

THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON

DATE: September 7, 2014

SUBJECT: THE FOREFATHERS OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE OF ISRAEL—The Calling of Abraham

SCRIPTURES: Genesis 12:1-8; Joshua 24:2; Gal. 3:8-9, 14; Acts 7:2-8

AIM: To show the children the origin of the people (children) of Israel with the calling out of their forefather Abraham from idolatry to follow the one true God.

MEMORY VERSES: Gen. 12:1-2a, 7a; Hebrews 11:8; 1 Peter 2:9-10;

SUGGESTED SONGS: #44 (FATHER ABRAHAM) , #190 (I AM CALLED) , #1006 (ABRAHAM BELIEVED IN GOD) , #1007 (ABRAHAM) , #2820 (GOD WILL CALL YOU) , # 5505 (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY).

BACKGROUND: We are about to begin a series of lessons which is called “The Travels of the Chosen People of Israel.”. Today we think of Israel as a country, but in the book of Genesis Israel was a person. The people (or the children) of Israel were actually the children, or descendants, of this person Israel. God once told Moses, one of the descendants of Israel, that He was the God of his fathers, “the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.” These three men—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (whose name God later changed to Israel) are the forefathers or patriarchs of the children of Israel. In this first lesson, we will see God’s calling of the forefather Abraham.

We have probably all heard about the great flood that destroyed all the living things on the earth. God sent the flood because He had seen that the wickedness of man was great in the earth (Gen. 6:5-7). Noah and his family were saved from that flood because Noah found favor in the sight of Jehovah (vs. 8). After the flood, Noah’s sons and daughters-in-law began to have children and they filled the land. But after many years and generations passed, mankind again became very sinful and rebellious in the eyes of God. The people were filled with pride and began to build a great city and a tower that would reach up into heaven (Gen. 11:4). Man had again turned away from God. But instead of destroying the entire wicked human race again, God called out one man, Abram.

CONTENT: Abram lived in Ur of the Chaldees where people worshipped idols. (Teachers may need to define “idols” for the children.) There, the God of glory appeared to him and called him to “come out from your land and from your relatives, and come into the land which I will show you” Acts 7:2-3. Abram did not immediately accept God’s calling, but remained in Ur for some time. Eventually, God caused Abram’s father, Terah, to move the family from Ur to Haran (Gen. 11:31, note 1). After the death of Abram’s father (vs. 32), God appeared to Abram a second time and called him again, “Go out from your land and from your relatives and from your father’s house to the land that I will show you...” Then God gave him a promise, “...And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing, and I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed” Gen. 12:1-3).

Abram was seventy-five years old when he answered God’s call. He, his wife Sarai, and his nephew Lot left their country and all their family and obeyed God to go to a land they had never seen before. God had said that He would bring them into a land that He would show them, and Abram believed God. He did not have a map nor did he know the way to go. He only had the real and living “God of glory” to lead him.

When Abram reached Shechem in the land of Canaan, Jehovah appeared to him again and promised him, “To your seed I will give this land.” This showed Abram that he was in the right place; there he built an altar to Jehovah and called upon the name of Jehovah.

Abram had now arrived at the land which God wanted to give to him and to his seed (children). However, at this time Abram had no child! One night when the Lord was speaking to Abram, Abram said, “O Lord Jehovah, what will You give me, for I go childless...” (Gen. 15:2) The Lord assured him that night that his seed would be as the stars of the heavens in number (vs. 5). Later, when Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord came to assure him that He would multiply him exceedingly (Gen. 17:1-2). God made a covenant with him and changed his name to Abraham because he would be the father of a multitude of nations (vs. 3-4). Then God told Abraham to call his wife Sarah and that she would bring forth a son for Abraham (vs. 15-16).

APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:

- Just as the Lord called Abraham out of the land of idols, He is calling us today. He is calling us to love and serve Him alone. Do we put the television, sports and games ahead of the Lord? Are these becoming our idols? Some of us may say that we do not have time to read the Bible or memorize verses, but seem to have time for cartoons and video games. The Lord is calling us today to leave our idols behind.
- Abraham is the father of all those who believe in God. (Gal.3:6-7). Abraham believed what God said. God’s people should believe and obey His word.
- With Abram, God had a new beginning. The start of the school year is also a new beginning for all of us. Just like Abraham, we should “build an altar” to the Lord. This means that we should give ourselves and this new school year to the Lord.

Note to Serving Ones:

The underlined portions are for the younger levels.