

Message Seven

Abraham (1) - God's Calling and Living by Faith

Scripture reading: Gen. 12:1-8; 13:3-4, 18.

I. Our God is the God of three particular persons—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—Exo. 3:6, 15-16.

- A. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the foundations of the nation of Israel; without them there would not be the nation of Israel—Acts 3:13; Gal. 6:16:
 - 1. God's people became His people through the experiences of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; their experiences culminated in Israel, the people of God.
 - 2. We all need to have the elements of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; without these elements we cannot be the people of God, the Israel of God.
- B. In the book of Genesis the records of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob overlap; Genesis does not portray them as three separate individuals but as constituents of one corporate person.
- C. We need to know and experience the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

II. God's calling of Abraham—Gen. 12:1

- A. The background of the God's calling—Babel:
 - 1. Out from an environment of forsaking God, exalting man, denying the right of God and serving idols—Josh. 24:2.
 - 2. From the result of the fourth fall of man—Gen. 11:1-9.
- B. The significance of God's calling
 - 1. It was a new beginning for God; Abraham is the starting point in God's plan of redemption and in His work of recovery—Rom. 4:17.
 - 2. It was to give up the race of Adam and to choose Abraham with his descendants as the new race to be His people for the fulfilling of His eternal purpose—Gal. 3:7-9, 14; Rom. 4:16-17.
 - 3. It was a transfer of life that was from the fallen life of the old creation to the stronger and better life of the new creation.
- C. The motive and strength of being called
 - 1. God's appearing; the God of glory appeared to Abraham, paying him a visit with His personal appearance because at that time Abraham was under influence of a strong background in Chaldea—Acts 7:2, 55-56; Josh. 24:2; cf. Matt. 4:16, 18-22; 2Cor. 4:6.

2. God's calling: When God came to Abraham, He called him, and calling means speaking; It is not a small thing to hear God's speaking—Acts 7:3-4; Gen. 12:1.
 3. God's promise: Most of God's speaking to us is His promise—vv.2-3.
 - a. "Go from your land and from your relatives and from your father's house to the land that I will show you" —v.1
 - b. "And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great" —v.2.
 - c. "And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed" —v.3.
 - d. God's promise to Abraham was His preaching gospel to him and it implied God's eternal purpose—Gal. 3:8, 14; Gen. 1:26-28.
- D. The process in answering God's calling
1. God called Abraham the first time at Ur of Chaldea in Mesopotamia—Acts 7:2-4.
 - a. To leave his land and relatives but Abraham not obeyed God's calling right away.
 - b. Abraham was taken to Haran by his father after his brother (Haran)'s death—Gen. 11:31.
 2. God called Abraham the second time at Haran after His father's death—11:32-12:1.
 - a. Not only to come out of his land and from his relatives but also out of his father's house.
 - b. In this second calling, God gave Abraham the promise of the gospel as an incentive to encourage him to answer His calling—vv.2-3.
 - c. But Abraham obeyed God's calling in a dragging way; he still took Lot with him—v.4.
 3. God removed Abraham into the Land of Canaan—Acts 7:4; cf. Heb. 11:8.
 - a. Apparently, Abraham journeyed into Canaan by faith, but actually, it was God who "removed him" across the Euphrates River into the good land.
 - b. To be saved is to be delivered out of many negative situations so that we may come into God's goal, God's good land.
 4. Abraham passed through the land to the place which God confirmed.
 - a. At Haran, Abraham crossed the river, and traveled to Shechem, to the oak of Moreh—12:6.
 - b. God appeared to him again and confirmed that he arrived at the right place—v.7a.
 - c. At this place, Abraham received the promise of the good land and built an altar—v.7b.

- d. When we get the promise of the good land, there we can build an altar to the Lord, call on His name, and have intimate fellowship with Him—v.8.

III. Abraham lived by faith; he was the first Hebrew to live the life of the altar and the tent—Gen 12:7-8; 13:3-4, 18; cf. Gen. 14:13; Exo. 7:16:

- A. The root of the word Hebrew means “to pass over,” especially to pass over a river; therefore, a Hebrew is a river crosser.
- B. The Lord Jesus appeared to Abraham as the great I Am, the God of glory, to transfuse Himself into Abraham—John 8:56-58; Exo. 3:14-15; Acts 7:2.
 1. God’s goal with Abraham was not merely to save him out of his environment and his background but to bring him into the land of Canaan for the fulfillment of God’s purpose.
 2. Through God’s repeated appearances to Abraham, God transfused Himself into him, causing him to experience a spiritual infusion with a spiritual infiltration of God’s essence into his being.
 3. Abraham’s faith not originated with himself but was a reaction to the God of glory appearing to him and to the transfusing and infusing of God’s element into his being.
 4. God’s appearing and transfusing issued in his consecration, causing him to build an altar, live in a tent, and live totally for God.
 5. Abraham trusted in God for His instant leading, taking God’s presence as the road map for his traveling—Heb. 11:8.
- C. Abraham built three altars in three places—Shechem, Bethel, and Hebron; these three places represent the good land, typifying the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive Spirit—Gen. 12:6-8; 13:18; Col. 1:12; 2:6-7; Phil. 1:19.
- D. Abraham’s dwelling in a tent, a movable abode, testifies that he did not belong to the world but lived the life of a sojourner on earth; erecting a tent is an expression, a declaration, that we do not belong to this world but that we belong to a better country, the New Jerusalem—Heb. 11:9-10, 13-16; cf. Psa. 90:1.

