

Abraham is called the "Friend of God," which title, along with the other, "Father of the Faithful," reveals very much. "I did not know before that God had even needed a friend. I need a friend. I need companionship. I need advice and counsel. I need to be cheered. I need a faithful friend. . . . I—but, surely, not God." What if God does need our friendship? What if He misses the service of our love?

In God's command Abram was tested whether he could trust God farther than he saw Him. The Almighty did not say, "It is a land that I will *give* thee," but "It is a land which I will *show* thee." No directions were given as to its locality, or the route he would need to take to reach it, or what kind of land he would find on getting there. He was required to follow God in this matter with implicit faith—with an unquestioned obedience.—Arnold.

This separation to which Abram was called involved a great deal, and the call of God to us demands a separation from the world and all its entanglements.

The nation of Israel looks back to Abraham as the founder of their history, and he stands forth as the first religious man who fully trusted God in all that he did. This religious conviction was the strength of Israel and caused it to outlast the other nations. No people can remain long in power who are without a religion.

There is a legend concerning Abraham's call. It is told in the Koran.

"When night overshadowed him, he saw a star and said, 'This is my Lord.' But

when it set, he said, 'I like not those that set.' And when he saw the moon rising, he said, 'This is my Lord.' But when the moon set, he answered, 'Verily, if my Lord direct me not in the right way, I shall be as one of those who err.' And when he saw the sun rising, he said, 'This is my Lord. This is greater than the star or moon.' But when the sun went down, he said, 'Oh, my people, I am clear of these things. I turn my face to Him who hath made the heavens and the earth.'"—Stanley's Jewish Church.

Light from the East

A PRAYER TO THE GOD OF UR.—The following extracts from a tablet older than the time of Abraham show how his kindred had been rising to the thought of one God, and how closely akin were the ideas and the language of Babylonian and Hebrew devotion: "Lord and prince of gods, who in heaven and on earth alone art supreme, Father, Lord of the firmament, Merciful One, begetter of the universe, whose will hath created law and justice, Father long-suffering and full of forgiveness, whose hand upholdeth the life of all mankind, Firstborn, Omnipotent, whose heart is immensity, there is no God who at any time hath discovered thy fulness. In heaven who is supreme? Thou alone, thou art supreme. On earth who is supreme? Thou alone, thou art supreme. When thy word is spoken in heaven, the seven spirits bow down their faces. When thy word is spoken on earth, the spirits below kiss the ground. King of kings, whose divinity no god resembleth, look with favor on this thy city, Ur."

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

This section contains teaching material for the various grades.

For Bible Class Teachers

AN ANALYSIS

The first eleven chapters of Genesis contain a condensation of human history for two thousand years. The call of Abram occurred about midway between Adam and Christ, and is the beginning of patriarchal history. We notice:

1. *What is meant by the call of Abram.* It meant, (a) God's choice of him to be a covenant head, and the efficacious working of his saving and sanctifying grace in fitting him for this high distinction. (b) Separation from idolaters, the severance of the ties that bound him to country, kindred and home. This involved great and painful sacrifice on his part, but it was necessary in order to qualify him to be the founder of a new fam-