

Bible Lessons

The
Patriarchs

VOLUME 2



G. L. TenBroeke

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by

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Preface

As Timothy knew the holy Scriptures “from a child”, so it should be the desire of every Christian parent that, from an early age, their children should be well acquainted with the sacred pages.

The aim of this series is to put before little children, in simple form, the fundamental truths of the faith, by consecutively studying the Bible.

The content being interspersed with questions and colouring texts, it is hoped that the interest of younger children will be encouraged.

It is however the desire of the publishers that the Spirit of truth will Himself apply the truth to the hearts of the young children who may read these pages, and teach the way of salvation as only He can.

November 2002

Chapter 1

ABRAM OBEYS GOD'S CALL

As the people moved away from Babel into other parts of the world, they soon began to build cities and later, countries were formed. Sadly, they no longer worshipped nor prayed to God. Instead, they began to worship the sun, the moon, and the stars. Some even made images of wood and stone to which they bowed in worship and prayed. The worship of all these things is called IDOLATRY.

Not far from the city of Babel, some of Shem's sons built a city called Ur of the Chaldees. Ur was a very large city, whose people had forgotten the worship of God and had begun to worship idol gods such as the moon.

In this city lived an old man named Terah. He had three sons named Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran died before his father, while in Ur, and left a son named Lot. Abram and Nahor each took wives while in Ur. Abram's wife was named Sarai and Nahor's wife was Milcah.

God would not leave mankind without a witness of His truth and grace. It pleased God to separate Abram from the multitude of people and teach him the worship of God.

How did God separate Abram from all other people? One day God called unto him saying, "...Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:" The Lord also promised him, "...I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 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."

Abram "believed God". By faith he obeyed God and took Sarah his wife and his nephew Lot; he left his father's house to go into the land which God had promised to give him. He was seventy-five years old at this time. The Bible tells us, "...he went out, not knowing whither he went."

On and on they traveled with their servants and their flocks across the desert, over hills and through valleys. In those days camels were most often used for travel. It was a long, hard, and dangerous journey. Yet, how safe they were, for they were in the will of God. Each step took them further from their fathers' home, but nearer the land which God promised.

After many days and weeks they arrived in the promised land and journeyed until they came to the plain of Moreh. This land of promise was called Canaan. They may well have thought that they would have the

land all to themselves. What a disappointment! The land was filled with people called Canaanites.

The Lord knew what thoughts and fears were in Abram's heart. So, He appeared unto him and said, "...Unto thy seed will I give this land: how thankful Abram was for the Lord's appearing! "There builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him."

You can read about this in Genesis 11. 26-32 and 12 .1-7; Acts 7. 2-5, and Hebrews 11. 8, 9.

Questions:

1. What is the worship of the sun, moon, stars and images called?
2. What was the name of Abram's wife?
3. What did Abram do by faith?
4. What was the land of promise called?
5. What did Abram build after the Lord appeared unto him?

Children of the heavenly King
As ye journey, sweetly sing;
Sing your Saviour's worthy praise,
Glorious in His works and ways.

Ye are travelling home to God
In the way the fathers trod;
They are happy now, and ye
Soon their happiness shall see.

Lord, submissive make us go,
Gladly leaving all below;
Only Thou our Leader be,
And we still will follow Thee.

“By faith
Abraham
when he
was called
to go out ...;
obeyed;”

HEBREWS 11. 8

Chapter 2

ABRAM AND LOT SEPARATE

Abram and his servants lived in tents all the while they sojourned in the land of promise (Canaan). It must have appeared like a city of tents to the people round about them. How different to the beautiful houses they left in Ur. Did they ever wish to return? No. The Bible tells us that, if they had been mindful of (*set their heart upon*) that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.”

As they journeyed toward the south, there came a famine in the land. The grass was withered and the waters in the streams and rivers dried up. They were unable to find pasture for their flocks. They journeyed out of Canaan and came to a country called Egypt.

While in Egypt, Abram was afraid the Egyptians would kill him so that Sarai could become the wife of their ruler. He pretended that Sarai was only his sister instead of his wife. This was very sinful. Had he forgotten God, who promised to bless him? Why did he not trust in God? It was to teach Abram (and you and me) that no man can believe God and trust Him except God help him. God did not allow the Egyptians to touch Abram or Sarai his wife.

After Abram went up from Egypt, he returned to Bethel, where he had pitched his tent in the beginning. The altar he had built before was there. Again, he called upon the name of the Lord.

Abram was now very rich with cattle, silver and gold. His nephew, Lot, also had many flocks and herds. The land was becoming too small for both of them.

