

THE CALL OF ABRAM

Old Testament Lesson #7

Terah (TE-ra) dwelt in Ur of the Chaldeans (kal-DE-ans). This was a city situated on the bank of the Euphrates (u-FRA-teze) River in the region of Mesopotamia (mes-o-po-TA-mi-a). At the end of chapter 11, Terah took his family and set out from Ur to go to the land of Canaan. Traveling with Terah were his son Abram, Abram's wife Sarai (SA-ri) and his grandson Lot. Lot was the child of Terah's deceased son.

About halfway to Canaan, they reached the city of Haran (HA-ran) and settled there. The journey appears to have been halted, and after some unspecified time, Abram's father Terah died.

Then God again appeared to Abram and instructed him to leave his country, his people and his father's household and to head to the land God would show him. God made some extraordinary promises to Abram. They included:

1. He would make Abram a great nation and bless him.
2. He would make Abram's name great and a blessing.
3. He would bless those who bless Abram and curse those who curse Abram.
4. Lastly, all the peoples of the earth would be blessed through Abram.

Once Abram arrived at Shechem (SHECK-m) in Canaan, God appeared again to him and indicated that he would give Canaan to Abram's offspring. Abram journeyed on and pitched his tent between Bethel and Ai (AY-eye), which were both cities of Canaan. Abram built an altar there to call upon the LORD. Abram then journeyed onward to the south toward the desert region of Canaan, called the Negev (NEG-ev).

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- Ur was an important city but was also a center for idolatry. Archaeological evidence has shown the city to have great libraries and an advanced culture. It had a massive temple, and it was the headquarters of the worship of the moon goddess.
- Genesis 11 gives no reason why Terah chose to leave Ur and take his family to Canaan. However, in Acts 7, Stephen indicates that God appeared to Abram in Ur and directed him to leave Ur and "go to the land I will show you" (Acts 7:3). Abram appears to have influenced his father and his family to make the journey. This appears to be confirmed by Nehemiah 9:7.

- Genesis 12:4 indicates that Abram was 75 when he headed toward the land of Canaan. He took with him his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot, along with all the possessions they accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran.

- What was remarkable about God's promise to give the land to Abram's offspring was that Sarai was barren and they had no children. In addition, they were both beyond the age of normal childbearing. This meant that they would have to trust in God for this promise to be fulfilled (see Romans 4:18-25).

The Call of Abram

- I. Abram traveled with his family toward Canaan.
 - A. His father, wife and nephew went with him.
 - B. They settled in Haran and didn't reach Canaan.
 - C. Abram's father Terah died.
- II. God appeared to Abram, told him to leave the country, and made four promises.
 - A. He would make Abram a great nation.
 - B. He would bless Abram's name.
 - C. He would bless those who blessed Abram and curse those who cursed Abram.
 - D. Everyone on earth would be blessed through Abram.
- III. Abram and Sarai moved to Canaan.
 - A. God said he would give land to Abram's offspring.
 - B. Abram built an altar to the LORD and journeyed toward the Negev.

ANSWER KEY:

tent, water, young, milk, dish, vocabulary, peace

"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."