

Genesis 12-25: Abraham - A Promise of Hope

INTRODUCTION.

- A. In our last lesson, we studied through Genesis 1-11 showing that obedience was the will of God for man. Sadly, man did not want to follow God's will. This was seen in the examples of Adam and Eve, Cain, the people of Noah's days, as well as the builders of the tower of Babel.
- B. As a result of Adam and Eve's disobedience, they were separated from God. We showed that Genesis 3:15 contained a glimmer of hope to come.
- C. With this lesson, we will study the life of Abraham and show God's promises to provide man with hope.

I. OVERVIEW OF ABRAHAM'S LIFE.

- A. In Genesis 11:27-32 we see that Terah had three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran.
 - 1. Abram married Sarai.
 - 2. Nahor married Milcah, daughter of Haran.
 - 3. Haran died in the Ur of the Chaldeans.
 - 4. Terah took Abram, Sarai, and Lot (Haran's son) out from Ur of the Chaldeans to the land of Canaan. They dwelt in Haran.
 - 5. Terah died at the age of 205 years.
- B. During the life of Abraham, we find several key points.
 - 1. God called Abram to leave the Haran. (12:1-4) (chart 10)
 - 2. Abram called upon God. (12:4-9) (chart 11)
 - 3. Abram traveled to Egypt. (12:10-20)
 - 4. Abram was separated from Lot. (13:1-13)
 - 5. Abram rescued Lot. (14)
 - 6. Abram had a vision about the future of his descendants. (15)
 - 7. Hagar gives birth to Ishmael. (16) (chart 12)
 - 8. God establishes his covenant with Abraham. (17)
 - 9. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. (18:16-19:29)
 - 10. Abraham's has an encounter with Abimelech. (20)
 - 11. Sarah gives birth to Isaac. (21:1-7)
 - 12. God called upon Abraham to offer Isaac. (22:1-19) (chart 13)
 - 13. Sarah dies and Abraham purchased the cave of Machpelah as a burial place

for his family. (23)

14. Isaac married Rebekah. (24)
15. Abraham remarries a woman name Keturah. (25:1-6)
16. Abraham dies at the age of 175 years. (25:7-11)

C. During the life of Abraham, four different nations are born.

1. The birth of the Israelite nation is seen with the birth of Isaac. (21:1-7)
2. The birth of the Ishmaelite nation is seen with the birth of Ishmael. (26-1-16)
 - a. The Ishmaelites were those who carried Joseph down to Egypt as a slave.
 - b. The modern day Arabs are said to be the descendants of Ishmael.
 - c. The birth of the Ammonite nation is seen with the birth of Ammon, the son of Lot. (Gen. 19:30-38)
3. The birth of the Moabite nation is seen with the birth of Moab, the son of Lot. (Gen. 19:30-38)

II. THE PROMISES.

- A. Having taken a brief overview of Abraham's life, let us now move on to the promises made to Abraham by God.
- B. The promises of Genesis 12:1-3,7. (chart 15)
 1. The Lord would make Abraham a great nation.
 2. The Lord would bless Abraham and make his name great.
 3. The Lord would bless those who blessed Abraham and would curse those who cursed Abraham.
 4. In Abraham, the Lord would bless all the families of the earth. A glimmer of hope seen. (Read Galatians 3:6-9)
 5. The Lord promised to give Abraham the land of Canaan.
- C. The promises of Genesis 13:14-17. (chart 16)
 1. The Lord shows Abraham the land that He would give to Abraham and his descendants.
 2. The Lord would make Abraham's descendants "as the dust of the earth." The spiritual descendants of Abraham are truly as the dust of the earth.
- D. The promises of Genesis 15:1-21. (no chart)
 1. The Lord reassures Abraham that he would have a son from his own "bowels." Abraham would father the promised sons. (vs 2-5)

2. The Lord tells Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a foreign land where they would serve and be afflicted for four hundred years. After this, the Lord would deliver them to the promised land of Canaan. (vs 12-16)
 3. The Lord tells Abraham the borders of his new land. (vs 18-21)
- E. The promises of Genesis 18:1-15. (vs 9-15)

III. GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM.

- A. After having examined God's promises to Abraham, let us now take a look at the covenant God made with Abraham.
1. God told Abraham that He would make a covenant between Him and Abraham. God also told Abraham that he would multiply him exceedingly. (vs 2)
 2. God promises to make Abraham a father of many nations, hence the change from Abram to Abraham. (vs 4-6)
 3. God promised to give Abraham and his seed all the land of Canaan. (vs 8)
- B. The covenant that God made with Abraham was a two way covenant. Genesis 17:9 reads, "And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations." (vs 9, KJV)

IV. WHY DID GOD MAKE THIS COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM?

- A. A person might be left wondering why Abraham. Why did God make this covenant with Abraham?
- B. The answer to this question is simple: God knew Abraham. Give consideration to a statement made by God about Abraham in Genesis 18:16-19. The Lord knew Abraham. The Lord knew that Abraham would "command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment."
- C. Take notice of another statement made about Abraham found in James 2:23. Abraham was called the friend of God.

V. A PROMISE FULFILLED.

- A. God fulfilled His promise to Abraham to give him a son. (Gen. 21:1-7)
- B. The son was named Isaac.

VI. THE DEFINING MOMENT IN ABRAHAM'S LIFE.

- A. Up until this point, we have:
1. Promises being made.
 2. A covenant being established.
 3. Key statements about Abraham being said.

4. A promise of a child being fulfilled.
- B. We now come to the defining point in Abraham's life. Consider Genesis 22:1-19. In Genesis 22:1-19, we have the account of God telling Abraham to offer Isaac. According to the text, Abraham proceeds to do as God has commanded. However, just before Abraham went through with the sacrifice, the Lord stopped him.
- C. After having stopped Abraham, the Lord says, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." (Gen. 22:12, KJV)
- D. After having seen Abraham's faith manifested in such a great way, the Lord said, "By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Gen. 22:16-18, KJV)

CONCLUSION.

- A. The story of Abraham is a wonderful story of one man's faith bringing salvation to a lost world.
 1. Because of Abraham's faithfulness to God, God upheld His promise to bless all the nations of the earth through the seed of Abraham.
 2. Consider Galatians 3:6-9 and 3:15-18.
- B. Whereas Adam and Eve brought sin into this world (Rom. 5:12), Abraham's faithfulness paved the way for man's future salvation. Abraham was not a perfect man, but he was a faithful man.
- C. Each and everyone of us should strive to follow after the example of Abraham, who, as pointed out earlier, was a friend of God. If we follow Abraham's examples of faithfulness and obedience, then we will enter into the city "whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11:10)
- D. In the next lesson, we will examine the story of Jacob and Joseph and show how the promise of man's salvation was passed on through the descendants of Abraham, just as God had promised.

Genesis 12-25: Abraham - A Promise of Hope (Old Testament Series) - January 17, 1999
by John M. Duvall -- Lawton, OK