

Father Abraham

Study Guide

LESSON
THREE

THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM:
MODERN APPLICATION



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HOW TO USE THIS LESSON AND STUDY GUIDE

This study guide is designed for use in conjunction with the associated video lesson. If you do not have access to the video, the study guide will also work with the audio and/or text versions of the lesson. Additionally, the lesson and study guide are intended to be used in a learning community, but they also can be used for individual study if necessary.

- **Before you watch the lesson**
 - **Prepare** — Complete any recommended readings.
 - **Schedule viewing** — In the Notes section of the study guide, the lesson has been divided into sections that correspond to the video. Using the time codes found in parentheses beside each major division, determine where to begin and end your viewing session. IIM lessons are densely packed with information, so you may also want to schedule breaks. Breaks should be scheduled at major divisions.
- **While you are watching the lesson**
 - **Take notes** — The Notes section of the study guide contains a basic outline of the lesson, including the time codes for the beginning of each section and key notes to guide you through the information. Many of the main ideas are already summarized, but make sure to supplement these with your own notes. You should also add supporting details that will help you to remember, describe, and defend the main ideas.
 - **Record comments and questions** — As you watch the video, you may have comments and/or questions on what you are learning. Use the margins to record your comments and questions so that you can share these with the group following the viewing session.
 - **Pause/replay portions of the lesson** — You may find it helpful to pause or replay the video at certain points in order to write additional notes, review difficult concepts, or discuss points of interest.
- **After you watch the lesson**
 - **Complete Review Questions** — Review Questions are based on the basic content of the lesson. You should answer Review Questions in the space provided. These questions should be completed individually rather than in a group.
 - **Answer/discuss Application Questions** — Application Questions are questions relating the content of the lesson to Christian living, theology, and ministry. Application questions are appropriate for written assignments or as topics for group discussions. For written assignments, it is recommended that answers not exceed one page in length.

Preparation

- Read Genesis 11:10–25:18
- Read Galatians 3

Notes

I. Introduction (0:28)

II. Abraham and Jesus (4:42)

We have been joined to Abraham's special seed, Christ.

A. Seed of Abraham (5:54)

Abraham is the father of all believers throughout history.

1. Singularity (6:44)

The promise was to Abraham and his "seed" in the singular.

The singular form “seed” referred to more than one person many times in Genesis. Paul used the word “seed” in a plural sense in Galatians 3:29.

Before Isaac’s birth, Genesis usually speaks of Abraham’s “seed” as a collective, meaning “descendants” in the plural.

In Genesis 22:16-18 the word “seed” has a focus on Isaac as the special singular descendant who would inherit Abraham’s promises.

The singularity of “seed” in Genesis 22:16-18 indicates that the promises were passed to Isaac, Abraham’s special son and heir.

2. Christ as Seed (13:41)

In Galatians 3:16, the one “seed” of Abraham is Christ.

Christ is the only one through whom anyone else can participate in Abraham’s inheritance.

Christ receives and distributes Abraham’s inheritance in three main stages:

- The inauguration of his kingdom
- The continuation of his kingdom
- The consummation of his kingdom.

Typology exists between Isaac and Christ:

- Isaac was the chief heir of Abraham in his generation.
- Christ is Abraham’s greatest son and the chief heir in the New Testament age.

B. Major Themes (18:45)**1. Divine Grace (19:23)**

The coming of Christ as the seed of Abraham was a great objective act of God's mercy to the world.

2. Abraham's Loyalty (21:16)

Christ was loyal to the father in all three stages of his kingdom.

Abraham's loyalty can be properly applied to the modern world only as we connect it to Christ, the seed of Abraham.

3. Blessings to Abraham (23:05)

Christ who inherits Abraham's promises and enjoys God's blessings in even greater measure.

4. Blessings through Abraham (24:45)

Through a process of blessing and cursing, all peoples on the earth would be blessed through Abraham.

Abraham and his descendants would inherit the entire earth by spreading God's blessings to all the families of every nation.

