

LESSON SEVEN

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM

TEXT: Genesis 11:27-32 & Genesis Chapter 12 & 13.

A. ABRAHAM:

Abraham is one of the most important characters in the Bible. He is possibly one of the best known characters of ancient history. Jews, Christians and Mohammedans venerate him. He is spoken of as being the father of them that believe (Romans 4:11).

With Abraham we come to the third beginning in the book of Genesis, the beginning of the nation of Israel. The importance of Abraham can be seen by the fact that three-fourths of Genesis is taken up with the story of Abraham and the first three generations of his descendants. The first eleven chapters of Genesis deal with the entire human race but from the twelfth chapter on our attention is directed to one man and his descendants.

His name was Abram but God changed it to Abraham which means, "Father of a multitude" (Genesis 17:5).

Abraham is the only man in the Old Testament who is called "the friend of God." Abraham is the first man after the fall that it is said that God "appeared" to them. God appeared to Abraham many times and this was the beginning of the Theophanies of the Old Testament.

The outstanding characteristics were his call out of idolatry, the revelation he received of the one true God, his faith in God, and his obedience. A character study of this great man will reveal his: (1) Faith; (2) Obedience; (3) Unselfishness; (4) Courage; (5) Separation and (6) Prayerfulness.

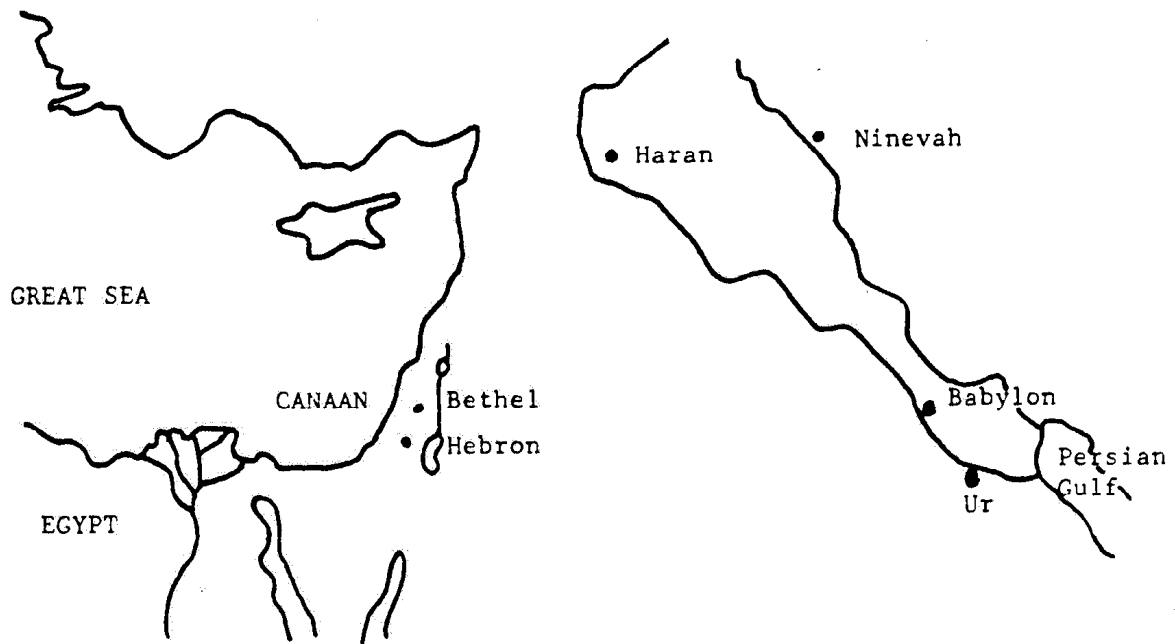
B. THE GENEALOGY OF ABRAHAM:

Genesis chapter eleven gives us the genealogy of Abraham from Shem, the youngest son of Noah. Abram's father was called Terah who lived in Ur in the country of Chaldea. It was here that Abram was born. Ur is not far from Babylon and Abram's call took place soon after the confusion of Babel. All of Abram's family was idolaters. Abraham had two brothers, Haran and Nahor.