Message Seven

Scripture Reading:

Reference Scripture Verses:

Gen. 12:1-8. 1 Now Jehovah said to Abram, Go from your land And from your relatives And from your father's house To the land that I will show you; 2 And I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And he who curses you I will curse; And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed. 4 So Abram went as Jehovah had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he went out of Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the souls that they had acquired in Haran, and they went out to go to the land of Canaan. And they came to the land of Canaan. 6 And Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. And at that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7 And Jehovah appeared to Abram and said, To your seed I will give this land. And there he built an altar to Jehovah who had appeared to him. 8 And he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to Jehovah and called upon the name of Jehovah.

Gen. 13:3-4. 3 And he continued on his journey from the Negev as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, 4 To the place of the altar, which he had made there formerly; and there Abram called on the name of Jehovah.

Gen. 13:18 And Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to Jehovah.

I.

Exo. 3:6 And He said, I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Exo. 3:15-16. 15 And God also said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial from generation to generation. 16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, I have surely visited you and seen what is being done to you in Egypt.

Acts 3:13 The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release *Him*.

Gal. 6:16 And as many as walk by this rule, peace be upon them and mercy, even upon the Israel of God.

II.

Gen. 12:1 Now Jehovah said to Abram, Go from your land And from your relatives And from your father's house To the land that I will show you

Josh. 24:2 And Joshua said to all the people, Thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt across the River long ago, Terah the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods.

Gen. 11:1-9. **1** And the whole earth had one language and the same speech. **2** And as they journeyed east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. **3** And they said to one another, Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and they had tar for mortar. **4** And they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top is in the heavens; and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered over the surface of the whole earth. **5** And Jehovah came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men had built. **6** And Jehovah said, Behold, they are one people, and they all have one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; and now nothing which they purpose to do will be kept from them. **7** Come, let Us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. **8** So Jehovah scattered them from there over the surface of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. **9** Therefore its name was called Babel, because there Jehovah confounded the language of all the earth, and from there Jehovah scattered them over the surface of all the earth.

Rom. 4:16-17. **16** Therefore *the inheritance is* out of faith that *it might be* according to grace, so that the promise may be certain to all the seed, not to that which is of the law only, but also to that which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all **17** (As it is written, "I have appointed you a father of many nations") in the sight of God whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls the things not being as being.

Gal. 3:7-9. **7** Know then that they who are of faith, these are sons of Abraham. **8** And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles out of faith, announced the gospel beforehand to Abraham: "In you shall all the nations be blessed." **9** So then they who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Gal. 3:14 In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Acts 7:2-4. **2** And he said, Men, brothers and fathers, listen. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, **3** And said to him, "Come out from your land and from your relatives, and come into the land which I will show you." **4** Then he came forth from the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, after his father died, He removed him into this land, in which you now dwell.

Acts 7:55-56. **55** But being full of the Holy Spirit, he looked intently into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; **56** And he said, Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.

Matt. 4:16 The people sitting in darkness have seen a great light; and to those sitting in the region and shadow of death, to them light has risen."

Matt. 4:18-22. **18** And while He was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. **19** And He said to them, Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men. **20** And immediately leaving the nets, they followed Him. **21** And going on from there, He saw another two brothers, James the *son* of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. **22** And immediately leaving the boat and

their father, they followed Him.

2Cor. 4:6 Because the God who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, is the One who shined in our hearts to illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Gen. 12:1-3. 1 Now Jehovah said to Abram, Go from your land And from your relatives And from your father's house To the land that I will show you; 2 And I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And he who curses you I will curse; And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.

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Gen. 1:26-28. 26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. 27 And God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

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Gen. 11:31-32. 31 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 out together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan, but when they came to Haran they settled there. 32 And the days of Terah were two hundred five years, and Terah died in Haran.

Gen. 12:1-4. 1 Now Jehovah said to Abram, Go from your land And from your relatives And from your father's house To the land that I will show you; 2 And I will make of you a great nation, And I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And he who curses you I will curse; And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed. 4 So Abram went as Jehovah had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he went out of Haran.

Acts 7:4 Then he came forth from the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, after his father died, He removed him into this land, in which you now dwell.

Heb. 11:8 By faith Abraham, being called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Gen. 12:6-8. 6 And Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. And at that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7 And Jehovah appeared to Abram and said, To your seed I will give this land.

And there he built an altar to Jehovah who had appeared to him. **8** And he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to Jehovah and called upon the name of Jehovah.

III.

Gen. 12:7-8. 7 And Jehovah appeared to Abram and said, To your seed I will give this land. And there he built an altar to Jehovah who had appeared to him. **8** And he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to Jehovah and called upon the name of Jehovah.

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Gen. 14:13 And one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew. Now he was dwelling by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, the brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and these were allies of Abram.

Exo. 7:16 And you shall say to him, Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to you, saying, Let My people go that they may serve Me in the wilderness. But until this very moment you have not listened.

John 8:56-58. 56 Your father Abraham exulted that he would see My day, and he saw *it* and rejoiced. **57** The Jews then said to Him, You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham? **58** Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am.

Exo. 3:14-15. 14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you **15** And God also said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial from generation to generation.

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Col. 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;

Col. 2:6-7. 6 As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walk in Him, **7** Having been rooted and

being built up in Him, and being established in the faith even as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

Heb. 11:9-10. 9 By faith he dwelt as a foreigner in the land of promise as in a foreign *land*, making his home in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the fellow heirs of the same promise; **10** For he eagerly waited for the city which has the foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God.

Heb. 11:13-16. 13 All these died in faith, not receiving the promises but seeing them from afar and joyfully greeting *them* and confessing that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth. **14** For those who say such things make it manifest that they seek after a country of their own. **15** And if indeed they continued to remember that *country* from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return; **16** But as it is, they long after a better *country*, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

Psa. 90:1 O Lord, You have been our dwelling place In all generations.