

Exploring the Old Testament

LESSON 2

Adam Through Abraham

Objective: To learn from biblical example the importance of obedience in the Christian life

Read: Genesis 4,6,7,12,22

Memorize: Romans 4:20-21

²⁰ Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.

²¹ He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises.

The fall of Adam not only affected man's relationship with God, but it eventually caused a breach in human relationships. The downward course of human nature plunged even deeper with the murder of Abel by his brother Cain.

As people began to forge a civilization without God, violence and death became constant realities of human existence. Man's

wickedness became so vile that God regretted ever making a human being.

Finding only Noah and his family worthy of saving, God decided to destroy His creation by flood. Nevertheless, after the flood, man's inherent sin nature caused him to once again go his own willful way. This time, God met man's arrogance by confusing the language of evil people and scattering them over the face of the earth.

Even so, we see the redemptive heart of God at work in the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. The calling of Abraham brought the promise of salvation. Because Abraham obeyed God in faith and love, God was able to give him a promise of blessing to the world. The story of Abraham shows how God developed and tested Abraham's faith in relationship to the promise.

The chosen line through Abraham and Isaac led down to the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the promise of blessing and redemption. The lineage of Christ is part of the fabric of the Book of Genesis. Those selected to be in the line were chosen because they were men of faith like Abraham.

Today, we who choose Jesus by faith have our part with faithful Abraham (Romans 4:16).

Bible Study

CAIN AND ABEL

1. In Genesis 4, two sacrifices are made. Evaluate each. Why was one acceptable to God and the other was not?

2. What do you think verse 7 means?

⁷ You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.

3. Read Hebrews 11:4. What part did faith play in Cain's and Abel's sacrifices?

⁴ It was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel's offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed his approval of his gifts. Although Abel is long dead, he still speaks to us by his example of faith.

4. Give at least one present-day example of the two types of sacrifices offered by Cain and Abel.

NOAH

1. Why was God sorry that He had made man on the earth (Genesis 6:5–7)?

⁵ The LORD observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil.

⁶ So the LORD was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart.

⁷ And the LORD said, “I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them.”

2. Why was Noah chosen by God to build an ark (6:8-9)?

⁸ But Noah found favor with the LORD.

⁹ This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God.

3. What do you think God accomplished through Noah? (Genesis 6:17–22; see also Hebrews 11:7.)

Genesis 6:17-22 “Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing that breathes. Everything on earth will die.

18 But I will confirm my covenant with you. So enter the boat—you and your wife and your sons and their wives.

19 Bring a pair of every kind of animal—a male and a female—into the boat with you to keep them alive during the flood.

20 Pairs of every kind of bird, and every kind of animal, and every kind of small animal that scurries along the ground, will come to you to be kept alive.

21 And be sure to take on board enough food for your family and for all the animals.”

22 So Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him.

Hebrews 11:7 It was by faith that Noah built a large boat to save his family from the flood. He obeyed God, who warned him about things that had never happened before. By his faith Noah condemned the rest of the world, and he received the righteousness that comes by faith.

ABRAHAM

1. Abraham holds a unique place in the history of the world. Three religions point to Abraham as the founder of their faith: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. On the basis of Genesis 12:2-3; 16:4,15; and 17:19, how does each faith trace its origins to Abraham?

Genesis 12:2-3 I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others.

3 I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”

Genesis 16:4 So Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress, Sarai, with contempt.

Genesis 16:15 So Hagar gave Abram a son, and Abram named him Ishmael.

Genesis 17:19 But God replied, “No - Sarah, your wife, will give birth to a son for you. You will name him Isaac, and I will confirm my covenant with him and his descendants as an everlasting covenant.”

2. Why do you suppose God made the request of Abraham recorded in Genesis 22:1-2?

¹ Some time later, God tested Abraham's faith. "Abraham!" God called. "Yes," he replied. "Here I am."

² "Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you."

3. Study Genesis 22:8 and give your explanation of it.

⁸ "God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son," Abraham answered. And they both walked on together.

4. How does Abraham's willingness picture God's love for us?

Life Application

1. What important lesson have you learned from God's response to Cain?

2. Do you think you would have boarded the ark with Noah? Why or why not?

3. How have you and your family been blessed in Abraham as promised in Genesis 12:3?

³ I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”

4. How can the story of Abraham offering Isaac to God in Genesis 22 help your faith to grow?