few children learn to ride a bike without taking some spills along the way. The experience of falling is a frustrating, yet necessary, prerequisite to riding. And a parent watching a child's first attempt does not think: "Oh Matthew, you fell. Guess you'll never learn to ride a bike. Let's go back in the house." Parents don't equate falling with failing. They understand that freedom from training wheels often involves bruised knees and battered pride.

Learning to ride a bike, like learning to live by faith, requires us to move through a process that naturally includes both successes and setbacks. Abraham began strong. He had unshakable faith, unquestioning obedience and an unparalleled promise. Even though his first major test of faith required a massive relocation, Abraham passed it flawlessly.

Answers:  
1. Sarai, his wife, and Lot, his nephew (Gen. 12:5)  
2. False (Gen. 12:6-10)  
3. famine (Gen. 12:10)  
4. True (Gen. 12:11-13)  
5. c (Gen. 12:17)

The story doesn't end there, however. Soon after this dramatic triumph, Abraham found himself facing an angry Pharaoh and caught in a foolish lie. We're quick to ask, "How could such a faith giant fail so quickly?" That's the wrong question. Remember, faith as a process involves setbacks. Despite this setback in Abraham's journey, he still went on to become the father of the Israelites. He got back on the bike and kept riding.

When we fall in our spiritual lives, we must not give in to feelings of failure and depression. Our Heavenly Father is waiting eagerly to lift us up again and mend our hurts—*so we can try again*.

**As you read through Genesis 12, reflect on the following questions:**

1. What specific actions or attributes helped Abraham begin his faith journey in the right way?
2. How did each of Abraham's tests strengthen his faith in different ways?
3. How did Abraham attempt to rationalize his lack of faith when he lied about his wife, Sarah?
4. In what ways does Abraham personally interact with God throughout the chapter?

**Apply It**

Paul, in writing to the Philippian church, offers another example of perseverance while recognizing personal faults. He gives his readers great hope by revealing his own journey of faith: "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me" (Phil. 3:12). In what ways are you working toward all that Christ wants you to be?

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**Express It**

Lord, thank You for allowing me to make mistakes as I learn to trust in You. Please help me to learn through both my successes and my setbacks so that my faith may continually grow. Give me the strength to get back up again when I fall.

## Remember It

Answer the following questions on the passage you read this week. See answers below.

1. It was Abraham's idea to have a child by Hagar.  
True/False
2. Hagar was of \_\_\_\_\_ descent.
3. After Hagar became pregnant, she despised Sarai.  
True/False
4. The Angel of the LORD told Hagar that Ishmael would be:
  - a. a great king.
  - b. blessed beyond measure.
  - c. a wild man.
  - d. a prophet.
5. Abram was \_\_\_\_\_ years old when Ishmael was born.

## Week Two

*This week, identify areas of your life that would benefit through some practice in patience.*

## Running Ahead of God

**Key Passage:** Read Genesis 16

*So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai (Gen. 16:2).*

How long would you wait for someone to fulfill a promise? A week? A couple of months? Abraham had been waiting on God for ten years. So far, his promised son had not arrived. In a foreign land, Abraham waited . . . and waited. His wife Sarah, now in her mid-nineties, was an unlikely candidate for motherhood from the beginning. Who could blame Abraham and Sarah for taking matters into their own hands to secure a successor? We certainly can't.

In our day, we barely wait ten seconds before charging ahead with our plans. God, however, does not work on our timetable. Often when we are anxious to hurry up, God actually wants us to slow down. So we resort to "helping" God. Abraham thought he could speed along God's promise by having a child with Hagar. Sadly, his haste only resulted in

- Answers:  
1. False (Gen. 16:1-2)  
2. Egyptian (Gen. 16:1)  
3. True (Gen. 16:4)  
4. c (Gen. 16:12)  
5. 86 (Gen. 16:16)

generations of pain and suffering between the descendants of Abraham's sons, Ishmael and Isaac.