Sadly, the servants of Abram and the servants of Lot began to strive and quarrel with each other. When news of this reached Abram, he called Lot and said, “...Let there be no strife, ...between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.”

Abram told Lot to separate from him. If Lot would go to the left, he would go to the right; or if Lot wanted the right, then he would depart to the left. What an example Abram set! He was not selfish or covetous. God had promised him the land; yet, Abram kindly let Lot take the first choice.

Lot was most ungrateful for his uncle’s kindness. He was only concerned for himself. From where they stood, Abram and Lot could see far to the east and west. Lot saw that the east country was well watered as the river Jordan flowed through it. He thought he would never have to

worry about having enough grass and water for his herds.

After Lot departed, the Lord visited Abram and told him to look all around to the north, and south, and east, and west: “For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.” At this time Abram and Sarai had no children, but God promised that some day their seed (descendants) would be as many as the dust of the earth which cannot be numbered. Abram believed God. God told him to “...walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it, to see how great it was.

You can read about this in Genesis 12. 8-20 and 13.

Questions:

6. What did Abram and his household live in?
7. What came in the land that caused Abram to go to Egypt for a while?
8. What reason did Abram give that he and Lot should not strive?
9. Who was given the first choice when Abram and Lot separated?
10. How many children did Abram and Sarai have at this time?

Why should we covet the joy of a day,
Things that will fade in a moment away?
Toiling for wealth and its honours to gain,
Why are we living for trifles so vain?

We have no promise that fame will endure;
Splendour will never our pardon secure;
Gold cannot brighten the gloom of the grave;
Only the merits of Jesus can save.

Trust not the world in its beauty arrayed,
Though at our feet all its treasures be laid;
What would it profit its wealth to control?
What can we give in exchange for the soul?

“...Let
there be no
strife
between me
and thee...;
for we be
brethren.”

Genesis 13. 8

Chapter 3

LOT'S CHOICE BRINGS TROUBLE

Lot was sure that he had made a wise choice in taking the well-watered and fertile plains of Jordan for his possession in the land of Canaan. Not very far away he could see the large cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. In these cities he could trade his sheep and cattle for other goods, or perhaps for gold or silver.

He began by pitching his tent toward Sodom. After a while he moved nearer to the city, until he finally moved his family into the city of Sodom. Perhaps he thought that it would be much safer within the walls. However, the men of Sodom were very wicked and exceeding great sinners before the Lord. The people of Sodom did not like to think about God. They were...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.” Did Lot forget that God separated his Uncle Abram from the men of Chaldea for that reason? God commands all His people to, “...come out from among them (*the wicked world*), and be ye separate,...and I will receive you.” What a bad influence the people of Sodom became to Lot’s wife and children.

One day, trouble came upon Sodom. The armies of four kings came to war against the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah and three other cities. In the battle, the enemy defeated the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. What a fearful sight to the men of Sodom and to Lot! The soldiers coming in the gate were not their own, but their enemies. The soldiers began to force their way into the homes and take their valuables. Then they took the people captive, perhaps to make them slaves. Lot and his family were taken too.

One of the captured men was able to escape. He fled to Hebron to tell Abram what had happened to Lot. Abram quickly armed 318 of his servants and pursued after the enemy. After a long march, they came upon the enemies camp at night. Abram and his servants rushed in upon the unsuspecting soldiers who lay sleeping. They thought that a great host was come, so they fled, leaving behind their tents and all the goods and people that had been taken captive.

God gave Abram a great victory. He recovered all the goods, along with the people and Lot. The king of Sodom went out to meet Abram and told him to keep all the gold, silver and other goods for himself and return only the people to the king. Abram refused to accept any reward, because he had promised God that he would not take anything for himself.

As he returned from the victory, Abram was met by another king whose name was Melchizedek. He was King of Salem. This place would later be called Jerusalem. Melchizedek was also a priest of the Most High God. He brought food for Abram and his servants, and then he blessed him. He also praised God and offered thanks for the great victory given to Abram.

Because Melchizedek was a priest and minister of God, Abram gave him a tenth of all the goods he had taken from the enemy.

You can read about this in Genesis 14 and Hebrews 7. 1-4

Questions:

11. Into what city did Lot move his family?
12. What were the men of Sodom like before the Lord?
13. Who gave Abram a great victory?
14. Who was King of Salem and priest of the Most High God?
15. What did Abram give to Melchizedek?

