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 Speaker, CARL E. DESMOND  
 M.P. for Kent County  
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**SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING**

will be held in the  
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 Sunday, October 10th  
 11 a.m.

Each one of us knows within his own heart those things for which he ought to be thankful. Think on these things. Then let us go up to the House of the Lord and give thanks.

Rev. John M. Smith,  
 MINISTER

**Comments on the Lesson**  
 Sunday, October 10th, 1948  
**BIOGRAPHY IN THE BIBLE**

by Rev. John M. Smith

Last week our study centred around the Bible as "A Treasury of Religious Literature". This week's lesson leads our interest toward the Biography section of that library. Biography is defined as "the written history of a person's life." The biographers of the Bible, however, were not concerned about giving a detailed description of their subject's life. Their interest lay in the realm of religious experience. Therefore for the most part Bible biographers are brief, dealing only with incidents and activities which reveal their character's relationship to God. It was their concern to show that God had a definite place in the life of man, leading him and working through him for the attainment of His Divine Purpose. What better way could the biblical writers use to further their point than by the telling of the case histories of the God-experiences of their great men? Our study, then, deals with a typical Biblical biography which bears out the truth of the key verse: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths — Proverbs 8:6.

The Biblical Basis:  
 Genesis 11:31-32; 12:1-6; 17:1-8

The biography chosen as a basis for the lesson is that of Abraham whose story can be read in Genesis Chapter 11, verse 27, to chapter 25, verse 11. It is the story of a man who in times of idolatry sought to live in communion with the One True and Living God.

In Gen. 11:31-32 we find the beginning of Abraham's story, in which he leaves his native city of Ur and goes out to a strange country in the company of his father, Terah, his nephew, Lot, and the remainder of the household. This is no simple move. It is Abraham's reply to the call of God. It is an act of obedient response in which he leaves the land of idolatry for the worship of the True God.

The Gen. 12:1-5 section acquaints us with the call that caused Abraham to set his eyes toward another land. It was a challenge with a promise — "Get thee out of thy country . . . and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing." It was a call which tried his faith and obedience. To obey meant separation — separation from kindred and native soil — but to obey also meant fellowship with God. Ahead lay weary travel, enemies, insecurity and the unknown. It is highly probable that the people of Ur listed Abraham among the "crazy folk" of his day. But like other men of faith, Abraham was called out to the unknown, with all its fears and doubts, by an ever widening vision, which was higher than the dreams of materialistic and fleshly satisfactions. That vision called him on until its reality became evident.

The verses of Gen. 12:1-8 tell us something of the covenant that was made between God and Abraham. In brief, Abraham for his part was to realize the All-sufficient nature of God, and hold a constant regard for His will and purpose, always knowing that he was under the eye of the Divine God for his part covenanted that Abraham would be the father of a great nation, and that He, the Almighty, would be the God of Abraham and his children. On this covenant Abraham based his life and so lived in faith and trust that men speak of him as "the friend of God".

The Application:  
 As we think again of the biography of Abraham as it appears in the Bible we realize that it carries a timeless message. The men of every age have the opportunity of going out in faith from the narrow confines of godless selfish living into the broad fields of self-sacrificing Christian service. This calls for a covenant with God. A covenant based on the fact that God in Jesus Christ has revealed himself to men as the All-sufficient God and urges them to walk before him in true devotion. Such a covenant calls for renunciation of desires and purposes incompatible with His will, it calls for faith to follow the Christ out into the unknown — faith to follow God's way rather than our own. It is a covenant with promise "I will bless thee . . . and thou shalt be a blessing." Such a promise ought to urge us on to the fulfillment of our part of the covenant. We want to receive the blessing of God; then let us live as God-guided men and women.

Helpful Quotations:  
 "Abraham did not doubt the divine authority of the call."  
 "Good men are the blessings of their country."  
 "Abraham went out not knowing whether he went but knowing whom he followed and under whose direction he went."  
 "That which we undertake, in obedience to God's commands, and a humble attendance upon His providence, will certainly succeed."  
 "What a work one man can do when God controls and directs him!"  
 "When God commands us to go forward He will lead the way."

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