

# GOD, THE FIRST EVANGELIST

## GOLDEN TEXT

“Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you”. (Galatians 3:8)

## USEFUL PRACTICE

God, who began the work of evangelization, requires of each of us an responsible and loving evangelistic attitude.

## SCRIPTURE READING

### Genesis 12:1-8

1 The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

2 “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

4 So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran.

5 He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

6 Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land.

7 The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.

8 From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.

## GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To Know that God requires of every believer a responsible and loving evangelistic attitude.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

**To explain** that the Gospel of Jesus Christ begins with the call of Abraham.

**To show** that the Bible is an essentially evangelical book.

**To know** that Israel, as the chosen people of the Lord, should have done the work of God.

## INTRODUCTION

We will address, in today's lesson, the experience of the patriarch Abraham, who heard, from God himself, the announcement of the Gospel. From that moment on, it would be up to the descendants of the patriarch, through Isaac and Jacob, to prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah. One sees, then, that God is pleased to announce the good news to the fallen and needy mankind that lacks his grace.

The call of Abraham shows us that the Bible is an evangelical book with a clearly evangelical mission. From Genesis to Revelation, God proclaims, both personally and through His prophets and apostles, salvation to all peoples of the Earth. Therefore, as did the Lord of Heaven and Earth, let us proclaim with zeal the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### I. THE CALL OF ABRAHAM

*It is with Abraham that the Gospel of Christ begins. Before the patriarch, there were several redemption announcements, but none was as clear and obvious as the one that God himself made to him.*

### **1. Abram the Chaldean.**

The story of Abraham begins when his father, Terah, left Ur of the Chaldeans, and went on a pilgrimage to Harran, and settled there (Gen 11:31). From the sacred text, we infer that it was the intention of Terah to reach Canaan, in order to provide better conditions for his family. But Terah came to die before reaching his destination.

### **2. Abraham, the evangelized one.**

After the death of Terah, the Lord calls Abram to a new spiritual reality. And, at that moment, he proclaims to him the eternal Gospel: "The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing" (Genesis 12:1,2). The terms of his call, or evangelization, are accurate and strong. He would have to leave his land in order to form a prophetic, priestly and royal people. In these conditions, he would share his faith with all nations, leading them to an encounter with Christ, which would happen when the set time had fully come (Gal 4:4). Anyway, his mission was to be an evangelical blessing to the world. For this reason, Abraham is the father of all who believe (Romans 4:11). You see, then, that God, by calling Abraham, evangelized him as the apostle Paul emphasizes: "Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you" (Gal 3:8).

### **3. Abraham the evangelist.**

Already evangelized, Abraham is made an evangelist and goes out to proclaim the divine knowledge. Among the Gentiles, he was the prophet of the Lord (Gen. 20:7). This way, he established the genuine faith in the region, leading his descendants to worship the One True God. That is why, in the genealogy of Christ, Matthew designates him as the main ancestor of the Messiah (Matthew 1:1). From the call of Abraham, the Jewish people began to live as the chosen people of God to announce to the nations the virtues of the Most High, as evidenced by the Holy Scriptures.

## **II- THE WORD OF GOD IS EVANGELICAL**

*The Holy Bible is an essentially evangelical book. From Genesis to Malachi it shows that Jesus is the Christ promised by God to the patriarchs and holy prophets, as proved by the messianic exposition that the Divine Master made to the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35).*

## **1. The Law of Moses is evangelical.**

In Genesis, God makes several evangelical announcements, highlighting the redemption of mankind (Genesis 3:15; 12:1,2). Initially, still in Eden, the Lord proclaimed to our fathers the coming of the seed of the woman, which would trample on the head of Satan. Later, in calling Abraham to the true faith, He promises him that, through his generation, all peoples on earth would be blessed.

In Exodus, the Passover illustrates not only the freedom of Israel, but also the release of all those who, everywhere, receive the Lamb of God as their Savior (Ex 12:1-28; I Co 5.7; I Foot 1.19) . Only Jesus is able to take away the sins of the world (John 1:29).

Finally, in Deuteronomy, Moses speaks openly about the Messiah who was to come: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him" (Deut 18:15).

## **2. The history of Israel is evangelical.**

At the height of Israel's history, when the people of God had already been freed from all his enemies through David, the Lord promises to his anointed one: "Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever" (2 Sam 7:16).

This promise, clearly evangelical, refers to the Lord Jesus, who, besides being known as the son of David, is hailed as King of kings and Lord of lords (Mt 1:1; Rev 19:16).

## **3. Israel's poetry is evangelical.**

In the poetry of Israel, the Lord announces the coming of the Savior through verses and songs. At the height of his pain and anguish, Job confesses: "I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth" (Job 19:25). In the Hymn Book of Israel, David, the sweet singer, prophesies the Messiah's triumph (Sl 2:1-12). But he also describes his suffering in favor of mankind (Psalm 22:1-31). We also see a beautiful reference about his death and resurrection (Psalm 16:10).

## **4. The prophets are evangelical.**

The prophets, inspired by the Holy Spirit, described the coming of Christ in detail. Isaiah prophesied his virginal conception and his vicarious suffering (Isaiah 7:14; 53:1-12). Jeremiah spoke about the New Covenant that the Lord, through the Messianic Israel, would establish with all

mankind (Jer 31:31-33). Micah showed the place of Christ's birth, and Daniel revealed his sovereignty (Micah 5:2; Dn 7:13:14).

### **III - DOING THE WORK OF GOD**

*Following the example of God himself, Israel should evangelize the world, preparing it for the coming of Christ. Unfortunately, They fell away from the Abrahamic faith. Therefore, the Lord disciplined them with the bitter exile in Babylon. Despite their failure, the Israelites partially fulfilled the mission entrusted to them by the God of Abraham.*

#### **1. Israel and world evangelization.**

The Israelites contributed to the evangelization of the world, because from them come the patriarchs, the Law of Moses, the covenants, the prophets, the Scriptures and Christ himself (Rom 9:1-5). At the height of their history, during the reign of Solomon, instead of seizing prosperity for doing missions, they fell into idolatry. However, the apostle Paul lovingly ponders: "But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their full inclusion bring!" (Romans 11:12).

#### **2. The non-transferable mission of the Church.**

Israel's failure did not delay the divine plan of world evangelization. Through the church, God's Word has reached the ends of the earth. However, what will happen if the Church fails in its evangelizing work? There are not, in all the earth, any other people that can replace us (Rom 10:15-17). World evangelization is a non-transferable task of the Church of Christ. Only we can carry it out.

### **CONCLUSION**

We have an evangelizing God. He is pleased to announce good news to mankind. Today, however, the Lord does it through us. Neither to the angels is this task entrusted. So, let's talk about Christ to all, in every time and place. Jesus is coming soon. The evangelizing God expects from all of us an also evangelizing attitude.