

# Genesis 12-18

## **I. Introduction**

1. The title: "Genesis" = beginning; origin; generation; this title was taken from the Septuagint = the ancient Greek translation of the OT.

A. The OT was primarily written in Hebrew with the exception of portions of Ezra and Daniel and a few other verses in Aramaic.

B. Hebrew is the language that is believed founded by Abraham in the land of Canaan, thus he did not bring it with him from the Ur of Chaldees. This is the language spoken by the Israelite nation during OT time.

C. Aramaic was an international language of business and diplomacy during the days of Babylonian captivity and adopted by the Jews who returned from Babylonian captivity. In the time of Christ, Aramaic was spoken by large numbers of the Jews in their conversation.

D. Greek was the language of the NT and also the common language of nations during Jesus' day. By God's divine hand the OT was translated into Greek in 285 BC. This translation was called the Septuagint because 70 translators, who knew Hebrew and Greek and were scholars, were chosen to translate the OT into Greek.

2. Who wrote Genesis?

A. God did. He breathed it from His very inner being. (II Tim. 3:16)

B. He used human instruments--holy men. (II Peter 1:21) Moses is the chosen human instrument who wrote this book also entitled "The first book of Moses called Genesis." Our Lord credited Moses as the human instrument used to pen this book and at least four more--Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:45-47)

## **II Outline of Genesis**

1. Mankind in general. (Chap. 1-11)

A. The creation. (1-2)

B. The fall of man. (3-4)

C. Noah and the flood. (5-10)

D. The Tower of Babel. (11)

## 2. The Patriarchs of Israel. (Chap. 12-50)

- A. The life of Abraham. (12-25)
- B. The life of Isaac. (21-28)
- C. The life of Jacob. (25-49)
- D. The life of Joseph. (30-50)

Note: their lives overlap each other.

### **III. Mankind in general. (Chap. 1-11)**

- A. The creation. (Chap. 1-2)
- B. The fall of man. (Chap. 3-4)
- C. Noah and the Flood. (Chap. 5-10)
- D. The Tower of Babel. (11)

### **IV. The Patriarchs of Israel. (Chap. 12-50)**

- A. The life of Abraham. (Chap. 12-25)

## **CHAPTER 12:**

### V. 1

1. The Scripture now takes leave of the rest of the Shemites, as well as the other branches of the human family, and confines itself to Abram. Thus, we have the beginning of the period of time referred to by man as the dispensation of promise which covers 430 years of history--from Abram's entrance into Canaan unto the Exodus.
2. "Now" = introduces an explanation of what precedes.
3. "The LORD" = Jehovah; the self existent One who stands alone with no aid from anybody or any other being in this world or out of this world.

4. "Had said unto Abram" = this occurred when Abram was in Ur of the Chaldees according to Stephen in Acts 27:2-4; the text seems to indicate that God renewed this call to Abram when his father died in Haran.

5. I believe that Shem (human instrument God used to tell the idol worshipers in Ur; this is God's principle; I Cor. 3:5) told Abram and his family about the God of heaven. Abram believed God existed; thus, having intellectual faith which led to seeking faith (Heb. 11:6); therefore, when he was called to leave his country, kindred, and his father's house, he told his father he was leaving Ur (Heb. 11:8,10); his father may have said, "I'm going with you," and took the lead as patriarch of the family, thus, it was recorded that "Terah took Abram" in Gen. 11:31.

6. And they came unto Haran and dwelt there. Haran was still in the same country as Ur of the Chaldees--about 550 miles. They lived there for some time--may have been as much as 32 years and as little as five years. We do not know the exact time but this act of stopping at Haran was in disobedience to what the Lord had said. Just remember that Abram is not yet saved. The faith that moved him was seeking faith. Abram was not saved until Gen. 15:6 which was nine years after entering Canaan's land.

7. When Abram's father died it seems that the Lord repeated His call to him in these first three verses of Genesis 12.

8. "Get thee out" = the Lord spoke personally to Abram at Ur and Haran to go for himself no matter who else remains behind.

10. "Of thy country" = speaks of leaving the country where Ur and Haran were located.

11. "And from thy kindred" = refers to family; family without a heart for God will hold you back.

12. "And from thy father's house" = refers to the inmost circle of all his tender emotions--there is no place like home; Abram had to leave Ur and then Haran after he had settled there; Jesus said one cannot be His disciple unless he forsakes all. (Luke 14:33)

13. "Unto a land that I will shew thee" = the Lord did not name the (the not a) land, both in Ur and Haran, nor did he describe it; but with a seeking faith Abram begin his journey from Ur and now from Haran (Heb. 11:8); the construction (both Hebrew and Greek) indicates "I'll show you as you go."

## V. 2

1. "I" = the LORD--Jehovah; also in verse 3.

2. "Thee" = "thy" = "thou" = Abram; also in verse 3.

3. "I will" = a promise which corresponds to the command of verse 1; if he is to lose much by his leaving all, he will also gain in the end; history says that the houses of Ur were nice and comfortable and Abram gave that up to dwell as a Nomad in a goat hair tent.
4. "I will make of thee a great nation" = this will compensate for the loss of his country.
5. "I will bless thee" = temporally with every kind of good, particular with offspring (even though he hadn't been told that yet), but also spiritually; the blessing was a recompense for the forsaking the place of his birth and kindred.
6. "And make thy name great" = he was to be the patriarch of a new house which would cause him to be honored and respected all over the world; the Jews, Christians, and Muslims all respect Abraham--name Abram was changed to Abraham in Gen. 17.
7. "And thou shalt be a blessing" = Abram was not merely the subject of Divine blessing but a medium of blessing to others; the sense in the source of blessing to others is explained in the next verse.

## V. 3

1. "And I will bless them that bless thee" = Abram embraced God's cause, and here God promises to interest Himself in His cause; He promises to be a friend to his friends, to take kindnesses shown to him as done to Himself and to recompense them accordingly; God will take care that none be losers, in the long run, for any service done for His people--even a cup of cold water shall be rewarded. (Mat. 10:42)
2. "And curse him that curseth thee" = He promises also to appear against his enemies; there were those that hated and cursed even Abram himself, but while their curses could not hurt Abram, God's righteous curse would certainly overtake and ruin them.
3. "And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" = this is the promise that crowned all the rest; not blessed by thee or in thy name but "in thee" as the ancestor in the direct line to the promised seed (Gal. 3:8); Abram was constituted a blessing because the whole fulness of salvation for the world was narrowed up to his line, by which in the future it would be carried forward, and at the appointed season, when the woman's seed was born--Christ the Messiah (Gal. 3:13-14); all families are blessed because Christ is the light that lighteth up every man (John 1:9); therefore, every man is blessed with light whether he knows it or not.
4. I am glad Abraham obeyed God even while he had seeking faith and was not yet saved. He made some mistakes while he was seeking during those 41 or 14 possible years but one thing he never did--he never went back to his old country. He walked the steps of faith and was saved at 84 years of age and we too can be blessed in him by walking the steps of faith he did. (Rom. 4:12) Intellectual faith leads to seeking faith which leads to saving faith and that will lead to serving faith.

5. The Abraham principle of salvation is missing in a lot of people's profession of salvation today.

#### V. 4

1. "So" = literally "and."
2. "Abram departed" = from Haran, "as the LORD had spoken unto him" = refers to what the Lord said concerning leaving "thy country" in verse 1.
3. "And Lot went with him" = verse 5 speaks of Abram taking Lot; Lot was his kindred and verse 1 made it clear he was to leave his kindred; whether or not this was Abram's idea or Lot's idea we know not.
4. "And Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran" = this verse confirms that Haran was where Abram departed from in verse 4; also this verse confirms the notes we wrote in Gen. 11:26 concerning Abram being the youngest son of Terah even though mentioned first because it was through him the Seed--Jesus Christ--was to come; his being 75 years old when he departed Haran lets us know Terah was 130 years old when Abram was born for he died at 205 years of age (Gen. 11:32); thus,  $205 - 75 = 130$  years.

#### V. 5

1. "And Abram took Sarai his wife" = she was not his kindred but his wife who should go with him; God had joined them together, and nothing should part them asunder; if Abram was to leave all to follow God, she should and would leave all to follow her husband.
2. "And Lot his brother's son" = Abram's nephew, who was born to his brother Haran, who had died in Ur, thus Terah took Lot in to raise him and now Abram may have felt obligated to care for him.
3. "And all their substance that they had gathered" = the Lord had blessed Abram materially while they were at Haran whether it was 5 years or 32 years; this shows the goodness of God to Abram, a lost man, who had not completely obeyed what the Lord told him in Ur--leave your country, leave your kindred.
4. This ought to help the lost who are trying to seek the Lord and obey the light they have, that when they fail it is not the end of the world for them no matter what the Devil says. The Lord is good, longsuffering, and forbears while you are on your journey to the strait gate so that you may be brought to repentance. (Rom. 2:4)
5. "And the souls that they had gotten in Haran" = refers to the servants or bondslaves he had acquired; later in Gen. 14:14, 318 servants are spoken of; how many they had

when they left Haran we do not know; they had enough to take care of his flocks and herds and his family's need at that time; these were part of their substance, but are called souls, to remind masters that their poor servants have precious souls which they ought to take care of and provide for them the necessities of life.

6. "And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came" = the Hebrew construction of the promise given in verse 1 makes it clear that the Lord would show them as they went; Abram did not know he was going to Canaan when he left Haran but Moses the human instrument knew Canaan was the place Abram went to; therefore, he recorded the place he was headed to and arrived at as Canaan; Canaan was 300 miles from Haran.

## V. 6

1. "And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem" = the spelling of this place later was Shechem, which is the place the children of Israel buried Joseph's bones (Josh. 24:32); at this time the town was probably not yet in existence but Moses used the name when he penned this down; it lay between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal in the middle of the land; later it became one of the cities of refuge in Israel (Josh. 20:7)

2. "Unto the plain of Moreh" = after much searching, I find the Hebrew word translated "plain" really means "oak" thus "the oak of Moreh" = refers to a plain set with oaks belonging to a man by the name of Moreh; this is in the same location as Sichem and not in another place; I do not know the exact significance of the use of this phrase.

3. "And the Canaanite was then in the land" = simply means the Canaanites were in possession of the land which bore their name; implies that the land was not open for Abram to enter and have immediate possession of it without a challenge; the land was not a stretch of unoccupied territory, but a populated region.

## V. 7

1. "The LORD appeared unto Abram" = this is the first mentioned appearance of Jehovah, who is the Lord Jesus Christ; Acts 7:2 reveals this had previously occurred at Ur and it is implied also at Haran; just how this occurred we cannot be sure but we know in OT time the Lord spoke in divers manners but in NT time He does so by His Son. (Heb. 1:1-2)

2. "And said" = this is the third time He spoke to Abram.

3. "Unto thy seed will I give this land = now the Lord enlarges His promise; He spoke of a seed, who is the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:16); this is another proof Abram was not saved in Ur--he hadn't even been told of "the seed," therefore, he could not believe something he had never heard; notice He didn't say He would give it unto thee but "unto

thy seed;" to Abram himself He gave none inheritance in it, not so much as to set his foot on. (Acts 7:5)

4. "This land" = "there" = Canaan.

5. "There builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him" = this altar was erected on the spot which was hallowed by the appearance of the Lord to Abram; even though Abram was a stranger in this land he set up and kept up the worship of God in his family--wherever he had a tent, God had an altar--signifies a high place because the altar was commonly a raised structure or mound of earth or stones; a structure for the purpose of sacrifice.

6. It is often said of Abraham and the patriarchs that they built altars to the Lord, but it is never said that they built houses for themselves.

## V. 8

1. "And he removed from thence (Sichem) unto a mountain on the east of Bethel" = no reason for this move is mentioned; I would assume it was the Lord's will and He communicated it to him even though it is not recorded.

