Great Events Of The Bible -- The Call Of Abram!

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Introduction:
A. Abraham -- A VITAL Figure In The Spiritual History Of The World.
B. His Is OFT Mentioned In The Bible!
   1. “Abram” is mentioned 61 times in 50 verses.
   2. “Abraham” is mentioned 251 times in 231 verses.
C. Scriptures Leading Up To The Call Of Abram.
   2. Gen. 11:10-26 -- the genealogy of Shem from Shem to Terah.

I. (Slide #2) The Lineage Of And Call Of Terah. Gen. 11:27-32
   A. (Slide #3) “This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot. 28 And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. 29 Then Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram’s wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor’s wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah. 30 But Sarai was barren; she had no child. 31 And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram’s wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. 32 So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.”

B. (Slide #4) Who Was Terah?
   1. He is in the 10th generation from Noah. Gen. 11:10-25
2. Abram, Nahor, and Haran are his sons -- the 11th generation from Noah. 27

3. Haran begat a son, Lot -- the 12th generation from Noah. 27

4. (►) Haran was an idolater.
   a. Josh. 24:2 “And Joshua said to all the people, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods.’”
   b. Like many in that area, he was a worshiper of the moon god.

C. (Slide #5) He Lived In Ur Of The Chaldeas (“Ur” city in southern Mesopotamia.)

D. Haran Died In Ur. 28

E. (►) Terah And His Family Left Ur Of The Chaldeas And Travelled Northwest Up The Mesopotamian Valley To Haran.
1. The travelers -- Terah, Abram and his wife Sarai; and Lot, Haran’s son (Terah’s grandson and Abram’s nephew). 31
   a. Nahor and Milcah (Haran’s daughter and Abram’s niece; they had 8 children. 22:19-23 Haran had two daughters -- Milcah and Iscah, and one son, Lot); 11:29; 22:20-33; 24:15,24
   b. Sarai was barren.
      1. Barren women longed for a child.
      2. Examples:
         a. Sarah. Gen. 11:30; 16:b
         b. Rachel
            1. Gen. 30:1-7 “Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, ‘Give me children, or else I die!’ 2And Jacob’s anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, ‘Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?’ 3So she said, ‘Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I also may have children by her.’ 4Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her. 5And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. 6Then Rachel said, ‘God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son.’ Therefore she called his name Dan. 7And Rachel’s maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son.”
            2. Later she bore Joseph. Gen. 32:22-24
            3. She died in childbirth with Benjamin. Gen. 35:16-20
c. Hannah
   1. I Sa. 1:10 “And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish.”
   2. I Sa. 1:11 “Then she made a vow and said, ‘O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.’”

d. Manoah’s wife: Ju. 13:3,5,7,8,24
   1. Although she had been barren, God promised her a son.
   2. Manoah’s prayer: “O my Lord, please let the Man of God whom You sent come to us again and teach us what we shall do for the child who will be born.” Ju. 13:8

3. People in those generations did not understand barrenness.
   a. As far as we know they did not understand the physiology of it.
   b. They saw a woman as a receptacle for the male seed.
   c. If nothing happened, the woman was seen as defective -- a faulty incubator.
   d. They likely saw this as something caused by the gods they worshiped.

2. This place was named for Terah’s son who died in Ur.

3. They settled here instead of going directly into Canaan (they went up the Euphrates River, at the Balikh River they turned due north and travelled for 80 miles and settled at the place they named Haran.)

4. They set out for the land of Canaan; when they came to Haran they settled there. (They went 80 miles north of the Euphrates following the Balikh River.

5. Terah died at Haran when he was 205 years old. 32
   a. This is SO young when you consider that he is in the 10th generation after Noah.
   b. Remember that Methuselah died in the year of the Flood at age 969. 5:27
   c. And Noah died 350 years after the Flood at age 950. 7:11; 9:28,29

6. Later his family migrated from Haran to Canaan.
II. (Slide #6) The Call Of Abram. Gen. 12:1-10

A. (Slide #7) “Now the LORD had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you. 2I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’ 4So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother’s son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan. (Slide #8) 6Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land. 7Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I will give this land.’ And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. 8And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. 9So Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South. 10Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land.”

B. (Slide #9) God Called Abram To Leave His Country, His Family, And His Father’s House.
1. Why did God have him to leave his family?

2. Was God severing his ties with their idolatrous ways?

3. Was God pushing him onward so that he could begin to head toward the Promised Land and to step into the Covenant Promise that God was going to make with him?

