

Abraham

page 1

[Return to the story of the man "Lot."](#)

In the Biblical record, just before we hear of Abraham (Abram), we find that the people were rejecting God, they were so full of pride that they were building a tower to heaven. As a result, God gives people different languages which causes them to spread out according to their language, see [Genesis 11:1-9](#).

The First Communication by God.

We first hear about Abraham, or as he was called originally, "Abram," in [Genesis 12](#), when he is called by God to *"get out of your country, and from your kindred, and your father's house, unto a land that I will show you,"* verse 1. Verse 1 records that God "had" spoken to Abraham, thus showing that the call of Abraham came after the events of the Tower of Babel but before he had left Ur of the Chaldees.

Why did God call Abraham? From [Joshua 24:2,3](#) it is obvious that Abraham was originally an idol worshipper. Abraham did not get the call from God because of his goodness, he was not a special person, was not super intelligent, or had great faith, rather, because of the fact that God could see the future, God knew the future for Abraham and in grace chose him for a special purpose. This is an example of election according to the will and purpose of God, See [Romans 11:5](#); [Ephesians 2:4-6](#). Though God had called Abraham for His special purpose, Abraham still had a free will to obey, he had the right to obey or refuse, he could also still chose which parts of the instruction given by God to obey. Abraham, it appears, chose to obey, with reservation, see [Genesis 11:31](#) ,

"And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there."

The call from God for Abraham had four instruction parts:-

Leave the country of your birth and idol worship.

Leave **all** of your family

Depart from the influence of your father and any inheritance.

Go in complete faith, God did not tell Abraham the final place he was to go to.

God required Abraham to **separate himself** from the world that he had known and **in faith** follow the instructions given to him by God. Abraham had to decide between a worldly inheritance or the future inheritance offered by God.

Examine and think on the following:-

[Deuteronomy 31:6](#); [Proverbs 3:5,6](#); [1 John 2:15-17](#); [James 4:4](#); [1 John 5:4-9](#); [Matt 6:24](#); [Matt 10:37-39](#); [Luke 14:26,27](#); [Rom 12:1,2](#)

We must note at this point that God seldom supplies reasons or explains His commands or instructions, He often gives instructions with wonderful promises, but we have to trust and step out in faith in the promises because God always knows what is best for us.

Note that with the command from God for Abraham to move away from his family, God also gave a promise that He would make Abraham a great nation.

Abraham starts to obey

Abraham obeyed the first part of God's commandment, he left the world of Ur and the idol worship and paganism, however, he took his close relatives with him. Because of this failure, to fully obey God only took them as far as Haran, there they stopped. The journey so far would have been easy, they had to follow the Euphrates River, plenty of water and food for their animals, but the next stage onto Canaan would involve a journey across dry and desert like land. This was a real step of faith in God for Abraham.

God did not want the Abraham family to enter Canaan, Abraham had to be separate from his father, God wanted Abraham to be separated from his past. God has to wait for Abraham to make the decision to make the next step out in faith. We are not told how long Abraham remained in Haran, possibly a number of years.

When did Abraham take this step? See [Genesis 11:32](#), After Teran his father had died at the age of 205 years, wasted years for Abraham.

When we as Believers give up an interest or a way of living because of a command from God He always gives a wonderful reward. See [Mark 10:28-30](#)

The Next Step

At last Abraham obeys the command of God, [Genesis 12:5](#),

"And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."

On arrival in Canaan Abraham does not stop but carries on to Sichem on the plains of Moreh, why? Because God gave no instruction to stop, though He had promised the land to Abraham, that was still in the future.

[Genesis 12:6](#);

[Acts 7:5](#).

The Second Communication by God.

This is recorded in [Genesis 12:7-9](#),

"And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there build-ed he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him."

God now introduced communication with worship. Up to now God had only been instructed, now Abraham builds an altar of worship and communion. They move to be near to a place called Bethel, which means "house of God".

Consider [Hebrews 11:8-10](#)

All true Believers must first take the step of faith and then add the worship and communion with God, see [1 John:6,7](#).

We are all strangers and pilgrims on earth as children of God.

[Genesis 12:9](#) recorded that Abraham continued South, he does not remain at the altar of worship. Why?

"there was a famine in the land: and Abram(Abraham) went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land. "

Abraham did not trust God to supply his needs during the famine and as a result enters a severe trial.

The Trial in Egypt.

Abraham lacks faith as he enters Egypt, [Genesis 12:11-13](#).

"11 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:

12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

13 Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee."

Abraham feared for his life because of the beauty of his wife Sarai, so they plan to tell and live a lie. In addition Abraham is more worried about his own safety than the honour of his wife. In the days of Abraham a wife was not respected that much, often being treated as "property" but because of his relationship with God.

Abraham should have had more respect for Sarai, she was all part of the plan of God.

Abraham now lives a lie, pretending to be what he was not, he was Sarai's husband not her brother.

Just as Abraham thought, Pharaoh found Sarai very attractive and took her to live with him, planning to make her his wife. Abraham is rewarded and well treated by Pharaoh, but God moved in and, [Genesis 12:17](#).

"17 And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife."

Pharaoh is very angry with Abraham and sends him away with Sarai, verses 18,19. Abraham's lack of faith had resulted in a rebuke and correction in his life by the "world."

Please note that God did not reject Abraham because of his failure.

Consider a True Believer who fails in faith like this,

[1 Corinthians 3:12-15](#)

[John 10:27,28](#)

[Philippians 1:6](#),

This tells us how God will treat the Believer, God does not reject us because we failed.

Do not think you can therefore live as you please because God will always have mercy and forgiveness, this is the "sin of presumption."

Abraham is forced to leave Egypt, ashamed because of his lie. He entered Egypt because he did not have faith that God would care for him during the famine, now he returns back to the place where he built the altar,

[Genesis 13:1-4](#).

Consider [1 John 1:5,6,9](#)

[1 John 2:1](#).

Abraham had still not completely obeyed the original commands of God, total separation from family had been requested but Lot was still with him.

Both Abraham and Lot had been blessed by God with great riches and many herds of cattle, this was making great demands on the land and was causing problems with the herdsmen of Abraham and Lot, each wanting the best grass for their herds.

[Genesis 13:5-7](#).

Abraham makes a very generous offer to Lot to get over the problem.

Abraham's offer.

There is no record of Lot building a place of worship or having any communication with God. Lot was living for his own pleasure and gain. It is possible, that while in Egypt, Lot may have developed a liking for the world.

Consider [Galatians 5:16,17](#).

Abraham had been promised the land by God, he could have demanded that he should chose where to go but he is prepared to leave the fulfillment of the promise to God.

Genesis 13:8-12 tells us that Abraham offered Lot the choice of the land available to them. "*Lot lifted up his eyes and saw*" the plains of Jordan and the rich grasslands there and so chooses the easy path, he preferred to "*separate*" from God and take what the world offered, and therefore "*pitched his tent toward Sodom*".

[Genesis 13:13](#) "*But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.*"