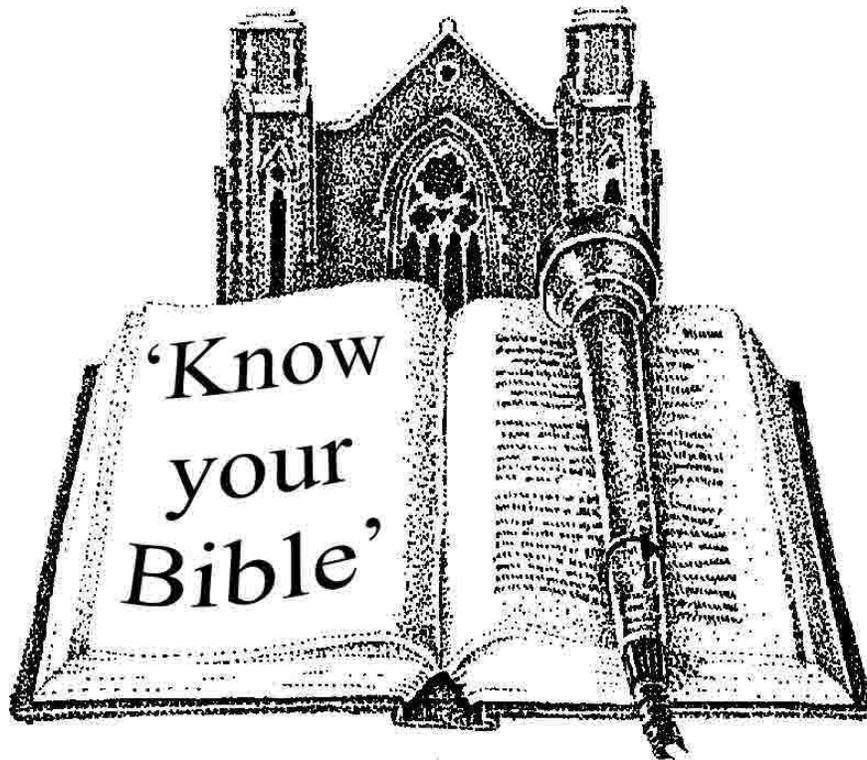


The Life of Abraham

Discussional Bible Studies.

Study Notes by Stuart Olyott



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Table of Contents of Study Notes by Stuart Olyott

Sermon Title	Page No
1 Abraham's call by God.	3
2 Abraham's promises from God.	5
3 God's covenant with Abraham.	6
4 Abraham's prayer to God.	7
5 Abraham lies to God.	8
6 Abraham's test from God.	9

Practical lessons from the life of Abraham.

The life of Abraham

One of the most important characters mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments is Abraham. With his father he migrated from Ur of the Chaldean (in the country we now call Iraq) to Haran (In modern Turkey). God called him to leave there, and he wandered through the countries we now call Syria and Jordan to the land of Canaan, and then as far south as Egypt. He was a pilgrim living in tents, led by God.

God's covenant with Abraham is often referred to as the basis for God's dealings with people, in both Testaments.

Abraham's response of faith is seen as the example of the only way in which people can become right with God. God's promise to Abraham that he would be the father of a multitude of nations is fulfilled in all those who have faith; and Abraham himself is seen as the father of all those who have faith.

His obedience is mentioned in the New Testament as the outstanding example of faith in action. Thus, if we have the same faith and the same obedience, we too can be called 'friends of God', just as Abraham was called 'the friend of God'.

The story of Abraham can teach us many things which will help us in our life today. 4000 years ago he was an exile living amongst strangers. Christians are in that very position today. He was inspired with the vision of a new country, just as we look forward to heaven.

In our studies we will concentrate on the practical lessons we can learn from our spiritual father. A study of his life will show us how to live a life of faith and obedience.

1. Abraham's call by God.

General questions

Genesis 11:26 – 12:7.

- Where did Abraham come from?
- How many of his family journeyed with him?
- What did God tell Abraham to do?
- What 3 things did God promise Abraham?
- What place did God show and promise Abraham?

Genesis 13:5-18.

- Why was there trouble between Abraham and Lot?
- What did Abraham suggest to Lot?
- Which part of the land did Lot choose?
- How did Lot put himself in a dangerous position?
- Did Abraham lose out because of his unselfishness?

Questions for discussions:-

1. "The Lord had said to Abram" (12:1) (12:7)
How does He speak to people today?
2. Abraham obeyed God's call (12:4).
What does God tell us to do nowadays?
How can we obey?
3. Lot chose the best land for himself.
What should be our attitude to the provision of our everyday needs?
4. Abraham, although the elder and leader, was generous to his nephew Lot.
How can we be generous with what we have?

Notes:-

Practical lessons from the life of Abraham.

2. Abraham's promises from God.

Passage for study : Genesis 15 & 16

General Questions:-

Genesis 15:1-6.

