

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM

BIBLE TEXT: Genesis 11:31, 32; 12:1-9.

LESSON 8 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Romans 4:3).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Genesis 11:31, 32;

31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

Genesis 12:1-9.

1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

7 And the LORD appeared unto

notes:

Founder of a Nation

God had a plan from the foundation of the world whereby fallen man might be redeemed, his sins forgiven, so that he would be ready to go to Heaven. As we read the Old Testament Scriptures we see God's plan being gradually unfolded -- slowly, but in a perfect pattern. Pure religion is the most important part of a person's life, and God has been careful that people are given the opportunity to learn the right way to worship Him.

God wanted a nation that He could call His own, who would preach His Gospel to the rest of the world. From that nation the Redeemer, Jesus, would come, through whom all people would be blessed. God did not subdue a certain people to be His nation, but started it from one person and his family. This man was Abram, later called Abraham, who lived in Ur of the Chaldees, among people who worshiped idols. From among all those people, God called Abraham to become the father of His chosen people. Four times God gave him the promise that he would make of him a great nation (**Genesis 12:2**; 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: **Genesis 17:6**; 6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. **Genesis 28:3**; 3 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; **Genesis 35:11**; 11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;).

A Good Father

God could see the thoughts and desires of Abraham's heart. He knew that Abraham would serve Him faithfully, and would be a good father of His people. He said that Abraham would surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth would be blessed in him, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgement; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (Genesis 18:18, 19). God promised that his seed would be as the sand of the sea, innumerable; and as the stars of the heaven. Those are the Jews, and also those of us who believe in Jesus and are truly saved: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29).

God promised Abraham, too, that He would give him all the land of Palestine: "Unto thy seed will I give this land." Another time God said: "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever" (Genesis 13:15). The promise God made to Abraham was to stand forever. Abraham did not live to see his children possess the land, but "by faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:9, 10). Abraham's heart was set on heavenly things, and neither the riches he had in cattle and gold, nor a desire for earthly gain, ever drew his attention from God and the promises He had given.

Isaac was the son of Abraham; Jacob was Abraham's grandson, and Jacob was the father of the twelve sons who became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, the Jewish nation. These

Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.

9 And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

were God's Chosen People, and He loved that nation. When they sinned against Him, and went after other gods, worshiping idols, He called them back. Those who turned in repentance were restored to God. In Deuteronomy 7:6 we read: "The LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth".

Through the Jews many other nations have been blessed. God promised: "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." Through the centuries, nations that have given a home to the Jews have prospered. Likewise, nations that have persecuted the Jews have gone down in defeat. God's Word is true, and what He says is sure to come to pass.

Dwelling in Their Own Land

After the Jews rejected and crucified Jesus, they were scattered into all the world. The promise that God made to Abraham that they would inhabit all the land of Palestine has not yet been fulfilled, but it is as sure of fulfilment today as it was when given more than 3,500 years ago. God is going to gather Israel, and a remnant of them shall dwell safely in the Holy Land: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land" (Jeremiah 23:7, 8). That will take place during the Millennium.

Abraham's Joy

Though Abraham did not have the joy of seeing the fulfilment of those prophecies while he was on earth, he was happy in the faith that God would do what He had promised. Jesus said, 1900 years after the time of Abraham, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56). Abraham knew that salvation would come through Jesus. "The Gospel" is the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul told the Galatian Christians: "The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Galatians 3:8).

What a great place Abraham had to fill in the plan of the ages! And because he obeyed God he was saved, and all the Christians today enjoy the spiritual blessings God promised to Abraham's posterity.

Promises to Us

You may say that it would not be hard to step out by faith and leave your home and go to a strange land if God would promise you as much as He promised Abraham. Just think what God has promised us: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs Of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (James 2:5). "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25). "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19, 20). The true followers of Jesus have His blessing upon them here in this world, and also have the promise of a part in the reign of Jesus when He comes again.

Not many people are willing to obey God completely, and yield their will to Him. They want His blessing, His protection, His healing power; but they do not want to do His will. We can check our lives by asking ourselves "Would Jesus do what I am doing, if He were on earth? Would Jesus go to the places that I go, if He were here?" We are Christ's representatives in this world. Are we worthy of the

name? If we live to please God, we will not be afraid to step out on His promises, as Abraham did.

Abraham fulfilled his part in God's great pattern. The Word tells us that he and his family started for Canaan, and "into the land of Canaan they came." There were many discouragements along the way, but the faith of Abraham did not waver. May we pattern our lives after the father of faith, and fulfil the will of God for us!

QUESTIONS

1. Where did Abraham live when God first called him?
2. What had Abraham's family worshiped?
3. What did God want of Abraham?
4. Name some of the promises God made to Abraham.
5. Where is the Promised Land?
6. What great Person was to be born into Abraham's family?
7. How can we become the children of Abraham?