2. "Pitched" = to stretch and spread out; staked it down for the present time; he did this between "Bethel and Hai" = probably inserted by Moses as he penned down this book; those names were known in Moses' day and are still known today; the cities are about five miles apart.

3. "West" = sea-ward; the Mediterranean Sea was the western boundary of Palestine.

4. "And there he builded an altar unto the LORD" = this was characteristic of Abram even though he was not saved as yet.

5. "Called upon the name of the LORD" = "called" often implies public worship, and it is evident that Abram's servants joined in the worship; it was also a witness to Abram's Canaanite neighbors and let them know he was a friend of Jehovah, even though he was not saved yet; when I wrote an article several years ago about "When and where was Abraham saved?" I had some who said he was saved here because he called on the name of the Lord using Rom. 10:13 as their basis.

6. A person can call all day long on the Lord with his mouth and not be saved because there has not been a completed work of reproof and godly sorrow to enable a person to call with a repentant heart and believe with saving faith.

7. Abram was not saved until Gen. 15:6, which was nine years after he got in the land of Canaan, but he did walk the steps of faith and was saved. (Rom. 4:12) Intellectual faith leads to seeking faith, which leads to saving faith, which leads to serving faith. You will be blessed with father Abraham if you walk those steps of faith.

## V. 9

1. "Journeyed" = to pull up the tent pins; broke up his encampment.
2. "Going on still toward the south" = "south" is translated from the Hebrew word, Negeb--the southern district of Palestine, normally dry, especially in the summer time; this region is between Kadesh-Barnea and Beer-sheba.
3. Abram is surveying the land and feeding his flocks as he finds pasture and water.

## V. 10

1. "Famine" = from a root word signifying to hunger; a general want of provisions sufficient for the inhabitants of a country.
2. "In the land" = the land of Canaan; the land of Canaan was naturally fertile but due to lack of rain the land was dry.
3. This famine was a test of Abraham's faith.
4. "And Abram went down into Egypt" = there is no mention concerning what the Lord's will was in this matter; also there is no mention of praying to find God's will; it seems Abram made this choice probably based upon hearing that there was pasture in Egypt where the Nile furnished water for the cattle and crops as well as themselves; one thing Abram did not do--go back to Haran or Ur.
5. "To sojourn" = to tarry as a stranger, but not to dwell; to live in a place as a temporary resident; Abram did not intend to stay there long.
6. "Grievous" = severe; difficult; heavy.
7. "For" = introduces the reason he left the land of Canaan.

## V. 11

1. "And it came to pass" = literally, "it was" = "when he was come near to enter into Egypt" = the place "he said unto Sarai his wife" = this seems to be just a reminder of what they had previously discussed when they left Ur (Gen. 20:13); fear gripped Abram's heart--fear for his life due to Sarai being a beautiful ("fair") "woman to look upon."

## V. 12

1. "Therefore" = in view of the fact just stated in verse 11.
2. "The Egyptians" = notorious for their licentiousness--excessive indulgence of liberty.
3. "When the Egyptians, etc." = Abram thought they would kill him in order to possess Sarai and take her into Pharaoh's harem; they counted murder a less crime than adultery.
4. "But" = and.
5. "They will save thee alive" = for either compulsory marriage or dishonorable use.

#### V. 13

1. "I pray thee" = I ask you to say "Thou *art* my sister" = this was a half-truth; Sarai and Abram had the same father but not the same mother, thus she was a half-sister to Abram.
2. "That it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee." = even though Sarai would be placed in Pharaoh's harem, it would take time for marriage such as this to be arranged and Abram no doubt counted upon being able to leave Egypt before any injury would be done to Sarai.
3. Sarai was about 65 years old--when this incident occurred.

#### V. 14

1. This verse states that what Abram had said in verse 13 happened just as he had said.
2. "Beheld" = to see; to look upon; her face must have been unveiled.
3. "Fair" = beautiful.

#### V. 15

1. "Princes" = chief men.
2. "Pharaoh" = the official title of the king of Egypt.
3. "Commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken" = the chief men saw her beauty and recommended her to Pharaoh who was perfectly honorable in his proposals while Abram and Sarai by their deception, had rendered it impossible to object without divulging their secret.

4. "Into Pharaoh's house" = refers to his harem (place where the Eastern kings confine their women from society) with a view to marriage as a secondary wife.

#### V. 16

1. "He" = Pharaoh.

2. "And he entreated Abram well for her sake" = Pharaoh was good to Abram on account of Sarai.

3. "And he had" = literally there was given to him.

4. All these animals as well as the servants were given to Abram to obtain his consent from Sarai's brother to be married to Pharaoh. Animals and servants were a symbol of riches. Abram now had become a rich man. The Lord was good to him in all his failures. This reveals our Lord's longsuffering.

#### V. 17

1. To settle the whole matter, Pharaoh was afflicted with plagues until he realized that something was wrong and drove the visitors from the land.

#### V. 18

1. Some way Pharaoh had found out Sarai was Abram's wife.

#### V. 19

1. The language of this verse lets us know that Pharaoh had not taken Sarai to wife. We do not know how long they were in Egypt or how long Sarai was in Pharaoh's house.

#### V. 20

1. "And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him" = this command was to dismiss Abram and all he had gained in Egypt, unharmed, from the country.

2. These men were probably an escort for their safe passage out of Egypt.

## CHAPTER 13:

### V. 1

1. "And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife" = Abram is obeying the command of Pharaoh in Gen. 12:20; "went up" indicates the hill country of Canaan was a higher elevation than the low-lying valley of Egypt; Abram being able to travel with his wife, back to Canaan, indicates a special mercy shown them for it is a wonder that either of them returned, considering the sin they had committed and the peril in which they had been placed.
2. "All that he had" = referring to his household servants and substance that he had gained while in Haran and also in Egypt; the Lord blessed Abram even though he was lost and did not do completely right--this shows the Lord's love for sinners. (Eph. 2:4-5a)
3. "And Lot with him" = this lets us know that Lot had accompanied Abram into Egypt.
4. "Into the south" = the Negeb, which was in the south of Canaan and the place Abram left from when the famine came. (Gen. 12:9-10)

### V. 2

1. "Abram was very rich" = means to have in abundance.
2. "Cattle" = means to acquire by purchase, livestock, thus including sheep as well as cattle; this was the chief form of wealth in the East.
3. "In silver, and in gold" = these materials are mentioned for the first time in Scripture as belonging to mankind; implies an acquaintance among the Egyptians with the operations of mining and the processes of refining these precious metals.

### V. 3

1. "And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, etc" = Abram is following the same path but in the opposite direction that he had taken when he had entered Canaan.

### V. 4

1. "Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first" = this is not saying he built his first altar between Bethel and Hai, for he built his first altar mentioned at Sichem (Gen. 12:7-8); "the first" = refers to Abram's first journey through Canaan land.

2. "And there Abram called on the name of the Lord" = there at the place he had previously built an altar; implies public worship and no doubt his servants joined in the worship; this also was a witness to Abram's Canaanite neighbors and let them know he was a friend of Jehovah, even though he was not saved yet.

## V. 5

1. "And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents" = Lot's uncle's prosperity overflowed upon the nephew; the word translated "tents" includes the domestic servants.

## V. 6

1. "And the land was not able to bear them" = there was not enough pasture available to sustain both men's animals; neither party had any title to the land so the herdmen of both Lot and Abram would try to find the best pasture and keep the others away.

2. "That they could not dwell together" = reason being "their substance was great" = the number of their herds and flocks had increased until there was not enough pasture in the area for both men's animals.

## V. 7

1. "And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdman of Lot's cattle" = result of their wealth and not enough pasture available in the area cause the herdmen to quarrel and anger flared.

2. "And the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land" = this is another reason there was not enough pasture available to Abram and Lot--the Canaanite and Perizzite had herds and flocks they had to pasture as well.

2. "Perizzite" = first mentioned in Scripture; they were dwellers in the hills and woods of Palestine, in the open country and in villages, as opposed to the Canaanites, who occupied walled towns; thus, the land was occupied and enough pasture could not be found for all of Abram's and Lot's herds and flocks to pasture.

## V. 8

1. "And Abram said to Lot" = Abram had a desire to avert the danger of collision between his nephew and himself so he spoke up and acted as a peace-maker.

2. "For we *be* brethren" = kinsmen by relationship--family.

#### V. 9

1. "Is not the whole land before thee" = most likely the view from this mountain plateau between Bethel and Hai was an extensive view of Palestine.

2. "Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me" = Abram is giving Lot the choice of the country; if you go to the left, I will go right, and if you go right, I will go left--Abram is saying it matters not which way you go, I'll take what is left.

#### V. 10

1. "And Lot lifted up his eyes" = with a look of eager, lustful greed.

2. "Beheld" = to see; this was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

3. "All the plain of Jordan" = described as "well watered every where" and was compared to "the garden of Eden" = which was well watered with its four streams (Gen. 2:10) and "like the land of Egypt" which was irrigated by the Nile and by canals from it; the fertility of Egypt had just been witnessed by the two kinsmen.

4. Zoar" = city at the south-east corner of the Dead Sea (not there then).

#### V. 11

1. "Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan" = allured by its beauty and fertility, and being selfish as he was, he chose the plain of Jordan; he had forgotten all that his uncle Abram had done for him.

2. "Lot journeyed east" = from the hill country of Hai, the Jordan lay to the east; this brought about the phrase "they separated themselves the one from the other" = they, along with their herdsman, were no longer feeding their animals on the same pasture.

3. Scofield's headings state that verses 10-11 are Lot's first step in backsliding. He along with many preachers today think that Lot was a saved man when he made this choice. There is no way that could be true because Lot did not have as much light as Abram did and Abram was not saved at this time.

4. Also, many use Lot's life as an excuse for their sinful life after they claim to be saved. This is not right, because a saved person cannot go years in sin without God chastening

him, and if one does not respond to that, then he will commit a sin unto death and the Lord will carry him home early. (I John 5:16) If one can go on habitually in sin, he is not saved. (I John 3:9; "commit" refers to an habitual lifestyle.)

5. I have an article I wrote several years ago about "When and Where was Lot Saved?" If you would like to have a copy of that contact us.

## V. 12

1. "Dwelted" = to remain; to settle; to abide as a permanent resident.
2. "Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan" = he lived in the hill country of Canaan as a wanderer throughout its borders, sojourning in a strange country. (Heb. 11:9)
3. "Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain" = he was desirous of a permanent settlement within the gates or at least in the immediate neighborhood of the wealthy cities of the land.
4. "And pitched *his* tent toward Sodom" = in the direction of; no doubt every move he made was closer to Sodom and finally made that city his home.
5. Note: Lot was not saved when he did this.

## V. 13

1. "But" = literally "and."
2. "The men of Sodom *were* wicked and sinners" = "wicked" means bad or evil; though all are sinners, some are greater sinners than others.
3. "Sinners before the LORD" = they were shameless daring sinners; described as "exceedingly" = to a very great degree beyond what is usual; their vileness was not restrained, neither in quantity nor quality; Isaiah used Sodom to reprove Judah in Isa. 3:9; their sins are listed in Ezk. 16:49-50.

## V. 14

1. "The LORD" = Jehovah.
2. "Said unto Abram" = this is the third (recorded; may be the fourth) time He spoke to Abram even though he is not yet saved.

3. "After that Lot was separated from him" = now Abram is in the condition the Lord wanted him to be because He told him when he left Ur, "Leave your country and leave your kindred."
4. The Lord now enlarges the promise.
5. "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, etc." = Abram was between Bethel and Hai, the center of Palestine on one of the mountain peaks, from which Abram could view almost the entire country.
6. "Northward" = toward Galilee.
7. "Southward" = as far as Beer-sheba.
8. "Eastward" = this would include the Jordan valley where Lot was.
9. "Westward" = literally "toward the sea," referring to the Mediterranean Sea which was on the west coast of Palestine.