“Happy *is he* that *hath* the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope *is* in the Lord his God:”

How hurtful was the choice of Lot,
Who took up his abode
(Because it was a fruitful spot)
With them who feared not God!

A prisoner he was quickly made,
Bereaved of all his store;
And, but for Abraham’s timely aid,
He had returned no more.

Yet still he seemed resolved to stay,
As if it were his rest;
Although their sins from day to day
His righteous soul distressed.

“My son, if
sinners
entice thee,
consent
thou not.”

Proverbs 1. 10

Chapter 4

SARAI AND HAGAR

Though Abram was given a victory in the battle against the kings and also possessed great riches and many servants, he had no children. What a trial this was! He was becoming an old man.

One night God appeared unto him in a vision. He told him not to be afraid, for He would protect him and give him a great reward or blessing. Abram asked God what He would give him for a reward. Many years before, God had promised that his children would be as many as the dust of the ground. But still this promise was unfulfilled.

God answered Abram with another sign of His promise. He brought him out into the dark night and told him to look up at the stars in heaven and count them, if he could. God promised, "...So shall thy seed (*descendents*) be." Abram believed the Lord, although he could not see even the beginning of this family of promise.

God made Abram to understand that, before his children would possess the land of Canaan, they should become servants in a strange land. There they would be afflicted four hundred years and then return to Canaan to possess the land as their own.

Abram's wife, Sarai, felt very sorry that she did not have any children. She thought that she was too old to have a child. It just seemed impossible to her. Instead of waiting upon God, she thought of a way whereby she might be given children.

Sarai had a maid named Hagar, an Egyptian. They probably obtained her when they went down to Egypt during the famine. Sarai suggested that Abram also take her for his wife. She could bear Abram a child. Abram hearkened to Sarai's suggestion and married Hagar.

After this, Hagar began to despise Sarai. Sarai wished she had never suggested this marriage. She began to punish Hagar severely. Now Hagar became very unhappy and decided to run away into the wilderness. Perhaps you are tempted to think that you can escape your troubles by running away.

Running away is never a wise thing to do. Deep in the wilderness there were wild animals and, sometimes, robbers. It was not a safe place! As she ran along the lonely desert road, she grew tired and stopped to rest by a fountain of water. Suddenly, Someone appeared. It was an angel of the Lord sent from heaven to her. "...Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go?..." He asked.

“...I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai,” she replied.

The angel of the Lord commanded her to, “...Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.” The angel promised that she would have a son named Ishmael, who would become a mighty man.

Hagar knew that the angel was God’s messenger, and she now realized that the angel was God Himself. She called His name, “...Thou God seest me:...”

After returning to Sarai, Hagar bare Abram a son. Abram called his name Ishmael. How pleased and happy he was with this son! However, he was not the son God had promised him.

You can read about this in Genesis chapters 15 and 16.

16. How many years would Abram’s seed be afflicted in a strange land?
17. What did Hagar do when Sarai punished her?
18. Who appeared to Hagar in the wilderness?
19. What name did Hagar call the angel?
20. What name did Abram give this son?

“The eyes of the Lord *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” Proverbs 15. 3

Where’er I am, whate’er I do,
Cannot concealed be,
For God from His exalted throne,
Does always look at me.

I cannot from His presence go,
Nor from His Spirit flee;
He is Himself in every place,
And always looks at me.

“...Thou

God

Seest

Me:...”

Genesis 16. 13

Chapter 5

ABRAHAM ENTERTAINS STRANGERS

Abram was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born. When Ishmael was thirteen years old and Abram was ninety-nine, the Lord appeared again to Abram. Even though Abram was a very old man, the Lord did not forget him. God said to Abram, "...I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect."

Abram fell on his face before God, and while he was bowed down, God talked with him. God said His covenant would be with him and he would be a father of many nations. His name would no longer be called Abram but Abraham, which means "father of a great multitude." Also Sarai's name was changed to Sarah, which means "princess."

God also promised Abraham that he would have a son with Sarah. This surprised Abraham because he thought Ishmael was the promised son. Besides that, he was nearly one hundred years old and Sarah was ninety. It seemed impossible that Sarah should have a son at such an age. God not only promised him a son, but also told him the name of the child would be Isaac.

After these things, God appeared again to repeat His promise of giving a son to Abraham and Sarah.

One day Abraham sat in the door of his tent resting and shielding himself from the hot midday sun. As he looked out of his tent door, he saw three men coming to him.

He ran to greet them. Even though they were strangers, he was very kind and thoughtful. He asked them to stay with him.

