

ABRAHAM.....I

(Genesis 11:26- 12:20)

God destroyed the generation of Noah's day because of their extreme wickedness. But in the generations following Noah mankind again turned against God and fell deeply into sin.

Rather than destroy the wicked people of the earth, God decided to choose one righteous man to begin a family of special people to be his very own.

That man was Abram. He lived in Ur, which was in the part of the world now known as Iraq. Abram had a great faith in God---which is why he was chosen.

God told Abram to leave his home and go to a country which he would show him. God made 3 very important promises to Abraham: (1) He would become a great nation; (2) all the peoples of the earth would be blessed through him; and (3) he and his offspring would be given the land which God would show him (Canaan).

The trip to Canaan was in two phases. Terah, Abram's father, accompanied by Abram, his wife Sarai, and Terah's grandson, Lot, travelled northward to Haran where they settled until Terah died. It was in Haran that Abram received the call recorded in Genesis 12:2-3.

Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran and moved southward into the new land. He had no children as Sarai was barren. He moved southward to a desert area called Negev.

Because of a severe famine Abram decided to go to Egypt for a while. In Egypt Abram showed embarrassing weakness. Despite the fact that he had great faith in God, he (like so many of us) had a lapse in his trust in God. He became afraid that because Sarai was so beautiful the Egyptians might kill him in order to get her! He told them that Sarai was his sister. Indeed she was taken to Pharaoh in his palace, presumably to become a wife (or perhaps part of his harem).

But God came to the rescue, inflicting diseases on Pharaoh and his household. Somehow they figured out that it was because of Abram's deception. Sarai was returned to Abram and they were ordered to leave the country.