



*“Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn; look to Abraham, your father.”* Isaiah 51

### **Introduction**

What will Muslims be remembering in their Eid holiday next weekend (Sun-Thurs)?

How is our remembering of Abraham going to differ obviously from theirs?

Read Isaiah 51:1-3 What are Zion’s ‘waste places’? What did Babylon do to Jerusalem?

How do these verses help us when we’re discouraged by declining church attendance, and by the triumph of an anti-Christian worldview?

- The Long Wait for Blessing (11:10-26)
- What state was the world in in 11:7-9?

How does the genealogy of Shem act as a slow and artful preparation for the account of Abraham? Hint: think about:

- a) lifespans
- b) one son + ‘other sons and daughters’

- c) A father and three sons listed
- d) no mention of God

The Promises of God (12:1-3)

- What do the blessings hark back to?
- How is v2 a putting right of the sin of Babel (v4)?
- How can we answer someone from these verses who said ‘God seems to only love the Israelites in the OT’

The Faith of Abram (11:27-32)

- Why is leaving home and familiar places difficult, whoever you are?
- What additional challenges might Terah and family have faced in pre-industrial times?
- What are some of the many griefs of infertility?

V30: why was Sarai’s barrenness particularly grievous for Abram?

[Note: Abram means Exalted Father (Big Daddy): Abraham means Father of a Multitude (ie of many nations)]

- What is Terah never held up as a patriarch to imitate?
- What is our destination (Phil 3:20)?
- ‘Don’t set up home in Haran; crack on towards Canaan’
- Be honest and share areas where you need prayer:
- In what ways are you tempted to make Haran your home rather than Canaan: ie laying up treasure for yourself on earth rather than in heaven (cf Matthew 6:19-21)?