

Bite Size Bible Study

Abram #123

By Pastor Lee

Now Adonai said to Avram, “Get yourself out of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father’s house, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and I will make your name great; and you are to be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse anyone who curses you; and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

Genesis 12:1-3 CJB

and YHWH said to Avram, walk yourself from your land and from your kindred and from the house of your father to the land which I will show you, and I will make you a great nation and I will exalt you and I will magnify your title and exist as a present, and I will exalt ones exalting you and ones belittling you I will spit upon and all of the clans of the ground will be exalted with you,

Genesis 12:1-3 Benner Translation

When God chose Abram to begin His plan to redeem the world, He had him move from his land of birth to the land of Canaan. We all remember Abraham's faith in God, but do we really know what he gave up to follow that faith. Probably we all remember that he was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac, but earlier his faith was tested by what we in the Western world do not understand.

When God said: *Get yourself out of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father’s house*, we don't see how much that went against all that meant in that culture. God was asking him to leave his family, culture, his means of support and any hope of protection from enemies.

Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot. Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot, son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan {Nahor is not mentioned as travelling with them, but Haran must have because he dies in Haran}. But when they came to Haran, they settled there. While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, in the land of his birth. {It hasn't been established whether this was the Ur in the east near the Persian Gulf or the Ur much further west near the headwaters of the Euphrates River – the latter is favored}. Both cities were well-developed civilizations and were worshipers of the moon god – sin, and Terah's family was a part of that idolatrous worship (Joshua 24:2).

At sometime after this, Abram received God's command to leave Haran and go to Canaan. In that culture, this would have been almost as difficult as sacrificing Isaac. Every kind of security that a person had was bound up in their clan and their land. Since Abram had no children, he would have no security in old age, as there would be no one to take care of him. Abram's extended family would have been his only place to go for help. So God was asking Abram to leave his people, his identity in that culture, his family, his protection behind and trust in God alone.

God's promise to Abram would have meant much more in ancient times than it does today. Although he was apparently very wealthy, with large herds and valuables, he would have no power in his clan. In Abram's time success was tied to family, the greatest hope a person could have would be that he or she would become the father or mother of many descendants. At the point of his leaving his country he was 75 and had no descendants. God, by offering to make of him a great nation, promises him a great number of descendants, although he never saw it in his lifetime.

Abraham journeyed (walked) throughout the areas of Canaan and even down into Egypt and back, taking his herds and small band of people with him. And now more than 25 years later, he is still childlessness, and that shouldn't have done anything to make them feel more confident that God would fulfill His promises. But he didn't waver.

Through all the doubts, Abram remained faithful. And because of his faithfulness, he is not only father of all the Jews, but all the faithful who come to believe in his descendant, Jesus. Because of his faithfulness, he became the father of a family that numbers more than the sands of the sea (some say the dust of the ground).

While some of the promises made to Abraham have been fulfilled in part the completion of those promises is still to be accomplished. Israel was not able to be the guiding nation, and the blessing to the nations surrounding her and her example of God's desire for these nations has yet to be accomplished. Jesus (of the lineage of Abraham) came to fulfill and be that example; but the nations, including His own, rejected Him and his message.

It will have to wait until His second coming for these promises to be completely fulfilled and usher in a world free of conflict and inequities.