4. Imagine what he was giving up:
   a. Land -- Haran had become their dwelling place; it was vital for political survival and identity.
   b. Family -- heirs; inheritance that could be passed on.
   c. Security -- when Abram left Haran, he forfeited his security. He did not know where he was going; he did not know what dangers he might encounter.
   d. He was putting his survival, identity, future, and security in Lord’s hands.

5. NO WONDER he is called:
   a. “The Father of the Faithful!”
   b. Heb. 11:8 commends his faith: “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.”
C. (Slide #10) Abraham’s Call And Promises God Made To Abram: 12:1-3
1. A Land that I will show you. 1

2. I will make you a great nation. 2 (Slide #11) (His descendants would be as the stars of the heavens! 15:3)

3. (Slide #12) I will bless you And make your name great. 2 (God was going to cause Abram’s name to be magnified!)

4. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you. 3

5. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. 3

6. An interesting observation: the word “covenant” is not used in this text!
   a. This is the FIRST great call in the Bible!
   b. It is first used in 15:18.

D. (Slide #13) Abram Heeded God’s Call, Took Sarai And Lot And The People He Had Gotten In Haran; He Left Haran. 4
1. He was 75 years old at this time.

2. 14:14 tells us that Abram had 318 servants who had been born in his house.

3. The came to the land of Canaan. 5

E. At Shechem, God Told Abram That This Was The Land That He Would Give To Abram’s Descendants. 6,7
1. Schechem -- about 20 miles north of Jerusalem (between Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim).

2. These were the mountains of blessing and cursing during the days of Moses.
   Dt. 11:29; 27:4,13; Josh. 8:33

F. (Slide #14) Abram Build An Altar At Shechem. 7

G. Then He Moved To Between Bethel And Ai; There He Built Another Altar To The Lord. 8 (He built an altar to the Lord; He called upon the name of the Lord!)
1. Bethel was 10 miles north of Jerusalem.

2. Later he would return there after surviving the famine in Egypt.
H. Because of a famine, he continued traveling south into the land known as the Negev. 9
1. Negev -- south of the hill country of Judah.

2. It was bordered on the south by a steppe region called “the wilderness.”

3. The focal point of Negev is the valley east of Beersheba over to Arad -- it extends 10 miles north and south of Beersheba.

I. (Slide #15) Israel throughout their history is reminded of this event and their earliest ancestor, the Chaldean.
1. (Slide #16) Josh. 24:2,3 “And Joshua said to all the people, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods. 3 Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac.’”

2. (Slide #17) Nehemiah and Ezra led the people in a reminder of their history: Neh. 9:7,8 “You are the LORD God, Who chose Abram, And brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans, And gave him the name Abraham; 8 You found his heart faithful before You, And made a covenant with him To give the land of the Canaanites, The Hittites, the Amorites, The Perizzites, the Jebusites, And the Girgashites-- To give it to his descendants. You have performed Your words, For You are righteous.”

3. (Slide #18) Isaiah warned drifting Judah to repent by focusing upon their roots: Is. 51:2 “Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who bore you; For I called him alone, And blessed him and increased him.”

4. (Slide #19) Stephen later rebuked the faithless Jews who had rejected the God of Abraham and most recently the Messiah He had sent by beginning at their historical roots: “And he said, ‘Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, 3 and said to him, ‘Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.’ 4 Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell. 5 And God gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, He promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him.” Ac. 7:2-5

J. Later he came into Egypt. 10
III. (Slide #20) Great Truths From This Text:

A. (►) Idolaters Can Change; Sinners Can Repent! God Can Do Mighty Things With And Through Them!
   1. God used an idolater who became a believer to be “the Father of the faithful!”
   2. Later in Gen. 21:33 is a profound statement that shows how drastically Abram had changed: “Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there called on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God.”
   3. People can choose to leave false gods and turn to the LIVING GOD!
   4. Sadly, people can also choose to leave the Lord and His Church and turn to denominationalism, idolatry, or even atheism!!!

B. (►) God’s Providence Began To Work To Bring Into Fruition The Nation Through Whom He Would Bring The Promised Messiah.
   1. Through the next 2,000 years, you see God at work giving Abram a son, raising a nation from his descendants, giving them a Law, giving them a land, and bringing the Messiah through their lineage.
   2. And God began this plan through a penitent idolater who became a great man of faith!

C. (►) Oh That We Would Live To Seek To Be Like The Spiritual “Father Of The Faithful” Abraham!!!!
   1. “Friend of God!”
      a. Is. 41:8 “But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, The descendants of Abraham My friend.”
      b. II Chr. 20:7 “Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?”
      c. Js. 2:23 “And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God.”
   2. God give us a heart of Abraham: Gen. 26:5 “Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”
   3. May we strive with all our being to be like “Father Abraham!”