

## The Foundation of Humanity: Abraham cements the future

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*And he said, "I will surely return to you at this time next year, and behold, your wife Sarah will have a son."*  
(Genesis 18:10)

Having been chosen by God to be the progenitor of monotheism, Avraham and Sarah are promised a son. This son Isaac represents the beginning of the fulfilment of the covenant made between God and Avraham that he and Sarah would build great nations rooted in a connection to God.

The Mishnah in Pirkei Avot states that Avraham received ten trials and withstood them all. The Mishnah explains that this teaches us that Avraham had a deep and unshakable love for God (Avot 5:3). Yet it was not Abraham's personal faith that impressed God. Before revealing to Avraham, the plan to destroy Sodom and Amorah, God describes the reason for his love of Avraham: 'For I have loved him because he commands his sons and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord to perform righteousness and justice ...' (Genesis 18:19).

Avraham and Sarah are not only willing to accept God's mission, but they are willing to transmit His message to others as educators and guides. Furthermore, they now have their own child, Yitzchak (Isaac). Having been brought up in their house, he represents their legacy in being able to continue his parents work after they have gone.

The parsha ends by describing the birth of Rivka (Rebecca), the daughter of Betuel and great-niece of Avraham who will ultimately become Yitzchak's (Isaac's) wife.

In conclusion, mankind's journey is now set. The first ten generations from Adam to Noah brought man to sin against God and ended in catastrophe. The subsequent ten generations from Noah to Avraham also rebelled against God, yet the birth of Avraham brought God a partner in mankind who could propagate His dual message of monotheism and morality. Once the covenant had been set with Avraham, the future was sealed through Isaac and Rebecca. Once Avraham and Sarah had trustworthy descendants, God could guarantee the future of humanity for the generations to come.

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