We are not so different from Abraham. We hate to wait. We equate waiting with doing nothing. If this were true, however, waiting would not be so painfully difficult. Waiting for the Lord is actually an intentional act; it requires self-discipline. Waiting reminds us that we do not know what is best for us. Waiting reminds us that the best plan for our lives will always be God's plan in His timing.

**As you read through Genesis 16, reflect on the following questions:**

1. How might Abraham's life have been altered, and even our lives today, if he had refused to rush ahead of God?
2. In what ways did Sarah react when her own impatience backfired on her?
3. In verse 6, what did Abraham do to avoid responsibility for his own unwise actions? What were the consequences?
4. How did Hagar attempt to take matters into her own hands to gain control over a bad situation?

**Apply It**

Think about your attitudes as you move about the day. How often do you allow God to control your time and mold your plans? What area of your life have you taken out of God's hands?

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Relinquish control back to God and allow Him to surprise and bless you with the grace of His timing.

**Express It**

Lord Jesus, it's so difficult to wait for You! I just want to take matters into my own hands and be my own boss. Allow me to relax and remember that You are in control and Your timing is best. Slow me down and give me peace.

## Remember It

Answer the following questions on the passage you read this week. See answers below.

1. The two angels struck the men of Sodom with \_\_\_\_\_ to stop them from breaking into Lot's house.
2. Lot left Sodom as soon as the angels warned him of the city's imminent destruction.  
True/False
3. When Lot tried to warn his son-in-laws, they thought he was joking.  
True/False
4. Because Lot was afraid to flee to the mountains, the angels agreed that he could go
  - a. live with Abraham.
  - b. to the city of Zoar.
  - c. to the wilderness.
  - d. to Egypt.
5. When Lot's wife looked back at Sodom, she became \_\_\_\_\_.

Answers:  
1. blindness (Gen. 19:11)  
2. False (Gen. 19:12-16)  
3. True (Gen. 19:14)  
4. b (Gen. 19:17-22)  
5. a pillar of salt (Gen. 19:26)

## Week Three

*This week we'll examine the consequences of allowing sin to slowly corrupt us.*

### Losing Our Focus

**Key Passage:** Read Genesis 19

*And while he [Lot] lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city (Gen. 19:16).*

The most dangerous threat to an animal's life is not the predator that quickly devours, but a disease that slowly disables the animal and makes it easy prey. The disease of corruption and sinfulness had slipped slowly into Sodom's society, rotting it from the inside out. Lot's family evidently underestimated the danger of such a disease, and that error left them primed for attack.

The previous night, Lot's family was caught in the middle of an ugly scene, the attempted gang rape of their angelic guests. Now, although warned about Sodom's impending destruction, everyone in Lot's family seemed content to stay in the city. Their hesitation reveals the great influence the Sodomite culture had inflicted on Lot's family. They had lived in a corrupt society for so long that their thinking had also become twisted.

Lot's suggestion to offer his daughters to the mob should have immediately alerted him to the serious rift in his spiritual life. Likewise, when our own actions and thoughts drift away from God's standards, we should step back and look at the danger around us.

Living on earth unfortunately means living in the midst of great wickedness at times. While we should not seek to isolate ourselves from society, the example of Lot's family reminds us of the importance of constantly refocusing and refreshing our relationship with God. Jesus reminded us that though we are *in* the world, we must not be *of* it.

**As you read through Genesis 19, reflect on the following questions:**

1. Where did Lot succeed and fail as a host?
2. What does Lot's initial treatment of his guests and his conversation with the men surrounding his house reveal about his "need" to try to satisfy everyone?
3. At what key points in this chapter should Lot have taken a stand against wickedness?
4. List several points throughout this chapter where members of Lot's family compromised their values. What was the outcome of each compromise?

**Apply It**

Take a moment to think about the choices you've made in the past month. Who or what was the greatest influence in those decisions? Were you surprised by any of them?

Consider how the values of your family, your neighborhood, your city and your culture compare with those found in Scripture. Which values have affected you most lately?

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**Express It**

Lord, I live in a fallen world, but I know You live in me. May others see Your life in my actions and my words. Protect me from slowly drifting away from You as I go throughout my daily life.

