

2. As we have come to one of the pivotal points of history, it may be well to remember some of the others and their chronological perspective. Fix in the memory, the names of the following representative characters. They appear at intervals of nearly 500 years.

B. C.	4004	3500,	3000.	2500.	2000.	1500,	1000.	500.	4.	B. C.
Adam.	Lamech.	Enoch.	Noah.	Abram.	Moses.	Solomon.	Ezra.	Christ.		

NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS.

The intervening portions of Scripture since last lesson embrace (1) Abram's sojourn in Egypt; (2) Lot's choice; (3) Lot's rescue by Abram, (4) The solemn and formal covenant; and (5) The story of Hagar. Our series of lessons is evidently intended to illustrate the covenant relationship in which the patriarchs stood, so that, interesting and important as are the lessons which these chapters teach, we must treat them as aside from our course and bestow upon them merely passing remark. But they must be studied by the teacher in order to get a clear conception of Abram's character.

LESSON PLAN. I. A Covenant God. vs. 1-3. II. A Covenant Head. vs. 4-5. III. Covenant Promises. vs. 6-8. IV. Covenant Obligations. v. 9.

I. A COVENANT GOD. 1. When Abram was ninety years old and nine.—B. C. 1897, twenty-four years after he came into the land, and fourteen since the covenant was solemnly entered into (ch. 15: 7-21). God's delay tested Abram's faith, see 2 Pet. 3: 9. **I am God Almighty** (R. V.)—Hebrew, *El Shaddai*. *Elohim* (God) is the Being who creates and sustains nature, *Jehovah* (printed in our Bibles, LORD) is the covenant God of his people, by whom grace triumphs over sin, *El Shaddai* (almighty God) is the omnipotent One who makes all subservient his eternal purpose and fulfil his decrees. This name occurs frequently in the book of Job. **Walk before me—live as one who appreciates the honor and privilege of my service.** Compare ch. 24: 40; 48: 15; 1 Kings 2: 4; 3: 6; 2 Kings 20: 3, also Enoch (ch. 5: 22), Noah (ch. 6: 9) and Job (1: 1). **Be thou perfect—order your life by my standard.** "Not sincere merely, unless in the primitive sense of purity, but complete, upright, holy, not only in walk, but in heart." (Murphy). The root meaning of "holy" is "whole," or perfect. **2. I will make—execute, as in the case of legal documents.** A token or seal is now to be given, and ratifications exchanged, as in ch. 6: 12. The covenant is already entered into (ch. 15: 7-12); it is now, as it were, solemnly read over, signed and sealed. This occasion is referred to in Gal. 3: 17. **3. Fell on his face—The lowliest posture of reverence, indicating humble and grateful acceptance of the promised blessing.** See verse 17, where the joy bursts forth. It was a common posture in worship, Gen. 24: 52; Num. 16: 22; Mark 14: 35. **God—Elohim.** This is the third name for God in the course of as many verses. Surely it is more reasonable to believe that this is an intentional variation on the part of one writer, than that scraps from three different documents are here pasted together, so to speak. The "Creator" promises a numerous posterity.

II. A COVENANT HEAD. 4. As for me—So far as concerns my part of the covenant. Verse 9 stipulates Abram's part. The father of a multitude of nations (R. V.)—(Gen. 13: 16; 22: 17). "This was true in a literal sense. The twelve tribes of Israel, and many Arab tribes, the twelve Princes of Ishmael, Keturah's descendants and the dukes of Edom sprang from him. But it is to be more magnificently realized in a spiritual sense." (Murphy). See Gal. 3: 7, 9, 29. **5. Abraham—"Father of a great multitude"** (Neh. 9: 7). It required some courage to assume this name and endure the covert ridicule it would excite. A change of name as indicative of a change of rank or condition may be illustrated by the titles of nobility. Plain Mr. Pitt becomes Lord Chatham. But names meant something in Bible times and lands. Compare Jacob's change of name Gen. 35: 10, 11.

III. COVENANT PROMISES. 6. Kings—Best fulfilled in Christ. Micah 5: 2; Rom. 4: 16, 17. **7. An everlasting covenant—To continue, that is, to the close of time and the blessings to be procured by it to be enjoyed throughout eternity.** The promise is made to the church of all ages. The seed of Abraham will eventually embrace the whole human family in fellowship with God." (Murphy). Ps 105: 8-11. **A God to**