#### V. 15

1. "For all the land which thou seest" = the entire country.
2. "To thee will I give it" = not to Lot; the land was given to Abram as a nomadic (wandering for the sake of pasture) chief, in the sense that he peacefully lived there for many years, grew old, and died within its borders.
3. "And to thy seed" = refers not to his bodily posterity (Isaac) but also and chiefly his spiritual family; this land of promise is a type of heavenly Canaan.
4. "For ever" = for a perpetual possession; means as long as the order of things to which it belongs lasts or better stated: to the close of that period which was already measured out in the secret counsels of Jehovah for the duration of the seed of Abram as a people.

#### V . 16

1. "I" = the LORD--Jehovah.
2. "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth" = Abram's seed, which is singular, shall be innumerable--cannot be counted just as particles of dust cannot be counted, as the last phrase of this verse brings out.(Compare to Rev. 7:9)
3. We see that the promise begins to enlarge itself beyond the bounds of the natural seed of Abram.

## V. 17

1. "Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it" = this is to be understood not as a literal direction, but as a hint that he might leisurely survey his inheritance.
2. "For I will give it unto thee" = repetition of verse 15; repeated to give Abram assurance that it was his.

## V. 18

1. "Then" = literally "and" acting immediately as the heavenly voice directed.
2. "Abram removed *his* tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre which *is* in Hebron" = Abram broke up his settlement between Bethel and Hai and traveled south to Hebron, where the plain of Mamre was; these names may have been placed in Scripture by Moses, the human instrument who penned down this book, about 430 years after this occurrence; it seems Abram settled down ("dwelt") in this open country.
3. "Mamre" = name is associated with an Ammorite chieftain who afterwards became the friend and ally of Abram. (Gen. 14:13)
4. "Plain" = Hebrew word is said to mean an oak or other strong tree; when in Israel in 1975 we were shown an old oak that was said to be the Oak of Abraham, which is in Hebron.
5. "Hebron" = a city about 20 miles south of Jerusalem on the way to Beer-sheba; located at the junction of all the principle highways of the region; surrounding the city were olive trees, grapevines, springs, wells, and grazing ground; the cave of Machpelah, later bought by Abraham for a tomb for Sarah, was very near.
6. "And built there an altar unto the LORD" = this was characteristic of Abram even though not saved as yet.

## **CHAPTER 14:**

### V. 1

1. "And it came to pass" = means some time had elapsed after Abram separated from Lot and relocated at Hebron; Abram is believed to be about 84 years of age; he had been in Canaan for 9 years except for a short stint in Egypt.

2. "In the days of Amraphel etc." = these four kings had joined together, probably trying to become a world empire.

A. "Amraphel" = "the king of Shinar" = located in northern Mesopotamia--the name of the entire area between the Tigris and Euphrates, including Babylon.

B. "Arioch" = "king of Ellasar" = thought to be located in the southern Mesopotamia area, which would include Ur; you need to remember Abram may have been gone as much as 41 years from Ur, so he may not have known him first hand.

C. "Chedorlaomer" = "king of Elam" = a well known mountain region near the head of the Persian Gulf; he seemed to be the most powerful of the four kings who made up this league.

D. "Tidal" = "king of nations" = his title may indicate that he was in control of several individual kingdoms or that he was at the head of a strong band of roving people who were in the business of making raids with open force--to plunder.

## V. 2

1. "*These*" = in italics, thus supplied by the translators because it is implied; refers to the league of four kings of verse 1.

2. "Made war" = the reason for the war is found in verse 4-5--these five kings rebelled from serving this league of four kings after doing so for 12 years; so after a year, in the 14th year, they made war to make them pay for their rebellion.

3. These five kings and their cities:

A. "Bera" = "king of Sodom" = Sodom was chief in power, luxury and wickedness, thus it is mentioned first.

B. "Birsha" = "king of Gomorrah" = name means a ruined city.

C. "Shinab" = "king of Admah" = we know very little about this city except it is mentioned almost always with Sodom and Gomorrah.

D. "Shemeber" = king of Zeboim" = another spelling is Zeboim; again we know very little about this city except it is mentioned several times with Sodom and Gomorrah.

E. "The king of Bela, which is Zoar" = "Zoar" = means "the little" which may be one reason it is placed last; even the name of its king is not given; this city is located in the area of the other four cities.

## V. 3

1. "All these were joined together" = refers to the five kings mentioned in verse 2; they were united in a league; they were in agreement.

2. "Vale of Siddim" = a tract of low ground between hills; a valley called Siddim--a name used only three times in the Bible and all three are in this chapter; this vale is said to be "the salt sea" = this is where the salt sea arose after the cities of the plain of Jordan were destroyed; Moses, the human instrument God used to write this book, made reference to the salt sea because in his day it was well known how that the salt sea (also called the dead sea) was formed as a result of the destruction of the cities of the plain of Jordan.

#### V. 4

1. "Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer" = the five kings of the plains probably gave allegiance to Chedorlaomer and as was the normal custom of such an agreement, they also payed tribute which might have been an annual sum of money paid, either as an acknowledgment of submission or as the price of peace and protection; this they had done for 12 years.

2. "And in the thirteenth year they rebelled" = they revolted from the government to which they owed allegiance; they probably refused to pay Chedorlaomer tribute; this occurred in the 13th year.

#### V. 5

1. "And in the fourteenth year, etc." = Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came to crush the revolt sometime during the 14th year--probably referring to the year of his reign as king of Elam.

2. In crushing the revolt of the five kings of the plain of Jordan, Chedorlaomer and his confederacy captured the neighbors of the cities of the plain first. Maybe they thought this action would cause the five kings of the cities of the plain to begin paying tribute again and yield allegiance to them again.

3. "Rephaims" = the tribe of gigantic stature.

4. "Ashteroth Karnaim" = we do not know the exact location of this city or place; it must have been close to the cities of the plain; it is thought to be to the east of Jordan.

5. "Zuzims" = this is the only time this people is mentioned; believed to have been between Jabbok and Arnon, thus, close to the north end of the Salt sea; the location of their town "Ham" is not known.

6. "Emims" = believed to be the people that the Moabites mingled with; they were "in Shaveh Kiriathaim" believed to be east of the salt sea.

## V. 6

1. "The Horites" = they dwelt in caves; they are still seen in Petra and other places around "Mount Seir, unto Elparan" = which is between the Salt Sea and the Gulf of Elam and is also the land of Edom at a later time.
2. "By the wilderness" = a dry barren, uninhabited land; probably refers to the wilderness of Paran.

## V. 7

1. "They returned" = from Paran which was the southernmost point reached by the invaders.
2. "En-mishpat" = "Kadesh" = not for sure the exact location but believed to be between Mount Hor, which is where Aaron died for striking the rock twice, and the Salt Sea; it is by the western border of Edom. (Num. 20:22-24)
3. "And smote all the country of the Amalekites" = refers to the area West of Edom where the Amalekites later dwelt; Amalek was the grandson of Esau. (Gen. 36:12)
4. "Also the Amorites" = means a mountaineer; they "dwelt in Hazezon-tamar" = means cutting of the palm, thus, it is believed to be En-gedi situated on the western shore of the Salt Sea.
5. If you could see a map of all these locations Chedorlaomer smote, you would see he smote all the people and cities around the five cities of the plain of Jordan. This was designed to put fear in those five kings of the plain.
6. Notice he never smote Abram for the Lord was in control of Chedorlaomer. (Pro. 21:1)

## V. 8

1. The five kings of the cities of the plain of Jordan joined together and went out to engage in battle with Chedorlaomer in the vale of Siddim.
2. See notes on verse 2-3 concerning their names and the city they ruled over and the place they now joined together to fight. Verses 4-7 is interjected to explain what Chedorlaomer and his league did to the cities of the plain of Jordan's neighbors.

## V. 9

1. See notes on verse 1 concerning these kings' names and the places they were from.
2. "Four kings" = refers to Chedorlaomer and his league of kings.
3. "Five" = refers to the 5 kings of the plain of Jordan.

#### V. 10

1. "Vale of Siddim" = see notes on verse 3.
2. "Slimepits" = pits literally full of slime which was adhesive mire; pits from which liquid petroleum had been removed and the holes may still have been partially filled with the bubbling liquid.
3. "And the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there" = it seems these two kings left their army and tried to get away from the battle and fell in those sticky pits; some commentaries say they perished but verse 17 says the king of Sodom went out to meet Abram when he returned from battle--he did not die there nor was he taken captive.
4. "And they that remained fled to the mountain" = the mountain east of the vale; the Bible is not clear if these were taken captive or not; so if the Bible is silent we need to be silent.

#### V. 11

1. "They" = second "their" = refers to Chedorlaomer and his league of kings with him.
2. First "their" = the league of the five kings of the plain of Jordan; even though Sodom and Gomorrah only are mentioned, the other three cities are included as well.
3. "Goods" = refers to personal possessions.
4. "Victuals" = food.
5. "And went their way" = went north up the valley of Jordan probably headed to Damascus; they had to ascend (go up) because the valley where the cities of the plain of Jordan were is almost 1300 ft. below sea level.

#### V. 12

1. "They" = Chedorlaomer and his league of kings.

2. "They took Lot" = they captured the city and took Lot as well as many of the other people of the city; Lot's name is the only one mentioned here because of his connection to Abram, who is the major person being dealt with in this section of Genesis; we know there were others taken because verse 16 plainly states other people were brought back by Abram.

3. "Dwelt" = means Lot had settled down in the city of Sodom.

4. "And his goods" = "took" = applies to this also; refers to all the provision and property he had acquired when he had been with Abram while he was in Egypt, when he came back with Abram to Canaan, and when he chose the plains of Jordan.

5. "Departed" = they began their journey, with all their spoil of battle, northward up the valley of Jordan.

## V. 13

1. "There came one that had escaped" = this lets us know that the people who were in Sodom and the other cities of the plain were taken captive, except this one; we do not know anything about him nor his name; we know it was a man because the Hebrew is masculine in gender.

2. "Had escaped" = he may have escaped while the league of kings was carrying him off as a captive or he may have escaped while the battle was going on.

3. "Told Abram" = brought the news of what had happened to the cities of the plain and also about Lot being taken captive. (verse 14)

4. "The Hebrew" = this is the first use of this word in the Scripture; it was used by foreigners in designating descendants of Abraham and the patriarchs; it probably means "a descendant of Eber" who was in the lineage of Shem and is given a special recognition in Gen. 10:21, 25; Abraham is known as the Father of the Hebrews.

5. "For he (Abram) dwelt in the plain of Mamre" = Abram was in Hebron (see notes on Gen. 13:18) which was not far from the scene of war.

6. "The plain of Mamre the Amorite" = see notes on Gen. 13:18.

7. "Amorite" = a mountaineer; one of the Canaanitish tribes.

8. "Brother of Eshcol" = another Amorite; he lived in the same general area as Abram.

9. "Brother of Aner" = also an Amorite--stands to reason for the three were brothers.

10. "These" = the three brothers.

11. "Were confederate" = they were in league with Abram probably for mutual defense, evident from the result--they went with Abram to battle. (verse 24)

## V. 14

1. "His brother" = refers to Lot who was actually his nephew--his brother's son (verse 12), kinsmen by relationship--family as in Gen. 13:8.
2. "Was taken captive" = Chedorlaomer and his league of kings had captured Lot as well as many others from the cities of the plain and were taking him bound back to their home country.
3. "He" = "his" = Abram.
4. "Armed" = word literally means caused to pour forth; from a root word meaning to unsheathe or draw out anything from a scabbard; thus, he drew out his trained servants.
5. "Trained *servants*" = to instruct and discipline for war; this he had done previously not knowing what occasion may occur where he would have to do battle; he was ready; described as "born in his own house" = the children of his own household, neither purchased or taken in war, the number of which was "three hundred and eighteen" = 318; his Amorite allies joined him. (verses 13,24)
6. "Pursued" = followed after "*them*" = the enemy kings with their captives.
7. "To Dan" = believed to be a city named Dan during this time in history in Northern Palestine; later it was changed to Laish when the town changed masters; the recollection of its ancient name and story may have attracted the Danites to this place in Joshua's day, where they burned Laish and built a new city which they again called Dan.

