



Articles and Sermons :: The Amazing Abraham

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The Amazing Abraham

Moving Out

Genesis 11:31-12:1-8

Introduction. Abraham the progenitor of the Nation of Israel had not only an outstanding place in Ancient History, but he has also a prominent place in the word of God. Of the fifty chapters, in the book of Genesis, thirty eight are centred on Abraham and his descendants

The Bible is essentially the history of salvation. It tells of God's provision for sinful men. It begins by making us aware, that man is God's creature; and God made his world, and when He made it was made good "God saw that it was good"

The Bible then tells us how man disobeyed God's word, and acted in independence, and in defiance to God's will. Man thus became guilty, ashamed, and unfit for God's Holy presence. Consequently the need arose, and the stage was set for a work of Salvation. Putting it simply the rest of the Bible tells us how God Himself acted to effect that salvation.

God in His sovereign grace has taken the initiative to bring back man into a right relationship with Himself, and into the full joy of man's true destiny eternal bliss in His presence. God took a particular decisive step in this work of salvation when He chose and called Abraham.

Salvation would come through the lineage of Abraham, in the person of his greater son "The Lord Jesus Christ". Abraham would be the father of all who believe.

Adam is the father of the human race, the starting point of human history; he is also the origin of man's fall into a state of depravity. Adam sinned against God he acted in defiance to His revealed word.

This caused him to lose his place in the Garden of Eden. He lost his Federal headship as the ruler of God's creation.

He lost the beautiful fellowship, which he had enjoyed with his maker, and the sentence of death was pronounced on him. The moment Adam sinned; sin became a Universal problem, which has remained to this day.

Rom 5:12 wherefore, as by one-man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

A Universal need required a Universal Solution, a remedy was required, and God in His Grace provided a Universal Saviour. God himself provided a Lamb.

It is interesting to note that before God called Abraham, He had always dealt with men as individuals. God dealt with Adam's sin on the grounds of shed blood. A sacrifice was made and the Lord made a covering for Adam & Eve using the skins of sacrificed animals to cover their nakedness and shame.

In Gen 3:21 we have the first mention of garments, of clothing and God our heavenly Father was the Tailor. He is still making clothing for His people to wear.

The Garments of Holiness, Righteousness, the garments of sacrifice and praise.

After the fall of Adam, there were those who had faith in God and sought to walk in obedience to God shining as lights in the increasing darkness as sin-waxed worse.

Abel was a good man-- a keeper of sheep, the first shepherd that we read of in scripture. Abel brought the firstlings of his flock as a sacrifice unto the Lord, and the Lord accepted his offering. This man had offered according to God's teaching, but he offered for himself alone, his sacrifice could not avail for another.

Enoch was a good man "A man who walked with God". His was a walk of Faith, a life of obedience, and God dealt with

him on a personal basis. We read of him, "He was not for God took him" God translated him to the realm of Glory via the sky.

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. He built the Ark to the saving of his household. Yet again, God was dealing with man on a personal basis.

From the earliest of times God dealt with men as individuals and on a personal basis.

In Abel we have a picture of Substitution

The blood of a lamb was shed for the sins of man.

In Noah we have a picture of Approbation

By faith Noah entered into the Ark of God's provision.

In Enoch we have a picture of Translation

The day of the Rapture when Jesus comes to take His believing people His blood washed Church home to the place of many mansions.

In Abraham we have a picture of new Revelation

God's choice and call of Abraham marks the beginning of His special dealings with all men after man's fall into sin, and after the flood waters of judgement which fell because of man's sin; a beginning that was consummated in his seed, in his posterity.

Friends, a right living relationship with God, for all who believe, through Sovereign Grace, Redeeming Blood, regenerating faith, can clearly be traced back to Abraham.

Back to the Divine choice and to the Divine, that was acts of Sovereign Grace.

1. Abraham's Country.

Gen 12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

This was the first of the Divine appearance to Abraham and it came while he was living in the ancient city of Ur. Ur was one of the most important cities in the then known world when God appeared to Abraham some four thousand years ago.

It was a busy commercial centre of Mesopotamia, which was situated in the Persian Gulf, and was bordered by the great river Euphrates.

The city covered about four square miles, and had a population somewhere in the region of 300,000.

History records and archaeology confirms, that many of these people were highly educated. They were proficient in mathematics, astronomy, weaving, and engraving.

Furthermore they preserved their ideas by writing on clay tablets. Which have been invaluable to archaeologists in reconstructing the social and religious life of these people.

They had a good standard of living; their city was prosperous, its seaport making it a centre of an affluent society.

But like the rest of the world "Ur" was Polytheistic.

The people worshipped many gods. The chief deity in this city being the moon god who was worshiped in the Temple Ziggurate

It was in the midst of this idolatrous existence that Jehovah appeared to Abram, and gave him a command to leave his country, to leave his relatives, to break away from his father's house, and go to a land that the Lord would show him.

The story of Abraham begins with God when He comes to an unregenerate man with a word of Revelation, with a word of Command. "Get thee out of thy country"

The word of God broke through the darkness and the deadness of Abraham's soul to speak to him about a new place and a new people.