First he fetched some water to wash their feet. Because of the hot climate, people wore sandals; thus their feet became very hot and dusty. Abraham said to his visitors, rest yourselves under the tree: and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort (*refresh*) ye your hearts; for therefore are ye come to your servant..." Abraham believed God had directed them unto him.

Abraham ran to the tent and bid Sarah to quickly bake some cakes of bread for the visitors. Then he ran to the herd and took one of the best calves he had and commanded one of his servants to prepare and cook it for the visitors. When everything was ready, he brought it along with butter and milk and stood by while they ate.

After they had finished eating, they asked, "...Where is Sarah thy wife?..." And he said "...in the tent." How surprised Abraham must have

been! How did these strangers know his wife's name? Surely one of them must be the Lord!

God then promised, "...I will certainly return unto thee...and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son.

Now Sarah stayed in the tent out of sight. But when she heard the saying and remembered how old she and Abraham were, she laughed within herself. This greatly displeased the Lord.

The Lord asked Abraham, "...Wherefore did Sarah laugh...? Is any thing too hard for the Lord?..."

Now Sarah was afraid, and denied, saying, "...I laughed not;" but the Lord answered, "...Nay; but thou didst laugh." Sarah also knew it was the Lord, who sees and hears all we do.

You can read about this in Genesis 17 and 18, verses 1 to 15.

Questions:

21. What were Abram and Sarai's names changed to?
22. What would the name of the promised son be?
23. Who did Abraham show kindness to?
24. Who did Abraham discover one of the strangers to be?
25. What did Sarah do that displeased the Lord?

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

"Be not
forgetful to
entertain
strangers..."

Hebrews 13. 2

Chapter 6

ABRAHAM PLEADS FOR LOT AND SODOM

Abraham esteemed it a great privilege to entertain those three special visitors. What a blessing he obtained in it! How he enjoyed their company!

Perhaps you remember a time when special friends came to visit. How quickly the time passed! You may have felt sad when the time came for them to leave. Abraham must have felt like that when his visitors rose to leave. He wanted to be with them as long as he could; so he walked with them part of the way. They were heading toward Sodom. Why would these holy persons go toward wicked Sodom?

As they walked along, the Lord said, "...Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;" The Lord knew that Abraham would teach his children and his servants to keep the ways of the Lord. Because Abraham was "the Friend of God", the Lord would tell him what He was going to do. The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was so great that the cry of it reached unto heaven. The Lord was going to visit these wicked cities and destroy them for their sin against God.

When Abraham knew that the Lord was going to Sodom and Gomorrah, he thought of his nephew Lot. You may remember that after Lot was rescued by Abraham from the four kings, he went back to Sodom. Abraham loved Lot and pleaded with the Lord for his safety.

While two of the men (angels) continued on toward Sodom, Abraham stood before the Lord and asked, "...Wilt Thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt

thou...not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?" The Lord answered Abraham, "...If I find fifty righteous...then I will spare all the place for their sakes."

Abraham was afraid that there was less than fifty. Yet, how he longed for Lot's safety! He was greatly humbled when he remembered that he was speaking to the Lord God. He said, "...Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: The Lord said, "...If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it."

Once again, Abraham asked if God would destroy the city if only forty righteous could be found. The Lord said, I will not do it for forty's sake."

The Lord's patience in listening to his prayer encouraged Abraham to

keep asking. Abraham wondered if wicked Sodom had even forty righteous souls. He said, "...Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And He (*the Lord*) said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there."

As Abraham thought about Sodom and its wickedness, he feared there would not even be thirty righteous. He asked the Lord if He would destroy the city if only twenty could be found there. The Lord said, "...I will not destroy it for twenty's sake."

Abraham felt he could not let the Lord go until he had asked once more. He said, "...Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And He (*the Lord*) said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake." What a wicked city it must be, if not even ten righteous souls were in it!

"And the Lord went His way,...and Abraham returned unto his place."

You can read about this in Genesis chapter 18 verses 16 to 33.

Questions:

26. What did Abraham do when the visitors left?
27. Which city did the visitors go toward?
28. What would Abraham teach his children and servants?
29. Who was Abraham's Friend
30. What encouraged Abraham to keep asking?

"...men ought always to pray, and not to faint;" Luke 18:1

Lord, teach us how to pray aright,
With reverence and with fear;
Though dust and ashes in Thy sight,
We may, we must draw near.

We perish if we cease from prayer;
O grant us power to pray,
And when to meet Thee we prepare,
Lord, meet us by the way.

“Pray
without
ceasing.”

1 Thessalonians
5. 17