## V. 15

1. "We" = "his" = "himself" = Abram.
2. "Them" = Chedorlaomer and his league of four kings along with the captives.
3. "Divided" = separated his men along with the Amorites with him into several small groups.
4. "By night" = under the cloke of darkness so as not to be detected--the element of surprise.
5. "Smote" = attacked them unexpectedly from different quarters; they fled and Abram "pursued" = to follow; to run after; after the attack at Dan, Abram and his fighting men covered about 100 miles in pursuit--from Dan to Hobah.
6. "Unto Hobah" = a city less than 50 miles north of the ancient city of Damascus; the custom at the time this was written was to look eastward to the rising sun when giving

directions; thus, "on the left hand of Damascus" = said to be the oldest existing city in the world; it was a metropolis (the chief city or capital of a kingdom) in Syria; the city Paul was headed to when he met Jesus (Acts 9:1-5); on the trade route from Palestine to the Mesopotamia.

#### V. 16

1. "He" = first "his" = Abram.
2. "He brought back" = seems he returned, after the victory over Chedorlaomer's league, to the land of Canaan; brought back all the spoil the enemy had taken--all the goods (property taken), his relative Lot and his goods, the women, and the people.
3. Lot is mentioned by name because he was the object of Abram's generous and gallant adventure.

#### V. 17

1. "And the king of Sodom went out to meet him, etc." = this proves that the king did not perish in the slimepits of verse 10, nor was he taken captive; some commentaries seem to think that there was a new king replacing Bera (verse 2) but that is not likely for most of the people of Sodom were taken captive.
2. First "him" = "his" = Abram.
3. Second "him" = Chedorlaomer.
4. "Slaughter" = to strike highly or severely; seems too forcible an expression in English for a mere defeat.
5. "Valley of Shaveh" = "the king's dale" = this is a different location than in verse 5 where two English words are translated from one Hebrew word; this place is believed to be the upper Kedron where Absalom's pillar was later erected (II Sam. 18:18); thus, this place was not far from Jerusalem which puts Abram in the right place to meet Melchizedek. (verse 18)
6. "Dale" = vale; a tract of low ground between two hills.

#### V. 18

1. "Melchizedek" = "king of Salem" = priest of the most high God" = spelled Melchisedec in the NT and interpreted "King of righteousness" = "king of peace" in Heb. 7:1-2; who is he?

A. Some think he was Shem since Shem was alive until Abram was 150 years old. At this present time Abram was about 84 years old. This cannot be for Heb. 7:3 tells us he was without father and without mother. This means the Scripture is silent concerning his genealogy. We know who Shem's father was.

B. Some say that he was Christ, but Heb. 7:3 states he was made like unto the Son of God and Heb. 7:15 states Christ's priesthood is after the similitude of Melchisedec. This could not be said if Melchisedec was Christ Himself.

C. Some have supposed he was some mysterious celestial being but Heb. 7:4 refers to him as a man. Christ was the God-man.

2. "Salem" = an early name of Jerusalem.

3. "Brought forth bread and wine" = for refreshment to the patriarch and his soldiers; these were tokens of friendship and hospitality; they were really in his territory; no doubt he was glad that Chedorlaomer had passed by his kingdom when the league of kings were battling the other cities of the plain.

4. "Wine" = the Hebrew word for "wine" here is "yayin" and corresponds to the Greek word "oinos" which are general (generic) words used in the Scripture for any part of the fruit of the vine--grapes, grape juice, intoxicating drink made from grapes, raisins, and vinegar; the context and principle of the Bible determines what form is meant; as king of righteousness, Melchizedek would not have served intoxicating wine; "winepress" and "winepresses" are used 17 times in the Scriptures; what does a "winepress" do = squeeze grape juice out of grapes.

5. Melchizedek is a type of the Lord Jesus as a priest and king; therefore, he was a royal priest.

6. "The most high God" = most probably the designation here describes the name under which the Supreme Deity was worshiped by Melchizedek.

V. 19

1. "He" = Melchizedek; it was he who spoke in this verse.

2. First "blessed" = to ask good things be showered upon Abram.

3. Second "blessed" = to be spiritually prosperous; to be happy.

4. "Of the most high God" = further described as "possessor of heaven and earth" = implies creator but more--means one who holds and that is exactly what He does. (Col. 1:17)

## V. 20

1. "Blessed" = to eulogize; an act of adoration; word of worship when applied to God.
2. "Most high God" = the lofty and Supreme God; there is no other like Him because He is the only God.
3. "Which" = who; God is a person not a thing; thus, this is masculine gender not neuter gender.
4. "Hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand" = the victory must be attributed to the Lord; it was the Lord's battle and Abram knew that and he was not saved as yet.
5. All victory whether physical or spiritual is from above. (John 3:27)
6. "Thy" = "he" = Abram.
7. "Him" = Melchizedek.
8. "Gave him tithes of all" = refers to the tenth of the spoils ("all") of war; this is the first time this word is mentioned; these being the customary offerings to the Deity were an acknowledgment of the Divine priesthood of Melchizedek; also this act made a practical acknowledgment of the absolute and exclusive supremacy of God whom Melchizedek worshiped; Abram did this and he was not yet saved.
9. Some say tithing is under the law and others say it is not Scriptural to tithe. To understand what a tithe is look on page 4 in our book "Study Guide for Doctrines of the Faith." That is transcribed here:

### A. What is a tithe?

- 1) A tithe is a tenth part of the first fruit of the increase. (Gen. 14:20; Gen. 28:22; Pro. 3:9-10)
- 2) A tithe is a debt we owe to God and honest Christians pay their debts.

### B. Tithing was before the law.

- 1) Abraham started tithing by faith, even though not saved as yet. (Gen.14:2)
- 2) Jacob continued tithing by faith, even though not saved as yet. (Gen. 28:22) He was saved in Genesis 32.

### C. Tithing was during the law.

- 1) Moses incorporated tithing into the law. (Lev. 27:30)
- 2) Nehemiah restored tithing after captivity. (Neh. 13:11-12)

3) Malachi commanded tithing. (Mal. 3:10)

D. Tithing is after the law.

1) Jesus commended the lost Pharisees for tithing. (Mat. 23:23)

E. Where are we to pay our tithes? God says to bring (not send) our tithe to the local church (storehouse) on the first day of the week--Sunday. (Mal. 3:10; I Cor. 16:2)

F. What is the result of failing to pay our tithes? We become cursed. (Mal. 3:8-9)

G. There are promises we can claim if we pay our tithes. (Mal. 3:10-11; Pro. 3:9-10)

V. 21

1. The king of Sodom seems to have been quiet while Melchizedek and Abram conversed, but after that encounter he now speaks to Abram.

2. "Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself" = he asked for those of his people whom Abram had recovered; his statement seems to be a very generous offer but Abram was justly entitled to the goods by right of conquest.

V. 22

1. Abram did not have to hesitate and think of the king's offer but said, "I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord" = either before, or then and there, he made an oath with uplifted hand, that he would not touch the property of Sodom; to lift up one's hand was a common form of swearing. (Dan. 12:7)

2. "LORD" = Jehovah; also called "the most high God" = most probably the designation here describes the name under which the Supreme Deity was worshiped by Melchizedek in verse 18 and now refers to Abram doing the same; also referred to as, "the possessor of heaven and earth" = implies creator but more--means one who holds and that is exactly what our Lord does. (Col. 1:17)

V. 23

1. First and second "I" = Abram.

2. "Thine" = "thou" = third "I" = the king of Sodom.

3. "I will not *take*" = a definite conviction of Abram.

4. "Thread" = little piece of a string.

5. "Shoelatchet" = a string that ties one's shoes or sandals.

6. "Lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich" = The patriarch refused to accept for himself the spoil or booty gained in battle; he had waged war not to enrich himself, but to secure the release of Lot.

## V. 24

1. Even though Abram would not profit in any manner, he saw to it that his allies had a reasonable amount of care for their expenses.

2. "Save" = except--what the young men with him had eaten and the portion of those who went with him--Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre--the Amorite brothers who were in league with Abram.

3. It seems there was nothing selfish in Abram's character.

## CHAPTER 15:

### V. 1

1. "After these things" = refers to the things which had just occurred; this phrase sets the time of Abram's salvation experience, which is recorded in verse 6, when he was about 84 years old and had been in Canaan for about nine years.

2. "The word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision" = this is the first time in the Bible this phrase is used; we know the Lord had spoken to Abram at least four times (in Ur, at Haran; Gen. 12:7-8; Gen. 13:14-18), but it is not recorded how He spoke to him at those times.

3. "Vision" = probably a night vision yet not a dream; the Lord spoke in various ways in OT time, but after Calvary He speaks to us by His Son (Heb. 1:1-2); this is not Word only but allowing the Lord to quicken His Word (utterance) to us--this is a must for one to be saved. (Rom. 10:17; John 8:31-32)

4. The Lord clearly stated three things to Abram.

A. "Fear not" = the patriarch had reason to fear--the enemy just defeated might regroup and attack, but Abram must put away fear by trusting in the Lord.

B. "I am thy shield" = "I" is emphatic in the original because it is separately expressed; a shield was used to defend, to protect, and to secure from assault or injury; this is the language of encouragement; the Lord Himself would defend him

and protect him--this He had just done in the victory he won, and He said He would do it again.

C. "*And thy exceeding great reward*" = Abram's reward was the all sufficient Jehovah Himself; Christ is all I need.

## V. 2

1. Abram now speaks displaying a bit of frustration concerning the promise the Lord had given him.

2. He addresses God as "Lord God" = note the word "Lord" is not all caps thus, it is "Adonai" = this is the first time in Scripture this title of God has been used; it denotes one who has authority, and when applied to God it means the Supreme Lord; the word translated "God" here is Jehovah, the one who spoke to him in verse 1; Abram is acknowledging Jehovah as Supreme Judge and Governor, and therefore He is entitled to dispose of all matters concerning his present or prospective welfare.

3. "What wilt thou give me seeing I go childless" = denotes what use will land or wealth be to me since I am childless and have no heir to pass on my inheritance.

4. He mentions "Eliezer of Damascus" as the "steward of my house" = one who attends to my domestic affairs and considered by Abram to be the possessor of his house or heir of his property.

5. "Damascus" = Abram may have acquired Eliezer when he was going through Damascus on his way to Canaan.

## V. 3

1. "Behold" = an expression of emphasis.

2. "Thou" = Jehovah.

3. "Seed" = offspring; posterity--descendants or children.

4. "Lo" = word is used to excite particular attention in a hearer to the subject at hand.

5. "One born in my house is mine heir" = Abram had just mentioned Eliezer his servant, thus, by this phrase he seems to be saying if Eliezer has a child it will be as if it were my child, thus my heir.

6. "Heir" = one who inherits.

7. Abram's language reveals three things:

- A. A natural desire to have a child of his own.
- B. A struggle to hold on to God's promise in the face of almost insurmountable odds.
- C. An obvious unwillingness to part with the hope that the promise, however seemingly impossible, would eventually be realized.

#### V. 4

1. "Behold" = word is used to excite particular attention in Abram concerning the subject at hand.
2. "The word of the LORD *came* unto him" = this is probably done in the same vision mentioned in verse 1.
3. "This shall not be thine heir" = referring to Eliezer's child as not being Abram's heir.
4. "But he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir" = this response brought renewed assurance that he was going to have a child and that must have thrilled his anxious heart with joy.

