

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2004**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB**

Message Two

The God of Abraham

(1)

**Obeying God's Calling by Faith
and Living the Life of the Altar and the Tent**

Scripture Reading: Josh. 24:2-3; Acts 7:2; Heb. 11:8-10; Gen. 12:1-3, 7-8; 13:3-4, 18

I. As believers in Christ, we are repeating the history of Abraham; the Christian life is the life that Abraham lived—Gal. 3:6-9; Rom. 4:12:

- A. For Abraham to live and walk by faith means that he had to reject himself, to set himself aside, to forget himself, and to live by Someone else—Gal. 2:20.
- B. Abraham's life of faith is presently being repeated among us; the church life today is the harvest of the life and history of Abraham—Rom. 4:12.
- C. An Abraham is a person who has been called out, who no longer lives and walks by himself, and who forsakes and forgets everything he has by nature—Josh. 24:2-3; Gen. 12:1-3.
- D. The way God worked on Abraham is the way He works on all the believers in Christ—Rom. 4:12.

II. Abraham obeyed God's calling by faith—Heb. 11:8; Rom. 4:1, 12; Gal. 3:7:

- A. God called Abraham by appearing to him as the God of glory, who transfused His essence into him—Acts 7:2:
 - 1. God's glory was a great attraction to him; it separated him from the world unto God, and it was a great encouragement and strength that enabled him to follow God—Exo. 29:43; Gen. 12:1, 4.
 - 2. In the same principle, God calls the New Testament believers by His invisible glory—2 Pet. 1:3.
- B. God appeared to Abraham to call him out of his fallen condition and to bring him back to Himself as the tree of life—Acts 7:2; Gen. 12:1-3:
 - 1. When God appeared to Abraham, that was the appearing of the tree of life—2:9.
 - 2. The principle of the tree of life is dependence, and to come to the tree of life is to depend upon God—John 15:4-5.
- C. When Abraham was called by God, he went out by faith, not knowing where he was going—Heb. 11:8.
- D. Abraham's faith did not originate with himself; rather, his believing in God was a reaction to the transfusion of God's element into his being—Acts 7:2

III. Abraham lived the life of the altar and the tent—Heb. 11:9; Gen. 12:7-8; 13:3-4, 18:

- A. Abraham first built an altar and then erected a tent; this means that Abraham was for God—12:7-8:
 - 1. Building an altar means that we offer everything we are and have to God; this is the real worship of God—Psa. 43:4a:
 - a. An altar means that our life is for God, that God is our life, and that the meaning of our life is God.
 - b. Abraham first took care of the worship of God by erecting an altar, and then he took care of his living—Gen. 12:7-8.
 - 2. Abraham’s dwelling in a tent testified that he did not belong to the world but lived the life of a sojourner on earth—Heb. 11:9-10:
 - a. The tent is the issue of the altar; the altar and the tent are interrelated and cannot be separated.
 - b. Erecting a tent is an expression, a declaration, that we do not belong to this world, that we belong to another country—vv. 15-16.
 - 3. Abraham built a second altar between Bethel and Ai, which stand in contrast to each other—Gen. 12:8:
 - a. *Bethel* means “house of God,” and *Ai* means “a heap of ruins.”
 - b. In the eyes of the called ones, only Bethel, the church life, is worthwhile; everything else is a heap of ruins.
 - 4. Abraham had his failures, and there was the forsaking of the altar and the tent; however, with him there was a recovery, and recovery is a matter of returning to the altar and the tent—vv. 9-10; 13:1-4.
- B. Abraham, a stranger and a sojourner, “eagerly waited for the city which has the foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God”—Heb. 11:10:
 - 1. By living the life of the altar and the tent, Abraham testified that he was sojourning by faith, as in a foreign land—v. 9.
 - 2. The excellent and lovely New Jerusalem is the dear expectation of God’s elect and the destination, the goal, of the heavenly pilgrims—vv. 13-16; 1 Pet. 1:1, 17; 2:11.
 - 3. Abraham’s tent was a miniature of the New Jerusalem, the ultimate tent—Gen. 12:8; 13:3; 18:1; Heb. 11:9; Rev. 21:2-3:
 - a. The overcomers live in tents, looking forward to the New Jerusalem, the eternal tabernacle and the real Feast of Tabernacles—Lev. 23:39-43.
 - b. We are living in the “tent” of the church life, waiting for its consummation—the New Jerusalem—Heb. 11:10.
 - c. The New Jerusalem will be a tabernacle for the remembrance of how the overcomers, before the consummation of the New Jerusalem in the kingdom age, lived in tents as they were journeying toward the New Jerusalem—the eternal Mount Zion—Rev. 21:2-3.
- C. If we would walk in the steps of Abraham’s faith, we must build an altar, signifying that our life on earth is for God, and then pitch a tent, indicating that we do not belong to the world—Rom. 4:12.