The God of glory appeared to Abraham. He received a personal invitation, and a Royal command. But there was also a compelling divine undertaking. "And I will"

When the Lord, calls for "Faith" He always quickly adds His "I will" Abram,

"I will show thee a land"

"I will make thee a great nation"

"I will bless you and make you a blessing"

Heb 10:23 exhorts

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

This revelation called for a response, it called for a statement of Faith and it called for a Step of Faith. Abraham stepped out in faith, he obeyed, he left Ur, not knowing where he was going but he looked for a city whose builder and maker is God.

Abraham's pilgrimage began, where ours begins, with a vision of another place. The Vision of a better land, a home forever blessed with the presence of the Lord.

Beloved, God speaks, we believe, faith dawns and real life begins. Abram left Ur of the Chaldees. God had asked him to move out from the place of condemnation.

It is useful to keep in mind the meaning of the name

Ur of the Chaldees.. Ur--- means "Flame" Chaldees means "destruction". The Lord was telling Abram to leave the place of "Flame & Destruction"

Today in the Gospel of His saving Grace, God is still calling men and women "to get out" to leave the place of flame and destruction, to leave the place of condemnation that they might become a new people and travel on in faith to a new place.

God says to the sinner in Grace "trust Me" and step out on the "Path of Faith"

It is wonderful to be a believer in Christ. It is also easy to misunderstand what the New Testament means by this experience. It is not that we believe Jesus Christ can do things, or merely that we believe in a plan of salvation.

It is that we believe Him, and whatever happens we will hang on to the fact that he is true and Faithful. We prove our faith by our commitment to Him. God says trust Me, and faith responds.

Faith says to God.

Lead us heavenly Father lead us

Over the world's tempestuous sea

Guard us keep us feed us for we have no help but thee

Yet possessing every blessing; if our God our father be

Abraham's Country.

Abraham's Call

God's call and invitation to Abraham was like a proposal of marriage. God came to Abraham as a man would come to a woman and He virtually said, "I want you"

Abram of all the people who are dwelling in Mesopotamia, I want you to be my friend.

The Lord used the isolating singular pronouns "you or thee". God demanded, as the man who proposes to the woman of his choice, that Abram should leave everything else in order to become His.

He should leave his own family to join another the people of God, to leave his own home to live with Him as a pilgrim.

A. The Singularity in the Call

Isa 51:2 "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him."

This was the "Call of Grace" and the call of grace is always a "Personal call, from a Personal God One who is ever a personal Saviour.

B. The Clarity of the Commands in this Call.

Leave your country! Leave your kindred! He was to go forth unto a land that God would show him!

Abram was to go to a place, which was not of his own choosing, but to a place that was chosen and prepared by God for him. God required that Abram would be completely His; he was to leave all for Him. He was to dwell in fellowship with Him and he was to walk the path of Faith, which would lead him to an inheritance that God had reserved for him.

God asked Abraham to leave all to bring nothing with him but himself. In one sense, he was to contribute nothing, and yet in another sense, he was to give everything, going forward to be wholly at God's command.

God, asked Abram to go to a place of His choice, a place of whose character and worth, God was the only guarantee.

Abraham knew nothing about this place. In this place he would have no familiar friends but One---"The Lord" everything would depend on Him and on His unfailing care and provision. But God undertook to bless Abraham.

Friends, what the Lord requires of you and I whom He has called in Saving Grace, is that we be prepared to leave all and to follow Christ, depending on His unfailing care, His provision, and His promise of blessing.

Someone has said "The Kingdom of God is no place for people whose faces are pointed one way and their feet is pointed in another direction

God is not taking people to heaven backwards or in retreat. He is leading them forward. Sometimes the greatest problems in the life of the Church can come from those, whose face is set in one direction but their feet are going another.

To enter the fullness of God's blessing, like Caleb of old with must wholly follow the Lord.

Saying, Follow Follow I will Follow Jesus anywhere he leads me I will follow on.

A. The Singularity in the Call B. The Clarity of the Commands in this Call.

C. The Reality of the Promise in this Call

God undertook to bless Abraham, giving to him a three-fold promise.

"I will bless you" "I will make of you a great nation" "In you will all the families of the earth be blessed"

The promise was for "Individual, National and Universal Blessing.

Here, we have the "I wills" of God. Which are the heavenly seal of assurance and security. The "I wills of God" are still available to all who will step out on the path of total obedience and surrender to Him and His will.

Our God will always bless those who are prepared to walk the path faith, claim His promises and take Him at His word.

Gen 28:15 The Lord appeared to Abraham's grandson Jacob in a dream, just to confirm the promise that He had made with His friend Abraham"

Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

Behold, I am with thee. Company for the Lonely/ Comfort for the sad, a refuge for the helpless Behold, I am with thee. Its music to make us glad

In the Great Commission to the Church the Lord said.

Mat 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Mat 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

One can hear the call of God to walk the Path of Faith, but it is not always easy to accept, for God's call be Disruptive, Disturbing, and it can easily disobeyed. It was not easy for Abram to leave a prosperous city, to walk the path of faith as a pilgrim or to break with his natural and national ties.