#### V. 5

1. "He" = Jehovah.
2. "Brought him forth abroad" = led him outside under the canopy of stars.
3. "Him" = "thou" = "thy" = Abram.
4. "Look now toward heaven" = proof that his vision was not a dream.
5. "Tell" = same word as "number" = the Lord brings Abram forth to consider with continued attention the stars of heaven and challenges him to tell their number, if he can.
6. "So shall thy seed be" = the Lord made all the stars out of nothing by the word of His power and He assures Abram that He is able to fulfill His promise and multiply the seed of Abram and Sarai.

#### V. 6

1. "And he believed in the LORD" = somehow (we know it came from the Lord but from men's standpoint--"somehow") saving faith was granted to Abram and he acted upon it by believing in the Lord; he believed His simple promise in the absence of all present

performance and in the face of all the seeming impossibilities; the command in Ur and Haran to go to the land which the Lord would show him, accompanied with the promise to make of him a great nation, had awakened in him a certain expectation but now the complete promise was given to him again and he believed what the Lord promised.

2. First "he" = "him" = Abram.

3. Second "he" = LORD; Jehovah.

4. "Counted" = imputed; place to the account of.

5. "Righteousness" = God now looked at Abram as a righteous person, not in character and conduct, but in the sense that he was now before God accepted and forgiven; this is the time and place of Abram's redemption--nine years after he entered Canaan and a possibility of being 41 years after leaving Ur.

6. Jesus said concerning this day, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." (John 8:56)

7. Many deny the truth concerning Abraham being saved in Gen. 15:6, but the New Testament declares plainly, three times, that this is the time and place that Abram was saved. (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23) Some say this is an interpolation which means something added or to insert, in other words, out of order. But this is not so for verse 1 states plainly, "After these things."

8. Anyone who denies this truth is flat denying Scripture.

9. Rom. 4:12 declares that even we Gentiles (not of the circumcision) have Abraham as our father if we walk in the steps of faith that he had. The steps of that faith:

A. Intellectual faith.

B. Seeking faith.

C. Saving faith. (Gen. 15:6)

V. 7

1. "He" = "I" = "the LORD" = Jehovah.

2. "Him" = "thee" = Abram.

3. "Said" = after the act of saving faith exercised on the part of the patriarch, and the act of imputation or justification on the part of God.

4. The Lord states His plan and purpose concerning Abram.

A. He brought him out of Ur of Chaldees.

B. To give him this land to inherit it.

#### V. 8

1. "He" = "I" = Abram.

2. He addresses God as "Lord God" = note the word "Lord" is not all caps thus, it is "Adonai" = this is the second time in Scripture this title of God has been used; it denotes one who has authority, and when applied to God it means the Supreme Lord; the word translated "God" here is Jehovah, the one who spoke to him in verse 1; Abram is acknowledging Jehovah as Supreme Judge and Governor, and therefore He is entitled to dispose of all matters concerning his present or prospective welfare.

3. "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" = this is not the language of doubt but a desire for a sign in confirmation of the promise, either for strengthening of his own faith or for the sake of his posterity.

4. This is not a contradiction to what Jesus said in Mat. 16:4 for Abraham did not have the Word of God penned down nor did he have the Holy Spirit living inside him.

#### V. 9

1. "He" = "me" = Jehovah.

2. "Him" = Abram.

3. "Take me" = literally, for me--for my use in sacrifice.

4. All the animals and fowls mentioned were afterward prescribed by law to be used as sacrifices in various occasions.

5. The number "three" is sacred and denotes the perfection of the victim in point of maturity. Three may also symbolize Him who was, and is, and is to come.

#### V. 10

1. "He" = "him" = Abram.

2. "All these" = the three animals and two fowl.

3. "Divided them in the midst" = refers to the covenant between two parties who participate in the rights which it guarantees.

4. "And laid each piece one against another" = each animal was divided and half placed opposite the other half with a path between; the birds were not divided--one was placed on one side and the other on the other side.

5. In ancient time men sometimes ratified an agreement or covenant by passing between the parts of the halved, sacrificial animals. (Jer. 34:18-19)

## V. 11

1. "The fowls came down upon the carcasses" = birds of prey, which are always attracted toward carrion--dead and putrefying flesh.

2. "Abram drove them away" = the sacrifice must be preserved pure and un mutilated for the purpose of the covenant--the only means and way through which the two parties can meet in a covenant of peace.

## V. 12

1. "When the sun was going down" = the visit of the Lord to Abram continues for two nights, with the intervening day; the first night the Lord led him forth to view the stars (verse 5); the second night sets in with the consummation of the covenant. (verse 17)

2. "A deep sleep fell upon Abram" = a supernatural slumber, as the darkness following was not solely due to natural causes.

3. "Lo" = an expression of emphasis.

4. "An horror of great darkness fell upon him" = an overwhelming dread occasioned by the dense gloom with which he was encircled.

## V. 13

1. "He" = Jehovah.

2. "He said" = He gives this revelation to Abram while he was in a trance of deep sleep.

3. "Know" = same Hebrew word as "surety" = double know; means to know certainly; this responds to Abram's question in verse 8 "Whereby shall I know?"

4. "Thy seed" = refers to more than just Israel, Abram's descendants, but to Christ and those in Him--true Israel.

5. "Stranger" = a foreigner.

6. "In a land *that is* not their's" = refers to Egypt = first "them" = "they."
7. "And shall serve them" = refers to Israel serving the Egyptians.
8. "And afflict" = suffering grief and distress.
9. "Four hundred years" = this is a rounded number which was a custom (Acts 7:6); Exo. 12:40-41 states plainly that the children of Israel came out of Egypt at the end of 430 years of sojourning (to live in a place as a stranger); Paul verified this in Gal. 3:17 giving the time to include from the time of giving the promise (Gen. 12:1-3 when Abram entered Canaan) to Abraham to the giving of the law in Mt. Sinai.
10. The children of Israel were not entreated evil the duration of this time but only from the time a Pharaoh was instituted who knew not Joseph until the deliverance by Moses. (Exo. 1:8-11; Acts 7:18--another is heteros = another of a different kind, not Egyptian) The exact time of affliction we can not verify but 144 years passed from Joseph's death to the Exodus (deliverance by Moses).

#### V. 14

1. "That nation" = we know it was Egypt but Abram was not told at this time.
2. "Whom they shall serve" = made them serve with rigour (severity) and hard bondage (Exo. 1:14); the length of time I believe to be about 82 years--proof = they were being afflicted when Moses was born but not when Aaron was born. Moses was 80 years old when he led them out; therefore, I believe the severe affliction began about two years before Moses was born.
3. "Will I judge" = refers to Jehovah sending the 10 plagues of judgment upon Egypt.
4. "Afterward" = after the 10th plague.
5. "Shall they come out with great substance" = the children of Israel spoiled the Egyptians. (Exo. 12:35-36)

#### V. 15

1. "Thou" = "thy" = Abram.
2. "And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace" = refers to Abram dying and going to the grave; this does not imply annihilation, but the continuance of existence.
3. "Thou shalt be buried in a good old age" = Abram died at 175 years of age, 115 years before Jacob went into Egypt (see chart on page 48). (Gen. 25:7-8)

## V. 16

1. "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again" = Jacob went down to Egypt mid-way of this dispensation (what man has devised) of promise and 215 years later the children of Israel came out of Egypt in the fourth generation--Levi (1), Kohath (2), Amram (3), and Moses (4). ( See chart on page 48)

2. "For" = introduces the reason the seed of Abram could not possess the land at that specific time; "for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full" = from this phrase we can learn much:

- A. The Lord foreknows the moral character of men.
- B. In His providence He administers the affairs of nations on the principle of moral standards of right.
- C. Nations are spared until their iniquity (perversity; evil; sin) is full.
- D. They are then cut off in repayment justice.
- E. The Amorite was to be the chief nation to be wholly destroyed for its iniquity when the seed of Abram returned--the exodus.

## V. 17

1. "And it came to pass" = the daylight was coming to an end, "when the sun went down" = this resulted in, "it was dark."

2. "Behold" = word is used in the manner of exciting attention.

3. "A smoking furnace, and a burning lamp" = these are emblems of Divine presence; symbol of Jehovah.

4. "That passed between those pieces" = only one symbolic representative of the contracting parties passed between the halves of the animals; this means the covenant in this case was to be kept from the God-ward side alone; only the Lord Himself could fulfill its promises; this is an unconditional covenant and He would make Abram's descendants as numerous as the stars and give them a great land.

## V. 18

1. "In the same day" = in that instant the covenant was solemnly completed.

2. "Unto thy seed have I given this land" = the Lord can state something already done even though it was not a reality at that time; He can do that because what He says is sure to happen.

3. "From the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" = this describes the boundary of the land promised Abram's seed; some say the river of Egypt is the Nile but there is a small river in the Sinai Peninsula that runs into the Mediterranean Sea, called the river of Egypt; this is the southern boundary of the land promised; the river Euphrates is called the great river and it runs into the Persian Gulf; this is the northern boundary.

4. This land has not yet fully been occupied by Abram's seed.

#### V. 19

1. Verses 19-21 gives the names of 10 nations who occupied this land in Abram's day.

2. "The Kenites" = dwelt in the country bordering on Egypt and south of Palestine; the Amalekites are found in that country as well.

3. "The Kenizzites" = mentioned only in this passage; a people dwelling apparently in the same region with the Kenites.

4. "The Kadmonites" = an Eastern people whose settlement extended towards the Euphrates.

#### V. 20

1. "The Hittites" = a descendent of Heth, thus a descendent of Canaan (Gen. 10:15); they established themselves on the Euphrates and spread southward to Canaan and Egypt.

2. "The Perizzites" = they were dwellers in the hills and woods of Palestine, in the open country and in villages.

3. "The Rephaims" = a tribe of gigantic stature dwelling near to where the Salt sea is now.

#### V. 21

1. "The Amorites" = means a mountaineer; they dwelt east and west of the Jordan River.

2. "The Canaanites" = inhabited the area of Palestine along the Mediterranean Sea shore.

3. "The Girgashites" = dwelt in the land of Canaan; one of the native tribes of Canaan.

4. "The Jebusites" = an inhabitant of Jebus, which later became Jerusalem. (Judges 19:10)

## **CHAPTER 16:**

### V. 1

1. "Sarai" = "Abram's wife" = she had been Abram's wife before they left Ur, thus, they had been married possibly over 41 years--the possible time that elapsed between leaving Ur and being saved (Abram) in Gen. 15:6.
2. "Bare him no children" = to be childless was a calamity and a disgrace for any Hebrew wife.
3. "Handmaid" = a female slave as a member of the household; she was an "Egyptian" = she was probably obtained, 10 years before, during their sojourn in Egypt.

### V. 2

1. Sarai brought up the proposition to Abram. She was trying to help God out.
2. "Behold" = word is used to excite particular attention in a hearer to the subject at hand.
3. "The LORD" = Jehovah.
4. "Hath restrained me from bearing" = to hold back; literally hath shut up my womb; rendering this every day more and more apparent.
5. "Pray" = to ask with earnestness.
6. "Go in unto my maid" = the custom of the East prompted Sarai to resort to giving her maid (same as "handmaid" in verse 1) to her husband as a second wife, that she might have children by her = "it may be that I may obtain children by her."
7. "Hearkened" = to hear intelligently (with understanding); to obey.
8. They knew the direct teaching of Gen. 2:24 and realized that husbands and wives must conform to that high standard. For a man to take a secondary wife or concubine was sinful. Yet, in attempting to provide a way for God to carry out His prediction, Sarai was willing to disregard the Divine standard and give her female slave, Hagar, to Abram, in hope that she might bear a son to the family.

9. Nature and history prompted the union of one man to one wife in marriage and nowhere does God ever condone or put His blessings on having more than one wife.