Haran died in Ur but he had two sons and one daughter. The daughter, Milcah, married her uncle Nahor and they became the grand- parents of Laban and Rebecca (who married Isaac). Laban was the father of Leah and Rachel, the wives of Jacob. One of Haran's sons, Lot, accompanied his uncle, Abram.

C. ABRAHAM'S CALL:

Abram's first call took place while he was still at Ur. *"The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Charan" (Acts 7:2).*



In this first call Abraham only partially obeyed. There were three things God commanded him:

1. He was to leave his own country;
2. He was to separate himself from his kindred;
3. He was to go to a land that God had promised him.

Abram obeyed the first but he failed in the last two. He left Chaldea but he took Terah his father and Lot his nephew with him. The name "Terah" means, "delay." He was delayed about five years in Haran, which word means "parched."

It was not until after Terah's death that Abram left Haran and journeyed south into Canaan that the Lord appeared to him again. We should note that there is no record of Abram receiving any further revelation from God until His call had been fully obeyed. At the first appearing God promised to show him a land. Now that he had obeyed God promised to GIVE him this land (verse 7). This is a real lesson for us all.

D. ABRAHAM'S SECOND FAILURE:

When Abraham reached Canaan he did two things: (1) he pitched his tent; and (2) he built an altar. He did this at Bethel, which means "the house of God." Pitching his tent speaks to us that he was still a pilgrim in a strange land; building an altar speaks to us of worship. He had to obey the Lord and recognize that he was only a stranger and pilgrim before he could worship in a way acceptable to the Lord.

If Abraham had remained at Bethel all would have been well. However, he continued toward the south. This southward direction led to Egypt.

After arriving in the land of promise, a famine came. This test and trial came right after the blessing. Instead of waiting upon the Lord and seeking God's will in prayer, Abraham turns to

a carnal solution and travels into Egypt. He had traveled all the way from Chaldea by faith but now was unable to trust the Lord in the time of famine. One sin leads to another. In Egypt he lies and lives a life of deception. As a result Pharaoh rebukes him. How sad it is when a child of God has to be rebuked by the sinner in the world.

Abraham traveled back north again to Bethel where he had pitched his tent and built the altar. Here Abram called on the name of the Lord (Genesis 13:4). Let us note that there was no altar in Egypt for Abraham was out of communion with God.

Let us take warning and beware of going down to Egypt.

E. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT:

God made a covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15:18). We should remember the terms of this covenant.

1. ABRAHAM'S PART:

- (a). Get thee out of thy country.
- (b). And from thy kindred.
- (c). And from thy father's house.
- (d). Unto a land that I will show thee.

2. GOD'S PART:

- (a). I will make of thee a great nation.
- (b). I will bless thee.
- (c). And make thy name great.
- (d). And thou shalt be a blessing.
- (e). I will bless them that bless thee.
- (f). And curse him that curseth thee.
- (g). In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed.

COURSE: GENESIS

LESSON SEVEN

SELF HELP TEST

A. Fill in the blanks with the correct word:

1. Abram's father _____
2. Lot's sister _____
3. Rachel's father _____
4. Abram's birthplace _____
5. Where Terah died _____
6. The Friend of God _____
7. Abram's wife _____

(Laban, Ur, Terah, Sarai, Haran, Milcah, Abraham.)

B. How old was Abraham when he left Haran?

C. Who rebuked Abram for doing wrong?

If you wish to obtain your AIS Bible and Theology Certificate or work toward your B.A. Degree from Indiana Bible College, complete this Self-Help Test as completely as possible and return it to: AIS, P.O. Box 47917 Indianapolis, IN 46247 or email it to: ais@apostolic.edu or fax it to: (317) 781-7700.