

Lesson 2

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM



Abraham is a person with a special place in God's plan of salvation. The history of Abraham is found in Genesis, the first book of the Bible. He was born in the 19th century B.C in a place called **Ur in Southern Mesopotamia**. **Abram** was his name before the call. He belonged to a tribe of nomads, keeping herds of cattle, roaming about in search of fresh pastures. They had no permanent home anywhere. Eventually the family of Abraham came and lived in a place called Haran.

God Calls

While in Haran, God called Abram. He told him: **“Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of**

you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing, I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen. 12:1-3).

Abram left Haran and proceeded as God directed him. Then he was 75 years old. Abram reached Shechem in the land of Canaan, up to the oak tree of Moreh. There the Lord appeared to Abram and said: “To your offspring I will give this land” (Gen 12:7). Abram built an altar at that place and offered sacrifice to the Lord.

Abram continued his journey. Wherever he camped he built altars to God and offered sacrifices. Years passed. Abram and his wife Sarai became old.

The Covenant of God

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said: “I am God almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make My covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous ... As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding; and I will be their God” (Gen. 17:1-8).

Thus God established a covenant with Abraham. God entrusted him with special responsibilities. God changed his name from Abram to Abraham.

The name Abraham means: 'the father of a great people'.

God also promised that Abraham and his children would have a special relationship with God.

The Promises of God

Through the covenant God gave Abraham three promises:

- ☆ - Abraham shall be the father of many nations.
- ☆ - Abraham and his descendants shall have a special relationship with God.
- ☆ - Abraham and his descendants shall inherit the whole land of Canaan.

These promises were fulfilled in course of time.

The Birth of Isaac

God told Abraham: "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her and moreover I will give you a son by her; I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her... God said, No, but your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him" (Gen17:15-19). while Abraham was camping in the valley of Mamre in Canaan three angels appeared to him and told him that a son will be born to him in his wife Sarah. According to the promise made by God, Sarah, conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age. "Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him." (Gen. 21:3).

The Sacrifice of Abraham

Once God decided to test Abraham. He called Abraham and said: "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you" (Gen. 22:2).

Abraham decided to obey God's command, made all preparations for the burnt offering and started off with Isaac. On the way Isaac asked. "The fire and

the wood are here but where is the lamb for a burnt offering”? And Abraham replied: “God himself will provide the lamb” (Gen 22:7-8).

When Abraham reached the place God had told him, he made an altar and arranged the firewood in order. He then bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. Abraham then took the knife and was about to slay his son when the angel of the Lord called Abraham from heaven and said: “Do not lay your hand on the boy, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me” (Gen. 22:12). When Abraham lifted up his eyes he saw a ram caught in the thicket by its horns. He took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering in place of Isaac.

Father of Nations

Abraham thus passed the test of God. God was pleased with him and said: “and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice” (Gen 22:18). Thus Abraham became the father of all those who were going to be His chosen people.

Father of Believers

It was due to his deep faith in God that Abraham became 'the father of believers.' His whole life testifies his unwavering faith in God. It was through this faith that he dared to leave his homeland and people proceed to the land shown by God. Even when it seemed impossible to have a son in his old age he believed in the promise of the Lord.

Even when Abraham was asked to sacrifice his only son, the most difficult thing to do, he was prepared to obey God and act accordingly. God was pleased with his obedience, and blessed him and his descendants abundantly. Even though there was enough reason for his faith to be shaken, he stood firm in his faith and proved it through his actions. That is how he became the father of believers.

Abraham is the father of all who believe in God and his son Jesus. He is our model in our life of faith. **We also may come across with occasions when our faith will be tested. Even then we must be able to prove our deep-rooted faith in God through our words and deeds. This is the lesson that we learn from the life of Abraham.**

Let us Pray

Taste and see how good the Lord is. Blessed is he who trusts in Him.

Read and Recount

Describe how Abraham got ready to sacrifice Isaac
(Gen. 22:1-18).



Word of God for our Guidance

“Abraham believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness”
(Gen 15:6).

My decision

Like Abraham, I will trust in God
and obey His commandments.

Let us do

Mark the following places in the map: Ur and Haran.



Let us find out the answer

1. What is the meaning of the name Abraham?
2. What are the promises God gave to Abraham through His covenant with him?
3. What did God ask Abraham to do in order to test his faith?
4. How did Abraham become the father of all believers?
5. What is the lesson we learn from the life of Abraham?