### V. 3

1. In this verse Sarai acts on what she said in verse 2.
2. "After Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan" = this dates the time Sarai gave Abram Hagar, her maid, to be his wife--according to the custom of the East (already discussed in verse 2); this is about one year after Abram was saved; he was 85 years old.

### V. 4

1. "He" = Abram.
2. "Went in unto Hagar" = he yields to the suggestion of his wife and complies with the custom of the country.
3. "She" = "her" = Hagar.
4. "Conceived" = to become pregnant; expecting a child to be born.
5. "Mistress" = the female head of the family.
6. "Despised" = abhorred--to hate extremely; to have contempt--a strong expression of having a mean opinion. 7. Immediately, on perceiving her condition, Hagar became insolent--proud and haughty. Her contempt was unjustifiable, but it was the natural consequence of Sarai's own improper and imprudent (failure to use caution in devising a plan to have an heir) step--in giving Hagar to her husband as a concubine.

### V. 5

1. "My" = "I" = "me" = Sarai.
2. "Thee" = "thy" = Abram.
3. "She" = "her" = Hagar, Sarai's maid.
4. "My wrong be upon thee" = Sarai transfers the blame to her husband because she is unwilling to see in herself the occasion of the maid's actions toward her.
5. "I have given my maid into thy bosom" = very imprudent, even had it not been sinful.

6. "Bosom" = refers to embrace, as with the arms; implies intimacy.
7. "The LORD" = Jehovah.
8. "The LORD judge between me and thee" = this is an irreverent use of the Divine name on the part of Sarai.

## V. 6

1. "But" = introduces a contrast.
2. "Thy" = "Thine" = "thee" = third "her" = Sarai.
3. First and second "her" = Sarai's maid, Hagar.
4. "Behold" = word is used in the manner of exciting attention.
5. "Thy maid *is* in thine hand" = Abram reminds Sarai that Hagar was still as one of her servants, even though she was elevated to the rank of secondary wife to himself and that she still had power to deal with her as it pleased Sarai.
6. "Do to her as it pleaseth thee" = do what seems good in thine (Sarai) eyes.
7. "Dealt hardly" = means Sarai afflicted Hagar by thrusting her back into the condition of a slave; this also could have involved heavy duties or bodily punishment such as stripes or mistreatment of some sort; this resulted in that "She fled from her face" = Hagar was unable to bear the yoke of humiliation.
8. "Fled" = to run rapidly.
9. "Her face" = refers to Sarai's presence.

## V. 7

1. "The angel of the LORD" = this is the first recorded visit of the angel of Jehovah to the earth; this angel either represents the Lord or is Jehovah in angelic form; I really believe this is Jehovah Himself, manifesting Himself to Hagar (compare to Isa 63:9); the Lord manifests himself to Hagar seemingly on account of her relationship to Abram, but in the more distant form of angelic visitation.
2. "Found" = to meet; the all knowing Lord knew where Hagar was; this is written for man's benefit and from his perspective--man would come upon her presence not knowing exactly where she was but the Lord did.
3. "Her" = Hagar.

4. "A fountain of water" = the Hebrew construction indicates a particular and well-known spring; a place of refreshment on her journey.
5. "In the wilderness" = refers to an uninhabitable district suitable for pasturing flocks.
6. "In the way to Shur" = Shur was located in the Sinai Peninsula at the border of Egypt where the Egyptians maintained a wall or strong line of forts to protect Egypt from invaders from the East; Hagar was clearly fleeing in the direction of Egypt, her native homeland.

## V. 8

1. "He" = the angel of Jehovah.
2. "And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid" = the Lord addressed Hagar as Sarai's maid not as Abram's wife; thus, the Lord declined to recognize her marriage to the patriarch, Abram, but reminds her of her original position as a bondswoman from which liberty was not to be obtained by fleeing; she was still legally a slave and had no right to run away.
3. "She" = "I" = "my" = Hagar.
4. "I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai" = Hagar's answer to the two questions asked by the angel of the Lord; her situation had become unbearable and fleeing seemed to present the only relief.
5. "Face" = presence.
6. "Mistress" = the female head of the family.

## V. 9

1. The angel of the Lord interrogates Hagar (verse 8) and requires her to return to her mistress, and humble herself under her hands.
2. First "her" = "thy" = "thyself" = Hagar.
3. Second "her" = Sarai, Hagar's mistress.
4. "Submit thyself under her hands" = indicates she should fulfill the duties of her position as a slave; she should meekly resign herself to the ungracious and oppressive treatment of her mistress.

## V. 10

1. "I" = the Angel of the Lord, believed to be an OT appearance of Jehovah who spoke this promise of verses 10-12 to Hagar = "her" = "thy."
2. "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly" = the Lord promised to increase her offspring--her posterity or descendants--in a general sense, succeeding generations; this language is another proof that this angel was not a created being but Jehovah, because only Jehovah can do such a thing.
3. "It" = thy seed.
4. "It shall not be numbered for multitude" = Hagar's descendants will not be able to be counted due to their abundance--"multitude."

## V. 11

1. "Behold" = word is used in the manner of exciting attention.
2. Jehovah promised Hagar she would "bear a son" = this is the first instance in the Bible of naming a child before its birth.
3. "Ishmael" = name means God will hear; so named "because the LORD hath heard thy affliction" = refers to prayer of which there is no mention, though men's miseries are said to cry out when men themselves are mute. (Exo. 3:7)

## V. 12

1. "He" = "his" = "him" = Ishmael.
2. This verse describes some of the characteristics of Ishmael.
3. "He will be a wild man" = literally "a wild ass of a man." The Hebrew word for "wild" means rude and bold and fearing no man--untamed, not yielding to discipline, living at large, and impatient of service and restraint.
4. "His hand *will* be against every man" = refers to his sin.
5. "And every man's hand against him" = refers to his punishment; he that has his hand and tongue against every man shall have every man's hand and tongue against him; those that have turbulent spirits have commonly troublesome lives; those that are provoking, vexatious, and injurious to others, must expect to be repaid in like manner. (Gal. 6:7; Pro. 18:24)
6. "And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren" = though threatened and insulted by all his neighbors, he shall live in safety, hold his own against all the world, and shall be able to make his part good with them.

7. Ishmael's descendants are basically the Arab people today, even though they are intermingled with the descendants of Esau and Lot. The character here given of them is true even to the present day.

8. The Bedouin Arabs are said to be the outlaws among the nations--then and now. Plunder is legitimate gain to them and daring robbery is praised as valor. The terrorist of today fit these characteristics and they are descendants of Ishmael.

#### V. 13

1. "She" = "her" = "I" = "me" = Hagar.

2. "The LORD" = Jehovah.

3. "Called" = addressed; this was not done in prayer.

4. "Thou God seest me" = "him" = El-Roi; a God of seeing--an all-seeing God.

5. "Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?" = the idea in this question is, "Have I looked after Him and still live?" Hagar was moved mightily by the realization that she had been in the very presence of the mighty God and that she was still alive.

6. This reminds me of Moses experience in Exo. 33:18-23.

#### V. 14

1. "Wherefore" = in view of the fact of what just occurred there.

2. "The well was called Beerlahairoi" = the well was so named, probably first by Hagar; the name means the well of him that liveth and seeth me.

3. "Behold" = an expression of emphasis.

4. "*It is* between Kadesh and Bered" = "Bered" is a place unknown as to its location; the well seems to be on a trade route between Canaan and Egypt and was believed to be located about 50 miles south of Beer-sheba and in the vicinity of Kadesh.

#### V. 15

1. "Bare" = to give birth.

2. Abram called the name of his son that Hagar gave birth to, Ishmael. The Scripture does not say Abram named his son but that he called his son, Ishmael, according to

what the Lord had told Hagar. This acknowledges the truth of Hagar's encounter with the Angel of the Lord.

## V. 16

1. This verse states the date of Ishmael's birth--when Abram was 86 years old, 11 years after entering Canaan, two years after he was saved. This could have been 16 years or 43 years after he was called to leave Ur. The exact time is difficult to establish exactly.

## **CHAPTER 17:**

### V. 1

1. There are 13 years of silence in the life of Abram between Chapter 16 and 17.

2. "The LORD appeared to Abram" = Jehovah had appeared to Abram several times before (recorded) and may or may not have done so during this 13 years of silence; just how this occurred we cannot be for sure, but we know in OT time the Lord spoke in divers manners but in NT time He does so by His Son. (Heb. 1:1-2; we have the written word and the Holy Spirit He sent to speak to us.)

3. "And said unto him, I am the Almighty God" = Jehovah revealed Himself to Abraham as "El Shaddai" = the multiple breasted One; the Nourisher; the Strength-giver; the Satisfier, who pours Himself into believing lives; as a fretful, unsatisfied babe is not only strengthened and nourished from the mother's breast, but also quieted, rested, and satisfied, so is a believer in El Shaddai; a sow can have a litter of pigs larger in number than she has bottles to feed them; thus, there are runts in her litter--not so in God's litter--there are no runts for there are enough bottles to go around; this is the first time in Scripture God reveals Himself as Shaddai.

4. "Walk before me" = set thyself to walk in my presence, as if conscious of my inspection and desirous of my approval.

5. "Be thou perfect" = complete; upright; holy, not only in walk but in heart as well.

### V. 2

1. "I" = "my" = "me" = El Shaddai--God Almighty.

2. "I will make my covenant between me and thee" = refers to the covenant already made in Genesis 15; now He states He is about to carry it out--to be carried into execution.

3. "And will multiply thee exceedingly" = refers to the seed--the promise of a son to be more specifically determined as the offspring of Sarai.

#### V. 3

1. "And Abram fell on his face" = in reverential awe and worship; this is the lowliest form of reverence, in which the worshipper leans on his knees and elbows, and his forehead approaches the ground; this is still customary in the East.

2. "And God talked with him" = Jehovah, El Shaddai, is here called God.

3. "Saying" = uttering in articulate sounds or words; Abram understood clearly what God was saying; verse 4 to verse 16 records what God spoke to Abram.

#### V. 4

1. "Me" = "my" = God--El Shaddai.

2. "Behold" = word is used to excite particular attention in Abram concerning the subject at hand.

3. "Covenant" = a solemn compact between two parties made by passing between pieces of flesh as in Gen. 15:17.

4. "As for me" = literally "I" standing alone at the beginning of the sentence is by way of emphasis; equivalent to "So far as I am concerned" or "I for my part" or "So far as relates to me;" the Lord is always faithful to do His part.

5. "Thee" = "thou" Abram.

6. "Shalt be a father of many nations" = the promise of the seed is here expanded; a multitude of nations and kings are to trace their descent from Abram--the 12 tribes of Israel and many Arab tribes, the 12 princes of Ishmael, Keturah's descendants, and the Duke of Edom sprang from him.

7. "Nations" = a term applied to the other great branches of the human race not to the chosen people only--Israel.

#### V. 5

1. "Abram" = means high father.

2. "Abraham" = father of a multitude as the next clause explains--"for a father of many nations have I made thee;" the high father has become the father of the multitude of the faithful.

## V. 6

1. "I" = El Shaddai--the Almighty God.

2. "Thee " = Abraham.

3. "I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee" = a promise fulfilled in the Ishmaelites, the descendants of Keturah, the Edomites, and the Israelites.

4. "And kings shall come out of thee" = example--David and Solomon and many, many more of all the nations that trace their heritage back to Abraham.

## V. 7

1. "I" = "my" = "me" = El Shaddai.

2. "I will establish my covenant" = not to be altered nor revoked; it is fixed, it is ratified, it is made firm as the divine power and truth can make it.

3. "Between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations" = it is a covenant, not with Abraham only (then it would die with him) but with his seed after him, not only his seed after the flesh, but his spiritual seed.

4. "For an everlasting covenant" = this is a perpetual covenant, an eternal covenant; this covenant will not fail, since God had originated it.