There would be times that he would be filled with confidence; there would be times when he would be filled with confusion. There would be moments of Triumph, moments of defeat. He would enjoy the mountain top experience. He would also plunge into the valley of despair.

He would have his great moments of "Faith" he would also have his moments of "Fear"

Abram through the Sovereign Grace of God had found the path of faith now he must learn to walk the Path of Faith. He would learn through experience.

That the God on the mountain is the God in the valley

The God of the good time is the God in the bad times

When things go wrong he puts them right

For the God of the day is the God of the night.

Abraham's Country.

Abraham's Call

Abraham's Conduct

Gen 11:31-32 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

Friends, we find that Abram's Obedience was only A Partial obedience and this resulted in loss of further progress. This whole venture of Faith grounded to a halt before it progressed very far. Abram took Terah his father with him and also his nephew Lot. The Lord had made it very clear that he must leave the ties of the flesh behind.

God cannot bless where there is but partial obedience. God could not bless Abraham neither can He bless us if there is only partial obedience to His command. The child of God is to be led by the Spirit, but often he is hindered in his walk by the flesh.

For a period of at least six years, Abram dwelt in a place called Haran, which is about half way to the land of promise. There is no indication in scripture that the Lord instructed Abram to live in Haran. Instead of going forward with God he was stuck in the half way house of partial obedience.

We would do well to note the meaning of this word Haran. (Barren, unfruitful, a place of ruin) For six years Abram lived here and the Lord did not appear unto him and there were no Altars of worship built in Haran

The Lord does not fellowship with those who are dwelling in the Haran's of this barren world. These were wasted years for Abram, and we all have experienced wasted years to some degree in our lives. Wasted years Oh how foolish, we fail to go forward with God in faith, displaying just a partial obedience.

The Author Tim Hansel wrote

I was almost your person today, Lord. Then I thought what it would have been like if Jesus had done the same thing.

What if God had almost revealed himself in Jesus Christ What if Christ was almost born and almost lived and almost died

What if the Lord had said, "Ask and it will almost be given you; seek and you will almost find; knock and it will almost be opened to you"

What if he would have said, "Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will almost give you rest. If Jesus had told His disciples "For whosoever would save his life will lose it, and whosoever loses his life for my sake will almost find it"

My Almost Christianity took on a much different light. I realised how many times I had played the game of being one of Jesus' "almost disciples."

I recalled how many times I had prayed almost believing and walked through my days as if he were almost risen, and almost trusted Him on "The Path of Faith"

Sometimes, we can fall into the category of "The Almost Christians" I was almost yours wholly today Lord.

Gen 11:32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

There, has been a death in Haran, Abram's father has died at the age of 205. There has been a burial in Haran. Terah whose name means, "Delay" has now been buried.

The Spiritual application to grasp from this physical death is the teaching of the New Testament, which tells the believer that the Old Man, the old nature of the flesh must die for this causes delay and hinders spiritual progress.

The Apostle Paul.

Eph 4:22-24 that you put off, concerning your former conduct the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

And that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. (NKJ)

The Old Man, that old fleshly nature must die it must be crucified daily. The believer is to die to self and to live completely for God. Paul could say.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

The old in Paul's life had been demolished and buried, he was now building on a new foundation, and he was building on Christ.

London businessman Lindsay Clegg told the story of a warehouse property he was selling. The building had been empty for months and needed repairs. Vandals had damaged the doors, smashed the windows, and had thrown rubbish all over the place. As he showed a prospective buyer the property he took pains to say, "that he would replace the broken windows, bring in a crew to correct any structural damage, and clean out the rubbish".

The buyer said, "Forget about the repairs when I buy this place I'm going to build something completely different. I don't want the building; I want the site".

That's God's message to us!

Our efforts to improve our own lives are as trivial as sweeping a warehouse that is going to be demolished. When we become God's children the old life is over.

He makes all things new. All He wants is the site to build on. There are still some trying to "reform the Old", but God offers through redemption to build a new edifice for His Glory" All we have to do is give Him the "property" and He will do the necessary "building".

In Ur of the Chaldees Abram heard the Divine Call unto Salvation. At Haran he learned something of the Divine Claim for Separation. He had learned a valuable lesson and now he is on the move again.

Gen 12:6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh

Sichem. The name means "Shoulder, Strength, Service"

Moreh... the name means, "the place of instruction" Abram's, on the move with God he would find the Lord to be his strength, and he would soon discover that when he walked with the Lord in fellowship He would instruct him.

Gen 12:8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.

Abram, has arrived at Bethel

Hai.. Means "the Place of defeat" Abram has now his back towards the place of defeat! His face is towards Bethel,

Bethel: (the House of God) the place for Adoration, it is there that he builds an Altar and calls on the name of his God.

Abraham is learning that the "path of faith" calls for separation unto the Lord. One must listen for instruction from the Lord who ever says to His own "I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go, I will guide you with my eye.

Abram was learning something of the "Adoration and Worship" which was to be rendered unto the One who had called him out of darkness into His glorious light.

A Brother in Christ.