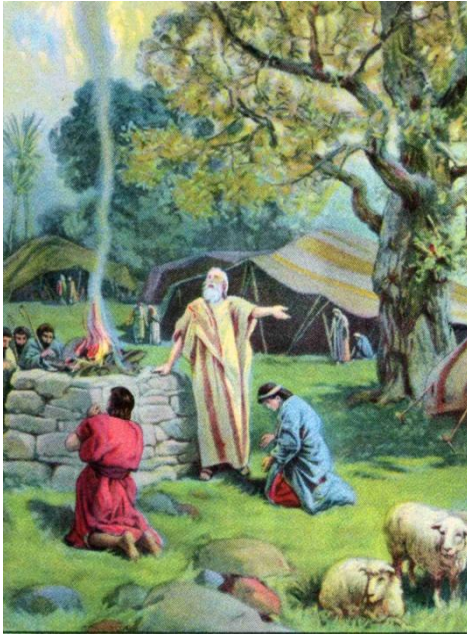


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 1



GOD CALLS ABRAHAM

Scripture Texts: Genesis 12:1-8; Genesis 13:14-17; Hebrews 11:8-10

God has always had a plan. He also has always had a need for a man to carry out His plan. In this lesson Abraham is that man. Abraham believed God. He obeyed God. He looked forward in faith to God's Kingdom. His faith was his righteousness. Abraham built an altar everywhere he went.

Throughout Old Testament history, God made things happen as examples to us. They are types. They teach spiritual Truths. God had them written for our learning, our warning. We are the ones **upon whom the ends of the world are come**, or the time of the last dispensation, the Gospel age. These lessons are specifically for us. If we were to have a text for this quarter, it would be found in **1 Corinthians 10:11: Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the**

world are come.

MEMORY VERSE: *And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*

—*Genesis 15:6*

DAILY READINGS:

Mon.—**Genesis 11:10-32** Abraham's family.

Tue.—**Joshua 24:1-13** God's dealings with Abraham & Isaac.

Wed.—**Nehemiah 9:5-15** God keeps His promises.

Thu.—**Psalms 119:1-16** Obedience to God's Word.

Fri.—**Isaiah 51:1-8** God's promise of everlasting salvation.

Devotional Reading: Romans 4 The everlasting covenant of faith.

Get Thee Out

Genesis 12:1-4 God works through men. He has chosen to use a man, woman, boy or girl to carry out His plan. Blessed is the one who obeys and is used. Abraham was such a man. **The Lord had said**—before this time (**Genesis 11:31**). Terah, Abraham's father, appears to have been in accord with the command of God and to have obeyed. The command was: **Get thee out of thy country . . . unto a land that I will shew thee.** Terah had led the family from Ur to Haran.

God promised to make of Abraham a **great nation**, a great **name** and a **blessing**. He would bless **all families of the earth** through him. We know now that this blessing was Christ Who was born as a human descendant of Abraham. Enemies of Abraham were to be cursed and friends blessed. His history and that of Israel shows that these promises were all fulfilled.

Abraham lived some 1900 years B.C. He had to leave Ur, where idolatry and other sins were practiced, before God could fully use him. Separation from our old lives of sin, from associates, and from any element that may influence us away from God's way is necessary. We may not need to move our home or change our employment, but there must be a total change in our inner lives. There will be new connection with God, new loves, new beliefs, new purposes, new goals, new thoughts and actions, new virtues, new hopes, a new Leader, a new source of spiritual food, and in all things a new life. **Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him.** He believed enough to act accordingly.

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Abraham Built an Altar

Genesis 12:5-8 Abraham obeyed God and went on **into the land of Canaan**. Again, the Lord **appeared unto Abram**. He promised to give this land unto Abram's seed. At each place Abram settled, he **built an altar unto the Lord**. He burned sacrifices to God and worshiped Him.

This is one secret of Abraham's faithfulness and the good character of his family. Worship of God was the center of his home life. Daily family worship is one of the strongest powers for good a people can possess. Its lack is an irreparable loss.

Abraham's Seed to Be Without Number

Genesis 13:14-17 **Lift up now thine eyes, and look . . . the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it.** The borders of this land were **from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates (Genesis 15:18)**. God promised Abraham's seed (his descendants) to be **as the dust of the earth**—an innumerable multitude. This is the way God gave the land. However, there were conditions, or strings, attached (**Deuteronomy 28**). The belief that the land of Canaan was given to literal Israel unconditionally and to be certainly occupied by the Jews is incorrect. Rather, **Deuteronomy 28:63-64** has been fulfilled because of the sins of the people, just as God warned. God has no special favors for the literal Jewish nation in this dispensation. God's interest and promises are now to a new Canaan and a new Israel. This is a spiritual people, a spiritual nation, The Church of God.

A City That Hath Foundations

Hebrews 11:8-10 **By faith Abraham . . . obeyed . . . went . . . not knowing whither.** It took faith to leave the known for the unknown—and at the age of seventy-five. Read **Hebrews 11:1**. Faith made it real to Abraham, gave him a real and certain goal to work toward. He believed God. His faith enabled him to live temporarily **in a strange country** throughout his earthly life, to live as a stranger, a foreigner. Saints are strangers in this land; they are citizens of another country—Heaven. **For he looked for a city which hath foundations**, a permanent city. It would be permanent and good because its **builder and maker is God**. This is no earthly city. It is the Kingdom of God which Jesus later set up. Abraham was not privileged to see it. But, thanks be to God, we have found it. We can see it. Salvation gives us a residence in it.

The city Abraham looked for is founded on something more sure than material stones. **The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal (2 Corinthians 4:18)**. By faith, Abraham looked down the centuries and saw the Kingdom of God, the church, eternal, that cannot be destroyed, that **the gates of hell shall not prevail against (Matthew 16:18)**, because it is built on the Rock, Christ Jesus. With that vision in his heart, earth lost its appeal. He saw something better. The trials and hardships of this life were bearable. Faith in his heart reached up to God and fastened onto that which was only a promise as yet.

Abraham was one of the greatest men in the Bible. Why? His greatness was not so much in doing as in believing, not so much in leading as in following. He knew how to obey. He stood firm in his believing. He did not blindly follow just any voice. The same will be ours if we believe and obey the Lord.

Our Great Privilege

We have received the reality of which Abraham had but the promise. Christ has come and made atonement for sin. He has set up His Kingdom in many hearts. He has sent the Holy Spirit to indwell them. These blessings are in the church today. They give us greater resources for living steadfast in the Lord than Abraham had. Are you taking advantage of these privileges provided in God's plan of salvation?

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