5. "To be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee" = this is one of the contents of the covenant--that God would be their God; this phrase is a clear indication of the spiritual character of the Abrahamic covenant.

## V. 8

1. More of the contents of the covenant--that Canaan should be their everlasting possession.

2. This is a type of heavenly Canaan which will be the inheritance of Abraham's spiritual children forever. This is that better country to which Abraham was looking. (Heb. 11:16) God said He would not be ashamed to be called their God, thus He said, "I will be their God" = Elohim, which is plural, thus the triune God--God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

## V. 9

1. "God" = Elohim.
2. "And God said unto Abraham, Thou" = literally "And thou," the other party to the covenant, who now learns his obligation.
3. "Thou shalt keep my covenant" = "keep" means to attend to, observe to do, thus this implies to obey, not only Abraham but his "seed after thee in their generations."

## V. 10

1. "Every man child among you shall be circumcised" = this is the sign of the covenant that God commanded Abraham and his seed after him to keep.
2. "Circumcised" = to cut around; this was the sign of the covenant God made with Abraham that set the Jews apart; it was a sign that coming out of Abraham's descendants would be a Saviour, so it pointed to Christ; in this day of grace we could say baptism has replaced circumcision as a sign (picture); baptism points back to the fact that Christ came, died, was buried, and rose again for mankind; if a man depends on circumcision or baptism for his salvation, he is lost.
3. God gave a bow (rainbow) as a token or sign of the covenant God made with Noah. (Gen. 9:13) Just as the rainbow was the appropriate natural emblem of preservation from a flood, the removal of the foreskin was the fit symbol of that removal of the old man and renewal of nature, which qualified Abraham to be a parent of a holy seed.
4. Circumcision was an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible relationship.

## V. 11

1. "Token" = sign.
2. "Betwixt " = between.

## V. 12

1. "And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you = literally, "and the son of eight days" = not sooner, that they might gather some strength, to be able to undergo the pain of it, and that at least one sabbath might pass over them.

2. "Every man child in your generations" = it was particular to the males, though the women were also included in the covenant, for the man is the head of the woman. (I Cor. 11:3)

3. "He that is born in the house" = refers to every son born to that dad and mom.

4. "Or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed" = refers to slaves and servants.

## V. 13

1. Repetition for emphasis.

2. "And my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant" = refers to the sign or token of circumcision.

## V. 14

1. The religious observance of this covenant was required under a very severe penalty.

2. "That soul shall be cut off from his people" = means to be excluded from any part in the covenant, and treated simply as a Gentile or alien, some of whom seem to have dwelt among the Israelites; if the parents did not circumcise their children, punishment would be upon them as was the case of Moses in Exo. 4:24-25; and those who were not circumcised in their infancy, if when they grew up, if they did not themselves come under this ordinance, God would surely reckon with them.

3. In this covenant there is taught the lesson of parental responsibility and parental hope. This was the first formal step in a godly education, in which the parent acknowledges his obligation to perform all of God's commands. Obedience to this command is a formal admission of the believing parent's offspring into the privileges of the covenant. This admission will not be reversed but by deliberate rebellion of the child.

4. We can draw strength from this command and its warning if one failed to observe it. Teach your children right at a very early age; teach them to respect you so they will respect God when He speaks. Forget the idea that some have said, "I will let the child decide for himself about the things of God when he is old enough." = He'll decide wrong every time. Don't leave a child to himself. (Pro. 29:15) We need to follow the Lord's advice in Deut. 6:6-9. Pro. 22:6 says even while he is growing old he will not depart.

## V. 15

1. "And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife" = before this time she had not been mentioned in any of the promises but now she is taken into the covenant, and accordingly receives a new name.
2. "Sarai" = my princess.
3. "Sarah" = princess; formerly she was Abram's princess only, but now she is recognized as a princess generally; she is so named, for she is to bear the child of promise (to become nations), and be the mother of kings.

#### V. 16

1. "I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her" = this is the first hint recorded that the promised seed was to be Sarah's child.
2. God reveals the purposes of His good will to his people by degrees. God had told Abraham long before that he would have a son, but never until now that he should have a son by Sarah.

#### V. 17

1. Abraham seems up to this time to have regarded Ishmael as the promised seed.
2. Now we see his reaction:
  - A. He "fell upon his face" = a position and attitude of reverence.
  - B. "And laughed" = due to the reverence Abraham had, we believe that his laughter sprang from a joyful and grateful surprise; I used to think that his laughter was in unbelief but Rom. 4:19-20 lets us know he staggered not at the promise of God when he was about 100 years old--actually he was 99 years old when this conversation occurred; laughing in the scripture expresses joy in the countenance.
  - C. "And said in his heart" = the following questions of wonder are not addressed to God nor or they spoken out loud; these questions reveal that Abraham pondered on these things.
3. "Shall a *child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old?" = the age Abraham would be when the child would be born.
4. "And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" = the age Sarah would be when the child would be born.

#### V. 18

1. Now Abraham speaks to God.

2. "O that Ishmael might live" = this does not imply that Abraham was content with Ishmael as the promised seed without waiting for Sarah's son--what I used to think; He loved Ishmael and asks life for his son for fear that Ishmael might be abandoned and forsaken by God; now that God is talking to him he uses that opportunity to speak a good word for Ishmael.

3. "Before thee" = refers to him having a life of holiness and communion with God--Abraham's desire.

## V. 19

1. Now God speaks. (verses 19-21)

2. "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed" = a definite promise; what God says He will do.

3. "Indeed" = truly.

4. "Thou shalt call his name Isaac" = named by God; "Isaac" means laughter--obvious reference to Abraham's laughter.

5. "I will" = God promised Abraham that He would "establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him" = Abraham may have desired that Ishmael not only live and prosper but share with Sarah's son in the blessing of the covenant; but God set the record straight--Isaac and his descendants would be the ones involved in this covenant, not Ishmael.

## V. 20

1. "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee" = means the Lord will answer Abraham's prayer concerning Ishmael and he shall find favor for Abraham's sake.

2. "Behold" = word used to excite particular attention in a hearer to the subject at hand.

3. "I have blessed him" = means God will have many blessings in store for him.

4. "And will make him fruitful" = his posterity shall be numerous for God "will multiply him exceedingly" = more than his neighbors.

A. "Twelve princes shall he beget."

B. "And I will make him a great nation."

5. Great plenty of outward good things is often given to those children of godly parents who are born after the flesh for their parents sake. This was true of Ishmael.

#### V 21

1. "But" = introduces the contrast between Isaac and Ishmael.
2. God repeats to Abraham the promise of a son by Sarah. Even true believers need to have God's promises repeated to them that they may have strong consolation--strengthens the mind and refreshes the spirit.
3. "At this set time in the next year" = a fixed time; it is God's doing and He is right on time every time. (Gen. 21:2)

#### V. 22

1. "He" = God.
2. "Him" = Abraham.
3. "Left off talking" = ended His conversation with Abraham.
4. "Went up" = into heaven "from Abraham."

#### V. 23

1. Abraham obeyed all that the Lord told him concerning the covenant "in the selfsame day" = he did not hesitate but was prompt and punctual in fulfilling the command concerning circumcision detailed with all the minuteness due to its importance.

#### V. 24

1. Abraham did not exempt himself from circumcision due to his age. He was 99 years old.

#### V. 25

1. Ishmael was circumcised even though God's covenant did not include him. He was 13 years old when this action was taken.

2. Josephus, a reputable Jewish historian, relates that the Arabs accordingly delay circumcision until the 13th year.

#### V. 26-27

1. These verses are repetition of verse 23 and just state that the entire household of the patriarch was circumcised simultaneously with Abraham.

2. Abraham's actions speak to us--what God requires we must do, not conferring with flesh and blood.

### **CHAPTER 18:**

#### V. 1

1. "The LORD" = Jehovah.

2. "Appeared" = to be in sight; to come in view; this was in the form of a man. (verse 2)

3. "Plains" = Hebrew word is said to mean an oak or other strong tree; when in Israel in 1975, we were shown an old oak that was said to be the oak of Abraham which is in Hebron.

4. "Mamre" = name is associated with an Ammorite chieftain who was a friend and ally of Abram. (see notes on Gen. 14:13)

5. "Him" = "he" = Abraham; he was not referred to by name because the original writings had no chapter and verse division and the time of this appearance was not long after God spoke to Abraham in chapter 17.

6. "In the heat of the day" = about the noon hour and Abraham "sat in the tent door" = an opening in the tent or a fold of which was fastened to a post near by to admit any air that might be stirring; among the orientals the hour of noon is the time of dinner and the time of rest; in this case the patriarch had probably dined and was resting after dinner, since on the arrival of his visitors, preparation had to be commenced for their being able to dine.

#### V. 2

1. "He" = "him" = "himself" = Abraham.

2. Verse 1 generally states the appearance of Jehovah to the patriarch but this verse minutely describes His appearance.
3. "Lo" = word is used to excite particular attention in a hearer to the subject at hand.
4. "Three men stood by him" = when first perceived by the patriarch they were believed to be men, strangers, who were approaching his tent and were already close to it-- standing by (close; not far away but far enough for him to run and meet them) him.
5. "Bowed himself toward the ground" = the expression denotes the complete prostration of the body by first falling on the knees, and then inclining the head forward until it touches the ground; this was a mode of salutation practiced by orientals toward superiors generally, such as kings and princes, but also toward equals.
6. It is impossible to know with certainty that an act of worship was intended by the patriarch, and not simply the presentation of human and civil honor.

#### V. 3

1. "And said" = this is Abraham speaking.
2. "My Lord" = Adonai; word denotes one having authority, whether divine or not; whether Abraham recognized one of the men as the Lord at first, we do not know, for this could have been nothing more than Abraham's recognition of superior authority.
3. "If now I have found favour in thy sight" = this is not implying doubt on Abraham's part as to his acceptance before God; if he was not aware that this was God Himself visiting him he could be simply using the customary formula of oriental address.
5. "Pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant" = the hospitality of the Eastern and even of the Arab who welcomes those who pass by his tent; equivalent to "pass not on till thou hast eaten bread, and rested under thy servant's tent."

#### V. 4

1. Feet washing was a necessary part of oriental hospitality.
2. "Rest yourselves under the tree" = literally, recline by resting on the elbow under the shade of the tree.

#### V. 5

1. "I" = Abraham, who was the head of the house, saw to it that all the necessary preparations for this meal was carried out; he did it because he saw to it that it was done.
2. "Comfort ye your hearts" = literally strengthen or support them by eating and drinking.
3. "Therefore are ye come" = in the course of events it has so fallen out, in order that you might be refreshed.
4. "And they said, So do, as thou hast said" = this brief reply is a frank acceptance of the hospitable invitation.

## V. 6

1. Abraham personally gives directions and Sarah personally attends to cooking.
2. "Three measures" = about three pecks which was a superabundant supply for three guests for in Exo. 16:16 we see an omer (three tenths of a measure) was considered sufficient for one man for a day; Abraham had a numerous household, and plentifulness was the character of primitive hospitality.
3. "Make cakes upon the hearth" = baked among the coals.

## V. 7

1. "And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good" = Abraham showed honor due to strangers by offering animal food, which was not a common article of consumption among Orientals.
2. "And gave *it* unto a young man" = his domestic servant in attendance whose business was to kill it and dress the meat.
3. "Hasted" = to hurry; promptly.

## V. 8

1. "He" = the domestic servant who killed the calf and prepared it (dressed it).
2. "Butter" = signified curdled milk not butter as we know it today for butter was not used among Orientals except medicinally.
3. "And milk" = while it was still fresh or containing its fatness.

4. "He stood by them under the tree" = this could apply to the domestic servant who served them as standing by ready to serve at a moment's notice; this could also refer to Abraham for it was the custom of the Orientals to honor their guest by not sitting to eat with them, but by standing to wait upon them.

