

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

Abraham

It is true today, as it has been from the beginning, that man must keep God's commandments in order to be saved. As Adam and Eve were told not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, God says in Ezekiel 18:4b, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Let us notice the man Abraham. We are still studying from the first period of time, called the Patriarchal Age. This was the period of time when God spoke directly to the patriarch of a family. Some commands were given to Noah that were not given to anyone else; such was also the case with Abraham. By noticing how they obeyed the commands given them, and the acceptance or rejection of their obedience by God, we can know how we must obey the laws God has given us.

In Genesis 12:1-4, this is written: "Now the Lord God said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

What does obedience to God's commands prove about a man? That he is faithful. No one can be faithful to God for me; neither can anyone be faithful to God for you. No one could obey the commands given to Abraham, but him. No one could prove Abraham's faithfulness to God, but Abraham. What, then, does faithfulness require? Obedience.

Genesis 12:5 tells us that Abram departed from his father's house, as the Lord had instructed him to do. Abram, his wife Sarai, his brother's son Lot, and all their substance came into the land of Canaan. The Lord made a promise to Abram at this point: "Unto thy seed will I give this land..." (Genesis 12:7). Was this promise fulfilled during Abram's lifetime? No. His seed would receive the land. And, it was this promise that was foremost with Abram over the next several years of his life. He was 75 when instructed to leave his father's house. God repeats the promise to Abram in Genesis 13:14-16. But, at age 86, Abram still did not have an heir. Sarah, his wife, suggested he take her handmaid to bear him a child. The handmaid, Hagar, did bear Abram a son, named Ishmael (Genesis 16:16). But this was not the Lord's plan. In our next lesson we'll notice God's plan.