Christ is the seed of Abraham and heir to Abraham's promises.

As the special seed of Abraham, Christ fulfills or completes the themes we encounter in Abraham's life.

III. Israel and the Church (28:34)**A. Seed of Abraham (30:06)****1. Numerical Breadth (30:44)**

Isaac was the conduit through whom many would enjoy the status of being Abraham's descendants.

The Christian church is the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29).

We are connected to Abraham because we are joined to Christ.

2. Ethnic Identity (32:28)

The people who followed Moses were a mixture of Jews, and Gentiles who had been adopted into Israel.

Later generations:

- Gentiles like Rahab and Ruth were engrafted into Israel.
- The genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1–9 include Gentiles' names among God's people.

The Christian church today is ethnically diverse.

We must be ready to apply Abraham's stories to Jews and to Gentiles that are Abraham's seed because they are in the church.

3. Spiritual Character (36:39)

There was spiritual diversity within the visible nation of Israel. There were both unbelievers and true believers.

Unbelievers within Israel showed their character by infidelity. True believers demonstrated their character by fidelity.

Unbelievers within Israel only received temporary blessings. But, in eternity they would receive God's final, eternal judgment.

Believers not only enjoyed many temporary blessings, but would also receive eternal blessings.

Diversity exists in the visible church:

- Unbelievers
- Believers

4. **Historical Situation (42:12)**

Moses wrote to Israelites who:

- Had left slavery in Egypt
- But had not yet entered the Promised Land

The church:

- Has been delivered from the dominion of sin (inauguration of the kingdom)
- But is still headed toward the glory of the new creation (consummation of the kingdom)

Remain faithful to Christ:

- Because of what he has done in the inauguration of the kingdom
- As his kingdom grows in our day
- Longing for the day we enter the new heavens and new earth

Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church both:

- The seed of Abraham
- Mixed ethnic identity
- Spiritually diverse
- On a journey toward the goal of the glorious kingdom of God

B. Major Themes (47:43)**1. Divine Grace (48:38)**

God has shown much mercy to us. We must learn how to seek and depend on his mercy.

2. Abraham's Loyalty (50:16)

True believers today are expected to respond to God's grace with faithful service to God.

Christians today have the responsibility to perform good works.

3. Blessings to Abraham (52:06)

Modern blessings encourage us that ultimate blessings will be ours when Christ returns.

4. Blessings through Abraham (53:10)

We can have assurance of God's protection.

We can be a blessing to all nations by extending God's kingdom to the ends of the earth.

IV. Conclusion (54:37)

Application Questions

1. Why is it important for believers that Christ fulfills the major themes in Abraham's life?
2. What are some practical modern implications of the ethnic diversity of Abraham's seed in Moses' day?
3. Why is it important to recognize that the church contains both believers and unbelievers? How does this affect the way you should view and minister in the church?
4. What basic church doctrines might be influenced by our understanding of the spiritual diversity of the church?
5. Why does God expect loyalty from you? How can you exhibit loyalty to God in your life?
6. In what ways do you enjoy the foretastes of blessings that God has given to you as his child?
7. How can we teach, proclaim and exhibit the gospel in ways that bless others? What types of things might prevent Christians from proclaiming the gospel with this result?
8. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study?

Glossary

covenant – A binding legal agreement made either between two people or groups of people, or between God and a person or group of people

exodus – The deliverance of the people of Israel out of bondage in Egypt

Rahab – Gentile woman who helped the spies when they entered the Promised Land; included as a part of the people of Israel after the conquest of Jericho

Ruth – Moabite woman; daughter-in-law of Naomi who married Boaz and became a member of Israel; of the family line of David and Jesus

Sinai – Mountain where God made a covenant with Israel in the time of Moses and gave them the Ten Commandments

sperma – Greek word (transliteration) for "seed"

zera – Hebrew word (transliteration) for "seed"; similar to "offspring" or "descendant"