5. "Them" = "they" = the three men mentioned in verse 2 who were Divine representatives of God with one being God Himself. (Heb. 13:2)

6. "They did eat" = designed to prove their visit to him was not a dream or vision, but a genuine external manifestation of God Himself.

## V. 9

1. "They" = the three men with one (God) doing the speaking for the others, as only "he" is used in verse 10; this may have been while they were eating or it could have been at the end of the meal.

2. "Him" = "he" = Abraham.

3. "Where *is* Sarah thy wife?" = this question indicates that this visit had a special reference to her.

4. "And he said, Behold in the tent" = no doubt at first Abraham may have regarded his visitors only as men, but by this time a suspicion of their true character must have begun to dawn upon his mind.

## V. 10

1. "He" = "I" = the Lord Himself.

2. "Thee" = "thy" = "him" = Abraham.

3. "I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life" = this is the language of self-determination and suitable only to the Sovereign One--the One who gives conception--not one of His messengers.

4. "Lo" = word is used to excite particular attention in a hearer to the subject at hand, namely Abraham even though Sarah heard the message; even though Abraham staggered not at the promise of God in Chapter 17 (Rom. 4:20); it is good for him to have it repeated.

## V. 11

1. This verse repeats the facts--both Abraham and Sarah were incapable of conceiving a child.

2. "Stricken in age" = advanced in years; Abraham was 99 years old and Sarah was 89 years old.

#### V. 12

1. "Therefore" = in view of the fact she was unable to have a child.

2. "Sarah laughed within herself" = she did not laugh out loud nor speak out loud, but the Lord heard and knew the thoughts and intents of her heart (Heb. 4:12); Abraham had laughed in joyful amazement in Chapter 17 at the first mention of Sarah having a son, and now Sarah laughs possibly in unbelief or at least with a mingled feeling of doubt and delight at the announcement of her approaching maternity.

3. "My lord" = not capitalized so it refers to Abraham; this reverential submission to Abraham which Sarah here displays is in the NT commended as a pattern for Christian wives. (I Peter 3:6)

#### V. 13

1. "The LORD" = Jehovah; the Divine one of the three men "said unto Abraham."

2. "Wherefore did Sarah laugh?" = a question which must have convinced Abraham of the Speaker's omniscience for Sarah did not laugh out loud, nor did she speak out loud.

3. "Saying" = within herself, "Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?" = she knows that in the nature of things she is past child bearing.

#### V. 14

1. "I" = Jehovah still speaking to Abraham.

2. "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" = denotes that nothing is impossible with God. (Luke 1:37; 18:27); Jehovah was and is capable of accomplishing anything He wills at any time and in any way He chooses.

3. The rest of this verse is a basic repetition of verse 10. In the birth of Isaac, as in the birth of Jesus, it was necessary for God to work a miracle.

#### V. 15

1. "Then Sarah" = who had overheard the conversation, and the charge spoken against her, now probably appears before the stranger.
2. "Denied, saying, I laughed not" = a natural reaction when her internal reaction was known by this stranger.
3. "For" = introduces the reason she denied, "she was afraid" = she was frightened that this stranger could know the secret of her heart; no doubt, at this point, there was kindled a suspicion in her inner being that this stranger was no ordinary man but Jehovah Himself. (Psa. 44:21)
4. "Nay; but thou didst laugh" = He who sees what is within and knows even the thoughts of one's heart refuted Sarah's statement in this verse and insists that she did laugh, at least in the thought of her heart.
5. The silence of Sarah was an evidence of her conviction and her later conception was proof of her repentance and forgiveness.

#### V. 16

1. "The men" = the three strangers, one of which was Jehovah and the other two, angels, all manifested as men.
2. "Rose up from thence" = got up from under the shade of the oak tree by Abraham's tent; this occurred after they had finished their meal.
3. "And looked toward Sodom" = actually toward the plains of Sodom as if intending to go there.
4. "And Abraham went with them to bring them on the way" = it was the custom to travel a portion of their journey with those who left one's home--tent; in Acts 15:3 as was the custom of that day, the whole assembly (church) of believers at Antioch turned out to escort the group for a short distance on the way; in our day we might say, "As you are about to leave, I will walk you to your car;" means to give them a friendly convoy over a portion of their journey; the lower tip of the Red Sea, which is where Sodom was believed to have been, can be seen from the hills east of Hebron; Sodom was about 18 miles from Hebron.

#### V. 17

1. "The LORD" = "I" = Jehovah.
2. "The LORD said" = to Himself, not out loud to Abraham.

3. "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do" = refers to what He purposed to do--destroy the cities of the plains of Jordan; the Hebrew construction reveals that the action is regarded as being already as good as finished.

## V. 18

1. "Seeing" = introduces the reasons the Lord did not want to hide what He purposed to do; these reasons are found in verses 18-19.

A. "Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation" = as a result of this, he would have the interest of humanity in this act of judgment on Sodom.

B. "And all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him" = this is a quotation of the promise given in Gen. 12:2-3 about 24 years before; thus, Abraham would be personally and directly concerned with all dealings of mercy and judgment among the inhabitants of the earth.

## V. 19

C. "For I know him" = literally "I have known;" implies to be chosen for a purpose; the Lord had made Himself known to him and manifested His love to him; therefore, this judgment upon Sodom is to be explained to him, that he may train his household to avoid the sins of this doomed city = "that he will command his children and his household after him" = he will command by parental authority as well as personal example; this involved two things:

1) To "keep the way of the LORD" = to guard, hedge about, protect, and attend to the truths of the Lord--the way of real salvation.

2) "To do justice and judgment" = to practice naturally and habitually that which is right and harmonizes with the Divine law.

1. "Second "that" = to the end; in order that.

2. "The LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" = refers to the promise the Lord gave Abraham in Gen. 12:2-3; if Abraham failed to command his children (train them, which involves instruction, example, love, and discipline), then his offspring will receive judgment or chastisement instead of blessing; later the Lord told Moses what He would do if they heeded His commandments and also what He would do if they failed. (Lev. 26:3-33)

3. The judgment of the Lord on Sodom is a warning example on all. If one ceases to do justice and judgment, it is certain they will not continue to enjoy the benefits of the covenant of grace. If we as parents fail to command our children, it is very likely that they will not continue to enjoy the benefits of the covenant of grace.

## V. 20

1. "The LORD" = Jehovah.

2. "Because" = introduces the reasons for the Lord's actions in verse 21.

A. "The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great" = these were the two leading cities at the south end of where the Dead Sea is now; three other cities--Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar--were to be destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah; ultimately God spared Zoar as a new home for Lot (Gen. 19:18-22); the "cry" refers to the wickedness of the cities and it was "great" = abundant; multiplied.

B. "Their sin is very grievous" = heavy; abundant; heinous--enormous, severe.

## V. 21

1. "I" = "me" = Jehovah--the LORD.

2. "I will go down now, and see" = this is written from man's viewpoint since God is omniscient, knows all things, thus He would not have to check it out as a man would, yet the Holy Spirit had this written this way for our benefit.

3. "They" = the people of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah as well as the other three cities of the plains of Jordan.

4. "Whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it" = the Hebrew construction indicates "whether they have made completeness--perfection;" this would be equivalent to their cup of iniquity being full.

5. "Which is come unto me" = refers to the cry of wickedness of the cities.

6. "And if not, I will know" = the Lord is telling Abraham what His intent is concerning the cities of the plain; the Hebrew may indicate, "and if they repent, I will not punish them;" that is what happened to the city of Ninevah (Jonah 3:4-10); the Lord already knew.

## V. 22

1. "The men" = refers to the two angels manifested as men, who were with the Lord; two of the three proceeded on their way toward Sodom, while the third was detained by Abraham, probably on the heights overlooking the plain.

2. "Abraham stood yet before the LORD" = to make intercession for the cities in which his nephew, Lot, dwelt.

## V. 23

1. "And Abraham drew near" = Abraham who was already standing by Jehovah, who appeared as a man, now spiritually draws near to Him.
2. "And said" = ask a question, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" = this question presupposes that God had explained to the patriarch His intention to destroy the cities of the plain (verse 17); Abraham may have been concerned about his nephew, Lot, whom I believe had been saved only a short time before this conversation; I believe after Abraham was saved, 15 years before, He begin to witness to Lot and after some time Lot was saved; we know he was saved because II Peter 2:7-8 refers to his righteous soul; there is no way Lot was saved when he pitched his tent toward Sodom in Gen. 13:12 because that is contrary to Scripture--a saved man cannot go years in habitual sin (I John 3:9); Abraham may have been concerned about the souls of the inhabitants of Sodom--he wanted to see them saved--thus the question.

## V. 24

1. "Peradventure" = by chance, perhaps; it may be.
2. Abraham intercedes for really all five cities of the plain even though Sodom is mentioned because it was probably the largest of the five cities.
3. "Fifty righteous within the city" = number mentioned in his first intercessory request.
4. "Wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place" = "the place" refers to the city or cities; this lets us know Abraham is concerned about the entire population and not just the godly portion of the city.

## V. 25

1. "Thee" = Jehovah.
2. "That be far from thee" = literally "that would be a profane (irreverent) thing to do;" spoken twice in this verse.
3. "This manner" = refers to "slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked" = it would be a profane thing to treat the righteous as the wicked.
4. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Abraham appeals not to Jehovah's covenant of grace but to His absolute judicial justice; Abraham believed that Jehovah would do nothing that would even seem to tarnish His Divine righteousness.

5. As Abraham boldly interceded, it makes Heb. 4:16 come alive.

6. The Lord will never do anything that would tarnish His Divine righteousness, but we must remember it rains on the just and the unjust alike. (Mat. 5:45) Therefore, there will be times when the righteous will suffer as the Lord punishes the wicked.

7. The Judge of the earth will always do right and in the end all saints (the righteous) will escape the wrath of God. (I Thess. 5:9; Rom. 5:9)

#### V. 26

1. "The LORD" = "I" = Jehovah.

2. The Lord granted his petition.

3. "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place" = not just the righteous but all the city; this is another proof that Abraham was concerned about the souls of all mankind in the city.

4. "For their sakes" = refers to the righteous; because of the claims upon the Lord's mercy which grace admits the righteous to prefer.

#### V. 27

1. "And Abraham answered and said" = being encouraged by the success of his first petition, he asks another petition.

2. "I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord" = I have undertaken or adventured.

3. "Which am *but* dust and ashes" = may refer to the custom of the burning the dead, as it was coexistent with that of burying them at least to the pagans; this is a figure of the insignificance he felt as the petitioner.

4. Abraham is always found burying his loved ones, not burning them.

#### V. 28

1. Again Abraham petitions the Lord not to destroy the city for lack of five righteous. Instead of pleading for the city's safety on account of 45, he prays against its destruction on account of five--lack of five.

2. And the Lord said He would not destroy the city if He found 45 righteous there.

V. 29

1. Abraham made a third request, perhaps 40 were found.
2. And the Lord granted his petition.

V. 30

1. His fourth request was for 30.
2. And the Lord granted his petition.

V. 31

1. His fifth request was for 20.
2. And the Lord granted his petition.

V. 32

1. "I will speak yet but this once" = on this one last time; this is his sixth request which was for 10.
2. And the Lord again granted his petition.

V. 33

1. "And the LORD went his way" = He vanished not to avoid further petitions from Abraham but for the reason specified in the next words, "as soon as he had left communing with Abraham" = because Abraham's petitions (interceding) were ended; no doubt he thought there should be at least 10 righteous in the cities of the plains.
2. "And Abraham returned unto his place" = he went back home to his tent at Mamre near Hebron.

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**DISCLAIMER:**

These notes were condensed and compiled after several hours of study. I do not claim originality, nor do I claim that they are correct as to grammar and typing. Our sincere desire is that they may be of help to others. Please overlook any errors. If our church can be of any help to you please let us know.

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