- What was Abraham's fear?
- What was God's promise to Abraham?
- Why was Abraham righteous before God?

Genesis 16:1-16.

- Who suggested that Abraham should sleep with Hagar?
- What was Hagar's attitude towards Sarai?
- Why did Sarai banish Hagar?
- What did the angel tell Hagar to do?
- What did the angel promise Hagar?
- - What did she call God? Why?
- What was the name of Hagar's son by Abraham?

Questions for discussion:-

1. What does righteousness mean (15,6)?
How do we obtain it?
2. 15:1 suggests that Abraham had fear.
What sorts of fears do believers have today?
What should they do about them?
3. What can we learn for ourselves from the way God cared for Hagar? (16:6-14).
4. Can we hide anything from God (6:13)?
How should this affect our day-to-day living?

Notes:-

Practical lessons from the life of Abraham.

3. God's covenant with Abraham.

Passage for study : Genesis 17:1-22.

General Questions:-

- | | |
|---|-------|
| - What did God tell Abraham? | 1 |
| - What did God promise to make with Abraham? | 2 |
| - Why did God change Abraham's name? | 5 |
| - What 4 things did God promise Abraham? | 5-8 |
| - What was the sign of the covenant? | 10 |
| - To whom was it to be administered? | 12-13 |
| - What did God promise Sarah? | 15-16 |
| - Why did Abraham laugh at God's words? | 17 |
| - What did God promise concerning Ishmael? | 20 |
| - With whom did God promise to make his covenant? | 21 |

Questions for discussion:-

1. Read again verse 1; and also Matthew 5:48 and 1 Peter 1:16.
What do these mean in day-to-day terms?
2. Has God fulfilled the promises of verses 4-8? In what ways?
3. When God makes his covenant with **us**, what does he promise us:
and what does he demand of us?
4. Is there a 'covenant sign' for Christians?
If so, to whom precisely should it be administered?
5. What lessons about God Can be learned from today's passage?

Notes:-

Practical lessons from the life of Abraham.

4. Abraham's prayer to God.

Passage for study : Genesis 18:17 – 19:1. 19:12-29.

General questions:-

- Why did God decide to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah?
- Why did Abraham ask God to spare the city?
- How many times did he pray to God about the city?
- What was God's answer to each prayer?
- Why did the angels come to Lot's house?
- What did Lot's sons-in-law think of the message?
- Did Lot obey the angels Immediately?
- What did the angel command them to do?
- Where did Lot ask to escape to?
- What was it called?
- What happened to Sodom and Gomorrah?

Questions for discussion:-

1. What do we learn about prayer from Abraham's example here?
2. Christ compares the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah with His own second coming (Luke 17:28-35). How would we prepare ourselves for it?
3. What do we learn about the sort of man Lot was?
4. What problems are faced by young Christians living in big cities today?
What are we to do about them?

Notes:-

Practical lessons from the life of Abraham.

5. Abraham's lies to God.

Passage for study: Genesis 20:1-18.

General Questions:-

- How did Abraham describe his wife to the king?
- What did Abimelech do?
- What did God tell Abimelech in a dream?
- How did Abimelech, behave towards Sarah?
- Who prevented Abimelech from sinning?
- What was Abimelech told to do in the morning?
- Why did Abraham not tell the whole truth?
- How did Abimelech show his forgiveness to Abraham?
- What did Abraham pray for?
- How was the prayer answered?

Questions for Discussion:-

1. Abraham told Abimelech something that was only partly true.
In what Circumstances are we tempted to do the same?
2. God prevented Abimelech from sinning.
What sins of the heart do we particularly need to be prevented from doing?
How can we be kept from these sins?
3. Abraham's half-truth could have led Abimelech to sin.
What actions of ours may cause others to sin?
4. Abimelech forgave Abraham and treated him generously.
How can we show forgiveness to others?

Notes:-

Practical lessons from the life of Abraham.

6. Abraham's test from God.

Passages for study : Genesis 21.1-7, 22:1-19.

General Questions:-

- | | |
|---|-------|
| - In what way was Isaac's birth a miracle? | 2 |
| - How did Abraham obey God's command? | 3 |
| - Why did Sarah call him Isaac, meaning 'laughter'? | 6 |
| - What was Abraham told to do? | 2 |
| - Did he argue with God, or hesitate? | 3 |
| - What did Abraham take with him? | 6 |
| - What did Abraham do when they came to the place? | 9-10 |
| - How did God intervene? | 11-13 |
| - How did God know that Abraham feared him? | 12 |
| - What was the result of Abraham's obedience? | 17-18 |

Questions for discussion:-

1. What does this story teach us about the faith of Abraham.
2. Why does God test our faith?
3. Give some examples of how He does it.
4. What does God promise to those who pass the test?
5. God spared not His own Son, but **did** spare Isaac. Why?

Notes:-