## Remember It

Answer the following questions on the passage you read this week. See answers below.

1. Abraham didn't want Isaac to go back to the land of Abraham's father.  
True/False
2. Rebekah was the granddaughter of Nahor, Abraham's \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. uncle
  - b. father
  - c. brother
  - d. sister
3. What sign did Abraham's servant pray for?
4. Abraham's servant wouldn't tell his story until after he had eaten.  
True/False
5. Rebekah received gifts of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ after she agreed to become Isaac's wife.

- Answers:  
1. True (Gen. 24:6-8)  
2. c (Gen. 24:15)  
3. that a young woman would give water to him and his camels (Gen. 24:14)  
4. false (Gen. 24:33)  
5. jewelry, clothing (Gen. 24:53)

## Week Four

*This week, work on training yourself to seek God's guidance while making decisions.*

### Choosing Wisely

**Key Passage:** Read Genesis 24

*Then he said, "O LORD God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham" (Gen. 24:12).*

The Bible doesn't tell us much about Rebekah and Isaac's first meeting. And it gives only a brief reference to their actual marriage. Instead, Genesis 24 concentrates on the incredible way God guided one man, Abraham's servant Eliezer, as he searched for a bride for Isaac. The servant's faithfulness serves as a useful guide for those in search of their life's mate.

First, Abraham's servant held to the strict guidelines laid out for him. He was instructed to select Isaac's wife from Abraham's clan, not from among the pagan Canaanites. Our Heavenly Father has also given us some guidelines in Scripture for finding a spouse (see Prov. 18:22, 21:9; Eph. 5:31-33; and 2 Cor. 6:14 for further study). With any decision, God's Word remains our first and chief source for instruction.

Eliezer also sought God's guidance through prayer. He did not rely on his

own judgment in choosing Isaac's wife. Likewise, our search for a spouse does not need to be a guessing game. God waits to confer divine wisdom on us when we choose to communicate with Him.

What is our next step when we think we've found our potential mate? Abraham's servant looked for signs of confirmation that his choice was pleasing to both God and Rebekah's relatives. When faced with an important assignment, the servant immediately turned to God as his natural response.

We can also train ourselves to react like this servant. In each decision we face, whether it concerns our future spouse or something less consequential, we're given the opportunity to pattern our lives to seek God's will.

**As you read through Genesis 24, reflect on the following questions:**

1. In what ways did Abraham's servant physically and spiritually prepare for his task before starting his journey?
2. Look at the servant's prayer in verse 42. How does he display an attitude of both faith and humility?
3. What was the servant's response when he discovered Rebekah's identity?
4. What specific signs of confirmation did the servant receive in choosing Rebekah?

**Apply It**

You may not be looking for your future spouse, but you regularly make important decisions. Where do you naturally turn for counsel?

Review the steps Abraham's servant took in finding a wife for his master, Isaac. How could you incorporate this process into your daily decision-making?

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**Express It**

Lord, I understand that Your wisdom is infinitely greater than my own. Train me to run to You first for guidance. May my choices throughout life be aligned with Your will.



## *Additional Scriptures for Study*

Romans 1:17

Romans 3:21–26

2 Corinthians 5:7

Galatians 2:20

Philippians 3:8–11

Hebrews 11

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## Find strength for your faith, in the life of Abraham.

Abraham, the friend of God, was a man of faith. Yet faith isn't born full-grown, it's tried and tested in the realities of life.

Abraham struggled like we do. He experienced failure, grew impatient with God's plans and dealt with foolish relatives and the fallout of his own mistakes. So how do we make faith work, even in the difficulties we face? Woodrow Kröll examines the life of Abraham for important lessons in faith we need today.

Woodrow Kröll's speaking, writing and radio ministries have clearly proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ for more than 30 years. He serves as President of the international ministry Back to the Bible and is heard daily on the nationally-syndicated radio broadcasts *Back to the Bible* and *The Bible Minute*.

His numerous books include *The I Am God, When God Doesn't Answer, Empowered to Pray* and *7 Secrets to Spiritual Success*.



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