

EXPLORING GOD'S WORD LESSON 3

[Read Genesis 12:1-3]

After the Flood, mankind was without a clear revelation of God. Most of the world was steeped in paganism, polytheism, and the worship of ancestors. About 1,900 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, God began to work with a man by the name of Abram from Ur of the Chaldeans in modern day Iraq. Starting with Abram, God slowly began re-introducing Himself to mankind.

The Old Testament is a layered revelation of God.

I. GODS PROMISE TO ABRAM:

1. To make a great nation – this is a promise about Israel.
2. To make his name great – he became Father of the faithful
Abraham becomes the father of all monotheists – those who believe in one God.
3. To bless all families of the earth through his seed – Jesus

Galatians 3:16 (NKJV)

16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.

4. To give the land to his descendants – The Promised Land

Genesis 12:7 (NKJV)

7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

Abram was 75 years old when God called him, and he had no children. Yet, all of the promises of Abram were dependent upon him having children.

II. ABRAM RESPONDED TO GOD IN FAITH:

Hebrews 11:8 (NKJV)

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Romans 4:20–22 (NKJV)

20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

III. ABRAM & SARAH DECIDED THEY WOULD GET GOD'S PROMISE THEIR WAY:

Genesis 16:3-4 (NKJV)

3 Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan.

4 So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes.

Abram's son would be named Ishmael:

Genesis 16:11-12 (NKJV)

11 And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction.

12 He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

Ishmael would become of the father of the Muslim people.

Isaac would become the father of the Israelites.

Flesh vs. Spirit (Read Galatians 4:28-31):

1. Ishmael is a foreshadow of our first birth.
2. Isaac is a foreshadow of our second birth.
3. Ishmael represents that which is born of the flesh.
4. Isaac represents that which is born of the Spirit.

IV. A RENEWED COVENANT:

(Read Genesis 17:1-10)

1. God changed Abram's name to Abraham:
 - a. Abram = "High father"
 - b. Abraham = "Father of multitudes"
2. God instituted the sign of circumcision

We are circumcised with the circumcision of the heart

Colossians 2:11-12 (NKJV)

11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,

12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

3. We are Abraham's heirs:

Galatians 3:26-29 (NKJV)

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

V. GOD KEPT HIS PROMISE TO ABRAHAM: (Read Genesis 21:1-7)

Genesis 21:2 (NKJV)

2 For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, *at the set time* of which God had spoken to him.

God 's promises often have a set time. God is faithful and will keep His word.

VI. GOD TESTED ABRAHAM'S FAITH: (Read Genesis 22:1-13)

1. God gave Abraham a chance to prove why he was living for God.
 - a. Was it for God or for the promise?
2. Abraham demonstrates supreme faith in God.

Hebrews 11:17-19 (NKJV)

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called,"

19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

3. Abraham could build a big altar because he had built lots of small altars.
 - a. His life was marked by altars (devotion) and tents (separation).

VII. THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC FORESHADOWED THE LAMB OF GOD:

Genesis 22:6-8 (NKJV)

6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.

7 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

John 1:29 (NKJV)

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"