

Genesis
St. Jerome Adult Bible Study
Lesson 3 – Answers
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- 1 – The scriptures give us timeless lessons. The lesson we receive from the story of Cain and Abel is that God has special love for all of us but expects obedience – and, even in the face of our disobedience, God still cares for us. The story of Noah teaches us that, for those of us who stay in God’s favor, salvation is ours.
- 2 – Like Adam and Eve in the garden, the people wanted to become like God and built towers to get closer to heaven. They were not giving due subservience to God their creator, therefore, God was extremely displeased.
- 3 – When God created humans, and when he saved Noah, He wanted them to fill the earth, to be fruitful and multiply. By scattering the people of Babel, God was helping them fulfill their destiny.
- 4 – Rebekah (Gen 25:21), Rachel (Gen 29:31), Hannah (1Sam 1:2), and Elizabeth (Lk 1:5) were women who, like Sarai/Sarah desperately wanted children.
- 5 –
- 6a – Terah was taking his family to Canaan when he left Ur.
- 6b – Terah got to Haran and decided to settle there. Haran is in the north-central part of the fertile crescent between the Tigris and the Euphrates – near what is now the border between Turkey and Syria.
- 7 –
- 8 – Christians, Jews, and Muslims all look to Abraham as the founder of their belief in the one true God. It is this faithful devotion to Yahweh that we first learned of from the story of Abraham and his descendants and which we model today.
- 9a – At St. Jerome Church, we are blessed to have had many visits from the Comboni Missionaries whose western hemisphere headquarters is nearby. Several of these dedicated servants of God have told us of their firsthand experience with the starvation in Rwanda, Uganda, Chad, and other African countries. We here in America find it difficult to even imagine the suffering they must endure there.
- 9b – For most of us in St. Jerome parish, the people of Resurrection Parish in Price Hill are a constant reminder of how severe poverty is very close to us. Fortunately for them and for us, too, we are able to help them with donations of food and cash to Fr. Keller, their pastor.

10a – Throughout the story of Abraham, we find almost absolute trust in the Lord. However, when, during famine, Abram fears for his and Sarai’s safety when they are entering Egypt and has Sarai dress to disguise her beauty; he also passes her off as his sister, not his wife. This lack of trust in God is unusual in Abram.

10b – When God punishes Pharaoh, we learn that God, having made a divine promise to Abram, is faithful to him even in the face of his lack of trust.

11 – Abraham, upon entering Canaan, built an altar to God in Shechem (see ruins below) and



gets his people to swear allegiance to Yahweh. At that same place more than 600 years later, Joshua has his people renew their covenant with God when they take Canaan and builds a stone statue (Jos 24:15 cf). 300 years later, Rehoboam, Solomon’s son who wanted to be king of all the tribes, meets all the tribal leaders at Shechem. It is where Jesus met the woman at the well (John 4). Shechem was near the Jordan between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead (or Salt) Sea.

12 – Lot, Abram’s nephew, raised sheep as did Abram. Food for both large flocks was not plentiful enough and Abram told Lot to take his flock in one direction and he, Abram, would take his in the opposite. Lot chose the greener direction which happened to be near Sodom.

13 – God gave Abram and his descendants all the land Abram could see and made Abram’s descendants as numerous as the dust of the earth.

14 – After the kings of Canaan united and plundered Sodom, kidnapping Lot, Abram proved himself to be an excellent military commander by taking a small band of men to recover the loot and save Lot.

15 – Melchizedek blesses Abram in the name of “God Most High”, which was the name of the highest of the Canaanite deities (Gen 14:19). Later, Abram tells of his oath to “God Most High” (Gen 14:22) – both times the invocation was intended to communicate to the indigenous Canaanites that Abram worshipped the God over all the Gods.

16 – Melchizedek is mentioned four more times in the Bible:

Psalms 110:4 - The Lord has sworn and will not waver: “Like Melchizedek you are a priest forever.”

Hebrews 5:6 – 10 - ⁶just as he says in another place: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” ⁷In the days when he was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. ⁸Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; ⁹and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, ¹⁰declared by God high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 6:19 – 20 - ¹⁹This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm, which reaches into the interior behind the veil, ²⁰where Jesus has entered on our behalf as forerunner, becoming high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:1 – 20 - ¹This “Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High,” “met Abraham as he returned from his defeat of the kings” and “blessed him.” ²And Abraham apportioned to him “a tenth of everything.” His name first means righteous king, and he was also “king of Salem,” that is, king of peace. ³Without father, mother, or ancestry, without beginning of days or end of life, thus made to resemble the Son of God, he remains a priest forever. ⁴See how great he is to whom the patriarch “Abraham (indeed) gave a tenth” of his spoils. ⁵The descendants of Levi who receive the office of priesthood have a commandment according to the law to exact tithes from the people, that is, from their brothers, although they also have come from the loins of Abraham. ⁶But he who was not of their ancestry received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had received the promises. ⁷Unquestionably, a lesser person is blessed by a greater. ⁸In the one case, mortal men receive tithes; in the other, a man of whom it is testified that he lives on. ⁹One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, was tithed through Abraham, ¹⁰for he was still in his father’s loins when Melchizedek met him. ¹¹If, then, perfection came through the levitical priesthood, on the basis of which the people received the law, what need would there still have been for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not reckoned according to the order of Aaron? ¹²When there is a change of priesthood, there is necessarily a change of law as well. ¹³Now he of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, of which no member ever officiated at the altar. ¹⁴It is clear that our Lord arose from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. ¹⁵It is even more obvious if another priest is raised up after the likeness of Melchizedek, ¹⁶who has become so, not by a law expressed in a commandment concerning physical descent but by the power of a life that cannot be destroyed. ¹⁷For it is testified: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

17 – St. Paul uses Abram’s faith and the fact that it was his faith that made him “righteous” in the sight of God (Gen 15:6) as proof that one need not be a Jew (nor be circumcised) to achieve eternal life: “¹What then can we say that Abraham found, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²Indeed, if Abraham was justified on the basis of his works, he has reason to boast; but this was not so in the sight of God. ³For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as

righteousness.”⁴ A worker’s wage is credited not as a gift, but as something due. ⁵But when one does not work, yet believes in the one who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness. (Romans 4:1 – 5)

And:

⁹Does this blessedness apply only to the circumcised, or to the uncircumcised as well? Now we assert that “faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness.”¹⁰ Under what circumstances was it credited? Was he circumcised or not? He was not circumcised, but uncircumcised. ¹¹And he received the sign of circumcision as a seal on the righteousness received through faith while he was uncircumcised. Thus he was to be the father of all the uncircumcised who believe, so that to them (also) righteousness might be credited, ¹²as well as the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised, but also follow the path of faith that our father Abraham walked while still uncircumcised. (romans 4:9 – 12)

18 – God assures Abram that the land he is in will someday belong to descendants by swearing an oath in a binding covenant with Abram.